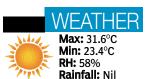
# DECCAN nicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA KARIMNAGAR | WEDNESDAY | 26 AUGUST 2020



Forecast: Cloudy sky. Rain likely. Max/Min temp. 32/22ºC



**CASES** DEATHS (+1,066)(+67,104)59,609 32,31,612

covid19india.org

(+92)

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS (+9)(+2,579)TS: 1,08,670 770

AP: 3,71,639 3,460 CASES AROUND THE WORLD

(+9,927)

2,39,50,822 **DEATHS** 

> 8,20,005 213

> > worldometers.info/ coronavirus

Sarvari; Dakshinayana Tithi: Bharapada Shuddha Ashtami till 10.42 am Star: Anuradha till 1.06 pm Varjyam: 6.36 pm to 8.10 pm Durmuhurtam: 11.53 am To 12.42 pm Rahukalam: 12 noon To 1.30 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** 

> Muharram 6, 1442 AH **PRAYERS** Fajar: 4.59 am **Zohar:** 12.28 pm Asar: 4.41 pm Maghrib: 6.40 pm

Isha: 7.50 pm SUNSET TODAY 6.34 PM **SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.01 AM MOONRISE TODAY 1.01 PM** MOONSET TOMORROW



### **More leaders test** positive for Covid

Chandigarh: Punjab industries and commerce minister Sunder Sham Arora on Tuesday tested positive for Coronavirus ahead of the Vidhan Sabha session on August 28. Congress MLA from Rajpura Hardial Kamboj and Akali MLA from Sanaur Harinderpal Singh Chandumaira also tested positive for Covid-19 Meanwhile, in Assam, legislators Ajanta Neog of the Congress and Ramendra Narayan Kalita of the AGP tested positive for Coronavirus. In Mysuru, Police Commissioner Chandragupta also tested

## **₹2,000 notes not** printed in '19-'20

positive for Covid-19.

according to sources.

Mumbai: Currency notes of ₹2.000 denomination were not printed in 2019-20 and the circulation of these notes have declined over the years, according to the RBI's annual report. The number of ₹2.000 currency notes in circulation has come down from 33,632 lakh pieces at end-March 2018 to 32.910 lakh pieces at end-March 2019 and further to 27,398 lakh pieces at end-March 2020. The number of pieces constituted 2.4 per cent of the total vol-

Report on Page 7

ume of notes at end-March

WORLD 5

deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

**Greta, too, wants NEET,** JEE exams put off



SPORTS 8 **Bolt Covid positive** post-birthday party

**TABLOID Magnificently** 

Husain



Vol. 83 No. 237 Established 1938 | 20 PAGES | ₹6.00

#### Miracle boy



Mohammed Bangi, 4, was pulled out alive from the rubble of the collapsed five-storey apartment building at Mahad in Raigad, Maharashtra, on Tuesday. The building collapsed on Monday. Locals chanted Ganpati Bappa Morya after the child who suffered minor injuries was lifted on to a stretcher. **Report on Page 8** 

## Bhushan counsel wants SC to recall its conviction order

## AG asks top court to take 'compassionate view', forgive lawyer

PARMOD KUMAR | DC with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, AUG. 25

The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved its verdict on the quantum of punishment against senior advocate Prashant Bhushan who has been convicted of criminal contempt for his two tweets.

Even as the Supreme Court lamented the tendency to criticise sitting and retired judges and imputing motives to them publicly, the court said that Bhushan did not tender an apology for his offending tweets and neither did he reconsider his affidavit submitted to the court last week.

Tuesday's proceedings began with attorney general K.K. Venugopal again appealing to the apex court to take a "compassionate view" and forgive

## Bhushan case sent to another bench

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 25

The Supreme Court on Tuesday decided to refer to another bench the 2009 contempt case against Prashant Bhushan and journalist Tarun Tejpal, editor of Tehelka to deal with certain larger questions related to freedom of speech and levelling of corruption charges against the judiciary.

Bhushan. However, the court said Bhushan has not apologised and in fact disparaging remarks in the affidavit filed in his defence. The

A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra was told by senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for Bhushan, that 10 questions of constitutional importance had raised by him.

Justice Anil Mishra, retiring on September 2 this year, said the matter will need time and observed "let us leave this to an appropriate bench."

bench took the AG through the affidavit. "Prashant Bhushan says SC has collapsed, is it not objectionable?" the bench Bhushan's

Rajeev Dhavan argued that an apology cannot be coerced and said, "This institution must take criticism, and not just criticism but extreme criticism. Your shoulders are broad enough."

Dhavan added that the

judgment convicting Mr Bhushan should be recalled and no sentence be imposed on him.

When Justice Mishra asked, "If we decide to asked. punish him, what should punishment?, Dhavan said, "If the top court wants to bar Bhushan from practise, it will have to hear him first... If you want to impose a jail term, my advice would be don't make Prashant Bhushan a martyr. Like what hap-pened after Babri was demolished and Kalyan Singh was convicted of

## Country, not post, matters: Sibal

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 25

A day after the acrimonious Congress Working Committee meeting failed to address their grievances, several of the 23 leaders who had written a letter demanding changes in the party structure said on Tuesday that they were not "dissenters" but wanted a revival of the party. Most of them also said that they favoured Sonia Gandhi as the party chief.

Among the first to speak out was senior Congress

leader and Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal. In a cryptic tweet, Sibal said: "It's not about a post. It's about my country which matters

Senior leader and lawyer Vivek Tankha said the letter was not a challenge to the leadership but a parchment of action to strengthen the party. Tagging Tankha's tweet, RS member Anand Sharma said: 'The letter was written with the best interest of the party in our hearts and conveying our shared conenvironment in the country and sustained assault on the foundational values of the Constitution.

Former Union minister Mukul Wasnik, who had been a front-runner for the Congress president's post last year, said those who saw the letter as an "offence" will also soon realise that the issues raised are worth consideration.

Senior leader M. Veerappa Moily said it was an "admitted fact" that the organisation is not in a position to take forward "the Congress forward

democracy". The intention of the letter was to keep the party ready for 2024 Lok Sabha, Assembly and local bodies elections, he added.

At the end of the meeting on Monday, the CWC unanimously adopted a resolution which urged Sonia Gandhi to continue as its interim chief till an AICC session can be convened to start the process of electing a full-time president and authorised her to effect necessary organi-

# TS says will control **Covid by Sept end**

Disease progressing as expected: Health dir

**BALU PULIPAKA I DC** HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

The Telangana state health department on Tuesday held out immense hope to the people, declaring that they can look forward to a "return

to their normal lives" by the end of September. "Covid-19 has been brought under control in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation area. By the end of September, it will be fully under control in the state. People can get back to their normal lives. There is no need for fear. The government has made all arrangements (for control and treatment of the disease)," Director of Health Services Dr G. Srinivasa Rao declared at a press conference here.

He stressed on the importance of people continuing to practise good health and hygiene habits they have adopted since the Covid-19 outbreak. "Wear your masks, maintain six feet distance with others, keep your hands clean," he said.

The top official of the health department said that current research shows that people need 2 reinfection cases suspected in Hyd

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

Even as the world woke up to the news of the first fully documented case of a Covid-19 reinfection in Hong Kong, comes information that two such cases could well emerge in Hyderabad.

Responding to a question on the issue of Covid-19 re-infections, Director of Health Services Dr G. Srinivasa Rao had said that more information is awaited with respect to the two possible cases in the city. He made it very clear to mediapersons that the matter at this point of time was speculaIncidentally, health minister Etala Rajendar referred to this possibility on Tuesday in an interview to a television chan-

"There is no guarantee that a person who con-tracted Covid-19 and is cured does not get the disease again. Those who do not develop enough antibodies for the virus after being infected can be rein-fected," he said. Of the one lakh plus

cases so far in the state, only two persons have been tested positive for the second time, he told the news channel.

Page 2: Reported cases were not followed up

not obsess about changing clothes as soon as they return home, sanitise goods or food materials, or keep them away for a cou-ple of days before touch-ing them. Covid-19, he said, is transmitted throu-

gh droplets, and through direct contact with an infected person and is not transmitted via clothing or goods brought home.

> Page 2: TS adopted strategic' testing

### PG 2 | INDIA TO CROSS BRAZIL IN NUMBER OF CASES

## JeM charged for Pulwama attack

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, AUG. 25

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday filed its chargesheet in the Pulwama terror attack that killed more than 40 jawans of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and injured eight others in February last year. The charge sheet, filed in a special court in Jammu, names Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) chief Moulana Masood Azhar, his two brothers Rouf Asgar and Ammar Alvi suicide homber Adil Ahmed Dar and 15 others as the accused.

On February 14, 2019, Dar alias 'Waqas Commando', an alleged JeM cadre, rammed an explosivesladen Maruti (Suzuki) Eeco into a bus which was part of a convoy of the CRPF at Lethapora in Pulwama district, killing and maiming security personnel on board.

The NIA has claimed that the conspiracy to launch the deadly attack was hatched by the JeM leadership in Pakistan but carried out by local militant Dar to project it as an act of home-grown

On February 14, 2019, an alleged JeM cadre rammed an explosives-laden van into a bus which was part of a convoy of the CRPF at Lethapora killing and maiming security

personnel on board.

The terror attack was initially probed by the J&K police in close partnership with the CRPF, the Army and other security forces and intelligence agencies. However, the case was soon handed over to the NIA by the Union ministry.

The NIA claimed that it has in its 13,800-page chargesheet provided evidence" 'irrefutable and also to highlight the role of Pakistan in the deadly attack.

The case was registered against the accused under various sections of J&K's defunct) Ranbir Penal Code, Arms Act, Explosive Substances Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Foreigners Act and J&K Public Property (Prevention of

## **KISHAN REDDY'S SITE HACKED BY 'PAK HACKERS'**

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T. I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

The personal website of minister of state for home affairs G. Kishan Reddy was hacked reportedly on the Independence Day. A complaint was lodged with the Hyderabad cybercrimes police on Tuesday, who registered a case and have taken up

the investigation.
The website, http://kishanreddy.com, is said to be hacked by Pakistan hackers. The office of the minister lodged a complaint with the police after making initial inquiries. The website is currently not available for access

"The website is said to only contain personal information about the minister and does not have any confidential information. The website has some photographs and other details of the minister. Following the complaint today (August 25), a case has been registered and investigation has been taken up," said an official from the Hyderabad cybercrimes police said.

## **PARLIAMENT LIKELY TO MEET** FROM SEPT. 14

New Delhi, Aug. 25: The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs has recommended that the Monsoon Session of Parliament be held from September 14 to October sources said on Tuesday. According to them, there will be in total 18 sittings and its dates will be notified later in the day.

Hectic preparations are underway for the Monsoon Session with several first-time measures because of the Covid-19 pandemic such as stag-gered sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Full report on Page 8

#### cerns over the present sational changes. militancy in the Valley. Damages) Act. State to put industrialists on notice for taking land but not starting companies **BROKEN** DEALS

# Set up units or will take back land: KTR

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

The state government has decided to issue showcause notices to industrialists who have taken government land but failed to start units as per the agreement reached.

A decision to this effect was taken when industries minister K.T. Rama Rao was reviewing ongoing initiatives of Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd (TSIIC) in Hyderabad on Tuesday. He instructed officials to

monitor the progress of various industries that have been allotted lands in the state to ensure they start production in a time-bound manner. "Those that have not yet started their operations even after being allocated lands must be issued show-cause notices," he stated. minister The

information on industries

in a sector-wise manner.

This information will be

useful for the government

information on industries in a sector-wise manner. This information will be useful for the government in coming up with policies and programmes to promote industrial development asked industries department offiwithin the cials to prepare a detailed blue book with complete

in coming up with policies

and programmes to pro-

mote industrial develop-

The minister asked industries department officials to prepare a detailed blue book with complete

Those (industries) that have not yet started their operations even after being allocated lands must be issued showcause notices. K.T. RAMA RAO,

ment within the state. Rama Rao also launched

view digital platform of the Telangana State Financial Corporation. He asked corporation offi-

cials to expand their operations and assured that the government will fully support it in its endeavours. During the meeting, the

minister reviewed works of Hyderabad Pharma City Chief Secretary with Somesh Kumar and heads of departments belonging to finance, industries, and municipal administration and urban development departments. He underlined that the Pharma City

should be pollution-free and of international standards. He asked officials to

ensure that Pharma City remains a zero liquid disarrangements are made for centralised treatment of waste material generated in the city.

Rama Rao instructed officials to right away start skill training centres for training local youth, who will be given top priority in recruitment by companies coming up in the

## SHORT TAKE **CONG LEADERS** TO INSPECT DISTRICT HOSPS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

The Congress Legislature Party (CLP) has decided to visit government hospitals in districts from August 26 to 28 to bring pressure on the state government to take appropriate action to control the spread of Covid-19 and give moral support and confidence to the

people during the pandemic. CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that for the past six months the Congress had been demanding that that government take appropriate preventive measures to contain Covid-19.

The government was not responding to the suggestions of the main Opposition party, Mallu Bhatti said.

### **MAN SEXUALLY ASSAULTS NIECE, GETS 5-YEAR RI**

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T. |

HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

A 35-year-old man who sexually abused his 10-year-old niece at her home was convicted by the Nampally court on Tuesday. The court sentenced the accused, Mohd Hameeduddin of Falaknuma, to undergo five years of rigor-ous imprisonment and pay ₹10,000 towards penalty. Of this, ₹9,000 would be paid to the victim as compensation to the victim.

The case against Hameeduddin was booked on June 7, following a complaint from his brother-in-law, that the former sexually abused latter's daughter. Hameeduddin had touched the victim inappropriately and attempted to rape her, but her father returned to the house just then and prevented the assault. Hameedudddin was arrested by the Falaknuma police under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and POCSO Act. A charge-sheet was filed against before the First ional Metropolitan Additional Sessions Judge cum Special Judge for POCSO Act cases and a trial was conducted.

### CASE LODGED **AGAINST ONE FOR HATE POST**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

The cybercrimes police of Hyderabad registered a case against a person who attempted to create trouble between two communities by uploading a video on social media. The accused, Ashish, had uploaded a video related to a small dispute between people of a community and posted it on his social media profile claiming that the issue took place between different communities.

A case has been registered against Ashish and the investigation is on to trace him, said the police.

Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar warned people against sharing false videos to create disturbances.

"Warning. A small quarrel which took place within same community in Moghalpura was settled by police and community elders. Some mischief makers have uploaded a video and projected it as an intercommunity issue. Such trouble makers are warned not to indulge in these mischiefs, the commissioner posted on

## **THOSE SELECTED** FOR CONSTABLES **CALL OFF STRIKE**

Hyderabad, Aug. 25: A group of candidates chosen for the post of armed reserve and civilian constables called off their protest after being told by senior officials that their training would begin in October.

The candidates reached the office of Director-General of Police M. Mahendar Reddy here on Tuesday to protest against the delay in starting training for those selected after applying for recruitment

notification released in 2018. Despite responding to the notices given to them in connection with pending cases and medical tests, they said that they did not receive any

Officials allowed them to enter the premises and told the candidates that training would start in October. Following this, the candidates called off the protest. — INN





Restoration work of the window of the historic Chowmahalla Palace has been stalled in view of the incessant rains during last week.

# India records 25K more **Covid cases than Brazil**

## About 7 lakh infections added in 10 days since August 15

KANIZA GARARI I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

India is recording about 25,000 more Covid-19 cases than Brazil, and will have the second highest number of cases in the world if the daily growth rate of 1.85 per cent persists, experts

Brazil has a daily average growth rate of 1.03 per cent and the total caseload stood at 36,27,217 cases on Tuesday. In India, the total number of cases at 10.45 pm on Tuesday stood at 32,31,612. India has added about 7 lakh cases in the 10 days since August 15.

The high number of cases is also an indication that more tests being done and more people with symptoms are reporting to hospitals. While the rise is constant in new cases in India, Brazil is noting a bend of its curve as the number of new cases come down. For this reason, the ın caseload between India and Brazil is closing. Data analysis gives a 20-day time period after which India will have

#### **CORONAVIRUS INFECTIONS**

• For every symptomatic Covid-19 patient, there are 30 asymptomatic cases and 20 untested cases.

For one positive case there are 50 cases.

82% • Of the total number of Covid infections are mild or asymptomatic Critical illness is 3%

Covd-19 is 2.3% There has been a sharp increase with

Death rate due to

more than 60,000 cases being recorded every day in August indicating spread of the dis-

• The spread is also an indication of development of antibodies in the population. 43,11,646 cases and Brazil 42,96,232. Dr Kiran semi-rural and rural areas where high numbers are Madhala, senior governbeing recorded. This shift shows that one section of

The stigma of Covid-19 has

caused more problems in India

and that has led to people not

coming forward for treatment

cause of death in the certifi-

and also not having Covid 19 as

**15%** 

Covid

reported

erate to

severe

illness

have mod-

cases

ment doctor, explained, "In metros, infection is found the population has develin 40 per cent of the popuoped antibodies. lation. Metros have shown The antibody test results a daily growth rate in in 2.7 lakh samples terms of spread of one per analysed by Thyrocare terms of spread of one per

shows that 26 per cent peo-

ple have developed immunity to the virus. Dr A. Veľumani, scientist and Thyrocare Technologies Limited, said, "Our data shows that the antibodies in people in India is very high and this is not noted in European countries. Immunity levels are building up in people against the disease. People must not panic seeing the large number of new cases as there is an equal number of people recovering and developing resistance to the disease."

Does this mean that max-

imum population will develop immunity? Dr Velumāni says, "Unlocking will give a clear picture and it will give the right indication for which we have to wait. Till then it would be difficult." The existence of virus around cannot be denied and use of masks, social distancing and hygiene etiquette will have to be followed. With a surveillance target of four years experts state that the prevention methods can-not be given up and it will have to continue.

# Local communities can help

**DC CORRESPONDENT** HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

**RE-REGISTERED** 

RAPE COMPLAINT

**FILED BY WOMAN** 

Central Crime Station (CCS) police of Hyderabad re-registered a case into the allegations of a 25-year-old woman who accused 143 persons of committing sexual assault, sources

The case was initially registered by the Punjagutta police on August 20, on the complaint of the victim that she was raped on multiple occasions by several persons who threatened her and captured her private videos.

Sources said that the case has been transferred to the Central Crime Station, where the officials re-registered the case and took up investigation into the

# curb climate change: Study

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

cent. The spread is now in

A research paper done by an international group of experts based at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, the University of Manchester (UK), the University of Sheffield (UK), and the University of Michigan (US) has found that nearly 300 million people live in areas with high potential for forest restoration in the tropics.

The paper identified the importance of empowering local communities to manage forest restoration as a just and sustainable mechanism for climate change mitigation.

The paper has been published in the journal Nature Ecology and

The paper, was stated to be one of the first compre-

hensive studies to examine the extent to which opportunities for tropical forest restoration overlap with global populations and levels of economic

development. The research estimates that 294.5 million people live in areas with high restoration in the tropics, and over one billion people live within 8 km from such high-potential sites. In low income countries, almost 12 per cent of the population lives in areas considered important for

forest restoration.
The study highlighted the high value of partnering with indigenous people and local communities to ensure the success of investments in carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and local jobs and liveli-

Providing communities with the right to manage forests and implement forest restoration offers a just and sustainable way to address climate

change, the paper said. Talking specifically about India, Dr Ashwini Chhatre, co-author and professor of public policy at the ISB, said that India has a robust legal framework for empowering local communities living near

Within the last two years, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha have prioritised expansion of community rights as a mechanism for empowerment and poverty alleviation. Dr Chhatre said that India could learn from its own positive experiences and set up an example for the global community.

# 2,000 medical personnel infected by Coronavirus

BALU PULIPAKA I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

As many as 2,000 health-care personnel, including doctors and frontline health workers, have been infected by the Coronavirus in Telangana state so far. Of these, 16 persons have lost their lives with 14 of them succumbing to Covid-19 related issues, according to Director of Medical Education Dr K. Ramesh

Addressing a press conalong with of Health ference Director of Health Services Dr G. Srinivasa Rao here on Tuesday, Dr Ramesh Reddy said the welfare of doctors and other frontline staff was a priority for the govern-

"If anyone is infected, we are providing the treat-ment needed. We are immediately responding and providing whatever is required. One officer has been given the task of pro-cessing the claims of the special insurance scheme for health workers that was announced by the Prime Minister," Dr Reddy said. In addition to Covid-19,

the government is also seized of ensuring treatment for seasonal diseases such as dengue, swine flu, malaria and diarrhoea. Instructions have also been issued to all hospitals to attend to elective surgeries that have been put on hold as the health-care sector focused on controlling of Covid-19.

"So far there have been few cases of dengue and swine flu but we have to take care to prevent these diseases. If needed, government hospitals have been instructed to run evening clinics," Dr Reddy

With respect to Covid-19 treatment, he said government hospitals, even in remote areas, have been provided with oxygen supplies along with the required medicines to

## Record 2,579 new cases erupt in TS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

New Covid-19 cases for the first time in the state breached the 2,500-mark with the government reporting that 2,579 per-sons had tested positive on Monday. The day also marked the first time that the state carried out more than 50,000 tests, with the tally reaching 52,933 between Sunday and

As per the Covid-19 bulletin issued by the health department on Tuesday, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 1,08,670 while the number of deaths increased by seven to 770. The state had 33,737 active cases of whom 17,226 were either in home or institutional isolation.

As on Monday evening, 84,163 persons had recovered from Covid-19 in the

On a day that also saw Director of Health Services Dr G. Srinivasa Rao say that Covid-19 was now "under control" in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, the GHMC area, as per the bulletin, recorded 295 new cases, down from 373 on Sunday and 472 on Saturday.

Eight other districts also registered cases in three figures. While Ranga Reddy district had 186 cases, Khammam had 161, Warangal Urban 143, Nizamabad 142, Nalgonda 129, followed by Medchal-Malkajgiri with 106 cases and Mancherial with 104

## **COVID-19 POSITIVE WOMAN DELIVERS** PRE-TERM BABY; MOTHER, CHILD SAFE

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

A pre-term baby was born to a Covid-19 patient who was in a serious condition in a city hospital and both mother and child are now safe. The birthing process had to be carried out in the seventh month as the mother developed Covid-19 and was on ventilator

As the woman had

treat cases of Coronavirus infection. A majority of the 319 doctors recruited recently have reported to work at remote health centres.

Dr Srinivasa Rao said the symptoms of many of seasonal diseases, including typhoid, chikugunya, dengue, malaria

stopped responding to treatment, doctors decided to save the child. After the delivery, it was found that the newborn too was ill and survival would be a challenge. Doctors put the child on medications and

the infant responded. The mother has also started showing signs of recovery. The 34-year-old woman had conceived the child after undergoing

treatment for infertility. and viral fevers, were similar to those of Covid-19. "We appeal to the people not to take chances and go

to the nearest health cen-tre to get examined. If found to be Covid-19 positive or for other diseases, appropriate treatment will be started immediate-

## **JAIN BODY TO EXPAND COVID CARE CENTRES**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

The Jain International Organisation (JITO) has said that it was working on plans to open Covid care centres (CCC) in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns of Telangana state. JITO's city chapter said its first centre in the state in Hyderabad, which has 100 beds, will soon be expanded to 170 beds to cater to the increasing needs of patients. The centre was inaugurated by Finance minister T. Harish Rao on August 5.

According to Vinod Ranka, a JITO-CCC core committee member, two doctors were part of the team that takes care of persons identified as Covid-19 positive who are asymptomatic or show mild symptoms.

The facility, set up by JITO in association with Mahavir Hospital and Research Centre, ₹28,000 to charges ₹35,000 for a seven-day package inclusive of meals, medication, basic kit, treatment and stay, and functions as per ICMR guidelines. It is permitted by the Telangana state health department. More information on the facility is available on JITO's numbers phone 9121155500 and 91212

# Reported cases not followed up conclusion on the matter

From Page 1

reported two other cases of reinfection but they were not followed up at that time. Since the viral finger-

printing of Coronavirus samples from the two Covid-19 patients were treated for the disease for the second time in two different hospitals in the city, a final Hong Kong instance.

cannot be reached, it is Deccan Chronicle had learnt. The results of tests on determining the viral RNA fingerprinting are expected to take time. Only when the results are available can any conclusion be drawn if the two individuals, both medical professionals, infected by different strains of the Coronavirus as was the case in

## **TELANGANA ADOPTED 'STRATEGIC' TESTING, SAYS HEALTH DIRECTOR**

From Page 1

"We could possibly go back to our normal lives as we lived them six months ago," Dr Rao said. He said Telangana state had adopted 'strategic' testing. "We ramped up testing. "We ramped up our testing only when we needed it. We performed 52,933 tests yesterday (Monday) in the 1,100 testing centres across the state. For the past few days, we were averaging 40,000 tests a day," Dr Rao said.

"The important aspect is that our aggressive testing and treatment over the past few months has resulted in a very low mortality rate, which is going down further," he said.

As part of the Covid-19 control measures, con-

tainment zones were put in place in Hyderabad and other districts. House to house surveillance and testing of suspects were being done where positive cases ere found and 20 mobile testing vehicles that perform RT-PCR tests were pressed into service, Dr Rao said.

While the government had 20,396 exclusive Covid-19 beds, an additional 18,000 beds were available in the state. A total of 15,000 beds now have been provided with oxygen connections, he said. Dr Rao also said that 50 per cent of all beds in private hospitals were occupied by Covid-19 patients from neighbouring states including Karnataka, and Andhra

# Cops check Chinese firm links to gamers' suicide

VIKRAM SHARMA I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

In the second week of July, T. Madhukar, 24, of Lakshettipet in Mancherial district died by suicide. He had lost ₹15 lakh to fraudsters on the online gaming site Dafabet. Madhukar had borrowed the money from

his friends. Like Madhukar, there were three more persons who ended their lives in separate incidents — one in Narsingi police limits,

the other in Sanjeeva Reddy Nagar while the third victim belonged to Chennai — all of whom lost several lakhs of rupees.

As the investigators are digging out the shady deals and transactions involving the Chinese firm Beijing T Power, whose head of operations for southeast Asia Yah Hao was arrested by the Hyderabad police recently, the sleuths have launched a parallel probe to ascertain whether the four victims of online gaming fraud were cheated by the Chinese company.

If the links are established between the victims and Yah Hao's companies, the Chinese national will be in for more trouble as the police have decided to charge him and other accused with abetment to suicide in each of the four cases. Interestingly, while the world was dealing with the deadly Covid-19, which originated from China, Chinese companies like Beijing T Power were minting money during the lockdown as transactions of this company, reflected in the bank transactions, skyrocketed between March and July as people who remained indoors invested heavily, only to suffer losses. The total value of inward transaction traced is over ₹1,100 crore, a majority of which was during the lockdown due to the pandemic this year.

Sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the mobilephones of the victims will

be examined to ascertain whether they placed bets in the companies linked to the Chinese firms, whose effort was to constantly establish new companies and move operations from one company to the other. To lure the gamers initially, the stakes would be in the ratio of 7:3, which means that the gamer would win seven out of 10 times. Subsequently, the company had programmed its systems in the reverse, that is 3:7 ratio, and this is when

many started losing large amounts of money. Sources said that some

evidence linking the victim with the accused company has emerged in the suicide in Chennai. The Hyderabad police are in touch with their counterparts in Chennai even as they are out on the trail of the transactions of the vic-

tims in Telangana state. The website on which they placed the bets, the payment gateways, details of their bank accounts are among the aspects under

investigation. So far, suspi-cious death cases have been registered in connection with the suicides. While online gaming was

being organised by initiating prospective gamers through Telegram groups and the admins of these groups would usually indicate the websites on which the registered members can play games and place bets, these websites were being changed on a daily basis. Players would place bets on colours in a game called 'colour prediction'.

IN BRIEF

## **Excess ferts cause**

loss to farmers

Khammam: The excess use of urea and fertilizers by the farmers would be like a double whammy for them. On on hand, they will have to spend more buying them and on the other, they will also get less yield if excess fertilisers are administered on the crop. To spend more, the farmers need to borrow more and also repay more, which will prove burdensome to them. Due to lack of awareness on the right quantity of fertilizers, there are chances for the farmers to use more fertilisers. In such a situation, the agriculture officers need to create awareness about the quantity of the fertilizers.

#### **Acquisition of SC** lands objected

Khammam: The Madiga Reservation Porata Samithi (MRPS) urged the government to check the availability of assigned lands for constructing Vaikuntadhamam, dumping yards and Rythu Ikya Vedikas. MRPS leader P. Prabhakar Madiga said that the SCs and STs are being forced to part with their assigned lands for these buildings. He said that hundreds of SC farmers would be put to loss if their lands are acquired for building the public utilities. Further, he said that the SC farmers were being paid very less for their lands during acquisition. He said that the government can acquire the lands from other sections of the society by giving more price than market value than put the SC, St farmers

## **Kidnapper beaten**

up in Nizamabad Nizamabad: A kidnapper was beaten up and handed over to the police in Nizamabad on Tuesday. Nagaraju of Basar in Nirmal district allegedly kidnapped a 16-month-old baby boy, Anji, on August 11 from Nizamabad bus station. The parents of the boy, Sailoo and Laxmi of Dandigutta village, found the kidnapper on Tuesday in Nizamabad and thrashed him asking him the whereabouts of the boy. According to sources, Sailoo

and Laxmi came to Nizamabad

bus station on August 11, where Nagaraju met them. After their interaction, Nagaraju escaped with the boy. The shocked parents lodged a complaint in the police station and have been searching for the kidnapper since then. Nagaraju was found near Nizamabad MPP office on Tuesday. The parents and others beat him up. Later, they handed over him to the police. On the other hand, Basar police in Nirmal district found the body of a one-and-a-half-year-old boy near the railway station on August 19. They also found CCTV footage of a person carrying the body of the boy. Nizamabad and Basar police officials are verifying the details of the baby's kidnap and

## **Mayor inspects** dump yard works

murder cases.

Nizamabad: Mayor Dandu Neethu Kiran visited the dumping yard at Nagaram on Tuesday. She inspected the works of the compound wall, weigh bridge and garbage lifting works. She directed the municipal officials to complete the works at the earliest and take precautions while shifting the garbage to the dumping yard. She also visited the 11th division in the city and inspected the drinking water supply, sanitary latrine works. She planted saplings in the area. Municipal corporation officials accompanied the Mayor

## **Tributes paid to** Thudumdebba chief

Adilabad: Adivasis and leaders of various Adivasi organisations on Tuesday paid rich tributes to Dabbakatla Narsinga Rao, 55

founder president of Thudumdebba, in the old Adilabad district. Adivasi leaders said Adivasi community has lost a committed leader with the sudden demise of Narsinga Rao who died of ill health in Mulugu district late on Monday night. Leaders expressed their shock over the sudden demise of Narasingarao and condolences to the bereaved family members. Leaders of Thudumdebba and Adivasi leaders recollected Narasinga Rao's contribution in supporting

Adivasis' causes and leading the agitation from the front to protect Adivasi rights in united AP. Thudumdebba Adilabad district president Godam Ganesh reminded that Narsingarao was the founder president of the Adivasi Hakkula Porata Samiti (Thudumdebba) formed in 1996. Since then, the organisation has been relentlessly working to uplift the

## **Om Ganesaya Namaha**



Devotees offer prayers to Lord Ganesha at Giddeperumandla Devasthanam during Navaratri Utsavam in

## Sudden jump in tests witnessed in Khammam

## Numbers rise to four fold compared to those last week

A. RAVINDRA SESHU | DC KHAMMAM, AUG. 25

The sudden change in the state government's stand with regard to conducting Covid-19 tests surprised many people in Khammam district. Earlier, the medical and

health workers, who did not conduct tests even to those approaching them with suspected symptoms, have increased the number of tests and are conducting four fold more when compared to those a week ago

in Khammam district. There has been a change in the government's readiness in testing Covid patients since August 15. The health workers have conducted 147 tests on August 15 and 38 persons tested posi-

NO COERCIVE

**STEPS AGAINST** 

**RGV, SAYS HC** 

■ The government started collecting samples from various primary health centers in the district. The workers are collecting samples not only from the persons visiting the PHCs with

suspected symptoms but

also others who want to

get Covid-19 test done

tive. On August 16, 119 testes were conducted and 35 people tested positive. About 327 tests were done on August 18 and 314 on August 19.

There is sudden jump in the number of tests on August 20 that the medical employees collected samples from 801 persons on that day.

On August 21, samples were collected from 1,658

suspects by the medical who want to get Covid-19 and health department test done. and 385 persons tested Covid-19 positive.

On August 22, 1,221 tests were conducted and 296 people tested positive and on August 23, 1,098 samples were collected. On August 2, the health

staff collected more samples, over 2,549, double the number on the previous day. On August 24, 528 people tested positive. Samples are being collected from asymptomatic patients too.

Interestingly, the government started collecting samples from various primary health centers in the district. The workers are collecting samples not only from the persons visiting the PHCs with suspected symptoms but also others test done.

N. Nageswara Rao, a registered medical practitioner in Khammam said, "The attitude of the government has changed suddenly and the sample collection also increased double to four fold. It is a good change and this will help in allaying fear among the people.

The people, who are travelling here daily, are approaching health centres and giving their samwith regard to Covid-19.

About 66 samples were collected from a PHC in Kamepalli on Tuesday followed by 92 in PHC in Kallur, 67 in Chintakani, 70 in Vemsoor and 89 in Madhira.

Nearly 2,541 tests were

# 20 pc test positive during RAT drive in Nizamabad

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

Telangana High Court on Tuesday directed the Miryalguda police to not take coercive steps Ramgopal against Varma and Natti Karuna, director and producer of 'Murder', based on a caste killing, in the criminal case registered against them under the SC/STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

The police had registered a case against them following the direc-tions of a SC/ST special court, which was acting on a complaint filed by Perumalla Balaswamy, father of Pranay, who was hacked to death by hired assassins allegedly employed by the father of Amrutha, Pranay's wife.

**NARENDER** PULLOOR | DC NIZAMABAD, AUG. 25

Around 20 per cent of samples tested turned out to be positive in Nizamabad district during the last few days. The medical and health department

have ramped up testing, so much so that around 2,500 Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) are being conducted across the district to trace Covid-19 District collector C.

Narayana Reddy directed the health staff to conduct 2,500 Covid-19 tests daily across the dis-Government General

Hospital in Nizamabad, district headquarter hosarea hospital, primary nealth centres and urban centres have increased the number of tests from August 21.

The medical and health officials conducted more than the targeted tests in district. During Ganesh Chaturthi festival and Sunday also Covid-19 tests were conducted in the district. Persons suffering from mild and severe symp-toms of Coronavirus lined up for tests.

Interestingly, merely 20 per cent of people tested positive for Covid-19 and others have been found to be suffering from flu and seasonal diseases.

A few panic-stricken people went for double testing of Covid-19 in dif-

pital in Bodhan, Armoor ferent centres.

District collector C. Naravana Reddy that people need not worry about tests and treatment for Covid-19 in Nizamabad district.

The necessary medical infrastructure as well as required medicines are available in government hospitals to treat the Covid-19 patients, he said.

The collector conducted cell phone conference with mediapersons on Tuesday. However, he stresed on

preventive measures to check the spread of

Even in case of infection, people need not worry, he said and told people all facilities for treatment were there.

#### KTR INSTRUCTS GHMC EMPLOYEES TO FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT OF PARKS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

commissioner D.S. Lokesh Kumar has instructed zonal and deputy commissioners to take up a cleanliness drive in all city parks for

Friday. He said that K.T. Rao, municipal administration and urban development minister, had asked corpora-tion officials to visit parks in their respective

zones to assess the facili-

amenities can provided in the green areas. As per the commission-

er's instructions the zonal, deputy commissioners and deputy directors of urban biodiversi-

all the parks for a period from 'Green Friday' later this week. They would be accompanied by GHMC corporators and public representatives and oversee required repairs. In

# Adilabad district breaches spike of 100 Corona cases

DC CORRESPONDENT ADILABAD, AUG. 25

For the first time, Adilabad district has breached the 100-Covid positive cases mark in a single day on Monday and this shows how rapidly the virus is spreading to every nook and corner.

There is a change in the public attitude towards Coronavirus and its effects. Many people are now voluntarily coming forward and getting tested for Coronavirus without bothering much about their neighbours and fellow people though there is social stigma still attached to Coronavirus.

It seems confidence levels have improved among the people to face the Coronavirus on seeing more number of people get-ting affected every day and affected people recovering without much difficulty. As many as 87 Corona pos-

itive cases were reported in Adilabad district on Tuesday. There is a surge in the Corona positive cases in people giving their samples



People in Adilabad have been neglecting the Covid protocols and moving closely in crowded places

They are not wearing masks even as they feel that recovering from the infection is easy and it is like flu

More number of Corona positive cases are coming out with more testing. News is making round that three ward members of Adilabad municipality tested positive for Corona.

Above 150 people, including councillors and top municipal officials and political leaders, had attended a birthday party that was arranged by a ward member in Adilabad town and later, the said councillor tested positive

larly, his two other col-

However, people are not scared of getting infected with Coronavirus and yet moving freely unlike in the

past.
Many people are not wearing masks and the physical distancing norm is also forgotten in crowded places.

Some people are not taking the Coronavirus as a serious disease and not following any norms since they feel that it is just like

People are freely moving and doing their day-to-day works in Adilabad town and all the business establishments are remaining open and one can find a huge rush at the shops.

Sai Kumar of Adilabad town said: "A maximum number of people could have contracted the Coronavirus if we go by the prevailing situation and people are coming to know of it only when they get tested and the result is positive.

He said there are more number of asymptomatic cases of Covid than the symptomatic ones.



Welfare minister Koppula Eshwar releases fish seed in Lingampet Cheruvu in Jagtial

## Telangana will be fisheries hub soon, says Koppula

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC

JAGTIAL, AUG. 25

Telangana will soon become a fisheries hub with the several projects being taken up in the state as per the vision Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, said welfare minister Koppula Eshwar

He released around 1.08 lakh fish seed at Lingampet Cheruvu in Jagtial district on Monday.

He also released 54,000 fish seed in Pedda Cheruvu of Shankaraopet village in Gollepalli mandal and speaking on the occasion, Mr Eshwar said that with an investment of ₹47 crore, around 176 lakes present in the district would be restored under Mission Kakatiya project. Fish seed is being released

in all those lakes to provide extra income to fishermen.

"Earlier, Andhra Pradesh

determination of KCR, Telangana is going to become one soon. As part of it, the government not only distributed fish seed freely to the fishermen community but also life jackets, transporting vehicles, mopeds and nets along with other equipment for catching and trading the fish without involvement of the middlemen. Fish markets have also been established

was treated as a fisheries

hub, but now with firm

With recent heavy rains that occurred in the district, all the lakes, tanks and reservoirs are now filled with water and suitab le for fish growth.

across the state,"

informed.

Over 80 tmc of water is available for cultivation of various types of crops in the coming season in the district, the minister said at the programme.

Jagtial MLA Dr Sanjay

Kumar said that around 400 society members of Lingampet Cheruvu belonging to surrounding villages of Lingampet, Kandlapalli Karnakunta Chintakunta lakes used to catch fish in the lake for their survival by making

themselves. But due to middlemen, they did not get any profits all these days. When the government started distributing fish seed freely along with taking all kinds of other measures for their financial wel-

arrangements of fish seed

fare, the farmers are happy, he said. District collector G.Ravi. ZP chairperson Dava Vasanta, municipal chairperson Bhoga Shravani, additional collector Rajesham, District

Fisheries Officer Raja Narsaiah and PACS chairman Sandeep Rao were among those who were present along with others.

## Soyam seeks protection of 100% quota to Adivasis

DC CORRESPONDENT ADILABAD, AUG. 25

Adilabad BJP MP Soyam Bapurao on Tuesday met Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda and submitted a memorandum requesting to take steps to protect the 100 per cent reservations in teacher jobs to the local Adivasis in the Agency areas in the wake Supreme Court quashing GO No. 3 that guaranteed 100 per cent reservations in teacher and other jobs to

Soyam Bapurao requested the Union minister to make

BJP MP Bapurao requested Union minister Arjun Munda to allocate five more Ekalavya schools for Adilabad district

a new regulation in Para 5 (2) or issue notification with necessary amendments or modification to the AP

Appointment to the Public Services Act, 1997 in terms at Para 5(1) of 5th schedule to the Constitution of India to protect the 100 per cent reservation in jobs to the local Adivasis in Agency

Soyam Bapurao also requested the Union minister to allocate five more Schools Ekalavva Sarangapur, Jainoor, Khanapur and Sonala in old Adilabad district since the district is having more than

60 per cent tribal population

were Maoist-affected. Bapurao also requested the Union minister to sanction an International Archery Academy Adilabad district.

Adilabad district BJP president Payal Shankar accompanied the Soyam

## WORKS I'N PROGRESS **Ex-IMP says works worth ₹300 crore underway** Smart City: Vinod seeks more funds

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, AUG. 25

developmental works under Smart City project were left pending in Karimnagar Municipal Corporation limits due to flood-like situation that arose due to recent heavy rains in Karimnagar district.

Realising this, vice-chairman of the 'State Planning Commission', Boinapally Vinod Kumar accompanied by IT and municipal minister. K.T. Rama Rao met Union minister Hardeep Singh during his visit to New Delhi and urged him to release the funds imme-

diately to speed up various developmental works which are in progress under the Smart City proj-

During his tenure as MP Karimnagar Parliament segment, Mr. Vinod Kumar played a key role in getting 'Smart City project' sanctioned to Karimnagar town and also several national highways to Telangana State which pass through Karimnagar along with sanctioning of separate High Court to

Telangana State. Mr Vinod was able to get permissions and clearance certificates for many projects and developmental

works by exerting pressure on the central government. He also raised several issues pertaining

Telangana Karimnagar during the Parliament session and tried to resolve them.

Continuing his efforts to develop Karimnagar city, Mr Vinod who met the Union minister informed him that several developmental works under the Smart City project are in

progress with an invest-

ment of ₹330 crore. Out of ₹196 crore which were sanctioned in the first phase, about ₹78.64 crore had already been paid to the contractors for various works which are

progress. **DPRs** Project Reports) of about 11 developmental works worth ₹206 crores in one category and 9 developmental works worth ₹235 crore in another category are in different stages and the reports will be submitted very soon to the Central Town Development depart-

ment, he added. He also informed that as part of Smart City project, a green corridor is going to be established in 4.4 km with an investment of ₹120 crore from Alganur to NTR statue of Padmanagar in Karimnagar city.

## SHORT TAKES **MAMATA WRITES TO MODI ON JEE/NEET EXAMS**

**Kolkata, Aug. 25:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the Centre should go in appeal against the Supreme Court order for holding the JEE and NEET examinations during the Covid-19 outbreak to ensure the aspirants are free

from "mental agony".
She wrote to Modi after the state government received a letter from the National Testing Agency on Tuesday to conduct the JEE/NEET examistarting September 1, 2020.

"I am aware that the Supreme Court has given a verdict on holding JEE/NEET examinations and the central government has been issuing instructions to go ahead with it accordingly. However, I would like to request for your kind intervention and to consider the central government making an appeal to the apex court to review its decision in the interest of the student community, so that they are free from mental agony and mental disaster. Such intervention is very much essential in the larger interest of the students to facilitate creating a situation whereby the students will neither be subjected to grave health risk nor they will be facing a career risk, Banerjee wrote in the letter that was also released to media.

"We are really worried and concerned," she said.

### FIRE AT PROTOCOL **OFFICE OF KERALA SECRETARIAT**

**GILVESTER ASSARY | DC** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUG. 25

Dramatic scenes were witnessed in the state secretariat on Tuesday after some files and documents got destroyed in a fire that broke out in the protocol wing of the complex.

The fire incident took place in the protocol office housed in the North sandwich block of the secretariat.

While some files and documents were gutted, there was no report of injury to anyone. However, an official of the secretariat said that no important files were damaged in the fire. Fire and rescue service personnel rushed to the spot and

put off the fire.
"Only some files relating to booking rooms in government guest houses were destroyed. The fire was caused by an electric snort circuit," a senioi official of the General Administration Department

told media persons. The destruction of files and documents in the fire triggered protests by Opposition Congress and BJP. Leaders of the two parties rushed to the secretariat and alleged there was a conspiracy to destroy evidence linked with the gold smuggling case. The case is currently being investigated by the central agencies.

#### **BJP MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IN MP RATTLES CONG**

**RABINDRA NATH** CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, AUG. 25

The just concluded membership drive of the BJP in poll-bound Gwalior-Chambal region in Madhya Pradesh reportedly wooed Congress workers, mostly loyalists of Rajya Sabha member Jyotiraditya Scindia, into its fold. The move has 'rattled' the grand old party in the state.

The Congress, however, asked the ruling party to make public the list of Congress workers in the region who ioined the saffron outfit.

"The BJP has hyped its whole exercise of membership drive in Gwalior-Chambal region. The party showed its existing members as new members. I challenge BJP to come out with a list of Congress workers who joined BJP", senior Congress leader and former minister P.C. Sharma told reporters here on Tuesday. Sharma said Congress continued to enjoy a mass base in the region and it would be reflected in the upcoming Assembly by-elec-

tions in the area.

The BJP countered Sharma saying that the party was ready to provide addresses and names of the Congress workers in Gwalior-Chambal who joined BJP. "Congress is rattled by the mass exodus of party workers in Gwalior-Chambal to join BJP", BJP spokesman here Rajneesh Agrawal said.

# Saw building pillars breaking before I ran out, says eyewitness

The building had issues related to substandard work and incidents of falling of plaster

Mumbai, Aug. 25: Mustafa Chaphekar and his family members, all residents of the ill-fated building that collapsed in Raigad, had a narrow escape as they rushed out just in time before the structure came crashing down.

They had barely reached the gate of the five-storey building when they saw some pillars of the ground floor breaking into pieces,

Chaphekar said.
The building, which had around 40 flats, collapsed on Monday evening in Maharashtra's Raigad dis-

According to police, a man, who was not a resident of the building, died cardiac arrest on Monday night after he was hit by a stone from the falling building, and 19 persons were still miss-

ing.
Chaphekar said he was at home when he suddenly felt "tremors", following which he ran out into the balcony of his flat and asked others what was happening.

Some people asked him to come out as the building was on the verge of collapse, he said.

Chaphekar then quickly rushed out along with his family members. Before leaving, he knocked the door of his neighbour and alerted him, he said.

"As my family members and I left the building, I heard a loud sound. When I turned back, I saw two-three pillars of the ground floor breaking into pieces," he said.

Chaphekar said since he and his family came to live in the building in 2013-14, there were issues related to substandard work and incidents of falling of

The problems increased in the next two years, following which the residents had a meeting with the builder, but he was reluctant to carry out repair work, he said.

The builder told us that he had constructed the building and given it to us, now it was up to us what to do with it," he added. Riyaz Mulla, a relative of

lies, said the incident shocked him. His brothers wife and

one of the missing fami-



Relatives mourn the death of a victim near the site of the five-storey building collapse in Mahad on Tuesday.

THE BUILDING, which had around 40 flats, collapsed on Monday evening in Maharashtra's Raigad district.

between 1.5 and 5 years, were still missing, a tearyeyed Mulla said. His brother worked in

Dubai and left from there to reach home after getting to know about the

incident, he added.

A day after the building collapsed, rescue personnel continued to sift through the rubble in search of survivors, while police said 19 persons are still missing. An official at the

Mantralaya State Control Room of the State Disaster Management Unit said the Tarek Garden building at Kajalpura in Mahad tehsil collapsed around 7

pm. There were around 40 flats in the building, the official said, adding those rescued were shifted to a local hospital at Mahad, which is around 170 km

## Toll climbs to 12, 4-yr-old rescued

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, AUG. 25

The toll in the Mahad building collapse incident

rose to 12 on Tuesday.
Rescuers sifting through
the rubble of a fivestoreyed building in Raigad district found a four-year-old boy alive and his mother dead beneath the debris.

The dead include the boy's 30-year-old mother and two sisters, aged seven and two years. A man died of cardiac arrest on Monday night after he was hit by a stone from the falling building. The dead
— five men and five

A video shared by NDRF showed the rescuers tak-

teenagers.

rubble on a stretcher amid claps by onlookers. NDRF Director General S.N. Pradhan termed the rescued boy as god's child.

"Miracle child rescued
alive — God's Child.

@NDRFHQ teams find a 4-year-old boy. Ops will continue, canines used. Lets all pray for more Pradhan miracles. tweeted.

Police on Tuesday registered an offence against five persons, including the builder and architect of Tariq Garden in connection with collapse.

The offence was regisagainst builder tered Farooq Kazi, RCC consultwomen — include two ant Baĥubali Dhamne, and architect Gaurav Shah under sections 304, 304A and 338 of the Indian

# 64-yr-old searches for daughter, 3 grandkids

Mumbai, Aug. 25: Sixty four-year-old Muhammad Ali reached Mahad immediately after hearing news of a building there collapsing like a pack of cards. Ali, a resident of Mandangad in Raigad district, said he is clueless about the fate of his daughter, who lived in the ill-fated Tarek Garden building with her three children.

"My son, who lives in Mumbai, called me on Monday night and said the building had collapsed. I immediately set out from Mandangad," he said. Ali reached Mahad, which is around 40 km from Mandangad, on Monday night and is camping near the collapse site, frantically trying to know the where-abouts of his kin.

the building along with her two daughters aged five and two years and a son who is three years old. I don't know their fate. Officials are not allowing me to search for them in the debris," he said.

A day after the fivestoreyed building collapsed, rescue personnel continued to sift through the rubble in search of survivors, while police said 19 persons are still missing.

An official at the Mantralaya State Control Room of the State Disaster Management Unit said the Tarek Garden building at Kajalpura in Mahad tehsil collapsed around 7

pm.
There were around 40 flats in the building, the

## **CASE: CBI MAY QUESTION MUMBAI POLICE** DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, AUG. 25

**SUSHANT DEATH** 

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) may record statement of some of the officials of Mumbai police team who were conducting enquiry into suicide of actor Sushant Singh

Rajput.
The CBI on Tuesday grilled Rajput's flatmate Siddharth Pithani, cook Neeraj Singh and house help Deepesh Sawant whose versions of the sequence of incidents showed some differences. The officials also questioned the actor's account Rajat Mewati

The police officials would be asked about their line of investigation and the questioning of the movie industry bigwigs in connection with the probe. Those city policemen who are likely to be questioned would include the team members who were closely involved in the

suicide enquiry.

The trio have been questioned on several occasions by the CBI citing the inconsistencies in their statement. The officials sought clarity on their statement at the DRDO guest house in

The trio's statement is of great importance in the probe as they were present in the Bandra apartment the actor committed sui-

"Rhea Chakraborty and family members may be summoned next for questioning in the suicide probe," said an officer privy to the

investigation.

The CBI is also rummaging through the deceased actor's phone and other gadgets to ascertain his state of mind in the days prior to

his suicide.
The details of the messages and other details exchanged by Rajput with whoever was in touch with him will be in prime focus of the investigation agency.

The CBI earlier questioned the staffers at the Waterstone Resort in Andheri about the actor's stay at the resort. The CBI asked the staff about who was accompanying nim and if there were any visitors whom he met during his stay. They are also verifying if there is any relevant CCTV camera footage that could be useful to the probe.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on the other hand is probing the alleged money laundering that the actor's father has accused Chakraborty of. The family alleged that at least ₹15 crore was fraudulently transferred from his bank account.

The ED is investigating the companies that were floated with the actor. Chakraborty and her brother Showik of which they were direc-



## Security in Eastern Parliament monsoon session likely Ladakh beefed up

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 25

Indian Armed forces have deployed troops equipped with shoulder-fired air defence missiles on the crucial heights in Eastern Ladakh to keep in check the activity of Chinese attack helicopters in the sector.

India had already deployed quick reaction defence missiles including the Akash missile system in June in Ladakh which can take down fighter jets and armed drones in few sec-It was modified to make

it suitable for deployment in the high mountainous

**KARNATAKA** 

**CONG CHIEF** 

Karnataka

**TESTS POSITIVE** 

Bengaluru, Aug. 25:

President D.K. Shiva-

kumar on Tuesday said

he has tested positive for

coronavirus and has been hospitalised.

ing Congress national

president Sonia Gandhi,

senior party leader Rahul Gandhi, Chief Minister B.S. Yediy-urappa have wished

Shivakumar a speedy

positive for the coronavirus. I am doing well,

but as a precaution have

been hospitalised and I

am under the good care

"I had fever and tested

Several leaders includ-

Congress

troops armed with the Russian-origin Igla air defence system have been deployed on the crucial heights along the border to take care of any enemy aircraft trying to violate the Indian air

The Russian-origin air defence systems are used by both the Indian Army and the Air Force and they can bring down enemy fighter jets or copters which come close to Indian locations or deployments during hos-

The air defence systems of both Army and the Air Force have been deployed in Ladakh to take on any

#### from Sept. 14; 18 sittings planned New Delhi, Aug. 25: The physical Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs has recommended that the

Monsoon Session of Parliament be held from September 14 to October 1, sources said on Tuesday. According to them, there

will be in total 18 sittings and its dates will be notified later in the day. Hectic preparations are

Session of Monsoon Parliament with several first-time measures because of the Covid-19 pandemic such as staggered sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and use of both chambers and galleries to accommodate members while following

distancing norms, officials had said. According to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, members of the Upper House will be seated in both chambers and galleries during the session.

This is the first time in the history of Indian Parliament since 1952 that such an arrangement will be in place, where 60 members will be seated in the chamber and 51 in the galleries of Rajya Sabha and the remaining 132 in the chamber of Lok Sabha.

Similar seating arrangements are being worked out by the Lok Sabha Secretariat as well.

For the first time, large display screens and con-

soles for participation Sabha Secretariat has from galleries, ultraviolet germicidal irradiation, special cables between the two Houses and polycar-bonate separators will be in place.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla at a meeting on July 17, after detailed examination of various options for holding the session, decided on using the chambers and galleries of both the

Naidu has directed officials to complete preparations for the session by the third week of August when testing, rehearsal and final inspection would be carried out. The Rajya been working overtime to ensure full preparedness, officials said.
While both the Houses usually function simulta-

neously, this time due to extraordinary circum-stances, one House will sit during morning hours and the other in the evening, sources say. The last Budget Session of Parliament had to be

curtailed because of the Covid-19 pandemic and both Houses were adjourned sine die on March 23. precedent, per Parliament has to be con-

vened before the end of six months from the last

## COVID-19 | VACCINES

## India in talks with Russia on the possible use of its Sputnik V vaccine

## Possibility of reinfection rare, says ICMR three vaccine candidates antibody response is in testing," Bhushan said. est the reports of reinfectual press conference the response to the presently a complete local conference to the presently and the presently a complete local conference to the presently and the presently accomplete local conference to the present tual press conference that

with agency inputs NEW DELHI, AUG. 25

Even though the trials for the Covid-19 vaccines are on track in India, the government is simultaneously engaging with Russia on the possible use of its Sputnik V vaccine.

"India and Russia are in communication on Sputnik V. Some initial information has been shared. Some detailed information is awaited,' said union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Tuesday.

The government may not be in a real hurry to import the Russian vaccines given the fact that

are already in the advanced stages of clinical trials in India. However, since the two countries are also strate-gic partners, the possibili-ty of having Sputnik V vaccine to boost the vaccination drive for the huge Indian population cannot be ruled out. "The Serum Institute of

India (Oxfrord University trials) vaccine studies consisting of 1,700 persons are in phase 2 and 3, the one by Biotech has completed phase 1 with 375 persons while that of Zydus Cadilla has entered Phase 2 with about 50 persons being tested. These are two dose vaccines and

antibody response is checked after two to four weeks," said Dr Balram Bhargava, chief of ICMR. As per Union health ministry, the total number of cases of Coronavirus in India so far reached 31,67,323 till Tuesday morning with nearly 61,000 fresh cases being detected. The toll was 58,390 out of which 848 fatalities were recorded in

the last 24 hours. Bhushan said that for the first time, active cases have reduced in the last 24 hours. "Active cases are only 22 per cent of the total cases we have had so far. There is also a steady decline in positivity rate despite very high increase

in testing," Bhushan said. He added that in the first week of August, the positivity percentage on a seven day rolling average was 11% which came down to 8% on Tuesday. The ICMR chief said the

report of the second national level sero survey is expected soon that will give an idea about the prevalence of the virus in the population. The health ministry is

keenly following the reports of possibly world's first case of Covid-19 "re-infection" in Hong Kong though the ICMR chief said that the possibility of a virus infection recur-

ring is very rare. 'We have read with intertion in Hong Kong. This may depend on the immune status of the person and whether the virus has mutated and become more virulent. But it is just one case and I do not want to be alarmed. Normally it does not happen in viral diseases. For example measles, in which immunity is developed for

life," Dr Bhargawa said.

Meanwhile, Puducherry
health minister Malladi Krishna Rao on Tuesday indicated that the Union Territory may have 2-day lockdown every weekend, as part of the government's efforts to contain spread of Coronavirus. The Minister told a vir-

presently a complete lockdown was imposed on Tuesdays as Saturdays and Sundays were considered auspicious for holding wedding events. have requested the

Chief Minister during a video conference to introduce the two day lockdown on Saturday and Sunday from next month so that the present spike in new cases could be controlled considerably," he said.

Anticipating not less than 3,000 cases during the coming week, he said the equipment needed for expeditious testing swabs of patients in all the four regions would be

made fun of him —one

told him he should read

the Quran during his

plentiful free time, anoth-

er said he was still alive because Tarrant didn't

know how to shoot, except from point-blank

range. The 29-year-old Australian gunman in March pleaded guilty to

murder, attempted mur-

der, and terrorism, rever-

sing an earlier not guilty

plea. He could become the

first person in New Zeal-

and to be sentenced to life imprisonment without

the possibility of parole,

the toughest sentence

available. Tarrant is noti-

ceably thinner than when

At the current hearing,

he hasn't shown the bra-

zenness he did at his first

court appearance the day

after the attacks, when he

made a hand gesture so-

metimes adopted by white

Tuesday's hearing, rela-

tives and survivors des-

cribed how more than a year after the attacks,

they were still having

trouble sleeping, enjoying

life and providing for

and if it is determined

that it is poisoning, then

there will be a reason for

said. Navalny, a politician and corruption investiga-

tor who is one of Putin's

fiercest critics, fell ill on a

flight back to Moscow

from Siberia on Thursday

and was taken to a hospi-tal in the city of Omsk

after the plane made an

Over the weekend he

was transferred to the Charité hospital in Berlin.

where doctors on Monday

said they have found indi-

cations of "cholinestera-

se inhibitors" in his sys-

tem. Cholinesterase inhi-

bitors act by blocking the

breakdown of a key che-

mical in the body, acet

choline, that transmits si

gnals between nerve cells.

with the antidote atropi-

ne. Navalny's wife, Yulia

Navalnaya, has been visit-

ing her husband daily

Navalny is being treated

emergency landing.

supremacists.

he was first arrested.

NZ survivor to

wounded in the New Ze-

aland mosque attacks had

a simple message for the

mass-murderer responsi-

ble: "You are the loser, and we are the winners."

Mirwais Waziri was am-

ong the survivors and

family members who spo-

ke on the second day of a

four-day sentencing hearing for white supremacist

Brenton Harrison Tarra-

nt, who killed 51 worship-

pers at two mosques dur-

ing the March 2019 atta-

cks. Waziri said Tarrant had not shown any remo-

rse during the hearing

and so instead of giving a

victim's impact statement

he wanted to deliver the

sometimes associated with terrorism but now he'd been freed. "You took

that name from me,' Waziri said.

"Today, you are the terrorist." His comments

elicited spontaneous applause from other vic-

tims in the courtroom. Others told Tarrant dur-

ing their statements that

he was a coward, a mon-

his impassive facade a

cted accusations of invol-

vement in an alleged atta-

who is in a coma in a

German hospital, a day

after doctors said tests

indicated that he was poi-

soned. The politician's allies say the Kremlin is behind the illness of its most prominent critic,

with some demanding an

investigation into wheth-

er Russian President Vla-

dimir Putin was involved.

olutely cannot be true

and are rather an empty

noise," Kremlin spokesm-

an Dmitry Peskov told

reporters on Tuesday. "We do not intend to take

Peskov saw no grounds

'These accusations abs-

ster, a rat. Tarrant broke their families.

Navalny poisoning

blame just 'empty

noise', says Kremlin

Moscow, Aug. 25: The the condition) is found, Kremlin on Tuesday rejeard if it is determined

ck on Russian opposition an investigation," Peskov leader Alexei Navalny said. Navalny, a politician

gunman a message Coming from Afghanistan, Waziri said, he was

mosque gunman:

'You are the loser'

Christchurch, Aug 25: A couple of times to smirk man who was shot and at survivors when they



IN BRIEF

## **Pakistan arrests** two militants

Lahore: Pakistan's counterterrorism officials have arrested two militants of the banned Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), a splinter terrorist group of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, in the country's Punjab province, the police said on Tuesday. According to the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab Police, an intelligence-ba-sed operation was conducted in Sahiwal city, some 175 kms from here, on Monday. The

terrorists were carrying weapons and explosive material as they had planned to attack the personnel of the law enforcement agencies in the city. The CTD team raided and arrested them, the police said.

#### **Philippines ultra** leader 'killed'

Manila: Abu Sayyaf militants may have staged suicide bo-mbings that killed 14 people to avenge the death of a Filipino leader of the Islamic State group in the southern Philippines following a clash with troops last month, the army chief said Tuesday. Army commanding general Cirilito Sobejana said Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan was wounded in a July 6 gunbattle in a jungle near Patikul town in Sulu province and most likely died a few days later. Troops have been searching for his buried remains, he said. Two Islamic militants blew themselves up in suicide attacks Monday that killed at least 14 people, including soldiers.

## \$424 mn surplus in July: Pak

Islamabad: Cash-strapped Pakistan has shown a surplus of \$424 million in July after posting a deficit of \$100 million in June, the country's central bank has said. The State Bank of Pakistan said "this is the fourth monthly surplus since last October". The SBP said that the strong turnaround in the remittances and exports is achieved "with support from several policy and administrative initiatives taken by the bank and the federal government, the Express Tribune reported. The export of goods increased to \$1.89 billion in July compared to \$1.58 billion in June. It was, however, 14 per cent lower than \$2.22 billion

## **FB blocks group**

export in July 2019.

#### on Thai monarchy

Bangkok: Facebook has blocked in Thailand a group with more than a million members that engages in open discus sion about the Thai monarchy, an institution that is staunchly protected from criticism by strict laws. The Facebook group, "Royalist Marketplace". was blocked late Monday after the social media giant bowed to pressure from the Thai government, Facebook said that it is still available in other places, adding that the co-mpany plans to "legally challenge" the government's request. "After careful review, Facebook has determined that we are compelled to restrict access to content which the Thai government deemed to be illegal," the company said.

## **ACTOR SABA SAHER SHOT** AT, CRITICAL

Kabul, Aug. 25: A roadside bombing killed a police officer while a policewoman and her driver were wounded when unknown attackers opened fire on them in Kabul, said Ferdaws Faramarz, spokesman for the Kabul police chief. The policewomen, Saba Saher, is also a well-known actress, and she was said to be stable.

A wave of attacks across Afghanistan on Tuesday left at least 17 people dead and scores more wounded, officials said, including a Taliban truck bombing that targeted a commando base for Afghan forces. The bomber struck in Balkh province, killing three people, including two Afghan commandos and a civilian. According to Hanif Rezaie, the spokesman for the Afghan army corps in the north, initial military report said at least six commandos and around 35 civilians were wounded in that explosion, which also destroyed or damaged dozens of nearby houses.

In a separate attack in Balkh, gunmen shot dead five people, including former warlord Abdul Raouf, two of his sons ages 10 and 11 and two other men. Also on Tuesday, an attack on a checkpoint of progovernment forces in western Ghor province killed eight troops and wounded five.

# Haley: US not racist, reject **Dem's 'fashion' statement**

Will speak at GOP meet that will renominate Trump as poll candidate

Describing herself as a proud daughter of Indian immigrants who wore a turban and a saree, top Republican politician Nikki Haley has narrated her story to the American voters, urging them to strongly reject the Democ-ratic Party's "fashionable" statement that "America is racist". The 48-year-old former US Ambassador to the United Nations, Haley is the only Indian-American listed so far to be speaking at the Republican National Convention which on Thursday would formally re-nominate President Donald Trump as its candidate for the November 3 presidential election. President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence will be challenged by the Democratic Party's presidential nominee Joe Biden and his Indian-American running mate Senator Ka-Twice elected as the Go-

vernor of South Carolina, Haley said, "In much of the Democratic Party, it's now fashionable to say that America is racist. That is a lie. America is

not a racist country."
"This is personal for me.
I am the proud daughter of Indian immigrants. They came to America and settled in a small southern town. My father wore a turban. My mother wore a sari. I was a brown girl in a black and white world," she said on Monday at the mostly-virtual four-day convention during which she fully backed President Trump and his policies.

Born as Nimrata Randhawa in South Carolina, she Haley said. is the daughter of Ajit



Delegates cheer as US President Donald Trump (L) and Vice President Mike Pence stand on stage during the first day of the Republican National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina on Monday.

#### Singh Randhawa and Raj Kaur Randhawa, who emi-Trump lauds India after grated from Amritsar in Punjab. Haley said her family faced discrimina-American pastor released tion and hardship but her parents never gave in to grievance and hate. "My mom built a succes-

Washington, Aug. 25: US White House along with President Donald Trump has appreciated India for listening to his request to release an American pastor who was arrested last October on charges of carrying \$40,000 of undeclared currency. Tennessee pastor Bryan Nerren, who was released by India after intervention from Trump this May, attended a round

several other American citizens who were released from overseas abductions and detentions.

'India responded very well to my request. Appreciate that," Trump said as he appeared in a taped meeting with a group of US citizens who were abducted or detained overseas and the Trump Administrtable with the President in the Oval Office of the ation helped them to return home. The taped round-

ng the first night of the four-day Republican National Convention on Monday. In his brief remarks, Nerren explained that he had been arrested by the Indian officials while travelling in the country.

Nerren from the Interna tional House of Prayer Ministries was arrested in Bagdogra, West Bengal

## False plasma data: US health official sorry

Washington, Aug. 25: Dr Stephen Hahn, the commissioner of the US Food and Drug Administration, apologised Monday after misrepresenting a key statistic on how effective blood plasma is for treating Covid-19 when announcing an emergency approval measure. The US on Sunday issued emergency approval for plasma taken from recovered Coronavirus patients, so that more people

London, Aug. 25: Swed-

ish teen climate change

campaigner Greta Thunb-

erg on Tuesday threw her weight behind postponing the NEET and the JEE

exams in India in view of

the Coronavirus, saying it

is "deeply unfair" that students are asked to appear in the tests during

Several students and

political leaders across

the country, including Co-

ngress leader Rahul Gan-

dhi, West Bengal Chief

Minister Mamata Baneri-

ee and DMK President

M.K. Stalin, have urged

the central government to

postpone the examination

until the spread of the Covid-19 was brought

Voicing her support to

the calls for the defer-

ment of the key national examinations, Thunberg took to Twitter, saying it

is deeply unfair for the

students. "It's deeply unf-

air that students of India

are asked to sit national

exams during the Covid-

19 pandemic and while

millions have also been

impacted by the extreme

floods. I stand with their

call to #PostponeJEE\_-NEETinCOVID," she said

Thunberg, 17, has beco-

me a leading voice for

action on climate change,

inspiring millions of stu-

dents to join protests around the world. She was

named Time magazine's

Person of the Year for

2019. Two years ago, she

started missing lessons

most Fridays to protest outside the Swedish Parli-

ament building, in what

turned out to be the begi-

nning of a huge environ-

mental movement.

in a tweet.

the pandemic.

under control.

imental treatment.

But Hahn and other senior health officials came under fire from experts after repeating a claim made by President Donald Trump that blood plasma from recovered Covid-19 patients reduced mortality rates by 35 percent. 'What that means is —

sful business. My dad taught 30 years at a histor-

ically Black college. And

the people of South Carolina chose me as their first

minority and first female

governor," she said. "Am-

erica is a story that's a

work in progress. Now is

the time to build on that

progress, and make Amer-

ica even freer, fairer, and

and if the data continue to pan out — 100 people who are sick with Covid-19, 35 would have been saved can get access to the exper- because of the administra-

THE JEE (Main) is

scheduled to be held

and 6, while the JEE

September 27. The

NEET will be held on

The chorus for postpon-

ing the various examina-

tions, including NEET

his party demanded that

the NEET and the JEE be

deferred. According to the leftist All India Students

Association (AISA), over

4,200 students observed

the day-long hunger

strike at their respective

home demanding that

CBSE compartment exa-

ms of Classes 10 and 12 be

cancelled and entrance exams such as the UGC-NET, CLAT, NEET and JEE be postponed. Aspi-

rants appear in the JEE

for admission into the pre-

mier engineering colleges

and the NEET for under-

graduate medical courses.

eduled to be held between

September 1 and 6, while

the JEE (Advanced) on

September 27. The NEET

will be held on September

13. With 60,975 people test-

ing positive for the Coro-

navirus infection in a day,

India's Covid-19 tally on

Tuesday rose to 31,67,323.

The JEE (Main) is sch-

(Advanced) on

September 13.

between September 1

Postpone NEET,

JEE exams: Greta

tion of plasma," Hahn changer in the fight said Sunday, after Trump against the pandemic had called it "a tremendous number". Health secretary Alex Azar added: "I just want to emphasise this point, because I don't want you to gloss over this number. We dream in drug development of something like a 35 percent mortality reduction. This is a major advance in the treatment of patients. This is a major advance Such a reducti-

but the statistic is false.

The officials said these results came from a study of 35,000 patients conducted by Mayo Clinic, but Dr Scott Wright, the study's leader, told AFP it did not come from his institution's research. He said he believed it might be an "integrated analysis" the FDA had arrived at by looking both Mayo's on would indeed be a game work and other studies.

ly Miller later tweeted that 35 percent referred to the relative difference in mortality risk between those patients in Mayo's study who received a high level of antibodies against those who received a low level of antibodies.

FDA spokeswoman Emi-

"I have been criticized for remarks I made Sunday night about the benefits of convalescent plasma," said Hann

#### for launching a criminal investigation into Navalny's condition, saying that it could have been Kenosha protesters, cops triggered by a variety of clash again after man shot

it seriously.

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUGUST 25 Nawaz Sharif should be immediately.

dent Maryam Nawaz.

The meeting of the federal cabinet was held in Islamabad with Prime Minister Imran Khan in chair. During the meeting, matters pertaining to the country's current Nawaz will not be all political situation came to leave the country.

discussed bringing back PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif to Pakistan and the recent political activities of party vice presi-Federal Minister for Water Resources Faisal Vaw-

es said that the meeting

da while expressing concern for failing to arrest Maryam Nawaz, said that she should have been arrested for what she did outside the National Accountability Bureau office, adding that no matter what happens, Maryam Nawaz will not be allowed

## UNDER | WATER |

## Officials yet to reveal why vessel came so close to the island

## Ship behind Mauritius oil spill sunk

the dispute.

Port Louis, Aug. 25: The broken stem of a Japan-ese-owned ship which ran aground causing a devastating oil spill in pristine waters off Mauritius, has been successfully sunk in

the open ocean. Nagashiki Shipping, which owns the MV Wakashio, said on Tuesday (Aug 25) it had completed scuttling of the front part of the vessel at sea on Monday as instructed by local authorities.

The bulk carrier ran aground on a coral reef off the Indian Ocean island on Jul 25 and began leaking

oil two weeks later, prompting a race against the clock to pump all the fuel off the bulk carrier before it broke in two.

The operation was successful and two tugboats last week began towing the larger, forward section of the vessel some 15km out into the open ocean, where it has been sunk to a depth of\_3,180m.

The smaller section remains wedged on the reef where the shipwreck

The planned sinking of the stem (forward) section of the casualty has been

completed and at around 3.30pm was no longer visible on the sea surface,' read a statement on Monday from the Mauritius crisis committee.

Greenpeace opposed the plan, warning last week that sinking the vessel would "risk biodiversity and contaminate the ocean with large quantities of heavy metal toxins".

More than 1,000 tonnes of oil spilled into the pristine waters that have long been a major draw for honeymooners, and contain precious mangroves and coral reefs. Last week a team of

British scientists arrived to co-ordinate an impact assessment on what damage has been done to the island and how to help the eco-system recover.

International experts from Japan and France are also on the ground assisting the archipelago nation in the wake of the

Senior British marine monitoring scientist Dr Sue Ware told AFP the team would help "determine the footprint of the

oil both on the shoreline

and ... whether it has man-

aged to reach any areas of

impacted coral reefs and different marine species.

She said efforts by Mauritius to place booms in the water appeared to have been successful in preventing oil from reaching the protected Blue Bay

wetlands area. The captain of the ship and his second-in-command were arrested last Tuesday. Officials have yet to reveal why the ship, which was making its way from Singapore to Brazil,

came so close to the island. — Agencies



The 29-year-old was hospitalised in serious condition. The shooting drew anew earlier Monday after

over the shooting of a PoC by police spilled into the streets of Kenosha for a

second night Monday, with police again firing

tear gas at hundreds of

protesters who defied a

curfew, threw bottles and

shot fireworks at law

ocratic Gov Tony Evers, who also called out 125 members of the National Guard on Monday after protesters set cars on fire, smashed windows and clashed with officers in riot gear the previous night. Police first fired tear gas Monday about 30 minutes after the 8 p.m. curfew took effect to disperse pro-testers who chanted, "No testers who chanted,

truck near the courthouse. Tensions had flared

a news conference with Kenosha Mayor John Antarmian, originally to be held in a park, was moved inside the city's public safety building.

Hundreds of protesters rushed to the building and a door was snapped off its hinges before police in riot gear pepper-sprayed the crowd, which included a photographer from The Associated Press. Police in the former auto manufac-turing centre of 100,000 people midway between Milwaukee and Chicago said they were responding to a call about a domestic dispute when they encountered Blake on Sunday. They did not say whether Blake was armed or why police opened fire, they released no details on

causes, and determining one should come first. "If and made no comment. a substance (that caused **Imran wants Nawaz** back immediately

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday while directing to review the legal aspects said that former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) supremo

brought back to Pakistan



## Chronicle **26 AUGUST 2020**

## Restore democracy to reinvent Congress

he meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) held on Monday evoked only the usual interest among the people, party workers and in political circles. The CWC, once one of the most powerful and representative bodies in the pre- and post-Independent India, has ceased to make news when it meets. There are two important reasons for it. One, the body filled with nominated people reflected the loss of democratic moorings in the party and symbolised the sycophancy that runs in the organisation from top to bottom; the last proper election to the CWC was conducted in 1991. Second, the committee with its elected president used to control the affairs of the nation as the ruling or a major Opposition party at the Centre and in most of the states; it no more holds such power strings now. It has been reduced to such a position that its leader in the Lok Sabha cannot legitimately lay claim to the post of the leader of the Opposition for he lacks the support of one tenth of the members of the House. The party has only four Chief Ministers now.

An elected leadership is a pre-condition if the party were to regain its legitimacy and popularity motion the process aimed at that

The sudden interest in the CWC meeting has its origin in the letter 23 senior leaders wrote to the party leadership seeking a change at the helm. The letter created heartburn in the circles close to the party high command but the party will do well to seize the opportunity the and the Congress
president must set in
motion the process

letter-writers have offered. It is highly
unlikely that they will launch an open
revolt against Sonia Gandhi who has been retained as president until a new incumbent arrives or former president

Rahul Gandhi, though they have succeeded in stopping Mr Gandhi from returning as party chief for now. Ms Gandhi who has said she has no plans to initiate disciplinary action against them must do more and accommodate them in the new committee which will be formed to help her run the party. Ms Gandhi must resist the temptation of the coterie around her which would want every crisis to end with a declaration that the "hands of the leadership must be strengthened". Such self-serving exercises are unlikely to help the party.

An elected leadership is a pre-condition if the party were to regain its

legitimacy and popularity and the Congress president must set in motion the process aimed at that; the easy way out of foisting string-pullers under the garb of "consensus" must be jettisoned. The AICC has been talking of making itself an elected body for decades, and this crisis gives it a golden opportunity, what with Ms Gandhi, who commands respect among all sections of the party, at the helm. It is important that the grand old party of Indian politics reinvents and renovates itself and makes itself a worthy Opposition party this nation deserves. Shortcuts and courtroom dramas are not the way to achieve it; returning to basic democratic practices is.

## No state for journalists

hat was the egregious misdeed of 42-year-old television reporter Ratan Singh for which he was beaten up by villagers at the home of the panchayat head in Ballia, eastern UP, before being shot dead? Why was there no deterrence of note in the face of this flagrant crime? Instead, the police, who should be in the dock for birthing this culture of impunity by repeatedly failing to do their job, are now busy playing down the murder as one that occurred as a result of a property dispute, a conjecture denied by none other than the family of the victim.

Sadly, this is the second murder of a journalist in about a month's time in the state of Uttar Pradesh. In July, Vikram Joshi was shot in Ghaziabad for reporting the harassment of his niece to police who waited and then effectively watched the crime take place. And in June, Shubham Mani Tripathi, a newspaper reporter from Kanpur, was shot in Unnao at the behest of a local real estate and sand lord after his reports led to the demolition of an illegal structure and he shared it on Facebook.

Tripathi's killing coincided with the Varanasi police's hounding of Scroll's executive editor for reporting that people in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency had gone hungry during the Covid-19 lock-down. This time, the police acted with alacrity. Indeed, 60 journalists from all over India, including some prominent names, have been arrested in this period, or booked or been confronted with other tactics of intimidation for simply doing something the police aren't — which is their own job of reporting on the pandemic and how the people have suffered through it. As the lockdown and recession affect millions of jobs nationwide, jour-

nalists, too, have come under financial stress and distress. But some of them have continued to face down both the virus and crime, as also an uncooperative and very often vindictive government, in order to report, investigate and be the first to get the news. The government, in its turn, has clanged kitchen utensils in their honour, and then promptly turned a

blind eye even as police blithely brushed crimes under the carpet. The headline, therefore, is an ironic one. As for the police-mafia-state crackdown on news and commentary, it is not completely successful.

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Kozhikode: Door No 6/1002 E, First Floor of City Mall, Opp. YMCA, Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001,

Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08



## Audit service is unhappy over Murmu as CAG

he appointment of former lieutenant governor of Jammu & Kashmir G.C. Murmu as India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has not been welcomed by the Indian Audit & Accounts Service (IA&AS) officers. It is being seen as yet another instance of the dominance of the IAS cadre over other all-India services. Not that it's been known to make any difference to this Sarkar, once it's made

Vinod Rai, a 1972-batch IAS officer. Apparently, the last IA&AS officer to become CAG was A. Baksi whose

tenure ended back in 1978. Since then, CAGs have been from the tribe of the "heaven-born", but clearly the IA&AS officers who have lost the race to become CAG are unwilling to accept the IAS "outsiders". Will the current resentment subside "naturally" or will Mr Murmu face rough weath-

#### **ASTHANA IS NEW BSF CHIEF**

Two years after his highly publicized ouster from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), its former special director Rakesh Asthana has been named director general of the Border Security Force (BSF).

Interestingly, he continues to hold additional charge of director general, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Checking narcotics smug-

the BSF, which patrols the borders, Mr Asthana as DG is back in a position where he can play a more

Mr Asthana has served both in the state government and at the Centre, where he served twice in the CBI. The 1984-batch IPS officer from the Gujarat cadre also did a low-profile stint at the Bureau of

Civil Aviation and Security. At the CBI, he was involved in investigating many high-profile cases. During his first stint in the agency, he investigated the fodder scam, which resulted in the conviction of former Bihar chief minister Lalu Yadav. He also achieved signal success in building a watertight case for the extradition of escaped liquor baron Vijay Mallya from the UK. He led CBI's case in the UK courts. In Gujarat, he served in crucial posts such as Vadodara's police commissioner

under then chief minister Narendra Modi.

this time.

TELL-ALL TALES

The arrival of "tell-all" books by Viral Acharya and Urjit Patel has whetted the curiosity of many who are looking to find some skeletons

Both economists did stints at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and left in more or less similar circumstances - before the end of their terms. While Mr Patel was RBI Governor, Mr Acharya is a former deputy governor of RBI, who quit

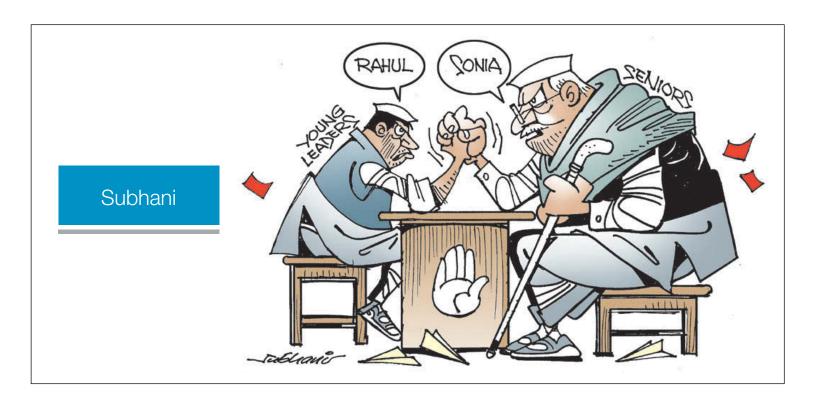
According to Mr Acharya, Mr Patel quit because of several attempts to undermine the autonomy of the bank by the government. It was something that was widely discussed in the media at the time. However, Mr Patel had claimed that he had resigned for "personal rea-

lated that one reason he disagreed with the government was on the issue of parting with the central bank's reserves. However, he seems to have mended fences now as he has been appointed as Chairman of the National Institute of Public

sons", although it was widely specu-

Finance and Policy. Mr Acharya, too, quit after a series of spats with government officials. His book was published close on the heels of Mr Patel's own book which provides a glance into how India's bankruptcy code was weakened by several stakeholders within the broader banking system. Mr Acharya has argued that numerous policies "regressed" the economic climate in the country while he was deputy governor between early January 2017 and mid-July 2019.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's



# Dawood, D-Company & Pakistan's terror links



Sved Ata Hasnain

n the early 1970s the name Haji Mastan Action to (FATF) much fear in India. He was among the early smuggler kings who lived by crime and exploited criminal netgold, some drugs, electronics and liquor, which mainly formed contraband those India's agencies. days. There were vast smuggling networks to evade the authorities, but their main effect was a marginal negative impact on the economy and a few inter-gang shootouts. These were people who did what they

and the power that went with it. Smuggler kings usually invested in the urban property market. As India progressed, these holdings began to emerge as virtual gold. The Bollywood film Deewar captured this very well in 1974. It wasn't until 1993 that crime syndicates involved in borders went across beyond the ordinary. They got involved with terrorism, as Mumbai saw in the 1993 bombings, when a series of 12 bomb explosions on March 12, 1993 resulted in 257 fatalities and 1,400 injuries. The bombings were ascribed to Dawood Ibrahim, leader of a Mumbai-based international crime syndicate "D-Company". Dawood was assisted by subordinates Tiger Memon and Yakub D-Company Memon. became a well-known name across India as it deeply involved itself with Pakistan-sponsored transnational proxy terrorism in India. Dawood Ibrahim, who had lived in the UAE since 1986, found a safe haven in Karachi too. Since then, he has been behind several high-profile terror acts in different parts of India outside Kashmir. He is listed as an "international terrorist" by the UN and the United States and carries a bounty of

did for self-enrichment,

The recent Financial Task pressure on Pakistan has led to the partially admitted presence of Dawood in Karachi. However, his networks continue to flourish in India despite the marked success of intelligence

What is the linkage between crime syndicates and transnational terrorists? To comprehend this, take the example of Pakistan. In 1989 it chose to target India through what is called asymmetric or sub-conventional Terrorism forms the core of this, with many other

domains forming part of

the low-intensity conflict

spectrum. Pakistan chose to launch its strategy in Kashmir and over a period of time established an efficient network of local overground workers from different segments of society. The network covered civil lawyers, businessmen, politicians, media persons, members of the clergy, faculty and students of universities, and much more. Due to the prevailing sub-nationalist trends in J&K it was not difficult doing this. However, Pakistan's strategy desired extension of the hand of proxy conflict to hinterland areas and important cities of India to give substance to its chosen strategy of "war by a thou-sand cuts". It was not easy doing this. Finding reliable proxies, creating networks, embedding sleeper agents, transporting warlike material, having access to large scale finances and creating empathy in some elements of society is never a simple set of tasks. It takes years to build these through networks. In search for the means to take the proxy war into the rest of India, Pakistan got a shot in the

arm with the destruction

of the Babri Masjid in

December 1992 and the

communal riots that fol-

lowed; both acting as facilitators for the extension of its strategy. Its target was not difficult to choose, as Mumbai offered itself due to its strategic significance as India's financial capital. Mayhem by violence would disrupt investments, lead to serious suspicions of the minority community, create cleavages in society and cultivate a resultant trust deficit that would assist Pakistan to exploit at will. However, the other major consideration for the selection of Mumbai as the target was the pre-existence of criminal networks, with the D-Company leading them. A foreign hand could ride on these net-

works for a cost. With networks on its side, Pakistan thus had available human resources, weapons, finances, communications and local knowledge. With explo-sives supplanted, it was a ticking bomb. Criminal networks got their first major experience of terror that did not differentiate between targets: every incidental target is justified in the rationale of terrorists, especially those with ideological

orientation. People of all faiths died or were maimed in the acts on March 12, 1993 and thereafter. Dawood Ibrahim, who evaded the hand of Indian law, managed to create a reported network of 5,000 criminal elements with an annual turnover of \$2 billion. The D-Company is suspected of having provided the logistics for the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba's terror attack on Mumbai on November 26, 2008, besides a host of other attacks in 2002, 2006 and 2011. A total of 600 people died in these various attacks in Mumbai. With

each event, Dawood With international success against the ISIS and Al Qaeda, a renewed and energetic Indian campaign to nail **Dawood Ibrahim is** the call of the hour so that the FATF can effectively take note and place Pakistan on notice

Ibrahim's criminal-cumterrorist profile enhanced a couple of notches and he has been known to keep the company of international terrorist outfits like Al Qaeda and the Taliban. In 2006, India submitted a list of 38 most wanted terrorists, including Dawood Ibrahim, to Pakistan, but the latter continued to play a hedging game knowing that the D-Company and its head was an invaluable asset for it.

With the FATF investigation against Pakistan, India in recent months has mounted pressure at the UN. On August 6, 2020, India highlighted the nexus between international terrorism and organised crime, quoting the case of UN-designatterrorist Dawood Ibrahim, who has been living in Pakistan ever since his involvement in the 1993 Mumbai blasts. India went on to state: "If the international community can successfully defeat the Islamic State, a similar focus on addressing threats posed by proscribed individuals and entities such as Dawood Ibrahim and his D-Company, the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad will

serve humankind well." The continuous Indian diplomatic campaign to highlight Pakistan-sponsored criminal and ter-rorist links which have acted as its proxies in India is apparently bearing fruit, with Pakistan reportedly admitting the existence of Dawood Ibrahim in Karachi. However, Pakistan is a past master at subterfuge and evasion of responsibility. Its admission on one day and denial the next is part of an old strategy which it continues to play with the FATF. With international success against the ISIS and Al Qaeda, a renewed and energetic Indian campaign to nail Dawood Ibrahim is the call of the hour so that the FATF can effectively take note and place Pakistan on notice to deliver or perish on the blacklist. But only time can tell if it will happen

The writer, a retired lieutenant-general, is a former GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps

## **CONG TROUBLES**

Your editorial 'Letter a wake up call to Congress on its future' (DC, Aug. 25) hits the nail on the head. Why the Congress is not able to demonstrate to the people that it can be a credible alternative to the BJP is amply evident from the way Monday's CWC meeting was conducted. Instead of discussing the contents of the letter which implores the leadership to take steps to revitalise the party, what they thought was important was to deliberate for close to eight hours on its timing!

L. Prabhakar Secunderabad

#### **ONLINE SCHOOLS**

I am 84, a retired teacher. I request the government to providing one hour daily internet class followed by short homework on the school's website. Sundays may be used for conducting online weekly exams as a revision recall. The poor may be given free internet and cellphones or tablet computers.

P.V. Padmavathi

Secunderabad

## **SUBHANI'S CARTOONS**

Every day, we look forward to the cartoons by Subhani.. He says it all in a few words and sometimes even without any words. Hats off to such talent. Monday's cartoon on the Edit Page was yet another good piece of work. The Counterpoint cartoons are no less. Thanks for making us laugh and think.

Pooja Dinakar Hyderabad



HYDERABAD, August 25. Mr. K. Brahmananda Reddi, Chief Minister, will leave by plane for Japan from Calcutta on August 31 on a 15-day visit at the invitation of the Japanese Government.

Mr. Brahmananda Reddy will be accompanied by Mrs. Raghavamma Brahmananda Reddi his Security Officer, Mr. S. Seethapathi Naidu, Mr. Sushil Kumar, managing director of the State Industrial Development Corporation and Mr. Maddi Sudarshanam, a well known industrialist of the State.

The Chief Minister and party will visit the Expo-70 and will also visit Hong Kong, Osaka, Tokyo, Bangkok and Singapore. The party will return to Hyderabad on September 16.





Sources say that in becoming CAG, Mr Murmu who is from the 1985-batch Gujarat cadre of the IAS, has superseded at least six IA&AS officers. But he is not the first IAS officer to become the nation's top auditor. Mr Murmu's immediate predecessor, Rajiv Mehrishi, was from the 1978 IAS cadre, and he too had followed Shashikant Sharma, who belonged to the 1976 batch. Many would also remember CAG

\$25 million on his head.

er? We'll have to wait and see.

gling remains a big concern and in active role.

tumble out.

six months before his tenure ended in 2019.

multiply the effect.

KARIMNAGAR | WEDNESDAY | 26 AUGUST 2020

**INDICATORS** 0.12 38,843.88 11472.30 0.05 Nifty 50 S&P 5003 3,428.93 -0.07 74.33 -0.01 Dollar (₹) -0.02 Pound Sterling (₹) 97.27 -0.02 87.83 0.37 Gold (10gm)\* (₹) 51,081▼188 Brent crude (\$/bbl)\* 45.92 0.79 -0.065 IN 10-Yr bond yield 6.157 US 10-Yr T-bill yield\* 0.700 0.054

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

## LIC Housing rises eight per cent after Q1 results

Shares of LIC Housing Finance Ltd (LICHFL) on Tuesday closed with 8 per cent gains after the company reported a 34 per cent jump in its net profit for the quarter ending June. The stock rose by 8.06 per cent to close at ₹299 on the BSE. On the NSE, it jumped 8 per cent to close at ₹298.95. In volume terms, 21.07 lakh shares were traded on the BSE and over 4 crore shares on the NSE during the day.

## Flipkart to shift to 100% Electric Vehicles by 2030



Walmart-owned Flipkart on Tuesday said it will transition completely to the usage of electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030 as part of its sustainability efforts, and has joined the Climate Group's global electric mobility initiative, EV100. EV100 brings together companies committed to accelerating the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and making electric transport the new normal by

## Satyam investor relations head fined by Sebi

Sebi on Tuesday levied a fine of ₹10 lakh on Satyam Computer Services Ltd's head of investor relations for indulging in insider trading in the firm's scrip. The head of investor relations of Satyam Computer Services Ltd, T.A.N. Murti, violated Prohibition of Insider Trading norms, Sebi order said adding that he had dealt in shares of SCSL while in possession of unpublished price sensitive information.

## **ICICI Bank uses** satellite data to assess agri loans

For the first time in domestic banking, ICICI Bank is deploying satellite data to power farm credit assessment, which it claims will reduce cost for both farmers as well as the lender. The second-largest private sector lender on Tuesday said it has been piloting the project in a few select villages for the past two years and is extending the same to 500 villages in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat now.



# RBI stops printing ₹2,000 notes Jack Ma's Ant No ₹2,000 note printed in 2019-20; ₹2,000 notes in circulation are on decline No ₹2,000 note printed in 2019-20; ₹2,000 notes in circulation are on decline offers world's

MUMBAI, AUG. 25

Without announcing a formal demonetisation, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appears to be phasing out ₹2,000 currency notes from circulation if one goes by data published in the RBI Annual Report 2019-20, which was released by the central

bank on Tuesday. In its report, the RBI said the ₹2,000 denominated currency note, which was launched after the demonetisation November 2016, has not been printed in financial

ber of ₹2,000 currency notes in circulation is also gradually coming down since 2018.

2018, there were 33,632 lakh pieces of ₹2,000 currency notes in circulation. This number came to 32,910 lakh pieces at end-March 2019 and further

down to 27,398 lakh pieces at end-March 2020. The ₹2,000 denominated notes constituted 2.4 per cent of the total volume of notes at the end of March 2020, down from three per cent at the end of March

2019 and 3.3 per cent at the

VERY CLEARLY without demonetisation. the RBI maybe phasing out ₹2,000 currency At the end of March notes. We are not getting any new supply

of ₹2,000 notes.

**SENIOR BANKER** 

end of March 2018. In value terms also, the share has came down to 22.6 per cent at the end of March 2020, from 31.2 per at the end of March 2019

and 37.3 per cent at the end of March 2018. The

share of ₹2,000 notes was

major focus was on remonetising the economy. On the other hand, the circulation of currency notes of denomination of ₹500 and ₹200 has gone up substantially, both in

beginning 2018. Bankers believe that the RBI is gradually with-drawing ₹2,000 notes from the circulation by not

terms of volume and value over the three years

printing notes afresh. Unlike demonetisation. the method would gradually withdraw the notes while allowing them to remain a lender tender.

**SHAKY GROUNDS** 

THE RBI'S ANNUAL REPORT SHOWS THAT THE INDIAN ECONOMY

WAS ON A SHAKY GROUND EVEN BEFORE THE CORONAVIRUS

**DEALT A SEVERE BLOW.** 

7.5 per cent in 2019-20.

67.5 per cent in 2018-19.

Estimates for gross

tax revenue in 2019-20

were brought down by

₹ 4.51 lakh crore

vis-a-vis budget

estimates.

The general government fiscal deficit of 25

states and the central government has increased from 5.4 per cent of GDP in 2018-19

to 6.5 per cent in 2019-20. The revised figure

Outstanding liabilities rose to 70.4 per cent

is expected to deteriorate further to about

of GDP in 2019-20 (revised estimate) from

A senior banker told Deccan Chronicle, "Very clearly without demonetisation, the RBI maybe phasing out ₹2000 currency notes. We are not getting any new supply of ₹2,000 notes.

A former banker said, "There may be some peo-ple who are hoarding ₹2,000 currency notes but the number may not be large. Banks are not reissuing ₹2,000 notes; maybe banks have been told by the RBI not to reissue ₹2,000 notes. It is also easy calibrate the ATMs with lower currency notes such as ₹500.'

On a year-on-

year basis, direct

tax collection has

declined by 7.7 per

cent in 2019-20 as

against a 13.4 per

cent increase in

Indirect tax

growth has slowed

2018-19.

to 1.7 per

cent from

a year

2.9 per cent

# biggest IPO Hong Kong, Aug. 25: Billionaire Jack Ma's Ant Group filed for an initial public offering (IPO) in Hong Kong and Shanghai

to bankroll its expansion in financial services and bolster its lead as China's largest online payments platform. The Hangzhou-based company will issue no less than 10 per cent in new

shares of its total capital, according to its filing with the Shanghai exchange. Ant generated 72.5 billion yuan (\$10.5 billion) in revenue in the first half, after full-year sales of 120.6 billion yuan in 2019, it said. The firm posted a profit of 21.2 billion yuan in the first half.

The crown jewel of the sprawling Alibaba empire, Ant has been accelerating its evolution into an online mall for everything from loans and travel services to food delivery, in a bid to win back shoppers lost to Tencent Holdings Ltd. With data from a billion

users of its Alipay app at its back, Ant is pushing broadly into financial services, delivering technology such as artificial intelligence, robo investing and lending platforms.

The simultaneous listing could mark one of the biggest debuts in years, and even top Saudi Aramco's record \$29 billion IPO, a person familiar has said. The firm is targeting a valuation of about \$225 billion, based on an IPO of about \$30 billion if markets are favourable, people familiar with the matter have

The company will use the proceeds to expand cross-border payments and enhance its research and development capabili-

WITH DATA from a billion users of its Alipay app at its back, Ant is pushing broadly into financial services, delivering technology such as artificial intelligence, robo

investing and lending

platforms.

ties, according to the filing, which didn't provide a share price range or the amount it intends to raise

Unlike Chinese tech giants such as Alibaba Group Holding Ltd., Ant decided against listing in the US at a time of increased scrutiny by the Trump administration of Chinese companies and warnings to US endowment funds to offload their stakes in US-listed Chinese businesses.

Ant's Shanghai listing marks a victory for the city's exchange, and is part of an effort by China to establish its own capital markets as tensions with the United States

escalate. Alibaba is Ant's largest shareholder, with a 33 per cent stake. Hangzhou Junao, an entity that is owned by key Ant and Alibaba executives, owns 20.66 per cent, while Hangzhou Junhan, which holds shares on behalf of Ant employees, owns a 29.86 per cent  $-Bar{loomberg}$ 

## Difficult to gauge Covid impact: RBI

New Delhi, Aug. 25: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday said it is difficult to accurately impact of COVID-19 pandemic as the dynamics are

still evolving.
"Covid-19's epidemiological dynamics are still rapidly evolving in India, rendering difficult an accurate assessment of its full macroeconomic effects," RBI said in its annual report.

It said government consumption will have to fuel demand till the economy comes out of the Covid-19 shock and regains pre-Covid-19 momentum.

Private consumption, which has lost its discretionary elements across the board, particularly transport services, hospitality, recreation and cul-tural activities, will come in later as "behavioural restraints may prevent the normalisation of demand for these activities", RBI said in the annual report.

Going forward, it said, "government consumption is expected to continue pandemic-proofing of demand, and private consumption is expected to lead the recovery when it takes hold, with non-discretionary spending leading the way until a durable increase in disposable incomes enables discretionary spending to catch up.

The RBI's survey for the month of July indicates that consumer confidence fell to an all-time low, with a majority of respondents reporting pessimism relating to the econo-mic situation, employment, infla-

## Bank frauds double to ₹1.85 lakh cr in 1 year

**FALAKNAAZ SYED** MUMBAI, AUG. 25

Bank frauds of ₹1 lakh and above have more than doubled in the previous year to ₹1.85 lakh crore from ₹71,543 crore in 2018the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in its Annual Report 2019-20 released on Tuesday. The number of such

cases increased by 28 per cent to 8,707 in 2019-20 from 6,799 in 2018-19 said the RBI report.

"Frauds have been predominantly occurring in the loan portfolio (advances category), both

NIPPON INDIA

RAISES ₹720CR

FROM FIRST NFO

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD** 

Nippon India Mutual

Fund has collected ₹720

crore through its first

new fund offer (NFO)

after the rebranding of its

fund house. The NFO

which was conducted dig-

itally and saw a large par-

ticipation with over 80,000

Nippon India Multi

Asset Fund is a unique

fund which allows invest-

ors to take exposure to

four distinct asset classes

eign equity, commodities

The NFO closed on

This was the first open

ended actively-managed

NFO after the brand change, launched under

Nippon India Mutual

Fund. The overwhelming

response strongly reflects

our strong distribution

capabilities, sound digital

infrastructure and trust

in newly established brands," said Saugata

Chatterjee, co-chief busi-

ness officer, Nippon India

spread across 370 loca-

tions invested in the NFO

through both digital &

offline mode. The fund

also received 25,000 SIP

applications," it said.

Over 80,000 investors

Mutual Fund.

August 21, 2020 and would

reopen for subscription

from September 2, 2020.

and fixed income.

domestic equity, for-

MUMBAI, AUG, 25

applications.

in terms of number and value. There was a concentration of large value credit-related frauds constituting 76 per cent of the total amount reported as frauds during 2019-20. Incidents relating to other areas of banking, like offbalance sheet and forex transactions, fell in 2019-20," said the RBI said in its report.

However, the date of occurrence of these frauds are spread over several previous years and are accounted for in the financial year when they are reported.

New Delhi, Aug. 25: The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) has pro-

posed to revive the Indian

economy by exploiting

potential of around ₹40

lakh crore in clean energy projects over the next 10

vear through government

policy interventions but

TERI has released a dis-

cussion paper on 'A Fiscally Responsible Green Stimulus' to revive the

Indian economy by creat-

ing demand and jobs with

policy and regulatory

interventions using mini-

mal government spend-

minimum public

## RBI foresees higher food prices despite surplus crop

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, AUG. 25

The country's headline inflation is expected to firm up further in the coming months largely due to disruptions in food and manufactured items' supply chains, the RBI said in its annual report for 2019-20.

In the same report, the central bank also claims that surplus foodgrain management nas become a major challenge for the

One hand, the RBI said headline inflation picked up strongly during the closing months of 2019-20 and the short-term outlook for food inflation has turned uncertain. On the other hand, the RBI claims that the total production of foodgrains has

\$540 billion), spread over

TERI suggested to incen-

tivise cleaner transport,

which has the investment

potential of ₹1.6 lakh

It suggested to subsidise

fleet modernisation of existing vehicles to BS-VI,

use of electric vehicles and provision of buses for

The Institute has also

pitched for producing ren-

ewable energy from agri-

cultural residues which

this decade by 2030.

crore per annum.

public transport.

• ONE HAND, the RBI said the short-term outlook for food inflation has turned uncertain. On the other hand, the RBI claims that the total production of foodgrains has reached a record 296.65 million tonnes in 2019-20

reached a record 296.65 million tonnes in 2019-20, while total horticulture production — accounting for about 40 per cent gross value added (GVA) in the farm sector — also reached an all-time high

of 320.48 million tonnes India is now among the leading producers of milk, cereals, pulses, vegetables, fruits, cotton, sugarcane, fish, poultry and

livestock in the world. But the RBI claims that disruptions in the supply

government should anno-

viable procurement price

for the next five years for briquettes made from crop

It has also asked for cre-

ating renewable energy

from animal husbandry

waste, which has investment potential of ₹88,000

The study suggested to

introduce a commercially

viable feed-in tariff for

purchase of electricity generated from animal

crore per annum.

a commercially

TERI for ₹40L cr green stimulus

ing, a TERI statement said. The Green Stimulus proposed by the TERI is about ₹40 lakh crore (or

chains of food and manufactured items could amplify sectoral price pressures, thus posing an upside risk to headline

The RBI also stressed on agricultural exports that expose the Indian farmer to international terms of trade and technology; and public and private capital formation in the farm sec-

Experience shows that in periods when the terms remained favourable to agriculture, annual average growth in agricultural GVA exceeded 3 per cent. Otherwise, the main instrument of incentive has been minimum support prices, but the experience has been that price incentives have been costly, inefficient and even distortive, the RBI report added.

husbandry waste (excreta from cattle, poultry, pigs, etc.) by power distribution

The institute also says

that promoting solar generation in rural India has

an investment potential of ₹27 lakh crore. It made a

case for a commercially

viable feed-in tariff for

purchase of electricity generated from rural areas in the kilowatt range by power distribu-

Supporting MSMEs to

become more green and

competitive has savings

potential of ₹15,000 crore every year. — PTI

tion companies.

companies

### **APPLE IN INDIA**

 Apple's first physical store is expected to be opened in Mumbai in 2021. The mobile phone maker is also planning to launch its second Indian store in Bengaluru.



Appie nas aiready assembling handsets in the country through its manufacturing partners Foxconn and Wistron Corp. Its another partner Pegatron Corp. is also planning to set its first plant in India.

## Apple to open online store in India in Sept

Apple Inc is set to open an online store in India next month, Bloomberg News reported on Tuesday, citing a person familiar with

rently sells its products in the country through third-party vendors and ecommerce firms such as Amazon.com Inc and Walmart Inc-owned Flipkart.

store will be ready for operation in time for the festive season that culminates in Diwali, the biggest spending season in the request for comment.

The iPhone maker cur-

The company's online

country, *Bloomberg* said.

Apple did not immedi-

Apple chief executive

officer Tim cook had said here earlier this year that Apple would open its first Indian retail store in 2021. With more than 1 billion

wireless subscribers, of which about a third rely on basic handsets, India provides huge growth prospects for smartphone makers, as well as cheap labor to manufacture the devices.

Apple also assembles some smartphones, including the iPhone 11, at Foxconn and Wistron's plants in two southern Îndian states.

## POST LOCKDOWN

## Lower demand for API and normalisation of operational expenses expected

## Pharma sector's profitability likely to decline

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 25

Pharma, which has been one of the very few sectors in the past quarter, may performance in the coming quarters. While dome-

that have performed well not be able to sustain the sales will improve with lifting of the lockdown, moderation in API demand and normalisation of operational expenses will affect profitability. The healthy performance of Q1 FY21 is attrib-

growth in the API business and lower operating expenses. The API business revenue grew 31 per cent year-on-year basis and 18 per cent q-o-q in Q1FY21 as demand from global and Indian formulation players remained robust, aided by higher opportunities, according to India Ratings and Research. Indian API players bene-

fited due to the thrust on supply chain continuity from customers and better inventory management in view of supply disruptions from China and the run up in the prices of API. Increased stocking by different channels also supported growth.

However, the growth in the API business will taper off in the near term as companies normalise their buying patterns. Ind-Ra also expects a price correction as the sudden demand normalises.

Further, operating expenses, primarily led by the 19 per cent q-o-q decline in the selling expenses, too would normalise. The restricted movement

of medical representatives and other cost savings like lower promotional expenses due to the lockdown led to the operating expenses declining 8 per cent y-o-y and 19 per cent q-o-q in Q1FY21 and had aided profitability.

According to Fitch Ratings, focusing on optimising direct costs and reducing fixed costs, including those related to travel and sales and marketing, helped many companies report resilient margins in Q1FY21.

Post-lockdown, as com-

petitive pressures rise, companies will eventually engagement with prescribers. Though the companies had cut some expenses with manpower rationalisation expense curtailment, the overall sustainable cost reduction is unlikely to exceed 10-20 per cent finds Ind-Ra.

However, Fitch Ratings believes that sales will rise after a gradual easing of the lockdown measures that caused disruptions across most markets in

April-June. The gradual easing has led to a rise in doctor visits and elective procedures since May in key markets. This will benefit sales, particularly

in acute therapy areas.

Nevertheless, sustained price erosion in the US generic pharmaceutical market continues to weigh on profitability.

"Focus on conserving cash by limiting capex and R&D spending in the near term will support their financial flexibility in the current environment, finds Fitch.





SHORT TAKES

## **Man U captain to**

be tried for crime

Thessaloniki, Greece: The trial of Manchester United captain Harry Maguire on charges of "assault". "bodily harm". "verbal abuse" and "attempted bribery" opened on Tuesday in the criminal court on the Greek island of Syros, according to a judicial source.

According to some British and Greek media on the spot, Maguire's lawyers raised procedural issues which could lead to the trial being postponed.

The international defender was not present, but was simultaneously named in Gareth Southgate's England squad for matches against Iceland and Denmark next month. Maguire's lawyers told local media that he had left the Cyclades last week. He could face a maximum

prison sentence of seven years, Greek radio station Skai said. The 80 million (88 million euros) defender was arrested late on Thursday after a fight with another group at a night-

club in Mykonos. Greek media reported that the fight started when someone in the other group hurt Maguire's

## **Ronaldinho out**

after five months

Asuncion, Paraguay: Retired Brazilian football star Ronaldinho was released from house arrest after spending five months detained in Paraguay for entering the country with a false passport. Paraguayan judge Gustavo

Amarilla handed down a sus-

pended sentence of two years in prison for Ronaldinho and his brother Roberto de Assis Moreira, and granted their release. The brothers will also have to pay a fine of \$200,000 between the two of them. Both were arrested last March for possession and use of false Paraguayan passports with which they entered the country to conduct business activities.

The retired soccer star was earlier released from a highsecurity jail in Paraguay but ordered to serve house arrest at a luxury hotel while he was investigated.

Ronaldinho will be able to return to Brazil immediately. Defense attorneys Tarek Tuma and Alcides Cceres said their clients will establish residence in Rio de Janeiro.

## **Afghans fail to**

arrest sex abuser

Kabul: Supporters of the former head of Afghanistan's football federation, who is accused of sexually assaulting and harass ing several players on the women's national team, prevented Afghan special forces from arresting him, officials

FIFA imposed a life ban and a

fine of 1 million Swiss francs (\$1.06 million) on Keramuddin Karim last year, and Afghan authorities issued an arrest warrant, but he remains at large. The inability to arrest him reflects the lingering power of local warlords and authorities' failure to uphold women's rights nearly two decades after the U.S.-led invasion that toppled the Taliban.

Amin Sediqqi, the deputy governor of the northern Panjshir province, said the arresting forces were met with a reaction by armed men. He said provincial authorities were not aware of the operation and are now working through local elders to calm the situation.

## **JUDOKA GIVEN 22-MONTH BAN FOR DOPING**

New Delhi: Indian judoka Deepanshu Balavan has been handed a 22-month suspension by NADA's Anti Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) for consumption of prohibited substance Furosemide, which is a diuretic medicine. Balayan had tested positive for the banned substance after his sample was collected during trials held in Bhopal in June last vear. Since NADA failed to establish that Balavan's dope offence was intentional, the panel shot down agency's rec-

ommendation of a harsher pun-

ishment of four years. - PTI

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# ASH STOKES FIRE Bolt tests Covid+ after B'day party

## Seals details of 'Mankad' talk with Ponting

**Dubai, Aug. 25:** Ravichandran Ashwin says he has spoken to his IPL coach Ricky Ponting on the contentious issue of running out batsmen who back up too far at the non-striker's end but will reveal the contents of the telephonic conversation only next week.

The issue became a talking point when Ponting, head coach of Ashwin's team Delhi Capitals, said he would have a discussion with Ashwin on the controversial manner of getting a batsman out ahead of the IPL starting September 19 in the UAE.

Ashwin ran out England batsman Jos Buttler at the non-striker's end last season when he backed up too far, drawing criticism for his act as many called it against the 'spirit of the game.' While Ashwin has reached Dubai, Ponting is set to arrive next week and the two will talk in person before the Indian reveals what transpired between them.

HAND DISIN

"Ricky Ponting hasn't yet reached (Dubai). After he comes, we will sit for a chat with him. He said he wants to have a conversa-tion. We have already talked over the phone. It was a very interesting chat," Ashwin said on his

YouTube channel.
Ashwin said it's better to have a face-to-face conversation since the message of the heavily-accented Australians can get lost in translation. "What hap-pens sometimes is Australians' messages in English get lost in translation and reach us with a different meaning. Even some of their jokes become news. That's what it is and next week I will reveal a bit more about conversation with

Ashwin on Monday suggested the introduction of a "free ball" for bowlers if non-strikers back up too far, saying there was nothing wrong with running such batsmen out. "Make it a free ball for the bowler. If the batsmen gets out of that ball, the batting team will be docked five runs. Free hit adds to the drama for a batter, let's give a chance to bowlers too," Ashwin

**Southampton, Aug. 25:** England paceman James

Anderson cemented his

place in cricket history by

taking his 600th Test wick-

et when he dismissed Pakistan captain Azhar Ali (caught by England

captain Joe Root) in the

rain-marred third and

final Test at Southampton

The 38-year-old struck with his 14th ball of the day. And there was

enough time left in the

day for England, 1-0 up in

the three-match contest

and on the brink of a first

series win over Pakistan

in a decade, to press for

on Tuesday.

Karnataka. To have someone like

Muttiah

Jimmy first pacer

to 600 Test wkts

Rahul expects head coach

Anil Kumble to do bulk of

the planning, which he feels will help him immensely in his debut as

captain of Kings XI Punjab in the IPL, begin-ning in UAE on September 19.

Like the other seven

fourth bowler — and first

paceman — to reach the

mark of 600 Test wickets.

him in the all-time Test

list are three retired spin-

(800), Australia's Shane

Warne (708) and India's Anil Kumble (619).

"It is a massive achieve-

ment," England coach Chris Silverwood had said

of Anderson's looming

Monday in sight of the 600

mark after taking 5-56 — his 29th five-wicket haul

in 156 Tests — during

milestone on Monday.

Anderson

The only men ahead of

Sri Lanka's Muralitharan

teams, KXIP players are son. I share a very good undergoing a six-day relationship with him off mandatory quarantine in the UAE. The squad is heavy on players from Karnataka the IPL website. including the captain

Ravichandran Ashwin of Delhi Capitals in this file photo.

himself, Mayank Agarwal and Karun Nair. The head coach too is from

the field, coming from the same state," Rahul told "I think he (Kumble) will

me immensely this sea-

Rahul banks on coach Kumble

To have someone like Anil bhai around helps me

immensely this season. I think he (Kumble) will

would be doing most of the planning and I just

have to go out there and carry out the plans.

make my life as captain very easy. I know that he

make my life as captain very easy. I know that he would be doing most of the planning and I just have to go out there and carry out the plans," said

side Chris Gayle, scoring 659 and 593 and in 2018 and 2019 respectively. "Maxi has been with Kings XI before and has

K. L. RAHUL

Rahul was in red hot

form in the past two sea-

sons while batting along-

Kings XI Punjab captain

had a successful run with the team. He was one player we were very clear we needed going into the auc-



Khaleel Ahmed (below) and Siddharth Kaul of the Sunrisers Hyderabad pose for a

## Pakistan's first-innings 273. — PTI Anderson is only the photograph outside their rooms at a Resort in Dubai on Tuesday. Kashyap questions training selection

New Delhi, Aug. 25: Former Commonwealth champion Games Parupalli Kashyap on Tuesday questioned his omission from the ongoing national badminton camp in Hyderabad, saying that restricting it to just eight Olympic hope-

fuls is "illogical The 33-year-old, a former World No.6, insisted that he too has an outside chance of qualifying for the Tokyo Games but he has no way to pursue it as he can't train at the camp.

"I have a couple of questions regarding the camp. I find it illogical to allow only eight people to train. Also, how are these eight, Olympic hopefuls because I think only three have almost confirmed their slot and rest have an outchance including Srikanth and the women's doubles pair," Kashyap

"I am ranked 23rd in the world ranking after Sai (Kidambi) Srikanth, then why haven't I been considered," he asked. The Sports Authority of

India (SAI) had allowed resumption of training at Gopichand Academy from August 7 following the Telangana government's approval on August 1.

Kashyap, who along with wife and fellow shuttler Saina Nehwal, has been training at a separate facility near the academy, he shared his thoughts with SAI but didn't get a satisfactory response.

"Gopi *bhaiya* (Pullela Gopichand) advised me to speak to SAI as they made the list. So I spoke to SAI DG and asked him what is the logic behind it? Why

I find it illogical to allow only eight people to train. Also, how are these eight Olympic hopefuls, because I think only three have almost confirmed their slots and rest have an outside chance including Srikanth and the women's doubles pair.

- PARUPALLI **KASHYAP** World No.24 badminton player

am I not in the camp? Who decided that we don't have a chance to qualify when seven-eight tournaments are still left," he said.

"A day later, a SAI assistant director called me and said this is a directive which has come from higher officials and they have spoken to BAI and SAI, who believe only

these people have a chance to qualify which I found to be strange," he

"I was told that only eight people will train till the Tokyo Games to keep the Olympic hopefuls safe. Now no one is staying at the centre, all are using gyms at different centres, they are meeting people outside, so I don't understand their explanation of keeping them safe."

Kashyap reiterated that the SAI Pullela Gopichand academy is equipped with enough courts to accommodate more players.

"The national centre has nine courts and currently only four people are training. There are nine coaches and two physios for four players who are training for a maximum of two and a half hours.

"So rest of the time the court is empty. Why can't

other players train for the rest of the time? It makes no sense to me," he said. 'Everywhere else all are

training together, in Bangalore, Lakshya (Sen), who also has an outside chance like me, is training with the rest. If I can't train at the camp, how will I pursue Olympic qualification?"

World champion P. V. Sindhu, along with Praneeth, former world Sindhu, Srikanth women's doubles player N. Sikki Reddy have resumed training under strict safeprotocols at the Gopichand Academy, ending a four-month-long

forced hiatus.

Among other Olympic hopefuls, the men's doubles pairing of Chirag and Satwiksairaj are wary of the Covid-19 threat and have decided to wait.

# Bolt tests Covid+

Kingtson (Jamaica), Aug. 25: Jamaica's Minister of Health says legendary sprinter Usain Bolt has tested positive for the novel Coronavirus.

Minister Christopher Tufton said Bolt was aware of the results and his recent contacts were being traced.

9-MAN TEAM

**DOPE TESTS** 

**WILL CONDUCT** 

New Delhi, Aug. 25: Three high-ranking

Agency (NADA) officials,

along with six empanelled Dope Control Officers

(DCOs), will be travelling to the UAE for sample col-

lection during this year's

Indian Premier League,

According to sources in the NADA, the agency is

targeting collection of at

least 50 samples during In-Competition (IC) and Out-of-Competition

(OOC) testing during the 60-match event which will

"NADA will have nine people in UAE and they

will also take help of the

Doping Organisation if

they require further man-

power, in this case chaper-

ones who help in sample collection," a senior BCCI official confirmed. The National doping

agency will have three

teams with one official

and two DCOs at each of

the three venues along with local NADO staff in each of the units.

take down any bowling

attack and we've felt that

the last couple of seasons we have missed that

impact player in the mid-

KXIP make one of the

most destructive opening

pairings in IPL. The cap-

tain expects the West

Indian to keep winning

'I have played for sever-

al years with him and share a great friendship

with him. He's a great guy

to have in our team. He

will be part of our core

group and with the kind of

experience he has, he will

definitely be somebody

that wins a lot of games

games for the team.

Rahul and Gayle,

dle order," said Rahul.

run till November 10.

UAE's National

which starts September 19.

"It is now public knowledge that Mr Bolt has tested positive. He has been formally notified, I'm told by the authorities," Tufton told reporters.

"It triggers an approach to questioning, interroga-tion if you will, which we follow through with contact tracing," he added.

According to reports, a surprise birthday party was thrown for Bolt by his family and friends when he turned 34 on August 21, with Manchester City star Raheem Sterling and Bayer Leverkusen winger Leon Bailey in attendance. Cricketer Chris Gayle is also said to be present at the event, which was described as a "big, maskfree" gathering that failed to observe health safety measures.

In some videos that surfaced, Bolt was seen dancing with his visitors as they seemed to disregard proper social distancing.

Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness also said police are investigating the circumstances surrounding Bolt's birth-day party. "There are reports of an activity relat-ed to Usain Bolt. These matters are all being thoroughly investigated and the police will give a report on these matters in near future," Holness told a virtual news conference.

Bolt said on social media on Monday that he was awaiting the result of a Coronavirus test and was quarantining himself as a precaution.

The 34-year-old retired sprinter who won gold in the 100 and 200 metres at the last three Olympics posted a video on social media to explain the situa-"Good morning everybody. Just waking up. Like everybody, checked social media and saw that social media says I'm confirmed of Covid-19. I did a test Saturday, because I



**Usain Bolt** 

According to reports, a surprise birthday party was thrown for Bolt by his family and friends when he turned 34 on August 21, with Manchester **City star Raheem Sterling and Bayer** Leverkusen winger **Leon Bailey in** attendance. **Cricketer Chris** Gavle is also said to be present at the event, which was described as a big, maskless gathering that failed to observe health

work. I'm trying to be responsible, so I'm going to stay in and stay here for my friends," he said.

safety measures.

Bolt, who appeared to be lying in bed in the video, said he has no symptoms. "Just to be safe, I'll quarantine myself and just take it easy," he said.

Jamaica has had fewer than 1,700 cases, a relatively low number in a country of nearly 3 million.

On the track, Bolt was known for his poses — his 'Lighting Bolt'' became iconic — and of course his post-race celebrations. His speed and charisma made his sport can't-miss viewing whenever he lined up in the blocks.

Bolt set the world records in the 100 and 200 metres at the 2009 World Championships in Berlin. He last competed internationally at tĥe 2017 World Championships in London. Bolt and partner Kasi

Bennet welcomed the hirth of a daughter, Olympia, in

## **FORMULA ONE ADDS FOUR RACES TO 2020 CALENDAR**

Paris, Aug. 25: Four Grand Prix races, in Turkey, Bahrain (two) and Abu Dhabi, have been added to the 2020 Formula One calendar, but the postponed Chinese GP has been cancelled, F1 organisers said

The addition of the four races and the elimination of the Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai bring the race total to 17 for the Coronavirus-affected season.

Formula One returns to Turkey for the first time since 2011, with the Turkish Grand Prix to be run at Istanbul Park on November 15. That is followed by a back-to-back double header in Bahrain, with the Bahrain Grand Prix on November 26 and the Sakhir Grand Prix on December 6. The season-concluding Abu Dhabi Grand Prix will take place at the Yas Marina Circuit on December 13.

## Ostapenko pulls out of US Open

New York, Aug. 25: Jelena Ostapenko, the 2017 French Open champion, pulled out of the U.S. Open, citing a change of sched-

ule. She is the latest woman with a Grand Slam title or high ranking to withdraw from the tournament that begins next week amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Six of the top eight women in the WTA rankings already were out, including No.1 Ash Barty, the reigning champion at Roland Garros, and No.6 Bianca Andreescu, the 2019 winner Flushing at Meadows.

#### **DJOKOVIC BATTLES NECK PAIN FOR A WIN**

World number one Novak Djokovic battled through neck pain on the way to a 7-6 (7/2), 6-4 victory over Ricardas Berankis at the Western & Southern Open, where second Dominic Thiem crashed out. Djokovic made it through to the Round of 16 despite the sore neck, for which he received treatment on court.

Djokovic twice went down a break in the second set, but broke back both times. He let out a roar

when he broke for a 5-4 lead then calmly served it He next faces American Sandgren, a 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) winner over 15th-seeded Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime.

The upset of the day was at the opposite end of the men's draw, as 32nd-ranked Filip Krajinovic of Serbia toppled Austria's Thiem 6-2, 6-1.

Krajinovic lined up a meeting with Hungarian Marton Fucsovics, who ousted 14th-seeded

**Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov** 7-5, 4-6, 6-2. Meanwhile, Andy Murray also notched an upset, surprising world\_number

seven Alexander Zverev 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 for his first win over a top-10 player in more than three years.

#### **SERENA MADE TO WORK** HARD FOR VICTOR'

In women's action, thirdseeded Serena Williams bucked the upset trend that saw top seed Karolina Pliskova and number two Sofia Kenin ousted on Sunday. Serena battled back from the brink against qualifier Arantxa Rus to win 7-6 (8-6), 3-6, 7-6