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**WINDOWS**

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**

CHITRA

We're debating. Once we decide whether allopathy is better or Ayurveda, we'll open a healthcare centre here!

## Delhi logs 1,491 new cases

NEW DELHI: Delhi on Wednesday reported 1,491 new Covid-19 cases, the lowest since March 25 when the national capital had reported a single-day tally of 1,515 cases, according to the health bulletin issued by the Delhi government. Also, this is the fourth straight day when Delhi reported a single-day tally of less than 2,000 cases. The national capital recorded a positivity rate of 1.93 per cent in the last 24 hours, remaining below the 5 per cent mark for the fifth consecutive day. On the other hand, fatalities are also gradually dipping in the national capital, with the city reporting 130 deaths on Wednesday, taking its overall toll to 23,695.

## Covid-hit Milkha stable

CHANDIGARH: Athlete Milkha Singh, who won multiple gold medals in sprint at 1958 and 1962 Asian Games and was admitted to hospital after he contracted Covid-19, is stable on oxygen support, doctors said on Wednesday. "Mr Milkha Singh continues to be stable on oxygen support. However, he is weak and we are trying to persuade him to increase his food intake," Fortis Hospital said in a statement. "Today we have stepped him down from the ICU to a room which he is sharing with his wife Mrs. Nirmal Milkha Singh who was admitted earlier in the day with Covid pneumonia."

## Mercury crosses 40 deg C

NEW DELHI: The mercury breached the 40 degrees Celsius mark in parts of Delhi on Wednesday, even as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said a heat wave is unlikely in the national capital in the next four to five days. The IMD's Safdarjung Observatory, considered the official marker for the city, recorded a high of 39.5 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature settled at 22.6 degrees Celsius, four notches below normal. Palam, Jafarpur, Mungeshpur, Najafgarh and Pitampura recorded a maximum of 40.6 degrees Celsius, 40.9 degrees Celsius, 41.2 degrees Celsius, 41.8 degrees Celsius and 42.1 degrees Celsius, respectively. The maximum temperature is likely to remain below 40 degrees Celsius till June 1, the IMD said, which means no heat wave is predicted in the city in this period.

# OUR PLANET WILL NOT BE SAME AFTER COVID: PM MODI

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the economic impact left by Covid-19 is huge and our planet will not be the same after the pandemic.

Delivering his keynote address on the occasion of Vesak Global Celebrations on Buddha Purnima through video conference, the Prime Minister said there have been many noteworthy improvements as well over the last year like having a better understanding of the pandemic, which strengthens our strategy to fight it and having the vaccine, which is absolutely im-

portant to save lives and defeat the virus.

The Prime Minister thanked the first responders, frontline healthcare workers, doctors, nurses and volunteers for selflessly risking their lives to serve others in need everyday. He expressed condolences to those who have suffered and lost their near and dear ones.

"A year later, Covid-19 pandemic has still not left us and several nations, including India, have experienced a second wave," He remarked that this once in a lifetime pandemic has brought tragedy and suffering to the doorstep of many and has impacted every nation.

The Prime Minister said while fighting Covid-19, one must not lose sight of the other challenges faced by humanity like climate change.

Modi said that the reckless lifestyles of the present generation are threatening the future generations and resolved not to let our planet remain wounded. He reminded of Lord Buddha's emphasis on a way of life where respect for Mother Nature is paramount.

The Prime Minister announced that India is among the few large economies to be on track to achieve its Paris targets. "For India, sustainable living is not only about the

right words but also about the right actions."

He appealed to the world leaders to come together in the fight against forces trying to spread hate, terror and mindless violence.

Remarking that the life of Gautama Buddha was about peace, harmony and co-existence, the Prime Minister said there are still forces today whose existence depends on spreading hate, terror and mindless violence.

"Such forces do not believe in liberal democratic principles," the PM said and gave a call for all those who believe in hu-

manity to come together and defeat terror and radicalisation.

"Lord Buddha's teachings and the importance given to social justice can become a global unifying force."

Members of the Mahasangha, the Prime Ministers of Nepal and Sri Lanka, Union Ministers Prahlad Singh and Kiren Rijju, Secretary General of International Buddhist Confederation, Venerable Doctor Dhammapiya were also at the event.

The Prime Minister said Vesak is a day to celebrate the life of Lord Buddha and to reflect on the noble ideals and sacrifices he made for the betterment of our planet.

# Delhi to get Sputnik V vaccine, says Kejriwal

Why isn't India buying vaccines, asks Delhi Chief Minister

NEW DELHI

SPUTNIK V's manufacturers have agreed to supply the Russian anti-Covid vaccine to Delhi, but the quantity is yet to be decided, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced on Wednesday.

"We are in touch with the makers of Sputnik V. They assure that they will give us vaccines, but the quantity is yet to be decided. Our officials and the representatives of the vaccine manufacturers met on Tuesday too," he said.

Kejriwal told the press that the vaccination process for the 18-44 age group has been suspended for the last four days as there has been no clarity when the next supply of anti-Covid jabs will be supplied to Delhi.

Covaxin stock for 45 and above age groups has also finished and only Covishield doses are being administered at government vaccination centres, he said.

The Chief Minister also said that mucormycosis infections have continued to surge in the capital and 620 cases are being treated at over 15 gov-



ernment and private hospitals, as of Wednesday.

Earlier, Kejriwal said Team India has to come together to fight coronavirus and urged the Centre to procure vaccines and distribute them to states. In an online briefing, Kejriwal claimed India delayed starting its vaccination programme by six months.

"World over, countries had started vaccinating their people. But in India, rather than vaccinating our own people, the vaccines were sent abroad. Had we started the vaccination programme earlier, we could have saved

many people from the second wave," he said.

Kejriwal claimed Centre asked states to procure the vaccines on their own. "Every CM has tried to procure vaccines but no state has been able to arrange them. Many states took out global tenders but failed," he said.

The chief minister said states are ready to support the Centre in the fight against coronavirus. "We cannot afford to lose this fight. If Centre will lose the fight, it won't be BJP but India that will lose the fight," he said, while urging the Centre to procure the vaccines and distribute them to states. States cannot afford to compete among themselves to buy coronavirus vaccines - any more than being forced to buy individual stores of weapons and ammunition in case of an attack by Pakistan, Kejriwal said.

"Why isn't this country buying vaccines? We can't leave it to individual states. We are at war against COVID-19. If Pakistan attacks India, will the centre leave states to defend themselves? Will Uttar Pradesh buy its own tanks or Delhi its own guns?" the Chief Minister asked.

# Subodh Jaiswal takes charge as new CBI chief

NEW DELHI

IPS officer Subodh Kumar Jaiswal on Wednesday took charge as the new Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

He took charge a day after his name was cleared for the top post of the country's premiere investigative agency.

On Tuesday, in an order, the Department of Personnel and Training said: "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has, based on the panel recommended by the Committee, approved the appointment of Subodh Kumar Jaiswal, IPS, (Maharashtra 1985) as Director, CBI for a period of two years from the date of assumption of the charge of the office or until further orders whichever is earlier."

Jaiswal was appointed as CBI Director a day after the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-headed committee including Chief Justice of India NV. Ramana and Leader of Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury discussed the names of the candidates for the new CBI chief.



Before joining as the new director of CBI, Jaiswal was the Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force.

He has also served as Maharashtra's Director General of Police and had a stint in India's external intelligence agency, R&AW. The CBI had got an acting Director in the form of Praveen Sinha after the term of R.K. Shukla ended on February 3 this year.

CBI spokesperson RC Joshi said that Jaiswal holds a Bachelor's Degree in English (Honours), Economics and Political Science and Masters in Business Administration.

He said that Jaiswal has served in his cadre holding various positions including SP (Gadchiroli, Aurangabad and Osmanabad), DIG, Incharge Special Investigation Team (SIT), Additional CP, Anti Terrorism Squad, Mumbai; Additional CP, Central Range, Mumbai; IGP Amravati Range and Commissioner of Police, Brihan Mumbai. He was DGP, Maharashtra for nearly two years from February, 2019 before joining the post of DG, CISF.

## Uttarakhand's global tender for Covid vaccine draws a blank

DEHRADUN: The Uttarakhand government said it extended the deadline for the global tender to May 31 since no manufacturer has participated in the tender process. The Uttarakhand government has extended the deadline for Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers to respond to its global tender to buy the life-saving shots by about a week due to the absence of a response from any manufacturer. The first deadline for the tender floated on May 15 expired on May 25 and has been extended, a senior state government official said on Wednesday. "As no manufacturer participated in the tender process till the deadline of May 25, we have extended it till May 31," Uttarakhand's director general health, Dr Tripti Bahuguna, said.

Several states floated global tenders after the Centre abruptly changed its vaccine procurement approach on April 21 and told states that they would have to get the vaccines from the manufacturers to vaccinate people in the 18-44 age group.

# Yaas ravages Bengal, Odisha

## Over 20 lakh people evacuated; four dead

BALASORE/KOLKATA/RANCHI

CYCLONE 'Yaas', packing winds of up to 130-145 kmph, whiplashed the country's eastern coasts on Wednesday, dumping heavy rain, damaging houses and farmlands, and leaving at least four persons dead - three in Odisha and one in Bengal -- officials said. Thick sheets of rain blurred the vast coastline, as the cyclone made landfall around 9 am near Dhamra port in Odisha, with surging waters swamping the mud-and-thatch houses in the low-lying areas, where a massive evacuation drive has been undertaken to move more than 20 lakh people to safety.

The storm, which had weakened during the afternoon, had left the coastal states on edge, with the Bengal government claiming

that at least one crore people have been affected by the calamity thus far, as it hollered on its destructive path towards Jharkhand. 'Yaas' is the second cyclonic storm to hit India within a week after 'Tauktae' tore into its western coast, causing death and destruction.

Seawater inundated several villages in Bahanaga and Remuna blocks in the Balasore district, and Dhamra and Basudevpur in the Bhadrak district, Odisha's Special Relief Commissioner PK Jena said. The administration, with the help of the locals, is taking measures to drain out the saline water from the villages, Jena explained. Heavy rainfall in the Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district sparked fears of a flash flood in the Budhabalang river.



Rough sea during landfall of cyclone near the Bay of Bengal in East Midnapore district

# 'Vaccines give protection from severe illness against variants'

NEW DELHI

VACCINES have been found to be effective in combating mutated variants and protect the vaccinated individual from severe illnesses, hospitalization, or death, reveals a study conducted by a Delhi-based Hospital.

The study was conducted amid several reported cases of infections after partial or complete vaccination, occurring in a small percentage of people. Concerns have been raised on the efficacy of vaccination against the mutated variants of Covid-19.

The study, conducted by Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, that include 69 symptomatic healthcare workers working at the hospital, who were tested positive for Covid-19 after their vaccination with the Covishield vaccine during the first 100 days of the vaccination drive earlier this year.

The study analysed nasopharyngeal samples for genome sequencing, in collaboration with the National Centre for Disease Control

(NCDC). The study was conducted between January 16 and April 24.

"Genome Sequencing is the key test to identify the nature of the virus and the variants that may emerge.

"Currently, this facility is available in only 10 select Government organizations, but such testing facilities are now being increased in the near future by the Government of India," the hospital said in a statement.

"Amongst 69 people, 51 were fully vaccinated with two doses (73.91 per cent) and the remaining 18 (26.09 per cent) were partially

immunized with a single dose, prior to acquiring the infection. "The predominant infections occurred from B.1.617.2 lineage (47.83 per cent), followed by B.1 and B.1.1.7 strains. There were only two hospital admissions (2.89 per cent) for minor symptoms, but no ICU admissions and deaths, from this group," said Anupam Sibal, Group Medical Director and Senior Pediatric Gastroenterologist of Apollo Hospitals.



# Will help people even if I face thousand PILs: Gambhir

PURNA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

FACING flak from the Delhi High court over distribution of Covid-19 drugs, BJP MP Gautam Gambhir on Wednesday said he will continue to save the lives of people even if thousands of PILs are filed against him.

The court had on Monday directed the drug controller to inquire into the issue of politicians buying COVID-19 drugs in bulk amid shortages and observed that while Gambhir must have been distributing the medicines to the best of his intention, the gesture unintentionally did a disservice.

The East Delhi BJP MP said he did what he felt was necessary to serve the people and was ready to face any punishment. "The medicines I distributed were the need of that hour. Not one

even if thousands of PILs are filed against me, I will continue to serve the people and try to save their lives," Gambhir said in a reply to a question at a press conference.

Gambhir said he will accept the court's decision and asserted he would do it again whenever such an occasion arrives.

"Questions should also be asked why medicines were not available at shops in Delhi and why there was shortage of hospital beds and oxygen. I joined politics to serve the people which is what I did," he said.

Gambhir has been involved in distribution of oxygen cylinders, concentrators and Covid medicine Fabiflu to people in his constituency. The Delhi Police under the court orders also sought his statement in this regard. "Gautam Gambhir must have done it with best of his intentions. We



are not doubting his intentions. He has been a national player of our country. Our question is whether it is a responsible behaviour when you know the medicine is in short supply," the court observed.

"We are not doubting his intentions but the way he has gone about it, he has actually done a disservice, unintentionally may be.

This was not the way that you buy from the market so many strips, certainly not," the court said. Gambhir said he will do everything needed to save the lives of people and stressed that humanity is the greatest 'dharma' for him. The PIL filed by one Deepak Singh, sought lodging of FIR on the allegations that politicians were able to procure in huge quantity and distribute COVID-19 medicines even as patients were running from pillar to post to get them.

While the capital is already battling the deadly second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, delay in action against vector-borne diseases by the civic authorities could prove another challenge for the people of Delhi.

According to the Delhi Municipal Corporations (MCD), so far 25 dengue cases have been reported in the city, of which 2 cases of dengue were reported in February, 5 in March, 10 in April and as many as 8 cases have been registered till May 22. This is the highest number of dengue cases in the capital in the January-May period, since 2013. However, no death has been reported in the city due to dengue so far this year, civic authorities claimed.

Apart from dengue, as many as 8 cases of malaria and 4 of chikungunya have also been registered during the same period.



# Womenia

TWEET PATROL



**URMILA MATONDKAR**  
**@URMILAMATONDKAR**

“Never regret being a good person to wrong people. Your behavior says everything about you, and their behavior says enough about them”  
#Buddha #BudhaPurnima



## Reasons why you should get vaccinated

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt lives across the world, it is critical to vaccinate people and break the chain.

L Sanjay, General Physician at Apollo Spectra Hospital Kondapur Hyderabad said, “Vaccination is an imperative step in managing this pandemic, achieving herd immunity, and protecting a population from a future outbreak. Israel has now been able to relax some Covid-19 restrictions as a result of a very successful and efficient mass vaccination drive.”

The following are reasons why people should get vaccinated at the earliest:

### Reduced infection risk

After receiving the first dose of the vaccine, the body begins to produce antibodies that will fight coronavirus if people become infected. People may still become infected after being vaccinated, but once a majority of the population has been vaccinated, herd immunity is achieved, and the risk of infection will reduce even further. As a result, vaccination can provide community protection while also reducing virus transmission.

### Protection against severe illness

Several studies have found that most COVID-19 vaccines are effective in preventing severe illness. As a result, if people get vaccinated and contract coronavirus, they are unlikely to become seriously ill. In comparison to those who are not vaccinated and become infected, people will only have mild to moderate symptoms. The population can almost eliminate your risk of hospitalization and mortality by getting fully vaccinated.

### Protection of unborn or newborn babies

According to a new study, expectant mothers who were vaccinated produced antibodies that were passed on to their unborn child via the placenta. It has also been demonstrated that the antibodies pass through breast milk. This demonstrates that newborns have some immunity to the virus from the moment they are born. This is critical because young children cannot receive the vaccine and are still at risk of contracting the virus.

ceive the vaccine and are still at risk of contracting the virus.

### Reconnecting with family and friends

Those who have been vaccinated can visit their loved ones who have been vaccinated as well. After waiting for the recommended time for immunity to be built, with vaccines, people can re-establish in-person meetings that have been cut off since the pandemic began, and they can meet their loved ones. Furthermore, if people are fully vaccinated, they do not need to be quarantined if they have had contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and are not showing any symptoms.

### Vaccination does not cause COVID-19

People who get vaccinated will not get COVID-19 because the vaccine does not contain a living Covid-19 virus. People may experience symptoms such as fever, fatigue, or a sore arm, but because the body is developing antibodies that will protect them from the actual virus if they become infected after being exposed to it.

### Young and healthy people are also at risk

COVID-19 affects everyone, not just the elderly or the sick. Infants, children, and young adults are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 infection, which is why everyone over the age of 18 must be immunized. Both newborns and children can test positive for the coronavirus, but in most cases, the symptoms are mild or non-existent, and they recover. Serious cases, however, have occurred. Symptoms in children include fever, cough, pneumonia, sore throat, diarrhea, and extreme fatigue. It is important to get vaccinated so that the virus does not infect the young and vulnerable.

### Vaccinate to protect the vulnerable

One reason to vaccinate is to protect the more vulnerable population, which includes young children, immune-compromised adults, and pregnant women. These people are relying on others to keep them from becoming infected with the virus.

## The goodness of Jamuns



Naini Setalvad

‘All good things come in small packages.’ I was a skeptic when it came to this phrase but after being introduced the scrumptious purple berries called “Jamun”, I must say I am a believer. Who needs the other imported berries when we have the scrumptious jamun grown in India itself. My childhood summers would go by eagerly awaiting the arrival of jamuns. Once they were in season, there was no stopping me. I would devour this fleshy fruit, oblivious to its miraculous health benefits. Now that I am aware, it is imperative that I share them with you.

I always advocate jamun to my clients with low iron levels as this purple hued fruit plays a vital role in treating anemias. It is packed with three super-nutrients: Iron, Folate and Vitamin C. These work in tandem to increase hemoglobin levels and thereby en-

**Jamun, also known as Java plum and black plum, is a colourful summer fruit with several benefits. Jamun is a pretty fruit with rich color and sweet taste. The fruit is popular for its deep blue or purple colour. Jamun has several medicinal and health benefits. It is one of the best home remedies for stomach pain, diabetes and arthritis**

sureing adequate oxygen is supplied throughout our bodies.

I can never get enough of this juicy fruit. Not only does it satiate my sweet craving but in fact has the property to control blood sugar. The fruit, seed and leaves of the jamun are greatly beneficial for Diabetics. They have shown to enhance in-



sulin activity and sensitivity, keeping blood sugar levels low. Now dare anyone say, “Diabetics can’t have fruits.” The reason I relish this fruit so much is its unique astringent flavour. Besides being delicious on the tongue, it is also a boon for your heart. Very few know that this fruit is high in potassium; the blood pressure lowering mineral. Its rich fibre content ensures



squeaky clean arteries, further reducing the risk of hypertension and strokes.

This pandemic has ensured that the word ‘infection’ is engrained in our subconscious. Let me give you some respite by informing that along with all its wonderful properties, Jamun also helps fight infections. It contains compounds like Gallic acid, maleic acid and oxalic acid; that

are anti-bacterial in nature. They are especially effective in alleviating symptoms of common cold, coughs and asthma.

Phew! Sounds like Jamun is quite the all-rounder. But hold on, I am not done bragging about this fruit just yet. It is important to note that jamun acts as a digestive cure when it comes to dysentery and diarrhea. It also helps reduce ulcers in the mouth. Packed with

anti-oxidants, vitamin C, Vitamin A and flavonoids, this fruit combats free radical damage and prevents inflammation in our body.

I am cannot stress enough on how nature holds the cure to all our ailments. Eating fresh, seasonal, local produce is the best way to tap into nature’s pharmacy. So what are you waiting for? Go grab The miraculous Indian Jamuns now!

### BEAUTY FUNDA

## Say no to dark circles with simple remedies

Dark circles are the most common problem faced by many people. If once, you are attacked with these Panda eyes, you will be repeatedly hearing ‘you look tired’ concerns. Nowadays when we all are staying at home and got attached to mobiles and laptops till late night it is imperative that we take proper care of our eyes. Watching TV late at night or for long hours can also cause dark circles. Taming dark circles is difficult, but with proper care and treatment, it’s possible to lessen them over time. Here are some of the best home remedies for dark circles under our eyes.

### Coconut oil

Take 2 drops of coconut oil on a cotton pad and wipe the cotton pad on your under-eye area to spread the oil. Allow it to stay for 3 hours to let your skin absorb the oil. Now, wash your eyes with lukewarm water and touch it dry with a towel.

### Aloe vera gel

Extract the gel from an Aloe Vera leaf using a spoon and collect it in a bowl. Refrigerate the gel for at least 2 hours and now apply the gel on your under-eye area and leave it overnight. Wash it off in the morning.

### Green tea bags

Take 2 used green tea bags and soak them in a bowl of water for a while.



Store the tea bags in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours. Place the cool tea bags on your eyes and leave it for 10 minutes. Discard the tea bags and wash your eyes with water.

### Mint leaves and rosehip oil

Crush a few mint leaves and make them in the form of a paste. Add 2 drops of rosehip oil to the paste and mix well. Apply the paste on the dark circles and gently massage for 10 minutes and then wash off with cold water.

### Coffee and oil

Take 2 tablespoons of organic ground coffee powder in a bowl and add 2 drops of a carrier oil like coconut oil and stir well. Dip a cotton ball in the mixture and apply it under your eyes. Keep it for 15 minutes and wash off using a mild cleanser.

### QUIK TIP



## CASUAL WEAR

Casual wear is a fashion style appropriate for everyday use. It prioritizes comfort and leisure making it simple to look stylish. This is a relaxed and informal style very popular today. From leggings and sweats to dresses and jumpers, these cute and casual outfit ideas will ensure you look fantastic and feel comfortable for work from home.

### NEWS ROUNDUP

## Sonakshi on social media ban buzz: Last post has to be a selfie

Sonakshi Sinha on Wednesday reacted to speculations that Instagram and Twitter could be banned, saying the last post one shares has to be a selfie. In her new Instagram picture, the actress gives a half turn at the camera with her hair stylishly falling on one side of her face. She wears a black vest for a casual impact, and reveals a hint of a smile.

“If it’s gonna be the last post... has to be a selfie,” she wrote.

The deadline passed for big social media platforms Twitter, Facebook and others to enforce measures that the Central Government has mandated in new guidelines.

On the work front, Sonakshi will be seen in “Bulbul Tarang”, which will have a digital release.

She also has the film “Bhuj: The Pride Of India” lined up where she will be seen alongside actors Ajay Devgn, Sanjay Dutt and Nora Fatehi. Besides this, the actress is gearing up for her web series debut with “Fallen”, where she plays a cop.



## Sun Screen Day

Sun screen defends the skin from damaging ultraviolet rays by forming a protective barrier – used properly, sun screen can help prevent skin cancer. Exposure to the sun also damages the skin and can worsen signs of ageing, so wearing sun screen will also keep your skin looking younger.

Use Sun Screen Day as a reminder to make sure you are properly protecting yourself from the sun, such as by keeping out of the rays at the hottest time of the day (11 am – 2 pm), drinking plenty of liquids and, of course, wearing sun screen!

Of course, Sun Screen Day has been designed to make sure that people are aware of the importance of wearing sun screen. Sunburn can increase your risk of skin cancer, and so it is imperative that everyone recognises just how pivotal it is to wear sun screen. One of the biggest problems is that a lot of people feel that this is something that they only need to concern themselves with when they go on vacation. However, this could not be further from the truth. After all, even when the weather is cold outside, the sun is still shining, even if you cannot feel it on your skin, and so it can always cause damage. This is why it is vital to make wearing sun screen part of your daily routine. It is also why it is imperative to have a day whereby we educate people about sun screen and why it is important. In fact, a lot of people believe that if they have a tan, they are going to be protected from the harmful effects of the sun. Again, this is not the case.

If you are to protect yourself and use sun screen correctly, you need to make sure that you understand SPF and star ratings. SPF stands for sun protection factor. This is a measure of the amount of UVB – ultraviolet B radiation – protection that you are going to get from the product in question. SPFs are rated on a scale of two to 50+, with the latter offering the strongest level of protection. For the amount of UVA – ultraviolet A radiation – protection that sunscreens offer, you are going to need to look at the star rating. The more stars, the better protection. These are two of the most critical factors that you need to consider when you are purchasing sun sc



THIS DAY IN HISTORY  
THE HANS INDIA



# UP Minister's brother resigns from university post after furore

LUCKNOW

ARUN Dwiwedi, brother of UP minister for basic education Satish Dwiwedi, has resigned from the post of assistant professor in the Siddhartha University in Siddhartha Nagar. Dwiwedi resigned from his post on Wednesday citing 'personal reasons' ad vice chancellor Dr Surendra Dubey said he had accepted the same. The resignation is seen as an attempt to quell the furore over the issue. It may be re-

called that a controversy had erupted over the appointment of Arun Dwiwedi as assistant professor in the Siddhartha University. Arun had been appointed as assistant professor in the psychology department from the (EWS) economically weaker section) quota. According to reports, there were two posts of assistant professor for the subject of Psychology. While Dr Harendra Sharma has been appointed from the



OBC quota, Dr Arun Kumar Dwiwedi has been appointed in EWS (Economically Weaker General Candidate) category. Interestingly, Vice-Chancellor Surendra Dubey's term was coming to an end on May 21, but the government has extended his term a day earlier on May 20, until the appointment of the regular vice-chancellor. Dr. Arun Dwiwedi was given the appointment letter by the Registrar of Siddhartha University last week. Vice chancellor

Dr Surendra Dubey said that they had received about 150 applications from which 10 were shortlisted on basis of merit. "The ten candidates were called for interview and Arun Dwiwedi ranked second. We were not aware of his relationship with the minister," the vice chancellor had told reporters. UP Minister Satish Dwiwedi had denied exerting any influence for his brother's appointment and had said that his brother lived independently.

Meanwhile, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra had alleged in her Facebook post that while thousands of teachers are waiting for their jobs, the state education minister had found 'opportunity in adversity' and managed a job for his brother. She termed the incident as a joke on the poor and weaker sections of society Priyanka also asked if chief minister Yogi Adityanath would take cognisance of the matter and take action.

## Bypolls to 5 Uttar Pradesh Assembly seats unlikely

LUCKNOW

BYE-ELECTIONS to five assembly seats that fell vacant following deaths of BJP legislators in the second Corona wave, are unlikely to be held. According to an election official, "Section 151A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 mandates the Election Commission to fill the casual vacancies in the Houses of Parliament and State Legislatures through bye-elections within six months from the date of occurrence of the vacancy, provided that the remainder of the term of a member in relation to a vacancy is one year or more." The remaining term of the state assembly is now less than one year. The five BJP MLAs who passed away after contracting Covid include Ramesh Chandra Diwakar (Auraiya), Suresh Chandra Srivastava (Lucknow-west), Kesar Singh (Bareilly), Dal Bahadur Kori (Rae Bareilly) and Vijay Kashyap (Muzaffarnagar). A sixth assembly seat headed for bypoll is Suar in Rampur, following disqualification of SP legislator Abdullah Azam, son of senior SP leader Azam Khan on charges of discrepancy in declaration of his date of birth. The matter has been pending in court even though Vidhan Sabha records show the seat



is vacant. Official sources in UP Assembly said that Speaker Hriday Narayan Dixit would soon inform the Election Commission about the six vacant seats. As a rule, election must be held in a vacant

seat within six months. This means that bye-elections will have to be held by November (if the Speaker notifies the EC this month) - less than four months before the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections next year.

## 14 black fungus cases reported in Gurugram

GURUGRAM

CASES of black fungus are increasing in Gurugram with every passing day. During the past 24 hours the district health department has confirmed 14 new cases of the infection. With this the total figure has risen to 170. These include patients living in outer districts and states apart from Gurugram. Those who are being treated in various hospitals of the district, according to the district health department. The city has recorded four suspected deaths due to black fungus in Gurugram. However, none of these have been confirmed by the district health department. Dr Amitabh Malik, Chief, ENT department, Paras Hospital, Gurugram said, this infection is happening to many diabetes patients battling Covid-19 and those who have weak immunity. "When a diabetic patient has Corona, he is given steroids which weakens the immunity and increases sugar levels. This is not a new form of infection. This includes people who have



health problems or take medicines that reduce the body's ability to fight germs and disease. These generally affect people with diabetes, cancer or people who have had organ transplants," Dr Malik added. According to doctors, the common symptoms associated with the disease are headache, facial pain, nasal congestion, loss of vision or eye pain,

swelling of the cheeks and eyes. However, no cases of white fungus have been reported so far in the district. Dr. Shashank Vashisth, Senior Consultant, ENT Department of Columbia Asia Hospital, said that white fungus is a fungus named Candida that is white in color. It also affects those people whose immunity is weak.

## AMU to hold online exams in June

ALIGARH

THE Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) will hold examinations in online mode only from June 22. According to an official release, the examination of all first-semester undergraduate and postgraduate students admitted in session 2020-21 at the Aligarh Muslim University will be held next month while for the students of final / intermediate semester will commence from June 1. However, the schedule of examinations for students admitted in the faculty of medicine, Unani medicine, engineering and technology, law and management

studies and research will be notified separately. According to a notification released by the Controller of Examination, the online teaching of first semester for all students of BA / B Sc / B Com / MA / M.Sc / M Com, admitted in session 2020-21, will continue till June 15. The examination schedule of all students will be notified on the Controller's website. "The departments shall notify the details and timings of the online examination and the app/software to be used for conducting the same along with meeting ID and password, if required, on the homepage of the department, the release said.

## Groom tests Covid +ve, lands in quarantine centre

HAMIRPUR

A groom who tested positive for Covid has ended up at a quarantine centre in Hamirpur district. The incident took place in Bakcha village under Sisolar police circle where the wedding procession of Dharmendra was all set to leave for the bride's residence at Asgha Tamaura village. Just when the procession was leaving, the Covid test report of the groom came in and

showed that he was Covid positive. The wedding procession was stopped by a police team and the groom was taken to a quarantine centre in the district. Dr Anil Sachan, in-charge, Maudaha community health centre, said, "The groom was admitted to a quarantine centre and his condition is stable." The family members said that they would reschedule the wedding once Dharmendra recovered completely.

## Yogi visits all 18 divisions in UP to review Covid situation



LUCKNOW

UTTAR Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath has toured all 18 divisions in Uttar Pradesh and reviewed Covid management in 40 out of the 75 districts. According to a government spokesman, the chief minister, who had tested Covid positive on April 14 and was in home quarantine till April 30, began touring the state to review the Covid situation. During his visits, he went to Covid command centres, hospitals and villages where he

interacted with the local people and took their feedback about the arrangements made for Covid treatment. He also held meetings with officials, doctors and elected representatives. The chief minister met monitoring committees and interacted with people in containment zones. "During his divisional reviews, the chief minister praised the efforts of health workers, police officials, ASHA and anganwadi workers and encouraged them to continue working for the welfare

of people," said the spokesperson. Even while he was in home quarantine, the chief minister held virtual meetings almost every day and interacted with officials and experts on the Covid situation. He monitored efforts being made to strengthen the medical infrastructure in the state and prepare for the third wave of the pandemic. "As soon as he tested negative, he went to inaugurate the temporary Covid hospital at Awadh Shilp Gram, built by DRDO, in Lucknow," the spokesperson said.

## New IT rules not seeking accountability: Shiv Sena

NEW DELHI

SHIV Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi on Wednesday slammed the government saying that the new IT rules instead of seeking accountability have chosen to control social media platforms by bypassing all privacy norms of individuals, violating the basic Right to Privacy enshrined in India's constitutional commitments to its citizens. Chaturvedi said that she hopes the courts will take a "nuanced and balanced call" on this issue. Speaking to IANS, Chaturvedi, who is a Rajya Sabha member, said "Every country is bound to create its law mechanism to ensure accountability of platforms." She said that over the years she have seen how these platforms have become tools for propaganda, fake news and manipulated narrative without being answerable to the authorities. "These platforms adhere to norms set by regions like EU, Australia, Singapore. US even summoned Mark Zuckerberg in publicly broadcasted questioning to understand their role in election outcomes. WhatsApp has been breaching all privacy norms of Indian citizens while looking at India as a market to profiteer," she said. "However, the new IT rules instead of seeking accountability has chosen to control these platforms



by bypassing all privacy norms of individuals, violating the basic Right to Privacy enshrined in India's constitutional commitments to its citizens. Hope the courts will take a nuanced and balanced call on this issue," the Shiv Sena leader added. Her remarks came after Facebook-owned WhatsApp on Wednesday filed a lawsuit against the Indian government in the Delhi High Court, saying that user privacy is in its DNA and requiring messaging apps to "trace" chats undermines people's right to privacy. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) had asked social media platforms to abide by the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 by May 25, or face strict action. The tussle between Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook and the Union government has reached its nadir, with cops raiding Twitter offices during the pandemic earlier this week over the ToolKit controversy.

## Modi govt's North Korean approach to free speech: Singhvi

NEW DELHI

AFTER WhatsApp filed a lawsuit against the Indian government in the Delhi High Court, saying that user privacy is in its DNA and requiring messaging apps to "trace" chats undermines people's right to privacy, Congress has termed the social media rules issued by the government as "draconian" and said it's "Modi government's North Korean approach to free speech". Abhishek Manu Singhvi, senior spokesperson of the party, said, "The new intermediary rules issued by the Modi government are dire, drastic and draconian in nature. The issuance of new intermediary guidelines reflect that the BJP government is suf-

fering from the 'Big Daddy' syndrome." The Congress said the new rules are a severe blow to the vibrant culture of discourse, deliberation and dissent in India, that the Modi government seeks to implement today, without recall or modification and despite unanimous condemnation from all segments of civil and political society. It is the "Modi government's North Korean approach to free speech." "Free speech and expression is like oxygen. Without it, humanity and democracy cannot survive. Having diminished the latter so much during COVID, we beseech the Modi government not to emasculate the former. Let us not forget that encryption is the technological backbone of pri-

vacy. This is particularly true of messaging apps, the most important subset of social media and digital platforms," Singhvi said. He said it is an attempt by the Modi government to capture and subordinate every pillar and agency of freedom of thought and expression. Having successfully done so in respect of constitutional and statutory bodies like CBI, ED, EC and several others, along with subjugation of the 'Godi Media', Singhvi said. "Modiji has now turned his attention to social media and social media platforms to annihilate all vestiges of free speech, thought, and expression," Singhvi added. The Congress leader said that the dictatorial regimes, including the

North Korean one, would blush at the brazenness with which the Modi government has done so. The Modi-led BJP government's pathshala should be the new go-to place for all dictators to hone their skills in controlling free speech and thought, he said. "When these Intermediary Rules were published on 25.05.2021, the heart and soul of their highly objectionable approach was reflected in Rule 4, which would be actionable after three months, ie from today. During this time, every protest, every treaty, every demand and every request for recall and modification of such asphyxiating rules have been ignored by this obstinate government and thrown into the dustbin," he further said.





# Why this inexplicable opaqueness on Covid 2.0 status?

SOMEWHERE the administration seems to be slipping in handling the issues. At a time when the State is grappling with second wave of Covid-19, the fate of about 6,000 Corona patients admitted in various teaching hospitals has been put at stake as junior doctors went on strike.

The students and health care workers are demanding that the Government issues a GO that provides ex-gratia for martyred healthcare workers and allotment of separate hospital in the State where these workers and their family members can avail free Covid-19 treatment. They are also demanding incentives as promised by the government with effect from January 2020 and not 2021.

The fact is that these healthcare workers have been putting their lives and the lives of their family members at risk and attending on Covid-19 patients. The health department should have taken the initiative and given them some firm assurances after discussing with the Chief Minister since it involves policy decision well before they were forced to go on strike.

The State administration has very senior and experienced officers. But unfortunately, they did not act as fast as they should have. The very fact that the Chief Minister in a statement on Wednesday said that if junior doctors' demands are justified, the government has no objection to

get them solved indicates that the bureaucracy did not take the issue to the notice of the Chief Minister till they went on strike.

If they had discussed the problems of these junior doctors with Chief Minister and conveyed the decisions to these healthcare workers, the strike could have been avoided. The bureaucracy needs to recall what we all studied during school days, "A stitch in time saves nine." A situation where they were forced to go on strike during this crucial period would not have arisen.

In a quick move, the Chief Minister resolved the issue by announcing that their honorarium would be increased by 15 percent and instructed that

if junior doctors or their family members should be provided better medical facilities free of cost in NIMS. He also directed that the ex-gratia amount be immediately handed over to the junior doctors.

The administration would have emerged as a magnanimous body if they had attended to these issues before the doctors went on strike. Apparently, there is some communication gap between the babus and the CMO. Why is this gap is something the CMO needs to probe and rectify. There are many issues where the Government has failed to ensure implementation of the decisions it had taken in Covid-19 management.

There was black marketing

of Remdesivir injections, private hospitals never implemented the rates fixed by the government for various procedures during Covid treatment and continue to fleece the patients and refuse to handover dead bodies till their coffers are filled. Ambulances too never followed the rates recommended by the Government and no action was taken against them.

The most intriguing aspect is that there was an announcement that the administration had issued notices to 26 erring hospitals but their names were not made public. Why this secrecy no one knows. People expect greater transparency in administration in deeds not in words.



## Nehru legacy: Time to count its blessings

GIDUGU RUDRA RAJU

MAY 27 marks the 57th death anniversary of free India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who is rightly hailed as the 'Architect of Modern India'. The gambit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to malign and run down the immense contribution of Nehru is bound to end up in a major fiasco. It is not only difficult, but even impossible, for the nation to forget the Nehruvian legacy. Nehru laid the foundation for transformational changes, paving the way for India's eventual emergence as a major economic hub on the global centrestage.

Nehru spent the best part of his life in prison. When he was undergoing imprisonment and suffering, there was no hope that India would be free and he would lead the newly-liberated nation. It was his self-effacing service to the nation that made Nehru the greatest Son of India.

When he did become the First Prime Minister, he worked relentlessly and without rest for national progress and advancement. Indeed, the nearly 18 years of his tenure, first as Interim Prime Minister from September, 1946, and then from Indian Independence on August 15, 1947, till his demise on May 27, 1964, bear witness to his record of unparalleled Service to the Nation. In fact, Nehru prided in calling himself as the Prime Servant of the Nation. That was the humility of the man, which stands out in sharp contrast to someone for whom the nation's history begins only in 2014.

As Congress Odisha incharge, I have seen how Pandit Nehru laid the foundation-stone for the State Capital of Bhubaneswar, for Paradip Port, Rourkela Steel Plant, Hirakud Dam and ever so many visible symbols of development in the State. Can anyone, in a proper frame of mind, deny or refuse to recognize, the role of Pandit Nehru as the architect of modern India?

Thanks to the vision and statesmanship of Pandit Nehru, India has today emerged as the leader in the space programme and as the Nuclear Power, globally. It was Nehru, who laid the foundations for the Indian space and nuclear programmes.

Thanks again to Nehru, the nation took giant strides and achieved transformational changes. India undertook several revolutions simultaneously, like the agricultural, industrial and technological revolutions.

India lives in her villages, as Gandhiji once famously said and it was for this reason that Nehru developed agriculture, by boosting irrigation facilities with Bhakra Nangal, Hirakud and Nagarjunasagar Dams. In a country, where not even a pin was produced, Nehru set up heavy industries. He developed educational institutions, with a number of universities, IITs, IIMs, besides achieving expansion in school education. Nehru also focused on Micro, Small and Medium Industries and promoted Khadi & Village Industries Commission. To realise Gandhiji's dream of Gram Swaraj, he started the Panchayati raj institutions at the grassroots level, as the third tier of Indian democracy, after Parliament at the national level and the Legislatures at the States level.

Indian Independence brought in its wake the horrors of Partition. There were there largescale massacres on both sides of the borders, both in the West and the East. While largescale refugees poured into India, large sections of Minorities, who decided by choice to stay back in India, there was an insistent and imperative need to instill a sense of security and confidence among them.

When India was celebrating her Independence on August 15, 1947, Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi was away in the far-off Noakhali, where Hindus were being targeted. It was Gandhiji's fast-unto-death that brought both the warring communities to lay down arms at his feet. This is in contrast

to the Politics of Hate being propagated on what is described as Muslim Appeasement that is wrongly and wantonly attributed to the Congress and its cherished leadership.

Gandhiji conquered hate, not with counter-hate campaign, but with love. That showed the way forward for India. The Hindus, who constitute the majority of the population, and the Muslims, who are the largest Minority in India, live in peace and brotherhood. That is the shining symbol of Secularism, which is now sought to be rejected and run down for purely political and partisan ends.

That was also the time when Pakistan launched its first-ever aggression against India in October, 1947, just in two months since the Indian Independence. Soon after, Gandhiji fell to the assassin's bullets on January 30, 1948, as a result of the vicious and virulent Hate Campaign unleashed by the detractors of the Congress.

When the fledgling nation was being buffeted by such stormy events, Pandit Jawaharlal steered the ship of the nation, bringing peace and stability, which were the necessary precondition for progress and development. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave us the sterling ideals of National Unity and Integrity, Democracy, Socialism, Secularism, Non-Alignment and World Peace.

At a critical and crucial juncture, when India, at her Independence, was struggling to stave-off challenges to her existence, National Unity and Integrity assumed paramount importance. That was also the time when Pandit Nehru not only laid the foundation for democracy in the country, but nurtured it. Democracy has all but disappeared in several countries, which became free at about the same time as India. But in India, if democracy has taken roots, which enabled the rise to power of Prime Minister Modi, credit goes to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Democracy is meaningful only when there is social and economic equality and that is why Nehru paved the way for a Socialist Pattern of Society, which became the national credo. To emotionally integrate two important communities, Nehru employed Secularism, which enabled the nation to achieve Unity in Diversity. Secularism is the weaving thread of India that holds the nation together and it became envy of the world.

To pull the world back from the brink of a possible nuclear catastrophe posed by the division of the world into two Power Blocs, the Western and the Eastern Blocs, Pandit Nehru came up with the policy of Non-Alignment, which provided a credible alternative to the emerging nations of the world, most of whom joined the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), making it into a powerful force for peace.

World Peace was no longer a distant ideal to aspire for but a practical reality, especially after the nuclear bombs used on Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan in August, 1945. Nehru saw a great stake for India and the underdeveloped and developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America in enduring World Peace. Nehru wanted war to be outlawed, as use of force for settling international disputes is no longer possible, with the looming threat of the nuclear devastation and destruction hanging over the heads of the nations.

Not only Nehru believed in the need to inculcate in the people a scientific temper, in order to build a modern nation, but also used science and technology to achieve rapid advancement of the nation. Regional Research Laboratories chain was started. As the nation pays its tribute to this great Son of India, it is also time to revisit the Nehruvian legacy and reassess his immense contribution to the all-round developed of India.

(The writer is a former AICC Secretary in charge of Odisha and former MLC.)

### PART-I

# The influence of Communism in India

## TALKING OF MANY THINGS



Dr Mohan Kanda

SHARING, and caring, are two concepts that we are taught to make part of one's personality right from our childhood. As a matter of fact, the idea is also central to the preachings of many important religions.

While most of the political parties across the world embrace, in principle, the idea of promoting the welfare of the underprivileged as part of their manifestoes, it is really the leftist philosophy that have made it its raison d'être. The history of the birth and growth of communism in the world covers a wide variety of ideologies and political movements. Common ownership of the three factors, wealth, economic enterprise and property, is the basic objective. Most modern forms of Communism are informed by the principles Marxism, of theory and method, developed by Karl Marx in the 19th century.

As a philosophical persuasion that informed governance systems, Communism was successful mostly in underdeveloped and chronically impoverished countries, such as the (erstwhile) USSR and the Republic of China.

The Bolshevik Party seized power following the Russian revolution in 1917, and created the Soviet union, (the world's first socialist state). The concepts of proletarian internationalism, and

a world revolution, were central to the Party's thinking. The Party saw the struggle as an international, rather than a purely regional, issue.

The tenth anniversary of the historic revolution in Russia shook the world, and established that real power lay in the hands of common people who could overthrow their exploiters. That approach had a tremendous impact on the rapid spread of Communism during the 20th century, with the USSR putting in place left oriented governments in Central and Eastern Europe, following World War II. Communist International (COMINTERN), formed with the idea of aiding and assisting Communist Parties around the world, began to gain following, and by 1985, a third of the world's population was covered by varying forms of Communist systems of governance.

Over time, however, the failure of Leftist governments to live up to the ideals of a Communist Society, coupled with the growth of authoritarianism in the governments concerned, caused increasing disenchantment. In 1991 the Soviet Union was dissolved, with several states repudiating, or abolishing, the ideology. As of the 21st century there remain only a small number of Leftist governments in countries such as China, Cuba, Laos and Vietnam.

I remember first hearing the word 'Communist' when my mother and I were travelling from Madras (now Chennai) to Coimbatore by train, for me, as a child artist, to fulfil a film shooting engagement. A few days earlier, there had been a train derailling, following alleged sabotage by the Communists. I remember how I spent a sleepless night and also prevented my mother from sleeping!

I had the privilege of having



**The Bolshevik Party seized power following the Russian revolution in 1917, and created the Soviet union, (the world's first socialist state). The concepts of proletarian internationalism, and a world revolution, were central to the Party's thinking. The Party saw the struggle as an international, rather than a purely regional, issue. The tenth anniversary of the historic revolution in Russia shook the world, and established that real power lay in the hands of common people who could overthrow their exploiters. That approach had a tremendous impact on the rapid spread of Communism during the 20th century, with the USSR putting in place left oriented governments in Central and Eastern Europe, following World War II**

Chand Joshi (son of the celebrated P.C. Joshi, Communist leader), as a friend, during my college days at Hindu College Delhi in the 1960s. Several animated discussions used to take place over tea in the college canteen, with Chand angering me by denouncing Gandhi-ji, and I, in turn, decrying Communism as a failed concept.

A few years later, while I was a post-graduate student at Osmania University, I made friends with Paleti Suryanarayana (Suri to his friends), who was not only strongly influenced by Leftist thinking, but even had an arm's length relationship with left-wing extremists. Our friendship, as well as violent disagreements, continue to this day!

After joining the service, when I was Collector of Krishna dis-

trict, the famous Leftist leader P. Sundarayya was an MLA. I recollect spending a whole day with him, touring his constituency and assessing the needs of the people. Not only were such associations with leaders of the opposition parties tolerated those days, especially when Dr. M. Chenna Reddy was Chief Minister of the state, but Sundarayya was actually made the Chairman of the State Drainage Development Board!

Such a tolerant, if not encouraging, ambience also existed when N. Janardhan Reddy was the Chief Minister, in whose office I functioned as Secretary in charge of Economic Coordination. I would go to a district in advance, meet officials and non-officials, and tour some places. On return to Hyderabad, I would

Everybody will be happy provided Anandayya's invented drug is clinically proved worthy.

N Ramalakshmi, Secunderabad

## Vital to uphold democratic values

THE emerging new trends in the country, despite the democratic tradition supposedly in place solidly and pink of health, is a worrying reality in India. The kidnapping and arrest of MP Raghurama Krishnam Raju, is a glaring testimony to the worsening and deteriorating trend, in this regard, that is fast catching up in the country. These chinks in the administrative mismanagement and the judiciary are unmissable in Andhra Pradesh, where the political dispensation and quixotic rule against any legitimate and rational observation is construed as an anathema and peril to the existence of Jagan government in the state; this is more or less the story in other states, like West Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan.

The chief editor of a popular news channel 'Republic' was needlessly arrested from his house and physically assaulted by the Maharashtra police for exposing the drug abuse prevailing in Bollywood film fraternity; in the aftermath of the death of a young and promising film actor who had fallen prey to this induced habit has irked and provoked the political class in the state without difference, to rally round the police and in hounding. Anab Goswami for carrying out the story. The incident of the state home minister of Maharashtra, fixing a target amount of a monthly hafta of 100 crore rupees to be collected from bars and beer dance parlours in Mumbai, engaging top police officials to the task is shameful enough, which is fresh in our minds. The accused minister had to quit his post in the light of a CBI enquiry, which the Ma-

harashtra government vehemently stonewalled, but the SC's writ and verdict finally came to prevail.

But then, what is the way out of this dirty scenario prevailing under the guise of a vibrant democracy to be evident in the country? The ultimate hope naturally boils down to the strong Centre and the Supreme Court, in undoing these ills. The irresponsible Opposition that jumps up to any silly and irrelevant cause, with daggers drawn, in accusing the Centre, found to be silent and miserably wanting in such genuine and deserving incidents - whose support is vital and paramount in carrying out things, that is in the interest of all; but they seems to be virtually hand in glove with the anti-social and anti-national elements in promoting their own agenda that is beyond the comprehension of an ordinary and law-abiding citizens of the country.

The general public of the country have a crucial role to play that goes beyond the duty of casting their vote, and electing a candidate in an election. There is a general feeling prevailing that people's role is over after an election, to be at the mercy of the party in power, with no right to either question or criticise the government. But, this mindset on the part of people must change, in the face of brutal assaults on democracy - people must not hesitate to take to streets, in protest as they did with the British, in securing freedom for the country.

But, a strange sense of comatoseness has set in the psyche of the majority of the general public to express loyalty to a party that is in power, having been influenced by inducements by way of money and license to rowdism. It is also time for the true and inclusive secular forces to play their cards meaningfully, not to be swayed by religious sentiments in vitiating the situation, by upholding the country's true and professed democratic values.

K V Raghuram, Wayanad

## LETTERS

### Anandayya's herbal eye drops, a game-changer?

DR Ramu Suravajula's crisp write-up on the grandiose invention of Anandayya was exhaustive and informative. In fact, Anandayya, a self-acclaimed Ayurvedic medical practitioner's herbal eye drops making waves after bringing the dying beneficiaries to life comes as a whiff of fresh air to patients who were struggling with immense pain and sufferings due to pandemic.

Despite the doctors rendering the best allopathic treatment so far to patients, it is painful to witness the recovery rate is far lower as a sizeable number are seen falling prey to the dreaded virus daily. Though experts are coming out with plans and strategy to flatten the curve, the government for various reasons is unable to defeat the enemy growing strong and vigorous by the day. With the second wave more fierce and dangerous transcended class hierarchies and barricades and engulfed the entire nation, people running from one hospital to another for ICU beds, oxygen cylinders and other critical care medical support for their dear ones helplessly on one hand and similarly many others laid down in hospital for days without cure, Anandayya's invention coming as a blessing in disguise to them shall remain etched in our collective memory for ever.

Further the fact that overwhelmingly large number of patients could get cured after the injection of eye-drops is no mean achievement considering the humble background of the Ayurvedic medical practitioner, criticism by rationalists without verification belies logic and rea-

thehansreader@gmail.com



# Diagnostic centres charge exorbitant rates for Covid test

SABYA SINGH  
HYDERABAD

AS many City residents are testing Covid positive, they are opting for home sample collections, rather than spending hours in queues at the diagnostic labs. However, exorbitant rates there are turning them away. They are complaining that the labs are overcharging for home sample collection, which is against government rates.

According to the fixed government rates, the current price for testing for home collection samples is capped at Rs 750. But labs are charging anywhere between Rs 1,500 and Rs 2,000. Similarly, for walk-in testing, the price is Rs 500, but the lab charges vary from Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,800 for a single RT-PCR test.

Speaking to The Hans India, Usha of Kukatapally said she turned away from getting tested due to rates. She ex-

- A lab in Madhapur, which charges Rs.1,300 for sample of home collection, explained the reason. It said doctor's fee is included as also the diagnostic charges, which makes it Rs.1,300. The walk-in service is around Rs.900. "We are charging as per government rates. Either one comes to our lab or opts for home service".
- Many residents voice concerns on Twitter regarding over-charging. "It's is the govt's duty to keep a record of such details of the laboratories, which are fleecing citizens,"

pected labs would charge Rs 750. "Along with my husband, I wanted to get tested, as many members in our community turned positive. Since we were afraid of walk-in service, we ordered home collection of sample and were surprised by the rates. Our bill was almost Rs.3,000. Later, we cancelled the order," she added.

Hema of Suchitra said :“I had to get my mother tested because she showed symptoms. For her convenience, we ordered a home collection from a private diagnostic centre. It cost me Rs 2,000.” She

said when asked for clarification on over-charging, the centre mentioned some additional charges.

Posing as a potential customer, when Hans India contacted a few diagnostic centres across the City. One private lab in Madhapur, which charges Rs.1,300 per sample of home collection, explained the reason. It said doctor's fee is included, as a consulting doctor is mandatory. The diagnostic lab is also included in it, which makes it Rs.1,300. The walk-in service is around Rs.900. "We are charging as

per government rates. Either one comes to our lab or opts for home service.

V Shreya, a resident of Yaprul, pointed out that "while the cap for testing is fixed at Rs 500 for sample collection labs, I was charged around Rs 1,200 for walk-in service at a private diagnostic centre in Secunderabad." She remarked that many people are unaware of the government fixed rates and agree to pay, as they are in a panic to get tested. Many residents voice their concerns on Twitter regarding over-charging. "It's is the government's duty to keep a record of such details of the laboratories, which are fleecing citizens," said K Rakesh. He has been over-charged and realised that later after hearing from his friends.

The government has 19 designated centres for RT-PCR testing, while 56 private labs have been approved, as per data of the Health ministry.

## 7 members of robbery gang jailed

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

A local court here on Wednesday sentenced seven members of a gang of robbers to rigorous imprisonment of three years and also fined each Rs.1,000. The court, while pronouncing the judgement, observed that the accused were guilty of committing house burglaries in City limits. According to the police, the offenders hailed from Maharashtra and entered Hyderabad with a motive to break into houses during nights and steal valuables. The gang cleverly had a cover business of selling bed-sheets. As they used to travel around various localities they would target a house and later break into the premises. They carried weapons to threaten the victim's family members. After a lot efforts the gang members were nabbed and sent to judicial custody.

## Begin Amberpet flyover work at earliest: Arvind Kumar to NHAI

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

MUNICIPAL Administration and Urban Development Principal Secretary Arvind Kumar on Wednesday asked the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) authorities to start work at the earliest of flyover at 6 number junction in Amberpet.

He held a review meeting with officials of various departments on development issues in the Amberpet Assembly constituency. They informed that compensation has been paid to 281 property holders. The GHMC had deposited Rs 9 crore with NHAI for utility shifting. He asked NHAI officials to commence the work as soon as possible.

Arvind Kumar instructed officials to take up improvement works at Ali Café, Shivam Road, Fever Hospital, Barkatpura, Kachiguda and YMCA junctions. The EE and ACP were asked to make a joint inspection and finalise the designs. They were asked to take up work, where site

has been cleared. Similarly, the GHMC was instructed to liaise with the Central government officials to take up road-widening opposite Sai Baba temple in Shivam Road.

The Principal Secretary asked officials to expedite tenders relating to construction of retaining wall to Hussainsagar surplus nala at Fever Hospital and to see that the work commences in June first week.

Arvind Kumar informed local MLA that a missing link road from Ali Café Chowrasta to Patelnagar would result in decongestion of the Ramanthapur road. A proposal to replace the Moosarambagh cause-way on the Musi with a new bridge was under active consideration of the government.

He directed the HMWSSB officials to address issues of low pressure and submit proposals for replacing pipelines to the government. Kumar asked all officials to make definite progress on all these aspects which he will review in third week of June.

## Thunderstorm warning extended till May 30

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

EXTENDING the thunderstorm warning till May 30, the IMD said on Wednesday that Ranga Reddy, Sangareddy and Medak will be among the 14 Telangana districts to be hit on May 27 by storms along with lightning, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Vikarabad will be added to the list of 19 districts to be lashed on May 28 by thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds (30-40 kmph). The IMD issued a yellow warning to say that on May 29 and 30 thunderstorms will hit all districts

along with lightning and gusty winds, under the influence of very severe cyclonic storm 'Yaas' after it cross the Odisha coast.

Meanwhile, during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Wednesday, the State reported maximum temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius and above at a few places. The highest 42.5 was recorded in Nalgonda. The bulletin said there was an appreciable rise in temperatures ranging from 2.1 to 4 degrees Celsius in some parts; there was also an appreciable fall in some other parts.

The other day temperatures registered in the State were: Medak 42, Adilabad 41.5, Nizamabad 40.4, Hyderabad 39.6, Bhadrachalam & Ramagundam 39.2 each, Mahabubnagar 39, Dundigal 38.9, Hakimpet 38.5, Khammam 38.4, Hanamkonda 36.5.

The bulletin forecast rain or thundershowers towards evening or night in Hyderabad from May 27 to 30, with the day temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius. On May 31 and June 1 partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thunderstorm is the outlook, with 41 deg C as the maximum temperature.

## Families taking safer route to avoid getting infected by thronging to farmhouses

- Gajwel, Siddipet, Sadashivpet, Zaheerabad, Chevella, Shankarpally, Alair preferred locations
- With most offices providing work from home facility, techies are opting to stay with near & dear ones

K CHANDRASHEKAR  
HYDERABAD

WITH Covid cases on the rise, families are taking the safer route to avoid getting infected by thronging to farmhouses and service apartments. Farmhouses far away from the City are catering to people who want to be stay away from crowded areas. Families believe they would be in a safer environment.

There are many farmhouses on the City outskirts at places like Gajwel, Siddipet, Sadashivpet, Zaheerabad, Chevella, Shankarpally, Alair. In most of such areas families are spending time because of the lockdown in the State. With most offices providing work from home facility, techies are preferring to stay with their dear and near ones. Generally, people prefer to go to farmhouses, resorts or service apartments during week-ends or during holidays. But now with the shutdown, they are thronging to these places.

It is said that many well-to-do families, who own farmhouses, are opting to stay in a secured and peaceful atmosphere. Those who do not own them are going for rented premises. According to some farmhouse-owners, there were quite a number of visitors during the last fortnight. It is learnt that some such

premises are rented for about a month, with charged of around Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000.

Realtor Badri said he has been with his family in a farmhouse near Chevella. "The second wave (Covid) has been very dangerous. My family is important for me and we decided to be in a secured atmosphere. Hence, we have been in farmhouse for a fortnight. Money is not a problem because, if health is good everything will be good," he pointed out.

Farmhouses are booked in advance. A popular place near Jeedipally, in Medak district, has no dates till June 30, indicating how people are looking to rural atmosphere.

Leading serviced apartment and hospitality management company Oakwood director of operations, India, Hoshang Garivala said it has been receiving bookings during the lockdown from local companies. "We do not take any booking for Covid isolation. Since we have guests staying for months and years, their safety and security is paramount. All guests have to present a negative certificate, which has to be 48 hours old when they check in with us," he stated. The price would depend on the category of apartment. For example a week-long stay can cost around Rs 25,000, Garivala added.

## Access Foundation offers free oxygen therapy for Covid patients

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE city-based NGO Access Foundation has undertaken an initiative to supply oxygen concentrators for patients in need without charging rent. The concentrators have been of help for patients in home isolation and those going through post-Covid recovery.

Till now Access Foundation distributed 25 oxygen concentrators among Covid patients to assist them in need of Oxygen due to mild to moderate infection, while another more 22 concentrators are due for distribution when they arrive from the UK next week.

The organization has also set up 'Covid War Rooms', an IT-enabled facility for active volunteers including doctors and non-medical staff to assist patients in bed allocation, supply of medicines, and other essentials using real-time chats. Some of these patients are also provided with financial the assistance of Rs 5000 for ration or other expenses during their quarantine period.

Access Foundation President Anees Ayesha said "The foundation has set up oxygen camps outside Gandhi Hospital, TIMS, and Fever Hospital in collaboration with Social Data Initiative Forum (SDIF),



Safa Baitul Maal (SBM) where patients are being given free oxygen therapy while they wait for admission into these hospitals. Around 100 patients are being benefitted from this every day."

Additionally, more than 80 oxygen cylinders owned by the foundation are in circulation among Covid patients. The

foundation's aim is to provide oxygen cylinders to patients at the earliest as waiting time at refilling stations is quite long due to the recent spike in Covid cases in the state. It is also providing Covid infected patients free online consultations with doctors, in collaboration with SBM and Mahir Charity," she added. Apart from this, the

NGO is currently running 4 ambulances in Hyderabad in collaboration with Maahir Foundation, UK. A 24x7 dedicated helpline 99088 20066 is also set up for ambulance services, which are available free of cost for shifting patients to a government hospital, whereas for a private hospital a nominal fee of Rs 75 per km is levied.

## Two notorious bike-lifters arrested

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Meerpet police on Wednesday arrested two notorious bike-lifters robbers and seized 13 two-wheelers worth Rs. 14 lakh from accused Wajid Khan and Zaki Khan. Accord-

ing to the police, Wajid Khan, a notorious burglar, befriended Zaki Khan when he was in jail. After coming out both hatched a conspiracy to steal bikes and sell them in blackmarket. The accused would roam in localities, where bikes are parked outside houses, and lanes which

did not have CCTV cameras. After finalising a target they would commit offences during nights and sell the bikes to dealers in blackmarket, said the police. After their movements were tipped off, the police nabbed the duo when they were doing a recce.

## AP CM praises staff for fall in Covid cases

- Interacting with District Collectors and SPs as part of Spandana, the Chief Minister says the State is able to fight the pandemic valiantly thanks to the work of doctors, nurses, Asha workers, volunteers and sanitation staff despite lacking in tier-1 cities and super-specialty hospitals
- Directs officials to crack whip on errant hospitals that violate govt norms on fees
- Says only 3,000 injections were received by AP to treat black fungus

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy discussed with district collectors and SPs about



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy addressing District Collectors and SPs as part of Spandana programme on Wednesday

the Covid situation and a wide range of other issues during the Spandana videoconference, here on Wednesday.

Interacting with the officials, the Chief Minister said that the number of cases have been decreasing for the past few days, which is a good sign and congratulated the entire staff that is offering services in fight against Covid-19. He said that the state has no tier-1 cities that offer advanced treatments, su-

per-specialty hospitals and better medical infrastructure facilities, but still with the extensive hard work by the doctors, nurses, Asha workers, volunteers, sanitation staff and all the frontline workers, the state is able to fight with the pandemic. He told the officials to focus on those areas, especially Chittoor, East and West Godavari districts where most cases are getting registered and take measures to control the spread.

The Chief Minister directed the officials to ensure 50 per cent of the beds in private hospitals are given to the Aarogyasri patients strictly following the government pricing for the treatments. So far under Aarogyasri, 28,737 people, which is over 70 per cent of the total cases, are being treated.

On black fungus, he said that the Injections for black fungus have become very rare, where the entire country has been facing shortage, as each patient should be given at least 50 injections per week. But, the state received only 3,000 injections from the Centre and another 2,000 will be sent soon.

As on date, 23,69,164 people have been vaccinated with two doses, while 33,11,697 people have received single dose of vaccine. The Chief Minister stated that the vaccine production in the country is very low, where the entire country needs 172 crore doses and the state requires seven crore doses.

He said district collectors should own 104 call centre and

ensure effective functioning of these centres and respond as if our own people are calling to the toll free.

He said that officials and the government will be held responsible if call centres are found not responding properly to the calls. 104 number should be registered in the minds of people as a one-stop solution for all issues related to Covid.

The Chief Minister appreciated the officials for showing efficiency and progress in oxygen supply to the state, which was increased to over 600 tonnes from earlier supply of 330 tonnes. As of now the state had kept enough oxygen to last two days even during the cyclone.

He said that the government had already imposed a curfew, permitting people to do their chores from 6 am to 12 noon. He also directed officials to ensure strict curfew is imposed right after 12 noon.

He urged people to take precautionary measures by wearing masks, staying indoors and maintaining social distance.

## YSRCP leaders will pay for their wrongs, warns TDP chief

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALAGIRI

TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday demanded the YSRCP government to explain why the SC, ST atrocities cases were filed against TDP ex-MLA BC Janardhan Reddy and his followers at Banaganapalli in the Kurnool district. Naidu said that the ruling party leaders were deriving sadistic pleasure by getting fabricated cases filed in order to arrest the opposition leaders. The government and the police were still not able to explain why cases were not filed against those who went to carry out an attack on the residence of Janardhan Reddy.

Addressing an online agitation started by the party, the TDP chief asserted that Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy was instigating these attacks on the TDP leaders only to divert

the attention of the public from his regime's total failure to stop the spread of the coronavirus infections. Naidu warned the YSRCP leaders that the day would come when they would suffer multiple times what the opposition leaders were facing right now. The TDP leaders, who took part in the online protests across the state, recalled how the Jagan Reddy government was misusing the official machinery to victimise the law-abiding TDP leaders.

Janardhan Reddy's family members said that YSRCP Banaganapalli MLA Katsani Rami Reddy and his son Obul Reddy have been instigating their followers to attack and injure the TDP activists. Though the TDP leaders were maintaining their cool and discipline, the YSRCP 'goondas' were behaving very oddly and even beating up the followers of Janardhan Reddy, they alleged.







**TODAY'S QUOTE**

**Stimulus package need of the hour**

Centre should consider another fiscal package to support the lower end of the society as well as small and medium enterprises. It should also increase the quantum of the credit guarantee scheme for providing collateral-free loans to SMEs from Rs 3 lakh crore to Rs 5 lakh crore  
— **Uday Kotak, CII President**



**HEFTY HIKE**

**Infosys CEO pay rises to ₹49.68 cr in FY21**

Infosys CEO Salil Parekh saw his annual pay package jump to Rs 49.68 crore in 2020-21, with more than half of the total amount coming from exercise of stock options. Parekh's compensation was at Rs 34.27 crore in 2019-20. The company's annual report for 2020-21 showed that his compensation included Rs 6.07 crore in salary

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	73.5	South	
Euro	89.94	African Rand	6.04
UAE Dirham	20.4	Hong Kong Dollar	10.78
Thai Baht	2.56	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.1	New Zealand Dollar	53.73
Australian Dollar	57.2	Saudi Riyal	21.34
Canadian Dollar	60.88	Swedish Krona	10.09
Swiss Franc	82.12	Singapore Dollar	56.09

DELHI THURSDAY 27 MAY 2021

**BIZ BRIEFS**

**AB InBev's CSR initiative**

AB InBev India's Crown and Charminar Breweries in Sangareddy has pledged their support to its nearby communities affected with Covid-19 with essential ration kits. More than 2000 families across 11 villages in the Sangareddy district, were provided with 15 kg essential ration kits consisting of quality rice, wheat flour, oil, spices, different types of lentils, salt, and sugar along with sanitizers and soaps. The company is working with local authorities and medical officials to support the affected communities in the Sangareddy. "We have a strong history of supporting our communities and stand in solidarity with them in times of adversity. The health and safety of our communities and people continue to be our top priority," said Anasuya Ray, Vice President-Corporate Affairs, South Asia, AB InBev

**Sonalika sets up O2 plant**

Sonalika Tractors has initiated vital support to the on-going relief efforts at the St. Stephen's Hospital Patients Welfare Society, New Delhi. The hospital is making every possible effort in supporting the needy Covid-19 patients during the current challenging times and therefore, company is supporting the hospital to set up a PSA oxygen plant. Raman Mittal, Executive Director, Sonalika Tractors, said, "Difficult times demand collaborative and extraordinary efforts from all. By setting up a new oxygen plant, we have initiated a revolution and are calling every business family or industrialist to come forward and adopt a hospital in the country. With our dedicated efforts such as setting up oxygen plants at each hospital in India, we can ensure that we don't have more fatalities due to oxygen shortage."

**L& T supports its staff**

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has announced financial and insurance assistance for its employees and their family members affected by Covid-19. This optional insurance cover is a communicable disease cover for Covid-19 with an insured sum of Rs 35 lakh per employee for a policy period of 12 months. The policy provides a lump sum payment of 100 per cent sum insured Rs 35 lakhs in the event of death of an employee arising out of Covid-19, whether in hospital or whilst at home quarantine or institutional or hotel quarantine. "We have collectively taken this decision to provide some relief to our employees which will hugely reduce the burden and stress of those affected," Subrahmanyan CEO, MD SN, Larsen & Toubro.

**Yalo raises \$50 million**

Yalo, a conversational commerce platform, has raised \$50 million (about Rs 363.8 crore) in funding led by existing venture investor, B Capital Group. The company said the total capital raised by the company (including the latest series C round) stands at \$75 million. Yalo enables large enterprises like Unilever, Nestle, Coca-Cola, and Walmart to communicate and transact directly with consumers through messaging apps like WhatsApp. Yalo has operations in the US, Mexico, Brazil, and India. The funds will be used to deepen the company's presence in Latin America and Southeast Asia. "For a long time, enterprise digital transformation has been synonymous with complexity, not anymore. Conversational commerce is a simple technology solution that enables brands to meet end-users," Javier Mata, founder, Yalo.

# **Sensex reclaims 51k mark as IT, fin stocks sparkle**

**BSE benchmark soars 380 pts, nifty up 93 pts; Bajaj Finserv rallies above 4%**

**MUMBAI**

THE BSE Sensex returned to winning ways on Wednesday after a day's pause as technology, finance and auto counters witnessed robust buying amid a largely positive trend in Asian markets.

Overcoming a tepid start, the 30-share benchmark gained momentum through the session to end 379.99 points or 0.75 per cent higher at 51,017.52. The Sensex reclaimed the 51,000-level after March 10 this year. The broader NSE Nifty extended its winning run to the fourth consecutive session, climbing 93 points or 0.17 per cent to finish at 15,301.45. Bajaj Finserv was the top performer in the Sensex pack, rallying 4.82 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Infosys, Maruti, HDFC, L&T, Tech Mahindra and M&M. On the other hand, PowerGrid, NTPC, ONGC, Kotak Bank, Dr Reddy's, HDFC Bank, ITC and Bharti Airtel were the losers, dropping up to 3.11 per cent. "Domestic equities remained upbeat as improved visibility about economic recovery from 2QFY22 continued to lift investors' sentiments," said Binod Modi, Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities.

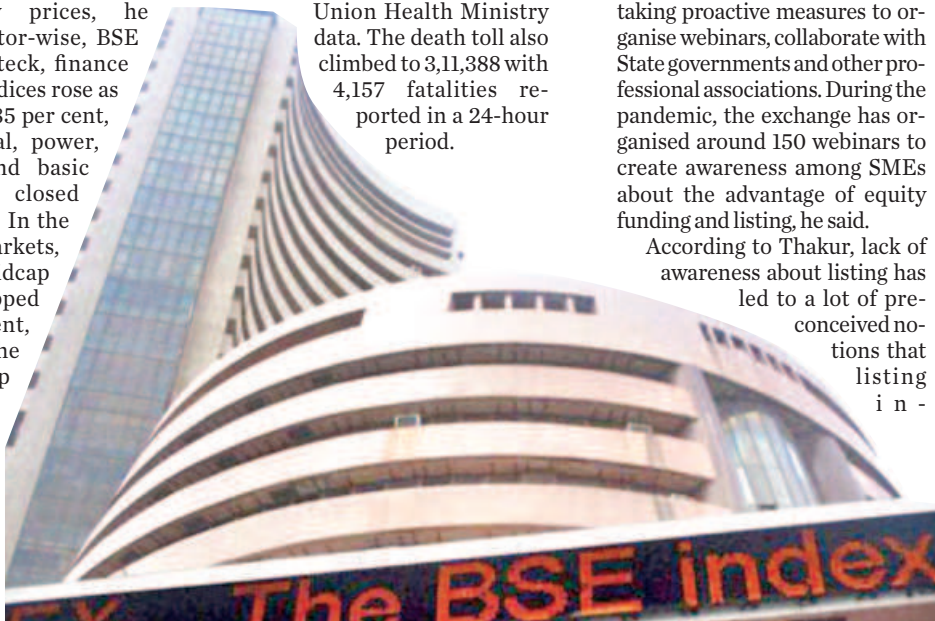
Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said,

"Domestic markets started cautiously positive and witnessed a strong rebound as it gained momentum from expectations of another set of relief measures. The new stimulus package is expected to focus on boosting the worst-hit sectors like tourism, aviation and hospitality along with MSMEs."

Value buying was seen in the IT sector while metal stocks remained in the correction phase due to muted international commodity prices, he added. Sector-wise, BSE realty, IT, teck, finance and auto indices rose as much as 2.85 per cent, while metal, power, utilities and basic materials closed with losses. In the broader markets, the BSE midcap index dropped 0.14 per cent, while the small cap gauge spurred 0.69 per cent.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai,

Hong Kong and Tokyo ended on a positive note, while Seoul was in the red. Equities in Europe were trading on a mixed note in mid-session deals. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude was trading flat at \$68.50 per barrel. The foreign exchange (forex) market was closed on account of Buddha Purnima. India on Wednesday reported 2,08,921 coronavirus infections, pushing the overall tally of cases to 2,71,57,795, according to Union Health Ministry data. The death toll also climbed to 3,11,388 with 4,157 fatalities reported in a 24-hour period.



## **Gati to exit cold chain solutions biz**

**HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD**

EXPRESS distribution and supply chain solutions firm Gati Ltd, which reported widening of its consolidated loss at Rs 173.40 crore in the March quarter, on Wednesday said it is exiting from its cold chain solutions business Gati Kausar India. Gati will sell its approximately 70 per cent stake in Gati Kausar India to existing minority shareholder Mandala Capital AG Limited, a leading private equity firm focused on investments across the food value chain, the company said in a statement.

Mandala, which currently holds about 30 per cent, has been a shareholder in Gati Kausar since 2014, the company said. Following the closure of



this transaction, which is expected within the next 30 days, Mandala will become the controlling shareholder in Gati Kausar, the statement said. Meanwhile, the Allcargo group firm, in a regulatory filing, said its consolidated loss widened to Rs 173.40 crore in Q4FY 21, impacted by exceptional higher expense of Rs 172.87 crore.

The company had reported a loss of Rs 70.60 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. Revenue from opera-

tions grew by 9.88 per cent in the quarter under review to Rs 406.64 crore, from Rs 370.09 crore in the year-ago period, as per the filing. In the quarter ended March 31, 2021, Gati Ltd reported a total exceptional expense of Rs 172.87 crore.

The company reported diminution amounting to Rs 171.03 crore in the present fair value of the assets sold during the year and proposed to be sold, the filing added. Following the exit from its cold chain solutions business and post the closure of the transaction, Gati's consolidated gross debt will come down by around Rs 100 crore. With this, Gati would have reduced its consolidated gross debt by more than 50 per cent over the last 12 months, the statement said.

## **Electric bike sales set for a big leap**

**MUMBAI**

THE electric two and three-wheelers volume are expected to account for eight-10 per cent and 30 per cent of new vehicle sales in the country by 2025, respectively, owing to low operating cost and attractive subsidy support, among others, ratings agency Ibra

said on Wednesday. The penetration levels in cars and trucks, however, are likely to remain low in the medium-term, it said. Globally, EVs now account for 4.4 per cent of new car sales during CY2020 and their share is likely to cross five per cent level this calendar year, as per Ibra. Electric two-wheeler (2W) and three-wheeler (3W) seg-

ments have relatively lower dependency on commercial charging infrastructure, owing to limited span of commute and can also adopt battery swapping to allay charging-related concern for commercial applications. Furthermore, operating cost metrics continue to favour electric 2W and 3W for commercial operations.

## **Don't like new Kia Carnival? Return it**

**NEW DELHI**

AUTOMAKER Kia India on Wednesday said it has rolled out a scheme under which buyers of its premium MPV Carnival can return the vehicle, if they were not satisfied with it, within the first 30 days of its purchase. Under the 'Satisfaction Guarantee Scheme' offer for the new buyers of Carnival, private owners of the MPV can return the vehicle if they are not pleased with the car within the first 30 days of its purchase. The company has introduced this one-of-a-kind initiative, which allows buyers to avail of this new offer valid on all variants of the Carnival, Kia India said in a statement. It will cover 95 per cent of the ex-showroom cost and overhead cost incurred for the registration and finances, etc of the vehicle, it added. Eligible customers need to ensure



that the vehicle has clocked not more than 1,500 kilometers from the purchase date and is completely free of damages, failures, pending claims, to be able to return the car, the automaker noted. Additionally, the owner's agreement for the transfer of the vehicle including all documentation and charges, etc in the name of a person will be obligatory. It will also be imperative that the vehicle is free from any HP and the NOC should be submitted from the financier's end. "Last month, we introduced our new brand purpose of inspiring consumers through products and services and their experiences with the brand. The 'Satisfaction Guarantee Scheme' is the first step to bring this purpose to life and is designed to offer a differentiated Kia ownership experience," India Executive Director Tae-Jin Park said.

## **PharmEasy buys Medlife**

**NEW DELHI**

ONLINE pharmacy PharmEasy on Wednesday said it has completed the acquisition of Medlife to become the largest healthcare delivery platform in India. All the users of Medlife would be migrated to PharmEasy, the company said in a statement. "This acquisition significantly strengthens our position in the healthcare industry, and further helps us in providing quality healthcare to a greater number of Indian households," PharmEasy Co-founder Dharmil Sheth said. The company has now become the largest healthcare delivery platform across the country, catering to more than two million families every single month, PharmEasy said. PharmEasy will also be looking forward to onboarding Medlife's retail partners and continuing their journey with the brand, it added. PharmEasy currently works with around 80,000 pharmacies and intends to expand that to 1, 20,000 outlets across 100 cities by the end of 2021, the company said.



## **Ayurvedic immunity booster shots launched**

**HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD**

CITY-BASED healthcare company Labcube India Private Limited in association with Labcube, Inc - USA on Wednesday announced the launch of three new flavors (Mint, Mixed Fruit and Pineapple) of Mana Arogya Ayush Immunity Booster Shots. The product is a non-medicinal Ayurvedic supplement for daily use that can help boost immunity and protect mankind from deadly viral infections including coronavirus.

The base product was launched in the presence of Union Minister for State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy in December 2020.

Labcube has partnered with leading logistic operators for the fast delivery of the products at the doorstep. The immunity booster shots will be available at a subsidised rate of Rs 55 each to the white ration card holders and for the regular customers it will be priced at Rs 73 each.

The products will also be made



available in all pharmacies, groceries, major online shopping outlets such as Amazon across the country, said Srinivasa Manapragada, Chairman and CEO of Labcube Group of Companies. Commenting on the new flavors, Manapragada said, "considering the present pandemic situation, Labcube has come up with an innovative Ayurvedic formula that can help the general public. 'Mana Arogya Ayush Immunity Booster Shots' aims to enhance the immunity in people through special formulation of Ayurvedic herbs that can really help fight against deadly infections. This product is approved by the Department of Ayush. Labcube is always striving to help the community in this second wave of Pandemic."

## **'Inflation back on higher input prices'**

Higher input prices and disruptions to the rural economy have resulted in price pressures and inflation is back to haunt us, says Crisil

**MUMBAI**

HIGHER input prices and disruptions to the rural economy have resulted in price pressures and inflation is back to haunt us, a rating agency said in its research report on Wednesday.

The report by Crisil said it sees upside risks to its 5 per cent estimate on consumer price inflation in FY21 because of this. It can be noted that the Reserve Bank is required to maintain the crucial number at 4 per cent in the medium term, with a 2 percentage point leeway on either side as part



of its inflation target.

A surge in inflation worries had led it to desist from introducing rate cuts during much of FY21, despite the over 7.6 per cent contraction in the economy. In its note, Crisil said data collection was disrupted in April and May 2020 because of the national lockdown, and last year's base will not reflect accurate trends. Therefore, it has focused on sequential price trends

on a seasonally adjusted basis. "When viewed thus, both WPI (wholesale price index) and CPI indices continued to increase on-month in April 2021," it said.

Input costs are rising because of a surge in global commodities, which are raising manufacturing costs and hence fanning domestic inflation, the report added. It said crude oil price at \$65 a barrel is double that of seen last year and

back to 2019 levels, edible oils are up 57 per cent on-year, the metals index is up by 76 per cent, and transportation costs are also high with the surge in the Baltic index. WPI inflation has surged in double digits in April on-year for items directly linked to these commodities, it said, adding crude-linked inflation has risen the sharpest, partly led by the base effect too.

Producers are currently bearing a higher burden of rising input costs than consumers. However, as demand revives, these costs can get increasingly passed on to consumers, the report noted. On top of the commodity prices, supply disruptions brought on by the intensification of the second Covid-19 wave in rural India are resulting in inflationary pressures, it said, adding that "upside inflation risks are clearly growing". These risks include the rising input prices, upside pressure on food prices and rising rural core inflation, it pointed out.



# Conditions in Eng will favour NZ in WTC final: Cummins

SYDNEY

WEATHER conditions in England next month will favour New Zealand in the World Test Championship (WTC) final against India in Southampton, said Australia pace bowler Pat Cummins, who is quarantining here after arriving from the Indian Premier League (IPL).

"It is going to be a good match. I think there has been a lot of rain in England from what I have seen in the news. I think, in terms of conditions, it is going to be close to New Zealand conditions," said Cummins in a question-and-answer session with fans on YouTube.

He, however, refused to predict the winner, saying the June 18-22 match is a one-off Test and is hard to predict. "We have seen both teams not having played



Test matches for a couple of months. So, it is a one-off. Anything can happen. I will sit on the fence," he said before insisting that weather conditions should favour the Kiwis.

"But if I say anything, the conditions should probably suit New Zealand more than India," he added. Cummins is the leading wicket-taker in the World Test

Championship, having picked 70 scalps in 14 Test matches. He could be overtaken by India off-spinner R Ashwin in the WTC final, who is three short of him with 67 scalps in 13 Tests.

The 28-year-old pace bowler said he loved the concept of the World Test Championship but felt frustrated at the event getting shortened due to Covid-19.

"It is annoying (that) Covid-19 made it a bit more difficult but it is great. I really enjoyed the whole aspect of it. Each series stands for something more than just the series itself. I really liked the (WTC) format. Unfortunately, we missed the series. So, we didn't have the six series leading to the final but I do enjoy the concept," added Cummins who praised India for winning the fourth and final Test against Australia at the Gabba.

"Our record is very good at Gabba. I thought we had cracks in it and that it is going to be perfect for Day 5. Everything went to plan and then obviously India played beautifully and felt confident after SCG where they had hung in. We needed 7-8 wickets. We knew it wasn't going to be easy, wish we took (a) few more wickets," he added. (IANS)

## Boxer Sanjeet enters semi-finals of Asian championships

Dubai: India's Sanjeet Kumar defeated Jasur Qurbonov of Tajikistan 5-0 in quarter-finals of men's 91 kg category in Asian Boxing Championships here on Tuesday night.

In another bout, India's Sakshi scored a 5-0 win over Ruhafza Haqazarova of Tajikistan to set up a semi-final clash with top seed Dina Zholaman of Kazakhstan in women's 54 kg. In women's 57kg, Jasmine outplayed Mongolia's Oyuntsetseg Yesugen 4-1 to advance to semi-finals. She will next face Vladislava Kukhta of Kazakhstan. Olympic-bound Simaranjit Kaur too made a good start in continental competition scoring 4-1 win over Uzbekistan's Raykhona Kodirova to advance into semi-finals of women's 60 kg category. She will face Rimma Volosnenko of Kazakhstan in semis.

There are no matches scheduled for women on Wednesday, but India's star male boxer Amit Panghal will be seen in action in quarter-finals of men's 52 kg on Wednesday. The world silver-medallist and defending champion will face Mongolia's Kharkhuu Enkhmandakh.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games champion in men's 69kg, Vikas Krishan will face Iran's Moslem Malamir in his opening bout of the competition on Wednesday. (IANS)

## FIFA WC Qualifiers: Thapa confident of India doing well

DOHA

THE Indian football team is not here for next month's FIFA World Cup Qualifiers to just "make up the numbers", but to make a mark, midfielder Anirudh Thapa pointed out on Wednesday.

The Sunil Chhetri-led Indian team will play its opening game against Qatar on June 3, followed by matches against Bangladesh and Afghanistan on June 7 and 15, respectively.

"We understand that Qatar are eagerly looking forward to the match. But we know that we will try to do well on the field. We don't want to be disappointed.

We are not there to make up the numbers. We are confident in our abilities and we are taking it one match at a time," said Thapa ahead of a training session on Wednesday.



Thapa, who plays for Indian Super League (ISL) side Chennaiyin FC, said playing for the nation is a different feeling altogether and he shared his feelings with the youngsters.

"The setup in the national team is a different feeling altogether. Starting from the pride to the game sense to the tempo and intensity of the training sessions, and eventually the matches -- whatever I have learnt, I

share with them [youngsters]. At the end [of the day], we are representing 1.4 billion people and they are never to be let down," he said.

On whether he has reached his peak, Thapa said: "I never feel so. There is still a long way to go for me and I need to improve on a whole lot of aspects. I need to convert more chances and I need to adapt to the changing playing circumstances that arise during matches." (IANS)

## WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

# Top Indian judokas allege favouritism in selection

NAVNEET SINGH  
NEW DELHI

LEADING Indian judo players have alleged favouritism by the Judo Federation of India (JFI) in the selection of a two-member team for next month's World Championships, at which a solitary Asian continental berth for the upcoming Olympic Games is on offer.

"I've been deliberately excluded from the World Championships, which is the last Olympic qualification event. It is unfair on the part of the JFI to pick up two players and drop others without a valid reason. Our efforts to reach out to the federation has proved futile," a player who has been dropped from the team told IANS. The aggrieved players in their communication to Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Monday have requested SAI to intervene to sort out the issue. "We are waiting for the response," said the player. India's five leading judokas -- Vijay Yadav (mens 60 kg), Jasleen Singh Saini (men's 66kg), Avtar Singh (men's 100kg), Sushila Devi (women's 48 kg), and Tulika Mann (women's 78kg) -- were selected last year in prepa-

ration for the Tokyo Olympics.

There is a marginal difference in ranking points, said a player. "Saini has approximately 920 while Singh has 724. One win in the World Championships will fetch 200 points. Depending on the draws, anyone can improve his/her ranking. Since there is one continental quota place, the player with maximum points would be eligible to earn a ticket to the Olympics," said the player.

Sushila with 989 points is top ranked Indian judoka. Yadav is fourth with 673 and Tulika is fifth with 446 points.

JFI's assistant secretary CS Rajan confirmed that only Saini and Sushila have been selected for the Budapest World Championship. "It is the decision of the JFI's technical committee. I can't comment why the other three have been dropped," he said.

Eight months ago, the JFI in coordination with the SAI selected five judokas -- Yadav, Saini, Singh, Sushila, and Tulika -- for the Hungarian Grand Prix in Oc-

tober and for other international competitions.

"The investment and efforts by the government would serve no purpose if players don't get a chance to compete in the World Championships," said an official familiar with the development.

In February, JFI secretary general Manmohan Jaiswal was suspended due to internal politics while interim secretary general Venkat Namishetty was unable to explain on what basis JFI selected the team for World meet.

"I don't know how many players were shortlisted last year in preparation for the Olympic Games as I took over the office in February this year. But we are sending only two players for world meet," was all he said.

Last month, a 16-member judo team was pulled out of Asian Oceania Olympic qualifier tournament in Bishkek as two players had tested positive for Covid-19 in the pre-event testing.

The World Championships will take place from June 6 to 13 in Budapest, Hungary. (IANS)



## Economic activity needs to stop for Olympics to go ahead: Study

TOKYO

STUDY conducted by two University of Tokyo professors claims strict restrictions on movement of people, including ceasing of economic activity, during Olympics and Paralympics could reduce spread of Covid-19 to near same level if the two events were to be called off.

There have been demands for cancellation of Olympics and Paralympics over fears of spreading Covid-19. But the study says Games can go ahead provided severe restrictions are implemented.

"If people's movements at the events were restricted to a level where all economic activity



ceased, the number of daily new Covid-19 cases would reach a peak of 842, according to the researchers," said a report in Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun.

"If the Olympic and Paralympic Games are called off, the study put the daily count of new cases at 822 in the middle of October (peak)," the report added.

Taisuke Nakata, an associate professor of public policy, and

Daisuke Fujii, a project assistant professor of economics, said that crowding in Tokyo would cause far more new Covid-19 cases than the arrival of over 100,000 (one lakh) people from abroad for the two events.

Besides 15,000 athletes, 78,000 officials and workers are expected to arrive from abroad for the Olympics (July 23 to August 8) and Paralympics (August 24 to September 5).

"They (researchers) said key to stemming spread of novel coronavirus is to significantly curb movements of people by avoiding holding public-viewing gatherings and other events during the sports extravaganzas," added the report. (IANS)

# Wrestler murder case: 4 associates of Sushil Kumar arrested

NEW DELHI

IN a major breakthrough in the murder of Sagar Dhankar, Delhi Police has arrested four associates of two time olympic medallist Sushil Kumar. All the arrested are members of Kala Asauda and Neeraj Bawana gang.

A senior police official said that on a tip off, a team of Special Staff of Rohini under Inspector Ishwar Singh and overall supervision of Brahmjeet Singh, ACP of Operation Cell, Rohini District Delhi, has apprehended four active members of Kala Asauda - Neeraj Bawana gang from Kanjhawala area on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday.

The official said that all were found to be the associates of Sushil Kumar in Dhankar murder case at Chhatrasal stadium.

The arrested accused have been identified as Bhupender a.k.a. Bhupi, Mohit a.k.a. Bholi, Gulab a.k.a. Palwalan and Manjeet a.k.a. Chunnil, residents of Haryana's Jhajjar and Rohtak.

They revealed the entire conspiracy and sequence of events of the murder of Sagar. He said that no bailable warrants (NBWs) were pending against them.

Giving the details of their arrest, the official said that in the intervening night of May 4 and 5, an information was received at Model Town police station regarding firing inside Chhatrasal Stadium.

The official said that the police at Chhatrasal Stadium found five cars including a Maruti Alto, Honda city, Toyota Fortuner, Mahindra Scorpio and



Maruti Brezza.

The police also recovered one loaded double barrel gun and three rounds were found inside Scorpio Car and two sticks in parking area.

"During spot enquiry it was found that Sushil Kumar and his associates had beaten the injured persons. A case was registered under several sections of the IPC and Arms Act.

The investigation of the case was later transferred to the Crime Branch.

Sushil Kumar and his aide Ajay were arrested on Sunday morning and they are on police remand with Crime Branch.

The official said that on Tuesday, an information was received that four members of Kala Asauda Gang - Neeraj Bawana gang involved in murder of Dhankar at Chhatrasal Stadium, are coming to Ghewra village to meet their associate Kala, also a resident of Jhajjar in Haryana.

"Acting upon the information, police laid a trap near Ghewra railway crossing and arrested the four accused," he said.

"During questioning they disclosed that in the intervening night of May 4 and 5,

they had gone to Chhatrasal stadium. They reached the stadium at around 12 night in two vehicles, a scorpio car and a Brezza car. Thereafter actively involved themselves in the crime," he said.

The police official also said that the four accused also narrated the sequence of events and details of other persons involved in the crime.

"On hearing police siren, they could not escape with their vehicles but left both the cars (Scorpio and Brezza) and their weapons at the spot," he said.

IANS had on Monday reported about the Mahindra Scorpio associated with the persons of Neeraj Bawana gang.

Police said that Bhupender, 38, came in contact of Rajeev a.k.a. Kala in 2000, and after committing a robbery he became close associate of Kala and committed a number of robberies and murders till 2011.

The official said that in 2011, Bhupender went to jail in a double murder case and remained in jail till February 2021.

"In year 2020, his gang leader Kala was murdered by members of rival gang in court premises in Rohtak

and after his release he was reviving his gang to take revenge," the official said.

Bhupender is previously involved in 9 cases.

Whereas Mohit's brother Rohit was close associate of Kala and is presently lodged in jail.

In year 2016, the rival gangsters involved Mohit in conspiracy of attempt to murder of one Suresh. In 2019, Mohit was again involved in a murder conspiracy case of rival gang. He was released on bail in May 2020 and joined Bhupender to revive the gang.

Gulab joined Kala Asauda gang in 2016 and two years later he was involved in an attempt to murder case and later in year 2019, was arrested for an illegal fire arm.

In year 2020, the rival gang members targeted Gulab, wherein his friend Ravinder was killed and he sustained bullet injury. Since then, he left his home and spent his time with members of Kala Asauda gang to take revenge. He was previously involved in two cases.

The official said that Manjeet is involved in supplying illegal fire arms.

In 2011, he was arrested after a brief encounter and 32 illegal fire arms (7 pistols and 25 country made pistols) were recovered from him. In jail he came in contact with Kala Asauda and thereafter, supplied weapons to his gang members, the police official said.

"He was arrested many a times with associates of Kala in various cases. Now he joined Bhupender to strengthen Kala Asauda Gang. He is previously involved in four cases," the official added. (IANS)





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