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SHILPA SHETTY IN MAHESH-TRIVIKRAM'S **STORY** Page 12

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

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

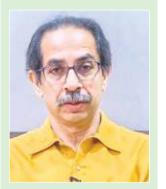
elhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday announced extension of the ongoing lockdown by one more week in the national capital, saying the gains made so far in combating COVID-19 cannot be lost due to any relaxations now. During a visit to the GTB Hospital, he said Delhi has recorded a "good level" of COVID-19 recoveries in the past few days and the number of cases is also reducing "very fast".

"But we do not want the gains made in the past few days to be lost all of a sudden. So, the lockdown is being extended for another week till 5 am on May 24," Kejriwal said.

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

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.

MLA Vamsi donates **O2 cylinders to GGH** 



Maha CM asks family docs to join fight against Covid



Covaxin effective against India, UK strains: Biotech

Panchangam

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

VIJAYAWADA

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Weather

**Temp:** 37/28

Humidity: 61%

Sunrise: 05:43 am

Sunset: 06:41 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated may 16, 2021 5:00 PM

**Varjyam :** 09:53 pm — 11:35 pm

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

any important work)

# Lockdown inevitable?

With more than twenty thousand Covid positive cases being report-ed everyday during the recent past, despite imposing 18 hours curfew for 14 days across Andhra Pradesh, the state government is likely to move ahead with a complete lockdown. As per the fever survey, a measure to control Covid-19, the positivity rate is alarming in the state and has crossed 20 percent.

Despite the strict curfew being imposed in the state, Covid positive cases are spreading like wildfire. Curfew is imposed from 12 noon to 6 am exempting emergency medical care. The present curfew does not appear to contain the spread of Covid as relaxation is given from 6 am to 12 noon and people are coming onto the roads unnecessarily during the relaxation period. There are criticisms that corona is not coming under control with the present curfew.

In the present scenario officials feel that lockdown, as imposed during Covid first wave, is the only way out. It is learned that the authorities have also told CM Jaganmohan Reddy the same and it is believed



that the corona cases will be difficult to control without a complete

The second wave of Covid is turning scary with the increasing number of positive cases of about 20,000 per day besides shortage of medicines, lack of vaccines, inadequate beds in hospitals, short supply of oxygen, exploitation done by private hospitals etc.. All these are the conditions under which people have to live in dire straits.

According to the ranking matrix of Covid-19 situation index and health infrastructure index of a few selected states in the country, AP's health infrastructure index is average and the Covid-19 situation

index is poor.

The AP government has been taking steps to curb the pandemic, however the question now is how far their measures will yield good result as the spread of the virus in the state appears to be very

high. Medical experts are also deeply concerned about the situation here.

The state government was initiating region-wise action depending on local conditions, but that had

on local conditions, but that had not been yielding expected results to contain the spread of infection. Generally, if the positivity rate crosses ten percent it is termed dan-gerous, however, the data revealed that the positivity rate has grossed that the positivity rate has crossed 20 per cent, which is alarming. According to ICMR lockdown is inevitable if the positivity is above 10 percent.

In the 11 districts in AP, the positivity rate was found to be above 20 per cent, with Visakhapatnam, East Godavari and Anantapur districts recording the most positive cases. With this, ICMR suggests imposing complete lockdown instead of curfew in the state for another six to eight weeks.

According to the Fever Survey conducted in AP more rural population seems to be suffering from fevers. Although most people show corona symptoms, the survey seems to find that they do not come forward to get tested. If tests are conducted for everyone the real situation will be more alarming.

### **BENGAL POLL EFFECT**

# Centre changes its attitude towards Telugu states now

SNCN ACHARYULU

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 par-ties 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 treat-ment from the Centre in getting supplies of oxygen, vaccines and other items to fight the pandemic.

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

### Primary contacts refuse to get tested for Covid

In a surprising move by the villagers of U Venkampeta hamlet of Veeraghattam Mandal in the north Andhra district of Srikakulam, the villagers refused to get them tested for Covid infection. Already a few people in the village were tested Covid positive and the medical and health authorities were identifying their primary contact to test for the deadly infection while the villagers refused to come for-

According to Health Supervisor, B Jagadish, U Venkampeta is a hamlet 💜 that has a population of 950 people. About five people were tested positive a few days back and they were isolated from their family members. The health department staff identified about 12

people who were primary contacts of the Covid positive patients. They were told to come and get tested by the health staff, six of them came and got tested while the remaining six said that they could not come for testing.

Jagadish said that they would

conduct a Covid testing camp at Chidimi village, which is close to U Venkampeta and get the primary con-tacts and others tested for Covid infection. M Sarasvathi ANM

said that three women and two men of U Venkampeta hamlet were infected and the family members were not willing to come to the testing centre as it was about 5 kms away and the medical supervisor told

that they would set up a camp for

them at Chidimi village on

### 39,000 people suffer from fever reveals household survey: Singhal

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Anil Kumar Singhal, principal secretary, Medical and Health department, said a household survey to identify people suffering from fever was in full swing across the state and was likely to be completed by the evening of May 17. He asked the Centre to increase the oxygen quota given to AP.

Addressing a press conference on Sunday, Singhal said that Asha workers were identifying people suffering from fever at every home. ANMs would provide medicines and isolation kits to the identified people suffering from fever. The survey was expected to be completed by Monday evening. So far, 39,000 people had been diagnosed with fever across the state. He said if treatment was provided to the infected at the right time, the pressure of corona cases on hospitals would be

reduced. Anil Kumar Singhal, said that the Medical and Health department officials were looking into the mat-



ter of black fungus to find out if any case was reported in the state till date. On the other hand the central government has allotted 1,600 vials to AP to treat black fungus cases and the state government is ready to purchase the vials, said the Principal Secretary. He said that during the past 24

hours, the central government had delivered 600 MT liquid medical oxygen (LMO) to AP and that was 10 MT more than the regular allocation. He said 80 MT of medical oxygen was received from Jamnagar, 60 MT from Jamshedpur and 40 MT

No injuries caused to rebel MP Raju: HC panel

from Durgapur. He said all hospitals across the state have full stocks of oxygen. He asked the central government to further increase the oxygen allocation to AP. Central government officials will hold video conferencing and decide on oxygen allocations

by Monday, he said. During the past 24 hours 94,550 samples were tested and 24,171 turned out to be positive and 101 people succumbed to the deadly virus. On the other hand 15,911 people across the state called 104 call centre in the last 24 hours and availed medical services, said AK Singhal.

### **Tauktae intensifies** into 'very severe cyclonic 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 Sunday.

"It is very likely to move 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.
The IMD has also issued a

yellow alert for the coasts of Gujarat and Diu and Daman. According to the Cyclone Warning Division of the IMD, by May 18, the wind speed is expected to increase to 150-160 kilometres per hour, gusting up to 175



### TODAY Israel air strikes kill 33 Month & Paksham: Vaishakha & Shukla Paksha

**Palestinians** 

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

With no sign of an end to the worst outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence in years the United Nations Security Council was due to meet later on Sunday to discuss the hostilities.

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



### **SNV SUDHIR** The High Court appointed medical committee had said that there were no injuries or wounds on the body of YSRCP rebel MP Kanumuru

Raghurama Krishna Raju and he was in perfect health. Raju was arrested by CID on

sedition charges on Friday evening in Hyderabad. After his bail petition was rejected by a single judge bench of the High Court on Saturday afternoon, Raju through his advocate wrote a letter to the High Court chief justice that he was inflicted injuries by the police on Friday during their custody.

Acting upon the letter, the High Court chief justice had asked a division bench to look into it. The division bench had constituted a medical committee and asked it to submit a report in a sealed cover.

On Sunday High Court judges while hearing the petition of Raju read the report submitted by the



medical committee.

The medical team clearly stated that there were no injuries on the body of Raghurama Krishna Raju and added that he was in perfect

The High Court has ordered to implement the orders of the CID Court which had said Raju should be taken to private Ramesh Hospital for medical tests and examination. However, after the

tests at GGH CID sleuths had taken Raju to Guntur sub jail instead of Ramesh Hospital which was objected by Raju's counsel during the hearing before the High Court bench on Sunday.

The Additional Advocate General (AAG) Ponnaavolu Sudhakar Reddy said that the High Court had issued orders at 6:40 PM on Saturday.

### Kshatriyas disown Raju

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Kshatriya community representatives and leaders from Narsapuram, Palakollu, Bhimavaram, Undi, Tadepalligudem had conducted a meeting on Sunday and unanimously stood on the point not to support YSRCP rebel MP Kanumuru

Raghurama Krishna Raju. The members of the Kshatriya Seva Samiti of Narsapuram found fault with Raghurama Krishna Raju and also condemned his hate speeches. Their condemnation comes in the wake of Raju trying to evoke sympathy from his constituency particularly from his communi-

ed him in the last elections and campaigned for him. But he is disloyal. In the last 15 months of his tenure he did nothing for his constituency as an MP. He has been not cooperating with any of the five MLAs of this region," Guntur Peddiraju, member of Kshatriya Seva Samithi told reporters on Sunday. He added Raju had changed

"We as a community support-

at least three parties in the last few years and his interest lies solely in safeguarding his properties and increasing his wealth.

The members said they were feeling disgusted with the behavior of Raghurama Raju and they were not going to support him in this context.





# 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 so, five units of oxygen making plants in the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant are in operation,

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

### Stay home, stay safe

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

### Babus in loop line elevated after Eatela's exit

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

# India records 3.11 lakh fresh cases of Covid, 4,077 deaths

With 3.11 lakh fresh coronavirus 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 Union Health Ministry data updated

on Sunday. A total of 3,11,170 new cases were reported in a day, taking India's total tally of COVID-19

cases to 2,46,84,077.

A total of 2,95,041 cases were reported in a span of 24 hours on April 21.

The active cases have reduced to 36,18,458 comprising 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 disease surged to 2,07,95,335, while the case fatality rate was

recorded at 1.09 per cent, the data stated.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28,

70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark

on December 19.India crossed the grim milestone of 2 crore on May 4.

According to the ICMR, 31,48,50,143 samples have been tested up to May 15 with 18,32,950 samples being tested on Saturday.

The 4,077 new fatalities include 960 from Maharashtra, 349 from Karnataka, 337 from Delhi, 303 from Tamil Nadu, 281

Punjab, 197 from Uttarakhand, 149 from Rajasthan, 144 each from Haryana and West Bengal, 129 from Chhattisgarh.

A total of 2,70,284 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 80,512 from Maharashtra, 21,434 from Karnataka, 21244 from Delhi, 17,359 from Tamil Nadu, 17,238 from Uttar Pradesh, 13,137 from West Bengal, 11,693 from Punjab 11,590 Chhattisgarh.
The health ministry

stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research, the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

### **Tauktae intensifies into 'very severe...**Continued from Page 1

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. It will gradually increase, becoming gale with speed reaching 150-160 kmph gusting to 175 kmph over the northeast Arabian Sea and along and off Gujarat coast (Porbandar, Junagarh, Gir Somnath, Amreli) and 120-150 kmph gusting to 165 kmph over Devbhoomi Dwarka, Jamnagar, Bhavnagar districts of Gujarat from the early hours

## Centre changes its attitude...

Continued from Page 1

The two states were then facing difficulties in getting from the Centre adequate medical equipment and supplies to fight Covid -19. Moreover, in the bye-elections -- for the Nagarjuna Sagar Assembly seat in Telangana and the Tirupati Lok Sabha seat in Andhra Pradesh -- the BJP lost its deposits. Local BJP leaders of both Telugu states had told the BJP high command that they were going to give a tough fight to the ruling parties in the bye-elections. But the results of the bye- elections had shown the BJP where

they stood in both the Telugu states. In the West Bengal Assembly elections, the BJP leadership thought that their party would come to power. But the BJP has occupied the principal opposition's position and not the position of

the ruling party.

In the light of these developments, the Telugu states' Ministers, 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

### Israel air strikes kill...

Continued from Page 1

The pre-dawn attacks were on houses in the centre of Gaza City, Palestinian health officials said. A spokesman for the Israeli military said he would look into these reports.

Palestinians working to clear rubble from a building wrecked in the air strikes recovered the bodies of a woman and man.

These are moments of horror that no one can describe. Like an earthquake hit the area," said Mahmoud Hmaid, a father of seven who was helping with the rescue

Across the border in the

Daphna, a physician, whose neighborhood has been struck by several rockets, described a feeling of "fear and horror".

The Israeli military said that Hamas, the Islamist group that runs Gaza, and other armed groups have fired more than 2,800 rockets from the enclave in six days.

This was more than half the number fired during 51 days in a 2014 war between Hamas and Israel, the military said, and more intensive even than Hezbollah's bombardment from Lebanon during the 2006 war between Israel and the Iran-backed Shi'ite group.

### Spurt likely in gold market Rayalaseema districts and Nellore. This being The gold market seems to be and \$ 2,799 (per ounce) Covid positive patients. In local markets, standard readying for an unprecedentrespectively. Dollar: Rs.53.04, Kuwaiti gold (24 carats) appreciated by Rs.320 and closed at Rs.48,980 ed tejee (spurt) considering - Yours truly Other economic parame-Dinar: Rs.243.61, Omani Rial: ters remained from moderate Rs.190.41 and UAE Dirham: (per 10 gms). Ornamental gold too followed suit and was to strong. Brent and Nymex

No injuries caused to rebel... Continued from Page 1 Court that the CID court would affidavit by tonight. While the High court had amend the judgment once High Court order convic submitted ination, CRPF security and CID court had ordered the presence of family members, uploading of the judgment Additional Advocate General copy of the High Court online Ponnavolu Sudhakar Reddy and AAG said it would be had informed the court that he

medical team. AAG said that CID Court had ordered to send Raju to Ramesh Hospital at 8:30 PM which meant the orders of CID Court had come after the orders of High Court. This issue has been taken to the notice of CID

himself had arranged the GGH

uploaded online by tonight.

AAG had objected to sending Raju to Ramesh Hospital stating it's like sending him to TDP office. It is not good to send Raju to Ramesh Hospital after a report is submitted by GGH doctors after careful examination.

The High Court has ordered

AAG informed the High regard. CID court will file an

It was a whole day of high a delay in conducting medical tests on YSRCP rebel MP from Kanumuru Narasapur Raghurama Krishna Raju by the court appointed medical committee and submitting the report to the CID sessions court. The CID sessions court in turn submitted the report to the High Court.

The High Court Division Bench had directed the medical board to submit the report along with the video footage of filing of an affidavit in this the tests conducted by 12pm.

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 rel). While Gold MCX about Azerbaijan's invasion of Armenia. These two factors 10 gms), MCX Silver have all the potential to divide closed at Rs.71,080 nto at least two blocks, each one siding one country or the other. If that

During the week ended 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

happens, all markets, includ-

flare up as the global strife

crude closed at US\$ 68.71 and 65.31 (per barrel) respectively, while Crude MCX was stood at Rs.47,677 (per (per kg). Copper MCX closed at Rs.773.25 (per kg). Sensex and ing of course gold, would Nifty 50

closed at **WEEKLY MARKET REVIEW** 48,732.55 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 closed at \$1,222 (per ounce) \$: Rs.56.98, Saudi Riyal: ed in the range of 9-10 tons

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 nurchase gold according to their 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 record-

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

supplies, the government has 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, Abdullah, Mir AlamMandi,

Dilsukhnagar, Kukatpally, Bowenpally and General Bazar witnessed moderate trading.

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.

as cabbage, cauliflower, ribbed 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.

# tale of two verdicts of Madras High

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 Dr.Dhananjay Justice

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 under Art.226 as also the media's right of

reporting and expression, on the other it has upheld the importance of the

**ROUNDUP** 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 what will form the part of the

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

True, as the highest court of the land, the apex court has done what it could be expected to do to douse the fire. Still, it ought to have overtly or covertly at least 'advised' the judges

> other subordinate courts to refrain from using harsh words against a litigant in the open court in course of hearing or trial of a case, because any way such oral observations or outbursts by the presiding

of not only of the High

Courts but also

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 Anuj 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 Purushottam Akshar

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.

### **NIA searches** in TN over **ISIS** social media posts

PNS CHENNAL

The NIA on Sunday carried out searches at four locations in Tamil Nadu's Madurai in connection with a case relating to incriminating Facebook posts by an extremist advocating the ideology of the Islamic State terror group and fundamentalist organisation Hizb-Ut-Tahrir, an official said.

The case pertains to uploading some incriminating posts on Facebook by Mohammad Iqbal, a Madurai resident, who was arrested in December last

In the social media posts, Iqbal, an extremist, advocated the ideology of the ISIS terror group and Hizb-Ut-Tahrir, a fundamentalist organisation, the official of the premier investigation agency said.

zThe posts on the Facebook page titled "Thoonga Vizhigal Rendu is in Kazimar Street" was uploaded by Igbal for denigrating a particular community, the official said.

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# Power consumption may go up in June

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Power utilities are expecting a surge in the electricity consumption across the state in June when compared to last year. In fact, the electricity usage had already gone up in the last fortnight of May.

The average energy consumption during the fortnight i.e; from May 1 to 15 was around 196 MU/day, which is an increase by 15.27 pc. coman increase by 15.37 pc compared to corresponding days in May 2020.

The energy demand in May 2021 is expected to be 190 MU/day with an average increase of seven per cent as against 177 MU/day in May 2020. The demand is low in May 2020 due to Covid induced Lockdown and an increase in energy demand in May 2021 is because industries

are not much impacted this year with Covid conditions compared to last year.

Similarly, as per the estimates of the state energy department the demand in June 2021 is expected to rise by 13 per cent compared to the energy consumption of 167 MU/day in June 2020.

This clearly indicates that the economic activity in the state has picked up compared to last year. "Taking all the precautionary steps in Covid, we will put all-out efforts to provide satisfactory services to all consumers," Energy Secretary Srikant Nagulapalli said during a telephonic review on power

supply position on Sunday. Even as the Covid had hit hard the entire power sector in the country, Andhra Pradesh power utilities have shown significant progress in supplying



quality and reliable power to its electricity consumers with the continuous support of the government. Significantly electricity consumption across the sectors in Andhra Pradesh had surged manifold in the last few

The energy consumption in the first week of May 2021 was 1,399 million units (MU) with the first week of May 2021 was the state government is fully supporting the power sector in the augmentaan increase of 23 per cent as against 1,139 MU in the first week of May 2020 while the national energy consumption increased by 25 per cent. The demand as of May 15 is 188.2 MU as against the expected demand of 200 MU. The reduction of demand of 12 MUon May 15 is due to rains in

We are quite jubilant to have a robust power

all categories of consumers

system in place in meeting the requirements of

the secretary said.

ment is fully supporting the tion of generation capacities, transmission and distribution, renewable energy generation and other advanced technologies. "We are quite jubilant to have the robust power system in place in meeting the requirements of all categories of consumers," he said

- SRIKANT NAGULAPALLI

**Energy Secretary** 

Minister for Energy Balineni Srinivasa Reddy appreciated the efforts of power utilities in meeting the demand and requirements of the consumers,

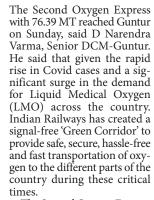
### Second Oxygen Express with medical oxygen reaches Guntur

some parts of the state.

The secretary said that meet-

ing the growing energy demand is absolutely not at all

a constraint for AP power util-



The Second Oxygen Express for Andhra Pradesh was loaded with four containers carrying 76.39 tonnes of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) reached Concor Siding in Guntur on Sunday. It had started from Reliance Rail Terminal, Kanalus in Gujarat on May 14 and travelled a total of 1,854 km and took 31 hrs 30



minutes to reach the destination in Guntur.

The Oxygen Special Express arrived at Pagidipalli in Guntur Railway Division and was placed at Concor Siding for decanting of liquid oxygen. A total of 76.39 tonnes of Liquid Medical Oxygen was decanted. Ram Babu, Senior Divisional Operational

Manager, Narendra Varma, IRTS Senior Commercial Manager, and other officials visited the container depot and monitored the decanting of liquid oxygen. This Oxygen Express is expected to bring relief to Covid patients in the state and strengthen the collective effort in the fight against the Covid pandemic

# cohort. I am sure that with our

Affairs Committee chairman Nadendla Manohar condemned the government for arresting Narsapuram MP Raghurama Krishnam Raju. He said that the Lok Sabha Speaker should take a suo moto cognizance of the case and order an inquiry.

He said that it was not appropriate to misbehave with the MP in the name of

### **Chinarajappa demands CBI** probe into 'custodial torture' of Narsapuram MP

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Naidu seeks Guv's intervention

on YSRCP rebel MP's release

TDP senior leader N Chinarajappa asserted that Narsapuram MP Raghurama Krishnam Raju was being victimised by the YSRCP government for filing a petition in the CBI court seeking cancellation of Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy's bail.

He said the ruling YSRCP Raghurama targeted Krishnam Raju for his courageous remarks against the government. No further proof would be needed other than the third degree methods to say how the YSRCP regime was bent on taking its revenge regardless of the political repercussions, he

In a statement issued here on Sunday, the TDP leader said the government and the Chief Minister would be held responsible if anything happens to the Narsapuram MP. The police were wielding their lathis against the law-abiding citizens instead of maintaining law and order. The rule of law was thrown to the wind under the autocratic rule, he remarked.

Chinarajappa asked what

would be the fate of the common man in the state when an MP was assaulted by the police. It was a fact that Raghurama Raju sustained injuries while in the custody of the CID. The AP CID violated the Covid guidelines by going in large numbers to arrest the MP.

They committed one more serious offence by using third degree methods against Raju. Some police officers were going to any length in order to please the Chief Minister.

Terming it as a disgrace for police force, Chinarajappa asked whether there would be any safety and security for the Opposition parties if they wanted to highlight the failures and misdeeds of the government, he questioned?

court order the police were supposed to get the MP examined at the Government General Hospital, Guntur, and then at Ramesh hospital. This should be done in the presence of his 'Y' category security is given by the Central government. However, the police did

not produce Raju for medical examination at Ramesh Hospital and they shifted him to the Guntur sub-jail. They shifted the MP through the backdoor from the GGH in Guntur without informing his family members and by evading the media.

### Nadendla seeks LS Speaker's intervention

PNS VIJAYAWADA

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Leader of the Opposition N Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday appealed to Governor

Biswa Bushan Harichandan

to intervene in the case of Narsapuram MP K

Narsapuram MP K Raghurama Krishnam Raju,

who was shifted to the Guntur

sub-jail by the AP CID in vio-

In a letter to the Governor,

Naidu stated that the MP's wife

and family members were wor-

ried as there was a grave danger to his life because of the

threat from the YSRCP.

Already, the MP sustained

injuries while in the CID cus-

tody. The court has ordered for sending him to medical exam-

ination at the Ramesh Hospital

in Guntur, but the police defied

Expressing serious concern, the TDP chief, said: "The CID Police of Andhra Pradesh have

illegally arrested Lok Sabha MP K Raghurama Krishnam Raju in Hyderabad on May 14 and he was brought to the CID

Police Station in Guntur. On

the same day, custodial vio-

lence was unleashed on Raju

by five masked men and was

brutally injured. In this regard,

the court has ordered for a

medical report about injuries

sustained by Raju during the

police custody."

Naidu said that as per the

the orders.

lation of court orders.

Jana Sena Party Political

### **Christian JAC leaders welcome YSRCP** rebel MP's arrest

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The members of Andhra Pradesh Christian JAC welcomed the arrest of YSRCP rebel MP from Narsapuram Raghurama Krishnam Raju by the CB-CID. They said that God has listened to their prayers and taught a lesson to Narsapuram MP. AP Christian JAC president Yalamanchali Praveen Kumar alleged that the MP was trying to disturb communal harmony in the

Praveen Kumar in a statement issued here on Sunday said that Raghurama Raju, who was elected as an MP

to create differences among people with his hate speeches. Praveen Kumar said that

from Narsapuram, was trying

Raghurama Raju making unsavoury remarks against Christians, however, when he was brought before a court of law he was talking about the rights and law, which is ridiculous.

He said that the court hould not grant bail and complete the trial immediately. He further stated that those who have been cooperating with the MP so far be identified, punished and the punishment shall be a lesson to others who try to spread commu-

### Govt sanctions ₹15,000 for Covid victims' funeral

PNS VIJAYAWADA

PNS VINUKONDA

MLA Bolla Brahmanayudu

inaugurated a special ward for

the Covid patients at the Covid

Care Centre in Vinukonda,

which was set up with the help of the US-based NGO

Speaking on the occasion,

the MLA lauded Ayesha

Charagulla, founder President

and CEO, Empower and Excel,

USA, and Karanam Kalyan

Krishna Kumar, India Chapter

head, Vijayawada, for their

Empower and Excel.

The government has issued orders sanctioning Rs 15,000 towards funeral charges of those who died of Covid. In ment accorded permission to all the District Collectors. The commissioner of Health & Family Welfare shall release the required funds to the respective District Collectors while the latter shall take necessary action accordingly.

### Tech Biz Incubator launched at SRM University

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Technology Business Incubator of SRM University-AP launched the first venture cohort with 36 selected start-up business ventures in the presence of the special guest of honour from the Loganathan, head of Co-Innovation and Outreach at IIIT Hvderabad.

He thanked the donors for

coming forward to set up beds worth Rs 2 lakh on wit-

nessing the plight of people in

the backward Vinukonda

Empower and Excel volun-

teer Vasireddy Ravichandra

said that their organisation

came forward to sponsor 500

beds across the state and they

are planning to provide 100

beds in the Guntur district and

already handed over 50 beds

to GGH in Vijayawada.

On the occasion, Ramesh Loganathan delivered a lecture on the scope and future of entrepreneurship in India and the



"The entrepreneurial journey should start with identifying the problems in the ecosystem. A reat example can be the face recognition software that started with the idea of capturing student attendance in colleges. Similarly, the budding entrepreneurs should identify such similar problems thorough market research and then prepare the business plan?

Dr Prakash Jadav, associate professor and head of IDEA, opined, "It is exciting to see so many students submitting their all can reach new heights in set-ting up their ventures in the industry." Udayan Bakshi, CEO, SRM TBI & Associate Director speakers and panelists for their efforts to make the SRM TBI

guidance and mentorship, they

cohort launch a grand success. He also highlighted that TBI will not limit to just this batch of students or the SRM University-AP, but shall extend its vision and activities to the entire ecosystem. investigation.

# Covid patients' kin cry foul over hospitals' exorbitant fees

MLA lauds NGO's gesture

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The kith and kin of Covid patients, who admitted their dear ones to private hospitals, alleged that they are being fleeced by the hospital managements by violating the rules framed by the government.

Therefore, officials made surprise raids on Covid Care Hospitals here in the city on Sunday. Minister for Transport Perni Nani, local MLA Krishnaprasad, Collector Imitiaz, JC Siva Shankar and others are part of the team that

inspected the hospitals. Nimra Hospital Ibrahimpatnam is one among them where they paid a visit where some beds are taken over by the government for free under the Aarogyasri.

But, it was alleged that the hospital management was collecting lakhs of rupees from the Covid patients and also not maintaining the records accord-

The issue came to the notice of the government when one of the public representatives' follower had received a huge bill from the hospital management

At the time of the inspection, hospital management was unable to show the requisite documents like duplicate medical bills, which had given to the patients at the time of discharge.

And officials found solid evidence from the patients end about the billing issues in the hospital. This hospital is a reputed one in the city and it had treated patients well in the Covid first wave, but after the transfer of powers from one person to other during the second wave, the hospital reportedly collecting huge bills from patients.

Indeed, local governing bodies in the cities had already appointed an animal husbandry sistant director as a coordinator to the hospital earlier.

But, due to his negligence in doing his work, the hospital management was acting as per its whims and fancies, alleged officials during the inspection.

Not only Nimra Hospital, but there are also so many hospitals in the city that are collecting more money than prescribed by the government.

Recently, a woman in the city posted on social media about the cost of treatment in a local corporate hospital where she was an attendant to a man infected with Covid, and saw paying Rs 7 lakh towards the hospital bill without getting any receipts.
Vigilance officials responded

to the post and assured her to render justice. Indeed Krishna district has 77 Covid Care Hospitals, of which six, are under the control of the govern-

### Work from home facility for women police

PNS AMARAVATI

In the wake of the Corona pandemic, the police department has made it easy for pregnant women to work from home. DGP Gautam Sawang issued orders to all police stattions in the state regarding the facility.

He directed all the police stations in the state to notify the details of pregnant police personnel to the police headquarters in Vijayawada immediately. He ordered officials to make arrangements for women police personnel to work from home. He directed to monitor the health and medical services from the Police Help Desk from time to time and provide appropriate assistance.

'Raghurama enacting drama to avoid punishment' The law will take its own

PNS VIJAYAWADA

course where even an MP can be arrested if he goes against the constitution, opined YSRCP MLA Ambati Rambabu.

Addressing the media here on Sunday, he said that there is no need for the government to ill-treat an MP and with the GGH report making it clear about injuries of MP Raghurama Krishna Raju, the anti-social elements supporting his stand exposed.

Raghurama is only trying to defame the government and took up the drama by accusing that he was assaulted by the police just to avoid jail. Two TDP leaders Atchannaidu and Dhulipalla Narendra were also

none has complained of being assaulted by police unlike Raghurama Raju, he pointed

He said that Raghurama Raju was enacting drama and he has complained about his assault immediately after his bail application was rejected in the High Court.

The MLA said that people are not going to believe either TDP's version or Raghurama's allegations against the YSRCP. as everyone knew that those injuries of Raghurama were due to psoriasis where many are still studying on search

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu is the man behind Raghurama's drama, he said and made it clear that neither



of them can gain political mileage nor damage the government's image. Rambabu demanded that he resign as an MP he has no right to continue as a representative of the the party rules and criticising the government.

The CID had submitted 46 CDs before the court, explaining how the MP had committed treason, also indulging in hate speech targeting some sections of society provoking religious hatred among the public. Being a public representative, he has left out the welfare of people of his constituency and was living in Delhi for 14 months, all the way participating in the debates of TDP pro media channels to accuse the government.

Refuting the TDP's allegations that the government has been trying to eliminate him, Ambati Rambabu questioned what is the necessity for the government to kill an MP in

warned of dire consequences if the TDP leaders continued their vicious propaganda against the government.

Raghurama has violated the 10th schedule of the Constitution by toeing another party line, betraying the party from which he was elected. The MLA alleged that leaving people behind, the MP is only lobbying in Delhi and working under the direction of N Chandrababu Naidu. Right from Tirupati bypoll

to every election, including ZPTC, MPTC, municipal and panchayat polls, Raghurama spoke against the party on which he was elected as an MP in 2019, also inciting the sentiments of people by speaking on caste and religious matters.

## Navy gives fresh lease of life to Covid patients

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Teams from Visakhapatnam Naval Dockyard achieved a breakthrough in repairing two major oxygen plants in Nellore and Sri Kalahasthi bringing a major boost to the oxygen supply in the state during the ongoing oxygen crisis amid Covid second wave.

Based on a request from the government, the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) airlifted the teams of specialists from Naval Dockyard by naval Dornier Aircraft from Visakhapatnam

The teams successfully repaired the oxygen plants on

Sunday by overhauling the compressors and replaced certain adapters and accessories, which were manufactured within Naval Dockyard.

The Krishna Teja oxygen plant in Nellore is a big cryogenic plant capable of charging 400 jumbo type cylinders a day and has been non-functional for the past six years. The naval team undertook the repairs of the plant and managed to achieve the cryogenic temp of minus 186 degrees Celsius and also achieved the requisite output oxygen pres-

sure to charge bottles. The analysis of the output is 98 per cent oxygen, zero per Teams from Visakhapatnam Naval Dockyard repairs two major oxygen plants in Nellore and Sri Kalahasthi near Tirupati

cent carbon monoxide and 0.01 per cent carbon dioxide, meeting the requirements of medical-grade oxygen.

The oxygen plant at Sri Kalahasthi near Tirupati is a big plant-based on VPSA technology and is capable of generating 16,000 litres per minute at five bar (direct feed to lines rather than charging). The

naval team undertook repairs of the plant and achieved the requisite output proved for medical-grade oxygen above 93 per cent, zero per cent carbon monoxide and 0.02 per cent carbon dioxide by carrying out necessary adjustment of column and moisture absorption of the plant.

A specialist team from the Naval Dockyard led by Commander Dipayan worked tirelessly for almost seven days, along with the engineering teams of the Health Department, to complete the task with the cooperation of the Collectors and the admin-



# 39 private hospitals fined ₹1.56 cr in East Godavari

Acting tough on the violations during the second Covid-19 wave, the East Godavari district administration has imposed fines against as many as 39 Covid notified private hospitals for violating govern-ment regulations, besides several other reasons.

District Collector District Collector Muralidhar Reddy enforced a total penalty of Rs 1.54 crore on all the 39 Covid-notified pri-vate hospitals in the district for failing to allocate 50 per cent of beds for Covid treatment under no-cash treatment under under no-cash treatment under Arogyasri and EHS (employees Health Scheme). The hospitals charged more fees against the prescribed rates and violating



scheme. Some hospitals, how-

ever, admitted Covid patients

even without permission.

Acting on the media reports, Collector Muralidhar Reddy

ordered surprise inspections.

The first-ever black fungus case in Andhra Pradesh was reported from Nidadavole in

recovered from Covid 15 days

is swelling progressively with each day. His family members

Some of the private corporate Covid hospitals in the district were allegedly robbing the patients and charged exorbitant prices. They ignored to consider the Arogyasri health

vate hospitals and found many The inspections carried out

by vigilance officers, cluster officers and flying squads found 39 private hospitals in the district notified for Covid treatment to have resorted to malpractices. Each hospital imposed a fine at a rate of Rs 2 lakh to Rs 10 lakh, the Collector said.

The respective private hospitals were ordered to pay the fine to the Arogyasri account within 48 hours. Muralidhara Reddy warned that the private hospitals would be taken over by the government and maintained by its personnel if they repeated to commit irregularities without changing their

First black fungus case

detected in West Godavari

### Dist Collector suspends 2 docs, 2 nurses for negligence

PNS ANANTAPUR

Collector Anantapur Gandham Chadrudu issued orders suspecting two doctors at the Government superspeciality hospital in Anantapur on Sunday for dereliction of duties.

He expressed ire over the negligence on the part of the doctors and their failure to provide better medical services to APMIP project director Subba Rao, who succumbed to the Covid at the hospital. He suspended Dr Sudhakar and Dr Sridhar on the spot. Show-cause notices issued Superintendent Bhaskar and two head nurses. The Collector expressed grief over the death of Subba Rao due



### Be vigilant in Covid treatment, Minister Balineni tells doctors

Minister Balineni Srinivasa Reddy directed the Ongole GGH doctors to be more vigilant and work hard to provide better Covid treatment to the poor in government hospitals.

At an emergency meeting with government doctors and GGH officials at Prakasam Bhavan in Ongole on Sunday, the Minister said steps should be taken to ensure the best medical assistance in the wake of the increase in Covid positive cases in the district during the second wave corona pan-

Minister Balineni asked the government doctors to provide maximum care in treating the corona victims at the GGH. He inquired about the emergency requirements such as oxygen and Remdesivir injections. A nodal officer was appointed at the district level to ensure an uninterrupt-

ed supply of oxygen, he said. The Minister said he would stay here for two months and work on the Covid control in the wake of the surge in the corona cases in the district. He appealed to the people to meet him only for Covid related issues and for other

Joint Collector TS Chetan, Ongole Mayor Gangada Sujata, the nodal officer K Krishna Veni, GGH superintendent D Sriramulu were

Balineni Srinivas Reddy visited the vaccine centre set up at PVR Boys High School where he instructed staff to ensure a smooth vaccination



### SHORT TAKES

### **Ongole MP's sons donate Rs 1 crore to TN CMAF**



**ONGOLE:** Ongole MP Magunta Srinivasula Reddy's sons and young industrialists Magunta Raghava Reddy and S D Rami Reddy announced a donation of Rs 1 crore to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Assistance Fund (CMAF) and handed over the cheque to Chief Minister Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin. Stalin thanked Magunta Srinivasula Reddy and Magunta Raghava Reddy for donating funds for the cause of containing the Covid during critical times. He called upon the people to work together to defeat the Covid pandemic in

### **Speed up new crematorium** works: Minister Anil Kumar



Sunday inspected the new crematorium works going on at an estimated cost of Rs 2 crores at Bodigadi Thota in Nellore. Along with the cials to speed up the work and make it available by month-end. The Minister's visit came close on the heels as people were facing difficulties and standing up in gueue lines with corpses at the crematoriums during the second Covid-19 wave. Leaders Obili Ravichandra. Polam Reddy Venkateshwarlu Reddy, Sankranti Kalyan and others accompa-

### Man slits wife's throat, held

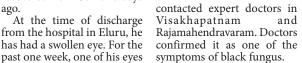


**GUNTUR:** A man allegedly attempted to kill his wife by slicing her throat at Boyapalem village in Yedlapadu mandal under Chilakaluripet constituency. According to the police, the couple Fopoon Ganun (37) and Rita (28) from Orissa were working as daily labourers in a local Ranganaika spinning mill. Fopoon Ganun allegedly slit his wife Rita's throat with a blade on Sunday. Raged by the

petition was also coming to the

incident, the local people tied him to a pole and beat him. Later they handed him over to the police. The police arrested the accused and rushed the injured woman to Chilakaluripet Government Hospital, SI P Rambabu said that Rita's health condition was stable. A case was registered and the investigation was on.

### West Godavari district. District Headquarters Government Hospital said that one of the patients Kolapalli Anjibabu of Nidadavole has had symp-toms of black fungus. Anjibabu



and Rajamahendravaram. Doctors confirmed it as one of the symptoms of black fungus. The doctors say that the fungus is likely to spread to the

eyes, nose and brain. They have made it clear that they have no option except surgically removing one of the eyes, putting his family members under a lot of stress.

### MLA Vamsi donates O<sub>2</sub> cylinders to GGH

PNS GANNAVARAM

Gannavaram Vallabhaneni Vamsi has donated 100 oxygen cylinders to the Government General Hospital which was facing an acute shortage to save the lives of the Covid patients in Vijayawada. As the oxygen shortage in the state was severe, he took the initiative to bring the cylinders in a special vehicle from Hyderabad with his own funds.

The cylinders were handed



The doctors thanked MLA Vamsi for his timely action to

Superintendent on Sunday. leaders Anagani Ravi, Olupalli Mohanaranga, Ramavarappadu Sarpanchi



Venkateswara Rao and GGH EE Purushottam and DE Ramana Rao were present on

# Officials seized a lorry laden with PDS rice at Nachugunta in Unguturu mandal of

### Govt trying to kill my husband, alleges Raju's wife

Narasapuram Raghurama Raju's wife Satyamani Ramadevi alleged that her husband was badly beaten up by the police in the lock-up. Asking the police why they did not follow the Court's order and failed to admit him to the Ramesh Hospital, she alleged that the govern-ment was trying to kill her husband tonight.

She said she was unable to understand what was actually going on.

Contest over next pontiff of Brahmamgari Matham

The accused in the murders were going scot-free and leaders who questioned the government on public issues were put behind the

Meanwhile, Raghuram Krishna Raju was shifted from GGH to Guntur jail.

The police tightened the security at the district jail. Despite the court order to provide proper treatment to him, he was shifted to jail. The prison authorities assigned prisoner number 3468 to Raghurama Raju.

# 'Restore Garuda scheme to help families of priests'

Consultations were going on with the state government to support the poor priests at the state level during the critical times of Covid-19, state president of the Andhra Pradesh Federation and spokesperson of the YSR Congress Party Brahmin Welfare Study Committee Jwalapuram Srikanth said on Sunday.

He said there was a scheme earlier that financial assistance of Rs 10,000 would be given under the Garuda scheme through the Brahmin Corporation if someone in a Brahmin family lost their bread-earner. Due to unknown reasons, It was now

Chairman of the Brahmin Corporation MLA Malladi Vishnu agreed to revive the Garuda scheme to support Brahmin families in difficult circumstances, he said.

On Sunday, he held a zoom video conference with Samakhya representatives from East Godavari district. On this occasion, he said that he had met the Chief Minister, Minister of Endowments and the Principal Secretaries of Revenue asking them to help



Minority Corporation. They promised that funds would be allocated to the Brahmin Corporation and steps would be taken to revive it. Samakhya District Working

Committée representatives Mamillapalli Ayyappa, Cable Ramana, Tejomurthula Murthy, **B**huvanagiri Venkataramana, Korukonda Sitarama Sastry and others explained the severe Covid situation prevailed in the district.

Giving another twist to the

episode, the second wife was

also claiming the position to her

two sons. She said Venkateswara

Swamy had given her a promise

on papers stating her two sons

would be the next seers. The

devotees of the Matham have,

however, ruled out her claim

saying it was ambiguous as both

her children were minors.

### 3 bail pleas to come up for hearing today

**MARTHI SUBRAHMANYAM** VIJAYAWADA

Drawing interest in the political circles, three bail petitions filed by political leaders are coming up for hearing in different courts in one day on Monday. Since all the three bail applications were belonging to political leaders, everyone was waiting to see who would get bail and who would be rejected. The Andhra politics were gaining momentum with internal squabbles and allegations and counter-allegations across the state when the people were struggling for life in hospitals with the second Covid-19 wave. The petition filed by Raghurama Krishnam Raju to cancel the bail issued earlier to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in CBI Court was coming up for a hearing on Monday. Hence, the focus of YSRCP activists and leaders was on the case. Another bail

bench in the AP High Court on Monday filed by former MLA Dhullipala Narendra. He was allegedly arrested on charges of tampering with Sangam Dairy affairs. With this, the Telugu Desam Party focused on him whether Narendra would get bail or not. In the third issue, the bail petition was expected to come for a hearing in the Supreme Court filed by MP Raghurama Krishnamraju, who was arrested on the allegations of hate speech against the government during debates in two Telugu TV channels. Meanwhile, the other parties were also watching closely to see the court orders on the three bail petitions. One should have to wait and see who would be granted bail in the courts today. Whose petition would be cancelled and who would have to spend some more time in jail!

### G GOPIKRISHNA KADAPA The ancient Brahmamgari Matham in Kadapa district was looking for the next descendant as a pontiff as the incumbent seer Veera Bhoga Vasantha Venkateswara Šwamy (76) passed away recently, leaving a puzzle among the devotees who would be the next? Now, it was a matter of a

him in the key post of Matham pontiff. Srinivasa Swamy, the wives Chandravatamma and sixth generation seer of Maruthi Mahalakshmi. The first Brahmamgari Matham and his wife had eight children, while wife had three sons and two daughters and he had demised in the second wife has two children. After the death of his first 1969. After him, according to the wife Chandravatamma 12 years ago, he married Maruti Hindu tradition, Veera Bhoga Vasantha Venkateswara Swamy, Mahalakshmi Singarayakonda of Prakasam the eldest son of their children, had taken over as the pontiff of

debate as to who would succeed

the seventh generation in

September 1969 at the age of 23.

The seventh seer has two

He had faced strong opposition to having second marriage in those days. Now the question is who would descend the Matham after Venkateswara Swamy. A debate was going on among the people of Brahmamgari Matham and also the devotees of Veerabrahmam.

Most of the people living in the Matham area want Venkateswara Swamy's eldest son Venkatadri Swamy to be given the opportunity as a seer. According to Agama Sastra and Hindu tradition, only the eldest



son was eligible for the highest position which comes as an inheritance.

Speaking to 'The pioneer', educationalist Deepti Ramana Reddy shared his views stating that they were living in the Matham for the last 60 years and well aware of the Brahmamgari Matham. As per the Hindu tradition, the eldest son should be the next pontiff.

Venkateswara Meanwhile,

Swamy's first wife's second son Veerabhadra Swamy entered into the scene claiming that he should be the right person to hold the position. Moreover, he brought a new theory stating that his father had promised him the top post. He was showing

some documents as evidence

that his father had promised him

after he got impressed with him

when he donated his kidney to

As per the AP Endowment Act, the seer of the Matham has a power to decide who should inherit the post of the pontiff. He, however, has to inform the Endowments Department in writing of the decision within 90 days. Still, it was not clear whether the seventh seer has given any such letter to the Endowment Department or not. The issue of the next pontiff of the monastery would be resolved within the family or it would be settled in the court of law became a debate among the

# Heavy rains lash 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.

India 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 shut-

ters.
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



### 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

deployed its diving and quick Hundreds of families living reaction teams in the coastal in coastal areas and low lying village of Chellanam in areas of the state have been Ernakulam district, which was shifted to relief camps.

Indian Navy on Sunday

heavily hit by tidal waves. The teams, braving harsh

visit and carry out relief and rescue

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

state government, it added.

According to the Karnataka

emergency assistance from the

Disaster Management Authority

heavy to extremely heavy rainfall

was observed over the state

mainly, in coastal and Malnad

districts during last night.

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

MANGALURU: One person died their tug boat that was assisting a ship capsized 10 nautical miles off 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 capsized 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 beach in Udupi district.

weather conditions, undertook rescue and rehabilitation of people who got trapped in houses.

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 wreaked 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 cyclonic storm" and is very likely to reach the Guiarat 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 in Thiruvanan thapuram, Thrikkannapuzha in Alappuzha and Beypore and Koyilandy in Kozhikode dis-

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

following high waves.

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

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

and off the north Maharashtra

coast from May 17 till the

morning of May 18, the IMD

is likely to increase to 65-75

south Maharashtra-Goa and

along and off the north

alert for the coasts of Gujarat

Sunday morning.

and Diu and Daman

According to the Cyclone

May 18, the wind speed is

to 175 kmph. Wind speed

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

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

### 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

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

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

Mucormycosis, also known as black fungus. Singh said the

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

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

vehicles stayed off the roads,

and shops selling non-essen-

tial items had shutters down,

in accordance with the curbs

imposed by the government

Police officers deployed

in the city's nooks and-

corners 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

as part of the lockdown.

Buses and other passenger

PNS KOLKATA

15-day lockdown comes

into force in West Bengal

the day.



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

The Oxygen Express train reached Kerala, two days after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijavanwrote 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

outside grocery shops, while

some queued up next to vegetable and fish stalls at

local market places early in

has allowed sale of essential

items for three hours amid

the shutdown - 7 am to 10

pm. A senior police officer

here said necessary mea-

sures were being taken to

generate awareness on the

lockdown norms, and action

would be taken against those

In several bazars in the

city and its outskirts -- such

as Hatibagan, Gariahat and

Sodpur -- customers, howev-

er, did not maintain physical

distance and many vendors

were spotted without masks.

their shops open beyond 10

am were forced to close

down by the police.

Some hawkers who had

flouting the rules.

The state administration

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

177 fresh Covid

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 territo-

ry, officials said on Sunday.

Of the latest deaths, one

So far, Leh has reported 119

each was reported from Leh

and Kargil districts, they said.

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

cases, two

PNS LEH

die in Ladakh

### 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

services of veterinary doc-

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

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.

Maharashtra Chief Minister

Uddhav Thackeray on

Sunday appealed to doctors

who serve as family physi-

cians to join the state's fight

against COVID-19 and

advise their patients under home isolation about the

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.

right treatment protocols.

### 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.

Maha CM asks family docs

to join fight against Covid



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,

He said family physicians can evaluate the COVID-19

patient's condition, co-morbidities and oxygen level during home isolationand

guide them effectively

regarding the need for hos-

"If the asymptomatic patients in home isolation are

treated effectively, it would

help reduce the COVID-19

He said family doctors

should also take into account

the increasing sugar level of

COVID-19 patients and how

mortality rate," he said.

it can be restricted.

pitalisation.

### capital Bhopal alone, of which 23 are in Hamidia Hospital here. The former MP CM asked Chouhan to take strict action 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

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 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

was seen hovering along 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 were also not hesitant to request the outsiders including police and health workers to ensure that they are not carriers

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-

settlements in this village.

Located inside the Munnar forest division, the remote hamlet, having no proper road or

They come out of the shelter of forests only rarely to collect essential articles, baby food and medicines.

of the virus while visiting them.

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



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

inhabitants of Koodalkattukudy, a tribal ward in Marayur panchayat, have also succeeded in keeping their

through self-isolation.

Besides Edamalakkudy, the settlements COVID free so far

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.

"The treatment protocols

of COVID-19 patients in

aged more effectively if their

family physicians join the

battle against the viral infec-

tion," the chief minister said.

hom isolation can be man-

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

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

to it that the children ate

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

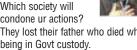
sometimes not at all. It is as though the roots of the society are being torn apart, for the cultural and psychological damage caused by this unprecedented crisis is incalculable. If helpless citizens are unable to accord their loved ones even the minimum dignity in death because, perhaps, no one is 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.

away, something partially cremated and

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?



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 deaths (3647) compared to USA of the level we are told to make out. (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

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



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

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

Hypertension can lead to

severe health complications and increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and sometimes death. It is a primary risk factor for cardiovascular disease, including stroke, heart 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 control is vital for preserving health and reducing the risk of

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.



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

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

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) 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



more than one year.

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

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

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

### **MONEY MATTERS**

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

which operates
McDonald's restaurants in southern and western region in India, plans to invest Rs 100 crore to open up to 30 outlets of the quick service restaurant brand in the current financial year. The company, which now witnesses more than half of its



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

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

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.

### 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.

# 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.

### 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

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

### 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.

### Tractor sales to be hit due to second wave

PNS NEW DELHI

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

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



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

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

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

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.

235.32 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

# Covid brings behavioural change in cash usage: Experts

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

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

impact on the handling and

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

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

electronic fund transfer service through mobile phones. According to the RBI's latest

Immediate Payment Service data, the outstanding currency (IMPS) is an instant interbank in circulation on May 7 was Rs

2,858,640 crore on March 26. Care Ratings Chief Economist Madan Sabnavis opined that during these uncertain times, there is a preference for people to hold down to cash. It is more for precautionary purposes because one needs cash for rainy days such as for medical reasons or for any sudden other expenses, said Sabnavis. PayNearby founder, MD

2,939,997 crore, up from Rs

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.



# what's brewing?

# 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' weight-loss or diet program. That is what you get when you don't follow science, just fads. Health though, is not a fad. It is a lifestyle habit.

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

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

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

gon-filled technicalities on nutrients. Opt for easy to use, nutritious prod-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 you. Just like your food, pick activities that you can stick to, and not things that will peter out after a few weeks of initial enthusiasm. You don't need to be spending hours in the gym or hiring a personal trainer.

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

### Start small and stay consistent. Make sleep a priority

exercise everyday.

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

enough sleep can have a detrimental impact on your physical, mental and emotional health.

If for some reason, you have trouble falling asleep, address it as a priority. Make time to sleep. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine. Unplug your digital devices before bedtime. Instead, unwind with a bath or some light reading. Create an environment that is conducive and free from distractions, with a bed and bedding that is comfortable..

### Manage your stress levels

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

Stress causes an increase in cortisol and adrenaline levels which influences blood pressure, heart rate, eating habits, sleep patterns, blood sugar, fat metabolism, and immunity. 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 vou enjoy without the guilt, just maintain a balance. With the right mix of natural organic ingredients, an indulgent low calorie Blueberry Crumble wise cream will be better and more delightful than so-called magic fat burner pills. The next time, someone tempts you with the next-best diet fad, show them your intuitive eating and healthy lifestyle plan. You will develop a better relationship with food when you tune in to your body's needs and cues, and incorporate this into your everyday life.

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

(Dhruv Bhushan is 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

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

also keeps energy levels up

and provides an overall

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

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

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

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

### **CARDIO**



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

### **YOGA**



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

### **PILATES**



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

### 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.

### **ARCHIE**



PEOPLE SURE HAVE A A A LIGH!

### **GARFIELD**

NANCY

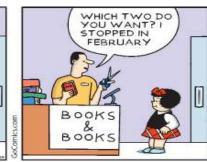


I'D LIKE TO BUY





# THAT'S AS LONG AS I CAN USE ONE BEFORE I GIVE UP ON IT BOOKS BOOKS



### GINGER MEGGS

BOOKS

BOOKS





### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**







CROSSWORD



JUNIOR CROSSWORD 853

### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



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  - 3 Throbbing pain
- 4 A mark from a healed cut

9 Use these to bite

11 Change

16 Mark correct

17 You need this

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- 8 Unclean 12 Attempt 15 Got bigger
- 10 Our planet
- 13 A party for something special

6 A two-wheeled vehicle

- before the euro
- to stay alive 18 Chopping tools 19 Cooked too long

### DOWN

**ACROSS** 

- 1 Number in a quartet
- 5 Car engine repairers 7 Schooling

# Tia Valuation er de la valuation de la valuati

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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

lishment of 700

wave of criticism following the

ity for satyanarayana Mathala, President of Telangana Facilities

Management Council. We all know the perception of Whats

groups these days — they are abused as spreaders of misinfor-

mation and hate messages. Most

WhatsApp groups are considered to be a nuisance as people are constantly buzzed with useless mes-

Desk's WhatsApp group is here to change. "It is to help people working in IT industries who are in dis-

tress, in panic mode looking for a

hospital bed, oxygen, plasma, ambulance services, etc., because

the virus is spreading like wildfire.

I shared a link with fellow manage-

ment professionals asking them to volunteer. Slowly colleagues started volunteering too. The initiative is codenamed 'Project Sahaya' now.

At the moment, it has 200 embers

providing services from 9 am 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, Hyderabad, and Secunderabad in

which nearly 6.5 lakh IT employ-

ees work," shared the founder of 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

washing up to the banks

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

perhaps because of the

near impossibility of a

proper funeral.
Initially, it looked like

both, infections and

there was a reduction in

mortality, but we let our

guard down, became com-

placent, and declared victo-

ry against the virus all too

sufficient and accurate data.

cal patients in the nearest

"In the last ten days alone, the

Help Desk got 637 requests. Out of

which, requests for beds for criti-

hospital were the highest, includ-

ing requests for ventilators and NIV. Then there was a need for blood and plasma followed by

of the Ganga river in

in the last few days,

sages. But TFMC Corona Help

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 catyonary ware Mathala.

Pradesh government announced the estab-

helpdesks for the wel-fare of cows! Facing a

# THE PAWSOME PAIR AND THEIR ADVENTURES

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

few days to be okay with me adopting, because it's a huge responsibility. My girlfriend back then was after my life to get it home. Finally, after 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."
Pets are a part of our lives. Riding with them physically is no equal to a human because of our body postures. Vamsi shares,
"The challenges I face start
from storing her food to
finding a place for the both
of us to rest or halt for the night. It is hard for Bear because she is allergic to packed food. So, I must carry homemade food for her during the

> tries while they are not restricted. 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

ride. It gets difficult because I must make sure the food doesn't go bad. The next big rural location. It is one of the major reasons why I 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 petfriendly,

imagine

the scenario

been pre-vented if pre-pared in advance

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

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

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

is different from the ones before, because it's at different times of the day and we get to do different things along the way. The best thing about all the rides is the look people have on 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 nor-mally start early in the morning and we ride towards the sunrise. We take a break every two hours or say 70 km, for water and chai. Taking breaks is the most important thing about the ride because I don't want to stress her out a lot. In these breaks, she gets to stretch and do her thing. After she came into my life, my life changed. I suddenly became more responsible and a lot of other things changed. Sure, it was difficult for

both of us to understand

ing process and it is not

each other and it is a timetak-

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 concludes, "She's the best thing that has happened to me. She is the reason why I travel so much — because we both love to travel to places and it's fun to see people watching us while we do that. It's amazing how she can make people smile just by looking at them and I have seen that happen a million times — where they forget everything they are going through, and just smile. Looking at the joy she spreads makes me so



Information being passed via WhatsApp has been considered unreliable, for the right reasons. Rumours and fake news have ruled the app for more than a year now. But today, a group of IT professionals in the city is doing all it can to receive, pass on, and verify, reliable help amid the pandemic, writes The Pioneer's **SHIKHA** 

enough place for the dead in crematoriums, graveyards, nor enough wood for pyres! Bodies have been early with little regard to scienadvice and without recourse to

DUGGAL.

sultation 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-

# City's helpdesk on the forefront in fight against Covid



through WhatsApp is nonsense and unverified! We are 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, crosscheck the same, and when requests come, we use the data to facilitate their requests," Sandhya Ionnada. 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 anunimaginable tragedy could

pandemic seriously, misfortune would've become avoidable! Recounting another testimony, where the Help Desk proved helpful, Satyanarayan shares, "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

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

advice."

nobody's control or predict, but can be preveted by deflecting accountability and responsibilities! The firm is also planning to set up an 'Isolation cum Oxygen Hub' for residents below the poverty line who don't have the luxury of quarantining at home.
"They will be treated for fourteen days with all the medicines, food, and nursing care. In case of an emergency, GHMC will shift them to the covid-care hospital! It is a thirty bedded arena coming up at handanagar Community Hall. This is being set up in support of corporate houses like GHMC, IKEA, HARSCO and Zenoti, doctors and the zonal commissioner,"

concluded

They can

be reached

on 63093

71600.

the founder.

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 employ-

ees/resource persons are currently

# Helping women help themselves

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

and hard-working entrepre-

neur – 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.



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.

# 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 Nada 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

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.

for Covid-19 during the now-suspended IPL, is expected to reach home on

# 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

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.

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-

again two minutes later

when Anwar El Ghazi

The Eagles equalised

minute when

scored from close range.

for a second time in the

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.

But Palace fell behind

John McGinn's third goal of

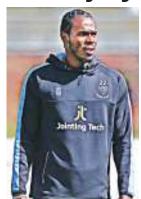
know that we made a monumental mistake. The gravity wasn't as plain until it all came out," he added.

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

### IPL helped Shami get his rhythm back after the hour when he followed up Gareth Bale's shot and

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.

Verona, as they look to return to elite European football after missing out last season. Juventus play their final game at Bologna desperate to

at home against midtable Hellas

Napoli's final game will be

avoid missing out on the Champions League for the first time in a decade. Lazio will not play among the European elite next season

after a 2-0 derby defeat to Roma on Saturday. Sixth-placed Lazio are eight points behind Juventus having played a game less.

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

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

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

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

Recently rumours were

rife that the film will head to an OTT release. Putting a full-stop to all these rumours, the makers of the film on Sunday announced that the Mass Maharaja film will release only in theatres. '#Khiladi has confirmed, This film will release ONLY IN THEATRES. A New release date will be announced once the situation becomes normal. @DirRameshVarma

@idhavish @PenMovies

#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.



# Charan-Shankar film postponed?

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

The upcoming untitled film was supposed to go on the floor by the second half of this year. But we now learn that a tiff

between the makers of Indian 2 may affect Ram Charan and

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

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*.





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

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



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.