



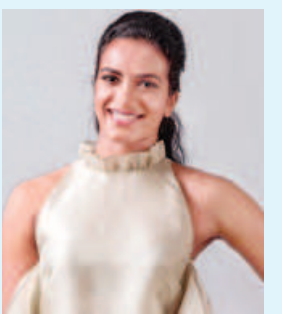
Womenia

TWEET PATROL



PVSINDHU
@PVSINDHU1

India as a nation has conquered many odds with the never say die attitude of people. #PhirJeetenge song is Bank of Baroda's initiative to spread the message of winning. This song reignites the flame of optimism, hope, and fighting spirit in us.
@bankofbaroda



KAJAL FOR BEAUTY

If there is something we Indian women can't live without, it's our kajal. Kajal or kohl is the most essential part of any woman's makeup kit. kajal is something that every woman owns and uses on a daily basis. It has been used traditionally to outline the eyes for a long time but has now started gaining popularity in the cosmetic world. Your dark, appealing and stunning eyes could give away your mood and emotions better than any words ever could. A neatly applied dark black kajal is all they need to look mesmerizing.



Shahnaz Husain

Every woman craves to possess adorned eyes look and the right application of kajal is perhaps the easiest way to achieve a sensual and attractive look. Eye makeup enhances the look of a woman in the quickest way and makes her look all the more appealing. But like everything else in life, beauty is not so simple a thing to achieve as kajal feathers and smudges at the inner corner of the eyes, making you look more embarrassing, scary, dull than gorgeous.

Smudging of kajal is a common problem. You may start off with exotic eyes and end up with dark smudges under the eyes. So, here are some tips to save yourself from embarrassment.

First of all, buy the Kajal of a reputed company. It may also be safer if black eye cosmetics do not contain lead. Invest in a good quality one that is long-lasting and



The use of Kajal and Kohl goes back to ancient times. In fact, it has been traditionally used in India for beautifying the eyes. It is a makeup staple of every single girl. There is no doubt that kajal helps to impart an exotic Indian look

smudge-proof to achieve black-eyed beauty. It will turn out to be your best friend in makeup.

Make sure that you are applying the Kajal in a proper fashion. Wash your face before applying any make-up, including a Kajal. Most people start from the inner corner of the eye, making their way outward. Since the inner corners of the eyes are watery, they can make the Kajal pencil wet. So, start from the outer corner towards the inner one, applying 2-3 strokes depending on the intensity that you'd like. The area around the eyes and near the lashes should be free from oil or sweat. First, wash your face. Pat it dry. Before applying eye make-up, wipe the area near lashes very gently, using a cotton bud. Apply ice cubes around your eyes in case of oily skin to look bright and get rid

of oiliness. It would help to remove oil and sweat. Dabbing a little face powder near the eyes may also help in soaking up the oil present in the region. Make-up experts say that applying primer really helps. Primer helps the kajal last longer.

When you apply Kajal on the lower lid, start from the outer corner, and go inwards. However, leave a tiny space in the outer and inner corners. Avoid applying the Kajal in the inner corners, because this is where the smudging actually takes place. Another tip is quite helpful. Apply the Kajal close the lashes and then apply black eye shadow over it with a thin brush or sponge-tipped applicator. This helps to

prevent smudging and also provides the smudged look, which many try hard to achieve. If you wish to extend the kajal outwards and slightly upwards, beyond the outer corner of the eyes, use the black eye shadow on the outer corners of the eyes to achieve the same look.

Mascara can also cause smudging. It should be applied in two light coats. First, apply one coat. Allow it to dry. Comb out the lashes with an eyelash comb. Then apply the second coat and repeat the procedure. Make sure that you do not touch your eyes/meddle with it unnecessarily if you have applied kajal on it or you yourself will smudge it by doing so. You may opt for smudge-proof kajal available with the beauty salons but be sure that it suits you best keeping in view your skin type.

Apply eye kajal on your upper waterline. Then use a voluminous mascara and apply two generous coats on your eyelashes. You have a fresh and peppy look ready.

This look can be used both for daytime lunches or even for those parties if you want to go heavy on the lips with your eyes subtle and sober. Spruce up your entire look with highlighters and a bit of sparkle to make for the beautiful and simple doe eye makeup that you have created using the eye kajal.

Applying a generous amount of kohl on your upper waterline makes your eyes appear bigger and gives them dimension. Add a generous amount of mascara and finish. This is a great look to sport for a casual, everyday no-makeup makeup look.

World Meditation Day

When the world around you is ensconced in madness, and you can't quite seem to find a moment of peace in the storm of the day, it's time to step back and remember those blissful moments as a child where we merely lost ourselves in the world. World Meditation Day is a call to the world to take time to participate in this millennia-old practice and clear our minds, remembering that we are people first, and workers second.

While extremist religious groups have sometimes villainized meditation, it has in fact been scientifically proven to have positive mental and physical effects when practiced regularly. Some of the key benefits of meditation include:

Helping with anxiety:

Across the world, anxiety remains one of the leading mental health conditions. Although in severe cases doctors may prescribe medication to help people with their anxiety, they often tend to try a more holistic approach first. Meditation is one of the most common holistic ways to treat the symptoms of anxiety, helping individuals to slow their heart rate, control harmful thoughts and prevent anxiety episodes.



Reducing stress: There's no doubt that the world we live in can be stressful. Although stress is a completely normal bodily response, we shouldn't be feeling stressed regularly as constant stress can cause serious problems in the body. Meditation is a great way to take time out from the busy world and to focus inwardly on yourself. The breathing exercises conducted while meditating can reduce blood pressure and lower stress levels, calming the mind and giving the body time to recover from periods of prolonged stress.

Reducing distractions: The human brain has more things than ever to keep up with and these combined with the internet and our access to smartphones means that many of us struggle with concentration. Practicing meditation and mindfulness encourages you to think about the present, to live in the current moment and to dismiss distractions, helping you to remain focused when you need to be and to improve your overall productivity.

We for women joining hands to support the needy

In these tough times, all of us should join hands to support the needy people, so that we all can come out of this crisis safe and healthy.

We for women gave groceries and N95 masks to around 100 families in few slums in Bowenpally Secunderabad area on 20th May 2021 and educated people in that area about personal hygiene and precautions to be taken to protect themselves from Covid.

We for women is a genuine, transparent, and motivated group that is committed to empower women by supporting them in the educational, social, economical, medical, and political domains.

Dr Pratibha Lakshmi, President and Founder of "We For Women" says, "On this occasion that though the main motto of our organisation was women empowerment, in addition to our services as doctors

"Support the needy in all possible ways," - Dr Pratibha Lakshmi



in this pandemic, we thought we have to do our part by supporting the needy in all possible ways."

Secretaries Dr Annapurna, A Shoba Devi EC members M Ashwini Dr Madan Mohan, A Srinivas etc participated.

Thin hair bands became fashion for work from home

The latest trend to look your hair beautiful is thin hair band. The hair accessories which people made a huge hit in the last few years aren't slowing down just yet. However, the latest trend is slightly more low-key, thin headbands.

In the late 2019's (and the first few months of 2020) were all about big, padded headbands that put Blair Waldorf to shame. When the pandemic hit, we swapped our oversized bands for more functional hair accessories, scrunchies to tie up unwashed hair, snap barrettes to hide overgrown bangs (or relieve ears from masks), and claw clips perfect for working from home. But a year in, we have finally struck a balance between fashion and function, and a new crop of headbands has been popping up all over Instagram.

Spotted on singer Phoebe Bridgers

and a TikTok influencer Addison Rae, 2021's coolest headbands are sleeker and more subtle. They still add something special to an outfit, making it feel instantly put together, but they aren't quite as bold. A skinny headband looks comfortable at home with a pair of track pants or a sundress.

Thin headbands are also in line with the low-key prep that's been trending in the style sphere. Think college sweat-shirts with pleated tennis skirts, layered collars, and tiny cardigans paired with baggy jeans. The style also nods to '90's icons like Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy and Britney Spears without being too

FASHIONISTA



on the nose, and it's being embraced by today's IT girls. They look at home on a wide range of hair types and styles, sleek and straight, messy waves, natural curls, buns, ponies and they're functional. Since they have grippy teeth unlike padded headbands, they're great for pulling your hair out of your face. The best part of these hair bands is they come in low price when compared to the big bands.

SAMVEDNA TO PLAY THE CHARACTER OF COP

"There is a sense of responsibility and dignity when you put on the police uniform", says Actress Samvedna Suwalka

Actress Samvedna Suwalka has won the hearts of the audience by her role of a cop in the Flipkart original show Kaun? Who did it? She talks about the second installment of the show and more. Sharing some insights about the developments in her character in the new season she says, "The relationship between Inspector Malini (me) and Adi sir (Sushant Singh) is going to be explored this season. She is slightly conflicted about her emotions. In the first season we saw the cop Malini, this season

we go beyond and explore the person that she is and learn about her traumatic past. " On being asked about the changes that the character brought in her life, she said that this project gave her the opportunity to play a cop for the first time

She adds, "I am playing a character in uniform, and it's amazing how you feel the moment you put the uniform on -there is a sense of responsibility and dignity. Further, my admiration for women in uniform has increased as they have to deal with all kinds of people and criminals, which is a very tough job." Lastly, she concludes by saying that she is very happy that the show is releasing on the 22nd of May and is very much excited to see the audience response to the second season. She also hopes that the audience shower more love for the second season as well.



NEWS ROUNDUP

Lakshmi Manchu helping kids who lost parents due to Covid

Actress Lakshmi Manchu is doing her bit to help children who have lost their parents to Covid. Her NGO "Teach for Change" will be extending support to 1,000 kids who have lost their parents to the virus. Their team is already on the ground, identifying such kids.

They will be helping them with education, basic necessities and also help build a foundation for themselves.

"On a personal front, I have been helping as many people as I can, trying to find medications or hospital beds and vice versa. The effect of Covid is more devastating post getting Covid even for the families and children who lost parents during this time," she says.

She adds, "We, at 'Teach for Change', are committed to taking care of 1,000 kids from lower-income households of their education, tuition, clothes and whatever it is they need help with."

Recently, the actress also stepped up to help the community of Hyderabad by donating 1,000 cooked meals in hospitals. "The initiative started with the lockdown where most people around the hospitals have been coming in from smaller towns and have no access to food. So, we chose a few hospitals that we would distribute 1000 meals during the entire lockdown. Our team at Teach for Change, our volunteers, our team members have been doing this every single day and are so grateful to be able to feed people and take hunger away from them," she says.

‘VENTILATION IS A COMMUNITY DEFENSE AGAINST PANDEMIC’

NEW DELHI

THE Office of Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India, Prof K. Vijay Raghavan has released advisory on “Stop the Transmission, Crush the Pandemic - Masks, distance, sanitation and ventilation, to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The advisory highlights the important role well-ventilated spaces play in diluting the viral load of infected air in poorly ventilated houses, offices etc. Ventilation can decrease the risk of transmission from one infected person to

the other. The advisory says that just as smells can be diluted from the air through opening windows and doors and using exhaust systems, ventilating spaces with improved directional air flow decreases the accumulated viral load in the air, reducing the risk of transmission.

Ventilation is a community defense that protects all of us at home or at work. Introducing outdoor air in offices, homes and larger public spaces is advised. Measures to improve ventilation in these spaces must be taken up on urgent priority in urban and

rural areas alike, recommendations for hutments, homes, offices and large centralised buildings are given.

Simple strategic placement of fans, open windows and doors, even slightly open windows can introduce outdoor air and improve the air quality inside. Introduction of cross ventilation and exhaust fans will be beneficial in curtailing the spread of the disease.

In buildings with central air-management systems improving central air filtration/increased filtration efficiency is especially helpful when enhanced outdoor air

delivery options are limited. In offices, auditoriums, shopping malls etc use of gable fan systems and roof ventilators are recommended. Frequent cleaning and replacement of filters is highly recommended.

Saliva and nasal discharged in the form of droplets and aerosols, by an infected person while exhaling, talking, speaking, singing, laughing, coughing or sneezing etc is the primary mode of virus transmissions. Infected person who shows no symptoms also transmit the virus. People without symptoms can spread the virus. People should con-

tinue wearing a mask, wear double masks or a N95 mask. The SARS-CoV-2 virus infects a human host where it can multiply, in the absence of the host it cannot survive, and stopping the transmission of the virus from a person to another person will decrease the infection rate of the disease to a level where it can eventually die. “This can be achieved only with the support and cooperation of individuals, communities, local bodies and authorities. Use of masks, ventilation, distancing, and sanitation, the battle against the virus can be won,” it said.



Himachal sanctions incentives for 4,082 sanitation workers SHIMLA

THE Himachal Pradesh government has sanctioned Rs 2.45 crore as incentive for 4,082 sanitation workers in all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across the state, said state's Urban Development Minister Suresh Bhardwaj on Thursday. Bhardwaj, in a statement here, said, “The state government led by Jai Ram Thakur has decided to give the incentives to the sanitation workers for April, May and June. They have been doing the outstanding work.” He added 4,082 sanitation workers in the state will get this incentive. Few days ago during a video conference with representatives of ULBs, Bhardwaj, raised the issue of incentive for sanitation workers. The Chief Minister announced it immediately. The added all ULBs will get Rs 1.55 crore for the cremation, burial and transportation of deceased who died of Covid-19. The state has also allowed all the five municipal corporations -- Shimla, Dharamsala, Mandi, Palampur and Solan -- to hire the hearses vans for two months, he said, adding the expenditure will be borne by the state from the disaster relief fund.

Don't leave people in distressing time: Priyanka

NEW DELHI

CONGRESS general secretary in-charge of Uttar Pradesh Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday wrote to UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and urged him not to leave the people in distressing time. In her two page letter, Priyanka Gandhi highlighted the issues faced by the people in pandemic and advised the Chief Minister to take steps in public interest.

She said, “the middle class is facing the wrath of the pandemic. Government should step in to fix rates in the private hospitals, as people are taking loan for treatment. The government should give reimbursement.”

“The government should take steps to curb inflation and should not increase electricity tariff and the shopkeeper and traders should be given relief.”

In the letter, she highlighted the issue of school fees and said the government should give relief to parents, teachers and schools.

Priyanka Gandhi, on Wednesday had said, “Denying the list of 1,621 teachers, who died while doing their duty during the panchayat elections, issued by the Uttar Pradesh Shikshak Sangh,



an insensitive UP government is saying the number of teachers who died was only three. The teachers did not get proper safety equipment and treatment while they were alive and now

the government is also taking away their honour after death.”

Earlier also, Priyanka Gandhi had slammed the BJP for conducting panchayat elections in Uttar Pradesh amid the raging

pandemic. She had said that that what is happening in the state is nothing less than a “crime against humanity” and the State Election Commission (SEC) is just “playing along”.

Lucknow teacher posing as doc held after patient dies

LUCKNOW

A BIOLOGY teacher in Lucknow, who had posed as a doctor and duped families of Covid patients by promising to set up Intensive Care Units (ICU) at their homes, was arrested after the death of one such patient. The impersonator, Shashivendra Patel, was arrested after the wife of the dead patient, P.K. Vashishtha, lodged a complaint.

The police probe revealed the racket Patel had been running by opening up a medical firm and providing treatment through ‘smart clinic’. He claimed to be its zonal manager and chief marketing officer. In the second wave of the pandemic, he started duping people by claiming to be a doctor and having a tie-up with a hospital. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP), East Zone, Qasim Abidi said Patel used to contact Covid patients seeking medical consultation and treatment at home.

“He teaches biology to students of classes VI to X at a government school in Safdarjanj, Barabanki. He used his basic knowledge of medical terms like

oxygen saturation, pulse rate, blood pressure and other terms to impress patients and their attendants. “He even promised to set up a temporary intensive care unit at the residence of Covid patients and used to charge heavy fee for treatment. He used to wear a white apron like doctors but never visited the house of a patient himself. He would send his driver for treatment,” Abidi added.

Patel had treated Vashishtha, who died during treatment recently. The accused started pressuring the deceased's wife to pay Rs 1.5 lakh as his fee and expenses on treatment but she refused. Patel started threatening her with dire consequences and the woman complained to police and investigation exposed the racket. The ADCP said that several other persons are involved in the fraud along with Patel and police are collecting call detail records to identify them.

Sources said that Patel is also suspected to have committed a fraud in the education department earlier and police are looking into his past to trace his crime record.

15 booked, 5 held for raising pro-Pak slogans

KANNAUJ

THE police have arrested five persons and booked 15 others for allegedly raising pro-Pakistan slogans, the video of which had gone viral on social media.

The arrested persons include a local Muslim cleric. According to the Kannaunj police, taking cognizance of the viral video, they conducted an inquiry and identified the people seen in it. The video was of May 15 at the Jalalabad crossing, police added. The four arrested persons have been identified as Maulana Mohammad Afzal, an Imam of a local mosque who hails from Kanpur Dehat, Salman, Shahid, and Meraj- all residents of the area. They have been booked under

IPC section 153-B (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration) and 505 (2) (statements creating or promoting enmity between classes) among others.

Circle Officer, (Kannaunj City) Shiv Pratap Singh said that while five of the accused are named in the FIR and 10 unnamed, efforts are on to identify all the others in the video and arrest them. Station House Officer, Gursahaiganj, Raja Dinesh Singh said police are also trying to ascertain why the video was shot and circulated on social media. It may be recalled that last week, a newly elected village pradhan, was arrested in Sitapur for allegedly raising pro-Pakistan slogans during his victory procession.

UP Eidgah 1st religious place to turn into vax centre

LUCKNOW

THE Aishbagh Eidgah in Lucknow will turn into a Covid-19 vaccination centre from Thursday, marking the first time that a religious place will double up as a facility where people can get inoculated against the virus.

A dry run of the vaccination process was carried out at the Eidgah on Wednesday.

People from all age groups, starting from 18 years, will get vaccinated at the campus of the biggest Eidgah in the city from noon on Thursday.

Jabs will only be administered to those who have regis-

tered online and walk-in vaccination will not be entertained.

Officials of the Islamic Centre of India, that is housed within the Eidgah complex, will be helping people with their online registrations.

Eidgah spokesperson Maulana Sufiyan Nizami, said: “The capacity at the centre for beneficiaries between 18 and 44 years of age is 150 a day and for those above 44 years of age, is 250 a day. Vaccination will however depend on registrations made in advance and people can select the Eidgah as their choice of centre on the online CoWin portal.”



He further said that there will be volunteers to help those who are not able to register online themselves.

It was after the Eidgah authorities, headed by Imam of the Eidgah Maulana Khalid Rasheed Farangi Mahali, expressed their willingness to support the administration in Covid management and care, that the Eidgah was chosen as a vaccination site.

According to clerics, the step will create awareness about vaccination further and reduce vaccine among the Muslim population, especially the illiterate people in the community.

Road caves in, house collapses

NEW DELHI

DUE to incessant rain in Delhi, a portion of the road caved in and a house collapsed near a metro construction site in Najafgarh area in South West District on Thursday. However, the authorities said no casualty was reported so far.

As per the report, a team of Public Works Department (PWD) officials of the Delhi Government has reached the spot and repair work of the road is being carried out. Delhi traffic police have diverted traffic to avoid any untoward incident. Delhi traffic police issued an alert on its official twitter handle, “Traffic alert - the metro site and a house have collapsed on the way from Khairatpur to Najafgarh, please avoid using this route.” Delhi has witnessed unprecedented weather change since the last two days and

moderate rain which began late night on Tuesday, continued till Thursday. According to IMD, in Delhi, all time rain fall was 60 mm, logged at the Safdarjung weather observatories on May 24, 1976. Rainfall recorded below 15 mm is considered light, between 15 and 64.5 mm is moderate, between 64.5 mm and 115.5 mm is heavy and between 115.6 mm and 204.4 mm is very heavy. Anything above 204.4 mm is considered extremely heavy rainfall. As the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an orange alert for Delhi, predicting ‘heavy’ to ‘very heavy’ rainfall in parts of the capital with winds gusting up to 60 kilometers per hour on Wednesday.

Also, an impact-based advisory was issued, predicting water-logging in low-lying areas, traffic disruption and uprooting of small plants.



Speak Asia accused again cheats people by establishing new entity

NEW DELHI/ROOPNAGAR

PUNJAB police in Roopnagar district has arrested five persons for cheating a hotel owner on pretext of doubling the money in few days. SSP of Roopnagar/Ropar Akhil Chaudhary said to media, accused Ikshith of Sirsa and Ankit from Bhiwani and Gurpreet Singh, Sachinpreet Sindhu and Rakesh Kumar of Mohali had been arrested and Rs 8.2 lakh has been recovered from them.

The police have registered a case and investigation is underway.

Akhil Chaudhary said, Munish Sethi, a resident of Morinda, Punjab had filed a complaint that the accused, have offered him high returns against his online investment in Espn Global Company (not related to ESPN Media) after which the action was taken and arrests were made.

The police initially said the accused ran a proxy of global gaming company but sources within police have revealed that during investigation, it



came to the notice that Espn Global is run by the same person as the accused in Speak Asia case - Ram Niwas Pal.

But sources say the random checking of the company documents say that it has camouflaged itself in an attempt to appear legitimate, Espn Global provides three corporate addresses on their website; one each in the UK, Poland and Malaysia which investigators feel are fake and in England the

company's ID is registered in the name of some other person and the address is of a hotel. The accused in the Speak Asia were arrested by Delhi Police for allegedly duping investors of thousands of crores in 2013. Speak Asia was registered in Singapore but the company had operations only in India.

Ram Niwas is well-known in his circle for his innovative modus operandi and a decade ago he had smartly structured

his Ponzi schemes to exploit the gaps in the various financial-sector regulations in the country.

The modus operandi of the accused, as per police sources, is that they lured people in investing into cryptocurrency, such as Libracoin and guaranteed huge return to the investors. People out for quick money fall in their trap and lose their hard earned money. The cryptocurrency is illegal in the country and the RBI has been issuing advisory so that people do not fall in the trap.

Ram Niwas Pal who is said to be the mastermind has been notorious and was accused in Speak Asia case and has many accomplices. Sources within the investigation team said that Pal through his accomplice was running the cryptocurrency ring and duping people by running fake websites and YouTube channels to lure people in the fraudulent company.

The names of these people have come to light during investigation and that Pal is

dead, but that turned out to be a hoax. The promoters of Speak Asia are under the scanner of enforcement agencies and also the investigating agencies but somehow they managed to establish a new entity and proceeded to do a new fraud.

CLASSIFIEDS

HOLY BIBLE
Jesus was born of virgin, lived holy life on the earth, healed and delivered people from all manner of diseases, torments and demons. In order to save our souls from burning hell, he shed his holy blood on the cross for our sin, died, was buried and rose again on the third day. Those who believe in Him will receive the forgiveness of sin, escape from hell fire and enter into his kingdom after death.
(Ph: 9848552321).

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Rising temperatures worrying the globe

IN a report, the International Energy Agency (IEA) issued a detailed road map of what it would take for the world's nations to slash carbon dioxide emissions to net zero by 2050. That would very likely keep the average global temperature from increasing 1.5 Celsius above pre industrial levels - the threshold beyond which scientists say the Earth faces irreversible damage. While academics and environmentalists have made similar recommendations before, this is the first time the IEA has outlined ways to accomplish such drastic cuts in emissions. That's significant, given the fact that the influential agency is not an environmental group but an international organization that advises world capitals on energy policy.

Formed after the oil crisis of the 1970s,

the agency's reports and forecasts are frequently cited by energy companies and investors as a basis for long-term planning. Several major economies, including the United States and the European Union, have recently pledged to zero out their emissions responsible for global warming by midcentury. But many world leaders have not yet come to grips with the extraordinary transformation of the global energy system that is required to do so, the agency warned. Net zero emissions doesn't mean countries would stop emitting carbon dioxide altogether. Instead, they would need to sharply reduce most of the carbon dioxide generated by power plants, factories and vehicles.

Any emissions that could not be fully erased would be offset, such as by forests or artificial technologies that can pull

carbon dioxide directly out of the atmosphere. To reach that goal of net zero worldwide by 2050, every nation would need to move much faster and more aggressively away from fossil fuels than they are currently doing, the report found. For instance, the annual pace of installations for solar panels and wind turbines worldwide would have to quadruple by 2030, the agency said. For the solar industry, that would mean building the equivalent of what is currently the world's largest solar farm every day for the next decade. For now, the world remains off course.

Last month, the agency warned that global carbon dioxide emissions were expected to rise at their second-fastest pace ever in 2021 as countries recovered from the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic

and global coal burning neared a high, led by a surge of industrial activity in Asia. We're seeing more governments around the world make net-zero pledges, which is very good news. But there's still a huge gap between the rhetoric and the reality, experts opine. President Joe Biden has made climate action a top priority of his administration and is pushing for an aggressive pivot away from fossil fuels at home and abroad.

But his own pledge to cut U.S. greenhouse gases at least 50 per cent below 2005 levels by the end of this decade faces significant political obstacles. At a virtual summit of 40 world leaders that Biden hosted last month, Japan, Canada and Britain joined the European Union in committing to steeper cuts but China, India and Russia did not. The unevenness in global action comes even as scientists warn that the damages from rising temperatures are already reverberating around the globe.



‘Kashmir Shaivism the fruit of Indian classical philosophical debates’

VISHNU MAKHIJANI

INDIAN intellectual systems have been greatly influenced by the ancient Kashmiri centres for theological discourse and out of these debates emerged the "remarkable" Kashmir Shaivism that assimilates the concepts of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics into a single entity, says techie-film historian-author Prachand Praveer, whose seminal book on world cinema has been essentially influenced by 10th century Kashmiri philosopher Abhinavagupta.

"If we look at any Indian classical philosophical system, typically it discusses four important areas such as metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics. Kashmir Shaivism is remarkable in the sense that it assimilates the major philosophical debates such as Santana vs Buddhist, Dualist vs Non-Dualist, Impact of Grammarians on epistemology, and multiple Bhakti traditions all into one coherent system.

"Unfortunately, Tantric systems are out of current mainstream intellectual and philosophical discourses, whereas Abhinava Gupta assimilates all walks of life including drama and music in his assimilation and formulation of various thoughts of Kashmir Shaivism. It is important to note that Kashmir Shaivism is considered as the fruit of Indian classical philosophical debates," Praveer told IANS in an interview.

How else did Kashmir contribute to the development of Indian classical philosophy? "Indian intellectual systems have been greatly influenced by the Kashmiri mathikas (centres for discourses) and its numerous intellectual traditions. Great grammarians such as Panini (author of the "Astadhyayi") and Patañjali (author of "Mahabhasya"), an ancient treatise on Sanskrit grammar and linguistics, and the compiler of the "Yoga sutras", a text on Yoga theory and practice), were Kashmiris," Praveer explained.

He also pointed to a "long list of major contributors with a definite presence in Kashmir" such as Bhamaha (7th century), the author of "Kavyalankara"; Shrivijaya (8th century), the author of "Anandavardhana (820-890), the author of Dhvanyaloka; Kallata (around 825); Utpaladeva (900-950), the author of "Isvara-pratyabhijñā-sāhikā" (on Tantric metaphysics); and Abhinavagupta (950-1016), the author of "Tantraloka" and "Abhinavabharati".

Post-Abhinavagupta, there were Kemendra (990-1070), and Mamata Bhatta (around 11th century).

"I believe even today any Indian literary criticism cannot be possible without describing or citing or subscribing to the views of one of these literary techniques such as "Alamkara" or poetic decoration (attributed to Bhamaha), "Dhvani" or aesthetics suggestion (attributed to Anandavardhan), "Vakrokti" or theory of oblique expression (attributed to Kuntaka), "Auchitya" or propriety (attributed to Kshemendra) or Mammata's propounded theory of poetic creations," Praveer said.

He noted that an "important name" that every Indian student of music would know is Sarngadeva (1175-1247) who authored "Sangita Ratnakara". "He was born in a Brahmin family of Kashmir and was not living in Kashmir, but we do see the impact of Abhinavagupta and other Kashmiri traditions on his famous treatise of music. Needless to point out that his authoritative treatise on Indian classical music is revered by both the Hindustani music and the Carnatic music traditions," Praveer said. Any other examples of how Kashmiri intellectuals have preserved Indian thoughts? "Well, India in its intellectual curiosity and discipline has preserved her heritage in many strange ways. Abhinavagupta's commentary on Natyashastra, the 'Abhinavabharati', was discovered in Kerala in the early 20th century. Without his commentary, our understanding of Natyashastra would have been very shallow.

"Indian classical traditions always include the additions in shlokas as "prakshipta" (projected addition) if found not matching with the current version. If you happen to read the Valmiki Ramayana or Mahabharata in any authentic preserved version, you will encounter such additions with commentary that it has been added by some sources which is not approved but yet present for the sake of completeness.

The Bhagavad Gita occupies a unique place in the annals of Indian thought and culture through the ages and in this sphere too, Kashmir claims its share of originality. "The existence of Kashmir recension of Gita was first drawn by (German philologist) Dr (Friedrich) Schrader as back as 1930. The Kashmir recension of Gita contains 745 verses as against 700 verses of the popular recension adopted by Adi Shankaracharya. Abhinavagupta's commentary, under the title "Itaarthasangraha", explains the fight between Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas is symbolic of a war that is constantly raging between the lower and upper impulses of our personality," Praveer explained.

Once upon a time, Buddhism was a major philosophical movement in India. Was there any Buddhist connection to Kashmir intellectual traditions? "Yes, Kashmir, from early times, has been a meeting ground of a variety of faiths and divergent thought currents. Kashmir's attachment to Buddhism dates back to the time of Ashoka (273-232 BC). Nāgārjuna (150 BC), the author of 'Milind-Panho', is said to be a Kashmiri. Kanishka (78-102) convened the 2nd Buddhist Council in Kashmir and brought Ashvaghosha to act as its Vice President.

"It has been noted that Kashmiri monks were active in medieval China from the early fourth century up to the 11th century. Kashmiri-ans' contribution, at large, includes translations into Chinese of Buddhist canons and ritualistic texts," Praveer said. His book, "Cinema Through Rasa - A Tryst with Masterpieces in the Light of Rasa Siddhanta", released earlier this year, unravels the nuances of world cinema by harkening back to Abhinavagupta as it pays tribute to his commentary on the "Natyashastra" and the concepts of "Rasa Siddhanta" (theory of aesthetic experience) and "purusartha" (cultural value system of life-pursuits).

Covid-19 and the spiritual dimension



SPiritUALITY is being abundantly conscious of the macro-environment that is enveloping us, instead of being narrowly focused on just one's self. Living a spiritual life doesn't mean to live the life of a saint or a recluse, it is to live a life with deeper understanding and consciousness of who we are, and what we are doing. Spirituality is also about being eternally open-minded to allow knowledge to freely flow-in. To be a perpetual seeker, is to be spiritually enabled.

It is a fact, that we are simply a particle in this mammoth universe. As an individual, we are quite insignificant in the larger schematic. This fundamental awareness should allow us to let-go of our ignorant arrogance. Our juvenile claim, that we can control everything that impacts us with intelligence, power, wealth or military strength exposes the lack of spiritual grounding.

The 'thought-led smarts' of our species has led us to believe that we are the masters of the world. We have only worked our way up using violent, unnatural methods with impunity to be on the top of the food-chain. Our belief that nothing can challenge or threaten our survival is misplaced.

This planet doesn't belong just to one species, no matter how superior it has evolved to be. There is abundant life on this planet, some our naked eye can't even see. Is it sustainable to inadvertently destroy every other life-form by over populating this planet with just one species?

Before the advent of modern industrialised societies and unquantifiable human greed, most human societies in the world lived natural and spiritual life, co-existing with the nature and its bio-diversity. There were fewer needs and lesser greed in spiritually-enabled societies of ancient civilisations. There was hardly any disease, prolonged life expectancy spanning double or triple than in the current period, in ancient civilisations. Natural death was welcomed and, in a few civilisations, it was even embraced and celebrated.

The Covid-19 microbe is a rude awakener for us humans living in

industrialized, structured, artificial human societies. Our position on the top of the food chain has been challenged for the first time ever, in the modern human history by a viral microbe of 0.06 to 1.4 microns.

All the presumed mastery, authority, control over our macro-environment we seem to possess has been neutralized, with COVID19 microbe, forcing the human society into our modern and artificial caves for the last 15 months.

Even after 15 months, the modern human enterprise could neither find an unambiguous, uncontested, standardized treatment for COVID19 infection, nor a pan-world, all-strain, unchallenged preventive vaccine so far. All trial-and-error research outcomes globally so far, have been rife with confusion, contest, denials, and withdrawals. If we are as superior of a species as we are promoted to be, how are we so weak against a viral microbe...and for this long? How did we lose an unprecedented 3.5 million of our fellow humans to this ongoing pandemic?

It is about time we collectively understand, and come to terms with the fact that we are not in complete control of the macro-environment on this planet. There are many natural forces on this planet, we just can't fight against.

However, it is commendable that the human enterprise with its diligence has found many counter measures to defend our species from infectious disease, environmental threats and other existential threats to survive and thrive for this long period. But, it's an irony that on one end we are ruining our habitat and health, and on the other end using billions of dollars to find counter measures to fix. Quite inexplicitly both destruction and resurrection are at play in the same time-line.

I strongly believe, it is essential for us to take a conscious pause, while we are forcefully or voluntarily locked up in our homes across the world, to reflect on where we as humans have actually arrived, after all the scientific advancement and thought-led evolution in around 500 years of modern human history. Have we really progressed or regressed? Have we defined success, progress, development, wealth conveniently to suit our unnatural pursuits?

Going forward, below are three key reflections I urge the modern human enterprise to recognize, reflect and resolve.

Reconnect to nature

Life on earth is a unique and an amazing natural creation. It is forever intriguing to see how na-



Before the advent of modern industrialised societies and unquantifiable human greed, most human societies in the world lived natural and spiritual life, co-existing with the nature and its bio-diversity. There were fewer needs and lesser greed in spiritually-enabled societies of ancient civilisations. There was hardly any disease, prolonged life expectancy spanning double or triple than in the current period, in ancient civilisations. Natural death was welcomed and, in a few civilisations, it was even embraced and celebrated

ture has empowered its life forms with composition of life-preserving gases in the atmosphere. Nature has enabled protection for life-forms on earth from harsh ultra-violet rays of the sun with an ozone layer, cultivatable land for food-produce for nourishment and many such unimaginable wonders.

However, the human species in particular seems to be moving away from its natural habitat, in a frenzy. I feel it is quite unnatural that most modern humans find special comfort in concrete, artificial, noisy, congested and sometimes even life-constricting social-ecosystems.

The concrete habitat we have got ourselves nested into doesn't breathe, nor it enables better life experience in comparison to the natural habitat. If nature has given us oxygen to synthesize and fuel life's core functions, we have almost grown unconscious of even breathing well. The fundamental life functions have become so mundane and underprioritized for centuries of our mad rush towards material pursuits.

Unfortunately, COVID19 had to cruelly remind us of the necessity to have better natural immunity, lower morbidity, higher lung capacity and natural oxygenation to not lose life.

It is evident that in the last 500 years, we have taken many bounties of nature for granted. We have disrespected and abused our natural habitats and overpopulated ourselves to live like pigeons in stuffy, cramped, tall concrete buildings, even while we

have no dearth of land at least for now on this planet.

It has now become imminent for us to go back to where we belong, our natural habitat enveloped by nature. I wish we can find a way to live better, to breathe well, to be disease-free. I fully understand the socio-economic compulsions which have driven-up the population density and artificial urban habitats. However, there is no one else to blame for all the mess we are in today.

Value life, not the lifestyle

It is about time; we reduce our needs to reduce greed in the society. It is the human greed which is driving unmanageable stress, lop-sided priorities, unwarranted comparisons and unhealthy competition.

The human society has grown so shallow, ignorant and bereft of 'life-knowledge', that it values wealth over health, success over happiness, reaction over reflection, drugs over nourishment, reason over emotion, materialism over spirituality and lifestyle over life.

COVID19 is not the first health challenge to human society and certainly will not be the last. Besides natural degeneration and death through age-related medical conditions, the last 100 years have seen a huge spike in lifestyle related diseases like cancer, diabetes, cardio-vascular, COPD, Tuberculosis and others.

There are also innumerable mental health illnesses driven out of the complexity of modern so-

cial habitats we currently live in.

COVID19 is quite unique in posing an existential threat for humans for the first time ever in the modern history unlike any other disease. Its ability to constantly mutate and its nature to spread fast and infect through respiratory particles, poses a huge threat as a global contagion.

If we as humans were to respect life in its full glory and had a spiritual dimension to our life, we wouldn't have colonized into these highly dense ant-hills of urban habitat. We wouldn't be glaring at such massive infection, disease and death.

Enable a spiritual society

Spirituality is an 'ancient-civilizational-knowledge' asset. It is a superior way of life. It needs to be emulated and valued, if one actually values their life.

Personal success, wealth creation, consumerism, scientific advancement and technological applications are welcome in modern societies, but they shouldn't be at the expense of destroying our own natural-habits and habitat.

In the name of progress, evolution and development, one should not lose track of the larger schematic of this planet and the universe. It is plain foolish to live and work as if, we are the last generation of humans to live on this planet.

Being conscious of our precious life-form, breathing consciously, respecting the natural environment, having gratitude for amazing bounties of nature, empathy towards other life-forms, and living in unison with the elements of nature, are critical spiritual endeavors for human survival in future.

Subsistence was not a bad phase in human evolution. In fact, I feel that was the best phase. In that phase, human needs were least and life was in the lap of nature. 500 years of irresponsible industrialization has risen human needs and wants, and has failed humans in the areas of spiritual self-preservation and natural sustenance.

Irresponsible misdirection towards destroying natural habits and habitats, and building artificial dungeons of concrete in the name of development has brought us today, to a clear and present danger of an existential threat.

I believe, it is time to travel in a different direction for another 500 years, with a worthy and responsible evolution for human species to regain their lost connection with natural habits and habitat.

(The author is the chief spokesperson of the BJP Telangana State, an organisational strategist & a leadership coach)

LETTERS

LDF govt 'left' with explaining to do

NO matter what the party - the CPI (M) - says, the exclusion of K K Shailaja Teacher from the new Council of Ministers headed by Pinarayi Vijayan has hung heavy on the occasion of the swearing-in of the CM and his Cabinet colleagues. It has taken some shine off the ceremony. The claim that it was the party's collective decision and not Pinarayi Vijayan's is very far-fetched. We are all aware that Pinarayi Vijayan wields enormous power within the party and no one dares voice objections to what he wishes. The LDF could have done without changing horses mid-stream.

One hopes that the new health min-

ister Veena George proves equal to the challenge of leading the Covid-19 fight as her predecessor did. The new faces in the Cabinet are all up-and-coming leaders; they represent the state's rich cultural ethos; they are promising; they are sure to do their best for the people to fulfil their aspirations and realize their potential. Captain Vijayan should nurture the young Ministers without centralizing power in the CMO.

What is politically more substantive and significant is that a left front committed to secularism assumes power for one more term and consecutively at that. It is expected that the Pinarayi Vijayan government's policies will be people-centric and focus on welfare and development. We are confident that it will do all that it can to improve the quality of life of the state's impoverished people.

We have to look at the new govern-

ment in the wider national context. It will be a bulwark against right-wing Hindutva forces and resist the attempts to implement the Hindutva agenda. It will seek a relationship with the Centre based on 'cooperative federalism'. Most importantly, it will preserve the state's famed social amity.

G David Milton, Maruthancode

Spread vaccination efforts

IT is of topical interest to note that the Bombay High Court told the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation that if the Centre did not permit door-to-door vaccination, the Court would grant the civic body permission to do so. In these days of widespread pandemic, it is all the more necessary to adapt the door-to-door vaccination. This is all the more essential in respect of those aged about 75, bed-ridden and wheelchair bound. I would urge the Telangana Government to consider this

suggestion and implement the same at the earliest.

Seshagiri Row Karry, Hyderabad

A little sensitivity needed

YOUR Editorial "Indifferent administration hurting people" (THI, 20 May) mirrors the present day reality where the politicians in power are doing very little to mitigate the pandemic induced miseries of people but are presenting a false narrative of their performance through their boastful and high decibel rhetoric which amounts to self-deception.

Millions of hapless and distraught people are immensely angered by the unresponsive and irresponsible political leadership that is investing all its capital for garnering votes and winning elections with no concern for the plight of people caught in the vortex of unprecedented health crisis where the cal-

lous and cavalier approach of rulers facilitated indiscriminate fleecing of millions of Covid-19 patients through black marketing of drugs and other corrupt practices with regard to accessing ambulance services, allocation of hospital beds and even getting time slots in crematoriums. People are indeed frustrated by the ruling classes unwilling to take any sort of accountability for their flawed administration that shattered the lives and livelihoods of people like never before.

Apparently, wisdom of ruling classes often gets reflected through revisiting and reviewing their missteps and going for course correction. When every rupee counts for government to ramp up healthcare infrastructure to halt the deaths caused by shortage of medical facilities, nothing is more insensible than going ahead with the construction of Central Vista Project at a huge cost.

A landslide electoral victory and a brute majority in Parliament shouldn't be taken as a license to embrace a political discourse devoid of economic

prudence, financial discipline, wider consultations, legislative debates and political consensus. In the backdrop of mounting criticism against the controversial Central Vista project, the government needs to make amendments to its policy in this regard. Egoistic tendency to not retreat may further make the already fragile economy still worse jeopardizing the pandemic control endeavours. The Centre needs to navigate carefully in the troubled waters of ever increasing financial constraints in light of people being hit hard multiple times by the mutating microbe where the limited financial resources have to be utilised judiciously and with right priorities. Political interests shouldn't take precedence over people's interests. It is high time the political leadership demonstrated dexterous political management to rise to the occasion during these most challenging times by renouncing a political discourse that seeks to promote the image of the top leader at the cost of wellbeing of people.

Naarveendra Babu, Hyderabad

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Covid infection takes toll on patients with severe mental illness

MOHAMMED HUSSAIN
HYDERABAD

WITH the surge in Covid cases in GHMC limits infecting a large number of people in the last three weeks, 80 abnormal inmates in the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), Erragadda, have got affected with the virus. These patients have severe mental illness and are at high risk for medical comorbidities whose psychiatric condition can worsen owing to the infection.

According to sources in IMH, sub-normal patients are difficult to treat when they have the virus. Many patients refuse to wear a mask and use sanitiser. Maintaining physical distancing is a challenge for them.

Further, the sources said, there is no ventilator support available in the institute. The IMH has shifted all the infected inmates to a separate ward to avoid the spread of virus.

The inmates, suffering from severe bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder besides chronic conditions like personality disorders, are very difficult to handle, as they do not cooperate with the doctors and nursing staff.

An IMA doctor, on the condition of anonymity, said even the in-house medics are not entering the Covid ward, due to fear

■ 80 abnormal inmates in Institute of Mental Health affected; many refuse to wear masks and use sanitiser and also maintaining physical distancing is a challenge for them

■ During first wave of Corona, around 37 patients were admitted after testing positive. Of them, nine were sent to Gandhi Hospital, and the rest were isolated at IMH as their condition was not serious

■ University of Oxford research found people with severe mental illness may be experiencing greater psychological distress during the pandemic



that they might get infected as inmates are not wearing masks or following any other protocols. Even the helping staff is hesitating to go into the ward, he added.

"One patient had lower oxygen levels. He was immediately shifted to the Chest Hospital for ventilator support. We are seeing a good recovery rate, but around 50 patients are still infected.

We now have a pulmonologist from the Government General and Chest Hospital to monitor the health condition of recovering inmates," said IMH Superintendent M Uma Shankar, adding

that there are over 250 beds in the hospital. They are scattered in a family/male/female/jail wards.

Last year, during the first wave of Corona, around 37 patients were admitted after testing positive. Of them, nine were sent to Gandhi Hospital, and the rest isolated at IMH, as their condition was not serious.

Moreover, the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford, conducted research and found that people with severe mental illness (SMI) may be ex-

periencing greater psychological distress during the pandemic than the wider public.

The research shows that public health measures associated with Covid, including quarantine of suspected cases and lockdowns may negatively affect the mental health of people with SMI, through a change of environment, disruption of services, increased stress, and isolation.

Existing research points to greater psychological distress during the pandemic for people with SMI, rather than demonstrating this distress is due to the pandemic, it found.

Pleas to provide special PF withdrawals

HYDERABAD

TRADE union leader and former director of TSRTC M Nageswara Rao on Thursday demanded the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao to instruct the RTC management to provide the employees with PF special withdrawals, which is three basic pay plus three DAs, which is non-refundable in nature from their provident fund holdings. The trade union in a letter to Chief Minister reminded that the Centre had made some amendments by incorporating new provision to 681 (3) of EPF scheme on March 28, 2020, by providing eligibility to all employees all across the country to get three basic pay plus three DAs which is non-refundable in nature from their provident fund holdings. Nageswara Rao said that Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) has sanctioned the applicants of 56 lakh employees of government/corporations so far duly spending about Rs 14,000 crore as on December 2020. He also pointed out that Andhra Pradesh Corporation had sanctioned special PF loans under Covid19 to about 30,000 employees in the first phase and they were sanctioning loans even for the second wave/phase of Corona Pandemic. He urged the Chief Minister to advise the management to implement the orders of EPFO and order payment of special PF loans by stipulating the specific date as the payment is delayed by more than one year and as RTC workers were financially suffering.

TSRTC night out orders draw flak

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE decision of the TSRTC officials to operate buses with less occupancy ratio is making the employees report on duty at 4 am and stay out station till the next day has drawn flak as those going to other districts are made to suffer with no hotels or restaurants amid the ongoing Covid-induced lockdown.

According to the Union leaders, the officials are asking the employees to start the bus services at 4 am, while the lockdown relaxation timing is between 6 am and 10 am. The TSRTC Telangana Jathiya Mazdoor Union leader K Hanumanthu Mudiraj said that the officials with over enthusiasm are operating more buses even though there is no demand and hence are in losses.

The union leaders alleged that the TSRTC officials are operating buses beyond 150 to 250 kms and have asked the drivers and conductors to report before 4 am. "The buses are sent even though there are no passengers. Since there is no scope for returning of the buses in the four hour window, the employees are asked to stay back in the districts in the name of night out," said Hanumanthu. However, he said that the drivers and conductors going to the districts are deprived of lodging and hotels to meet their needs like food and shelter. They are made to stay there and return to the city the next day before 10 am.

Hanumanthu said that there

■ Union leaders say, drivers and conductors going to the districts are deprived of lodging and hotels to meet their needs like food and shelter

■ There was no point in operating buses without passengers as not even half the money spent on diesel was coming

■ TSRTC officials are operating buses beyond 150 to 250 kms and is asking the drivers and conductors to report before 4 am for the sake of attendance

was no point in operating buses without passengers as not even half the money spent on diesel was coming. Though the officials know that they won't get money but they want to call the employees for the sake of attendance, he alleged.

The corporation is also asking the employees to ensure the earnings per kilometer (EPK) to be Rs 30. Employees Union leader K Raji Reddy said that the BHEL depot has put up a notice that the employees should compulsorily mention about the earnings per kilometer in the trip and also wanted them to ensure the earnings are Rs 30 per kilometer, which is not justified as the people were not travelling in the buses in the wake of lockdown.

9th O2 express reaches Hyd with 119.45 tonnes of LMO

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Ninth Oxygen Express to Hyderabad reached Sanathnagar Goods Complex on Thursday. The train has brought 119.45 metric tonnes of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) filled in six tankers. So far, 774.37 Metric tonnes of LMO had been transported in nine Oxygen Express trains.

The Ninth Oxygen Express was transported from Rourkela, Odisha for 1320 km in a short period of around 22 hours, with the train travelling at an average speed of 60 kmph from its originating station. To ensure that the train reaches the destination at the fastest possible time, Railways have created a green corridor route for uninterrupted and fast movement of these oxygen special trains, said senior officer, South Central Railway.

Gajanan Mallya, General



Manager, SCR has assured that the Railways is taking all necessary steps to ensure that the Oxygen Express trains reach in the fastest possible time. He said that the movement of these trains is being given the highest sense of urgency, with multi-disciplinary teams working round

the clock to ensure speedy delivery. He also appreciated the staff and officers for the coordination and liaison being maintained with the State governments of both originating and destination stations for expediting the supply of oxygen by these trains.

Uttam demands free Covid treatment to all BPL families

Criticises the government for 'poor' infrastructure at State-run hospitals

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Pradesh Congress Committee president N Uttam Kumar Reddy strongly demanded the State government that all 80 lakh families who under the below poverty line in the State should be provided with free treatment for Covid-19.

He also demanded that ambulances should be provided at nominal charges for transport of the Covid patients, and non-BPL families should be provided treatment at private hospitals at regulated charges. He made it clear that the government should ease the burden on the middleclass and the poor sections immediately.

Addressing the media online on Thursday, Uttam said that due to the incompetence of the State and



gratia was also being provided in other States, while no such respite exists in Telangana.

Citing the comments of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao that Ayushman Bharat Scheme of the Centre was useless, Uttam said that a very few families would be covered by it and

it was not at all useful. The TPCC chief lamented that Covid has been casting unbearable burden on the poor families. He said that due to the incompetence of the government about Rs 20,000 to Rs 25,000 has been collected for ambulance, Rs 50,000 per one oxygen bed, and Rs 1.50 lakh has been

charged for ventilator bed by the hospitals. He said that for the last one-and-a-half years the Congress has been demanding the government to consider Covid as a natural calamity so that the affected could be protected. Citing the comments of the Chief Minister that people were unnecessarily spending lakhs of rupees in private hospitals, Uttam said that the people have been opting private hospitals as there was no infrastructure in government hospitals.

He called upon the party leaders and workers to take up relief works for the benefit of Covid affected families at the hospitals, burial grounds on the occasion of 30th death anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on Friday. He wanted them to help the illiterate to register their names for the vaccination drive.

PANDEMIC TIME

CM appeals Naidu to extend cooperation to govt

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy appealed to Opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu to extend cooperation to the State government at the present time of Covid crisis instead of blaming the government.

He said mistakes are common at any level and nothing can be achieved by pointing fingers at each other. He said everyone should encourage others for better performance and should not cause panic among people by indulging in false campaign on Covid.

He also requested some section of the media not to spread false news and cause panic among people. Addressing the Budget session of the State Assembly on Thursday, the Chief Minister made it clear that the State government will provide vaccination to people free of cost. He said AP is the first State to go for global tenders to get

● Says any false campaign at a crucial time will only cause panic among people
● The CM says vaccination is the only solution to contain Covid
● Assures free vaccination to all
● Says priority will be given to vaccinating the vulnerable sections who are above 45 years
● Points out that the State has a capacity to vaccinate one lakh people each day



vaccines. Stating that vaccination is the only solution to contain Covid, the Chief Minister said that if the vaccination was completed by 50 to 60 per cent, then only we will get rid of the Covid pandemic.

The Chief Minister pointed out that the vaccination comes under the Central govt purview

and the Centre has to give clearance for getting vaccines through global tenders. He said priority will be given for vaccination to vulnerable sections who are above 45 years of age and later those under 18-45 age group will be vaccinated. He said AP has a capacity to vaccinate one lakh people per day.

The Chief Minister said as he knows the importance of life, he included Covid and black fungus under Aarogyasri. He said during the coronavirus second wave, 649 hospitals were transformed into Covid hospitals by providing 47,747 beds. Besides in Covid Care Centres, 52,471 beds were provided. He said the State government is purchasing 18,000 oxygen concentrators. He said the State government spent Rs 2,229 crore towards Covid treatment for the past 23 months.

The Chief Minister said 17 hospitals were notified to treat black fungus. Referring to oxygen supply, Jagan said oxygen units were set up in 53 hospitals and the government would purchase 18,500 oxygen concentrators at a cost of Rs 309 crore. He said Andhra Pradesh needs 7 crore doses of Covid vaccines including 3 crore doses for above 45 years but the Central govt supplied only 13 per cent of vaccines so far.

objections and suggestions from the general public and intending bidders.

He appealed to the people to submit objections or suggestions if any within seven working days on or before May 28.

documents were submitted to Justice B Sambasiva Rao of Judicial Preview as per the AP Infrastructure (Transparency through Judicial Preview) Act and were placed on the domain of judicial preview www.judicialpreview.ap.gov.in inviting

the proposal to induct the buses into the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation, according to Executive Director of APSRTC P Krishna Mohan Rao.

He said in a statement here on Thursday that the tender

APSRTC to buy 350 electric buses

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

TENDERS for the purchase of 350 electric buses have been called for through judicial preview committee after the State government approved

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE State government has allocated Rs 13,830 crore to Medical and Health Department in the Annual Budget for the year 2021-22.

The Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy presenting the Annual Budget in the Assembly in Amaravati on Thursday said the State government is giving priority for the development of infrastructure facilities in the government hospitals, Primary Health Centres, Area Hospitals and Community Health Centres.

He said the Aarogyasri was implemented to provide cashless treatment to the people in select hospitals and YSR Aasara is implemented to give financial assistance to the patients.

The Finance Minister said the budget allocation to Medical and Health Department increased by 21.11 per cent in 2020-21 compared to the previous financial year.

He said under the Nadu-Nedu scheme, infrastructure facilities were being developed in the government hospitals, area hospitals, district hospitals, Community Health Centre and PHCs. He said the government had allocated funds for construction of 16 medical colleges in the State for the year 2020-21 and 21-22.

Referring to Covid, the Minister said the State government had spent Rs 2248.94 crore to deal with the Covid pandemic.



Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy heading towards the State Assembly at Velagapudi with Budget 2021-22 papers on Thursday

He said the government spent expenditure for setting up labs, purchasing ventilators, drugs, PPE kits, laying oxygen pipelines in the hospitals and

to meet other expenses. The Minister said NITI Aayog also praised the efforts of the Andhra Pradesh government in fighting the pandemic.

House passes Appropriation Bill

ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED SINE DIE

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE State Legislative Assembly on Thursday passed the Andhra Pradesh Appropriation Vote on Account Bill, 2021, Andhra Pradesh Appropriation Bill No.2, 2021 and Andhra Pradesh Appropriation Bill No.3, 2021.

Finance Minister Buggana Rajen-

dranath Reddy tabled the three Appropriation Bills required to meet the supplementary grants made by the State Assembly for the year and supplementary expenditure charged on the consolidated fund of the state of Andhra Pradesh for that year. The Bills were passed by voice vote. The State Legislative Assembly was later adjourned sine die by Speaker Tammineni Sitaram.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Subsidy hike will benefit farmers

“The government is committed to farmers’ welfare and the decision to hike subsidy on DAP fertiliser will provide relief to the farming community. The Prime Minister called a meeting and decided to hike subsidy to ensure domestic retail prices remain unchanged.


— Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Agriculture Minister



SUGAR EXPORTS

Govt cuts subsidy on high global prices

Centre slashed subsidy on sugar exports from Rs 6,000 per tonne to Rs 4,000 per tonne with immediate effect in view of firm global prices. The reduced subsidy rate will be applicable to export agreements executed on May 20 or later

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)				
US Dollar	73.84		South	
Euro	90.06		African Rand	5.95
UAE Dirham	20.5		Hong Kong Dollar	10.83
Thai Baht	2.56		Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.31		New Zealand Dollar	53.1
Australian Dollar	57.27		Saudi Riyal	21.43
Canadian Dollar	60.99		Swedish Krona	10.09
Swiss Franc	81.95		Singapore Dollar	55.95

DELHI FRIDAY 21 MAY 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Tanla posts ₹102 cr net

Cloud communications firm Tanla Platforms reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 102.54 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2021. The company had posted a consolidated net loss of Rs 89.12 crore in the year-ago period. Its total income increased by 23.64 per cent during the reported quarter to Rs 650.09 crore as against Rs 525.77 crore in the corresponding quarter of 2019-20. Tanla added 68 new customers in the quarter. “We delivered another fantastic quarter to cap a record-breaking 2021 across all key parameters, with over Rs 2,300 crore in full-year revenue. “These stellar results continue to demonstrate Tanla’s strong platform and enterprise offerings, our focus on customer success, and commitment to enable their communication needs,” Tanla Platforms Chairman CEO Uday Reddy said.

Storytel’s new offer

Demand for content in regional languages has gone up significantly in the last few years and continues to be on rise. In this backdrop and with focus on regional languages, Storytel has expanded its starter subscription plan, Select, which allows customers to access audiobooks in 11 regional languages. Storytel had piloted Select services with thousands of audiobooks & ebooks in Marathi language only in 2020. Now the offering is expanded to 11 languages at an affordable price point of ₹149 per month. “Our aim is to get people more and more closer to stories and literature that stems from their roots. With expanding Select as a product, we want to give users the power to choose and pay for what they actually consume. We were seeing doubled interest in the consumption of audiobooks in languages other than English”.

New plan from Exide Life

Exide Life Insurance Company Limited announced the launch of Exide Life Guaranteed Wealth Plus, a comprehensive life insurance plan that offers best-in-class guaranteed returns, to help customers fulfill their financial needs comfortably along various life stages. Sanjay Tiwari, Director-Strategy, Exide Life Insurance said, “We are delighted to launch the Exide Life Guaranteed Wealth Plus, one of the most unique and competitive guaranteed savings insurance plans in the market today. The product not only caters to the diverse financial needs of our customers but also offers them a lucrative option to build wealth”. The category-first product feature of continuous life cover throughout the income payout period along with up to 350 per cent guaranteed returns, sets this product apart, he added.

FAITH seeks GST cut

FAITH, the policy federation of all the national associations representing the complete tourism, travel and hospitality industry of India (ADTOI, ATOAI, FHRAI, HAI, IATO, ICPB, IHHA, ITTA, TAAI, TAFI), has made suggestions to Finance Ministry, Tourism Ministry & the CEA for GST rationalization of the Indian tourism value chain, to be taken up in the upcoming GST council meeting the next week. It has suggested initiating the process of undertaking a review and rationalisation of GST applicable across different aspects of the Indian tourism, travel & hospitality industry.

Mkt retreats for 2nd day on negative global cues

Sensex sheds 338 pts, Nifty slumps 124 pts; banks, RIL slip

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmarks stayed on the backfoot for the second session running on Thursday, mirroring the nervousness in global markets after minutes of the US Fed’s previous meeting revealed discussions around tapering its asset purchase programme.

After touching the 50,000-mark in opening trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex was dragged lower by selling in banking and energy counters. It finally finished at 49,564.86, down 337.78 points or 0.68 per cent. On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty gave up the 15,000-level to close 124.10 points or 0.83 per cent lower at 14,906.05.

ONGC was the top loser among the Sensex constituents, tumbling 2.70 per cent, followed by Sun Pharma, PowerGrid, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Kotak Bank and Nestle India.

On the other hand, M&M, IndusInd Bank, Titan, L&T, Bajaj Finserv and Infosys were among the gainers, climbing up to 2.47 per cent. “Domestic market witnessed selling due to lack of further domestic cues and weak global market. Wall Street has extended its losses as US treasury yield and dollar index jumped post the release of a

watchful Fed minutes, which was below the expectations. “Fed minutes signal



nalled a plausible slowdown in bond buying ‘at some point’, a shift in policy in the future, which will have an implication on emerging markets,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. Binod Modi, Head - Strategy at Reliance Securities, said the visible decline in daily Covid-19 cases in India has offered comfort to investors.

“However, minutes of FOMC meeting indicates diversions among members’ view about higher inflation and accommodative stance and ECB’s warning toward potential bubble in financial assets do not bode well for global equities, including India.

“This raises concerns about possible taper tantrum in early 2022, which is also expected to weigh on investors’ sentiments

in coming week and can be a headwind for market...,” he added.

Metal stocks witnessed heavy selling pressure after China’s move to curb commodity prices in the country, he pointed out.

Sector-wise, BSE metal, oil and gas, bankex, utilities and energy indices fell up to 3.62 per cent, while realty, capital goods and consumer durables ended with gains. Broader BSE mid-cap index finished in the red, while the smallcap gauge rose 0.22 per cent. Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Seoul ended on a negative note, while Nikkei was in the positive terrain.

Equities in Europe were largely trading with gains in mid-session deals. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.15 per cent higher at \$66.76 per barrel. The rupee strengthened by 6 paise to end at 73.12 against the US dollar, tracking the weakness in the American currency in the overseas market. Foreign institutional investors were net sellers in the capital market on Wednesday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 697.75 crore, as per exchange data.

‘CCI should be proactive in approach’

NEW DELHI: The Competition Commission of India should take ‘extra care’ and ensure that no ‘omission or commission’ result in undermining of market processes as businesses look for revival after the pandemic, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Thursday.



Addressing a virtual event to commemorate the 12th annual day of the Competition Commission of India (CCI), the Minister also appreciated the efforts taken by the regulator over the years and urged it to continue with a pro-active approach.

The CCI has the mandate to ensure fair competition in the market across sectors and also has powers to clamp down on anti-competitive practices.

“I would also want to just mention, not in a left-handed way but certainly mention that knowingly or unknowingly, no omission or commission should result in the market process getting undermined. “... Competition Commission will ensure that market process should never get undermined because it is very critical considering the post-pandemic revival. It is going to meet with so many challenges even otherwise,” Sitharaman said.

Centre extends I-T filing deadlines

To provide relief to taxpayers in view of the severe pandemic

NEW DELHI

THE government on Thursday extended the due date of filing income tax returns for 2020-21 for individuals by two months till September 30.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has also extended the ITR filing deadline for companies by a month till November 30. As per the income tax law, for individuals whose accounts are not required to be audited and who usually file their income tax return using ITR-1 or ITR-4 forms the deadline to file ITR is July 31. The deadline for taxpayers, like companies or firms, whose accounts are required to be audited is October 31.

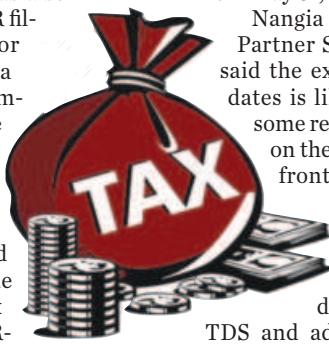
In a circular, the CBDT said an extension of time limits is being given for certain tax compliances “to provide relief to taxpayers in view of the severe pandemic”.

Also, the deadline for issuing Form 16 by employers to employees has been extended by a month till July 15, 2021, the CBDT said. The due date for filing the tax audit report and transfer pricing certificate has been extended by a month till October 31 and No-

vember 30, respectively. For filing belated or revised return of income, the due date is now January 31, 2022. Besides, the deadline for financial institutions to furnish the Statement of Financial Transaction (SFT) report has been extended till June 30, from May 31, 2021.

Nangia and Co LLP Partner Shailesh Kumar said the extension of due dates is likely to provide some relief to taxpayers on the tax compliance front. “However, for taxpayers whose entire income tax liability is not discharged by TDS and advance tax and such shortfall is more than Rs 1 lakhs, they should endeavour to file their ITR within respective original due date to avoid the charge of interest u/s 234A, which is charged on filing ITR beyond the original due date at the rate of 1 per cent per month for every month/ part thereof after the original due date of filing ITR,” Kumar added.

The CBDT had on April 1 notified forms for filing I-T returns for 2020-21 fiscal, and said that keeping in view the ongoing crisis due to Covid pandemic and to facilitate the taxpayers, no significant change has been made in comparison to the last year’s ITR Forms.



Hotels see 39% dip in room revenue: JLL

NEW DELHI

INDIA’s hospitality industry witnessed a decline of 38.7 per cent in Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) during the first quarter of 2021 as compared to the year-ago period, according to global real estate consultant JLL.

“RevPAR in the top six cities has decreased by 48 per cent in Q1 2021 as compared to Q1 2020,” JLL’s Hotel Momentum India (HMI) Q1 2021 said in a statement. Goa grew to be the RevPAR leader in absolute terms, despite the single digit decline in RevPAR by 1.1 per cent in January-March 2021 compared to the year-ago period. This was due to a 6.4 per cent increase in occupancy levels, it added.

Demand for domestic leisure travel amid international travel restrictions continues to make Goa the fastest recovering market in absolute terms, the statement said. Bengaluru saw the sharpest decline



in RevPAR in the first quarter of 2021, with a 60.6 per cent decline compared to the same period of the previous year, it added. The recovery of the sector has been primarily driven by the leisure segment performing notably well, the statement said. JLL, South Asia, Hotels and Hospitality Group, MD Jaideep Dang said that in the first quarter of 2021, the hospitality industry witnessed a revival, with most leisure markets performing exceptionally well.

The pace of recovery started picking up due to increase in corporate travel but it was short lived as the onset of the second wave brought back travel restrictions and derailed the recovery, he added. “We expect that the hospitality sector in India will mostly remain under stress in 2021. However, the hotels are much more nimble and better prepared in terms of their SOPs and cost structures to navigate business interruptions this year,” Dang said.

Covid 2.0 dampener on auto industry recovery

An elongated recovery cycle expected despite the vaccination drive: ICRA

MUMBAI

THE second wave of the pandemic in the country has derailed the recovery momentum of the domestic auto industry, which was poised for a comeback in the current fiscal after witnessing the two consecutive challenging years, ratings agency ICRA said on Thursday. Unlike the first wave where infections were largely localised to urban clusters, the second wave has seen deeper and wider penetration, including into rural hinterlands. Accordingly, outlook for various segments has been revised downwards, it said.

While pick-up in the vaccination drive is expected to support flattening of the curve going forward, an elongated recovery cycle or possibility of a third wave offers further downside risks to ICRA’s volume estimates, according to ICRA. Many auto original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and auto ancillaries resorted to plant shutdowns as a restrictive measure. The automotive dealerships across



regions have also not been operational in light of regional restrictions imposed by various States and local authorities in order to curb the pandemic, it said. The agency added that as per an ICRA note, while these would cause near-term supply disruptions in the sector, the larger and prolonged impact is likely to be on account of the impact on various demand drivers. Accordingly, the ratings agency has revised the growth estimates for most of the different automotive segments downwards.

Segment-wise, ICRA said, the two-wheeler volumes are expected to be

the most impacted, with the target consumer segment’s affordability and demand sentiment sharply hit by the second wave. Accordingly, domestic two-wheeler volumes in 2021-22 are expected to grow 10-12 per cent now as against 16-18 per cent earlier. The passenger vehicle segment may see a lower growth of 17-20 per cent now as against 22-25 per cent expected earlier, as per ICRA estimates. Overall, the commercial vehicle (CV) segment is expected to grow 21-24 per cent (albeit on a low base) in 2021-22 now, compared with 27-30 per cent that was expected earlier.



ByteDance chief steps down

BEIJING: Chinese tech unicorn ByteDance Ltd co-founder billionaire Zhang Yiming on Thursday announced that he will step down as CEO, in a surprise move that signalled a major leadership shake-up at the nine-year-old technology firm which created popular global short-video app TikTok.

Zhang, 38, who is one of China’s wealthiest entrepreneurs, said he is ready to step down after nearly a decade of running the world’s largest unicorn, becoming the latest among the country’s technology founders to quit in their prime.

Zhang will step down from his role as CEO of the Beijing-based ByteDance, giving up his day-to-day responsibilities to “be more impactful on longer-term initiatives,” the company said.

Vax tourism idea goes viral before takeoff

A flyer of Dubai-based travel agency Arabian Nights Tours has gone viral on WhatsApp. It offers a 24-day-long trip from Delhi to Moscow including two-doses of Sputnik V vaccine

N SHARATH CHOWDARY HYDERABAD

AS India is facing acute shortage of vaccines amid a raging Covid 2.0, vaccine tourism is the new buzz on internet from last few days. This term began trending online when travel operators from European countries started offering a vaccination-cum-vacation trip to Russia. Such a tour package is also doing rounds on social media attracting the Indian travellers. Several travel enthusiasts have shown interest to buy the tour package but in vain.

A flyer of Dubai-based travel agency Arabian Nights Tours has gone viral on WhatsApp. It offers a 24-day-long trip from Delhi to Moscow in Russia including two-doses of Sputnik V vaccine, visa support, sightseeing in Moscow and St Petersburg, transport, food

and accommodation in three-star hotel at a cost of Rs 1.29 lakh per person. Even the below middle-class Indians fall flat for this lucrative deal. Thousands of people tried calling the number displayed in the advertisement and finally they were upset to know that the package is yet to take off.

“Amid lockdown and curfew, this package seems to be a perfect escape from the boredom here, but it was not happening. These trips for vaccine tourism to Russia must start soon,” said R Pavan, an IT employee. “The package offer was suspicious. Forget vaccination, 24-day ac-



commodation in Russia at Rs 1.29-lakh budget is not realistic,” says P

Chaitanya, an entrepreneur. The management of Arabian Nights Tours was not willing to respond to Bizz Buzz queries. According to a reliable source, the travel agent did not get necessary approvals to commence the package from either of the countries and its information was leaked unofficially prior to the official launch. Over 2,000 phone calls were received by the travel agent in a single day enquiring about the offer. The members of Indian Association of Tour Operators

(IATO) also wondered how this package will work out. The national body of the tourism industry tried to get information from Russian authorities.

They found that only Russian citizens and foreign citizens with registration in Moscow can get vaccinated over there. Any tourist with the assistance of a travel agent may not be permitted for vaccination.

IATO President Rajiv Mehra said, “Arabian Nights Tours is not our member, so I don’t comment on the authenticity of their package. The idea of vaccine tourism is not viable for Indians when both indigenous and foreign vaccines are available here. It may be a good idea if people from African nations come to our country for vaccination.”

ZeroCode launches online boot-camp to upskill students

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

CITY-based emerging IT company Zero Code Innovation has teamed up with IIIT Kurnool and Computer Society of India (CSI) for an online certification course ‘Super 100’ to address the surging demand for quality and quick programmers for the ongoing digital revolution. The 10-day long boot-camp designed to equip the learner to develop any software without writing any code.

The outcome of this course is that any learner can build apps, mobile, web or enterprise grade without any previous knowledge. The programme empowers the user irrespective of any academic background to build apps without coding in just 10 days. As per the company, this is the first of its kind



Bharath Kumar

online boot-camp in the world on ZeroCode technology with a recruitment drive and paid internships.

Bharath Kumar, CEO of Zero Code Innovation said, “The Covid-19 crisis has brought about years of change in the way companies do business. The demand for applications development has outgrown by 4.5 times more than the current available IT capacity to deliver. Through ‘Super 100’, we would like to make the contribution to fill the gap of the huge demand in the burgeoning market.”

Chandra Dasaka, Chairman of CSI Hyderabad Chapter, said: “The huge skill dearth among non-engineering students can now hold a hope with this course, an opportunity to be a part of Digital 2.0 Revolution.”

Juve bag record extending 14th Coppa Italia title

REGGIO EMILIA (ITALY)

GIANLUIGI Buffon lifted the last trophy of his glittering Juventus career after his team beat Atalanta 2-1 in the Italian Cup to put some shine on a disappointing season. It was a record-extending 14th Italian Cup title for Juventus on Wednesday, and a first for star forward Cristiano Ronaldo after the Bianconeri lost the final last year.

"Today was a great emotion. To finish like this makes me proud and I was delighted to share with my teammates many adventures up to this final," the 43-year-old Buffon said.

"The fans today were the icing on the cake. They, the Juve people, the managers, the president and my teammates will always be a part of my life. I think I have given so much love, professionalism, pride and courage every time I took to the field with this shirt and I am proud of this."

Fans were able to celebrate inside the stadium for one of the first times in Italy in more than a year. About 4,300 supporters were allowed to attend after the Italian government gave its approval for the Mapei Stadium in Reggio Emilia to be at 20 per cent capacity.

Fans have been barred from matches in Italy for the majority of the past year because of the coronavirus pandemic, apart from a brief period shortly after the start of the season when up to 1,000 spectators were allowed into stadiums.

"It was a final deserving of the name in front of fans. We are happy for that too," said Juventus coach Andrea Pirlo, who celebrated his 42nd birthday on Wednesday. Dejan Kulusevski and Federico Chiesa scored for Juventus, either side of Ruslan Malinovskyi's equaliser for Atalanta shortly before halftime.

It was Pirlo's second trophy in his first



Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates with the trophy after the victory against Atalanta in the Italian Cup final match at the Mapei Stadium in Reggio Emilia, Italy late on Wednesday. Juventus win Atalanta 2-1.

season as a coach, having steered Juventus to the Italian Super Cup in January. However, Juventus saw its nine-year reign as Serie A champion ended by Inter Milan and is in dan-

Gasperini's lineup almost got off to the perfect start as Duván Zapata forced his way into the left side of the area before pulling back for José Palomino but Buffon saved the shot with his legs. The World Cup-winning goalkeeper is set to leave Juventus — for the second time — at the end of the season.

Juventus took the lead against the run of play in the 31st minute as Juan Cuadrado sparked a counter-attack and Weston McKennie rolled across for Kulusevski to curl into the far corner. Atalanta leveled 10 minutes later when Remo Freuler managed to win the ball in a duel with Juventus midfielder Adrien Rabiot and spread it to the right.

It was then rolled across for Malinovskyi to smash it into the roof of the net. Juventus almost restored its lead on the hour as Ronaldo's backheeled flick released Chiesa, but his effort came off the right post, with Atalanta goalkeeper Pierluigi Gollini beaten.

The Bianconeri did score the winner 12 minutes later when Chiesa played a one-two with Kulusevski before drilling into the left side of the net from close range. (AP)



CHANDIGARH

LEGENDARY athlete and 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh, 91, was diagnosed coronavirus positive on Thursday after one of his staff members tested positive. He isolated himself at his residence here, doctors said.

"His condition is stable, but has been down with fever since last (Wednesday) night," said a doctor. His wife Nirmal Milkha Singh said a cook, who has been with the family for 50 years, was earlier diagnosed Covid-19 positive.

Since the pandemic broke last year,

'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh tests positive for Covid-19

Milkha Singh has been appealing to the people to exercise daily during the lockdown while staying at home. In his video message, he called upon people to stay indoors during the preventive lockdown to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

"As a sportsman, I want to tell you with a humble request that you are staying indoors and for you an exercise of 15-20 minutes is very necessary," Milkha Singh, who won India's first Commonwealth gold, has been saying.

Milkha Singh's son Jeev Milkha Singh is one of the top golfing icons in the country. (IANS)

WACA to host historic women's Test between India, Australia

NEW DELHI

INDIA women's team will play their first ever pink-ball Test against Australia at the WACA Ground in Perth. It will be the first Test match between the two teams in 15 years.

It will also mark the first time a Test match will be played at the WACA since the men's Ashes Test in December 2017.

"Taking forward our commitment towards women's cricket, I am extremely pleased to announce that Team India @BCCIwomen will play in their first-ever pink ball day-night Test later this year in Australia," Jay Shah, the secretary of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), wrote on his Twitter handle.

Cricket Australia confirmed it through a statement, "The WACA Ground will host just the second ever women's day-night Test match when Australia take on India in a multi-for-

mat series to kick off the 2021-22 international summer of cricket."

The decision to play in Australia comes after severe criticism from various quarters that the current BCCI dispensation has ignored women's cricket. The Indian women's team didn't play any cricket for almost a year before the home series against South Africa.

Even the women players' contracts were announced only on Wednesday night, well over a month after contracts for men's team were announced.

That aside, the women's squad for the tour of England was announced much after the men's squad was announced even though both the teams are to depart for England on June 2 in the same charter flight. In all, the Aussies and Indians have played nine Tests, with Australia leading 4-0. Five matches have ended as draw. (IANS)

NEW DELHI

INDIA pace bowler Mohammed Siraj's ability to bowl long spells is being acknowledged by former India stars. After former captain Sunil Gavaskar praised him a day back, another former India batsman VVS Laxman termed him a 'dangerous bowler due to his ability to maintain speed, bounce and movement for long period'.

"Siraj is a very skillful bowler. For any fast bowler, there are two very important requirements. Firstly, he must have the ability to swing the ball deceptively. Siraj has this ability in

'Siraj's deceptive swing, ability to bowl long spells special'

abundance. Secondly, a fast bowler has to be able to bowl long spells. This ability too, Siraj has in him. He has tremendous stamina. He can come back for his third spell and bowl with just as much venom as he did in his first two spells," said Laxman while speaking to Hyderabad-based Siasat daily.

The right-arm pace bowler had made his Test debut in Australia during the Test series which India won. He ended up bowling the most num-

ber of overs among Indian bowlers.

Siraj then said he had worked a lot on his fitness during the lockdown.

"This ability to maintain speed, bounce and movement over a long period is what makes Siraj such a dangerous bowler. There is no time for the batsmen to relax. Siraj just keeps coming back again and again and he keeps hammering away at the batsmen. That is why he picks wickets even in his third spell. It is an important quality

for any fast bowler to possess," Laxman added.

Laxman, who represented India in 134 Test matches and was the architect of India's famous win in the 2001 Test against Australia, said Siraj has the capability to become a bowling great.

"Provided he continues to work hard over the next few years, Siraj can be a really big name in international cricket. He certainly has the qualities and the potential to do so," Laxman added. (IANS)



AWAITING KICKOFF



A 28-member Indian football team squad led by Sunil Chhetri arrives at the Hamad International Airport in Doha, late on Wednesday evening, for FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Qualifiers. The players underwent Covid-19 tests on arrival and are waiting for results before starting their preparatory camp ahead of the joint Qualifiers. The team, bolstered by the return of Sunil Chhetri, will have a preparatory camp inside a bio-bubble here before its first match on June 3 against hosts Qatar. The other two matches are against Bangladesh (June 7) and Afghanistan (June 15).

'Boards will be reluctant to send players to India for T20 WC'

SYDNEY

EVEN though Indian cricket board (BCCI) is confident it will be able to host the T20 World Cup in October-November, doubts remain on whether teams will be prepared to travel to India for the tournament.

Former Australia batsman Michael Hussey, also the batting coach of Chennai Super Kings (CSK), said on arrival from India that it will be difficult to host the tournament in India as cricket boards will be reluctant to send their teams to the country reeling under the pandemic.

"I think it's going to be very difficult in my view to play that tournament in India," Hussey, who is serving quarantine, was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.com.

Hussey was one of those who got infected by Covid-19 and had to get treated in Chennai before departing to Australia.

While CSK saw Hussey and bowl-



ing coach Lakshminath Balaji get infected, Kolkata Knight Riders, Delhi Capitals and SunRisers Hyderabad were the other teams affected by the virus. It eventually led to the postponement of the tournament.

"We're talking about eight teams in the IPL. I think there are probably similar number, maybe more teams coming in from overseas [for the T20 World Cup], there would be more venues. As I said earlier, if they're playing in different cities, that is when the risk goes up.

"I think they'll have to look some pretty big contingency plans, perhaps looking at the UAE or somewhere like that that could host the World T20. I think there will be a lot of cricket boards around the world that'd be pretty nervous about going back to India for a cricket tournament."

The UAE has already been kept as a back-up venue for the tourney. (IANS)

Mbappe stars as PSG rout Monaco to retain French Cup



PARIS

KYLIAN Mbappe scored one goal and set up the other as Paris Saint-Germain stayed on course for a domestic double by beating Monaco 2-0 to retain the French Cup.

PSG's record-extending 14th cup win was given a helping hand after a terrible defensive error gifted an early goal to striker Mauro Icardi on Wednesday. He was set up by Mbappe, who then netted his 41st goal of the season late on.

French President Emmanuel Macron met the players before the game at Stade de France, speaking at length to Monaco striker Wissam Ben Yedder and several others.

The sides met for the third time in the final, with PSG winning 1-0 in 2010 and Monaco triumphing by the same score in 1985. Monaco beat PSG twice in the league this season, but flopped this time and never looked like winning the competition for the sixth time and first since '91. (AP)

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