

Womenia

TWEET PATROL

LAKSHMI MANCHU

@LAKSHMIMANCHU

Something I'll never like.. Jet-lag. Argh ..

Post-Covid healing yoga asanas

SIDDHI JAIN

As the country reels under a severe Covid wave, nearly every family has had a brush with the debilitating virus, and many members are going through a slow recovery.

To help with the recovery via yoga, Delhi-based The Pink Lotus Academia, an online and offline tutorial platform focused on Indian classical artforms and yoga, suggests asanas that go a long way in building immunity, relaxing the body and mind, leading to faster healing post-Covid.

The ancient practice of yoga is known to offer scientifically proven solutions to many everyday problems both physical and mental. From increasing immunity to improving the function of vital organs of the body, from reducing stress to minimizing depression, yoga plays a major role if you choose the right asanas and practice them with awareness. These select asanas strengthen your body and mind, increase immunity, and take away fatigue.

Staff pose

This simple asana comes with many benefits for the body. It stretches the shoulders and chest, strengthens the back muscles and improves posture.

Step 1: Sit on the floor with

your ankles and feet. Step 3: Visualise your spine as the "staff" -- the vertical core of your torso rooted in the ground, hold the pose for a minute or two.

Cat and Cow pose

This asana combines the Cat pose (Marjaryasana) and Cow pose (Bitilasana) to gently stretch



Butterfly pose



Cat and Cow pose



Pigeon pose

your legs extended in the front. Keep the back straight, you may sit on a blanket or a cushion to keep the pelvis slightly raised. To ensure perfect alignment of the upper body, you can sit against a wall. The sacrum and the shoulder blades should touch the wall, but lower back and the back of the head must not.

Step 2: Sit on the front of the sitting bones so that the pubis and tailbone are equidistant from the floor. Firm the thighs, press them down against the floor, without hardening the belly, and flex

the body and warm-up it up to relieve stress, and massage the spine and stomach organs.

Step 1: Start on your hands and knees with your wrists directly under your shoulders, and

Move into Cat pose by exhaling, and draw your belly to your spine and pull your back toward the ceiling, just like a cat stretches its back.

Step 4: Release the crown of your head toward the floor, don't let the chin drop. Inhale, come back to Cow pose, then exhale as you return to Cat pose. Repeat 5-20 times.

Butterfly pose

This asana stretches the inner thighs, groin and knees, and improves flexibility, removes fatigue from long hours of standing and walking.

Step 1: Sit with your spine erect and legs extended in the front. Bend your knees and bring your feet towards the pelvis. Let

thighs and knees downward gently towards the floor.

Step 4: Start flapping both the thighs up and down like the wings of a butterfly. Starting slowly, gradually increase the speed. Keep breathing normally throughout. Flap as fast as you comfortably can. Slow down and then stop.

Step 5: Take a deep breath in, then exhale and bend forward, keeping the chin up and spine erect. Press your elbows on the thighs, pushing them towards the floor. Feel the stretch in the inner thighs. Breathe long and slow, relaxing the muscles. Take a deep breath in and bring the torso up. Exhale and gently release the posture.

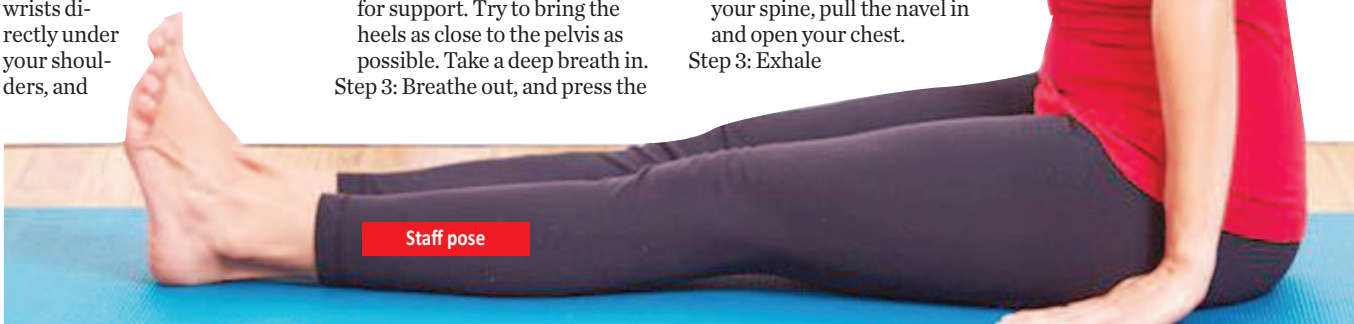
Pigeon pose

By stretching your thigh, groin and back, this asana works as an antidote to the strain of sitting for long hours, and calms your mind. It also stretches outer hips and prepares you for seated postures and backbends.

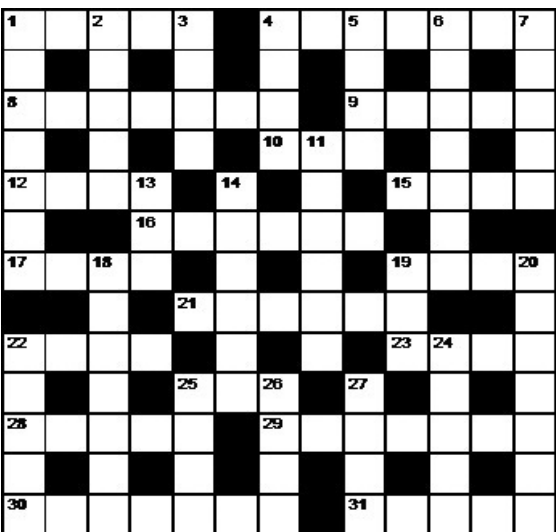
Step 1: Start on all fours, bring your right knee forward towards your right wrist, so that your right ankle will be in front of your left hip. Slide your left leg back and point your toes and heel towards the ceiling.

Step 2: Draw your legs in towards each other. Inhale and come onto your fingertips, stretch your spine, pull the navel in and open your chest.

Step 3: Exhale



Staff pose



L S U S A D D L E
L I T E R A T I A A
A A S O T H E R S
M E C C A F U R L R
A N K H T A X I J U T
S A B E L L O O P
D O O D L E B U G
M I S O G W Y N R
M A M T R U E C O O P
R A H O Y D E R B Y
E V E N S O I A G
E T M O M E N T U M
B L A S T S S E Y

SOLUTION TO JUNE 8

CROSSWORD

- Across**
- Across**
- 1 Uses a sieve (5)

4 Otalgia (7)

8 Pouring down (7)

9 Portion (5)

10 Express in words (3)

12 Former Italian currency (4)

15 Negative votes (4)

16 Marley's music (6)

17 Stitched joint (4)

19 A pocket case for pins and needles (4)

21 Finally (2,4)

22 Cover with earth (4)

23 Combustible heap (4)

25 Doze (3)

28 Gunk (5)

29 Jeopardize (7)

30 Plead guilty (7)

31 Work by Lamb ? (5)
- 1 Rolls of parchment (7)

2 Member of a monastic order ? (5)

3 ____ over : glance at or look through ? (4)

4 Birds lay them (4)

5 Resembling a rope (4)

6 Small cigar (7)

7 Large pitchers (5)

11 Incarnation (6)

13 Limb (3)

14 ____ Christie : the "Queen of Crime" ? (6)

18 Censure (7)

19 Equal Time Point (3)

20 Perfectly (7)

22 Fundamental (5)

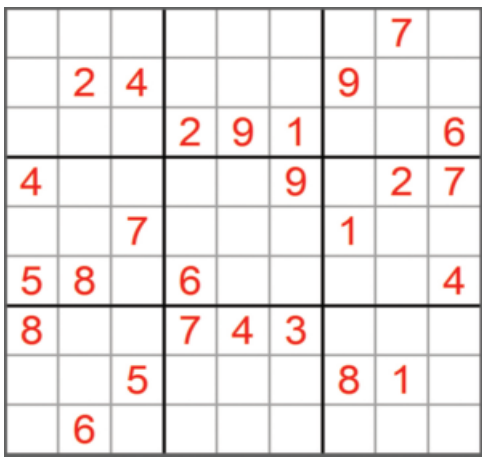
24 Belgian battle (5)

25 Madhuri ___, nee Dixit (4)

26 Bakery offerings (4)

27 Fencer's sword (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO JUNE 8

Shlokka Pandit's cat keeps her busy in lockdown

NEWS ROUNDUP

Actress Shlokka Pandit has been spending a lot of time with her pet cat Luna during lockdown.

"Luna has brought a lot of changes in my life. I can understand things without being told. Unlike most, he is a very affectionate, calm and good-natured cat. The unconditional love he gives has enabled me to be a more compassionate and caring person," Shlokka says.

She calls her pet an obedient kid, adding, "I literally can't imagine a day without him. We are two cool buddies in a way."

Shlokka makes a pitch for vaccination, saying, "Let's all follow guidelines and protocols. The pandemic is far from over. Let's get vaccinated whenever the opportunity arises."

"We are facing an uphill task against the virus but I'm sure if we follow the protocols and take care of ourselves and others, we will definitely be able to overcome it," added the actress, who was recently seen in the film "Hello Charlie", co-starring Jackie Shroff, Elnaaz Norouzi and Aadar Jain.

Be communicative and proactive to have a healthy relationship

We all want to have healthy relationships, but most of us were never really taught about what that actually means. Therapists with over a decade of experience working with couples says that being communicative and proactive is the key to have a good, healthy relationship.

Do the things you did the first year you were dating

As the months and years roll on, we tend to slink into our proverbial sweatpants and get lazy in our relationship. We lose our patience, gentleness, thoughtfulness, understanding, and the general effort we once made toward our mate. Think back to the first year of your relationship and write down all the things you used to do for your partner. Now start doing them again.

Ask for what you want

Over time, we assume that our partner knows us so well that we don't need to ask for what we want. What happens when we make this assumption? Expectations are set, and just as quickly, they get deflated. Those unmet expectations can leave us questioning the viability of our partnership and connection. Keep in mind that asking for what you want extends to everything from emotional to sexual wants.

Become an expert on your partner

Think about what makes your mate excites, both physically and emotionally. We can become consumed by what we think they want, as opposed to tuning in to what truly resonates with them. Remember that if it's important to your partner, it doesn't have to make sense to you. You just have to do it.

Ask questions beyond just "How was your day?"

At the end of a long day, we tend to mentally check out of our lives and, consequently, our relationship. We rely on the standard question, "How was your day?" But because we hear that question so often, many of us will reflexively just respond with the bare minimum: "Fine. How was yours?" This does nothing to improve your connection and can actually damage it because you're losing the opportunity to regularly connect in a small way.

If your initial "How was your day?" doesn't spark much conversation, try asking more creative follow-up questions: "What made you smile today?" or "What was the most challenging part of your day?" You'll be amazed at the answers you'll get, with the added benefit of gaining greater insight into your significant other.

Donald Duck Day

Donald Duck is one of the most iconic characters of the Disney franchise and has, for multiple generations, been one of the hallmarks of childhood and innocence.

Also, of rage driven spite filled incoherent rambling while spraying the area around you like a sprinkler in high summer. There was something in his tendency to fly completely off the handle and rail at the slightest provocation that touched a part of us all. Everyone had times when they've just had enough, and Donald gave us the perfect way to respond by raging incoherently while stamping our feet. It pays to lose your cool once in a while.

Donald Duck had some very specific characteristics, and celebrating Donald Duck day provides you with an opportunity to embrace your inner angry waterfowl. Dress in blue and gold to commemorate everyone's favorite duck, and add just a splash of red to round it out. When people ask you questions, respond with the partially-legible quack that is Donald's claim to fame and, whenever possible, fly into a comedic and harmless incoherent rage cussing out everything you loathe in a voice that no one can understand. People may look at you funny but, one of the great things about being Donald for a day is, you don't have to care. Take a leaf out of Donald's book and be bold, bright and enjoy the day! Afterall, that's all we can do anyway isn't it?

If you are able, you have to go see this mastermind in the flesh so to speak and plan a trip to Disney! Now is the time to take advantage of your booked up holidays and surprise the kids with a trip to see Donald! But if this isn't an option, the best way to really celebrate dear old Donald, is to watch some of his old movies! He's popped up in quite a few animations over the years! No doubt hearing his quack and voice will remind you of the days of old, when life was simple and we recorded on VHS. Oh those were the days, weren't they?



THIS DAY IN HISTORY
June 9th

Amarinder to remain Punjab CM with Sidhu likely as deputy

NEW DELHI

WITH the party panel for Punjab set to submit its reports on the political turmoil in the state, sources say that it may not recommend removal of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and he is likely to the party in the state to the next elections.

The panel members are also tight-lipped about the change of guard in the organization but sources say that a non-Sikh member is likely to be recommended by the panel to lead the state unit if Sunil Jhakhar the incumbent state president is to be replaced.

Fate of cricketer-turned-politician Sidhu is still not

clear but he may be recommended for the Deputy Chief Minister's post in the Punjab cabinet despite Amarinder's reservations and he could be seen accommodating a deputy in the cabinet, sources said.

Last week the panel headed by Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress' Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat and former MP J.P. Aggarwal met all the stakeholders in the party.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh appeared before the three-member Congress panel.

After the meeting Captain Amarinder Singh said: "The meeting was to discuss the preparations for the Assembly elections scheduled early next year.



These are our inner party discussions and I don't propose to share them with you."

The rift in Punjab Congress had surfaced after for-

mer state Cabinet Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu along with Pargat Singh opened a front against the Chief Minister. The All India Congress Committee (AICC) was forced to constitute a committee to listen to the grievances of its Punjab leaders, after a group led by Sidhu suggested change in the state leadership.

However, sources said that there has been no discussion on replacing Amarinder Singh.

The Congress wants to pacify Sidhu and retain him in the party by making some minor adjustments, without going for a major shake-up, sources said.

The panel has already discussed the issue with former Congress President Rahul Gandhi, besides

meeting the party MPs from Punjab and the ex-state unit chiefs.

Disgruntled Congress leader Sidhu, who has targeted Amarinder Singh on various issues, including the 2015 sacrilege case, had also met the Congress panel and presented his views.

Interacting with reporters after the meeting, he had said: "I came here on the call of the party high command and I have presented people's voices from the grassroots level to the party. My stand on democratic power remains the same that the 'power of the people' must return to the people. Every Punjabi must be made a shareholder in Punjab's progress."

DEATHS DUE TO SPURIOUS LIQUOR

LIQUOR MAFIA TO PAY COMPENSATION TO KIN

LUCKNOW

THE Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh will now make the liquor mafia give financial assistance to families of those who die due to consumption of spurious liquor.

The decision comes after spurious liquor claimed three dozen lives in Aligarh last week.

Chief minister Yogi Adityanath has asked ADG (prosecution) to submit a list of matters linked with excise within three days, along with directions to take strict action against the culprits in cases of manufacture and sale of illicit liquor.

Awasthi said that action against the culprits must be taken under Section 60 of the UP Excise Act and the Gangsters Act.



The details of such persons against whom FIR is registered under the two Acts will be uploaded on the e-prosecution portal and provided separately to the government.

According to Section 60, a person selling or making available an intoxicating substance or adding something to a substance

to make it intoxicating which leads to the death of a person, will be punishable by death or life sentence.

In cases where such substance causes disability, the culprit will be sentenced to six to 10 years rigorous imprisonment and can be fined between Rs 5-10 lakh.

Meanwhile, provisions have

been made to issue licenses and permits for the possession and sale of methyl alcohol, a key ingredient of spurious liquor, and district magistrates have been authorized as the licensing authority.

ACS excise Sanjay Bhosreddy said that methyl alcohol is a poison, declared under the Poison Act. After having issued directions about safe transport of methyl alcohol to prevent its misuse, the government has now said that permits for the possession and sale of methyl alcohol can only be licensed by district magistrates.

"Under the rules, in addition to the magistrate, officers of the police, revenue, health, excise and industry, not below the rank of inspector, have been empowered to inspect these licenses. A three-member nodal committee will be set up at the district level for implementation of the rules," Bhosreddy said.

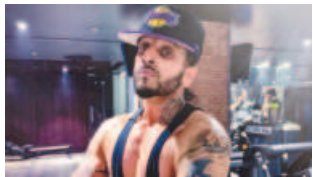
Singer Jazzy B's Twitter a/c blocked on Centre's request

NEW DELHI

TWITTER has blocked four accounts in India - including one belonging to Canadian-Punjabi singer Jazzy B, who has frequently tweeted in support of farmers protesting the government's agriculture laws and, in December last year, joined thousands camped on the borders of the national capital.

The accounts were blocked - they have been 'geo-restricted', meaning they can still be accessed from IP addresses outside the country - after a legal demand from the government on Sunday. "When we receive a valid legal request, we review it under both the Twitter Rules and local law. If the content violates Twitter's rules the content will be removed from the service. If it is determined to be illegal in a particular jurisdiction, but not in violation of the Twitter Rules, we may withhold access to the content in India only," Twitter said in its statement.

"In all cases, we notify the account holder directly so they're aware that we've received a legal order pertaining to the account. We



notify the user(s) by sending a message to the email address associated with the account(s), if available," the statement added.

According to technology news website TechCrunch, all four accounts have posted material critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government or in protest against the farm laws.

Popular singer Jazzy B's Twitter account blocked over a legal demand by the government

Twitter posted confirmation of its action on the Lumen database - an online archive that analyses legal complaints and requests for removal of content to ensure transparency.

This is not the first time Twitter has been told to block accounts tweeting on the farmers' protests.

In February around 250 accounts - including that of Caravan magazine, against whose editors

Delhi Police had filed an FIR relating to the Republic Day violence, other journalists and opposition leaders - were blocked for several hours after a "legal demand" from the government. Four accounts were blocked after a government request on Sunday

Sources said the request came from the Home Ministry and law enforcement agencies, and was made to prevent "escalation of law and order (situation) in view of the ongoing farmer agitation.

The blocking of accounts this week comes amid pressure on Twitter to comply with new rules for social media firms; rules Twitter has flagged as "a potential threat to freedom of expression".

On Monday the company - which faced raids by the Delhi Police last month after it tagged a BJP leader's tweet as "manipulated media" - said it needed more time to comply with these rules.

That was after a thinly-veiled threat last month; the government warned Twitter to "stop beating around the bush and comply" instead of "dictating terms" to the world's largest democracy.



Lucknow traders defy curfew, open shops

LUCKNOW

UPSET over the 50-day closure in the coronavirus-induced curfew, traders in several markets have now started defying the restrictions and opening their shops.

In Rajajipuram, on Monday, traders opened their shops and when the police tried to force closure, they started protests by clanging on thalis.

As the news spread that shops in Rajajipuram were opening, traders in Yahiyaganj, Pandeyganj, Fatehganj and Rakabganj also opened their shops.

Traders in Chinhat and Dubagga said they would start opening their shops from Tuesday. "How long can we sit at home? Our savings have finished and we cannot even pay salaries to the staff, most of whom, in any case, have returned to their villages. If liquor shops can remain open, why not other shops? This is the

wedding season and people need to buy things," said Om Prakash Rastogi, a garment seller in Raja Bazaar.

Lucknow on Monday reported 777 active Covid cases and health officials said that if the cases drop below 600, restrictions would be lifted in the state capital.

Various trader leaders have already pleaded with Lucknow MP and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma for allowing their shops to open.

The traders told reporters that they have suffered a loss of more than Rs 4,000 crore in this Corona curfew in the state capital.

Sandeep Bansal, president of the Akhil Bhartiya Udyog Vyapar Mandal, said, "The small traders are facing a question of survival and even the big traders are suffering huge losses because the is no relief on power bill and taxes."

Not for courts to judge: Punjab High Court on live-in relationship

CHANDIGARH

THE Punjab and Haryana High Court has granted protection to a young couple involved in a live-in relationship, observing that it is not for the courts to judge them if they want to stay together without sanctity of marriage.

The order of the single bench came following a petition by a 17-year-old girl and a 20-year-old man from Punjab's Bathinda who sought protection of their life and liberty from the family members of the former.

The court also observed that honour killings were prevalent in northern parts of India, particularly in parts of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, and said it is for the state to ensure protection of such couples.

The petitioners submitted that the parents of the girl wanted her to marry a person of their choice as they had come to know about her relationship. She left her parents' home and started living with her partner.

They decided to live together till such time as they could solemnise a marriage on attaining the marriageable age.

They further submitted that they had approached the Bathinda Senior Superintendent



of Police, seeking protection but there had not been any response.

Following a notice of motion, the Punjab Assistant Advocate General submitted that the couple seeking protection were not married and, according to their own pleadings, were in a live-in relationship.

He further submitted that the coordinate benches have recently dismissed similar matters, where protection was sought by persons who are in live-in relationship.

"It would be a travesty of justice in case protection is denied to persons who have opted to reside together without the sanctity of marriage and such persons have to face dire consequences at the hands of persons from whom protection is sought.

said, "It is for the State at this juncture, to ensure their protection and their personal liberty."

"If the petitioners herein have not committed any offence, this court sees no reason as to why their prayer for grant of protection cannot be acceded to. Therefore, with due respect to the judgments rendered by coordinate benches, who have denied protection to couples who are in live-in relationship, this court is unable to adopt the same view," the single bench said in its order.

The court directed the Bathinda SSP to grant the protection to the petitioners.

Some benches have earlier given different verdicts in matters pertaining to live-in relationships. A single bench of Justice H S Madaan in his May 11 order had said a live-in-relationship is morally and socially not acceptable while dismissing a petition of a runaway couple from Punjab, seeking protection of their life and liberty.

Justice Sudhir Mittal of the high court in the May 18 order had granted protection to a Haryana couple who were in a live-in relationship while observing that social acceptance of such relationships is on the increase.

Missing inmate found injured in UP jail premises

BANDA

A prisoner, who was said to have escaped from the high security Banda district jail in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday evening, was finally tracked down in the fields of the jail campus. The prisoner, Vijay Arakh, tried to escape but was badly injured after jumping from the jail's inner boundary wall and so he was unable to scale the outer wall. Fearing that he would be thrashed by the jail officials, he hid in the thick bushes in the fields of the jail campus.

Surprisingly, it took about 24 hours to search the missing jail inmate when he was hiding inside the prison itself and the entire jail campus was equipped with close circuit televisions (CCTV) directly monitored by DG (Jail) Anand Kumar since Mukhtar Ansari has been lodged there. The prisoner was said to be engaged for agricultural work and on Sunday, he arranged a big wooden log and with its help he climbed the main security wall and jumped from there in the hope of escaping after scaling the outer wall. But as he jumped, he injured his back which foiled his attempt. He was tracked down on Monday evening. Vijay, a resident of Girwa area of Banda district was lodged in the prison in February this year in a case related to theft and house trespass.

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સુ કલલકુ નાકારો

કોનું બંધાવું કોનસાગુતુનાને હંબાવું...

Tata's bet on digital biz augurs well for startups

THE salt-to-steel conglomerate Tata Group is betting big on digital businesses to cash in the emerging opportunities during the post-pandemic world. Announcement of investment up to \$75 million in fitness startup Cure.fit by Tata Digital is testimony of this fact. Tata Digital is the wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Sons and is spearheading the digital transformation of all its consumer-facing businesses across verticals, including travel, retail, and financial services.

As per the current deal, Cure.fit founder and CEO Mukesh Bansal will join Tata Digital as president and will work closely with Tata Digital's CEO Pratik Pal. Though operations of Cure.fit has been disrupted badly due to the pandemic-induced lockdowns, the business model holds great potential in the long run.

Last month, Tata Digital acquired a majority stake in online grocery delivery startup BigBasket for around \$219 million. Post this deal, Tata Group now has a major pie in the online grocery segment. It also puts the group in direct

competition with other major online delivery firms including Grofers, Reliance Industries' Jio Mart, e-commerce giant Amazon Inc, and Walmart-owned Flipkart.

Similarly, Tata Digital is reportedly in talks with online pharma platform 'Img' for acquiring a majority stake in the company since last November. Tata Digital has infused Rs 100 crore worth compulsorily convertible debentures or CCDs in Img in April this year, reflecting its interest in the healthcare platform.

With such aggressive deal lineups, Tata Group has sent a clear message to the market that it is not going to fall behind in the new age business space. The group has already shown its interest in launching a 'Super App' that will bring all of the conglomerate services and products in the consumer business under a single umbrella. Under this app, the group's all retail companies such as Trent, Infiniti Retail, Tata consumer products, Titan and Voltas - and financial products companies - Tata Capital, Tata Asset Management, Tata AIA, Tata AIG are likely to be

integrated. As the pandemic has shown gross migration of consumers towards digital platforms, even Tata Motors can sell cars, Tata Realty can sell flats and Vistara and Air Asia can sell flight tickets. Even Taj Hotels can rent its rooms through this app.

The big bets of the country's one of the oldest business conglomerate reflect that Indian startup ecosystem will hold a lot of sway in the coming decades. That is the reason that every established business house in India - be it Reliance Industries or Mahindra Group - is betting big on this space. Online financial services platform Paytm's plan to go public this year on Indian bourses gives credence to this fact. Through raising money from the public, Indian startups have proven that they have come of age and are matured enough firms with proven business models. When Tata Group bets big on different consumer-facing startups, it is time for the market to take note and convince itself about the future upside of these startups in coming years.

Indian waste warrior recycles PPE and mask waste into brick units

SIDDHI JAIN

WITH an unprecedented global need for masks and protective gear, came the challenge of complex waste. 27-year-old Binish Desai, who hails from the small district of Valsad in Gujarat, is an environmentalist and waste warrior who is creating eco-friendly bricks out of PPE kits and masks made from non-woven fabric to help decrease the burden on the environment.

A Rotarian, Desai follows a procedure that successfully manages this new kind of waste and puts it to a sustainable use: "After following proper sanitation protocols, the material is shredded, added to industrial paper waste procured from paper mills, and then mixed with binder. The mix is kept for 5-6 hours before being set in moulds. The bricks are naturally dried

for three days and the product is then ready for use."

The innovator and sustainability champion is also the Chairman of Recycling, Rotary International's ESRAG (Environmental Sustainability Rotarian Action Group) in South Asia. Excerpts from the interview:

What got you interested in recycling and waste management? How did you enter the space?

Just like any other child, I used to revel in outdoor games, cartoons, and comics. However, at the age of 10, my favourite pastime was watching Captain Planet -- a superhero trying to defend Earth from pollution caused by villains and Dexter's Laboratory -- an animated series about a boy who ran a secret science lab at home. The show generated curiosity and inspired me to think innovatively.

In 2009, I got selected as a Rotary Youth Exchange student and that played an integral role in shaping my personality and channelising my thought process towards contributing to society at large. I informed my host family during the exchange and fellow Rotary members about my plans to build the world's least expensive house using chewing gum and wastepaper, and finally found a receptive audience I had been seeking.

Tell us about your efforts in and process of recycling used PPE kits, masks, and other protective equipment. Is there a fear that they might contain the virus? How safe is the end product?

As the pandemic peaked, there was significant increase in the unsafe disposal of masks and PPE kits in water bodies, which emerged as a new threat to the environment. According to industry reports, at least 129 billion face masks are being used and discarded every month. The crisis doesn't just stop there, the manufacturers of PPE are also facing issues with the disposal of the PPE waste that is produced during the manufacturing process.

The solution to this problem was converting the waste into special formulated bricks which can be used for all types of building construction and boundary walls. We collected discarded PPE from the public at commercial establishments, shopping malls, institutions, offices, etc and stored in a separate bin for three days.

Safety and hygiene are paramount when dealing with medical waste which is why we follow all Central Pollution Control Board guidelines. As PPE waste must be kept untouched for 72 hours before disposal, the eco-bins are opened 72 hours later, and the waste is then washed in a pool of disinfectant. After following proper sanitation protocols, the material can be shredded, added to industrial paper waste procured from paper mills, and then mixed with a binder. The mix is kept for 5-6 hours before being set in moulds. The bricks are naturally dried for three days and the product is then ready for use.

In 2010, I had designed P-Block (bricks from chewing gum leftovers and industrial paper). Using a similar process, I developed Brick 2.0 using "corona waste". I added PPE made from non-woven fabric which includes masks, gowns, syringes, and head-covers. I started experimenting with the method in my home-lab, and soon made a few in my factory. Face masks are a part of the new normal and they are adding to the plastic pollution. The idea was to manage the waste by the way of recycling and utilise it for something better. We have used three things -- masks, head cover and certain types of bodysuits of PPE which are made from non-woven fabric.

Where is this recycled material used? Where have you found these bricks at home?

We have been using these bricks to create cost-effective toilets, re-fabricated houses, apartments, and even eco-centres and eco-schools. There is also a museum being made which will have these bricks made from PPE waste and paper. We have recently started creating furniture as well and have worked with 106 different types of waste (jewellery units, textile scraps, paper surplus, coffee waste, etc.) to create over 180 products such as wall and acoustic panels, paver blocks, home decor artefacts, and more.

What are your thoughts on waste management in India? Is enough being done? What are some key hits and misses of the current practice?

Waste management in India is lesser known among people but Green India Mission has shed more light on the importance of sustainability. Organisations like Rotary have been trying to make a difference in this area by supporting initiatives at a grassroot level that could have a long-term, positive impact on the environment. Currently, India is the 6th largest producer of waste and we have around 43,000 industries generating 19,000 tonnes of waste every day. Approximately, 10,000 cars are being sent to the landfills daily.

Traditionally, Indians have been using the 'reduce, recycle and reuse' approach in their everyday life much before it became one of the most successful approaches in making a positive impact on the environment. We see at home how mothers make use of old clothes and have been playing the role of biggest recyclers. Also, it is imperative to understand that waste management is not only segregation or relocation of waste but also about getting rid of the waste in a sustainable manner.

We need to find eco-economic and social ideas that can be implemented on a large scale. For this, the government must set regulations creating a circular economy, manufacturers need to be more cautious about what they are using and how they can reduce their consumption of non-recyclable materials or recycle more waste that they are generating. Consumers also should take an extra step to reuse and recycle material or ask the right questions to management or government to reduce waste. Recyclers should understand how to create products that are environmentally friendly and socially impactful but are also economically viable, only then the consumers will be able to utilise it to the maximum. All the stakeholders involved in this cycle need to work together so that one man's waste becomes another man's treasure.

There are worrying studies and visuals on plastics and micro-plastics being found in oceans, marine life, soil, and even agricultural produce. How do you view these harmful developments?

As technology evolved and materials became complex, waste came into existence. Nature is also taking longer to break down these materials and that is resulting in the generation of waste in oceans and soil. Microplastics found in the ocean are worrisome and raise an alarm for us to opt for products that are less toxic to nature. It is recommended to adopt a zero-waste lifestyle and move towards eco-friendly products. Reusing and reducing is a common phenomenon that should become a way of life to utilise resources in the right way.

How can we take this message of sustainability far and wide, especially in the age of consumerism?

In this age of mass consumption, we have forgotten the essence of going local and buying handmade products which are eco-friendly. We are also drawn towards buying things that we want and not just what we need. Minimalism is a way to move forward to produce lesser waste. Recycling as much as possible and segregating waste products to create something useful has become necessary. People can also reach out to their nearest Rotary club who will help in creating more sustainable solutions for the locality. The way to move forward is 'Paryavaran Sthir Atmanirbharta' which means environmentally cautious and sustainable self-reliance.

Ka Ra's 'Yagnam' is still relevant

MOOT POINT



Dr Ramu Suravajjula

hest of the village panchayat? Deeply worried by the exploitative nature of the unjust lending system that forever keeps them in a debt-trap, he had warned his father against losing the land because it would push the next generation into poverty and subsequent slavery. What is the option left for the son Sitaramudu considering that his father Appalaravu's fervent plea for a reprieve fell on deaf ears of the panchayat?

Taking a pragmatic stock of the situation, we can imagine three instant options left for Sitaramudu to bail his family out of the distress: Borrowing money from relatives and friends to retain the land, requesting some for time to clear the debt or defying the diktat to take the issue to court for getting a fair deal.

Let us also take cognisance of the social setting in order to explore other possible alternatives for him. Given the influence of the peasants' armed struggle that started at Naxalbari and taking firm roots in Srikakulam, where his village is situated, the town-returned Sitaramudu could have mobilised fellow-victims to take up arms against the feudal and oligarchical panchayat and annihilate class enemies.

Instead, infuriated by the fact that his family's future will be bleak without the land, howsoever miniscule, Sitaramudu rushes home fuming and fretting, kills his son and brings the mutilated body to the panchayat in a gunny bag. He leaves everyone aghast with his reason for taking the extreme step: "Sirs, I worked like a slave as had my father. My son shouldn't be a slave (without land)... I went home and asked my son whether he would live like a slave or was willing to die. He preferred the latter and I killed him."

He announces that he is ready to go to the gallows, euphemistically declaring that landlessness is tantamount to lifelessness for lesser mortals.

This is the enigmatic climax of a magnum opus "Yagnam" penned by Kalipatnam Venkata Surya Ram Subrahmanyeswara Rao, aka KaRa Mastaru, in the primary stage of the Srikakulam peasant uprising (1967 to 1970), a watershed in the history of revolutionary armed struggles in the world. 'Yagnam', written in May 1964 and published two years later, is considered as one of the best short stories in Telugu literature. Kodavadaganti Kutumba Rao, the tallest of writers of the day, likened 'Yagnam' to the legendary writer Gurajada Appa Rao's 'Mee Peremiti?'; another timeless literary masterpiece.

KaRa Mastaru's enormous contribution to Telugu literature comes in the form of "Katha Nilayam," a treasure trove that took-off in 1997. The self-funded project collects and stores Telugu short stories published since 1920 along with the profiles of authors.

The soul-stirring 'Yagnam' had an indelible impact on the minds of readers and critics for more than five decades and its ghastly apogee is still a never-ending discussion point in literary circles.

The Sahitya Academy acknowledged that "it is very rare for a single story to attract so much discussion." Muppala Rangayakamma, a prolific Marxist writer and critic, scrutinised various dimensions of 'Yagnam' and came up with a hard-hitting book. She has reservations about certain aspects of the story, including the climax. "Yagnam initiated a development debate in Telugu literature. It explains about how Nehruvian development model adversely impacted the downtrodden," accomplished writer Prof. Kethavarapu Katayani Vidmahe observed.

Influenced by Rachakonda Viswanatha Sastry, KaRa imbibed Marxist philosophy and used plots and characters to lay bare the inhuman practice of exploitation of farmers, workers and the marginalised sections.

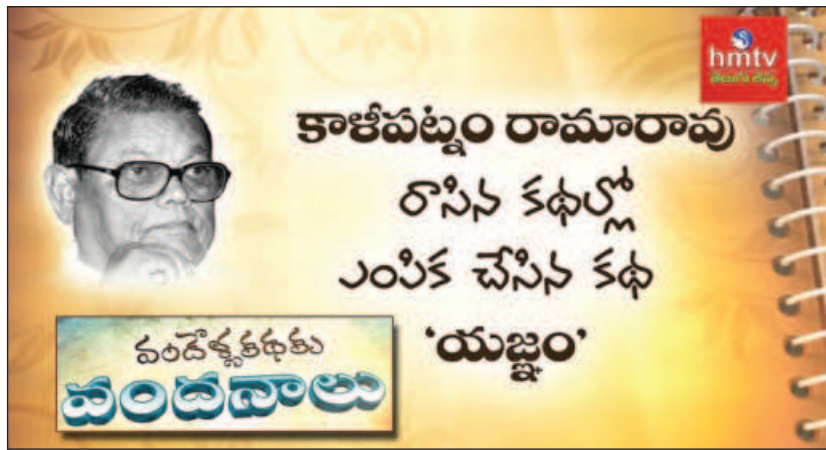
'Yagnam' explains how rural poor, notably so-called lower castes, began to lose their land rights as well as identity in the new development paradigm. "The key point in 'Yagnam' is exploitation, which denied poor peasants an opportunity to 'own' property, howsoever small. The story shows how some classes of the village gained and why some lost in the practical implementation of the Five-Year plans meant for developing agriculture in rural areas," KaRa explained in an interview.

Though the story was written 57 years ago, the issues it raised hold good for the present times, and perhaps into the future. 'Yagnam' is a Hindu tradition evolved from offering oblations and libations into a sacred fire amid Vedic hymns with an aim to get specific results. The story is all about a dispute between a 70-year-old Appalaravu, a Harijan representative of the village Panchayat and Gopanna, a former moneylender, in a non-descript village Sundarapalem, situated 15-kilometres from Srikakulam on the Madras-Calcutta grand road, in 1962.

As the three-year grace period he had given has come to an end, Gopanna, approaches the village panchayat to get back Rs.2,000 (along with interest) that he had lent to Appalaravu for his agricultural activities. Both of them repose faith in the Panchayat president Sreeramulu Naidu, who discontinued law course in 1947 to serve his village.

A Gandhian, Sreeramulu Naidu is the one who transformed the face of Sundarapalem in 15 years by laying a road, constructing a school and hospital, instituting a library and ensuring electricity. The writer defines the development-propelling efforts of Sreeramulu Naidu as 'Yagnam' but it intrinsically hits the reader that a section of people or systems or institutions is reduced to ashes in the quest for progress.

The soul of 'Yagnam' indeed lies in the points raised by Appalaravu, an illiterate and hard-working honest peasant, at the fag-end of the Panchayat that was summoned to resolve the dispute between him and Gopanna. Every issue raised by the Dalit farmer fits into well-entrenched economic and development theories proposed and debated by academicians and experts.



The soul-stirring 'Yagnam' had an indelible impact on the minds of readers and critics for more than five decades and its ghastly apogee is still a never-ending discussion point in literary circles. The Sahitya Academy acknowledged that "it is very rare for a single story to attract so much discussion"

Appalaravu explains how the six acres of land he inherited from his father 50 years ago has gradually come down to 2 acres 3 kuntas and how he was struggling to come out of the debt-trap.

"Farmers perpetually get into the vortex of debts from which they can't come out...Knowing pretty well that they are deceived, farmers relay on moneylenders....Our happy days were ruined with the introduction of commercial crops," he says, recalling the good old days of 1910s.

Even 74 years after India attained independence, ironically, the vortex of debt has been a nagging issue for Indian farmers. Scores of farmers ended their lives due to mounting debts and there is no respite in sight.

"Ippudu agriculture vullu vyavasayam gurinchi janaalaku cheppinatle, saavukkarlu pejalaki nachhajeppavaru. (As agricultural department officials explain to people about agriculture now, merchants used to impress upon people the need to go for commercial crops)," he avers. The similar cajoling exercise is continuing unabated even now in the form of campaigns of agrochemical and agri biotechnology companies like Monsanto!

Appalaravu also laments, "When we wanted to sell our product, the rates were invariably less but when we wish to buy them, the costs are mind-boggling. Businessmen resort to a lot of tricks to deceive gullible farmers. When we questioned the injustice, businessmen used to claim that it was part of varthaka dharmam (business practice or ethics)." Alas, the same 'varthaka dharmam' of moneylenders and businessmen is still in vogue and the worst part is governments joining the bandwagon!

"Dharaleppudu padi yeppudu legisai potayote teliste baavunnannipinchindi, kaanee raitodikeppudu avi telisi sachhevi kaavu (It will be good if we come to know when the prices go up or come down. Farmers never could figure that out)." This dialogue of Appalaravu still holds relevant considering loads of tomatoes and turmeric dumped by farmers roadside in the absence of appropriate price. 'Yagnam' highlights the prevalent caste

system, the societal disadvantages of being downtrodden, the highhandedness of the dominant caste representatives, farmers gamble from assured traditional crops to risky commercial crops following the persuasion of profit-oriented merchants, the financial bankruptcies of castes like shepherds, the meteoric rise of small businessman running parallel to the downside of small farmers, the collapse of small businessmen with the entry of big merchants, the destruction of menial jobs for the poor as a direct off-shoot of machines, the volatile prices of agricultural produce, the skyrocketing prices of commodities, and so on.

Each of these aspects continues to haunt a major chunk of today's population and the points raised during the ongoing farmers' agitation are the modern versions of the issues during Appalaravu's times. Ease of doing agriculture, the mainstay of India's economy, has been an ever more elusive!

Readers can appreciate the vision of KaRa when Appalaravu's relative prophesies: "Reppodduna dunnadaniki, oddupulaku, goppulaku, kotalaku, kodaa mesinlu raabotunnayi. Appudu choosukondi tadaakhaa (Machines are going to be used in all kinds of agricultural activities. Then imagine our fate)." The writer probably took a cue from the Green Revolution techniques and mechanisation of agriculture sector.

Appalaravu at a point observes that he was surprised to see how good was turning into bad (Babaiya, manchannadi sabaraipovadam naakoo sitramgaane undi). Pearls of wisdom, indeed! The manual or labour-intensive works of yesterday are bulldozed by machine-driven technologies today at the cost of poor and marginalized. The newest technologies like Artificial Intelligence that are all set to further replace manual labour may always trouble the conscience of the likes of Appalaravu. The one question that keeps on troubling them: "is this the right kind of development?"

Explaining the ill-effects of the development paradigm in simple terms, Appalaravu also says: "kondari batukulu bugagai...aa buggeille mari kondariki buvva... Yekkadu tappundi. (Lives of some people are getting destroyed in flames while some are making a living from that very destruction...It is going wrong somewhere and something is amiss).

That is 'Yagnam' for you!
(The author, a PhD in Communication and Journalism, is a senior journalist, journalism educator and communication consultant)

mentarians from Kerala.

Malayalam is as Indian as any other Indian language. How can hospital's nursing superintendent issue such discriminatory circular to the nursing staff without instructions from hospital administration. Is speaking in Malayalam another language discrimination? Many nurses at various hospitals across the country, hail from Kerala, with Malayalam being their native language. This is a totally bizarre and unconstitutional and violation of the basic human rights of Indian citizens.

K S Rao, Thane

Vaccination politics

MODI government needs to be complimented for accepting it's mistakes gracefully and deciding to take over vaccine procurement. Opposition parties are also need to be congratulated for displaying rare unity with out which the centre might not have reversed it's earlier decision (Free vax jab for all : PM, June 8). The entire episode clearly displays the power of democracy. Now priority of parties should be speedy implementation of vaccination. This is because "none of us will be safe until everyone is safe".

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao, Hyderabad

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LETTERS

A case of double standards

PROPOS the letter of Mr Vinay Bhushan B (THI dt. 8.6.21). The author is right in asserting that IYR is not objective because he is after power if not pelf. IVR had the distinction of being the first Chief Secretary of the residual state of Andhra Pradesh and we shall assume this was based purely on his merits. Later as he retired he was appointed as chairman of a nascent corporation which again is a first.

For reasons known only to him and the then CM, he was unceremoniously sacked from this post in no time. It is in the public domain that he aspired for this position pre retirement. Since then he was a caustic critic of Mr. Chandra Babu and delivered innumerable innuendos at the shortcomings of the former CM.

It raises a question as to how his flawless impeccable standards in rendering services as a Chief Secretary prevented him in pointing out these very shortcomings at that point of time. It is crystal clear that he is a beneficiary of pre and post retirement from the political government of that time. Alas, he does not include this fact in presenting his own credentials. Besides he confirms that as of now he subscribes to the ideology of BJP (which

many consider as Right).

It is but specious argument of IVR -as to what course courts will take, in deciding the protocol precedence whether All India Service rules or Disaster Management Act with respect to the disobedience of West Bengal Chief Secretary for he is guilty of intransigence of his own credentials. His very article is a harakiri.

Yaddanapudi Srinivas, Secunderabad

Why discriminate against Malayalam?

DELHI government's G.B. Pant Hospital, which stoked controversy after it issued a circular asking its nursing staff not to speak in Malayalam language while on duty has revoked its controversial circular after protests from senior Congress leaders. The nurses in the hospital were barred from speaking in Malayalam language and were directed to speak only in Hindi or English as maximum patients and colleagues do not know this language and feel helpless causing a lot of inconvenience. The circular has drawn sharp criticism from some of the senior Congress leaders. After protests from senior Congress leaders, the hospital authorities eventually withdrew the order of forbidding the nurses conversing from Malayalam language after immense backlash from Rahul Gandhi and Shashi Tharoor, both of whom are parlai-

Covid norm violations: Ration shops, Meeseva centres turn ticking bombs

ESA BIN ABDUL REHMAN
HYDERABAD

AT a time when a snowball effect is being witnessed in positive cases in the city especially the areas under the southern part have appeared sitting on a ticking bomb again with people thronging to fair price shops to get ration and blatantly throwing social distancing norms and Covid-19 appropriate behaviour into the air.

Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts together carry a total number of 1,593 ration shops with the former having 674 shops and the latter holding 919 such facilities. However, out of 919 FP shops located in the Rangareddy district, the Saroornagar circle alone carries a whopping 217 shops spreading under areas like Rajendranagar, LB Nagar, Serilingampally, and Vanasthalipuram.

The city's fringe areas like Hassan Nagar, Indra Nagar, Suleman Nagar, Shastripuram and Gagan Pahad in Rajendranagar and Falaknuma, Mustafa Nagar, Chashma in Bahadurpura are some of the densely populated areas where ration shops were seen overwhelmed with the public gathered there to get monthly ration in a hustle-bustle unmindful of Covid appropriate behaviour.



- Minor children to elderly citizens were seen waiting in queues with just a hair's breadth distance for hours
- The crowd increased many folds when the relaxation time reached the threshold
- FP agents with just one assistant each to disburse grains unable control the wayward people
- Similar messy situation at Meeseva centres hinting towards another startling catastrophe

No proper social distancing arrangements were seen at fair price shops in these areas where people from minor children to old age citizens were seen waiting in queues with just a hair's breadth distance for hours to get their turn. The crowd increased many folds when the relaxation time reached the threshold

thereby leading to a messy situation wherein every person tries to unwind from the rush pushing out others unmindful of getting affected with the infection.

Not much different is the situation at Meeseva centres where poor and disabled people are approaching to know whether or not their Aasara pensions have

been released from the government. This led to a similar messy state of affairs at Meeseva centres hinting towards another startling catastrophe.

"These scenes of overcrowding at FP shops and Meeseva centres will surely send the wrong message to the government and would play a spoilsport against

the measures to arrest the infection thereby hampering the chance of revoking restrictions. Unless the people adopt Covid-19 appropriate behaviour in every aspect, the situation will not change. The less we follow the Covid-19 restrictions the more we are exposed to life threats forcing the government to roll out measures after measures to avoid re-convulsing of the pandemic," said Sai Mallik, Ward Member Budvel, Rajendranagar.

Expressing resentment over the messy situation at Fair Price Shops, the Assistant Civil Supplies Officer Saroornagar Circle, Bala Saroja said, "We are unable to control the wayward public at Fair Price Shops as additional rice distribution, announced by the government made people un-nerved and made them rush towards FP shops in myriad to get the excess amount of rice all by throwing social distancing rules into the air."

"Taking help from police can't help us to ensure adherence to Covid-19 appropriate behaviour," she said adding that "When police itself facing great difficulty to ensuring people follow Covid-19 guidelines on roads and localities how come the FP agents of FPS with just one assistant each to disburse grains can control the wayward people," she quipped.



1 held for illegally selling Remdesivir injections

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE South Zone Task Force, along with the Hussainialam police, on Tuesday nabbed a medical representative Md Shafuiddin for allegedly black-marketing Remdesivir injections. They seized 20 injections from his possession.

According to the Task Force officials, the accused pasted

sticker of a health representative on his bike to avoid suspicion. Due to demand for the injections, he took advantage of his contacts to purchase them at lower prices. He intended to sell for Rs. 10,000 to needy patients.

However, Shafuiddin's plans were foiled, as he was nabbed. He was booked under relevant sections of IPC by the police and sent to judicial custody.

Officers, assistant posts in RRBs

HYDERABAD: The Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) has invited applications from candidates for appointment of officers and office assistants in the regional rural banks through a common recruitment process. Total number of posts is 10,417 (5,096 office assistants & remaining officers) Required qualification is bachelor degree in relevant subject, MBA, CA, and experience. Selection will be through online test (preliminary test and main examination). Applications can be submitted online before June 28 (website <https://www.ibps.in>). The preliminary test will be in August, while the main exam in September/October.

Bison is not 'Komaram Bheem'

Keeping the sentiments of the family and followers of the legend, the name "Komaram Bheem" was dropped

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

A male Gaur Calf was born at the Nehru Zoological Park on Wednesday on the auspicious occasion of Telangana Formation Day he was named 'Komaram Bheem', as a mark of respect to the legendary hero of the tribals who sacrificed his life fighting for the rights of the marginalised poor of Telangana.

The Gaur, also known as the Indian Bison, is a strong and massively built bovine, and one of the largest members of the family 'Bovidae'. The mighty megaherbivore calf was christened after the 'Tribal Hero' as a mark of respect. On Tuesday, certain sections of the press reported that the naming of the calf has offended the family members and followers of the legendary hero. It is clarified that the naming was meant as a mark of respect, and no disrespect was intended. However, keeping the sentiments of the family and followers of the legend, the name "Komaram Bheem" is dropped.

Multi-specialty hospital to come up in Erragadda

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

CHIEF Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao has agreed in principle to construct a multi-specialty hospital on the premises of Erragadda Chest Hospital.

This was announced by Animal Husbandry Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav after visiting the Chest Hospital along with Home Minister Mohd. Mahmood Ali and inspecting treatment and facilities. The Health department recently started a special Covid ward in the hospital.

Srinivas Yadav said he will make another visit to the hospital with Health Secretary Rizvi, Director of Public Health Srinivas Rao and DME Ramesh Reddy. "We will submit a report will be submitted to Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao to finalise the project, he said.

Talasani stated that with the new hospital people in the City will get better facilities on par with corporates.

He asserted that the government was committed to provide better services to people during Corona crisis. "The KCR government is spending huge funds on the health sector for

- Ministers Talasani Srinivas Yadav and Mohd Mahmood Ali visit Chest Hospital
- Health dept officials to submit report to CM to finalise the project

treating Covid cases. During the lockdown, he said, virus cases and fatalities had decreased thanks to people's co-operation.

The ministers urged people to follow Corona protocols to ensure further decline in cases. They said "we have discussed the new hospital proposal with modern facilities, like Gandhi Hospital, with Superintendent Mahabub Khan. When we discussed the same with the CM he agreed to construct the new hospital for the benefit of City residents.

Yadav said 44 acres land was available on the premises, a new modern hospital with a research centre was being planned. Once it was completed, it will be a big relief to people as rush at other major hospitals can be reduced, he felt.

Move to hand over RRC land for comml devpt stokes protests

MEGHNA NATH
HYDERABAD

OPPOSING the commercial development on railway recreation club land, several public associations staged a silent protest in front of the RRC ground on Tuesday.

This complex is in a pleasant environment and should be used by all, should not be privatized expressed the protesters. "Daily many people visit this ground for walking, exercise, running and other sports that helps to improve people's health. It is cruel and unfair on the part of central government to privatise without even leaving these spaces for common people to relax," fumed the protestors.

As per the sources 19 acres RRC ground would be handed over to Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) to conduct techno-economic studies for commercial development. It will be leased out once the study is completed and tenders would be passed for development. Daily around 1500 people use this space for walking, exercise, sports. These include Cricket Ground (International Standard), Athletic Ground, Football



Several public associations stage a silent protest in front of the RRC ground on Tuesday
Photo: Adula Krishna

Ground, Synthetic Hockey Stadium, Handball Court, Kabaddi Court, Co-Co Court, Basketball Outdoor Court Basketball Indoor Court, Boxing Hall, Weightlifting Hall, Body Building Hall, Volleyball Court-2, Beach Volleyball Court, Table Tennis Hall, Tennis Coats-6, Billiards Hall, Swimming Pool (International Standard), Multi Purpose Indoor Stadium (10,000 people seating capacity), Shuttle Badminton Court, A/ C Gymnasium, Ball Badminton Court, Annapurna Mess, 400 running track, 1.8 KM walking track.

K Siva Kumar, assistant gen-

eral secretary, SCR Mazdoor Union, said, "We are against this privatisation. We need to encourage sport and game particularly in India, as our country lacks in sport globally instead of giving encouragement to sport personality and also providing various infrastructure in the open space, railway is planning for privatisation."

Furthermore M Ajay Babu, city president, Telangana Parents Association said that if the railways do not take back the decision, they would intensify the agitation take up large scale protests.

Academy for cybersecurity invites online applications

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE National Academy of Cyber Security (NACS), Hyderabad, is inviting online applications for admission into online cyber security courses. Interested inter, degree, diploma, engineering, PG candidates can apply.

The courses offered are-cyber security officer, diploma in cyber security management, post-diploma in cyber security management, certificate in cyber security. The NACS offers up to 60 per cent fee subsidy in the form of concession in fee to SC, ST, BC, EBC, OBC, minority, physically challenged, women candidates and ex-serviceman and their children under the Swarna Bharat National Skill Development Programme. After successfully completing courses, candidates will get opportunities in job profiles like cyber security officer, information officer, information analyst, security architect, IT security engineer, systems security administrator, information risk auditors, security analysts, intrusion detection specialists, computer security incident responders, cryptologists, vulnerability assessors, trainer/teacher in educational institutions. Job opportunities are good for the candidates both in the country as well as abroad. June 29 is the last date for online applications. Students can visit www.nacsindia.org or 7893141797.

JAGANANNA THODU

AP CM remits ₹370 cr into accounts of vendors as interest-free loans

- The amount was transferred into the accounts of 3.7 lakh small traders
- Though 9.05 lakh beneficiaries are identified for the scheme, only 5.35 lakh have been given loans by the banks under Phase-1
- The govt provided loans to the remaining 3.7 lakh through Shreenidhi Credit Cooperative Federation and APCOB

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

FOR the second consecutive year, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on Tuesday deposited Rs 370 crore to 3.7 lakh small traders, towards interest-free loans, under Jagananna Thodu scheme.

Speaking on this occasion, the Chief Minister said that the small and petty vendors, artisans needn't approach private parties for loans and burden themselves by paying heavy interest, as they can take loans from banks under Jagananna Thodu scheme towards their



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy handing over a cheque for Rs 10,000 as interest-free loan to a petty vendor under Jagananna Thodu scheme at his camp office on Tuesday

working capital. Although 9.05 lakh beneficiaries were identified for the scheme, in the phase-1, only Rs 535 crores was disbursed by the banks to 5.35 lakh beneficiaries, despite the government offering to pay the interest. As these vendors come under the unorganised sector, the banks don't provide loans resulting in the vendors approaching private parties, taking loans at high-interest rates to run their businesses, and often fall into debts.

In order to resolve this, the state government has decided to extend financial assistance to remaining

3.7 lakh beneficiaries through Shreenidhi Credit Cooperative Federation and APCOB covering all the eligible beneficiaries by sanctioning loans in rural and urban areas, said the Chief Minister adding that a total of Rs 49.77 crore is being borne by the government under this scheme towards paying interest.

He said that the scheme will bring a change into the lives of small and petty vendors, as the government is relieving them from paying heavy interests, and if they repay the loan amount in the given timeline, the state government

shall reimburse the interest directly to the beneficiaries' accounts, and further, they will be eligible to take the next loan.

The Chief Minister stated that vegetable vendors, fruit vendors, small shopkeepers, pushcart vendors and traditional artisans are eligible to apply for the scheme and if any eligible person is not covered in this scheme, they can still apply through volunteers, and upon verification, they will be provided with the scheme benefits in a month or two. Also, they can call on the 1902 toll-free number to get enrolled.

Population criterion for vax allocation

Continued from P1

Also, states/UTs will be notified in advance of how many doses will be supplied to them. The government has said that the states should similarly allocate doses well in advance for districts and vaccination centres. "They should also put in the public domain the information about the above availability at district and vaccination centre level, and widely disseminate it among the local population, maximizing the visibility and convenience of citizens," the guidelines read.

The guidelines state that the vaccination will be prioritized and will be administered to healthcare workers first followed by frontline workers, citizens more than 45 years of age, citizens whose second dose is due, and then to those above 18 years of age.

As per the new rules, all citizens, irrespective of their income status, are entitled to free vaccination. Those who have the ability to pay are encouraged to use private hospital's vaccination centres, the government has said.

The shift in the vaccination policy comes after the Supreme Court raised questions about it and several states sought centralised procurement of vaccines. This comes at a time when states across the country are planning to ease lockdown restrictions considerably in the coming days.

Covid cases cross 2 lakh mark in Chittoor dist

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

COVID positive cases have crossed two lakh mark in Chittoor district with the rampant second wave. During April 1 to June 7 itself the district reported a total number of 1,12,347 cases while the preceding one year period accounted for 92,614 infections. It has become the second district in the state after East Godavari in crossing two lakh Covid cases. Till now, total cases in the district are 2,04,961 while it tops the death toll with 1,401. As the lockdown has not given any respite from the increasing spread of the virus, the district had gone through a tough phase in May with 70,467 cases and 327 official deaths.

In fact, May has created havoc in the district forcing the officials to stand on their toes to create the necessary infrastructure. With the huge number of Covid cases, the dependency on oxygen has also increased and both SVIMS and Ruia faced tense situations with management of oxygen supplies. Ruia hospital has witnessed a tragedy on May 10 with low pressure in oxygen supply reportedly claiming the lives of at least 23 patients.

During the last one week, the cases have started receding slowly and after 41 days the district witnessed less than 1,000

cases on Monday. The same day, Tirupati reported a much smaller number of 43 cases. While the police were acting tough on those violating lockdown restrictions, the officials are of the view that the second wave impact has been coming down. They expect that the cases will further come down in the next few days.

However, on Tuesday, there was a slight jump in the number of infections as 1,210 new cases were reported out of which Tirupati accounted for 127. Still, on the whole there was a drop of at least 500-1,000 daily cases. Accordingly, the burden on hospitals and Covid care centres is also coming down. According to official sources, the oxygen consumption has also come down now.

Out of 990 Covid beds in Ruia hospital, 525 active cases were in admission by Tuesday and 465 beds including oxygen and ICU beds are lying vacant. In SVIMS, out of 675 beds 387 have been getting treatment. However, black fungus infections have been increasing and in SVIMS, 95 patients are admitted with the disease, said medical superintendent Dr Ram. In addition, more than 70 black fungus patients are there in Ruia hospital. Many patients are said to be going to neighbouring states for treatment.

Bapu's great-granddaughter sentenced to 7 yrs in jail in S Africa

DURBAN

A 56-year-old great-granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, who was an accused in a six-million rand fraud and forgery case, has been sentenced to seven years in jail by a Durban court.

Ashish Lata Ramgobin was found guilty by the court on Monday.

She was accused of defrauding businessman SR Maharaj after he advanced R6.2 million to her for allegedly clearing import and Customs duties for a non-existent consignment from India. He was promised a share of profits.



Lata Ramgobin, who is the daughter of noted rights activists Ela Gandhi and late Mewa Ramgobind, was also refused leave to appeal both the conviction and the sentence by the Durban Specialised Commercial Crime Court.

When trial in the case against Lata Ramgobin started in 2015, Brigadier Hangwani Mulaudzi of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) had said that she allegedly provided forged invoices and documents to convince potential investors that three containers of linen were being shipped in from India.

At that time, Lata Ramgobin was released on a bail of 50,000 rand.

On Monday, the court during the hearing was informed that Lata Ramgobin had met Maharaj, director of the New Africa Alliance Footwear Distributors, in August 2015.

The company imports and manufactures and sells clothing, linen and footwear.

Maharaj's company also provides finance to other companies on a profit-share basis.

Lata Ramgobin had told Maharaj that she had imported three containers of linen for the South African Hos-

pital Group NetCare.

"She said she was experiencing financial difficulties to pay for import costs and customs and she needed the money to clear the goods at the harbour, NPA spokesperson Natasha Kara said on Monday.

"She advised him (Maharaj) that she needed R6.2 million. To convince him, she showed him what she claimed was a signed purchase order for the goods. Later that month, she sent him what seemed to be a NetCare invoice and delivery note as proof that the goods were delivered and payment was imminent," she said.

WINDOWS

Suvendu Adhikari meets Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly and BJP MLA Suvendu Adhikari arrives at Union Home Minister Amit Shah's residence in Delhi. An FIR has been registered against Adhikari for his alleged involvement in theft of cyclone 'Yaas' relief material from a store of Contai Municipality in Purba Medinipur district, police said on Monday. The FIR lodged at the Kathi Police Station also mentioned names of Suvendu's brother Soumendu Adhikari, a former chief of the civic body, and two others, a senior officer said. The FIR was registered on a complaint filed by Ratnadip Manna, a member of the board of administrators of the municipality, on June 1. He had alleged that tarpaulin worth around Rs two lakh was stolen from a store managed by the municipality on May 29. All of those named in the FIR have been booked under sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

'Choksi Indian, courts to decide'

DOMINICA: Dominica Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit termed fugitive diamondaire Mehul Choksi as an "Indian citizen" and stated that the courts will decide what happens to the fugitive. He added that the government will protect the rights of Choksi as he awaits trial. Currently, Choksi has got interim relief from immediate repatriation to India by the Dominican court, which adjourned the matter of his detention. Loop Jamaica News quoted that Dominica PM as saying that, "The matter with this Indian citizen is before the courts, the courts will decide what happens to this gentleman and we allow the court process to go through." "His rights will be respected as have been done thus far and let the courts decide what has to happen in that regard. We have no interest in so far as the issues in Antigua and the issues in India. We are part of a whole community and we have to recognise our duty and our responsibility," Skerrit said.

Woman seeks vaccinated groom



NEW DELHI

CONGRESS MP Shashi Tharoor is famous for his eloquence, vocabulary and how he faces his opponents in debates. He often tweets about matters of national and international concern, but he can be funny too. For instance, on Tuesday, the Thiruvananthapuram MP tweeted what appeared to be a newspaper clipping of a matrimonial advertisement, dated June 4, 2021. In the advertisement, a self-employed Roman Catholic woman sought an alliance with a man of her faith, but there was an added condition.

She claimed that she had already received both doses of Covishield vaccine and was looking for a potential groom, who was also vaccinated like her. This appears to be a one-of-a-kind matrimonial advertisement. "Vaccinated bride seeks vaccinated groom! No doubt the preferred marriage gift will be a booster shot? Is this going to be our New Normal?" Tharoor captioned. Reacting to Mr Tharoor's tweet, a Twitter user, @pandey_priyanka, said that the next step may entail new criteria. "Now, one more criterion to be eligible, vaccine cannot be Covaxin. Pfizer will be rated above," she wrote. Another user couldn't believe that the woman was seeking a vaccinated groom. User, @digambaran suspected the clipping had been generated using a software. Another user, @KtonyoseMM, also said that the clipping was fake and had been generated using a mobile app.

Daily count dips below 1 lakh

NEW DELHI

INDIA on Tuesday logged 86,498 new Covid infections in 24 hours, less than one lakh cases for the first time in past 63 days, the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry said.

It is also the lowest number of cases since April 2 when the country logged 89,129 new cases.

In the past 24-hour, 2,123 more people succumbed to the pandemic.

On Monday, India had reported 1,00,636 cases, lowest spike since April 6. India's overall tally of Covid-19 cases now stands at 2,89,96,554 with 13,03,702 active cases and 3,51,309 deaths so far.

Over the last few days, India's fresh Covid cases have seen downward trend, maintaining over one lakh infections every 24 hours, while the deaths have also remained below the 3,000 mark. After battling a brutal second wave for weeks, fresh Covid cases came down below the three lakh-mark for the first time on May 17 after touching record high of 4,14,188 on May 7.

In the last three weeks, India has recorded over 90,000 deaths. India registered record fatalities due to Covid-19 on May 21 with 4,529 deaths -- the highest from Covid infection in any country in a day since the coronavirus outbreak was reported in China's Wuhan in December 2019. It surpassed 4,468 deaths in the US on January 12, 2021, and 4,211 in Brazil on April 6, 2021.

Vaccination for Covid-19 has been temporarily suspended in Madurai district due to the shortage of doses. The Tamil Nadu Health Department has not received any information regarding the arrival of new stock of vaccines and the resumption of inoculation in the district. Dhinesh, a doctor with Madurai District Public health department told IANS: "We have a shortage of vaccines and hence we have temporarily stopped the inoculation. However, we are expecting fresh arrivals in a couple of days and may resume either on June 9 or June 10."



People stand in a long queue outside the Barakhamba metro station after resumption of the metro services in New Delhi on Tuesday

No Covid bodies in 4 days in Delhi

AS Covid cases fall across India, crematorium workers say Covid bodies coming in for cremations have dropped. India reported less than one lakh new coronavirus infections after a gap of 63 days, while the daily positivity rate dropped to 4.62 per cent, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Tuesday. In Delhi, crematorium workers say deaths have come down. "There is some relief now than before. We didn't receive Covid bodies for last 2-4 days. Earlier, we used to cremate 25-27 Covid bodies every day," says a crematorium worker. The brutal second Covid wave saw cremations taking place round-the-clock in Delhi with over a 27-hour wait for the pyre.

Spell out new vax policy: HC to Govt

KOCHI: The Kerala High Court has asked the central government to spell out its new vaccine policy on Wednesday. The court issued this directive while hearing a bunch of petitions, asking for streamlining of distribution of Covid vaccines. The state government informed the court that it has cancelled the order that was given to the companies for the purchase of one lakh vaccine doses after they informed that they were unable to supply these large quantities. Moreover, they can supply vaccines only as per the directions given by the Centre. Following this the court posted the case for further hearing on Thursday. It was on Monday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced free vaccines for all above 18 years of age from June 21.

Punjab shouldn't have sold vax

NEW DELHI: Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Monday said Punjab Government should not have sold Covid vaccines to private hospitals. Responding to a question on the alleged selling of Covid vaccines by Punjab Government to private hospitals, the Congress leader said, "I agree that Punjab government should not have given vaccines to private hospitals. But what is the proportion of vaccines they gave to private hospitals in few days when that policy was in force? Maybe 1-2 per cent. They have corrected it now." "The underlying message is that the government has learned from its mistakes. They made two cardinal mistakes and made effort to correct those mistakes. But as usual bluff and bluster, Prime Minister blames the opposition for the mistakes he committed," said Chidambaram.

AGRA HOSPITAL IN CONTROVERSY TO BE SEALED, PATIENTS BEING SHIFTED

'22 patients turned blue in 5 mins': Hospital's O2 'mock drill' claim

AGRA

A prominent private hospital in Uttar Pradesh's Agra was closed by authorities on Tuesday after its owner was allegedly caught on audio bragging about how the hospital shut off oxygen supply on April 27 for five minutes in a "mock drill" amid what the owner purportedly claimed was an acute shortage of oxygen at his hospital during a raging Covid surge in the western UP town, and elsewhere in the state. The Uttar Pradesh government had ordered an inquiry into the incident after outrage.

The Paras hospital in Agra is being sealed following the death of 22 patients reportedly due to a shortage of oxygen.

"We were told that even the Chief Minister cannot get oxygen, so start discharging patients. Modi Nagar is dry. We started counseling families. Some were willing to listen but the others said they would not leave. I said ok let's do a mock



drill. We will find out who will die and who will survive. So we did that at 7 am. A mock drill was done. No one knows. Then we identified 22 patients. We realised they would die. This was done for 5 minutes. They started turning blue," Arinjay Jain, the owner of Paras Hospital, can be purportedly heard saying in the 1.5-minute audio clip from April 28.

The hospital also has a Covid facility within its premises.

In a statement to the media,

Agra District Magistrate Prabhu N Singh claimed there was no death due to lack of oxygen on that day the alleged video was recorded. However, he said, "We have filed a case against them under the Epidemic Diseases Act. The police will conduct an investigation. The hospital is being sealed. All 55 patients are being shifted out."

Earlier, in a statement, Singh had said, "Initially, there was some panic and shortage but we sorted all that out in 48 hours. In this hos-

pital, there have been seven Covid deaths on the 26th and 27th of April. There is no truth that 22 people died but we will carry out an inquiry."

After the audio clip was widely circulated, the hospital owner indicated that his statements were misinterpreted. "We too had received instructions from the administration for judicious and rational use of oxygen. In the third week of April, we categories our patients into those who were on high flow and those on low flow (of oxygen)," Mr Jain said.

Top Congress leader Rahul Gandhi condemned the incident, hitting out at the ruling BJP. "There is a severe shortage of both oxygen and humanity under the Epidemic Diseases Act. The police will conduct an investigation. The hospital is being sealed. All 55 patients are being shifted out."

Earlier, in a statement, Singh had said, "Initially, there was some panic and shortage but we sorted all that out in 48 hours. In this hos-

Didn't meet Sharif: Uddhav when asked about separate meet with PM

MUMBAI

MAHARASHTRA Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday led a delegation of the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi government to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi to discuss around a dozen important pending issues concerning the state, officials said here. To a question whether he met the PM separately, Thackeray shot back: "We may not be together politically... That doesn't mean we have severed our links. I didn't go to meet Nawaz Sharif. So there's nothing wrong if I met him (PM) privately."

He added that the delegation emerged satisfied with the outcome and are confident that the PM will take appropriate action on all the matters raised with him.

At the meeting, in which Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and PWD Minister Ashok Chavan were also present, Thackeray took up issues of Maratha quotas, the state's GST dues, Mumbai Metro



carshed, damage due to the recent Cyclone Taukta, crop insurance scheme for farmers, etc.

"We had a good discussion with the PM on various pending issues of the state. The PM has given us a patient hearing. We are hopeful he will take a positive decision in the matter. I thank the PM," Thackeray later told mediapersons at Maharashtra Sadan in the capital. An official in Mumbai said that the CM-led delegation raised certain key issues with the PM pertaining to the Maratha reservations, quotas for Other Backward Classes in Panchayat elections, reservations for Backwards Classes in promotions, making available space at Kanjurmarg for the Mumbai Metro Car-shed, the pending GST dues to the state.

US GOVT LAB IN 2020 CONCLUDED COVID-19 LEAKED FROM WUHAN

Can't compel China to give more info on Covid: WHO

GENEVA

A top World Health Organisation official said that the WHO cannot compel China to divulge more data on the origins of Covid-19.

Mike Ryan, Director of the agency's emergencies programme, said at a news conference that the "WHO doesn't have the power to compel anyone in this re-

gard", reported Al Jazeera.

Meanwhile, he expected full 'cooperation' from member states. There are competing theories that the virus jumped from animals, possibly starting with bats, to humans, or that it escaped from a laboratory in Wuhan, China.

The US government's national laboratory had in a 2020 report on the origins of Covid-19 concluded that the virus



leaked from a Chinese lab in Wuhan, the Wall Street Journal said citing people familiar with the classified document.

The study prepared in May 2020 by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California said that "the hypothesis claiming the virus leaked from a Chinese lab in Wuhan is plausible and deserves further investigation", WSJ reported.

The study, dated May 27 was also used

by the State Department in its own inquiry into the pandemic's origins in October last year, during the Trump administration.

Lawrence Livermore's "Z Division" drew its assessment based on genomic analysis of the SARS-COV-2 virus, which causes Covid19, the WSJ report said, adding that the national laboratory has declined to comment on the study.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Storage infra key to rise farmers' income

“MODERN, cost-efficient storage infrastructure at grass roots level and at block level is great way to increase farmers' income. Whole of the government approach is needed rather stand-alone departmental storage plans. For this, land aggregation for storage from States and government undertakings should be explored


— Piyush Goyal, Union Minister



HIRING

60% cos looking for new talent this yr

THIS year looks promising on the hiring front as nearly 60% of the companies surveyed are looking to hire talent for new positions. Recruitment managers are optimistic about returning to pre-pandemic hiring levels in 2021, and this outlook gains more credibility, according to the report by Mercer Mettl

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	73.56	South	
Euro	89.53	African Rand	6.16
UAE Dirham	20.42	Hong Kong Dollar	10.79
Thai Baht	2.57	Japanese Yen	0.76
British Pound	103.98	New Zealand Dollar	53.04
Australian Dollar	56.96	Saudi Riyal	21.35
Canadian Dollar	60.86	Swedish Krona	10.12
Swiss Franc	81.87	Singapore Dollar	56.12

DELHI WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Karur Vysya's CSR initiative

Karur Vysya Bank has donated a sum of Rs 20.00 lakh under its CSR programme to Samadrushti Kshamata Vikas Evam Anusandhan Mandal (Saksham), Hyderabad to support the setting up of a temporary Covid-19 care facility at the Durgabhai Deshmukh Hospital, run by the Andhra Mahila Sabha at Hyderabad. The first installment of Rs 10 lakh was handed over by C Ramakrishna, Deputy General Manager of Karur Vysya Bank to Dr Santhosh Kumar K, National Joint Secretary, Saksham. Thirty dedicated beds provided with high flow oxygen facility for Covid-19 patients have been set up at the hospital. B Ramesh Babu, MD & CEO, Karur Vysya Bank, said: "Karur Vysya Bank has so far donated Rs. 4.61 cr during the second wave of the corona pandemic under its Corporate Social Responsibility programme."

Amaze extends deal with Virat

Amaze Inverters has extended its endorsement deal with Indian cricketer Virat Kohli for another three years. The top-order batsman has been associated with the company since its inception in 2018 and has been the face of Amaze. As part of the deal, Virat Kohli will feature in all print and electronic media advertisements for the brand. The company offers a range of inverters and batteries that are designed to withstand long and frequent power cuts. Virat Kohli said: "I have a great association with Amaze and will continue to be with the brand. Amaze has been growing tremendously across different geographies of India and I take pride to say that they have been living up to their promise of providing high-performance power backup products."

Morphisec's new APAC head

Morphisec has announced that it has appointed Ajit Pillai as Regional Director for APAC. In this role, Pillai will oversee strategic direction in the region and ensure Morphisec can meet increasing local demand for its suite of solutions for endpoints, servers, and cloud workloads, which uses patented zero trust runtime security powered by moving target defense technology to block threats. The company's products have been deployed on over seven million endpoints worldwide and offers enterprises cutting-edge cyber prevention that automatically stops the most dangerous attacks in an automated and easy-to-manage manner. "We're thrilled to add Ajit to our team to further Morphisec's momentum in India and across Asia Pacific," said Ronen Yehoshua, CEO, Morphisec

Arvind Mafatlal enters edtech

Arvind Mafatlal Group has announced its foray into the fast-growing education technology and services space. The group launched Uniform Junction, one-stop, integrated supply chain solution and platform for K12 schools. The group will leverage its five plus decades' of experience working with schools to supply uniforms and to provide the widest and most comprehensive range of school products as well as academic and non-academic courses. Priyavrat Mafatlal, MD, Mafatlal Industries, said: "We witnessed up close how a vast majority of schools, especially those in the non-metro and tier I & II cities, that were otherwise among the most effective and efficient, grappled with the new norm, online learning. This experience and the sudden stagnation of the uniform business is what set us thinking and led to the birth of Uniform Junction."

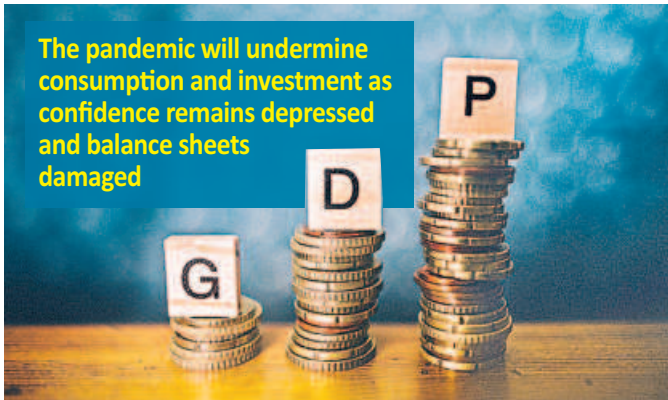
WORLD BANK PROJECTS INDIA's GDP AT 8.3% IN 2021

WASHINGTON

THE World Bank on Tuesday projected India's economy to grow at 8.3 per cent in 2021 and 7.5 per cent in 2022, even as its recovery is being hampered by an unprecedented second wave of the COVID-19, the largest outbreak in the world since the beginning of the deadly pandemic.

The Washington-based global lender, in its latest issue of Global Economic Prospects released here, noted that in India, an enormous second COVID-19 wave is undermining the sharper-than-expected rebound in activity seen during the second half of Fiscal Year 2020/21, especially in services. "India's recovery is being hampered by the largest outbreak of any country since the beginning of the pandemic," the World Bank said. In 2020, India's economy is estimated to have contracted by 7.3 per cent while in 2019, it registered a growth rate of four per cent, the World Bank said, adding that in 2023, India is expected to grow at 6.5 per cent. In its report, the Bank said that the global economy is set to expand by 5.6 per cent in 2021 - its strongest post-recession pace in 80 years. "For India, GDP in fiscal year 2021/22 starting from April 2021 is expected to expand 8.3 per cent," it said. Activity will benefit from policy support, including higher spending on infrastructure, rural development, and health, and a stronger-than-expected recovery in services and manufacturing, it said. Although

World Bank forecasts 7.5% GDP growth in 2022 as recovery in Indian economy is being hampered by an unprecedented second wave of the Covid-19



The pandemic will undermine consumption and investment as confidence remains depressed and balance sheets damaged

the forecast has been revised up by 2.9 percentage points, it marks significant expected economic damage from an enormous second COVID-19 wave and localised mobility restrictions since March 2021, the report said. Activity is expected to follow the same, yet less pronounced, collapse and recovery seen during the first wave, it said. "The pandemic will undermine consumption and investment as confidence remains depressed and balance sheets damaged. Growth in FY 2022/23 is expected to slow to 7.5 per cent, reflecting lingering impacts of COVID-19 on household, corporate and bank balance sheets; possibly low levels of consumer confidence; and heightened uncertainty on job and income prospects," it said.

According to the World Bank, in India, the FY 2021/22 budget

marked a significant policy shift. The government announced that the health-related spending would more than double and set out a revised medium-term fiscal path intended to address the economic legacy of the pandemic. Following deteriorating pandemic-related developments, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced further measures to support liquidity provision to micro, small and medium firms, and loosened regulatory requirements on the provisioning for non-performing loans. "In India, fiscal policy shifted in the FY 2021/22 budget toward higher expenditure targeted at healthcare and infrastructure to boost the post-pandemic recovery. The renewed outbreak, however, may require further targeted policy support to address the health and economic costs," it added.

Global economy may expand 5.6% in 2021

WASHINGTON: The global economy is expected to expand 5.6 per cent in 2021, the fastest post-recession pace in 80 years, largely on strong rebounds from a few major economies, the World Bank said on Tuesday, noting that despite the recovery, global output will be about two per cent below pre-pandemic projections by the end of this year.

In its latest edition of Global Economic Prospects, the World Bank said that at the same time many emerging markets and developing economies continue to struggle with the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

"While there are welcome signs of global recovery, the pandemic continues to inflict poverty and inequality on people in developing countries around the world," said World Bank Group President David Malpass. "Globally co-ordinated efforts are essential to accelerate vaccine distribution and debt relief, particularly for low-income countries."

NEW I-T WEBSITE FM asks Infosys to fix tech glitches

NEW DELHI

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday asked Infosys and its Chairman Nandan Nilekani to fix technical glitches being encountered on the income tax department's new e-filing website, after users flooded her Twitter timeline with complaints.

Infosys was in 2019 awarded a contract to develop the next-generation income tax filing system to reduce processing time for returns from 63 days to one day and expedite refunds. The portal went live last evening.

Early on Tuesday morning, Sitharaman took to Twitter to announce the launch of the new portal, www.incometax.gov.in,



saying that the "important milestone to make the compliance experience more taxpayer-friendly" went live at 2045 Hrs on Monday. But, soon, her timeline was flooded with user complaints.

"I see in my TL grievances and glitches. Hope @Infosys & @NandanNilekani will not let down our taxpayers in the quality of service being provided," she tweeted later. TL here stands for timeline. "Ease in compliance for the taxpayer should be our priority," she said while quoting a tweet from a user who was unable to log in to the new e-filing portal.

Infosys had also developed the GST Network (GSTN) portal, used for GST payment and return filing. The software major had faced flak for slow functioning of the GSTN portal.

StanPlus to expand ambulance network

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

INDIA's leading private patient logistics and emergency medical response company, StanPlus, has announced its collaboration with Grip Invest, a platform that offers investment opportunities in physical assets leased to corporates. With this, StanPlus will lease ambulances from Grip Invest to expand its Red Ambulance network across the country.

What makes this partnership unique, is that Grip Invest will allow people, such as HNIs, to invest in its leasing model starting with as little as Rs 50,000, thereby diversifying their investment portfolio, earning 17 per cent returns, and helping build the nation's ambulance network during this challenging period. StanPlus will commence the partnership with 10 Red Ambulances and eventually expand to 100 across 30 cities.

Sensex, Nifty edge down amid weak Asian cues

BSE index slips 53 pts, NSE Nifty declines 12 pts; HDFC twins, RIL weigh

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmarks Sensex and Nifty ended marginally lower on Tuesday following losses in index majors HDFC twins, Reliance Industries and ICICI Bank amid a weak trend in Asian markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex slipped 52.94 points or 0.10 per cent to 52,275.57. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty declined 11.55 points or 0.07 per cent to 15,740.10. Banking, finance and energy stocks succumbed to profit-booking, while robust buying in IT counters capped the downside for the bourses.

SBI was the top loser in the Sensex pack, slipping 1.21 per cent, followed by HDFC, Kotak Bank, HDFC Bank, PowerGrid, ICICI Bank and Ul-



traTech Cement. On the other hand, Tech Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, HCL Tech, Infosys, Titan, Dr Reddy's and ITC were among the gainers, climbing up to 2.53 per cent. "Traders are uneasy about high valuations and rising global inflation ahead of central bank meetings. Investors await key US inflation data due on Thursday for more indications about the Fed's policy outlook and cues about the global economic recovery," said Narendra Solanki, Head- Equity Research (Fundamental), Anand Rathi.

Midcap and smallcap indices continued to outperform the benchmarks as improved prospects of earnings recovery continues to attract investors towards this space, said B i n o d Modi, Head

- Strategy at Reliance Securities. "Notably, daily caseload falling below one lakh first time after two months and government assuring state governments to supply jobs at own cost for all offer additional comfort," he added. Sector-wise, BSE metal, bankex, finance, energy and capital goods indices lost up to 1.38 per cent, while telecom, IT, tech and healthcare closed in the green. Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices rose up to 0.93 per cent. Global equities were mixed ahead of crucial US inflation data and the policy meeting of the European Central Bank (ECB). In Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Hong Kong ended in the red. Stocks exchanges in Europe were trading with gains in mid-session deals. International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.53 per cent lower at \$71.11 per barrel.

FTCCI inks pact with NMIMS

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

FEDERATION of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) and NMIMS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a close partnership that will foster a collaborative environment in bringing the entrepreneurs, members of the Industry, government and non-government agencies of Telangana. As part of the agreement, these institutions will promote skill development and industry-institute collaboration.

The thrust areas of the partnership include curriculum design, industrial visits, student internship, skill development programs, guest lectures, management development programs and entrepreneurship skill development among. Ramakanth Inani, President, FTCCI said that this partnership reflects the importance to empower our educational institutions and provide them industrial exposure for guiding and enhancing them to upgrade to the new technologies.

Another fiscal stimulus package key to rekindle animal spirits

Lack of fresh investments with slowdown of bank credit growth: SBI report

NEW DELHI

Another dose of fiscal stimulus package holds the key to rekindle animal spirits in the economy at this juncture as monetary policy has little headroom, a latest report from SBI Ecwrap.

According to the research report released on Tuesday, there is a distinct slowdown in bank credit growth in India with the trend starting with the onset of pandemic last year continuing well into FY22. What this means is that India Inc appetite for fresh investment is still not there. And in the absence of fresh fiscal stimulus package, the investment climate would not improve.

The Ecwrap report suggested that low bank credit growth was a direct fallout of corporates rapidly deleveraging by repaying high cost loans through funds raised

through bond issuances.

An SBI analysis showed that top 15 sectors, from more than 1,000 listed entities, reported more than Rs 1.70 lakh crore of debt reduction in the pandemic year 2021. Refineries, steel, fertilizers, mining & mineral products and textile alone reduced debt by more than Rs 1.50 lakh crore during FY21.

Simultaneously, primary issuance of bonds increased by nine per cent. This trend is continuing in FY22 also, the report said. The trend is indicative of the fact that fresh investment in projects during the time of the pandemic is not coming through while corporates are using this period to replace their high cost debt with low cost funds through bond issuance and prepare ground for future invest-



ment when economy picks up with highly leveraged operations. "Interestingly, corporate willingness for new investments remains low currently as the economy is still recovering from the devastating second wave. Investment scenario is tepid as gauged by new investment announcements which saw 67 per cent decline in FY21 as per CMIE. However, the same is reported flat as per Projects Today, where new an-

nouncements of Rs 10.7 lakh crore were reported in FY21 as compared to Rs 10.8 lakh crore in FY20," the SBI Ecwrap report said. However, it is true that order inflow position of two leaders L&T and BHEL declined during last year. While L&T reported decline in order inflow by around six per cent, BHEL reported a decline of 61 per cent (up to Dec'20) as compared to FY20. However, Dilip Buildcon, KEC, Kalpataru reported growth in order flow position during FY21, Dilip Buildcon majorly because of orders from Road sector (NHAI) and Kalpataru's growth largely driven from orders in T&D business.

"Against this background, only fiscal policy can rekindle animal spirits at this juncture - monetary policy has little headroom," the report suggested.

iQoo launches new smartphone

HYDERABAD

SMARTPHONE brand iQoo unveiled iQoo Z3 in India. Equipped with future-ready 5G capabilities, the new smartphone comes with latest camera technology and strong hardware specifications.

Packed with the latest Qualcomm Snapdragon 768G 5G Mobile Platform, 55W FlashCharge and 64MP Auto Focus main camera, it is equipped with 120Hz refresh rate and 180Hz touch sampling rate for a smooth experience. To prevent the phone from overheating, the Z3 has a five-layer liquid cooling system, keeping the device cool even under high-load operations to ensure long-term performance in gaming scenarios.

Gagan Arora, Director-Marketing, iQoo, said: "With Z3, we aim to bring outstanding performance in the mid-range segment, making fast 5G experience available to more customers."

Chhetri overtakes Messi's Tally of Int'l goals

36-year-old one goal away from entering all-time top-10; is three goals short of Pele's 77 goals

DOHA

INDIAN football talisman Sunil Chhetri has surpassed Argentina's global superstar Lionel Messi to become the second-highest active international goal-scorer with 74 strikes, adding another feather to his illustrious career.

The 36-year-old Chhetri achieved the staggering feat with his brace against Bangladesh in the joint preliminary qualifying round match for 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup here on Monday night.

The seasoned striker, who helped India register their first win in six years in World Cup qualifiers, now stands only behind Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (103) in the active international goal-scorer list.

Chhetri leads Barcelona star Messi by two goals and sits a place above Ali Mabkhout of the UAE, who is third on the list with 73 strikes to his name.

In the all-time goal scorers' list, Chhetri is three goals short of Pele's 77 goals.

Messi scored his 72nd international goal in a World Cup qualifier against Chile last Thursday, while Mabkhout added to his tally against Malaysia, also last week.

At the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium on Monday, Chhetri broke the deadlock in the 79th minute when he headed in Ashique Kuruniyan's cross from the left, and then sealed the victory by curling in a shot from long range in added time.

The India captain is also just goal away from entering world football's all-time top-10. He is behind Hungary's Sandor Kocsis, Japan's Kunishige Kamamoto, and Kuwait's Bashir Abdullah, who all have 75 goals.

Delighted with the team's victory and Chhetri's record, All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Praful Patel lauded the captain for leading from the front.

"Our @IndianFootball skipper Sunil Chhetri adds another feather to his illustrious cap as he overtook Lionel Messi to become the second-highest active international goalscorer with 74 goals. "A big congratulations to Captain Fantastic & wishing him many more accolades in the future," Patel tweeted.

The AIFF boss also praised the team on the convincing win that was built on Chhetri's brilliance. "Congratulations #BlueTigers on an awesome win over Bangladesh today & fabulous performance by skipper @chetrisunil11 who lead from the front & paved the path to victory.

"Your hard work & determination was visible on the field. Wishing you all the very best in the upcoming game!"

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ISL's new regulation mandates clubs to field at least 7 players at one time

MUMBAI

THE Indian Super League's 2021-22 season will witness an increase in local players' on-field participation thanks to a new set of guidelines that mandates clubs to field a minimum of seven footballers at one time from the previous six.

A rise in the number of Indian players means one spot less for foreign stars which will now be capped at four. "Hero Indian Super League 2021-22 season will witness an increase in number of Indian players in the playing XI, as the new Coach & Player Selection Guidelines of Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) now mandates clubs to have a minimum of seven (7) Indian players on the field at any point of time," the ISL said in a release on Tuesday.

The inaugural edition in 2014 had witnessed a playing composition of six foreigners and five Indian players. Over the years, the league has gradually increased the spots for Indian players, with ISL 2017-18 having a minimum six Indian players on the field, which now has been further increased to seven for the next season.

"The latest changes in player guidelines are incorporated with the League's philosophy of bringing constant improvement to India's premier football event," it said in the release.

The cap on foreign players to a maximum four is in accordance with the Asian Football Confederation's club competitions' regulations. With the changes, clubs can sign a maximum of six foreign players of which one is required to be from an AFC member nation.

A club also has an option to sign a foreign marquee player within the League-approved classifications. Starting this season, FSDL (Football Sports Development Limited, which runs the league) will mandate clubs to increase their development player signing from minimum two to four, while continuing to have two of such development players be part of the match-day squad.

"The league witnessed a significant improvement in the performance of developmental players last season with the likes of Akash Mishra, Apuia, Jeakson Singh, Rahul KP, Asish Rai, etc. delivering breakthrough performances underlining the testament to the growth of young footballers in India."

A club can have a maximum squad strength of 35 players, with three registered goalkeepers. A club can also have an injury replacement for an Indian player (outside of the maximum 35 registered players). The squad salary cap remains at Rs 16.5 crore for the upcoming season. Indian football's transfer window will open from Wednesday, giving the clubs a chance to aggressively chase the players of their choices.

(PTI)

tiano Ronaldo (103) in the active international goal-scorer list.

Chhetri leads Barcelona star Messi by two goals and sits a place above Ali Mabkhout of the UAE, who is third on the list with 73 strikes to his name.

In the all-time goal scorers' list, Chhetri is three goals short of Pele's 77 goals.

Messi scored his 72nd international goal in a World Cup qualifier against Chile last Thursday, while Mabkhout added to his tally against Malaysia, also last week.

At the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium on Monday, Chhetri broke the deadlock in the 79th minute when he headed in Ashique Kuruniyan's cross from the left, and then sealed the victory by curling in a shot from long range in added time.

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If you give a chance to Chhetri, he will take that: Bangladesh coach Day

DOHA

SUNIL Chhetri won't miss if you give him the opportunity to score, says Bangladesh coach Jamie Day after the Indian captain led his side to a 2-0 win in the 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup Qualifying contest.

"For a long period, we did well, we had a couple of half-chances. But if you give Chhetri a chance, he scores like he showed tonight. He had two chances in the last 20 minutes, and he took them," Day was quoted as saying by goal.com.

The Englishman rued that his players were guilty of giving away the ball far too cheaply to the Indians as Bangladesh suffered their fifth defeat in their seventh Group E game of the joint qualifiers.

"For 80 minutes, we competed very well. The shape was nice and difficult to break down. You see the difference in quality between the players when they were in possession. One of the disappointments was that we gave the ball away too much and gave possession back to India," he assessed.

"Our players were fantastic. They work their socks off, give their best every day. We just couldn't keep the ball and that shows in games where you give possession away too much. And if you do that against better teams and better players, then at some stage they'll punish you," he explained.

"You can't defend for 90 minutes against international teams, but again I can't fault their effort. They worked hard. We just need to be better on the ball but that's a long-term plan, not a short-term plan."

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Chhetri's energy, poaching skills resemble a 25-year-old: Stimac



DOHA

INDIAN football team head coach Igor Stimac says his 36-year-old goal-machine Sunil Chhetri plays and scores like a 25-year-old, evidence of which was his stunning twin strike in a joint 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup qualifier here.

"Many people keep on asking as to when Sunil is going to retire. He works so hard on the pitch, and in every training session, he is by far the best," Stimac said after the match.

"He is in such good shape and is working with such professionalism. He is working as if he is 25, playing as if he is 25, and scoring goals like he is 25," Stimac, a key member of the Croatia "Many people were asking last year or so, 'when is Sunil going to retire?' (If Chhetri retires) what are we going to do then? By far, in every training, he is our best player," Stimac said.

Centre back Sandesh Jhingan felt that Chhetri's name will be remembered even after 100 years. "Some 100 or 200 years down the line, people will still talk about Sunil Chhetri. As long as there is Indian football, people will remember his name. It's for everyone to see what he does on the field.

"Hence, I would rather like to mention that off the field he is the perfect example for all to follow."

Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu expressed, "I will keep on mentioning that there's one guy floating in between Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi -- and that's my teammate, my captain Sunil Chhetri."

"It shows his commitment and how consistent he has been scoring goals -- one after the other. It's simply remarkable," he added.

"We presented football as it should be. That's the way we always want to play. Of course, it's not always possible but when we are favourites against a lower-ranked team, it's something that we will like to present," Stimac said.

"The players did everything they could to get the win. So all the credit to them for executing the game plan perfectly," added the 53-year-old.

Stimac added, "The best defence against lower-ranked teams is attacking -- keeping them away from the ball. Just to explain, if we didn't keep doing what we were doing right throughout the game, we wouldn't have scored the second and allowed Bangladesh to come at us."

Broad to be match referee for India-New Zealand WTC final

DUBAI: ICC Elite Panel match referee Chris Broad will oversee the World Test Championship (WTC) final between India and New Zealand, scheduled to commence at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton from June 18. The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday announced the officials for the match. ICC Elite Panel's Richard Illingworth and Michael Gough will be the on-field umpires. Richard Kettleborough, also a member of the Elite Panel, will be the TV umpire while Alex Wharf of the ICC international panel of umpires will be the fourth official. "We are pleased to announce an experienced team of match officials for the final of the World Test Championship," said ICC senior manager (umpires and referees), Adrian Griffith. "It has not been an easy time with the pandemic, but we are fortunate to have a group of officials at the top of their field who have been consistent over the years in this momentous fixture. We wish them all the very best."

Wrestler Sushil seeks special food, supplements in jail

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court will pronounce order on Wednesday on Olympic medalist wrestler Sushil Kumar's application seeking special food and supplements in the prison where he lodged in connection with the alleged murder of a young wrestler. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Satvir Singh Lamba reserved the order after hearing the contentions of prosecution and defence at-length. Sushil, who is facing charges of murder, culpable homicide and kidnapping, is currently lodged in Delhi's Mandoli Jail. In the plea, Kumar's counsels advocate Pradeep Rana, Kumar Vaibhav and Satwik Misra stated that their client takes supplements like isolate whey protein, omega 3 capsules, jointment capsules, pre-workout C4 and hyde, multivitamin GNC, exercises bands etc. The application added that denial of these basic requirements will have a huge implication on his career, as the special nutrition diet and supplements are extremely necessary for him to maintain his health and performance. "The applicant's career in wrestling directly depends upon his physical strength and physique without which it cannot sustain and to maintain the supplements are required," the plea stated. However, the jail authorities in their reply to the court have stated that Kumar's medical condition does not require food supplements or an extra protein diet as an "additional diet".

French Open: Swiatek enters quarters with win in straight sets

PARIS: Eighth seed Iga Swiatek beat Marta Kostyuk in straight sets, 6-3, 6-4, to enter quarter-finals of French Open late on Monday night. The 20-year-old Swiatek proved to be the superior player although her 18-year-old opponent stretched her. The Polish player was a break down early in the second set before she bounced back to beat the Ukrainian in 92 minutes. Swiatek won 74 percent first serve points as against 57 percent by her opponent. She also converted four out of the 12 break-points she got. Kostyuk could convert only two out of seven break-points. The Ukrainian was also guilty of committing four double faults as against one by Swiatek who will now face Greek Maria Sakkari in the quarter-finals on Wednesday. Sakkari, who became the first Greek woman to enter quarter-finals, had scalped world No.5 Sofia Kenin 6-1, 6-3 on Monday. In Tuesday's first women's singles quarter-final, Slovenian Tamara Zidansek will face Paula Badosa Gibert of Spain.





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Printed and Published by K. Hanumanta Rao, on behalf of Hyderabad Media House Pvt. Limited, Flat.No.609, 6th Floor, Kirti Shikhar Building, Plot.No.11, Dist.Center, Janakpuri, New Delhi- 110058. and Printed at M/s. Marutinandan Printers & Publishers, A-15, Bara Bagh, G.T Karnal Road, Industrial Area, New Delhi - 110033. Editor: V Ramu Sarma. RNI No: DELENG/2017/74095