**ANALYSIS 7** 

CORONA: SOME REAL,

THOUGH SOME HYPE

SPORTS 12 IGA IS QUEEN OF ROME



HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI **DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA** \*LATE CITY VOL. 3 ISSUE 207 \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

SHILPA SHETTY IN MAHESH-TRIVIKRAM'S **STORY** 

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### PETROL, DIESEL PRICES HIKED AGAIN; PETROL PRICE NEARS RS 99 IN MUMBAI

etrol price on Sunday was increased by 24 paise per litre and diesel by 27 paise, pushing rates correct. 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 stateowned 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'**

enior Congress leader and MP Rajeev Satav died at a private hospital in Pune this Omorning, 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**

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.

elhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on

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

\_he 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

Maha CM asks family

docs to join fight

against Covid

Covaxin effective

against India, UK

strains: Biotech

TODAY

**ALMANAC** 

Panchangam

Month & Paksham:

Vaishakha & Shukla Paksha

Tithi: Panchami: 11:34 am

**Nakshatram:** Punarvasu: 01:22 am Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start

**Rahukalam:** 07:23 am - 08:59 am

**Yamagandam :** 10:36 am - 12:12 pm

**Good Time:** (to start any important work)

**Amritakalam**: 10:45 am - 12:29 pm

**Abhijit Muhurtham:** 11:46 am - 12:38 pm

**HYDERABAD** 

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Weather

**Temp:** 34/23

Humidity: 61%

Sunrise: 05:43 am

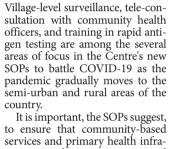
**Sunset:** 06:41 pm

**Current Weather Conditions** 

**Varjyam :** 09:53 pm - 11:35 pm

**Gulika:** 01:48 pm - 03:25 pm

any important work)



structure in these areas are equipped to manage infections.

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



Centre's new SOPs to battle

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

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

The Centre on Sunday asked the state I 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.

# First batch of anti-Covid drug 2-DG to be released today

The first batch of anti-COVID drug 2-DG, developed by the DRDO, will be released on Monday by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Health Minister Hársh Vardhan, officials said.

The Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI) has approved the oral drug for emergency use as an adjunct therapy in moderate to severe coronavirus patients, the defence ministry said earlier this month. The officials said the first batch of the drug will be released by the two ministers at an event at the headquarters of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) here.

The ministry, on May 8, said the clinical trials of the drug, 2-deoxy-



D-glucose (2-DG), showed that it helps in a faster recovery of hospitalised patients and reduces sup-

plemental oxygen dependence. The approval of the drug has come at a time when India is grappling with a record-breaking wave of the coronavirus pandemic that has stretched the country's healthcare infrastructure to its limit.



### **Tauktae intensifies** into 'very severe cvclonic storm'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cyclone Tauktae has intensified into a "very severe cyclonic storm' and is approaching the Gujarat coast, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on is very like north-northwestwards and reach Gujarat coast in the evening hours of 17th (May) and cross Gujarat coast between Porbandar and Mahuva (Bhavnagar district) around 18th May early morning, the IMD said.

# Second batch of Sputnik V vaccine reaches Hyd

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 onal anti-pandemi ation.

"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 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.



### 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,

Palestinian health officials said. A 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 dedicates 2 hospitals AP HC directs CID to shift 'wounded' for black fungus treatment YSRC rebel MP to private hospital transplants. It is treated with antifun-**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

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 examining Raju.

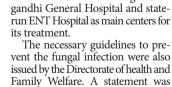
The medical board, headed by the superintendent of Government General Hospital in Guntur, submitted that there were no external injuries on Raju, though his legs and feet were swollen.

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).



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

The Black Fungus or Mucormycosis

is being spread widely in Covid

patients and the Telangana govern-

ment has decided to dedicate two

hospitals for the treatment of the

patients with Black Fungus symp-

toms. It was decided to designate the

The necessary guidelines to pre-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

gal drugs along with surgical debridement." He further added, "It is known that the disease is spread due to overuse 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."

including two children. The pre-dawn attacks were on houses in the centre of Gaza City, spokesman for the Israeli military

### 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,



# 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

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'

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 vac-

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 Khera said at a press conference that questions will be asked from get vaccines, medicines and oxygen they desperately need to fight

the prime minister if people don't

"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". Khera 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 didnot manage the crisis well," he said.







# 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 'statewise 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 subsequenty 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

### 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

# AP HC directs CID to shift...

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

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

"Shifting him to that private ly caused due to police tor- court order. vocate 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

> cial 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,

act as the former was in judi-

be admitted to a hospital for the sleuths lodged him in the treatment of injuries alleged- district jail in violation of the

> The bench 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.

# **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

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 ssembly 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,

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 develop ents, the Telugu states'

Gujarat and Diu and Daman. 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 covey 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.

# intensifies into...

Continued from page 1

The IMD has also issued a yellow alert for the coasts of

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 depen-dency 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 INMAS, 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

# Centre's new SOPs to battle...

Continued from page 1

"Monitoring of oxygen saturation is important for monitor-ing 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

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

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

beneficiaries during the second

being faced by the NFSA

the guidelines say.

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

# Spurt likely in gold market

readying for an unprecedented tejee (spurt) considering the rapidly changing geo-political phenomena. If, on the one hand, the world has been watching with bated breath the war-like situation on Gaza borders, equally it is worrisome matter to learn about Azerbaijan's invasion of Armenia. These two factors have all the potential to divide the world into at least two blocks each one siding one country or the other. If that happens, all markets, including of course gold, would flare up as the global strife

escalates. Saturday, the New York gold appreciated and closed at US \$ 1,843.90 (per ounce) while silver remained steady and closed at \$ 27.43 (per ounce). On the other hand, platinum and palladium declined and closed at \$ 1,222 (per ounce)

Other economic parameters remained from moderate to strong. Brent and Nymex crude closed at US\$ 68.71 and 65.31 (per barrel) respectively, while Crude MCX was quoted at Rs.4,786 (per bar-rel). While Gold MCX stood at Rs.47,677 (per 10 gms), MCX Silver closed at Rs.71,080 (per kg). Copper Rs.773.25 (per kg). Sensex and Nifty 50 closed at

**WEEKLY MARKET REVIEW** 48,732.55 During the week ended and 14,677.80 points respectively. Leading foreign currencies' exchange rates on the closing day of the week were: US \$: Rs.73.29, British Pound: Rs.103.32, Euro: Rs.89.00, Singapore \$: Rs.55.02, Swiss Franc: Rs.81.27, Australian \$: Rs.56.98, Saudi Riyal:

Dinar: Rs.243.61, Omani Rial: Rs.190.41 and UAE Dirham: Rs.19.95, Japanese Yen: Rs.0.67 and Hong Kong Dollar: Rs.9.43.

India has been the second largest importer of gold after China. Akshay Tritiya is a festival when traditionally Hindu families (nowadays, people of other faiths also) purchase gold financial capacity. In normal times, gold worth

15-20 tons is bought on this occasion, but since the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, due to a decline in earnings and restrictions on movements, there has been a drastic fall in the volumes. This year, according to trade sources gold sale was recorded in the range of 9-10 tons

In local markets, standard gold (24 carats) appreciated by Rs.320 and closed at Rs.48,980 (per 10 gms). Ornamental gold too followed suit and was quoted in the range of Rs.44,800-44,900 on the closing day. Silver (0.999), on the other hand, declined marginally by Rs.100 and closed at Rs.76,000 (per kg).

COMMODITIES

With a view to augment upplies, the governmen eased restrictions on the import of tuar daal, moong daal and urad daal until October 31.

The sentiment in principal wholesale commodity markets in the twin cities turned moderate due to lower demand.

Rythu Bazars and other commodity markets located in Begum Bazar, Kishangunj, Mukthyargunj, Risala Abdullah, Mir AlamMandi, Dilsukhnagar, Kukatpally, Bowenpally and General Bazar witnessed moderate

During the week, like in the previous week, common pulses such as tuar dal, masoor dal, moong dal and urad dal and commodities like chillies and garlic remained unchanged. Staple food grains and common edible recorded a negligible decline.

Common vegetables such gourd, snake gourd, lady's finger, cucumber, potatoes, onions, tomatoes, French beans and leafy vegetables remained unchanged at the previous week's higher levels.

The NECC wholesale price of egg in Hyderabad further appreciated by Rs.30 and closed at Rs.448 (per 100). The highest price of Rs.552 was recorded at Ranchi and Muzaffarpur, while Hospet recorded the lowest of Rs.435.

# 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 peo-

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.

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. Vijayabhasker & 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 ROUNDUP 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 what will form the part of 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 offend-

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 hear-LEGAL ing 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

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 eyeopener 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 Muslimdominated areas on the ground that Islam considers taking out a religious procession of other religions as a

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 jus-

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 Anui Kumar Vs. State of U.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.

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# Mango growers again hit by Covid

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 govern-ment 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, Mallika, Rasaalu are being cultivated in the rest of the

cultivated in Nagarkurnool district enjoy demand at home and also abroad. Earlier, the mangoes were exported to Bangaluru, 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 harvest-The mangoes cultivated in Jagityal, Kollapur mangoes down 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

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. No wholesale trader is coming forward to purchase mangoes

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.

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

# 'Telangana is in better position in availability of oxygen, medicines'

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 gov-

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

ernment is taking all the steps



### Greenko's consignment of O<sub>2</sub> concentrators lands at RGIA

reenko 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.

the patients on time.

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

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.

"Within the next 5 days, four

medical institutions. The public representatives and officials are on the ground to take stock of the situation and are acting swiftly during an emer-

### **CITY LIGHTS**

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

o ensure that the lockdown was enforced strictly, Cyberabad Police Sunday visited different places including Suchitra, Alwal IG Statue, Golnaka 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 checkposts on roads



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

he very severe cyclonic storm, Tauktae, over the east central Arabian Sea is during next 24 hours. As a result, several parts of Telangana - including districts such as Adilabad, Survapet, 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 Celcius 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'

ommissioner 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

### JITO ladies wing announces 'Kalakaar Ki Khoj' Season-2

ITO Hyderabad Ladies Wing on Sunday announced the launch of Kalakaar Ki Khoj Season-2 in a virtual mode. The organisation Uannounced 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 orgnisers said. Speaking on the occasion Sarlla Bhutoria Chairperson of JITO Ladies Wing (JLW) Hyderabad said, "As part of Season-2 we are conducting five competitions dancing (Dance Ke Dewaane), 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

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-

Telangana has reported 3,816

new Covid infections and 27

to 2,955 and the total number

of positive cases to 5,28,823.

The number of active cases in

Requesting KTRTRS anna office to look into this.

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

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

evening stood at 50,969.

Sunday, authorities conducted

awaited. On Sunday, 5,892

individuals have recovered

with a recovery rate of 89.80

ther tweeted"Is this fair? 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).

### **USA sends 0**<sub>2</sub> concentrators to Hyderabad

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With India in the midst of a severe Covid pandemic, many foreign countries are sending essential medical equipments to India.

In this regard, American flight carrying oxygen concentrators have been dispatched from Dallas to Hyderabad which was received at the RGIA.

The Cargo department had received the eight oxygen concentrators weighing 2352 kilos at the airport. The Cargo Department are taking every possible step to ensure that the Covid related essentials equipment is handled properly.

### A cycle of hope in city amid Covid pandemic post office hours on their

ANUSHA PUPPALA ■ HYDERABAD

Meet 'Relief Riders' of Hyderabad who delivers medicines and essentials to the elderly and vulnerable in the city. The young riders not only deliver medicines and essentials but also deliver free food at the doorstep of quarantine centre's and Covid patients across the city duly following the Covid safety protocols.

This initiative was started by 41-year-old Santhana Selvan, an IT employee and Bicycle Mayor along with group of cyclists.

They are techies, who are offering to deliver medicines for elderly based on requests received from the residents of Hyderabad. They have received several requests from arranging emergency drugs, food for Covid patients, oxygen cylinders, blood plasma units and even ICU beds. They have started this campaign recently after the out-

Relief Riders consisting more than 160 volunteers across the city are delivering medicines before and after

cycles in different parts of the city. Whenever a request comes in, there are always two or three volunteers coming forward to deliver the requests, which has encouraged the Relief Riders even more to continue this noble work during tough times like these.

They have also created a 'Free Food Network' apart from 'Relief Riders', where there are about 10 free food providers who have their 50 home kitchens spread across the city. Relief Riders deliver the free food to the Covid patients and families in isolation. Relief Riders were overwhelmed when even elderly volunteers came forward to help and deliver the essentials.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Santhana Selvan said, "We started this initiative three weeks back with 20-25 volunteers and now more than 160 volunteers have joined us in helping the needy by delivering them essentials and medicines. Majority of the volunworking professionals who are volunteering us in their free time before and post working hours."

# Wild cats pair rescued in T'gana poultry farm

cumulative number of deaths results of 1,396 samples were

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, poul-

try 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 last-ed 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.

T'gana records 3,816 new cases, 27 deaths per cent. So far, a total of 152 from Kothagudem, 658

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

1,40,61,725 Covid-19 tests have from areas under GHMC, 135 Between Saturday and been conducted in the State out from Jagtiyal, 54 from Jangaon, of which 5,28,823 have tested 76 from Jayashankar Bhupal-Gadwal, 25 from Kamareddy, 152 from Karimnagar, 151 from Khammam and 17 from Komaram Bheem Asifabad.



the lanes and bylanes of the Old City of Hyderabad, to make sure that the lockdown norms are followed strictly apparently causing curiosity among children who watched the rare sight through half-opened windows of their houses. The purpose of the mounted patrol is to evoke a sense of

confidence among people and let them know that police are with people, come what may.



### **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 suf-fered severe injuries in the road accident in Detroit on Saturday, breathed his last while being shifting to hos-

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

### **DUGGU RAGHU** HYDERABAD Citing lockdown as the reason, TPCC working president and

Malkajgiri 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 e 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.

Revanth Reddy, police locked in wordy duel

ing 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. Irated 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

wordy duel between the MP and the police for over halfand-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 wresting Dubbak seat from ruling TRS in November and subsequent huge gains in GHMC, the saferon party failed to keep the fron 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

Indrakaran directs

officials to ensure

strict enforcement

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

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

The Minister stated that

at controlling the disease.

.300 tests were being he

itive for Covid.

the district every day and

medical kits were being given to those who were tested pos-

PNS MANCHERIAL

public.

Sunday.



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 olls 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

sumed 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; deeprooted Congress is not a pushover in Telangana. And now, the possibility of Etela 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

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

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 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 land sharks managed to obtain proceedings from Tahsildar in 2019 with the help of daughters. Gaddam Sudhakar and daugh-Kondaiah's Kondaiah's son died in 1994, ters of Kondaiah. When while his wife passed away in 2006. Kondaiah died in 2009. applied under Right to information Act seeking relevant land records, there was no proper reply. When a petition Nobody applied for inheritance, which should be done in one year or two years. was filed in court bringing it to Moreover, revenue authorities its notice, the court asked have no power to issue inher-One-Town Police station to itance to surrendered lands. probe into it, but the police did For over 10 years, nobody not register a case in spite of looked towards the land," the court's direction. Mahender BJP leader alleged and stated Reddy said that a case was regthat the officials received kickistered with Human Rights backs in the whole episode. Commission. He also filed a 'Under survey number case with Lok Ayukta. He said

that notices were received in 724/D, the land was registered in the name of Minister the two cases. and land sharks' benami hold-Similarly, illegal construction is going on in the burial grounds allegedly with the ers Mohammad Abul Fazul Zulfikar Ali, Parvez Khan, Feroze Khan, Qhalid Khan by support of the Civil Supplies Irukulla Anjani and her hus-Minister, he said.

### 'Black fungus' case detected in Karimnagar

**PNS** ■ KARIMNAGAR

Black fungus, the new scourge, is scaring the daylights 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 Malyala 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 the

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

# 'Action against black marketing of Remedisivir'

PNS SANGAREDDY

District Collector Hanumantha of virus lockdown 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. Forest Minister Indrakaran Reddy instructed the district officials to strictly imple-The patients are being given ment the lockdown that is the drug free of cost in meant for the welfare of the 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

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.

sons 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

waters at the procurement cen-

tres as the weather forecast pre-

dicted rains in the next two or

In a statement issued here on

Sunday, the Collector asked all

Revenue Divisional Officers,

Officers, agriculture officials,

who are cluster in-charges, in

the district to take precaution-

ary measures to prevent rains

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

three days.

He asked the people to hospitals like putting them on inform details of such per-oxygen, administering 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.

# Satyavathi Rathod leads Corona awareness drive

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.



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

The principal secretary of Janardhan Reddy, IAS permitted to use Rytu Vedikas to store

harvested paddy, the Collector

said and asked farmers to

scope for showers lashing the district and adopt suitable pre-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 cles to transport paddy to rice mills. The RDOs should allot vehicles to cluster in-charges depending on the demand.

# **AFTER EFFECTS** Rains lashed several parts of Telangana on Sunday. The downpour was witnessed in Nampally, Abids, Kothi, Basheerbagh, Khairatabad and other parts of Hyderabad. The rains led to waterlogging in parts

of the state capital

### 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

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 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

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 lead-ership 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 EatelaRajender 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 Chandrasekhar Rao did not take steps to add Covid to Arogyasri and implement Ayushman Bharat which

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

"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.

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.

He added that Remdisivir 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

### 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.

# Heavy rains in Kerala; orange alert issued

The water level in many dams across Kerala showed a rising trend on Sunday even as cyclone Tauktae moved away from the state's coast after wreaking havoc.

Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued orange alerts --a warning indicating heavy to very heavy rain-- on Sunday in three districts-Ernakulam, Idukki and Malappuram.

The catchment areas of many dams in the central Kerala districts have reported heavy rains. prompting the authorities to sound alert warnings before upping their shutters.

The Thrissur district administration said spillway shutters of the Peringalkuthu dam will be opened if the water level crosses the permitted limit of 419.41 metres.

In a statement, the administration has urged the people living on the banks of Chalakudy river to be cautious. Shutters of Malankara dam in Idukki district will be opened on Sunday, as the water level has increased, the district authorities said.

The administration has directed those people living on the banks of Thodupuzha river, Muvattupuzha river and their tributaries to be cautious.

In the coastal areas, high tidal waves continued to wreak havoc.

Hundreds of families living in coastal areas and low lying reaction teams in the coastal vil-



### K'taka CM takes stock of situation

Bengaluru: With Cyclone Tauktae wreaking havoc in the coastal districts of the state, Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Sunday asked district in-charge Ministers and Deputy Commissioners to visit affected areas and carry out rescue and relief works. Yediyurappa on Sunday called Ministers incharge of coastal districts and Deputy Commissioners there and took stock of the situation there, his

office said in a statement. It said,

the chief minister asked them to

works in the areas affected by the cyclone which has come amidst the COVID pandemic. The Chief Minister has directed the officials to call the Ministers concerned or him directly if in need of any emergency assistance from the state government, it added. According to the Karnataka Disaster Management Authority heavy to extremely heavy rainfall was observed over the state mainly, in coastal and Malnad districts during last night.

visit and carry out relief and rescue

lage of Chellanam in Ernakulam areas of the state have been shifted to relief camps. district, which was heavily hit by Indian Navy on Sunday tidal waves. deployed its diving and quick

The teams, braving harsh weather conditions, undertook

### One dead, six missing as tug boat capsizes

MANGALURU: One person died and six others were missing after their tug boat that was assisting a ship capsized 10 nautical miles of the coast here. Nine people were on the boat that left New Mangalore Port on Friday to carry out maintenance work at the single point mooring facility, which is located 17 km from the port. The boat was caught in the rough seas in adverse weather conditions and cansized while they were returning to the shore on Saturday police sources said. The body of one crew member was found near Kaup beach in Udupi district, while two others were rescued. A search is on for the rest of the crew members, police sources said. The damaged boat was found at Katipatna near Padubidri heach in Uduni district

rescue and rehabilitation of people who got trapped in

They were shifted to a relief camp at St Mary's High School in Chellanam, a Navy official has said. Besides Chellanam in Ernakulam district, rough sea and high tidal waves had havoc

### All but 19 fishing boats return to ports in Maha, Gujarat

**NEW DELHI:** With Cyclone Tauktae fast approaching the Gujarat coast, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on Sunday said that all fishing boats, except 18 in Maharashtra and one in Gujarat, have reached their harbours or taken shelter at nearby ports. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Cyclone Tauktae has intensified into a "very severe cvclonic storm" and is very likely to reach the Gujarat coast in the evening hours of May 17 and cross it between Porbandar and Mahuva in Bhavnagar district around the early morning of May 18. "Pre-emptive measures in full swing for Maharashtra & Gujarat. Barring 18 boats from Maharashtra and one boat from Gujarat, all boats have either returned harbour or taken shelter in nearby ports," the ICG said on Twitter. The IMD said squallywind with speed reaching 40-50

Kaipamangalam, Chavakkad and Kodungallur in Thrissur, Pallithura` Thiruvananthapuram, Thrikkannapuzha in Alappuzha and Beypore and Koyilandy in

Kozhikode districts. Hundreds of houses were damaged in coastal belts across the state as sea water seeped in

According to the state government, at least nine districts have been severely affected by the sea incursion.

kmph gusting to 60 kmph is like-

ly over the northeast Arabian Sea

and along and off south Gujarat

and Daman and Diu coasts from

The IMD has also issued a yellow

alert for the coasts of Gujarat

Warning Division of the IMD, by

expected to increase to 150-160

kilometres per hour, gusting up

reaching 70-80 kmph gusting to

90 kmph is likely along and off

adjoining Karnataka coasts, and

40-50 kmph gusting to 60 kmph

Maharashtra coast on May 16. It

kmph gusting to 85 kmph along

is likely to increase to 65-75

and off the north Maharashtra

morning of May 18, the IMD

coast from May 17 till the

following high waves.

south Maharashtra-Goa and

along and off the north

Sunday morning

and Diu and Daman

According to the Cyclone

May 18, the wind speed is

to 175 kmph. Wind speed

A large number of people were shifted to relief camps in various districts, arranged in adherence to COVID-19 proto-

### Sonia condoles MP Rajeev Satav's demise

PNS NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Sunday condoled the demise of party MP Rajeev Satav and described him as a rising star of the party known for his unfailing dedication and sincerity.

In her condolence message,

Gandhi said she is deeply pained by the tragic loss of the party leader, "who was a trust-ed colleague and a friend to all of us".

She said it is also a person-

al loss to her.
"Rajeev Satav was only 46 years old yet he rose from the grassroots to holding many responsibilities in a short time due to his unfailing dedication. sincerity and hard work," she

Gandhi said Satav served as President of the Indian Youth Congress, AICC secretary and In-charge of the state of

'As Member of the Lok Sabha, he championed people's issues and fought for the ideals of the constitution.

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya

Singh on Sunday said an injection

some COVID-19 patients as well as

those who had recovered from

the infection, was not available in

letter to Chief Minister Shivraj Singh

Chouhan, the Rajya Sabha MP said

people were in distress due to the

shops in Madhya Pradesh. In a

to treat Mucormycosis, a rare and dangerous fungal infection

which has been found in

V-P condoles Congress leader's death New Delhi: Vice- President M

Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday expressed shock at the death of Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Rajeev Satav due of post-COVID complications, saying he was a dynamic parlia-mentarian deeply comm-itted to serving the people. Satav died on Sunday morning due to postcoronavirus complications in Pune. He was undergoing treatment at a private hospital in the city in Maharashtra after testing COVID-19 positive last month and was on ventilator support. After recovering from the coronavirus infection, he was diagnosed with the cytomegalovirus and his condition became critical. "I am deeply shocked by the untimely demise of Rajya Sabha member, Rajiv Satav due to COVID-related

complications

**INDIA CORNER** 

Digvijaya writes to MP CM over

key mucormycosis injection

# First Oxygen Express arrives in Kerala

An Oxygen Express train carrying 118 metric tonnes of medical oxygen arrived here from Odisha in the wee hours on Sunday, official sources said here.

"The first #OxygenExpress to Kerala has reached Ernakulam from Kalinganagar with medical Oxygen for COVID-19 patients in the State," Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said in a tweet.

Sources said the medical oxygen load was meant for Delhi but it was diverted to Kerala after requirement in the national capital has dipped.

The train carrying oxygen reached the Vallarpadam terminal here at 1.45 AM.

Trucks carrying oxygen will



completing the process of decanting from containers to tankers, they said.

The Oxygen Express train reached Kerala, two days after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayanwrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting him to allocate 450 MT oxygen as the state Trucks carrying oxygen will leave for various districts after was witnessing an increase in the number of patients who require critical care, including oxygen support.

As the State government will not be able to manage the oxygen demand without assistance from the Central government, it is requested that Kerala's daily oxygen allocation may be immediately enhanced to 450 MT," . Vijayan had said in his letter

### Vet doctors told to join Covid fight in rural areas

PNS HISAR

Hisar's civil surgeon has sought roping in the services of veterinary doctors in the anti-Covid fight in rural areas of the district. Civil Surgeon, Dr Ratna Bharti, on Sunday said she has requested the district administration for availing

tors in rural areas. On what would be the nature of duties of veterinary doctors, Dr Bharti said their services could be utilised for things like keeping records of patients in isolation centres being set

services of veterinary doc-

They can also be put on other Covid-related duties as deemed fit by the administration, she added.

She said the veterinary duty in the villages where they are already posted in government hospitals.

# PM Modi speaks to four CMs on COVID-19 situation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday spoke to the chief ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Puducherry on the COVID-19 situation in the states and the union territory, government sources said.

Modi has been regularly speaking to chief ministers to take stock of the pandemic's situation in states and union territories. With 3.11 lakh fresh coro-

navirus infections, India saw the lowest rise in daily COVID-19 cases after a gap of 25 days, while the death toll rose to 2,70,284 with 4,077 new fatalities, according to the nion Health Minist updated on Sunday.

The active cases have reduced to 36,18,458 com- the data stated.



prising 14.66 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has improved to 84.25 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The number of people who have recuperated from the while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.09 per cent,

### against those involved in medicine black-marketing and ensure people needing Amphotericin get it in time. 26 new Covid cases push Andamans' tally to 6,568

former MP CM asked Chouhan to take strict action

unavailability of Amphotericin injections that are used to treat

unavailability of Amphotericin gives rise to doubts whether it too is

being black-marketed like Remdesivir, a key medicine in COVID-19

infection was spreading fast, with more than 70 cases reported in

capital Bhopal alone, of which 23 are in Hamidia Hospital here. The

treatment. Singh, in his letter to the CM, said the black fungus

Mucormycosis, also known as black fungus. Singh said the

The union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands reported 26 new COVID-19 cases, pushing the tally to 6,568, a health department official said on Sunday. All the new cases in the archipelago were detected during contact tracing, the official

was seen hovering along

said. The COVID-19 death toll in the union territory

remained at 85 as no fresh fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, he said. Forty-two more people were cured of the disease during the period, taking the total number of recoveries in the archipelago to 6,267. The union territory now has 216 active COVID-19 cases of which 209 are in South Andaman district and seven in North and Middle Andaman district. The Nicobar district has no active COVID-19 case at present, the official said. The Andaman and Nicobar administration has so far tested 3,79,096 samples for COVID-19, and the positivity rate is 1.73 per cent.

Suspected Pakistani drone

spotted along IB in Jammu

### 15-day lockdown comes into force in West Bengal

PNS KOLKATA

Streets were largely empty in the metropolis and elsewhere in West Bengal on Sunday as the 15-day COVID 19-induced lockdown came into effect in the state, with just a few vehicles seen ferrying essential items during the

Buses and other passenger vehicles stayed off the roads, and shops selling non-essential items had shutters down, in accordance with the curbs imposed by the government as part of the lockdown.

Police officers deployed in the city's nooks andcorners intercepted some of the vehicles that plied on the roads to check their papers before allowing them to pro-

A handful of people were seen waiting for their turn outside grocery shops, while some queued up next to vegetable and fish stalls at local market places early in the day.

The state administration has allowed sale of essential items for three hours amid the shutdown - 7 am to 10 pm. A senior police officer here said necessary measures were being taken to generate awareness on the lockdown norms, and action would be taken against those flouting the rules.

In several bazars in the city and its outskirts -- such as Hatibagan, Gariahat and Sodpur -- customers, however, did not maintain physical distance and many vendors were spotted without masks.

Some hawkers who had their shops open beyond 10 am were forced to close down by the police.

### 177 fresh Covid cases, two die in Ladakh

PNS LEH

Ladakh's COVID-19 tally mounted to 16,333 with 177 fresh cases while the death toll climbed to 165 as two more people succumbed to the viral disease in the union territory, officials said on Sunday.

Of the latest deaths, one

each was reported from Leh and Kargil districts, they said. So far, Leh has reported 119 deaths and Kargil 46. Leh reported 174 of the fresh cases and Kargil three, the officials said. They said that the number of active cases in Ladakh stands at 1,549 -- 1,260 in Leh and 289 in Kargil. The officials said as many as 181 COVID-19 patients -- 165 in Leh and 16 in Kargil -- were discharged the previous day after their

### Maha CM asks family docs to join fight against Covid He said family physicians can evaluate the COVID-19

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday appealed to doctors who serve as family physicians to join the state's fight against COVID-19 and advise their patients under home isolation about the right treatment protocols. During a virtual interac-tion with private medical

practitioners and members of the state COVID-19 task

force, Thackeray said patients

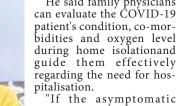
trust their family doctors

more than anyone else.

"The treatment protocols of COVID-19 patients in hom isolation can be managed more effectively if their family physicians join the

battle against the viral infec-

tion," the chief minister said.



"If the asymptomatic patients in home isolation are treated effectively, it would help reduce the COVID-19 mortality rate," he said.

He said family doctors should also take into account the increasing sugar level of COVID-19 patients and how it can be restricted.

### the International Border (IB) here, prompting security forces to launch a massive search operation to check if it had dropped anything inside the Indian territory, officials said on Sunday. However, nothing suspicious was found during the search operation, they said This comes two days after a Pakistani drone dropped an AK-47 rifle,

a pistol and some ammunition along the IB in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir. The suspected Pakistani drone was seen hovering in Kanachak sector here late on Saturday night. Some residents saw a streak of yellow light in the skies for quite some time before it vanished in the darkness, officials said. A search, which began at 5:30 am on Sunday, was carried out by joint teams of Army, Border Security Force (BSF) and police in a vast area between Panch Talli and Laliyal, about 1,500 meters from the IB, they said.

# Voluntary lockdown helps tribals beat Covid

PNS IDUKKI(KER)

Confining himself to his forest hamlet isolating from the outside world seems to be a non-issue for Rajesh, a tribal youth living in Oonjampara, a settlement located over five

kms away from Marayur here. If anyone asks if he is not missing his frequent trips to the nearby town these days, he has a clear but sure answer: This isolation is for our wellbeing only...to keep this disease

away. Isn't it?" This wisdom has helped a section of forest dwellers in this hill district tokeep COVID-19 at bay in their hamlets, at a time when the entire country is reeling under its second

Long before the government clamped lockdown officially, they were confined to their fringe hamlets isolating themselves to ensure that no one among them got infected. They come out of the shelter of forests only rarely to col-

food and medicines. They were also not hesitant to request the outsiders including police and health workers to ensure that they are not carriers

lect essential articles, baby

of the virus while visiting them. Edamalakkudy, the first tribal panchayat of the state located about 30 kms away from the tourist town Munnar here, is the only panchayat in the southern state now where there is zero positive case, thanks to the self isola-

A habitation of Muthuvan community, around 3,000 people, belonging to over 750 families are living in more than 25

settlements in this village. Located inside the Munnar forest division, the remote hamlet, having no proper road or



other connectivity, has now become a model for the entire world outside to emulate in their fight against the pandem-

Besides Edamalakkudy, the inhabitants of Koodalkattukudy, a tribal ward

in Marayur panchayat, have also succeeded in keeping their settlements COVID free so far through self-isolation.

Located about five kms away from Marayur, there are over 1,300 tribals, belonging to 500 families of Muthuvan and Hill Pulaya community, living in 9 settlements in this panchayat

If oorukoottam', the tribal council, of Edamalakkudyhad decided to adopt self-isolation when the first wave of COVID-19 hit the country, the dwellers of Koodalkattukudy isolated themselves from the outside world from the beginning of this April.

Health and Forest department officials are constantly monitoring the situations and conducting periodic health checks in these settlements. Twenty-five-year old Rajesh, belonging to Oonjampara settlement ofKoodalkattukudy, said everyone, cutting across all age groups, are diligently obeying the directives of the tribal

council to follow self-isolation. He said he concentrated more on farming, the major occupation of dwellers of his settlement, during the lockdown period and he never felt that the self-

isolation was boring.
"We go down (the hills) once in every week, most often Saturdays, to collect baby food, medicines and other essential articles. Isolating from the outside world has never made me sad. We are happy with our farming and all. If everything we want is around, why should

we go out," he told P T I. Forest officials also help them get essential articles during the time of emergencies.

Tapioca, ginger and beans were the most frequent crops cultivated in the forest-fringe farms, the tribal youth added.

Marayur forest range officer, M G Vinod Kumar said his department was giving all support to the efforts of the inhabitants of Koodalkattukudy to keep their settlements free of the disease.

"Self-isolation is the mantra that has helped these tribesmen to keep the virus infection at bay. All government departments including the forest department are extending every possible support to them for this," he said

### Delhi govt deploys 4-member team to answer distress calls

\_he Delhi government has deployed staff from its Department of Social Welfare to attend to distress calls and other queries from senior citizens impacted by the pandemic A team of four officials has been sent to the office of the divisional commissioner to support helpline



number 1077 that is run under the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), the department said in an official order. Section officer G C Meena, senior assistant Kumar Gandharva, welfare officers Kuldeep Saini and Vijay have been deployed for the task, it said. "These officials will also coordinate with HelpAge India, Qutub Institutional Area to utilise the manpower engaged for the new elderly helpline for which the Department of Social Welfare has entered into an MoU with HelpAge India as a project supported by the Ministry of Social Justice and the National Institute of Social Defence," the order stated. The duties of these officials will involve attending telephone calls from senior citizens, providing guidance regarding the online process of applying for senior citizen pension and answering queries pertaining to the

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- PAPER WITH PASSION

# **Keep going**

Despite reverses, the nation needs to keep reminding of the goal ahead: Keep ourselves healthy

n April 19, at a virtual event organised by the All India Management Association, Foreign Minister S Jaishankar fielded a question from industrialist Sunil Munjal about India exporting or donating vaccines without first satisfying the domestic demand. The Minister said: "So ask yourself this question — can I go around and say 'guys, keep your supply chains flowing towards me and, by the way, the end product of the supply chain I am asking you raw material for — vaccine — but I am not going to give you the vaccine'. If you get into this, why are you exporting at all; then someone else will ask why am I exporting to India and that is so shortsighted and only really irresponsible, really non-serious people will make that argu-



ment and, by the way, there are some around as you would have noticed." What he did not tell Munjal was that the vaccine doses donated by India, that is, given free to several foreign countries, were only 10.75 million out of a total 66.37 million doses shown as "Made-in-India vaccine supplies" on the Ministry of External Affairs website. A substantial part of it, 35.79 million doses to be precise, are commercial and licensing liabilities of the two vaccine manufacturers, the Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech. Another 19.86 million doses are vaccines sent abroad because of the agreement the manufacturers had signed to obtain raw mate-

rials for producing the vaccines.

The last two types of supplies were tagged along with the free doses supplied. The vaccine diplomacy of New Delhi, called "Vaccine Maitri", began on January 21 and lasted till April 16. In this period, India had supplied abroad all the vaccine it possibly could and the rationale for this comes from no less a person than Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. At the inaugural Raisina Dialogue on April 13, he said: "...this year, despite many constraints, we have supplied vaccine to over 80 countries. We know that the supplies have been modest. We know that the demands are huge. We know that it will be a long time before the entire humanity can be vaccinated. At the same time, we also know that hope matters." During this period, doses were sent to 95 countries across the world. Now comes the part where the Government did not do what it was supposed to do during this period of "Maitri". On May 11, the cumulative doses given to Indians stood at 17.51 crore and no more orders were placed in this period even though shortages were being reported. In early May, the Government said it was still to receive 23 million doses from its previous order and placed fresh orders of around 160 million doses. These orders, for May, June and July, are supposed to be met by July. The manufacturers have their own compulsions meeting the orders in time and the vaccination drive awaits vaccines, free or paid for, in the meantime.



The faithful gather at St Peter's Square at the Vatican

# **Too young?**

The Myanmarese people, most of them born after Suu Kyi came into the frame, are kicking up dust

he younger generation is leading the fight against oppression and exploitation around the world. Be it the students of Hong Kong or the youth of Myanmar, they are out to defend their democratic right at the cost of their lives. Ever since the Myanmar Army seized power in February this year, it unleashed a regime of terror. But the terror has not intimidated the young Myanmar. Thousands of people, mostly young, have been protesting and demanding the restoration of democracy. More than 770 civilians had been killed and over 3,738 detained. Yet the morale of the protestors is as high as ever.



As they say, democracy dies in the darkness; the young ones are keeping the torch lit. And they are doing it in style by making good use of social media to tell the world what is happening in Myanmar. They are finding ingenious ways to thwart the might of the State and military. Anti-coup protesters are exploiting the military's patriarchal values to their advantage. The Myanmarese Army is rather conservative and ill-trained to deal with civil disobedience. Or, is it?

Yes, true that they would not go under the women's clothesline as it brings in bad omen. The protestors would circle their protest site by wires and hang women's clothes

as protection. The Army may have bullets but they have bottles filled with petrol to keep them at the bay. Of course, it is not enough, but it has kept their fight going; it works. The social media campaigns are telling the world about the Army's wrongdoings. They post everything, their atrocities, and highhandedness. They have already won the moral high ground. But young Myanmar is not only fighting the army for restoration of democracy alone, it is also fighting a stagnant social system that is sexist and oppressive. mired in superstitions and dogmas. Generation Z typically less than 25 years of age is also working for a more fair, inclusive future. Myanmar is Southeast Asia's most traditional society. It has an archaic family structure, respect for authority, and gender inequality. Spousal rape and domestic violence are still legal and pervasive in Myanmar. Yet Myanmar's Generation Z activists are defying many of the social norms with their protests and taking down gender stereotypes. Every nation must fight its own evils and that is perhaps what is happening in Myanmar today. It is as much a fight against the Army as it is against the social disorder that has not been challenged for centuries.

# The sinking of a paper boat



In these pandemic times, do we remember that we had a time filled with the zest for life, ambitions and hope? Where is it now?

t was the summer of the 71. Agra, my hometown, was flooded. Our house, on a higher ground, was a bit less affected; nevertheless, water had entered the ground floor and we were perched on the top. As the rescue boats went by, we children were busy floating paper boats as playthings. They were, though inanimate, like our aspirations and thoughts. The boats, of course, couldn't do a long course. But our imagination did. Those days we children had so much to do, so much to learn from the life around us that there was never a dull moment. Indeed!, for the children who spent their childhood around 50 years back, they had a childhood quite different from the current crop.
Innocence! That's was all we

had. The world around us was our playground. It was all real; there was nothing virtual about it. Yes, we children knew so little about everything else that was not in our immediate vicinity. But that was fun, exploring on our own and enjoying every bit of it. Unlike now, the phones were unheard of. We had wired phones instead, which we made with a thread and two matchbox-

But the connections they provided were pretty strong. The parents at that time were different, too. They hardly cared what the child studied at the school unless a complaint from the school came in. They would often forget the standard in which their child studied. The only day the father would come into the picture was when you got your annual report card.

And his only concern was that if the child was promoted to the next class. Else, the eartwisting took place. That was more or less summed the early education. Playing I Spy or Hit&Run was the best pass time. Children's extracurricular activities involved spreading papads and chips in the sun. The packaged chips would come much later. Eating out meant having golgappas at the street vendor. Of course, the kulfiwala occasionally announced his arrival with a



the merry-go-round and the giant wheel. It made us dizzy but then enjoyment doesn't come cheap. Those were the years of innocence and ignorance alike. As we grew up, we realised how little we knew about anything, yet we had learned so many lessons of life that stay with us forever. The parents did not care about the studies of their children; they cared about their health and so saw to it that the children ate

The elderly were no pariah either. The granny would tell endless ghost stories and

everything cooked at home.

The kids, too, contributed to

the household chores willing-

ly, or unwillingly in my case,

but learned that anyway.

thing that we looked forward

to. The charm, of course, was



THOSE WERE THE YEARS OF INNOCENCE AND IGNORANCE ALIKE. AS WE GREW UP, WE REALISED HOW LITTLE WE KNEW ABOUT ANYTHING; YET WE HAD LEARNED SO MANY LESSONS OF LIFE THAT STAY WITH US FOREVER. THE PARENTS DID NOT CARE ABOUT THE STUDIES OF THEIR CHILDREN; THEY CARED ABOUT THEIR

we believed them all. For us, there was a ghost on every peepal tree, and the djinns, churails and dayans were watching us when we returned late. Caring for them came naturally, partly out of affection and partly out of greed for stories and money that the parents refused. There was a close bonding with them. They became part of you.

Now that when I see my kids growing, I realise the children and their childhood have undergone a sea change. They are informed but not innocent. They can get you the information you might have not known till your graduation. They don't play with matchboxes or waste time decorating Janmashtami models. They are always with their gadgets. They play with them or, rather, live with them. Life has turned virtual. It is a digital degeneration of sorts where you know a lot yet you are rudderless as the framework that comes with human interaction is missing. The pizza-burger generation is more about flaunting its feat

rather than enjoying it. The pictures of restaurants and places visited on the trip find floating on Instagram and Facebook. They might not see churails and dayans but have demons in their head which tell them to seclude them from the rest. You won't know if your child is at home because he is too much engrossed with the mobile that he needs no one else.

Last year in the monsoon, told my young daughter how we floated paper boats in the puddles. She said that she did not know how to make one. I was excited as she showed some interest. I said, I will make one for you. I made one, gave it to her, and asked her to set it afloat. Fifteen minutes later, she was with her phone again, chatting. I asked whatever happened to the boat she was supposed to play with. "It sank," she said with a flat face and submerged into her phone again.

The writer is a columnist and documentary film-maker. The views expressed are personal.)

### LETTERS TO

### THE AIR INDIA DISINVESTMENT PLAN

Sir Cairn says it remains open to talks with the Government to resolve the dispute, but it is not unusual in legal proceedings of this nature to seek attachment of the alleged assets of the debtor in foreign jurisdictions. Air India operates flights from India to New York, Chicago, Washington DC and other cities in the US. The suit brought by Cairn would seek to seize airplanes or other immovable assets, like sales offices that the carrier operates in some of these locations. As we all know, Air India has long been a loss-making entity and the Government has indicated that it is in an advanced stage of being disinvested with multiple parties having submitted offers, including the Tata Group.

This action against Air India could put a roadblock to that process as the Government was hoping to conclude the sale by September this year. Secondly, this can be seen as yet another setback in a continuing story of the retrospective tax law damaging India's international reputation when it comes to doing business.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

### THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Sir It is a matter of profound sadness that while the world is battling the COVID-19 pandemic, Israel is resorting to aerial bompardment in Gaza, inflicting casualties on the Palestinians. It exemplifies man's inhumanity to man and man-made suffering in this time of a global pestilence. The Israeli air strikes on Gaza have claimed the lives of at least 162 Palestinians, including 41 children. Of particular poignance is the fact that children become the victims of this escalation in violence. Every single death in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a tragedy for which the right-wing dominated, repressive Israeli Government is responsible.

The interception of most of the rockets fired towards Israel by Hamas indicates the difference and disproportion in military power between the two sides. With 'unwavering support' from the Biden

### We are together in it, or not?

HEALTH



**W**e, for the past several days, see that many people have been criticising Modi ji on the Corona issue. If these people can come forward and do some positive work in the interest of our country, that would be more than welcome. After all, what do they get from speaking against Modi? The Opposition also has a limit in democracy and if someone uses it only for their sole benefit, then that too is a travestv

It is the absolute duty of every citizen of India that when calamity occurs, we all must fight together against it. Of course, the Central

Administration, Israel is emboldened to

continue its air offensive "as long as nec-

essary". The issue at the heart of the con-

flict is Israeli occupation of Palestinian

land. It is true that advanced warning and

time to evacuate were given. There are

global protests in support of the people of

Palestine. Let's just hopr for better sense

Sir — This refers to the news report,

'Innumerable bodies float' (May 15).

Bidding farewell to the dead through

funeral rites was one of the earliest signs

of our civilisation. The people wish peace

for the dead through rituals according to

their cultural and religious beliefs, it is a

way of coping with the unknown.

Social bonds are confirmed in the peri-

LET'S NOT NEGLECT THE DECEASED

**G David Milton** | Tamil Nadu

Government must prepare it to deal with the disaster before it becomes a burden on the Centre.

It becomes the duty of every citizen of the country to serve it in this battle, at least at their own level, but do we actually do it? We need to change ourselves. Small efforts, on the part of each one of us, will have to be made. There are many villages in Haryana where small support groups are engaged in serving the people. The administration is also sending them help and they have also made arrangements at their level. Such work is also a unique quote of reflexes and dedication to society. If such support groups are raised above the rural level politics and taking everyone in confidence, then

there should be no solution to any problem. I, as a citizen, request you to do as much as you can. The country is currently facing a major crisis. In this order, many progressive things are being done by the system and the Government. Obviously, there are things unattended. But let's not focus on the negatives. Satyavan Saurabh I Bhiwani

od of mourning through sharing and But what seems unbearable is that people

are being forced to bury bodies in the shallow soil of water banks or let them float away, something partially cremated and sometimes not at all.

It is as though the roots of the society are being torn apart, for the cultural and psychological damage caused by this unprecedented crisis is incalculable. If helpless citizens are unable to accord their loved ones even the minimum dignity in death because, perhaps, no one is around to take the bodies for cremation, or they can't afford the soaring prices of wood or the funeral -profiteers never rest -and have to throw bodies into the river.

> N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

You can reduce your risk for high blood pressure with health lifestyle changes Which society will condone ur actions?

They lost their father who died w being in Govt custody.

> People's Conference chairman — Sajad Lone



We are concerned about the intercommuna violence across

— Joe Biden

**US President** 

Stay safe, wear your masks and get vaccinated as soor as possible and follow all COVID auidelines



- Madhuri Dixit-Nene



We have got a tour against India in mid-September. So, there are a couple of camps Australia bowler — Megan Schutt

Hello there! Missing all my red! With the last entire year being covered in masks, and continuing to do so..missing a bit of



the #redlipstick action

Raveena Tandon

### **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



utual 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 retails 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 hit-ting 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 complacence 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. tries 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-billiondollar 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 downsizingwith 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 bellsfor 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 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 DURING FOR 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



shall be revalatory.

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 Sumar 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 gamein

Covid, national morbidity and mortality data across states in specific time frames are subject to wide fluctuations because transmission of Covid is multifactorialin nature involving the vision of the governmentad thestrict measures it takes to control the pandemic including health facilities. Thus, it shall be naïve to pronounce judgement on the performance of the governance 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 (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 HIVrelated diseases the annual death toll was 5-9 lakh globally and 69,000 for India in 2017. These figures shall not be significantly dif-ferent 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 deaths (3647) compared to USA 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.

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

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

n India at least one in three adults in India have Lhypertension, 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 med-

ication, 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



**MAHATME** 

The author is a

Member of Parliament,

Rajya Sabha

tensives 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 pre-

conditions, particularly hyper-

Dos and don;lts:

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



Indians have dialled E-Sanjeevani, the government's telemedicine platform for a

medical consultation. Avoid consuming excess salt in your food Risk Factors associated

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 discontrol is vital for preserving ease, including stroke, heart health and reducing the risk of these dangerous conditions. attack, heart failure, and

aneurysm. Uncontrolled hypertension may affect eyes; leading to Hypertensive Retinopathy which may lead to irreversible blindness. Keeping blood pressure under

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

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 kid-

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

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 VicePresident (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 higher 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. "Stockspecific 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)

more than one year.

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 pandema 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 county as well as world over for due to the COVID-19," the

official said. CCL which has been "Despite following the protocol of COVID-19 issued by allowed mining activities, has recorded a 112 per cent the government from time to time, many executives as well as non-executives, have been increase in production at 4.84 affected from the COVID-19 million tonne (MT) in April 2021 as against 2.28 MT coal infection. Altogether about 47 employees have lost their lives output in April 2020. due to the deadly virus and

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

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.

# 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

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

### Granules India earmarks capex of Rs 1,000 cr till FY24

Drug firm Granules India has earmarked a capex of around Rs 1,000 crore which it aims to invest over the next three financial years on expansion of operations, according to a top company official.

The Hyderabad-based firm plans to invest on a new manufacturing facility and on expanding production capac-

ities at existing plants.
"During FY22, we expect to spend Rs 400 crore and the rest of the Rs 600 crore is spread over FY23 and FY24,' Granules India Chairman and Managing Director Krishna Prasad Chigurupati said in an analyst call.

### CBIC starts special drive to clear pending GST claims

PNS NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has launched a special drive to clear all pending GST refunds by month-end. The 15-day GST refund

many are undergoing treat-

ment. It is not only the employ-

ees of CCL are affected but

there are cases in which many

family members too became

affected and few of them died

drive is on the lines of an ongoing similar drive organised by the CBIC for refund of customs and duty drawback claims. In an instruction to all Principal Commissioners of Central Tax formations, the CBIC said there is a need to focus on timely disposal of all pending GST refund claims in order to provide immediate relief to business entities, especially MSMEs, in the difficult times of second wave of the Covid pandemic.

"It is hereby instructed that a 'Special GST' Refund Disposal

Drive' will be launched by all Central Tax formations during

the period from 15th May 2021 to 31st May 2021 for processing and disposal of all pending GST refund claims on priority," it said. "It is, however, expected that all Central Tax formations will take up all the pending

GST refund claims for processing on priority and endeavour to dispose them of much earlier than the statutory time limits, preferably before a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of the refund application," the CBIC

### **Windlas Biotech Limited** files draft papers for IPO

indlas 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



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-II.

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

ued companies witnessed a 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 holidaytruncated 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 Eight of the top-10 most val- 11,28,488.10 crore.

Infosys witnessed an eroing 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

# Power consumption grows nearly 19 pc

Power consumption in the country grew by around 19 per cent in the first fortnight of (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,

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 sition of lockdown by the gov ernment 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.

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

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.

# 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



ing as one of the main drivers

while it plans to enter markets

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 ĆFO Bharat Madan

### **SBI to sell 3 NPA accounts for** recovery of over Rs 235 crore

PNS NEW DELHI

The State Bank of India (SBI) will sell three bad accounts to asset reconstruction companies or other financial institutions next month to recover dues of over Rs 235 crore, according to a sales notice.

In terms of the bank's policy on sale of financial assets, in line with regulatory guidelines, SBI said it has placed Heavy Metal and Tubes Ltd, Khare and Tarkunde

Infrastructure Pvt Ltd and Elize International Ltd for sale to recover a total of Rs

235.32 crore. Heavy Metal has outstanding dues of Rs 116.91 crore to the bank, Khare and Tarkunde owes Rs 99.84 crore and Elize International Rs

18.57 crore. The bank has set the reserve prices for these NPA accounts for sale at Rs 27.50 crore, Rs 15 crore and Rs 8

# Gold import jumps to USD 6.3 bn in April

old 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 million (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.

in 2021-22 with Europe serv-

in South East Asia and Brazil

### Covid brings behavioural change in cash usage: Experts now has invariably gone up by 20 per cent to Rs 3,000-4,000 2,939,997 crore, up from Rs

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.

ioural 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

across both rural and urban India," Adashe said. He further said UPI was tak-

ing care of small-ticket transactions with the average ticket size constant at Rs 1,000. Owing to this behavioural shift, daily average transac-

tions 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

management of cash. "This has in turn brought about substantial shift in behavioral patterns among the

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

Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) is an instant interbank in circulation on May 7 was Rs

electronic fund transfer service through mobile phones.

According to the RBI's latest data, the outstanding currency

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.

# ELVACE Pioneer Dack

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> Monday May 17, 2021

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.

ast week, the Uttar

# THE PAWSOME PAIR AND THEIR ADVENTURES

hile biking has become a com-mon scenario these days amongst millenamongst milen-nials, who does-n't love involving their furry companions in the adven-tures of their life? Meet tures of their life? Meet Vamsi Vedam, 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 inspir-ing. Not very long ago, he was performing at a cafe in Hyderabad where adoption drives happen every 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

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 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."

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 packed food. So, I must carry homemade food for her during the

> It is so satisfying that we are of some help to the people during these troubled times," informed Mohini Chaitanya who is a fulltime worker at IKEA Hyderabad and volunteers for TFMC.

"Most of the information that's circulated through WhatsApp is nonsense and unverified! We are

ride. It gets difficult because rural location. It is one of I must make sure the food the major reasons why I doesn't go bad. The next big have not traveled to places thing is calling up places to check if they allow pets. where it takes more than a day to ride." Even most of the metropolitans are not pet-friendly, imagine the scenario

where the

Help Desk

proved helpful, Satyanarayan shares,

with pets, training them to adjust to their surroundings and behave is the most cru-

cial process. Explaining how he trained his companion, Vamsi shares, "The training started at a very young age. She started riding on

When it comes to riding

the bike when she was 29 days old. That's when we adopted her. She would sit in between me and my girl-friend. 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 ent 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

morning and we ride towards the sunrise. We 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 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

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 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

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

ast week, the Uttar Pradesh government announced the establishment of 700 help desks for the welfare of cows! Facing a wave of criticism following the announcement to protect cows in the wake of a pandemic, they were forced to deny the plan.

While in Hyderabad, what began as a need to do something for the ailing in the tech industry is now a full-blown 24×7 responsibility for Satyanarayana Mathala, President of Telangana Facilities reasons. Rumours and fake news have President of Telangana Facilities ruled the app for Management Council. We all know the perception of more than a year WhatsApp groups these days— they are abused as spreaders of misinformation and hate messages. Most WhatsApp groups are a group of IT considered to be a nuisance as people are constantly buzzed with useless messages. But TFMC Corona Help Desk's WhatsApp group is here to change. "It is to help people working in IT industries who are in distress, in panic mode looking for a hospital bed, oxygen, plasma, ambulance serall it can to vices, etc., because the virus is spreading like wildfire. I shared a link with fellow management proand verify, fessionals asking them to volun-teer. Slowly colleagues started volreliable help unteering too. The initiative is codenamed 'Project Sahaya' now. amid the At the moment, it has 200 mempandemic, bers providing services from 9 am bets providing services from 9 and to 6 pm and it gets hard for us to keep a track of emergencies. We are adamant on supervising IT offices in and around Cyberabad, writes The Hyderabad, and Secunderabad in

this noble cause in the city.

Over the last few weeks, the country has witnessed horrific scenes of people dying due to the lack of medication, oxygen supply, hospital beds, etc. There isn't enough place for the dead in crematoriums, graveyards, nor enough wood for pyres! Bodies have been washing up to the banks of the Ganga river in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the last few days, perhaps because of the near impossibility of a proper funeral. Initially, it looked like there was a reduction in both, infections and mortality, but we let our guard down, became complacent, and declared victory against the virus all too early with little regard to scientific advice and without recourse to sufficient and accurate data.

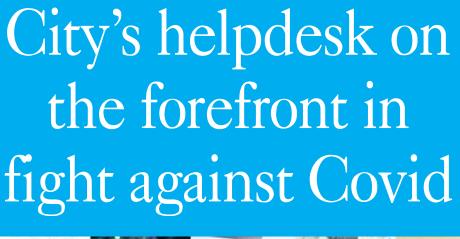
which nearly 6.5 lakh IT employ-

ees work," shared the founder of

"In the last ten days alone, the Help Desk got 637 requests. Out of which, requests for beds for critical patients in the nearest hospital were the highest, including requests for ventilators and NIV. Then there was a need for blood and plasma followed by

now. But today, professionals in the city is doing receive, pass on, Pioneer's **SHIKHA** DUGGAL.

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 indus-tries while they are not restricted.





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 Vigilent 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 responsibili-ties! 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."

the founder. They can be reached on 63093

71600.

concluded



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 pro-gramme 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-depen-

dent 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.

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

or 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 vou 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'xt 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 vou 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 vou 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 Habbit 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 jargonfilled 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 sup-plements 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 vou.

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 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 mod-ern 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. Longterm 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

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 Habbit)

### HOW TO CHOOSE A WORKOUT THAT FITS YOUR NEEDS

he 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**



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

### 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, its 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.

walk or jog while listening to your

favourite music, a dance class or a

around while on the phone, con-

yoga session can be a good starting

point. Also, stay active throughout the

day. Take stairs instead of the lift, walk

tribute 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.

tone up, research shows that strength

or resistance training, and high inten-

sity workouts offer more sustainable

outcomes. More than how much or

Start small and stay consistent.

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 indi-

viduals. It is during this time that the

hormones that also aid weight loss are

at play only during sleep. Not getting

enough sleep can have a detrimental

body repairs and recovers. Essential

that you do exercise everyday.

Make sleep a priority

what you do everyday, what matters is

This is one of the most overlooked

And for more dedicated individuals

looking to burn fat, lose kilos and

### **ARCHIE**



BOOKS

PEOPLE SURE HAVE A A A LIGH!

### **GARFIELD** LAZINESS IS RIGHT. CONTAGIOUS JIM? 0





JIM?.



BOOKS

### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**







CROSSWORD



JUNIOR CROSSWORD 853

### REALITY CHECK



# SPEED BUMP



### SUDOKU

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9	<ul> <li>Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9</li> </ul>										

exactly once.

The sum of all numbers in

### DOWN

2 Replica

7 Schooling

ACROSS

8 Unclean

Our planet

special

14 Close-fitting

6 A two-wheeled vehicle

13 A party for something

17 Money used in France

before the euro 19 Cooked too long

- Number in a quartet
- 3 Throbbing pain
- 4 A mark from a healed cut 5 Car engine repairers

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

# tollywood

**MAHESH'S GENEROURS** GESTURE

rince 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 director Parasuram and is jointly financed by Mythri Movie Makers, 14 Reels Plus, and G. Mahesh Babu Entertainment.



Khiladi to release in theatres only

rife that the film will head to an OTT release. Putting

a full-stop to all these

the film on Sunday

rumours, the makers of

announced that the Mass

Maharaja film will release

'#Khiladi has confirmed,

@idhavish @PenMovies

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

This film will release ONLY IN THEATRES. A New release date will be announced once the situation becomes normal. @DirRameshVarma

only in theatres.

#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.







mkaram Guruji, along with junior artists and TV Artists President Vallabaneni Anil and Secretary Swamy Goud, donated groceries sufficient for one month, to over

laborating 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 Kamal Haasan and Kajal Aggarwal-starrer Indian 2 was just

t is known that Mega Power Star Ram Charan is col-

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

Hindi film starring Ranveer Singh.
Sources close to the film's unit say that the Ram Charanstarrer, 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*.

# KORATALA TO **AKHIL'S RESCUE?**



hil 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

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



ahesh Babu's project with dialogure 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.

200 members of the cine industry.

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 vestervear heroines in all-pow-erful



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 Vaikunthapurramloo.

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 hay 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

rf Iga Swiatek continues play-ing 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 Anastasija 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 Krejcikova 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 move her into the top 10 of the through everything," Swiatek rankings for the first time on

said. "I was super focused today

so I'm really proud of myself."
Swiatek's third career title will

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



### 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

# 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 try-

ing 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 but 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 PTI Olympics. My dad also helps me a lot," she said.

# Kohli best batsman in world: Paine Finally, Hussey India Eves likely to

**PTI** ■ MELBOURNE

 $V^{\mathrm{irat}\,\mathrm{Kohli}\,\mathrm{seems}\,\mathrm{to}\,\mathrm{have}\,\mathrm{left}}$  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 feud with him four years ago, He in the world," the 36-year-old is certainly someone I will



Paine said on the *Gilly and Goss* podcast.

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

always remember," he added. Ínterestingly, last year Paine had said that Kohli is "just "He (Kohli) is challenging to another player" in the Indian team who "doesn't really both-

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

# 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.

# 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



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.

# well as games in South

### **short** passes

### **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 Kanasas 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: Sekap Archer's elbow injury resurfaces**

**PTI** ■ MELBOURNE

 $F^{\rm ormer~Australia~bowling}_{\rm coach~David~Sekar,~who}$ 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.

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

"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 "Cameron's (Bancroft) a it's never going to go away. very nice guy. He's just doing it 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.

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



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.

# 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 Hojberg's through ball behind centre backs Conor Coady and Romain Saiss.

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

Hojberg made it 2-0 just

### after the hour when he followed up Gareth Bale's shot and tapped the ball in after Patricio

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 head-

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 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-vear-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.



# Napoli keep CL hopes alive

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

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 newlycrowned champions Inter Milan on Saturday, with one match left this season. Napoli's final game will be

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

at home against midtable Hellas

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.