

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | 17 APRIL 2021



## WEATHER

Max: 36.8°C  
Min: 24.1°C  
RH: 26%  
Rain: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.  
moderate rain likely.  
Max/Min temp. 38/25°C

## ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Panchami till 8.30 pm

Star: Mrigashira till 2.31 am (Sunday)

Variyam: 5.54 am to 7.42 am  
Durmuhurta: 6.02 am to 7.42 am

Rahu Kalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

HIJRI CALENDAR

Ramzan 4,142 AH

PRAVERS

Fajr: 4.57 am

Zohar: 12.26 pm

Asar: 4.38 pm

Maghrib: 6.38 pm

Isha: 7.47 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.32 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.58 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 9.28 AM

MOONSET TODAY 11 PM

RAMZAN TIMINGS

IFTAR: 6.38 PM (TODAY)

SEHRI: 4.33 AM (TOMORROW)

## COUNTER POINT



Don't vote for him,  
father... he is not  
wearing a mask!

## SHORT TAKES

Monsoon to be  
normal, says IMD

New Delhi: The South-west monsoon, which brings 75 per cent of rainfall to India, is expected to be normal this year, IMD said on Friday.

The Long Period Average will be 98 per cent with an error margin of plus and minus 5 per cent, said earth sciences secretary M. Rajeevan.

■ Full report on Page 9

SC norms for  
cheque bounce

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday came out with a slew of directions to ensure speedy disposal of cheque bounce cases and asked the Centre to amend laws to ensure cladding of trials in cases which are lodged within one year against a person relating to the same transaction. It directed HCs to issue guidelines for trial courts to deal with cheque bounce cases.

## INSIDE

CITY... PAGE 3  
Covid can spread by  
air, says Lancet

## ACTING TOUGH

Excise office defied HC order to release a seized vehicle last year

HC orders babu to feed 20 for a week

VUJINI  
VAMSHIDHARA I DC

HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Making it clear that the

apologies of officers alone

won't prompt the court to

let off guilty officers in con-

tempt of court matters, the

Telangana High Court

ordered a modified form of

punishment to another officer on Friday.

A division bench of the

High Court on Friday

directed Syed Yasin

Qureshi, deputy commis-

sioner of the Prohibition

and Excise department at

Mahbubnagar, to feed a

minimum of 20 persons

daily for a week by standing

outside a mosque near his

residence, to coincide with

the breaking of fast ritual

for Ramzan in the evening.

It also imposed on him a

token cost of ₹1,000 for non-

compliance of court orders.

A week ago the Nalgonda

district collector was direct-

ed by the court to do social

service and a retired civil

supplies officer was ordered to

feed orphans for two days

in lieu of the punishments

imposed on them.

The single judge had

imposed costs of ₹1,000 on

the deputy commissioner for his "recklessness" in the

matter of non-implementation of high court orders.

The original case related

to the seizing of a vehicle

loaded with jaggery. The

High Court had issued

directions on August 24,

2020, to the officer to release the vehicle, in

response to the contention that the jaggery would

be damaged if the vehicle is exposed to the sun and

rain. But the officer did not release the vehicle.

After the contempt case was filed before the High

Court, the excise department filed an appeal. When

notice was served in the contempt case, the depart-

ment released the vehicle on January 15, which is a

delay of four-and-a-half months.

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# CLASSIFIEDS

DECCAN CHRONICLE | HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | 17 APRIL 2021

pg 2

## FOR SALE AUTOMOTIVE

## FOUR WHEELERS

DUSTER 2013 Model 85 PS RxL Diesel. Single Owner. Owner Driven and in Good Running Condition. Direct Dealing. No Brokers. Contact: 9177722280 (HYMM/2122/C00519)

2016 MERCEDES Benz S350 CDI, doctor owner. Black exterior and Beige interior. 1.25,000 Kms done and in mint condition. For more information, please call 9550000339 (W/2122/AT000058)

## FURNITURE

WE PURCHASE Old Furniture, Office, House, Hotel, Showroom, ACs, UPS, Batteries, Generator, Aluminium Partition, Wiring, Brass Vessels & Scrub. Ph:814269887, 8555901629. (B/2122/C00066)

## FOR SALE PROPERTY

## AGRICULTURE

✓ 7.5 ACRES land for sale at Janwada near Kokapet financial dist. Gachibowli contact singh directly 9666661361. (W/2122/AT000082)

## COMMERCIAL

SALE COMMERCIAL 2200 sqft owners prate, 4th floor, Road No.12, Banjara hills, well furnished. Ready to occupy. Contact: 9866551159. (A/2122/C00057)

✓ CHIKKADAPALLY MAIN Road, Newly Constructed, Prime Commercial Space 4Floors, For Sale, Each floor of Area 4650 Sqft, Ph:9391428899, 9348605544, 9059415299. (HYMM/2122/C00471)

✓ GACHIBOWLI MAINROAD Independent Building Sale/ Lease. Opposite Gachibowli central mall, beautiful glass & Marble elevation, total 12700sqft s/b area, 9500carpet area, G+3Plz, 2BHK/ Office space, Ready to move, 2side Roads & 2Entrance, Lift, 430Sqys Land, 9Car+10 Wheeler Parking, Suitable Restaurants, Software, Furniture, lights, Jewellery showroom/ Mall, Hospitals, Clear title, Ph.9502032226. (HYMM/2122/C00536)

SALE COMMERCIAL property at Himayatnagar prime location 1st floor 4046sqft. Contact: 9246155020/ 6288155200 (HYMM/2122/C00517)

✓ FOUR STOREYED building plinth area 9000sqft 3 sides road 220sqys Commercial use for sale - Srinagar colony Yellareddiguda Hyderabad. Contact: 9840814329 - 9.00am to 6.30pm. (W/2122/AT000070)

NEAR WONDERLA, 1210sqyd with one bore well, sqft 20,000/- only Negotiable. Opp Narayan College. Suitable for Residential/ Commercial Complex/ Petrol pump. Ph:9704416895 (HYMM/2122/C00549)

COMMERCIAL SPACE Available For Sale/ Rent: 12,435 Sqft Fully Furnished, Plug & Play, with Parking 350sqft at Fortune-9 (Old Adp Office), Somajiguda, Hyd Contact: 9347333945, 9949794126. (HYMM/2122/C00531)

SRI RAJYA Laxmi Garden (Function Hall) with Banquet Hall, 7500 sq.yds on Hunter Road, Warangal Junction, Warangal Station 3km away on Khammar, Vijayawada. High way. Ph:9100481178. (S/2122/C00151)

## FARM HOUSES-SITES

OFFER 2DAYS. A gated community of 100acres farm houses, customize villas, resorts, organic fruits, sandalwood, starts @36lacs. Or plot 17acs. Sadashivpet mumbai h/w. Ph:7416613247. (HYMM/2122/C00559)

FARM HOUSE Land, 8Guntas for Sale, ICFAI-Shankarpally Main Road to 5km. Produttri, Tangur Main Road. Ph:7989016821. (S/2122/C00097)

## FLATS

## DOUBLE BEDROOM

ADIBATLA "S.V. Regalia" 2BHK Flats Ready to move Rs.31 Lakhs onwards opp: police station Ph:837419206/ 9848892582. (HYCL/2122/C00237)

NEAR APPA Junction: Bundlaguda Jagir 2& 3BHK DLX Flats For Sale E/N/W Face position in 12months @Gated Community. Ph:9666989119/ 8121844748. (HYCL/2122/C00227)

BACHUPETTAL 2BHK Flats for sale, 1050 Sft. 50 ft. Road facing. Ready to occupy. Contact: Ph:9844588538, 9849775703. (HYCL/2122/C00146)

PATANCHEVURU Pre-launch fully gated community 10 floors 11 towers 283 BHK Flats. Pre-launch offer Rs.3499/- perft. Limited period. Ph:9848832207 (HYMM/2122/C00355)

2 & 3BHK Ready To Move In Flats Available In Accurate Climate Chait At Narsing Nair Financial Dist. Cont: 7569037771 (HYMM/2122/C00500)

2BHK FLAT for sale 867 sq/feet, east face, ground, Sui Subha Residency, AVP behind KLM Rajahmundry, 36lacks tel: Ph:9100261047& 8978494613. (HYMM/2122/C00532)

FLAT FOR Sale near Kukatpally Rail Station, area 1022sf, 2BHK, with furniture and car parking. Ph:8997422525. (HYCL/2122/C00243)

MALAKPET RACE course Road, New Flats 2BHK 1230sf, 3BHK 1440sf Etch Ready to occupy. Car Parking, Lift, Generator, 24hrs Water. Loans available. GHMC-RERA Approved. Ph:9246181119, 8309487138 (HYMM/2122/C00301)

NAGOLE, OPP. Kalyana Lakshmi Gardens, GHMC-RERA Approved 2BHK Deluxe Flats For Sale, 127 Sft, E/W, Ph:9505707733 / 9440217828 (W/2021/AT00117)

TWO- 2 BHK ready to move in flats available behind Little Flower School/ College- Friend's Colony, Sainagar, Uppal. Only genuine buyers for immediate sale. Contact 9840916831. Brokers please excuse. (A/2122/C00032)

✓ 2 BHK Flat, 3rd floor, 900sqft in Srimansion Yellareddiguda Hyderabad. Contact: 9908391862 (HYMM/2122/C00480)

## THREE & MORE

23 BHK Luxury Flats @ Rs.3700/- Sft in Gated Community with Club House & Amenities Ready at Gundla Pochampally, Near Komalpuri, 3 BHK starts from 57.35 lacs onwards. Modi Builders 7677120120. (B/2122/C00040)

3 BHK Luxury Flats @ 3500/- Sft in gated community with club house & amenities ready @ Pochampally, near New Infosys Campus from Rs.48.28 lacs onwards. Modi Builders 7677120120. (B/2122/C00067)

2016 MERCEDES Benz S350 CDI, doctor owner. Black exterior and Beige interior. 1.25,000 Kms done and in mint condition. For more information, please call 9550000339 (W/2122/AT000058)

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## INDEPENDENT

3 BHK Luxury Flats @ Rs.3700/- Sft in Gated Community with Club House & Amenities Ready at Gundla Pochampally, Near Komalpuri, 3 BHK starts from 57.35 lacs onwards. Modi Builders 7677120120. (B/2122/C00067)

## INDIPENDENT

3 BHK Luxury Flats @ 3500/- Sft in gated community with club house & amenities ready @ Pochampally, near New Infosys Campus from Rs.48.28 lacs onwards. Modi Builders 7677120120. (B/2122/C00067)

## PREMIUM

3 BHK Luxury Flats @ 3500/- Sft in gated community with club house & amenities ready @ Pochampally, near New Infosys Campus from Rs.48.28 lacs onwards. Modi Builders 7677120120. (B/2122/C00067)

## RENT

3 BHK FLAT for sale, 1500sf, West facing, 1st floor, Semi furnished, Car parking, lift facility at Old Bowenpally, Ph:988449937, 990838093. (HYMM/2122/C00527)

## RENTAL

3 BHK FLAT for sale, Re-Sale, Arca Sarovar, Next to DLF SEZ, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. Contact: Sudhakar, Mob No: +91-9866560027. (HYCL/2122/C00240)

## RENTALS

3 BHK FLAT for sale, 1500sf, West facing, 1st floor, Semi furnished, Car parking, lift facility at Old Bowenpally, Ph:988449937, 990838093. (HYMM/2122/C00527)

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**IN BRIEF**  
**TS High Court warns of action**

FROM PAGE 1

**Hyderabad:** There was a delay of four and a half months in implementation of the court order; and that too, only after the contempt notice was issued.

Taking serious note of this, the single judge bench imposed a fine of ₹1,000, which it said would be collected from the salary of the officer and paid to the state exchequer.

Challenging the orders of the single judge and saying that if such a cut was made from his salary it could affect his service record, Qureshi filed the contempt appeal.

On Friday, he came with a request before the court that instead of paying the costs, he shall feed the needy people, and this was agreed to by the court.

The court made it clear that it won't be asking for a compliance report vis-a-vis his service of feeding the people but would take serious action if it came to know that the officer did not do what he was asked to by way of the amended punishment.

**APOLLO CUTS TIME TO TREAT HEART ATTACK PATIENTS**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

The most common life-saving procedure to remove a block in the heart is through balloon angioplasty, stenting or other percutaneous coronary interventions (PCI) that widens the narrowed blood vessels.

The time that it takes for a patient suffering a heart attack to receive balloon angioplasty or any other treatment from the moment they walk through the hospital doors is known as 'door-to-balloon time'.

Apollo Hospitals has succeeded in reducing the 'door-to-balloon' time to less than 60 minutes as against the internationally recommended timeframe of 90 minutes by the American College of Cardiology, saving many lives in the process.

This achievement is even more praiseworthy amidst the pandemic situation considering the challenges of Covid-19 precautions that need to be taken with every patient who comes to the hospital.

The measures instituted by Apollo Hospitals to achieve this landmark success included ensuring round the clock availability of qualified and well-trained emergency medicine doctors along with an expert cardiology team and nursing and paramedical staff. Round-the-clock Cath lab facilities ensured no delay in percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) procedure for balloon angioplasty, the hospital has said.

**TS URDU ACADEMY EMPTIED AS STAFF TESTS POSITIVE**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

The Haj House, where different institutions of the minorities welfare department are housed, is under the grip of Covid-19.

After the Wakf Board, one employee of the TS Urdu Academy tested Covid positive, while the report of another person is awaited. The Academy was emptied on Friday and sanitised.

Academy secretary Dr Mohammed Ghouse said one employee who was on duty developed the symptoms of Coronavirus on Thursday he was advised to leave the Academy and approach the doctor.

He said after the developments, we sanitised the Academy's portion in the building and employees were advised to take precautions and avoid unnecessary mingling with the strangers. He appealed to the visitors to strictly follow the Covid norms. Wakf Board chairman Mohammed Saleem reviewed the situation and issued instructions to the security staff to restrict the general public from entering the Haj House without the mask. He also directed to sanitise the masjid after every prayer.

He said instructions were given to ensure smooth delivery of marriage/khula/religious certificates. He appealed to the heads of all institutions functioning from Haj House to shift their inward section in the ground floor to receive applications and grievances from the general public.

# Conjunctivitis may be Covid sign

Doctors want people to take any redness in eye seriously, isolate themselves

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Conjunctivitis, or pink eye, usually a seasonal eye condition that occurs every year, has now become a possible symptom of Covid-19, a senior eye specialist has said.

According to Dr Sridhar, a consultant ophthalmologist, Apollo Hospitals, Jubilee Hills, people should watch out for conjunctivitis as it is being viewed as a symptom of Covid-19 that is spread by new mutated strains of the Coronavirus.

Any sign of redness in the eyes should be taken seriously, and it would be best to isolate oneself till a medical practitioner has a look, and people should also avoid touching their eyes, he said.

Meanwhile, ophthalmologists have noticed an increased number of cases of people with worsening glaucoma and cataracts this year when compared to last year when many patients missed regular checkups in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the last quarter of 2019, less than 10 per cent of all cataract patients were suffering from advanced cataract, but this number jumped to 50 per cent in the last quarter of 2020. Cases of dry eyes due to digital eye strain similarly jumped from 10 to 30-50 per cent over the same period.

Eye care specialists have also reported complications in previous corneal transplant patients such as rejection of cornea and high eye pressure, while people with diabetes ignored their eye check-ups, leading to severe complications in their retina, according to Dr Gaurav Arora.

## HEALTH INFRA OVERWHELMED, SAY TS OFFICIALS

FROM PAGE 1

Gandhi Hospital, as per the department, has a total of 500 ICU beds capable of providing patients with ventilator and CPAP systems. In addition, the hospital has 1,000 beds equipped with oxygen supply and 390 general beds.

A circular issued by hospital superintendent Dr M. Raja Rao on Friday to heads of departments said they should "not admit non-Covid cases, but emergency and terminally ill patients should be stabilised and then transferred. Present cases in different wards should be cleared at the earliest and all beds should be made available for Covid patients."

Amidst very real fears expressed by health department officials that the healthcare infrastructure may not be able to cope with the rush of Covid-19 patients, many private hospitals too began reporting that their Covid-19 wards were full.

Rachakonda police commissioner held



A motorist who was allegedly not wearing his mask properly, is being penalised by the police at Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad on Friday. — R. PAVAN

## TS records another high, 3,840 cases, 9 more die

## State vax stocks to last only for 1 day

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Telangana appears set to explode with Covid-19 with the state reporting 3,840 new cases on Thursday, another new high. The daily deaths from the Coronavirus infection showed no sign of reducing with the health authorities reporting that nine more people lost their lives, which is also the highest single day toll.

With the deaths reported for Thursday, the toll from Covid-19 in Telangana state reached 1,797, while the overall caseload rose to 34,185.

While, for long, Hyderabad city and the rest of the GHMC area reported most cases every day, other districts appear to be catching up with Covid-19 cases being recorded in large numbers in areas around Hyderabad too. On Thursday, Medchal-Malkajgiri reported 407 cases, up from 314 the previous day. Ranga Reddy, and Sangareddy districts reported 302 and 175 cases, up from 277 and 153 on Sunday respectively.

The health department said the GHMC area recorded 505 cases for Thursday.

A total of 14 districts reported cases in the hundreds, up from 10 which had cases in triple digits on Sunday. According to the official numbers released in the state Covid-19 bulletin by the health department, Nizamabad had 303 new cases, followed by 167 in Jagtial, 159 in Nirmal, 144 in Kamareddy, 124 in Karimnagar, 116 in Nalgonda, 114 in Warangal Urban, 111 in Khammam, and 101 in Mancherlai districts.

The burgeoning cases

also resulted in a large number of people, as many as 30,494 being categorised as active Covid-19 cases in Telangana, with 20,215 of them either in home or institutional isolation, the health department said.

**113 RACHAKONDA COPS TEST COVID POSITIVE**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

One hundred and thirteen Rachakonda police personnel have tested positive for Covid-19 and under isolation. A total of 5,822 personnel have received their first dose of Covid-19 vaccine.

Rachakonda police commissioner held

Mahesh M. Bhagwat reviewed the vaccination drive and said nearly 250 personnel were left out. He instructed officers to ensure that not a single person was left out of the drive. Bhagwat assured that a medicine kit for immunity boosting will be supplied in a week to all personnel.

He advised around 450

personnel who could not take vaccination to be extra cautious in their duties.

The Covid-19 positive personnel were asked to take care of their health. He advised those who were hospitalised to claim the ₹1 lakh that the government was extending towards Covid treatment.

Those who place bets on matches and games said since the Covid-19 pandemic has forced cancellation of sporting events, bets are now being placed on the dates of a likely lockdown, the infection rate, the death toll etc.

"Usually the money placed on lockdown dates has a longer-term validity. Short-term bets included infection and death counts in different cities. During the initial lockdown phase, the public was mostly placing their bets on when the restrictions would be lifted. If the odds are in favour of Coronavirus, it means you are betting that the cases will rise or the lockdown will continue," said a punter who placed bets in the last few months.

City police officials said that apart from keeping an eye on the usual punters and betting hubs during the IPL season, they are on the lookout for those placing bets on lockdown restrictions as well. "We do not know how the nature of betting has changed after the pandemic, but we will continue the crackdown against such crime networks. Our teams are monitoring all the cyber operations," police officials said.

**AS PER latest buzz, May 2 is date of interest for bookies.**

**COPS ARE cracking down on the cricket betting crowd since the IPL season began.**

**CITY COPS are monitoring all the cyber operations**

we are able to detect and bust the rings easily."

"Those betting on lockdown predictions are,

however, unorganised and it happens either as a one-to-one case or in less organised manner, making it difficult for us to track, trace and arrest

## IIT-H RESEARCHERS DEVELOP 'DUROKEA' TO FIGHT COVID-19

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

A team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H) has developed a novel technology to combat the spread of the Covid-19. It was launched on Friday at an online event in the presence of Union education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'.

The 'DuroKea' technology has been developed to ensure killing of 99.99 germs within 60 seconds, the research team said. It leaves behind a long-lasting protective nanoscale coating up to 35 days or till the next wash. DuroKea products have been tested and certified by an Indian government accredited lab and field-tested at the IIT Hyderabad campus.

Talking about the product and the technology, Dr Jyotsnendu Giri of IIT-H's department of biomedical engineering, said: "Unlike silane-based long-lasting technology, our self-disinfecting DuroKea nanotechnology kills pathogens instantly and provides protection for longer periods, from several hours to several days."

Dr Giri said long-lasting hygiene products have several advantages along with being time and money efficient. "These nano-formulation products are the first of their kind." Dr Giri hoped that the new products will play a crucial role to combat the pandemic and hospital-acquired infection.

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## Virus infections predominantly by air: Lancet

BALU PULIPAKA DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Making the worst fears about how Covid-19 spreads and how the disease-causing SARS-CoV-2 travels from one person to another come true, a study published by Lancet, the venerated medical journal, has said that the virus spreads "predominantly by the airborne route."

In their study, published by Lancet on April 15, researchers from the US, Canada and the United Kingdom, said there was enough evidence to surmise that the SARS-CoV-2 spreads through the aerosol route. Even since the pandemic broke out early last year, the predominant view has been that Covid-19 spreads only through droplets — microscopic liquid particles emitted by an infected person while coughing, sneezing or talking with virus taking a ride in those particles — that are inhaled by another person.

The study comes just two days after the Telangana state Director of Health Dr G. Srinivas Rao, in the wake of the severe surge in Covid-19 cases, warned of the dangerous situation and said it was no longer a stretch to say that the virus is now airborne.

In their study published by Lancet, six experts from the three countries provided 10 reasons why they believe that the virus is airborne and spreads as an aerosol particle. Aerosol particles do not make a 'carrier', such as a droplet, for the virus to ride on.

The paper 'Ten scientific reasons in support of airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2' said one of their findings was that Covid-19 infections in hospitals have been documented even at places where healthcare professionals used personal protective equipment designed to protect

against droplet but not aerosol exposure.

They said there is an urgent need for safety protocol modifications

against droplet but not aerosol exposure.

They said there is an urgent need for safety protocol modifications as one of their findings shows that anywhere from 33 to 59 per cent of all Covid-19 transmissions in the world were not related to people coughing or sneezing.

"Direct measurements show that speaking produces thousands of aerosol particles and few large droplets, which supports the airborne route," they said.

They also said that the dominant rate of infections occurring indoors than outdoors, and how transmission rates can be cut with good ventilation, supports the argument that Covid-19 spreads "predominantly" by the airborne route.

While saying that it is likely that the disease spreads through droplets, the researchers said "there is consistent, strong evidence that SARS-CoV-2 spreads by airborne transmission. Although other routes can contribute, we believe that the airborne route is likely to be dominant. The public health community should act accordingly and without further delay."

The study can be accessed here: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/P10140-6736\(21\)00869-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/P10140-6736(21)00869-2/fulltext)

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## IN BRIEF

**TRS DECIDES TO STAY AWAY FROM GHMC BYPOLL**DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

The Telangana Rastra Samiti on Friday decided to stay away from the byelection for the Lingoiguda division of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation to pave way for the unopposed election of the BJP candidate.

The seat fell vacant following the death due to Covid-19 of Akula Ramesh Goud of the BJP who won the December 2020 GHMC elections. Goud died in January 2021 even before taking oath as corporator, necessitating the byelection.

The Telangana State Election Commission (TSEC) on Thursday issued notification to hold election for Lingoiguda division on April 30. The BJP has decided to field late Ramesh Goud's son.

A delegation comprising former BJP MLC N. Ramchander Rao, late Ramesh Goud's wife and son met TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao at Pragathi Bhavan on Friday and requested him not to field a candidate from the TRS for the election, to pave way for the unanimous election of the BJP candidate.

Rama Rao took up the issue with party president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, who gave his nod for the party to stay away from the election.

Rama Rao said the untimely death of Ramesh Goud even before taking oath as corporator was unfortunate and TRS had decided not to contest this poll in support of Ramesh Goud's family members.

The BJP and Ramesh Goud's family members thanked Chandrashekhar Rao and Rama Rao for their decision to stay away from meeting on humanitarian grounds.

There has been a convention to allow a family member of a deceased elected representative to get elected unopposed.

**OPPN HAD NO CLUE ON WARD RESERVATION**

FROM PAGE 1

In this too, the Opposition was caught unawares. They had no clue as to which ward was reserved for which category.

The sudden issue of the poll notification reminded the Opposition parties of the GHMC poll notification in November 2018 when just three days' time was given for filing of nominations against the usual one week, and just a day's time was given for the withdrawal of nomination against the usual three days.

Opposition parties say the TRS has exploited the advantage of being the ruling party yet again as it could secure all the details on the reservations in advance from the SEC and it could thus take time and pick the right candidates in advance. It also started campaigning a month in advance.

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao is the minister for municipal administration and urban development, as also IT. He toured all the poll-bound municipalities from April 2 to April 14, launched development programmes worth crores of rupees and sought votes based on them.

Interestingly, the SEC released the schedule on April 15, a day after Rama Rao completed his tour of all the municipalities.

**OPPOSITION SAY THE TRS HAS EXPLOITED THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING THE RULING PARTY AS IT COULD SECURE ALL THE DETAILS ON THE RESERVATIONS IN ADVANCE FROM THE SEC, IT COULD TAKE TIME AND PICK THE RIGHT CANDIDATES.**

**Vehicles for specially abled**

IT minister K.T. Rama Rao and home minister Mahmood Ali join ministers Sabitha Indra Reddy and Malla Reddy to distribute three-wheelers and electronic goods to the physically handicapped people at IB stadium on Friday.

—DEEPAK DESHPANDE

**BJP rushes leaders to Warangal, Khammam****To work on poll strategy to expose TRS 'failures'**DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Warangal, so that with a majority seats in its kitty so that its leader can be the next mayor.

Incidentally, the BJP does not have a single corporator in Warangal and Khammam. In Siddipet, of the two councillors one joined the TRS while the other has been made district party president.

Dubbad MLA M. Raghunandan Rao will oversee electioneering in Siddipet while former MP A.P. Jithender Reddy and former legislator

Chintala Ramachandra Reddy are being rushed to Khammam.

Party leaders are confident that the BJP can not only give a tough fight to the TRS but also bag a majority of seats in all three civic bodies. BJP leaders will focus on the "failures" of the government in handling the floods, neglect of urban bodies.

Raghunandan Rao stated that the fight in Siddipet municipality will be between TRS cash politics and BJP clean image.

**Cong slams EC, TRS for sudden civic poll plan**DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Shabbir said.

Shabbir Ali demanded that the government declare a medical emergency in view of the alarming rise in Covid cases and deaths. He also demanded postponement of municipal elections.

He said that the state government had failed to deal with the Covid-19 situation.

He said no beds were available either in government or private hospitals. Further, there was a huge shortage of oxygen in many government hospitals. Ventilator beds were not available even at a premium, he alleged.

The Congress leader said that there was a huge contradiction in the claims being made by health minister Etala Rajendar regarding the availability of facilities in government hospitals and the real situation.

He said that the minister is not even aware of the available bed strength in the state.

Citing an instance, he said that a man from Kamareddy district was admitted for Covid treatment and doctors recommended that he be shifted to any major hospital in the capital but also in the entire state.

He said people have been suffering due to non-availability of vaccines.

"No beds are available in government and private corporate hospitals. The government is not taking any concrete initiative to protect precious lives," he said.

The Congress leader said the TRS government seemed only interested in holding election after election.

He maintained that was unfair that the State Election Commission had issued the notification for holding municipal elections when the Coronavirus is on the rise and hundreds of people are getting struck by the virus.

"Is winning municipal elections more important to Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao than saving the lives of people? KCR has become an addict to elections."

I demand that the TRS government utilises the rooms in LB Stadium, Uppal Stadium and other places to accommodate Covid patients and provide necessary treatment to them," Hanumantha Rao demanded.

He pointed out that accommodation at Gachibowli stadium had earlier been used for treating Covid-19 patients.

It has promised to increase self-employment opportunities by imparting vocational skills to youth and providing loans under various self-employment schemes. AAP has also promised to give importance to creating sports and recreation facilities in the town, supplying power at subsidised prices, empowerment of women and welfare schemes to differently abled persons.

Many TRS corporators have lost their divisions, as their divisions have been reserved for general women.

They want their wives to contest, so that they can retain their seats.

Seelamsetti Veerabhadram, whose wife is corporator from ruling party, is contesting again as a TRS candidate.

The transport minister has asked some of the existing candidates to file their nominations from their respective divisions. About four nominations have been filed on Friday. Candidates have, however, been asked not to expect any election

funds. They will have to fund their election on their own.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has become the first political party in Khammam to announce its manifesto.

It has promised to increase self-employment opportunities by imparting vocational skills to youth and providing loans under various self-employment schemes. AAP has also promised to give importance to creating sports and recreation facilities in the town, supplying power at subsidised prices, empowerment of women and welfare schemes to differently abled persons.

KHAMMAM | MUNICIPALITY

**BJP to announce candidates on Saturday**DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, APRIL 16

Political activity has picked up within the limits of Khammam Municipal Corporation (KMC) with parties busy with the process of selecting candidates for contesting from the 60 divisions of the civic body.

Ruling TRS has already entered into an alliance with CPI by giving the latter three seats. Parleys are on with CPI-M for a similar understanding. While local CPI-M leaders are opposing any alliance with TRS, the party high command is in favour of a pact with the

ruling party.

Vansantha Laxmi, wife of transport minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar is contesting from 20th division. It is expected that, once elected, she will be the next mayor of Khammam. A general category candidate can be the mayor of Khammam, as the seat is not under any reserved category.

Bharatiya Janata Party is expected to announce its list of candidates on Saturday. It has declared that it will contest all the 60 divisions.

Present mayor B. Muralikrishna declared has that he will not be contest KMC polls as his ward has

been reserved for general women. Many TRS corporators have lost their divisions, as their divisions have been reserved for women this time. They want their wives to contest, so that they can retain their seats.

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**Mayor: Hyd will be climate resilient**DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Hyderabad Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi on Friday in her speech at the United Nations Mayors virtual meet, said. "It is my great privilege to represent the ambition of cities from the Indian sub-continent to ensure climate resilient, just and equitable development. While we are

not historic polluters, we are shouldering the burden of addressing climate change alongside global cities."

She said Hyderabad was the most inhabited city in India, and with 64,000 hectares of urban forests, is planting over five million saplings to enhance the carbon sinks significantly. Hyderabad has employed a multi-pronged strategy to transform into a

climate resilient and low-carbon city, she said, adding we expect to reduce our power demand by 15 percent by focusing on renewable energy.

"We look to the leadership of the UN Secretary General to encourage collaborative action," she said, in a group comprising Secretary General António Guterres, and other mayors.

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Sis Joy Cherian, Pastors and Bereaved Members of United Peoples Fellowship (UPF) Ramnagar, Hyderabad-500020. Cell: 9550504718

**OBITUARY****Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao**

16-04-2021 Formerly Director NIMS President- Indian Radiological &amp; Imaging Association

Though you left us your memories can not be forgotten for ever. May your soul rest in peace

Dr. B.S. Sreedhar &amp; Dr Meera Mr and Mrs Dr Anand Abkari Mr Khushroo Vakil &amp; Sheker Medicine Medical Products Dr Srinivas &amp; Ramesh Kalinka Diagnostics, Sec-bd. Saluja Nursing Home, Sec-bd.

Dr. Saluja and Mrs. Dr. Saluja Saluja Nursing Home, Sec-bd.

I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever Psalms 23:6

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# DECCAN Chronicle

17 APRIL 2021

## Bengal: EC misses chance to curb Covid during vote

**E**vidently, bureaucratic woodiness has triumphed over plain common sense. It is open to question, however, whether the victory has not been that of politics in dismissing the plea of West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee for collapsing the remaining four phases of the Assembly election into one. The CM's urging came in the wake of the surging Covid-19 cases in the country.

As much as the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar, which the chief minister of Uttarakhand shows no inclination to cancel as he aspires to religious merit and evidently also political dividends that may flow from it, the Election Commission of India appears in no mood to cancel polling schedules more appropriate for normal times.

It is another matter that eight phases of polling in a not very large state wasn't exactly normal to start with, and has been a matter of criticism by all parties in the fray other than the BJP. The dissenters see in the eight-phase polling programme the hand of political considerations writ large.

Ms Banerjee tweeted her pleading. The EC has not designed to reply because the suggestion was not made on official paper. It must look deep within itself and reflect if officially turning a deaf ear would have been its way if the prod had come from those on high in New Delhi. No prizes for guessing the right answer. The record of the EC in recent years has been a subject of adverse comment.

In a fiercely noisy election campaign in which bad language and worse sentiments have won the day so far, Ms Banerjee's suggestion was frankly a breath of fresh air. It was out of the box. It was genuinely constructive. It would have cut the time and scope for any potential violence. More importantly, it would have helped cut the transmissibility of the new mutants of the Covid-19 virus by checkpointing poll-time crowds.

In fact, it is reasonable to wonder why the EC itself did not initiate such a splendid idea, find ways to overcome legal hurdles, if any, and help all parties reach a consensus on practicalities, urging them not to be politically short-sighted or naive but look for what's good for the general public.

It is a pity that the Commission chose not to offer to reply. It gave out snippets of its thinking through the media. One, it was said that the proposal was made on social media, as though that makes it irrelevant. Two, it was explained by "sources" that there were legal difficulties since nominations were over. This hardly seems tenable since the issue at stake was polling, not nominations or withdrawals. Three, the point was also made that 150 companies of central paramilitary forces — or 15,000 soldiers — would be hard to find suddenly.

This does appear lame — even tawdry. Those numbers can be got together with the snapping of the finger if there is political will. The real point, however, is that the country is not at war with one half of the state of West Bengal where polling (for 159 seats) are due to be held by the end of the month. Remember, for comparison, that the US has only 3,000 soldiers in war-ravaged Afghanistan for counter-terrorism duties, and this has been the case for nearly a year.

The EC could have done better. It has missed the chance to reach for higher goals and distinguish itself.

## Recovery vs inflation

**E**ven though the year 2020 was lost because of the once-in-a-hundred years pandemic, people had harboured a glimmer of hope that 2021 would be better. While January and February did seem so, people's complacency brought back the coronavirus in full strength. As if the Covid-19 pandemic were not enough, economic data suggests a difficult time ahead. Wholesale Price Index (WPI) numbers that were released on Thursday showed that the rise in wholesale prices has touched an eight-year high at 7.39 per cent in March.

While it is true that WPI or wholesale inflation numbers are no longer used by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to determine lending rates, the retail inflation is better at 5.52 per cent. Though it is still within the inflation mandate of four per cent (plus or minus two per cent) given to the RBI, it could shoot up if supply constraints emerge because of local lockdowns.

The rising inflation and contracting industrial production present the most difficult conundrum for the Narendra Modi government. Since May 2014, the government has been careful not to stoke inflationary pressures in any manner, even if it meant sacrificing economic growth for some time. In its first term, it stopped raising the minimum support price for farmers, which was one of the key reasons for higher inflation during the UPA-2 government. Even during the lockdown, the government let most people fend for themselves without opting for unorthodox policies.

One of the tools that RBI employs to tame inflation is the higher interest rate. However, it cannot drop its accommodative monetary policy, if it has to spur economic growth at least back to the pre-Covid levels. The government and RBI have a difficult choice to make between taming inflation and boosting economic growth. Good luck, finance minister and RBI governor!

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"The day dawns  
Your Yoni yawns  
The lingam says 'good morning';  
The night has gone  
But the game's still on —  
That apple came with no warning."

— From The Pirhana Purana by Bachchoo

## Racism exists in Britain, but it's not always 'institutional'

**T**here were two "incidents" in my years at Cambridge University which I could possibly label "racist". On my first day, in conversation with my tutor, Meredith Dewey, he used an unfamiliar word. He asked if my room was comfortable and said: "The New Block has central heating, so we put all the wogs there."

I hadn't heard the "W" word before. I later asked my neighbour, Beresford, what it meant, and he said it was the abbreviation for "Worthy Oriental Gentleman". The insult, I realised was in the implicit patronisation. I am certain Dewey meant no offence. He was not a racist, but it was an imperial term he'd been brought up with and hadn't thought about. Not very many people, 40 or more years on, dare publicly pro-

nounce the word. Like the "N" word or the "P" word (used for all Asians), it's taboo.

That was verbal. The real incident of race discrimination I faced at university was in my second year when we had to live out of college in "digs". I applied for several and was turned away from many because the landladies didn't accept any "wogs" in their rooms.

One got over it.

London was another fettle of kitsch. Yes, there were the same elements of race-based abusive words and the refusal by landlords to rent out their bed-sitters and bartenders refusing to serve you in pubs. There were assaults, certainly through racist motives, some serious, as the time in 1973 when a petrol bomb was thrown into the ground floor of the building where I had a flat on the second and had to leap out of the window of a burning building.

Even so, these may have been racist, but couldn't be strictly classed as "institutional racism". My first experience of the meaning of that phrase was when I got a teaching job at a school which had been established as an amalgamation of three schools — Henry

Thornton, which was a grammar school, all white except for two Indian doctors' sons, Tennyson and Aristotele. The Tennysonians and Aristoteleans were 90 per cent black with 10 per cent of white working-class boys. The amalgamated school was graded into 10 levels in each academic year. The division seemed institutionally pernicious as the top two grades were exclusively white and the bottom four almost uniformly black with the middle grades layered in a climbing graph of racial composition. There were no declared or transparent criteria for the classification. Of course, the school protested that the divisions were based on academic tests. After six months in the school, I was convinced they were not. It was an institutionally race-biased division.

Living and working in London and being a member of a radical political group, I was soon made aware that the police in every major city systematically picked on West Indians walking the streets and searched them, or invaded their gatherings, calling them drug addicts.

It was not till the 1980s when, after the riots of black youngsters in Brixton in

London, in Liverpool and Birmingham and the murder of a teenager called Stephen Lawrence by racist thugs, that Westminster set up independent enquiries into the causes and possible remedies of what was clearly an urban war between the police and blacks.

One of the enquiries by an impartial member of the judiciary, characterised the police forces as "institutionally racist". Since that term entered the public vocabulary, it has been used to characterise very many institutions of Britain.

In the long shadow of the Black Lives Matter movement, BoJo's government recruited a Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. The commissioners were eleven people. Ten of them from Asian and black communities and were representatives of several professions. They produced a 258-page report which, when it was published on April Fool's day brought a tsunami of criticism. Not from the right-leaning press in Britain, which accepted and boasted about the report's contention that Britain had no institutions which could be, on statistical evidence, condemned as "institutionally racist".

The report was cautious in several ways but raised a storm of protest from black academics, writers, activists and liberal newspapers, some of whom questioned the "findings" and others who condemned it as a Tory government whitewash. I was made aware, gentle reader, of several of these objections. They were in the main not backed by statistical counter arguments to the report's findings, but assessments of the "mood" and the feelings of those who would speak for the black communities — if there is indeed still such a single entity.

Some of the negative reaction to the report, which said for instance that the Chinese, Asian and female black students excelled in schools and left white and black working-class boys scoring the worst in exams and meritocratic progress. The report concluded that this was not endemic institutional racism in the educational system but was attributable to vast social factors.

I admit I haven't read the report but will do. The fact that I know two of the commissioners and respect the acumen, honesty and view of at least one of them, inclines me at this point to sit on the fence. Ouch!

Subhani



## Kal Ho Na Ho: Inept govt messes up war on Covid



Shobhaa's Take

People who track government mess-ups blame the bureaucrats, specially the three musketeers who advise the PM

celebration site, but so far no action has been taken against those naughty chaps: *theek hai* "pauri ho rahi hai", boss!

People who track government mess-ups blame the bureaucrats, specially the three musketeers who advise the PM. While he was busy investing all his time and energy in the West Bengal elections, our bright chaps goofed up with the entire vaccine rollout plan: the complicated international contracts and the crucial numbers involved. By trying to drive a hard bargain, we actually lost out! Apparently, when things started to slide in the second surge, the bureaucrats panicked and did what babus always do: opted for the CYA approach. Right now, chaos reigns and nobody knows where the buck stops. How on earth are we going to contain the second wave, when we do not have enough vaccines for our people? So much money and prestige lost — why? Because those "babu bullies" got the maths wrong, leading to a cancellation of major contracts and embarrassment in the international media. Several scathing articles have appeared since the debacle, mocking our earlier boasts of "Bending it like Beckham" (in the context of the economy). Too bad the Sensex tanked, based on the disastrous Covid forecasts.

No, we are not prepared to fight this war, regardless of what the government is claiming. Lies and more lies are being thrown at us daily. Like that fake video showing a deserted Haridwar and asking: What crowds? Where crowds? This clumsy attempt at shielding the government's monumental failure at tackling a national crisis is being seen as a crime against humanity. Such negligence! Such heartlessness!

Dealing with Covid is a lot easier than dealing with our callous *netas*.

Readers can send feedback to www.shobhaade.blogspot.com

## LETTERS

### BRING DUST BINS

What is the GHMC trying to prove by removing dust bins? (*A sight to (be)hold your breath, DC, April 16*). Now garbage has piled up everywhere. It is difficult to walk or drive on the roads. It is a very serious health hazard in this pandemic. I request the authorities to bring back the dust bins and lift garbage regularly.

M.A. Kaiser  
Hyderabad

### EXAMS CANCELLED

The cancellation and postponement of exams is welcome. However, it is surprising that the government is ignoring crowds at film halls, political meetings, etc.

Wg. Cdr. V. Sundaresan (retd)  
Secunderabad

The TS government may be correct in cancelling public exams. However, it is not ideal for their learning. There is no urgency to conduct exams in May, they can be held in the second week of June. Instead of cancellation, the government could have postponed exams and taken a decision in the first week of June after a review.

C.K. Vinaya Chandra  
Hyderabad

### SELFISH POLITICIANS

Karan Thapar's article clearly shows that politicians are interested in people's votes and not their well-being (*Covid: Who'll pay price for irresponsible netas? DC, April 16*). When educational institutions are closed, board examinations are postponed or cancelled, why not elections be postponed.

S. Nageswara Rao  
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

### Big farm credit project in AP

HYDERABAD, April 16: The Rs. 341 million World Bank aided agricultural credit project will be implemented in Andhra Pradesh from May 10.

Together with an assistance of Rs. 183 millions from the World Bank, the lending agencies will make available to the farmers, under the project, finance to the tune of Rs. 264.4 millions while the rest will have to come from the resources of the farmers themselves.



## SHORT TAKES

## 22-YR-OLD GETS SENTENCE TO JAIL FOR RAPE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

A 22-year-old who sexually assaulted a 16-year-old girl under the pretext of marriage was sentenced to life imprisonment by a local court in LB Nagar on Friday. The court also imposed a fine of ₹15,000 on him.

The accused, Kappelly Tirupathi, a technician, befriended the victim, took her to his relative's house and married her there. He kept her in a rented home and sexually assaulted her.

Police said Tirupathi knew that marrying a minor was an offence. Based on the complaint from the victim's mother, the Jawaharnagar police booked a case of kidnap and traced her and arrested Tirupathi.

Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh M Bhagwat, appreciated the police officers for their efforts in getting conviction and announced reward to them.

## AP PLANS CLOSURE OF ALL TEMPLES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 16

The Andhra Pradesh government is planning to close all major, medium and small temples for some time to check the spread of the Coronavirus in the state.

There are nearly 1,074 major temples in the state including the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams located in Tirupati, as also about 2,000 medium temples and hundreds of small temples. In the second wave of Covid-19, the number of devotees visiting the temples has drastically come down. This has resulted in a fall in the hundi collections, which would seriously affect the payment of monthly salaries to the temple staff.

The endowments department is planning to close these temples for a few days so as to break the chain of the virus spread.

## TIRUPATI ALL SET FOR LOK SABHA POLLS TODAY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, APRIL 16

Authorities have made elaborate arrangements for Saturday's by-election to the Tirupati (SC) Lok Sabha seat to ensure a smooth polling in seven Assembly segments of Chittoor and Nellore district that fall under the parliamentary segment. Polling will be held between 7 am to 7 pm.

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Election Commission has added 501 polling booths - 251 in Nellore district and 250 in Chittoor district, in addition to the existing polling stations that were set up during the 2019 election, fulfilling the ECIs instructions of one polling station for every 1,000 voters.

In total, as many as 2470 polling stations - 1056 PSs in Chittoor district, covering three Assembly segments, including Tirupati (382), Srikalahasti (362) and Satyavadi (312) and 1,414 PSs in Nellore district, covering four Assembly segments, including Gudur (366), Venkatagiri (366), Sullurpetta (343) and Sarvepalli (339), have been arranged. Polling stations were divided into 260 sectors with 877 declared critical.

Approximately, 28 candidates, including independents are in the fray. The prominent ones being Dr M. Gurumurthy (YSRC), Panabaka Lakshmi (TD), K. Ratna Prabha (BJP-JSP), Chinta Mohan (Congress) and Nellore Yadagiri (CPI-M).

There will be a mock polling around 6 am on Saturday.

As per Covid-19 guidelines, medical teams are being deputed at all polling stations to check voters before they enter booths. The ECI has provided postal ballot facilities to the elderly (508 octogenarians), physically challenged (284) and election staff (3,195).

As per the data, around 12,87,734 votes of the total 16,50,453 electors were polled in the 2019 general election, recording a poll percentage of 78.99 per cent. In all, the Tirupati Assembly segment recorded least polling percentage at 66.05, followed by Gudur (78.12), Venkatagiri (78.62), Srikalahasti (81.81), Sarvepalli (82.42), Sullurpetta (82.86) and Sathyavedu with 86.09 per cent.



Muslims offer first Juma prayers on the first day of Ramzan at Macca Masjid in Hyderabad on Monday.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

## Masjids full for first Juma of Ramzan '21

Tens of hundreds offered Juma prayers at Macca Masjid

ATHER MOIN IC DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

The first Juma prayers of Ramzan were offered at mosques in the city on Friday. This year, the mosques have planned to host all five daily prayers, in addition to the Taraweeh, the special nightly prayer.

The AIMIM observed the first Friday as Youm-ul-Quran and held a public meeting at Macca Masjid after the Friday prayers. For many who attended the prayers on Friday, it was an emotional experience as Muslims had missed out on the spiritual experience during last year's Ramzan when the mosques had remained closed in the wake of Coronavirus safety measures.

On Friday, worshippers started reaching nearby mosques much before the prayer timings to occupy a place in the

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Chief Executive Officer, Haj Committee of India, Dr Maqsood Ahmed Khan issued a circular to all state Haj Committees stating that as per the statement of the Saudi Arabia health minister and a mail from Consulate General of India in Jeddah, pilgrims visiting Saudi Arabia need to get two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine before departure to

Saudi Arabia. He advised the intending pilgrims to take the first dose of vaccine now so that at the time of departure the second dose can be given to them. He clarified that no official communication regarding Haj-2021 had been received from the Saudi government. All the process of Haj will be subject to the approval of Saudi authorities.

front rows. They brought their prayer-mats as the management of the masjids had removed prayer-mats usually provided by them, as part of Covid-19 safety measures.

Worshippers were directed to wear face masks properly and maintain adequate physical distance to stay safe from the virus.

The largest gathering was seen at the historic

Macca Masjid next to Charminar where tens of hundreds offered the Juma prayers. Imam and Khateeb Moulana Rizwan Qureshi delivered the sermon and led the prayer.

## Hyd loses two renowned doctors

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Dr Kakarla Subba Rao

Dr K Subrahmanyam

Hyderabad this week lost two of its renowned doctors, Dr Kakarla Subba Rao, known to most as the first director of the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, and Dr Kalluri Subrahmanyam, a senior radiation oncologist.

Dr Subba Rao, the 96-year-old and highly-respected radiologist who oversaw evolution of NIMS into a superspecialty hospital, passed away at a private hospital here in the city on Friday, where he was being treated for age-related ailments.

He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2000 for his contribution to the medical field.

Dr Subba Rao, who worked in the United

States of America as a radiologist, and was the founder president of Telugu Association of North America, returned to India and took charge as the first director of NIMS, following a call by then Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao for Telugus to return home and help develop the state.

Dr Subba Rao's family, all well-wishers who prayed for his recovery after admission to the hospital.

Earlier on Wednesday, Dr Subrahmanyam, one of the senior-most practicing radiation oncologists in the country, passed

away after suffering from a severe heart attack. He is credited with the government-run MNJ Cancer Hospital achieving the status of a regional cancer centre, and for training many doctors who went on to become cancer treatment specialists.

A major portion of Dr Subrahmanyam's career was devoted to working at the Osmania Medical College and MNJ Cancer hospital.

He was a postgraduate examiner for more than 15 universities in the country and was an external faculty expert for All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, PGI Chandigarh, Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute, Lucknow and Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad.

## Jagan launches Amul project in AP

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 16

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has stressed that he is committed to the cause of women empowerment and hence implemented several welfare schemes for them including the Amul Palavelluva project to help women rear cattle, produce milk and earn money.

The Chief Minister launched the AP Amul Project in Guntur district in virtual mode from the camp office here on Friday.

He said the Amul Project will start in Guntur and milk will be collected from 129 villages in the district and also from 174 villages in Chittoor district from today. The project was started with an MoU signed between Amul and the state government on July 21. "The idea is to financially empower women self-help groups through setting up of milk coop-

## ACB nabs MDO for taking ₹20K bribe

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

eratives in the government sector," he said.

The CM said the Amul Palavelluva Project was started on December 2 and arrangements have been made for collection of milk from 400 villages in Chittoor, YSR Kadapa and Prakasam districts.

As a result, the women in these villages are getting five to seven rupees more than the existing price per litre. "Milk is being collected also in some villages of my own Puliendula constituency," the CM said.

The Chief Minister said Amul has been paying remunerative prices to milk farmers as it stands eighth in the IFCN's rankings and its stakeholders comprised dairy farmers. Amul, a cooperative movement, pays more than the existing price per litre and the profit earned by it would be distributed among the stakeholders every six months.

According to officials, the accused, P. Albert, demanded the money to clear a bill related to the construction of a vaikunta dhamam and dumping yard at Pandurangapuram in Paloncha mandal.

He approached the ACB. The ACB arrested a mandal parishad development officer from Paloncha mandal and caught him red-handed while he was accepting a bribe of ₹20,000 at his office on Friday.

According to officials, the accused, P. Albert, demanded the money to clear a bill related to the construction of a vaikunta dhamam and dumping yard at Pandurangapuram in Paloncha mandal.

The complainant, A. Ramalingaiah, who

agreed to pay the bribe approached the ACB. The ACB was arrested and the bribe money was recovered from his possession. It might be recalled that a junior assistant at Paloncha tahsildar office was trapped by ACB last month.

The ACB arrested a mandal parishad development officer from Paloncha mandal and caught him red-handed while he was accepting a bribe of ₹20,000 at his office on Friday.

According to officials, the accused, P. Albert, demanded the money to clear a bill related to the construction of a vaikunta dhamam and dumping yard at Pandurangapuram in Paloncha mandal.

The complainant, A. Ramalingaiah, who

## JAGAN SEEKS SUPPLY OF 60L VACCINE DOSES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 16

AP Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy has sought 60 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccine for Andhra Pradesh to administer vaccine to meet the first-dose requirements of the listed age-groups. The Chief Minister wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, highlighting the successful conduct of the Tika Utsav in AP, as advised by the PM at the national level, under which 62,8961 persons were vaccinated in the state a single day on April 14.

Explaining the Coronavirus situation in the state, the CM expressed his thanks to the PM for the supply of 6.4 lakh doses of vaccine to AP in response to his earlier letter. Jagan said, "In accordance with your call for 'Tika Utsav', we have taken up vaccination on a large scale. I am happy to bring to your kind notice that we have vaccinated 6, 28,961 persons on a single day on 14th April 2021 during Tika Utsav. This is the highest single-day Covid vaccination numbers by any state in the country."

Stating that volunteers played an important role in making the vaccination drive a success, the Chief Minister said, "We could achieve this as we have leveraged the village and ward volunteer system which is a unique de-centralised governance mechanism wherein a dedicated volunteer takes care of the needs of 50 families. These volunteers have been roped in to mobilize eligible persons for the vaccination."

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**  
Office of the Superintendent, Gandhi Hospital, Secunderabad.  
Rc.No.GHS/MSP/1/2021-22/94 DI-15-04-2021

Tender Notification

Sealed Tenders are invited from the authorized / Dealers / Agencies / Vendors towards procurement of Lab Chemicals, Regents & Kits etc. for the use in Microbiology Department, Pathology Department, Biochemistry Department, Blood Bank and CDL Laboratory of Gandhi Hospital, Secunderabad for the period of Two (02) Years i.e., 2021-2023. Sale of tender form will commence from 16.04.2021 up to 17.05.2022 on all working days between 11.00 AM to 3.00 PM from P-1/P-2 Section of GHS. Last date for submission of sealed tender is on 18.05.2021. Opening of sealed tenders in the Seminar Hall, Ground Floor, GHS at 3.00 P.M. on Dt: 18.05.2021.

Superintendent Gandhi Hospital, Secunderabad.

R.D. No.: 46/OPC-AGENCY/AD/1/2021-22

Sd/-  
Superintendent Gandhi Hospital, Secunderabad.

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY** Website www.ner.indianrailways.gov.in  
Email : cos@ner.indianrailways.gov.in, Fax No. 0551-2200721  
TENDER NOTICE NO. 02 DATE 16.04.2021  
Invitation of tenders through e-Procurement system

Principal Chief Material Manager, North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur, and on behalf of The President of India, invites tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items. Complete description of the item and other condition are available on website www.reps.gov.in

Item No.	Tender No.	Due On	Brief Description of Stores	Reserved to be procured from	Qty. Required	Earnest Money (Rs.)
1	29211038	11.05.2021	Set of Molding Item etc.	...	92133 Set	423070/-
2	29211044	11.05.2021	Fasteners Set etc.	...	99405 Set	318410/-
3	29211043	11.05.2021	Set of Magnetic Path Assembly etc.	...	19391 Set	253100/-
4	29211041	11.05.2021	Set of Magnetic Path Assembly etc.	...	54570 Set	894950/-
5	22201313	27.06.2021	Speed sensor with cable etc.	...	108 Nos.	103230/-

CPR0/S=02 Principal Chief Material Manager, Gorakhpur  
About any passenger amenity complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955 Do Not smoke Bidi/Cigarette in train

**JOIN ARMY DENTAL CORPS AS SHORT SERVICE COMMISSIONED OFFICER FOR A PROMISING & CHALLENGING CAREER: 2021**

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ONLINE APPLICATIONS IS 15 MAY 2021  
सेवा दंड कार्यालय में अप्लाई करने के अंतिम तारीख नागरिकों पूर्ण और नवाचारी दोनों से आवेदन आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं।

शोधयात्रा: उभीदावारों को डैंटल कार्पोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (डीआईएस) द्वारा मास्टर प्रॉफेर कोर्स / विश्वविद्यालय से बीडीएस / एमडीएस डिग्री प्राप्त की जाती है।

आयु: जीवा: उभीदावार की आयु 31 दिसंबर 2021 को 45 वर्ष होनी चाहिए।

Online applications are invited from Indian citizens, both male and female, for grant of Short Service Commission in the Army Dental Corps.

**QUALIFICATION:** Candidates must be BDS/MDS Degree Holder from a College/University recognized by Dental Council of India (DCI).

**AGE:** The candidate must not have attained 45 yrs of age as on 31 Dec 2021.

जीवा जीवालय क

## SHORT TAKES

**NITISH CHAIRS MEETING ON CORONAVIRUS**

**Patna, April 16:** A day before an all-party meeting over Covid situation in Bihar, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar held a high level meeting here Friday discussing steps taken so far to check spread of the virus and also availability of oxygen cylinder for coronavirus patients.

Emerging from the meeting, Kumar refused to divulge details of the deliberations, saying everything will be discussed at all-party meeting which will be chaired by Governor Phagu Chauhan on April 17.

"We will brief about steps taken till now to check the spread of infections and will listen to point of views of others," he told reporters.

The chief minister said after talks with political parties, a district level meeting will be held the next day and more suitable measures will be taken to put a break on surge of coronavirus in Bihar like other parts of the country in the wake of its second wave.

The meeting called by the Governor will be held in virtual mode.

Friday meeting on coronavirus scenario in Bihar was attended by Deputy Chief Ministers - Tarkishore Prasad and Renu Devi - besides Health minister Mangal Pandey, his cabinet colleague in Education department Vijay Kumar Chaudhary and Principal Secretary Health Pratyaya Amrit among others.

**FORMER CBI CHIEF SINHA PASSES AWAY**

**New Delhi, April 16:** Former CBI director Ranjit Sinha died here Friday morning at the age of 68 in what is believed to be a Covid-19 related death, senior officials said.

He was confirmed positive for coronavirus on Thursday night and breathed his last at 4.30 am, the officials said.

Sinha, a 1974-batch IPS officer of Bihar cadre who had cracked the coveted UPSC examination at the age of 21, headed the CBI for a controversial two-year term in 2012 as its 26th chief during which the agency earned the sobriquet of "caged parrot".

The scathing remarks by Justice RM Lodha were a result of Sinha's nine-page affidavit to the Supreme Court giving details of his meetings with then Law Minister Ashwani Kumar and other senior officers during which changes were made in the coal scam probe report submitted to the apex court.

"Whatever the Supreme Court says is correct," was his response to the reporters after the controversy.

Towards the fag end of his tenure, another controversy struck him. A purported visitors' diary with names of persons under the CBI scanner in coal and 2G scam surfaced in 2014. It showed that these people were allegedly frequenting his residence.

**COURTS IN MAHA, GOA TO WORK 2.5 HRS A DAY**

**SHAHAB ANSARI | DC**  
MUMBAI, APRIL 16

**Due to surge in Covid-19 cases in the state, all subordinate courts in Maharashtra will function in one shift of 2.5 hours and would take up only urgent matters till May 7.**

Considering the spike in Covid-19 cases in the state the Administrative Committee, comprising Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court and other judges decided how the courts in Maharashtra, Goa and in Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu will function to break the chain of Covid-19.

As per new circular all courts should function in one shift and take up remand, bail and urgent criminal and civil matters from April 19 with judicial working hours of two-and-a-half hours. It has also been ordered that all court will remain closed on all Saturdays and would work as holiday court for urgent matters. Even canteens and bar rooms within the court premises have also been directed to remain closed.

In the meantime the Bombay High Court will also continue hearing matters virtually till May 7.

Furthermore, division benches will sit only two days a week i.e. Tuesday and Thursday. Single judges will sit thrice a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The benches will work for four hours everyday.



Bodies lined up for cremation, amid surge in Covid-19 cases across country, at Hindon river crematorium in Ghaziabad on Friday. With increasing number of deaths due to Covid-19, the waiting period at crematoriums has gone up. - PTI

**15-day-old infant succumbs to Covid-19 at Surat hospital**

**Infant was born with the disease, her mother had contracted Covid-19**

**Now, UP plans lockdown on Sundays till May 15**

**Lucknow, April 16:** Amid a surge in Covid-19 cases, the Uttar Pradesh government has announced a lockdown across the state on all Sundays till May 15 and also said those caught for the second time not wearing a mask will be fined ₹10,000.

The first time fine for not wearing a mask has been doubled to ₹1,000 and officials have been directed to run a special campaign for sanitisation across the state, according to a statement.

"There will be a weekly closure in all rural and urban areas of the state on Sunday. Only sanitisation, sanitisation and emergency services will operate during this period," the statement quoted Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath as saying.

He also directed officials to run awareness campaigns in this regard.

Another statement said that "all markets, commercial institutions, offices etc will remain closed on Sundays till May 15 for proper implementation of this campaign. It (the closure) will start from Saturday 8 pm till Monday 7 am. However medical and health-related emergencies will remain open."

This year also, according to rules, ₹1 crore from funds of legislators can be used in Covid-19 management on their recommendation, Adityanath said.

"A fine of ₹1,000 will be imposed if someone is caught without a mask for the first time. If caught for the second time, ₹10,000 fine amount will be imposed," the state-

ment said.

The state on Thursday

reported 104 deaths and 22,439 fresh cases,

pushing the fatality count to 9,480 and the total infection number to 7,66,360.

The chief minister said that last year, the MLA development fund proved useful in the work related to prevent the spread of the virus.

This year also, according to rules, ₹1 crore from funds of legislators can be used in Covid-19 management on their recommendation, Adityanath said.

The Chief Minister said that the first phase of panchayat elections was completed in a very peaceful manner and strict legal action should be taken against those involved in breaching peace at some places.

— PTI

"While some went back to attend weddings and other social gatherings, others left out of fear. Some even left for their hometowns to care for their ailing parents and relatives," Vekaria said.

"Majority of the diamond polishing units are operational at present. A marginal number of workers have left, but they will return once the situation improves. So far, the diamond industry remains largely unaffected because of Covid," he said. — PTI

**BE CAREFUL: OFFICER TO FRIENDS BEFORE DYING OF COVID**

**Bahraich (UP), April 16:** Don't be careless about Covid, a forest officer wrote to his friends in a poignant farewell message before leaving the lap of Mother Earth from a Lucknow hospital.

Yashwant Singh, the divisional forest officer (DFO) at Katarniaghaj Wildlife Sanctuary, tested positive for coronavirus on April 2 and was admitted at a private hospital in the state capital.

He died there Thursday, Bahraich Divisional Forest Officer Manish Singh said.

The officer sent a WhatsApp message to his friends from his hospital bed, telling them about his imminent death which took place three days later.

"After spending 55 and a half years in the lap of Mother Earth, I am leaving for my last journey. Don't be careless about Covid. My blessings remain with everyone," Singh was cremated in Lucknow, where his family lives, amid the Covid protocol that restricts the number of people at the funeral.

He had taken provisional charge of his new post six months back.

The officer is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter who is an MBBS intern, according to Dabeer Hasan, a project officer with wildlife NGO WWF.

— PTI

**Haffkine targets 22.8 cr vax vials**

**Mumbai, April 16:** After receiving permission to make Bharat Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin, Mumbai-based Haffkine Bio-

Pharmaceutical on Friday said it would take least at one year's time for the company to start actual production.

A top official said the state-run company is targeting to produce 22.8 crore vials of the vaccine per year.

Speaking to reporters here, Dr Sandeep Rathod, managing director, Haffkine Bio-Pharmaceutical Corporation Ltd, said, Our target is to produce around 22.8 crore vaccine vials but it will take one year for us to start pro-

duction.

Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech and the ICMR have developed Covaxin, one of the two vaccines being used in the ongoing nationwide vaccination drive. And now we received a contract to produce the vaccine at our Pareli facility in Mumbai," he said.

"A proposal was submitted in January owing to the rising cases of coronavirus and need for more vaccines to immunise a large number of people. It is an ambitious project which is important from the angle of vaccination, said the managing director of the Maharashtra government undertaking.

The Congress-led opposition has been criticising the government over its handling of the pandemic and the vaccination drive, while the Centre has maintained that its timely steps have been instrumental in fighting Covid-19. In a tweet in Hindi, Gandhi said, "The Central government's Covid-19 strategy - Stage 1-Impose a Tughlaqi lockdown, Stage 2- Ring bells, Stage 3- Sing praises to the Lord."

The Congress in the past also has compared some of the government's decisions to those taken by Delhi Sultanate ruler Muhammad bin Tughlaq, to allege that they were arbitrary and not well thought out.

The party has also taken swipes at the government over its *taali-thaali* call last year in which people across India clapped, rang bells, blew conch shells and beat metal plates in solidarity with health workers fighting the novel coronavirus.

Later, on Instagram, Gandhi posted a video from his remarks to the media on this day last year when he had talked about lockdown providing time for ramping up health

infrastructure and contrasted it with a video report of how there is a massive shortage of resources to fight the pandemic currently.

"One year later, our people continue to suffer, our infrastructure continues to crumble and our prime minister continues to turn away from his responsibilities," he said in his post.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra appealed to the people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour such as wearing masks and taking other precautions. "We have to win this battle together with caution and compassion," she said in a tweet in Hindi.

Meanwhile, Union minister Prakash Javadekar

**200 prisoners in 47 jails in Maha test Covid+ve**

**SHAHAB ANSARI | DC**  
MUMBAI, APRIL 16

matter for hearing on April 20.

On the other hand, a division bench of Justice Z.A. Haq and Justice Amit Borkar at Nagpur also took suo motu cognisance of the complaints about difficulties faced by patients in getting the reports of RT-PCR test.

According to Dr Mukesh Chandan, one of the intervenors, the reason for this delay is that the laboratories are not giving the reports before they are uploaded on the ICMR portal and sometimes the server is slow, which results in delay in uploading of reports.

Advocate S.P. Bhandarkar, who has been appointed as amicus curiae to assist the court in this matter, said that the reports should be given to patients immediately on WhatsApp and also as hard copy. "However, as far as uploading reports on the ICMR portal is concerned, of course it should be done as the data is of utmost importance for the concerned government and authorities to take appropriate decisions and action in the matter," he said.

After hearing arguments the bench said, "We direct that after making the report available to patients on WhatsApp, the reports of those persons who test positive shall be uploaded on the ICMR portal within 24 hours and the reports of those who test negative should be uploaded on the ICMR portal within seven days. The authorities would be free to take appropriate action against laboratories violating this directive."

The bench has kept this

**Odisha wants 25 lakh doses of Covid vaccines**

**AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC**  
BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 16

In order to expedite the inoculation programme in the state, the Odisha government has demanded at least 25 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccine in a single lot from the Centre.

According to state health minister Naba Kishore Das, short supply in vaccines from the Centre has affected progress of the immunization drive in the state. In a letter to the Union government, the minister has said the state is prepared to administer 3 lakh doses daily, but it is not getting allocated the required number of shots.

The minister had earlier written two more letters to the Union health ministry, requesting the authorities to expedite the supply of vaccines.

"I again request you to urgently supply at least 10 days of stock of Covishield (25 lakh doses) in a single lot as an emergency measure to enable

us to plan sessions and undertake the vaccination programme effectively," the minister said. He also said the state had received 50,79,650 doses of Covid-19 vaccines as of April 14.

Due to the "intermittent" supply of Covid vaccines, the sessions for immunisation "cannot be conducted as planned," he said.

The government on Thursday administered 1,54,330 doses to beneficiaries in 1,050 session sites across the state.

● **ODISHA HAS received 50,79,650 doses of Covid-19 vaccines as of April 14.**

**Leaders including Javadekar, Surjewala down with Covid-19****CORONA | CASES****Rahul hits out at 'Tughlaqi lockdown'**

**New Delhi, April 16:** Taking a dig at the government

and its strategy to fight the Covid-19 pandemic consisted of imposing a 'Tughlaqi lockdown', ringing bells and singing praises to the Lord.

The Congress-led opposition has been criticising the government over its handling of the pandemic and the vaccination drive, while the Centre has maintained that its timely steps have been instrumental in fighting Covid-19. In a tweet in Hindi, Gandhi said, "The Central government's Covid-19 strategy - Stage 1-Impose a Tughlaqi lockdown, Stage 2- Ring bells, Stage 3- Sing praises to the Lord."

Later, on Instagram, Gandhi posted a video from his remarks to the media on this day last year when he had talked about lockdown providing time for ramping up health

infrastructure and contrasted it with a video report of how there is a massive shortage of resources to fight the pandemic currently.

"One year later, our people continue to suffer, our infrastructure continues to crumble and our prime minister continues to turn away from his responsibilities," he said in his post.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra appealed to the people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour such as wearing masks and taking other precautions. "We have to win this battle together with caution and compassion," she said in a tweet in Hindi.

Meanwhile, Union minister Prakash Javadekar

said he has tested positive for coronavirus and urged those who came in contact with him in the last few days to get themselves tested.

Javadekar, who holds the key portfolios of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Information and Broadcasting; and Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises; informed about it on Twitter.

"I have tested #COVID positive today. All those who have come in contact with me in the last 2-3 days may please get themselves tested," he said. (sic)

Javadekar had received the first shot of vaccine at a private hospital in Pune on March 5. He had appealed to all the citizens

to get vaccinated as and when they become eligible.

Javadekar has been busy with engagements related to his ministries till recently, including a bilateral meeting with French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and an event at the French Embassy on Wednesday.

Several top political leaders, including Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa, have also tested positive for coronavirus recently.

Senior Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala and Shiromani Akali Dal leader Harsimrat Kaur Badal also tested positive for coronavirus. — PTI

## IN BRIEF

**Keralite nun found dead inside well**

**Kollam:** A 42-year-old Catholic nun was found dead inside the well of the St Joseph convent at Kureepuzha in this south Kerala district on Friday, police said. The other inmates noticed the body of Mable Joseph, a native of Karunagappally here, inside the well of the sprawling convent campus in the morning. They carried out a search after she failed to turn up for the usual morning prayers. Police said *prima facie* it was a suspected case of suicide and other details could be known only after the post-mortem and investigation. A suicide note, suspected to be written by the deceased, was recovered from her room, they said. As per the note, no one was responsible for her death and she was ending her life due to health issues.

**C'GARH: TWO COPS HACKED TO DEATH IN SUKMA**

**Sukma, April 16:** Two policemen were allegedly hacked to death by unidentified persons in Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Sukma district, police said on Friday. The bodies of assistant constables Dhaniram Kashyap and Purnendu Hadma, bearing injuries inflicted by sharp-edged weapons, were found lying on a road on the outskirts of Bhejji village around 5 pm on Thursday, a senior police official said.

A police team was rushed to the spot soon after being alerted about the killings and sent the bodies for post-mortem, he said. "The jawans were posted at Bhejji police station, from where they had headed to a grocery store on a motorcycle around 3.30 pm on Thursday. They were later found dead with the motorcycle lying next to their bodies," he said.

**J&K TEACHER HELD FOR ABETTING TERRORISM**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR, APRIL 16

A schoolteacher who was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) from Jammu and Kashmir's northern Bandipore district earlier this week on charges of helping a West Bengal woman in abetting terrorism in various parts of the country at the behest of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) is likely to be flown out of the Valley for further interrogation, the sources here said.

The NIA had on Thursday said that the alleged LeT 'recruiter' Altaf Ahmed Rather was arrested by it from his native village in Bandipore in a case being investigated by it for the past one year.

The case relates to the arrest of one Tanja Parveen, a resident of West Bengal, by the concerned police for her alleged association with LeT. An FIR in this regard was registered at the Police Station Baduria in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district under various sections of Indian Penal Code, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and Information Technology Act.

The NIA had re-registered the case against the accused at New Delhi on April 5, 2020 and took over the investigation of the case. Later the agency filed a chargesheet against Parveen.

It said that the probe has revealed that Rather, a schoolteacher in Bandipore, was a sympathiser of the LeT.



Polling officials collect EVMs and other election materials before leaving for election duties for the 5th phase of West Bengal Assembly elections, at Bidhanagar in Kolkata on Friday. — PTI

## Ahead of 5th poll phase, CPM terms Didi 'fascist, intolerant'

CPM has accused Mamata of 'provoking' April 10 CoochBehar incident

**SANJAY BASAK | DC**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 16

The fifth phase of the West Bengal polls will be held on Saturday amidst the shrill campaign unleashed by the Left parties to project Trinamul boss and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee as "fascist and intolerant".

In fact, after the April 10 Sitalkuchi incident in which four people died in security forces at a short notice is one of the key reasons why Election Commission is not able to hold remaining four phases of Bengal elections in a single day as has been demanded by some political parties. Sources said home ministry has done a detailed assessment and is of the view that deployment of security forces in Bengal had been done according to polling over a period of eight phases and it would be a "logistical nightmare" now to change that schedule.

Some articles have openly talked about Banerjee's "fascist regime". Even CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury has described her as "fascist and intolerant".

Reacting strongly, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Roy said: "Each and every milestone of the CPI(M)'s 34-year rule is drenched in blood."

He also claimed it was not Mamata Banerjee, but the CPI(M), which helped the BJP make inroads into Bengal".

In an article "Census of Political Murders in West Bengal during CPI-M rule 1977-2009" published in Left-leaning weekly Mainstream, it was stated: "CPI-M adheres to the cult of violence. Its character is anything between a fascist party and a Mafiosi. In fact, by their public activities, the CPI-M activists lean more towards a mafia organisation."

The 2010 article written by D. Bandhopadhyay said: "Devoid of any high ideology and believing in the cult of violence, the

## No clubbing of polls due to 'logistical nightmare'

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 16

Major redeployment of security forces at a short notice is one of the key reasons why Election Commission is not able to hold remaining four phases of Bengal elections in a single day as has been demanded by some political parties. Sources said home ministry has done a detailed assessment and is of the view that deployment of security forces in Bengal had been done according to polling over a period of eight phases and it would be a "logistical nightmare" now to change that schedule.

Some parties like Trinamul Congress have suggested that after the fifth phase on April 17, the

CPI(M) used murder as a political instrument since 1978 in an organised manner."

The writer continued:

"In 1997, Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, in reply to an Assembly question, stated that between 1977 and 1996, 28,000 political murders were committed... It meant on average 25.7 murders were effected in a month. It meant the daily rate of murder was four. That is to say, one political murder took place every six hours for the entire 19 years between 1977 and 1996..."

He also wrote of the Marichjhapi massacre, murders of monks and nuns of the Ananda Marg groups, the Bantala rapemurder case, the Sushapur mass murders, and Singur, Nandigram, among others.

Speaking to this newspaper, Roy claimed between 1977 and 2011, "there were at least 53,000 political murders". He spoke of the

remaining three phases of elections should be held together in a single day on April 24 in view of the rising Corona cases in West Bengal.

However, home ministry officials argue that in view of the heavy security deployment changing the pattern now would be a "logistical nightmare" as massive mobilisation would have to be done which in turn could impact impartial elections. This time Assembly polls in Bengal are being conducted for the first time in eight phases for which an unprecedented one lakh central para-military forces have been used.

All security arrangements have been made keeping in view the eight phases elections. Now if we change this at this stage we will have to move around a lot of security personnel from one part of the State to another which would be a logistical nightmare," a senior home ministry official added.

However, both Election Commission and home ministry have decided that security personnel will try to spread more awareness on Corona and maintain proper Corona protocol at all polling centres in the coming days.

Elaborate Corona safety

arrangements will also be made at the counting centres also for the counting day on May 2 not just in Bengal but also in other states which went to polls like Assam, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Buildings, claiming it was a "potential security threat" to chief minister Jyoti Basu.

Countering the CPI(M)

propaganda blitz that it was Banerjee who had helped the BJP make inroads in West Bengal, Roy recalled the famous Shahid Minar rally in the mid-1980s where Jyoti Basu and BJP leader Atal Behari Vajpyee, along with others, held each other's hands in a "spirit of camaraderie".

He also wanted to know why Jyoti Basu "did nothing to stop L.K. Advani's Rath Yatra as it entered West Bengal in 1993?" He pointed out: "The moment it crossed over from Bengal to Bihar, it was (Bihar) chief minister Lalu Prasad Yadav who stopped the Rath in its tracks." Roy added that in each and every no-confidence motion against the Congress, "the Left had joined hands with the BJP".

Roy pointed out that history shows there's "no difference between a fascist and a Communist regime". On the issue of suppressing freedom of expression, Roy reminded that in 1993, then information and culture minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee had dismantled the Press Corner in Writers

Writers

2001 Chhoto Angaria massacre, in which 11 TMC workers were allegedly burnt alive by CPI(M) workers.

He referred to the killings of landless labourers allegedly by CPI(M) cadres near Nanoor in Birbhum district in 2000. Roy reminded everyone of the killings of nine people by CPI(M) workers at Netai in Birbhum in 2011. It may be recalled that three years after the killings, then chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee admitted the Netai incident was a "grave mistake" committed by party workers.

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**SANDHYA 35MM**  
(ENJOY 4K LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS)  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

**ARJUN 70MM - KUKATPALLY**  
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM

**RAJADHANI COMPLEX**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

**TARAKARAMA 70MM**  
6.00, 9.00PM (2 SHOWS)

**OAMB** AMB-2.00, 4.50, 10.25PM  
11.30, 6.30, 9.45PM

**Cinesquare** 4.20, 10.15PM  
Gpr-1.30, 10.20PM

1.30,  
10.20PM 11.00  
7.00PM 1.50,  
10.15

**PVR** Forum-11.30, 4.50, 7.15, 9.40PM

Inorbit-1.25, 6.35, 9.00PM

Central-10.35, 8.25PM

RK-2.55, 11.00PM | Hitech-4.50, 10.10PM

Galleria-11.05, 5.40, 8.05, 10.30PM

Irrummanzi-12.45, 6.05, 10.20PM

Moosarambagh-1.15, 10.00PM

Preston-1.50, 10.15PM

GVK MALL-10.30, 4.30, 10.50PM

**INOX** MP-10.40, 3.30, 10.40PM

GSM-11.00, 7.00, 10.00PM

Cinépolis CCPL-3.25, 9.30PM

MANTRA-12.00, 5.00PM

SUDHA-1.00, 6.35PM | DSL-1.20, 6.25PM

**TIVOLI** TIVOLI-11.30, 4.30, 10.10PM

MIRAJ CINEMAS SHALINI-11.40, 8.10PM

CHANDANAGAR-10.15PM

BALANAGAR-11.40, 8.10, 10.40PM

**SRILAXMIKALA** MANDIR-ALWAL

11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM

**SAPNACINEMA** ABIDS

6.00 & 9.15PM (2 SHOWS)

**SIVASAKTHI** 70 RAJYALAXMI

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

JYOTHIRCPURAM AARADHANA 70

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

KUMAR 70MM METRO 70MM

11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00

ANJALI 70MM AMBA 70MM

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SENSATION INSO TALLURI 70MM

11.45, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45

SREEPREMA 70 LAKSHMI 70MM

TUKKUGUDA SHAMSHABAD

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

**YAKUTHMAHAL** 12.30, 3.30, 6.00, 9.00PM

CONTACT: 9030161717

**MUSICAL HIT**

JIO STUDIOS & R RAHMAN PRESENT

SONY MUSIC

99 SONGS

VISHWESH KRISHNAMOORTHY

A R RAHMAN

TELUGU VERSION

**SRI SAI RAJA** 70MM

11.30am, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00pm

PRASAD MULTIPLEX 3.15pm & 10.45pm

AMB CINEMAS 10.55am, 1.25, 6.55pm

MULTIPLEX BVK MULTIPLEX 1.30pm

**TIVOLI** CINEMAS 1.10pm, 7.00, 10.10pm

**PVR**

FORUM - 12.00pm, 3.00, 6.00, 9.00pm I

MOOSARAMBAGH - 12.15pm, 6.00, 10.10pm I

IRRUM MANZIL - 12.50pm, 7.10, 10.10pm I

GALLERIA - 12.15pm, 3.15, 6.15, 9.15pm

ICON - 12.50pm, 6.45, 9.45pm I CENTRAL - 1.00pm & 7.20pm

RK - 12.40pm & 7.00pm I INORBIT - 1.35pm, 7.30, 10.30pm

PRESTON - 4.15pm & 7.15pm I S2 - 4.15pm & 7.15pm I

Cinépolis 5.15pm & 8.15pm

DSL - 1.00pm & 6.50pm I MANTRA - 1.00pm, 7.35, 10.40pm

CCPL - 12.45pm & 7.05pm I SUDHA - 3.30pm & 9.05pm

RADHIKA - 1.55pm & 7.40pm I GPR - 1.55pm & 7.40pm

CINESQUARE - 4.30pm & 10.30pm I MJR - 1.55 & 7.40pm

M CUBE - 4.20pm & 10.50pm LAXMIKALA - 2.15 & 9.45pm

CINEPLANET - 10.50pm & 7.30pm I

**INOX**

GVK - 10.10am, 3.50, 10.30pm I

GSM - 12.45pm, 6.50, 10.10pm I MP - 10.00, 4.30, 10.40pm

CHANDANAGAR - 1.30pm & 7.20pm I

BALANAGAR - 5.20pm & 10.40pm I

SHALINI - 5.20pm & 10.40pm I

PLATINUM 9.00am, 2.45, 8.00, 10.45pm I

INDRA FILMS RELEASE

# WHO worried over spike in Covid cases

Nations which avoided virus outbreak earlier face steep rise

## Pfizer plans third jab in 6-12 months

Geneva, April 16: The head of the World Health Organisation said Coronavirus cases are continuing to rise globally at worrying rates and noted that the number of new cases confirmed per week has nearly doubled during the past two months.

At a press briefing on Friday, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the number of new cases is approaching the highest rate of infection that we have seen so far in the pandemic.

Tedros said some countries that had been able to avoid widespread Covid-19 outbreaks are now seeing steep increases, citing Papua New Guinea as an example.

Until the beginning of this year, Papua New Guinea had reported less than 900 cases and nine deaths, Tedros said.

The country has now identified more than 9,000 cases and 83 deaths, half of which were reported in the last month.

Papua New Guinea is a perfect example of why vaccine equity is so important, Tedros said, adding that the Pacific island nation has relied on vaccine donations from Australia and the UN-backed Covax initiative.

To date, Covax has shipped about 40 million vaccines to more than 100 countries, or enough to protect about 0.25 per cent of the world's population. — AP

Washington, April 16: The head of Pfizer said in an interview aired on Thursday that people will "likely" need a third dose of his company's Covid-19 shot within six to 12 months of vaccination, while elsewhere the cost of the jab.

CEO Albert Bourla also said annual vaccinations against the Coronavirus may well be required.

"We need to see what would be the sequence, and for how often we need to do that, that remains to be seen," Bourla said in an

interview recorded on April 1. "A likely scenario is that there will be likely a need for a third dose, somewhere between six and 12 months and then from there, there will be an annual revaccination, but all of that needs to be confirmed," he said, adding that variants will play a "key role." It is extremely important to suppress the pool of people that can be susceptible to the virus," he said.

Researchers currently don't know how long vaccines provide protection against the Coronavirus. — AFP

## EU UNLIKELY TO RENEW ASTRA ORDERS: FRANCE

Paris, April 16: The European Union is very unlikely to renew its Covid-19 vaccine contracts with pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca, a French minister said on Friday.

Denmark this week banned the use of AstraZeneca jabs over blood clot concerns, just as the EU said it was expecting 50 million Pfizer vaccine doses earlier than expected. No final EU decision

had been taken, French Industry Minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher told RMC radio, but "it is highly probable" that no further AstraZeneca doses would be ordered.

The prediction comes after US drugmaker Johnson & Johnson said it would delay its European rollout, also over blood clot fears — a major hit for the continent's immunisation drive. — AFP

## Jimmy Lai, 4 other activists imprisoned

Hong Kong, April 16: Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai was jailed for 14 months on Friday along with four other veteran democracy activists for their roles in protests that helped trigger a sweeping crackdown on dissent by China.

Lai was given two jail terms for separate rallies in August 2019, at the peak of a democracy uprising that paralysed the financial hub for months.

The jail terms were the first ever for the 73-year-old millionaire, who has spent decades using his media empire to support democracy

between Moscow and Washington. "He has repeatedly said that we are ready to develop our dialogue to the degree that our counterparts are ready for this," he said.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Friday said that Putin has long talked about the importance of normalising relations

## NO PROGRESS ON N. IRELAND BORDER CHECKS

Brussels, April 16: Late night talks between the EU and Britain to resolve a row over border checks in Northern Ireland ended without a breakthrough, officials said on Friday.

European Commission Vice President Maros Sefcovic and UK Brexit minister David Frost met late Thursday in Brussels as a wave of rioting has raised fears that fallout from Brexit is destabilising the British province.

The European Union has also accused Britain of violating the Brexit divorce deal by unilaterally delaying border checks in Northern Ireland until October. — AFP

## Kremlin welcomes Biden call for talks with Putin

Moscow, April 16: The Kremlin said on Friday it was "good" that US President Joe Biden was seeking dialogue with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin but criticised the United States for a fresh bout of sanctions on Moscow.

Biden's offer earlier this week of a summit between the leaders am-

ounted to a peace offering as tensions between Russia and the West were escalating over the conflict in Ukraine and the new penalties levied by Washington.

Kremlin spokesman

Dmitry Peskov

on

Friday said that Putin has long talked about the importance of normalising relations

between Moscow and Washington. "He has repeatedly said that we are ready to develop our dialogue to the degree that our counterparts are ready for this," he said.

But Peskov also blast-

ed a new round of penalties imposed by Washington on Moscow Thu-

sday. — AFP

## 2nd BLOCKBUSTER WEEK



**SUDARSHAN 35MM**  
(ENJOY 4K PROJECTION AND DOLBY ATMOS)  
11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15pm

PRASADS LARGE - 19.30, 3.30, 6.30, 9.30 I  
PRASAD MULTIPLEX - 11.30, 12.00, 1.00, 2.00, 2.30, 4.00, 5.00, 5.15, 7.00, 7.45, 8.00, 8.15, 10.00, 10.45, 11.00  
AMB CINEMAS - 10.50, 11.00, 12.40, 1.00, 3.45, 4.05, 6.50, 7.05, 10.00, 10.20pm I

PVR FORUM - Kukatpally - 1

**IN BRIEF**  
**Indian's body found in NY river**

New York: The body of a 31-year-old Indian-origin mathematician working with cryptocurrency and artificial intelligence was found floating in the Hudson River here, according to a media report which said he was battling apparent mental illness. Shuvro Biswas' body was found floating in the Hudson River on Monday, the *New York Post* reported.

## Pak suspends social media over protests

Islamabad, April 16: Pakistan on Friday temporarily suspended the services of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp to stop their use to organise demonstrations following violent protests by a radical religious group that has now been banned by the government.

The government banned Tehreek-i-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) on Thursday following three days of violent protest by it to force

the government to expel the French ambassador over a blasphemous caricature published in France last year. The TLP had launched the country-wide protest on Monday after the arrest of its chief Saad Hussain Rizvi.

The TLP supporters clashed with the law enforcement agencies in several towns and cities earlier this week, leaving seven persons dead and over 300 policemen injured. — PTI



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## quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	48,832.03
Nifty 50	14,617.90
S&P 500*	4,180.11
Dollar (\$)	74.35
Pound Sterling (£)	102.46
Euro (€)	89.06
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,431▼ 9.00
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	66.82
IN 10-Yr bond yield*	6.088
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.578
	0.048

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

### Mindtree Q4 net profit climbs 54% to ₹317 cr

IT firm Mindtree said its consolidated net profit rose by 53.9 per cent to Rs 317.3 crore in the March quarter, against Rs 206.2 crore in the year-ago quarter, on the back of strong operational efficiency, and it expressed confidence in logging double-digit growth in FY22. Its revenue grew 2.9 per cent to Rs 2,109.3 crore from Rs 2,050.5 crore. In dollar terms, the net profit was up 53.4 per cent at \$43.3 million, while revenue was up by 3.5 per cent at \$288.2 million.

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## ■ Little gain seen to elders from the move Plan to open NPS to 65+ gets split views

FALAKNAAZ SYED

MUMBAI, APRIL 16

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is contemplating hiking the maximum age of entry for the National Pension System (NPS) from 65 years to 70 years.

The pension fund regulator is also thinking of allowing NPS subscribers who join after the age of 60 years to continue their NPS accounts till the age of 75. However, for others, the age of maturity will remain 70 years.

Financial planners are, however, divided over the benefits of people entering NPS at the fag end of their life, as they would have a limited time-frame to accumulate a decent corpus through this investment.

"This is because under NPS, 40 per cent of the corpus needs to be converted into annuity, which reduces the rate of return that a person would earn on their corpus, as you are forced to go to an insurance company and buy annuities. Also, if you are a senior citizen, you will invest only in debt, which would limit the scope of appreciation as compared to when you invest in equities. You are better off on your own investing in a range of debt instruments that give you a higher rate of return."

"So, for older people starting NPS just because the investment age is raised would not be the right strategy, as you need to give time for the corpus to accumulate. Such investors can look at a mixture of debt mutual funds, debentures, bonds, special deposits of banks and debt mutual funds."

Says Arnav Pandya, a certified financial planner: "It would have been positive if existing subscribers were given the option to contribute in NPS for a longer time. But the accumulation period is being increased for new sub-



scribers. Senior citizens

who can invest in NPS for around 15-20 years can look at subscribing in NPS but those who have a lesser time horizon should refrain from NPS."

But Supratim Bandyopadhyay, chairman, PFRDA, says around 15,000 people above the age of 60 joined the NPS since the entry age limit was raised from 60 to 65 three years ago.

According to the chief executive officer of a pension fund house, "Senior citizens can earn decent returns, avail tax benefits and protect their capital by investing in NPS."

Sachin Shetty, a mutual fund and insurance distributor, said, "Life expectancy is rising and so are expenses. So far NPS has performed well. If a person is 60 years or more but is ready to hold money for the long term i.e. 10 years or more, then he should definitely invest in NPS to create a good corpus to meet rising expenses. However, since NPS is prone to market fluctuations, those with high investible surplus could diversify by investing a part of their surplus in Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana which is fetching over 7 per cent return."

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## Catch-22: More customers mean less revenue for e-pharmacies

SANGEETHA G

CHENNAI, APRIL 16



Similar to other online services, e-pharmacies too have seen increased customer acceptance during the pandemic but their revenues have declined during the period. This, despite a four-to-five-fold growth in traffic witnessed by them.

E-pharmacies became more popular during the lockdown as many first-time buyers used them for buying both prescription and OTC drugs. These customers are sticking to e-pharmacy purchases even after the pandemic.

The average traffic per day had surged four-five times during the lockdown period, according to brokerage Motilal Oswal. In addition, customer conversion went up from 12-15 per cent pre-lockdown to 20-22 per cent after lockdown. But the average

order value came down drastically from Rs 3,500 to Rs 800 post-lockdown. As a result, average revenues of e-pharmacy players declined during the pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, 70 per cent of e-pharmacy business used to come from chronic therapies, such as diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol. That trend shifted heavily towards Covid essentials post-lockdown and simultaneously chronic therapies' contribution came down to 40-45 per cent of

total online revenues. This led to a decline in average revenues. While private label and substitution can improve profitability, substitution of prescribed brand for private label is a costly affair with slim chances of success.

Currently all e-pharmacy players are burning cash and to break-even at the Ebitda level, they need to have an average order value of Rs 3,000-3,500 and cut operational costs drastically, which is possible only with an omni-channel model," says Kartik Anantharaman, director of e-pharmacy and private label business at Medlife.

According to him, the omni-channel model involves online players working with offline players, eliminating competition between the two and enabling collaboration by complementing each other's strengths. The omni-channel format also provides operating leverage, as e-pharmacy players can easily service more orders per day. Further, profitability is also dependent on the mix of bulk purchases and just-in-time purchases. To become profitable, the bulk purchases have to be at least 70 per cent and for this, companies need better clarity on demand and the prescription patterns of doctors.

The road to profitability looks quite long for e-pharmacies now.

### CHINA'S Q1 GDP SURGES TO 18.3%

K.J.M. VARMA

BEIJING, APRIL 16

China's economy grew a record 18.3 per cent in the first quarter of 2021, riding on strong domestic and foreign demand and aided by recovery from a low base in early 2020, statistics released on Friday showed. The gross domestic product (GDP) reached 24.93 trillion yuan (about \$3.82 trillion) in Q1. This is the highest quarterly growth rate since China first began publishing GDP data in 1993.

—PTI

### Honda Cars recalls 78,000 units of select models

#### MARUTI HIKES PRICES BY UP TO ₹22,500

New Delhi, April 16:

Honda Cars India Ltd (HCIL) on Friday announced the recall of 77,954 units of select models to replace faulty fuel pumps in an exercise it started last year. The fuel pumps, it said, may contain defective impellers that could over time result in engine stopping or not starting.

The recall impacts the Amaze, 4th generation City, WR-V, Jazz, Civic, BR-V, and CR-V, manufactured between January 2019 and September 2020.

HCIL said 36,086 units of

the impact of the rise in input costs. Barring Celerio and Swift, all the models will be covered under the price increase exercise, MSI said in a regulatory filing.

Jazz made during Jan.-Aug. 2019 and 20,248 units of the 4th Gen City produced during Jan.-Sept. 2019 have been recalled. Similarly, 7,871 units of WR-V and 6,235 units of

## GAMES

### SHORT TAKES

#### Vihari out on duck in county debut

Nottingham: India's Test specialist Hanuma Vihari had a forgettable English county debut for Warwickshire, failing to trouble the scores against Nottinghamshire here. Vihari, who is set to play a minimum three games for the Birmingham-based county, struggled a lot while facing England international Stuart Broad during his agonising 40-minute stay in the middle. Vihari came in to bat in the second over of the Warwickshire first innings after Notts were bowled out for 273 in 88 overs. During fielding, Vihari bowled an over for 11 runs and also took a catch off his skipper Will Rhodes' bowling to dismiss Steven Mullaney. —PTI

#### Harman recovers from Coronavirus

New Delhi: Indian women's T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Friday announced that she has recovered from Covid-19. Harmanpreet had tested positive and made it public on March 30. After more than two weeks, her RT-PCR report has come negative.

"Happy to inform you all that I have tested -ve & I'm feeling better. My only message to y'all is to take care & be extra careful. The virus is real & it's dangerous. Follow all the protocols set up by the authorities. Wishing strength to the ones who are in the middle of the fight," Harmanpreet tweeted. —PTI

#### Coleman to miss Oly despite ban cut

Geneva: World 100 metres champion Christian Coleman's two-year ban for missing three doping tests has been reduced by six months to 18 months, the Court of Arbitration for Sport said on Friday. The 25-year-old American will still miss the rescheduled Tokyo Olympics this year as his ban runs until November 14. Coleman will, however, be eligible to defend his world indoor and outdoor titles next year. CAS "partially upheld" the Athletics Integrity Unit's ruling but found Coleman's "degree of negligence to be lower". —AFP

## Roma, Man U in Europa last four

Paris, April 16: Roma lined up a blockbuster Europa League semifinal clash with Manchester United on Thursday after holding Ajax to a 1-1 draw to go through to the Last Four 3-2 on aggregate.

Edin Dzeko's strike 18 minutes from time ensured the draw and passage for Paulo Fonseca's side, who were on the back foot for most of the match, and a showdown with United who strode into the semis 4-0 after a 2-0 win over Granada at Old Trafford. The other semi-final will see Arsenal face Villarreal, coached by former Gunners boss Unai Emery.

Italy's only remaining representative in Europe came into the clash at the Stadio Olimpico with a slender lead but two away goals from last week's first leg in Amsterdam.

Their European campaign looked in danger when Ajax teen Brian Brobbey was introduced for Antony at the break and the striker made an instant impact, racing onto Perr Schuurs pass three minutes after the restart and nipped the ball

past an onrushing Pau Lopez.

However, after Dusan Tadic's strike for the away side six minutes later was ruled out for a foul on Henrikh Mkhitaryan in the build up, Dzeko tipped the tie in Roma's favour.

Meanwhile, United had few problems against Granada, who had a mountain to climb after losing the first leg 2-0 in Spain.

Edinson Cavani opened the scoring after just five minutes to put United ahead but Jesus Vallejo's last-minute own goal sealed the win for United, who could yet have an all-English final with Arsenal.

The Gunners will face Villarreal in a fortnight after thumping Slavia Prague 4-0 to go through 5-1 on aggregate.

Behind on away goals thanks to Tomas Holeš' stoppage-time leveller at the Emirates Stadium last week, Arsenal ended Slavia's 23-match unbeaten run thanks to a six-minute blitz from Nicolas Pepe, Alexandre Lacazette, and Bukayo Saka in the first half.

—AFP

Manchester United's Alex Telles looks on as his teammate Paul Pogba (right) vies with Granada's Kenedy (left) during their UEFA Europa League quarterfinal second leg match at Old Trafford stadium in Manchester on Thursday.

— AFP

## Women team's plan chalked out

New Delhi, April 16: The BCCI Apex Council has decided, in principle, to field both the men's and the women's teams at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics if the game is included in the roster.

The women's team will be a camp before the three-team Women's T20 Challenge and just after it's over, the squad will fly to England.

"The girls will play a full series in England. Once they come back, West Indies or Proteas women will again come for bilateral series."

"Once that's over, the team will be travelling to Australia for a white ball series and then will play another series in New Zealand. The New Zealand

Olympics, then both men and women's team will take part. This has been decided in principle," a senior BCCI functionary privy to developments of the day said on conditions of anonymity.

#### WOMEN'S IPL AND FTP

Just like last year, there will be a camp before the three-team Women's T20 Challenge and just after it's over, the squad will fly to England.

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Olympics, then both men and women's team will take part. This has been decided in principle," a senior BCCI functionary privy to developments of the day said on conditions of anonymity.

#### BIHAR CA SHOWCAUSED

The BCCI has showcased the Bihar Cricket Association for defying the parent body's dictat while holding an unsanctioned T20 League last month.

"Obviously, we plan to hold the Ranji Trophy and all the tournaments in order but you can't escape the situation. The compensation package will also be worked out as it has been approved by the general body in Jauary," a senior BCCI functionary privy to the developments of the day added.

Verstappen was second in Bahrain and Bottas third. — AFP

their house in order or hence they will be barred from playing domestic cricket.

For all other state T20 leagues, some statutory procedure will be put in place and the final authority to grant permission will be with office bearers," he added.

#### DOMESTIC CRICKET

No concrete decision has been taken as the Covid situation in India is fluid.

"Obviously, we plan to hold the Ranji Trophy and all the tournaments in order but you can't escape the situation. The compensation package will also be worked out as it has been approved by the general body in Jauary," a senior BCCI functionary privy to the developments of the day added.

Similarly there was a cigarette paper between Hamilton, who won the opening race in Bahrain, and Red Bull's Max Verstappen, the young pretender to the Briton's world crown.

Verstappen was second in Bahrain and Bottas third. — AFP

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Verstappen was second in Bahrain and Bottas third. — AFP

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• CHENNAI SUPER KINGS • DELHI CAPITALS • KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS • MUMBAI INDIANS • PUNJAB KINGS  
• RAJASTHAN ROYALS • ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE • SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

DECCAN CHRONICLE, HYDERABAD, SATURDAY, 17 APRIL 2021

pg 13

ORANGE	
Nitish Rana, KKR	137
Sanju Samson, RR	123
Manish Pandey, SRH	99

PURPLE	
Harshal Patel, RCB	7
Andre Russell, KKR	6
Avesh Khan, DC	5

### Off the field



CSK batsman Ambati Rayudu with his daughter. — Instagram

### Stokes to undergo surgery on Monday

England all-rounder Ben Stokes will be out of action for "up to 12 weeks" as his fractured left index finger will require surgery that will take place in Leeds on Monday. A repeat X-ray and CT scan revealed that the 29-year-old has a fracture in his left index finger, an injury that he picked up during the ongoing IPL. Stokes, who is currently in India with his franchisee Rajasthan Royals, will fly home on Saturday. "Ben Stokes will be out for up to 12 weeks. He will have surgery in Leeds on Monday," England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said.

The injury occurred while Stokes was fielding during Royals' opening match against Punjab Kings.

### Ishant suffering from heel niggle

Ricky Ponting has revealed that Delhi Capitals' experienced fast bowler Ishant Sharma, who missed his team's first two IPL matches, is suffering from a heel niggle.

"Coming into the first game, Ishant Sharma obviously had a heel niggle that we have been trying to work through," Ponting said.

With Sharma missing out, Avesh provided Delhi Capitals the early breakthroughs, claiming five wickets in the last two games and Ponting was "ultra" impressed with him. "He has grabbed his opportunities with both hands. He has been around this franchise for few years," he said.

### Nortje is back after false test

Delhi Capitals pacer Anrich Nortje on Friday came out of his hard quarantine that was extended by a couple of days following a false Covid-19 positive report. The Proteas speedster, a star performer for DC in the last edition, had tested positive for Covid-19 while in quarantine. But was retested and came out negative in three RT-PCR results. "Our pace superstar is now out of quarantine. After a false positive result for Covid-19, Anrich Nortje tested negative thrice, and is now part of our team bubble. We can't wait to see him in action," DC tweeted from its official handle.

Regd. No. HQ/SD/509/2021-23

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# CHAHBUSTER!

On-song Deepak takes 4/13 as CSK thrash Punjab by 6 wickets

Mumbai, April 16: Chennai Super Kings defeated Punjab Kings by six wickets to register their first win in the Indian Premier League here on Friday. Opting to bowl, Deepak Chahar returned with impressive figures of four for 13 as CSK dished out a clinical bowling and fielding display to restrict Punjab to a below-par 106 for eight.

Chahar said there was a bit more seam than swing. "We bowled in the right areas. Last year was difficult for all of us and I had Covid. I had to stay in quarantine for at least 28 days and then after four days I had to play. This year we trained well and the last game was a bit of a wake-up call for us. Things went our way. I think the pitch will stay the same. I think we will have to score 107 and it'll be easy for us," he added.

Shahrukh Khan top-scored for Punjab with a 36-ball 47.

Chasing the paltry target, Moeen Ali made 46, while Faf du Plessis remained unbeaten on 36 as CSK reached home in 15.4 overs.

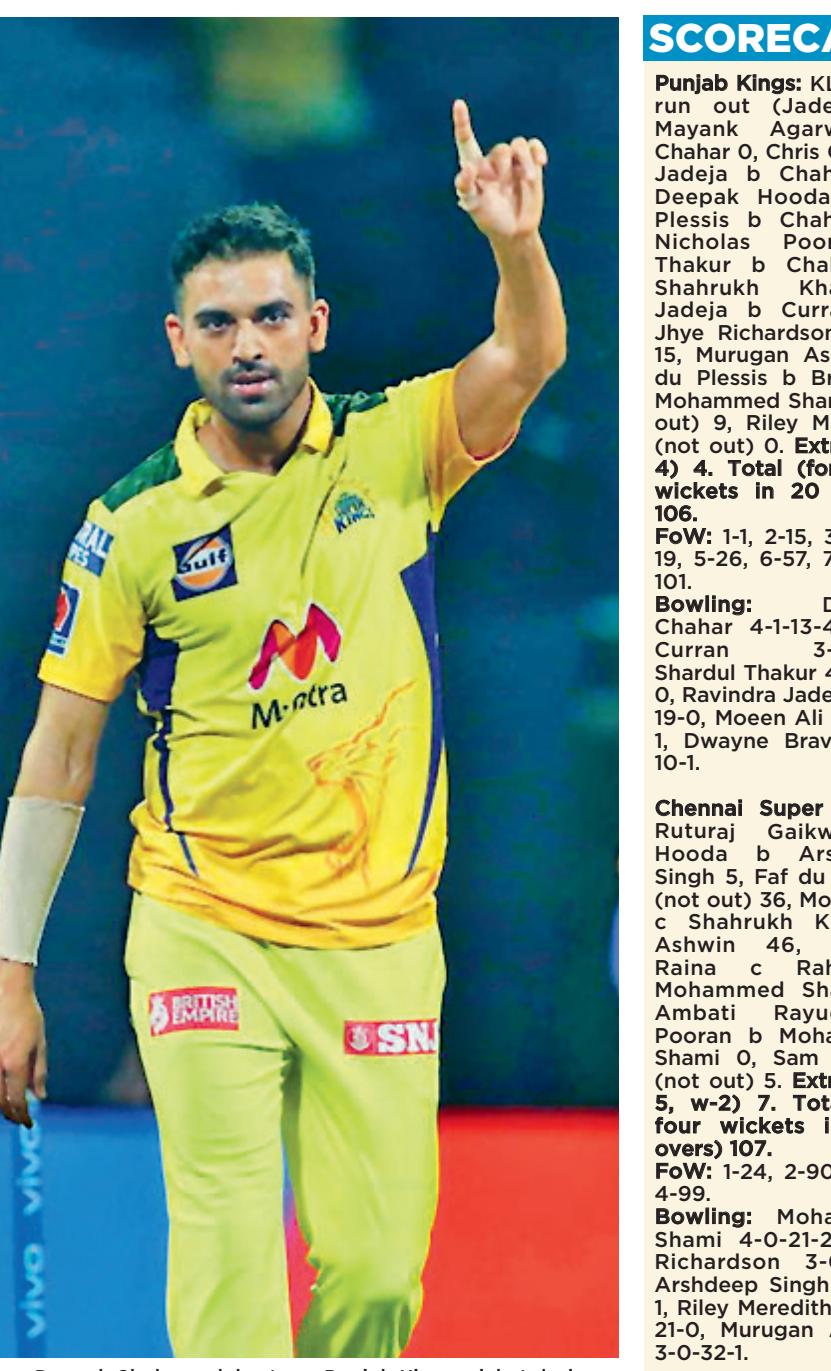
Mohammed Shami was the pick of the bowlers for Punjab with figures of 2/21.

Punjab skipper KL Rahul said: "When any team loses five wickets in the first six or seven overs, the pitch did play differently. It was more sticky and tacky than what it looked like. Deepak with his knuckle ball got a couple of wickets. Myself getting run-out. It wasn't a 110-wicket, maybe 150-160."

Earlier, Tamil Nadu's power-hitter M Shahrukh Khan was the only Punjab batsman to make an impression, with a 36-ball 47 (4X4s, 2X6s) before falling to Sam Curran in the final over as CSK was all over their opponent.

Sam Curran (1/12), Moeen Ali (1/17), Dwayne Bravo (1/10) were the other wicket-takers for CSK.

Aiming to bounce back after being outclassed by Delhi Capitals in their opening match, CSK bowlers justified skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni's woes with his consistency



Chennai Super Kings pacer Deepak Chahar celebrates a Punjab Kings wicket during their IPL game in Mumbai on Friday. — IPL

decision to bowl first by reducing Punjab to 26 for four in the powerplay (first six overs).

In-form Rahual (5) was run-out by a brilliant direct throw from Ravindra Jadeja fielding at short-cover as the batsman tried to scramble for a single. Jadeja was in the act in the fifth over again, grabbing a superb catch diving full-length to dismiss Chris Gayle for 10 to

and conceded only two fours in his four-over spell.

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give Chahar his second wicket.

Nicholas Pooran bagged his second straight duck, pulling a short delivery straight into the hands of Shardul Thakur at long-leg.

Deepak Hooda (10), who played a blinder in Punjab's first match against Rajasthan Royals, could not repeat his heroics, lobbing a simple catch

to Faf du Plessis as the team slipped to 26 for five in the seventh over.

Shahrukh Khan and Jhye Richardson (15, 22 balls, 2X4s) added 31 runs for the sixth wicket in what was the best partnership of the innings.

Murugan Ashwin (6) then added 30 runs with his TN teammate Khan to help Punjab's cause in an otherwise nightmare for them. — Agencies



Sunrisers Hyderabad players are all ears as coach Trevor Bayliss speaks during a training session. — SRH

## Tricky test for Warner & Co.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, APRIL 16

With a shaky middle-order proving to be their Achilles heel again, Sunrisers Hyderabad would be desperate to address the issue and taste first victory this season when they take on Mumbai Indians here at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on Saturday.

Hyderabad were cruising in a chase against Royal Challengers Bangalore in their previous match before their inexperienced middle-order let the match slip through the fingers.

A disappointed Sunrisers captain David Warner had criticised his

Live on TV

Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Mumbai Indians from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

batsmen for playing cross-batted shots against a left-arm spinner.

As pace bowling all-rounder Vijay Shankar has come under fire for not utilising opportunities, experienced campaigner Kedar Jadhav who can sneak in a few overs of off-spin could get his maiden SRH cap.

The opening combination of Wriddhiman Saha and Warner hasn't really worked for them either.

There have been calls for the inclusion of Kane Williamson in the XI, but the Kiwi has revealed that he is not 100 per cent fit yet.

Sunrisers lost both their games while chasing, while Mumbai's lone victory came while defending.

The slow Chepauk surface has proved tricky for the chasing teams. Warner doesn't expect the wicket to get better. "The key is to execute through the middle, try and take early wickets in the powerplay and when batting it's just to consolidate in the first six with minimal damage," said Warner.

Defending champions Mumbai Indians recov-

ered from a slow start to the season with a stunning win over Knight Riders. Rahul Chahar, Krunal Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah helped Mumbai pull a rabbit out of the hat in their thrilling win.

As the pitch is expected to assist the spinners, Rahul and Krunal will continue to play key roles for Mumbai.

A big Rohit Sharma knock is due. The Mumbai skipper made a good start against Kolkata in the previous game, but failed to convert it into a half-century.

Ishan Kishan who got out for 1 against KKR hasn't really fired for Mumbai this season.

### HEAD TO HEAD

Matches 16

MI 7 SRH 8

TIE 1

• Mumbai beat Hyderabad in Super over after match ended in a tie at Mumbai in 2019.

### FOR THE RECORD

• Krunal Pandya who has taken 48 wickets at an average of 32.20 in 71 innings needs two more to become the sixth bowler to complete 50 wickets for Mumbai.

• David Warner who has smashed 196 sixes in 144 innings needs four more to become the sixth batsman to complete a double century in IPL.

### LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

• Mumbai beat Sunrisers by 34 runs at Sharjah.

• Sunrisers beat Mumbai by 10 wickets at Sharjah.

STATS: S. PERVEZ QAISER

POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Points	Net RR
RCB	2	2	0	0	4	+0.175
CSK	2	1	1	0	2	+0.616
MI	2	1	1	0	2	+0.225
DC	2	1	1	0	2	+0.195
RR	2	1	1	0	2	+0.052
KKR	2	1	1	0	2	+0.000
PBKS	2	1	1	0	2	-0.909
SRH	2	0	2	0	0	-0.400

## I am getting paid to slog, says Chris

Mumbai, April 16: Chris Morris who played a key role in Rajasthan Royals' successful chase against Delhi Capitals on Thursday said it was nice to know that his side can win from anywhere after being down in the dumps.

"There are guys that get paid to bat and guys that get paid to slog, and I know which I am. That's why I play so much golf," he said.

"I think the last game, that close game, we took a lot as a team. For us to get as close on the day we took a lot out of that first game of ours," he said.

Morris Capitals batsmen did not handle the bounce well but Royals bowlers hit the right length.

"That happens every now and then in the game of cricket, I thought Delhi played really well. Dave played a great hand and it went out way. "I think the dew plays a part here. I think they hit the length a lot better than we did and they got a lot of guys skying with the extra bounce. But we would have taken a chase of 140-odd," he added.

Even the presence of proven performers David Miller and Morris was not assuring enough for Rajasthan Royals skipper Sanju Samson, who thought the two destructive batsmen may not be

"In the second innings there was more dew than the first innings so we had to be doing our part, because the slower ball wasn't stopping," he said. — PTI



Rajasthan Royals' David Miller (left) and Chris Morris.

## Not bowling Ash out was mistake: Ponting

Mumbai, April 16: Star New Zealand batsman Kane Williamson, who missed Sunrisers Hyderabad's first two IPL matches due to elbow injury is recovering well and is expected to attain full match-fitness "within a week".

The New Zealand captain on Friday said his "recovery is going really well", "...you know I have been focussed to get pain free as quickly as possible and we are certainly tracking really nicely and hoping to be fit and ready within the week," Williamson said. — PTI

Ashwin conceded just 14 runs and no boundaries in his three overs after being brought in following the powerplay on Thursday night when DC were

With two left-handers — David Miller (62) and Rahul Tewatia (19) — in the middle, new skipper Rishabh Pant introduced Marcus Stoinis in the attack instead of continuing with Ashwin in the 13th over. The Australian conceded 15 runs which included three fours, taking RR from 58/5 to 73/5 to effectively shift the momentum.

"That's certainly something that we will talk about when I get a chance to sit down with the team. He had bowled beautifully. Three overs, none for 14. Hadn't even conceded a boundary," Ponting said.

"He had a disappointing game in game one, but he has worked really hard in the last few days to make sure he adjusted and got things right in this game. "I thought he bowled

beautifully. Probably a mistake on our behalf, and something we will be talking about later on."

The Royals needed 58 from the last five overs. Morris smashed four sixes in the last two overs during his quick-fire 18-ball 36 to take the team home with two balls to spare.

"We probably gave him (Morris) a few too many easy balls, a few too many slot balls if you like," Ponting said.

"The length wasn't quite where it needed to be. If you look at the replay of the game, if you bowled a reasonable yorker, he didn't score off them."

"If it was back of a length, sort of, above stump high, he didn't get hold of them either, especially with pace on the ball. We talked about how to bowl to him, but the execution probably wasn't there."

Ponting

