

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | 22 MAY 2021

WEATHER

Max: 36.9°C
Min: 26.5°C
RH: 33%
Rain: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Thunderstorms likely.
Max/Min temp. 36/26°C

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarakaya
Tithi: Vaishakha Shuddha Dasami till 9.12 am
Star: Uttara Phalguni till 2 pm
Variyam: 9.45 pm to 11.13 pm
Durmuhurtam: 5.46 am to 7.29 am
Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

HIJRI CALENDAR
Shawwal 9, 1442 AH

Fajr: 4.34 am
Zohar: 12.23 pm

Asar: 4.45 pm
Maghrab: 6.48 pm

Isha: 8.04 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.43 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.43 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 1.40 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 1.41 AM

COUNTER POINT



Not islands, they are
heaps of dead bodies!

SHORT TAKES

Centre to get
RBI's ₹99,000cr

Mumbai: The RBI on Friday approved paying ₹99,122 crore as dividend to the Central government for the accounting period of nine months ended March 31, 2021. The dividend is likely to alleviate some of the burden off the government's shoulder at a time when the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic has hit government finances. The Centre is staring at a high fiscal deficit target of 6.8 per cent in 2021-22.

■ Full report on Page 11

Pilot killed as
MiG-21 crashes

Moga (Punjab): An Indian Air Force MiG-21 Bison aircraft crashed in a field during heavy rain in Punjab's Moga district, killing its pilot, Squadron Leader Abhinav Choudhary. The aircraft was on a training sortie from Suratgarh in Rajasthan when it crashed in Langeana on Thursday night, said Moga SP Gurdeep Singh.

■ Report on Page 7

Army chief visits Northeast

New Delhi: Army Chief Gen M.M. Naravane reviewed India's operational readiness along the border with China in the Arunachal Pradesh sector during a two-day visit to the Northeastern region that began on Thursday. His visit to the region came amid the Indian Army's continued standoff with the Chinese military in some of the friction points in eastern Ladakh.

William, Harry hit out at BBC

London: Princes William and Harry have both condemned the deceit that lay behind their late mother Princess Diana's famous BBC interview over 25 years ago in which she first spoke about her troubled marriage to their father, Prince Charles. An independent inquiry found that the BBC "fell short of the high standards of integrity and transparency which are its hallmark".



WORLD | 9
Israel, Hamas agree to ceasefire



SPORTS | 12
Medicos charged in Maradona death

TABLOID
#ShameOnYouSamantha trends on social media



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



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao listens to a Covid-19 patient in the ICU of MGM Hospital in Warangal on Friday.

— DC

Do not fear Covid, KCR tells patients in Warangal

CM calls for strict lockdown in state

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, MAY 21

The Chief Minister directed the collectors and SPs to ensure that no one came onto theroads unless there was an emergency.

onto theroads unless there was an emergency. He asked them to impose restrictions on crowding of people during the relaxation period of 6 am to 10 am.

On the occasion, he said despite losing thousands of crores of rupees in revenue, the state government was implementing the lockdown till the 30th of this month for protecting the health of people.

■ Page 2: Survey yielded good results, says CM

health portfolio from Etela Rajendar, Chandrashekhar Rao has been busy overseeing the treatment of Coronavirus patients in state-run hospitals. He recently visited Gandhi

Hospital in Hyderabad. As part of changes in MGM hospital, the superintendent Dr Nagarjuna Reddy has been replaced with Dr V. Chandrashekhar ahead of the CM's visit.



13 Naxals killed in Maha encounter

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC
MUMBAI, MAY 21

official Twitter handle of the Maharashtra home minister office said,

"Early this morning an encounter between C-60 commandos of #Police and #Naxalites broke out at Paydi-Kotmi forest in Etapalli, where the Naxalites had gathered for a meeting. C-60 squad were successfully able to gun down 13 Naxalites during this operation (sic)."

The operation was headed by the Superintendent of Police Ankit Goyal. All deceased Naxalites were identified and mostly belonged to the Kasansur Dalam.

In a series of tweets, the

Dehradun, May 21: Renowned environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna, who pioneered the Chipko movement, died of Covid-19 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh, on Friday. He was 94.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. He was cremated with full state honours on the banks of the Ganga in Rishikesh.

Known for his role in the Chipko movement, during which the activists hugged trees to save them from being felled, Bahuguna had been undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at AIIMS-Rishikesh for over a week.

Admitted on May 8 after testing positive, Bahuguna's condition turned critical on Thursday night with his oxygen level dropping drastically. He was on CPAP in the ICU and breathed his last at 12.05 pm, AIIMS director Ravikant said. — PTI

■ Tribute on Page 7

An exchange between a sesquipedalian Shashi Tharoor and the Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia-stuck K.T. Rama Rao brought a rare chuckle of delight for Twitterati on an otherwise gloomy day that continued to be about Covid-19, hospital emergencies, shortages and rush to save people. Or on cue, the Rama Rao-Tharoor's persiflage abounded jocundity on Twitter.

Rama Rao, in a tongue-in-cheek back and forth on Twitter with Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, known for his proclivity for picking and using rarely used, obscure and little-known words in English, enthralled followers of both the tech-savvy smart leaders, who are known for the flair for expression.

It began a day before when Rama Rao, who uses the Twitter handle @KTRTRS, Tweeted about how hard it was to pronounce names of drugs and

SPORTS | 12

Medicos charged in Maradona death

TABLOID

#ShameOnYouSamantha trends on social media

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TRS abuzz with reshuffle talk, Kavitha debut likely

Palla, Sandra to join team, Malla Reddy, Eshwar out

L. VENKAT
RAM REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Daughter of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, Nizamabad MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha, is set to enter the State Cabinet soon. The other new entrants into the Cabinet could be the recently re-elected graduate constituency MLC Palla Rajeshwar Reddy and MLA Sandra Venkata Veeriah.

Since the day Etala Rajender was unceremoniously dropped from the Cabinet, there was a growing buzz in TRS circles that two more ministers, Ch. Malla Reddy and Koppula Eshwar, would also be shown the door soon.

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Minister constituting a 'Team 2023'. Multiple sources in the party confirmed that this is indeed the biggest focal point of conversation currently in TRS circles.

Though there were no official indications from the party supremo over taking up an immediate Cabinet reshuffle, speculations within the TRS refuse to die down over the 'KCR's Team 2023', which could be constituted in the next three months.

It is significant that this is seen as the 'election 2023 Cabinet', based on whose performance the party hopes to make its bid for a third consecutive term in

power. After the TRS government assumed office for a second term in December 2018, CM Rao took only Mohd Mahmood Ali into the Cabinet as home minister. He was previously the deputy CM.

The two-member Cabinet

continued until February

19, 2019, when the Chief

Minister expanded his

Cabinet by inducting 10

ministers. There were still

six vacancies in the

Cabinet, which the Chief

Minister filled on

September 8, 2019.

There has been no

Cabinet reshuffle since

then. Though speculations

of a Cabinet rejig surfaced

several times during the

past 20 months, it did not

materialise. Party leaders

attribute this to successive

elections and the

Coronavirus pandemic,

which has pushed all other

considerations to the back

burner.

Now that all elections have been completed in Telangana state, party leaders believe that the Chief Minister will consti-

tute an 'election Cabinet' soon, keeping an eye on retaining the Assembly polls.

Kavitha entered state politics, when the party fielded her in the MLC elections for the Nizamabad local body seat, which she won with a thumping majority in October 2020.

TRS leaders are excited that the stage is finally set to induct her into the Cabinet. This will be the ministerial debut for her, having served one term as a Lok Sabha MP from 2014 to 2019.

Labour minister Malla Reddy has been frequently landing in controversies, due to which he faces an imminent threat of ouster from the Cabinet. The CM is also reportedly unhappy over the performance of social welfare minister Koppula Eshwar, who represents the Scheduled Castes community in the Cabinet. He will be in most likelihood be replaced by Sandra Veeriah from the Dalit community.

CONDITIONAL BAIL FOR YSRC REBEL MP RAJU

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

The Supreme Court on Friday granted bail to YSR Congress's Lok Sabha member K. Raghu Ramakrishna Raju in a seditious case, with the court saying that prima facie he was ill-treated while in police custody.

Holding that the Andhra Pradesh High Court "ought" to have considered the bail plea by Raju, instead of sending him to the trial court, a bench comprising Justice Vineet Saran and Justice B.R. Gavai saddled Raju with a number of conditions including that he will not speak to the print and visual media on the issues that form part of the case against him.

The barge P305 was carrying 261 persons when it sank 35 nautical miles off the city's coast on Monday, as Cyclone Tauktae battered India's west coast.

It has been five days since the barge sank and so far 51 bodies have been recovered and 24 people are still missing after the barge sank due to Cyclone Tauktae.

Captain Balwinder Singh, however, is one of the missing persons. A case of causing death by negligence has also been registered against him.

The case was filed after the barge's chief engineer Rehman Sheikh indicated that the captain said wind speed is 40 knots and it

will pass within two hours.

The master of P-305 chose to move just 200 metres away from the massive ONGC platform.

According to Alam, his friend Anand told him about the hole in the barge and he immediately called the owner and informed him to get the vessel back.

However, he did not receive any response.

The barge P305 was car-

rying 261 persons when it

sank 35 nautical miles off

the city's coast on

Monday, as Cyclone

Tauktae battered India's

west coast.

Sheikh is currently admitted at Apollo Hospital in Tardeo and he told his brother, Alam Sheikh,

another chief engineer, that the captain said wind

speed is 40 knots and it

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IN BRIEF
22 new cases of black fungus in TS

Hyderabad: Twenty new patients with black fungus disease were admitted in the state on Friday. Most of these patients were coming from the districts at a late stage. In some of them, the infection had spread to both eyes. Doctors said that they were carrying out surgical procedures first. Anti-fungal medicines were being used immediately.

City residents adopt zoo ostrich

Hyderabad: A city resident, Raghavendra Rao Gudipudi, along with his friends adopted an ostrich at the Nehru Zoological Park for a period of one year. The cost: ₹50,000.

Speaking on the occasion, V.V.L. Subhadra Devi, zoo curator, said that she was happy that people were coming forward to adopt animals, despite the pandemic. Meanwhile, the zoo will conduct an awareness programme commemorating World Turtle Day on May 23.

25K BOOKED IN RACHAKONDA FOR VIOLATING CURBS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Rachakonda police booked over 25,000 cases and seized 1,579 vehicles for violating lockdown norms apart from booking 4,054 cases against them on Thursday alone.

Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh M. Bhagwat said that a total of 25,537 cases have been booked since the implementation of the lockdown on May 12.

"Of them, 17,360 cases were booked for lockdown violation, 6,367 for not wearing or improper wearing of masks, 1,228 for not observing physical distance at public places, 337 for public gatherings and 245 cases for consuming liquor in the open," he said, adding that there are about 46 check-posts in the commissionate.

Commending the efforts of the force while performing enforcement duties round the clock, he warned citizens of legal consequences if they violated the guidelines.

ANJANI WARNS OF STRICT ACTION AGAINST VIOLATORS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

The Hyderabad police have issued a stern warning to everyone to not to be on the streets and roads after 10 am, beginning Saturday. In a warning that leaves no doubt over how the police are set to deal with violators, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar on Friday said, "Anyone seen outside after 10 am will attract strict action and punishment. Only those who are allowed to move as part of essential services, medical and health services will be allowed to move and anyone else will face immediate action."

Anjani Kumar, in a message on Twitter, said, "Some people were taking the lockdown 'very lightly', and putting into jeopardy the health of others. Such people deserve serious action. Any one other than those officially permitted to be on the roads, will have cases booked against them and their vehicles will be seized (sic)."

He added: "Understand this warning and take it seriously. The lockdown is for your safety. Just because of some careless and irresponsible people, we cannot push everyone else to face Covid."

COVID | COMBAT

To study virus spread among animals, samples to be sent for third RT-PCR test

Nehru zoo lions win battle against Covid

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

The eight Asiatic lions in the Nehru Zoological Park which contracted Covid-19 last month and have since recovered, will undergo a third set of RT-PCR tests to help scientists from CCMB-LaCones, as well as the zoo veterinarians, on how the disease behaves in wild cats that are recovering from an infection of the SARS-CoV-2.

The decision to collect mucus and salivary discharge from the night houses of these lions — all stars of the one of the zoo's main attractions, the Lion Safari Park — was taken after results from samples collected on May 11 showed positive results for three of the lions.

The lions have recovered and are in normal health. But it is suspected that sometimes, as in the case of humans who test positive if



Nehru Zoological Park staff pass on food to the Safari Park lions in their night house cages.

a RT-PCR test is performed though they have been cured of Covid-19, the lions too even after recovery, could be testing positive, a forest department official said.

To ensure that they understand how the disease is behaving in wild animals, it has been decided to collect a third set of samples for the eight lions for testing. As in the previous two instances, the samples will be collected from

the saliva and any nasal discharge deposits in the cage of each lion.

Though CCMB-LaCones labs began collecting faecal samples of these lions to study the possibility of testing the animals for Covid-19 using such samples, the findings so far have not been consistent.

This prompted the decision to go in for a third round of saliva or nasal discharge sample collection to get the lions tested again.

Steroids without supplements slow cure for ex-Covid patients

Report back to hospitals with black fungus, urinary tract infections, other ailments

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Heavy intake of steroids with no vitamin and immune supplementation has led to further deterioration of health of Covid-19-recovered patients. They are reporting back to hospitals with complaints of black fungus, urinary tract infection, recurrent diarrhoea and compromised lung-function.

During and after treatment, the protocols for improving the immunity to ensure overall recovery are not being followed by these patients.

Says a doctor, "The focus has been to save life. In the bargain, there has been indiscriminate use of steroids. If one did not work, another was tried. No set protocol is being followed in the second wave. Due to this, a range of side-effects are evident."

Antibiotics and steroids are Schedule H drugs but are delivered freely.

Dr Sai Kumar Katam, president of the Doctor of Pharmacy Association

ANTIFUNGAL DRUG DETAILS

- There are five companies producing amphotericin B in India and there is one importer. Permission to five more manufacturers has been given by the government to produce these anti-fungal medicines.
- Due to rise in black fungus cases, the government of India has ramped up the production to 1,63,752 vials. This will be further increased to 2,55,114 vials in June 2021.
- There are plans to import 3,63,000 vials in May.
- The central government states that 3,15,000 vials will be imported in June. Internal reports are that more patients are coming in with complaints of black fungus.

explains, "The highest use of steroids namely dexamethasone and methylprednisolone is observed in the second wave. After the schedule of treatment went viral on social media, these medicines were dispensed without prescription at pharmacies. Antibiotics and steroids have been overused ... many patients opted for self-treatment." This irrational use of steroids has led to a range of side-effects.

It has also been noted by pharmacists that those who self-prescribed took the medicines for three days. If cough, cold and fatigue persisted, they took it again for 10 to 15 days. This kind of use is now backfiring.

Dr Mohammed Shafi, a senior infectious disease specialist explains: "Disturbance is noted in gut flora among recovered patients, leading to lack of appetite, diarrhea, nausea, acid reflux, vomiting of blood and other gastrointestinal problems. People are not willing to acknowledge self-medication and it requires strict questioning to understand their treatment regime. Further medications can lead to drug interactions."

In the last one week, hospitals in Hyderabad say they are not only getting patients with complaints of black fungus but also of gum infections, recurrent diarrhoea, urinary tract infection and other problems in the gastro-intestinal tract.

Covid recovery: Docs suggest protein diet

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

After recovery from Covid-19, the body's process of rebuilding cell immunity requires supplementation and a diet consisting of high protein as also liquids for hydration, and of green vegetables.

Nutritionist Sujatha Stephen explains, "In the intensive care unit, we are starting with 'L-Glutamine'. It will help in early recovery and also supplement protein level in the body. People who have been on steroids must take high intake of liquids. This is required for hydration of the body."

The post-discharge follow-up in hospitals has become important as patients are coming back with side-effects.

Nutritionists say they are recommending pro-

tein supplementation and inclusion of protein-rich foods like eggs, paneer, low-fat meat and cereals to build immunity.

Nutritionist Fatima Z. explains, "Those who have history of diabetes are put on a strict diet. There are many youngsters showing high sugar levels in their 20's and 30's. This recovered group of Covid-19 is first being evaluated for their sugar levels and a matching diet is prescribed."

Experts say foods like spinach, green leafy vegetables, dry-fruits like almonds, yogurt and citrus fruits would help improve immunity. Food with hidden sugars like junk foods, beverages, juices, ready-made shakes etc must be avoided by those who have recovered. These can raise the sugar levels.

STATE RECORDS 3,464 NEW COVID CASES, 25 DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

The state recorded 3,464 new cases of Covid-19, after conducting 65,997 tests, and 25 deaths on Friday. The caseload stands at 45,727 and the toll 3,085. The recovery rate has improved to 91.33 per cent, the state health department's Covid-19 bulletin said.

The GHMC area recorded 534 cases, followed by Ranga Reddy district with 243, Medchal-Malkajgiri 219, Khammam 217, Nalgonda 150, Karimnagar 136, Mahabubnagar 135, Bhadrakal Kothagudem and Vikarabad 115 each, Nagarkurnool and Warangal Urban 111 each, Siddipet 110, Mancherlai 103 and Warangal Rural 109.

The bulletin said there were 98 micro containment zones, 16 in Warangal Rural, 14 in Siddipet, 12 in Warangal Urban and 11 each in Hyderabad and Khammam.

PARADIP PORT TRUST

CORIGENDUM-1

Name of the Work: "Replacement of Hydrant & Monitor Pipe line of the Fire fighting pipeline Network at North Oil Jetty". Estimated Cost: ₹ 1,83,45,880.00. Last date & time of submission of bid: Dt. 03.06.2021 upto 17:15Hrs. Refer our website for details : [https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/Executive_Engineer_\(PED-I\)PPT/PR/34/21-22](https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/Executive_Engineer_(PED-I)PPT/PR/34/21-22) Dt.21.05.2021

BHAROSA-SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF WOMEN & CHILDREN-AN INITIATIVE OF HYDERABAD CITY POLICE, TELANGANA

ADVERTISEMENT FOR RECRUITMENT ON CONTRACT BASIS

Bharosa-Society for Protection of Women & Children invites applications from suitable candidates for the Clinical Psychologists Male/or Female 2 (Two), Receptionist Female Post 1 (One) and Helpline Operator Female post 1 (One) post on contractual basis without right of regularization of service, etc to work in Bharosa-Support Center for Women & Children HACA Bhavan Saifabad, Hyderabad. For all the other details kindly visit www.bharosahydpolice.org. The last date for submission of applications along with Bio Data and copies of certificates at BHAROSA Centre, HACA Bhavan, Ground Floor, Saifabad, Hyderabad is on or before 05-06-2021 by 5PM.

Sd/ (Anjani Kumar, I.P.S.)

Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad City.

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Follow us on @SCRailwayindia Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website : www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

NOTIFICATION NO. HYB/01/2021 – DT. 22.05.2021

NOTIFICATION FOR FILLING OF POSTS IN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF HYDERABAD DIVISION ON FULL TIME CONTRACT BASIS

A notification was issued on 22.05.2021 and placed on the website of South Central Railway and Hyderabad Division, for the following posts (www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in):

| | |
|--|------|
| Specialist Doctors | : 03 |
| (Anesthetist-1, Physician-1 & Pulmonologist-1) | |
| GDMOs (CMPS) | : 16 |
| Nursing Supdt | : 31 |
| Hospital Attendant | : 26 |
| Pharmacists | : 02 |
| Health & Malaria Inspector | : 01 |
| Lab Assistants | : 01 |

Last date for submitting applications is 29.05.2021. Interested applicants may please submit the applications in prescribed format along with testimonials to mail id: contractmedicalby@gmail.com on/before 17.00 Hrs of 29.05.2021, as per the terms and conditions mentioned in the notification. (Pl see notification in SCR website for full details)

Divisional Railway Manager/Personnel/Hyderabad Advt No.493

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA

Office of the Badangpet Municipal Corporation, Ranga Reddy District.

Dt. 21.05.2021

e-procurement Tender Notice

Tenders are invited from the registered contractors for various works of total value Rs.433.00 lakhs. Tender schedule is as mentioned below. Tender documents download date: from 3.00 pm dt.22.05.2021 to 4.30 pm dt.29.05.2021. Tenders will be accepted up to 4.30 pm dt.29.05.2021 and will be opened at 5.00 pm on 29.05.2021 at the office of Badangpet Municipal Corporation or his deputy.

For further details visit [https://tender.telangana.gov.in](http://tender.telangana.gov.in) or contact the office of the Badangpet Municipal Corporation. Contact No(s) 9849597085, 9404840929. Sd/ Commissioner R.O. No: 12076-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2021-22

Badangpet Municipal Corporation

HYDERABAD GROWTH CORRIDOR LIMITED

HGCL Office Building, 2nd floor, Khajaguda Road Adjacent to ORR, Nanakramguda, Hyderabad - 500104.

Email: cgnhgcl@hmda.gov.in

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are invited on e-procurement platform for the following works: Tender Notice No.127/CGM(T)/HGCL/CM(T)-1/Cadding&UPVC Windows/2020-2021, Dt.: 20-05-2021. Name of Work: "Elevation work for HGCL and TCC buildings - Providing Dry/Wet Cladding and UPVC Windows at Staircase Landings, Nanakramguda, Hyderabad". Commencement Date for Downloading Tender Document: 22-05-2021. Last date and time for submission of Bid: 04-06-2021 upto 03:00PM. Date & Time for opening of Technical Bid: 04-06-2021 upto 03:30PM. For further details log on to <http://www.hmda.gov.in> or www.eprocurement.gov.in or Contact this office. Any Amendments, updates regarding this Bid Notice will be published in the e-procurement platform and in the website <http://www.hmda.gov.in> only.

Sd/ Chief General Manager (Tech), HGCL

RAIL COACH FACTORY KAPURTHALA

On-line tenders are invited by PCMF, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

| Sr. No. | Tender No. & Due Date | Description | Qty/Sets | EMD (₹) |
|---------|------------------------|---|----------|---------|
| 1. | 17211365 11.06.2021 | (1) Set of seats and Berths including annual tender berths for first AC Coaches (2) Set of seats and berths for LHB AC2T Coaches (3) Set of seats and berths for LHB SCN Coaches (4) Set of seats and berths for LHB AC3T Coaches (5) Set of | | |

IN BRIEF

HC rejects bank's plea to implead

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court has rejected Canara Bank's request to implead itself in the petition filed by Jamuna Hatcheries that is owned by family members of former minister

Eatala Rajendar. The court suggested that the bank file a separate petition listing its grievances. Jamuna Hatcheries had filed a petition before the High Court seeking a direction to the revenue authorities not to intervene in its possession of assigned land spread over 59 acres in Achampet village of Medchal district. Canara Bank, in its petition, submitted that they were being questioned and even harassed by state government authorities, especially the ACB, over the ₹93 crore loan given by the bank.

State taps Centre to borrow more

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Hit hard by Covid-19 pandemic, and with revenue collection taking a beating due to the lockdown, the state government is planning to seek help from the Centre for raising more loans for the current fiscal 2021-22.

It is mulling to ask the Centre to increase Fis-cal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) limit to 3 per cent for the same.

The government has proposed to raise ₹47,500 crore loans through auction of bonds in Budget 2021-22. However, it now plans to raise an addi-

tional ₹7,000 crore if the Centre enhances FRBM limit from 3.5 per cent to 5 per cent like last year to help states tide over the Covid financial crisis.

Under the FRBM Act, states are permitted to raise loans up to 3 per cent of GSDP. However, for revenue-surplus states, the limit is set at 3.5 per cent of the GSDP. With Telangana being a revenue-surplus state, it can raise loans up to 3.5 per cent GSDP.

However, the state government wants the Centre to enhance this limit to 5 per cent of GSDP which will provide an additional 1.5 per cent borrowing eli-

gibility. Despite a corona-induced financial crisis, the state government presented an ambitious budget of ₹2.30 lakh crore for 2021-22, which is significantly higher than ₹1.82 lakh crore budget presented in the last fiscal 2020-21. However, the second wave and lockdown have affected earnings in the first two months of this fiscal, April and May.

The government is in dire need of more funds this fiscal to implement many schemes. It has already mobilised ₹4,500 crore loans through auction of bonds in April and May.

The government is in

MAN HELD FOR HARASSING EX-LOVER

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD MAY 21

A man was arrested by the CCS police, Rachakonda, for harassing a woman online.

The accused, Narayandas Maniprakash, 26, a choreographer from Kalwarkutty in Nalgurkurnool district, met the victim during the making of a short film in 2020,

wherein he was assisting the director.

"They fell in love. As a part of the film the director shot a few scenes with the victim which Narayandas recorded on his phone. A few months later, they broke up. He created a fake Instagram account and started uploading photos and videos on it to defame her," police said.

In Memory of

In Memory of
Mr. Mandala Prabhakar Ramamurthy & Mrs. Mandala Vijaya Lakshmi
Together with their smiles Through this roller-coaster called life Together in our memories Through their beautiful after-life...
Forever present in our hearts Through their love, kindness, and positivity "Be Good Do Good"
From
Lavanya (Ammani), Giridhar, Vihana and Aadya Sirigudi, Bhaskar (Bobby), Jyothi, Raaga, and Taara Mandala
Married : May 19th, 1968
Deceased : May 10th, 2021

OBITUARY

OBITUARY
D.O.B. 31-10-1954 D.O.D. 28-05-2021
SRI MUTHYALA VENKATA NARASIMHA TATAJI GARU
Proprietor: Godavari Realtors
Wife: Mrs. M. Venkateshwari & Family Members
BS Reddy, Mahendar, Laxminarayana, Narasimha Valle, Ar. Raju Badugu

OBITUARY
D.O.B. 08/04/1954 - 11/05/2021
Mitta Raghunath Reddy
Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure...
Deeply mourned by
Mitta Family & Relatives

OBITUARY

OBITUARY
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Rev.14:13
DOB: 11-09-1959 DOD: 22-05-2012
DASARI JOHN BUNYAN
Dy. Director of Agriculture (Retd.)
DOB: 11-09-1959 DOD: 22-05-2012
Fondly Remembered by:
D. Sulochana John (Wife)
Sons, Daughters-in-law
Daughter, Son-in-law & Grand Children



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao inspects products made by inmates of Warangal Central jail on Friday.
— DC

TRS, Congress workers clash to distribute sops

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, MAY 21

Tension prevailed in 57th division of Khammam Municipal Corporation on Friday as activists of the Congress and the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) clashed with each other over issuing of cheques under Shaadi Mubarak and Kalyana Laxmi schemes. Two Congress workers sustained serious injuries in the incident.

Congress workers raised objections over the issuing of cheques to beneficiaries by the Sthambadri Urban Development Authority

chairman B Vijay Kumar and Nagaraju, who was defeated in the same division in the local body elections. Congress workers Abdullah and Anif argued that it was against protocol and Congress corporator should be invited to the programme. It was a government programme and not TRS programme, they argued.

There is an allegation that the TRS leaders provoked Congress workers during the Kalyanam Laxmi cheque issue programme. Mustafa and others lodged complaints in Two Town police station.

injuries in the incident. The 57th division became politically sensitive after Rafida Begum, wife of Mustafa, won the seat as a Congress candidate. Mustafa said at that time it was a win against minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar. The police allegedly troubled Mustafa during the election and he was taken into custody twice.

Exchange of words turned serious and both the parties clashed with each other. They hurled stones against each other in the first round. Later, they hit each other with cricket bats. Anif and Abdulla sustained head

13th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever- Psalms 23:6
REBBA EDWARD RATHNAM
(Retd. Administrative Officer - Gandhi Hospital)
DOB: 12.07.1941 DOD: 22.05.2008
"You shall remain in our hearts forever"
Fondly Remembred By
Wife, Son, Daughter-in-law, and Grand Daughter

SHRADHANJALI
TEKPALLY NARSING RAO
DOB: 11-05-2021
Shakelli Jaya Shree, Sreehari,
Grand Son: Shakelli Vishal, Nikitha (A.U.S.)
Grand Daughter: Atta Varsha, Dheera,
Great Grand Children: Dhruvi, Vineet
(S/2122/D00224)

10th DAY CEREMONY
Sri. S.S. SATHYANARAYANA
DOB: 11-05-1944 DOD: 13-05-2021
Retd Supdt NSSO (F.O.D.) Hyderabad
10th Day Ceremony will be held on 22-05-2021 at our residence of 2:00 pm
Plot No. 12, Beside Govt Girls High School Pochampally Secunderabad.
In grief: M. Srilekha (Wife) & Sunchu
Family Members
Ph: +91771806590, 7780769756
(S/2122/D00228)

SAD DEMISE
P. SUDHEER
DOB: 12-05-2021
Your memories will always remain in our hearts for ever.
11th day on: 22-05-2021
By FAMILY MEMBERS
Ph: 8142961443

IN THE LOVING MEMORY
SRI MUTHYALA VENKATA NARASIMHA TATAJI GARU
Chief Advisor: Telangana Realtors Association (TRA)
Wife: Mrs. M. Venkateshwari & Family Members
BS Reddy, Jayashankar Thula, D S Reddy, Abdul Shukur, Naveen

25th ANNIVERSARY
The memory of the righteous is a blessing- Prov.10:7
Sri G.Y. SATYANANDAM
M.A. B.Ed (Retd. Principal)
Promoted to Glory on: 22.5.1996
Inserted by: EVER LOVING FAMILY MEMBERS

OBITUARY
M. ETHIRAJ MUDALIAR
Retd. Dept Manager - APSRTC
DOB: 12.05.1940 DOD: 20.05.2021
Funeral on 22.05.2021 at 10:30 AM, Bansilalpet Crematorium, Secunderabad.
Inserted by: Sons & Daughters
FAMILY MEMBERS
Ph: 8886797503, 9177402537

FIRST ANNIVERSARY
A. VENKATA LAKSHMI
1938 - 2020
GRIEVING FAMILY
V. S. SISTA Son-in-law
S. V. LAKSHMI Daughter
SUREN SISTA Grand Son
RAMYA SISTA Grand Daughter
K. SHASHANK Grand Son
K. ANUPAMA Great Daughter
K. DHRUV Great Grand Son
K. VIBHU Great Grand Son
(S/2122/D00225)

HOMAGES
D. KESHAVA PRASAD
DOB: 10.05.1964 DOD: 19.05.2021
Director - KESHAV HIGH SCHOOL, Warasiguda, Secunderabad.
MORT, Chairman Club Member - LIC Development Officer - SHIRAM CHITS
In grief: M. Srilekha (Wife) & Sunchu
Family Members
Ph: +91771806590, 7780769756
(S/2122/D00226)

OBITUARY
MUNSHI ABDUL AZIZ
1978 to 1983. Nidadavolu MLA
Former APCC (I) President and Ex Forest Minister
Inserted by: Family Members
Ph: 8142961443

IN THE LOVING MEMORY
SRI MUTHYALA VENKATA NARASIMHA TATAJI GARU
Chief Advisor: Telangana Realtors Association (TRA)
Wife: Mrs. M. Venkateshwari & Family Members
BS Reddy, Akula Pawan Kumar, Ratna Balaji, Hanumanthrao, Kasam Srinivasa Gupta

1st ANNIVERSARY
Late. Mr. P.N. THOMAS
(Retd. from Survey of India)
DOB: 19-07-1934 DOD: 22-05-2020
We'll always remember that special smile, that caring heart, that warm embrace, we always gave us. We'll always remember you because there will never be another one to replace you in our hearts.
Inserted by: Loving Family Members
Ph: 9848532998

(S/2122/D00227)

OBITUARY
We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there.
Late Peri Panvathi
W/o Late Peri Subba Rao, Advocate
DOB: 12.08.1938 DOD: 20.05.2021
Peri Venkata Ramudu, Advocate
Peri Prabhakar, Advocate-Peri Shailaja
Peri Bhavani Shankar, Peri Aparna
Peri Krishna Rao - Peri Venkata Naga
Lakshmi, Peri Sri Surya Aditya, Peri Naga Parvathi, Peri Viswajitha, Peri Akshaya, Peri Medha, Peri Pravallika, Contact: 9840264195
Inserted by:
Family Members

SHRADHANJALI
Sri. GOGINENI KOTESWARA RAO
(Indian Airforce and Air India - Retd)
DOB: 10-04-1941 DOD: 09-05-2021
"You will be always in our memories. May your soul rest in peace forever"
Inserted by:
Family Members

IN THE LOVING MEMORY
Late Mr. GOVADA JOHN PRAMANICK RAO
DOB: 21-05-1941 DOD: 22-05-2021
The hardest part is wasn't losing you, it was learning to live without you. I LOVE YOU & MISS YOU Thammu.
Inserted by: K. Anne Reddy (Akkus), K. Hannai Zuluda (Niece)

SHRADHANJALI
SRI MUTHYALA VENKATA NARASIMHA TATAJI GARU
Chief Advisor: Telangana Realtors Association (TRA)
Wife: Mrs. M. Venkateshwari & Family Members
BS Reddy, Akula Pawan Kumar, Ratna Balaji, Hanumanthrao, Kasam Srinivasa Gupta

FIRST ANNIVERSARY
A. VENKATA LAKSHMI
1938 - 2020
GRIEVING FAMILY
A. S. SARMA Husband
A. VENKAT RAO Son
A. LALITHA RAO Daughter-in-law
KARTIK AYOSLA Grand Son
VAMSIDHAR TANUGULA Grand Son
SHILPA RAO TANUGULA Grand Daughter

2nd Death Anniversary
"Blessed are those who die in the Lord... For they will rest from their hard work; for their good deeds follow them." Rev 14:13
G. HOSEA JOHN
(Retd. CWS, SC Railway)
DOB: 04.08.1936 - DOD: 22.05.2019
We thank & praise God for the blessed & wonderful family life we could spend with you.
Inserted by: FAMILY MEMBERS
Ph: 9573915475, 9948079329

(S/2122/D00228)

2nd ANNIVERSARY
"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" Phillipians 1:21
Mrs. Athirapathi Amara Leela
Nursing Supdt. Retd.
W/o Late A John Wesley DOD: 22.05.2019
Your sweet memories will remain in our hearts forever and ever.
Inserted by:
FAMILY MEMBERS
Ph: 9573915475, 9948079329

(S/2122/D00229)

25th Anniversary
I Will Dwell In The House Of The Lord Forever Ps:23:6
Late Mr. GOVADA JOHN PRAMANICK RAO
DOB: 22nd May 2011
My mind still talks to you and my heart still looks for you. But, my eyes know you will never die.
MISS YOU SO MUCHONI!
Inserted by:
G. Giriraj Mahender (Daddy), G. Mary Ratnam (Mummy), G. Mary Latha (Wife), G. Lalith Samuel (Son), G. Shyne Hebiba (Daughter)

(S/2122/D00227)

FIRST ANNIVERSARY
A. VENKATA LAKSHMI
1938 - 2020
GRIEVING FAMILY
K. R. SAstry Son-in-law
K. JYOTHI Daughter
Dr. C. S. Murthy, Dr. C. Sri Lakshmi, Grand Son
K. VAMSIS KRISHNA Grand Son
K. ASHWIN KUMAR Grand Son
K. GAYATHRI Grand Daughter
K. SAKET RAM Great Grand Son
K. SHANMUKH SAI Great Grand Son

Senior Congress leader V. Hanumantha Rao pays floral tributes to former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 30th death anniversary at Gandhi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Friday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Cong. remembers Rajiv on his 30th death anniv.

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Telangana Congress paid rich tributes to former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 30th death anniversary on Friday.

TPCC chief and Nalgonda MP, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy and several leaders, offered floral tributes and remembered him as a leader who fought for communal harmony in the country.

Participating in a programme at Huzurnagar, Reddy said that the contributions of Rajiv Gandhi in strengthening local bodies, pioneering computer and IT sectors in India and lowering of voting age would be remembered forever.

He visited the government hospital and distributed food, fruits and

medicine kits to patients, their families and hospital staff and appreciated the selfless service of doctors, nurses, medical and sanitation staff and ambulance drivers during the Covid-19 crisis.

Working president and MP A. Revanth Reddy garlanded the statue of Rajiv Gandhi at Somajiguda. He hailed Rajiv Gandhi as the architect of modern India by promoting IT and eventually sacrificed his life for the country.

Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy donated 25 oxygen cylinders and N-95 masks to AIIMS Bibinagar and Bhongir area hospital on the occasion.

He also contributed ₹ one crore from his MPLAD funds to Bhongir government hospital for

the purchase of ambulances. The Congress party conducted a remembrance programme at the Rajiv Gandhi statue in Somajiguda under the leadership of former MP, V. Hanumantha Rao. TPCC general secretary Vinod Reddy distributed food and masks to people at Himayatnagar during a programme organised by Telangana Seva Dal.

The Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Yatra Committee (RGSYCC) paid homage at Charminar, from where the former prime minister had started his Sadbhavana Yatra in the city on October 19, 1990. RGSYCC chairman G. Nirjanan said the country will always remember the changes initiated by him during his short

stay in the city. The RGSYCC chairman said the country will always remember the changes initiated by him during his short stay in the city.

Mrs. Ellen Mary Savaria
DOB: 13.07.1943 - DOD: 22.05.2020
From Sunrise to Sunset every moment would have been more Wonderful if you were with us. Your Memory is stored in our Hearts & Minds.
Inserted

SHORT TAKES
ROWDY-SHEETER KILLED OVER OLD ENMITY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

An 18-year-old, who was listed as a rowdy-sheeter by the Hyderabad city police, was murdered at Kishan Bagh in Bahadurpura around midnight on Thursday. Previous enmity is suspected to have led to the killing.

The deceased, identified as Mohd Ajaz, was killed by unidentified men. Two teams are on the job to identify, trace and nab the suspects.

"He was earlier involved in the attempt to murder of another rowdy-sheeter, Gaffar. We are suspecting that Ajaz was called outside and attacked," said an official.

ISB: ROLE OF AI IN ECONOMY BIGGER AMID PANDEMIC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

The latest Artificial Intelligence Index 2021 annual report published by the Indian School of Business (ISB) reveals that use of AI has entered several sectors of the economy.

The report sums up research by ISB's IT-focused think tank – Srinivasa Raju Centre for Information Technology and Networked Economy (SRITNE). Led by Prof. Deepa Mani, the research underlines that investments in AI-managed processes have grown substantially across businesses.

Artificial intelligence has helped businesses become resilient to the pandemic by redesigning their models, according to the study.

The research disclosed that Karnataka and Maharashtra accounted for the highest AI-related start-ups, with a steady growth in AI-related online job searches during 2019-20.

Prof. Deepa said, "Our study suggests that while there has been significant advancement in knowledge creation and appropriation in the field of AI, much more needs to be done, especially with respect to skilling and education."

UNANI DOCS SEEK CJ'S HELP AS STIPENDS DENIED

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Unani house surgeons, who have been shifted to Government Nizamia Tibbi College (GNTC) from Al-Arif Unani Medical College, have urged the Chief Justice of Telangana High Court to ensure that they get their stipend.

In a letter addressed to the Chief Justice, they pointed out that the Health University had allowed about 400 students of Al-Arif Unani Medical College to continue their academics in GNTC after derecognising the former college in 2019. Of them, 63 students completed their final year in GNTC but they were denied stipend while it was being sanctioned for regular students who had completed the course.

Dr Shaikh Yaseen said that they were both efficient and diligent and deserved parity with students of GNTC. He explained that their parents had spent huge amounts on their education. He pointed out that even after being enrolled in GNTC they had to pay fees as much as a private college student.

He said many junior doctors were testing Covid-19 positive but there has been no support from either the hospital or the government.

He clarified that they had addressed letters to the Chief Minister, principal secretary (medical and health), commissioner of Ayush and the district collector but they were all in vain as none had come to their aid.

DEADLY GREED

Three vials of Ambisome 50 mg stolen, says pharmacist

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Three vials of anti-fungal injections were reported stolen from a private hospital in Panjagutta. Police booked a case following a complaint from its head of pharmacy department and started a probe.

According to police, a complaint was received from Mallikarjuna Rao, pharmaceutical head of department of Virendri Hospitals, Banjara

Issue fresh notification for rural polls: AP HC

SEC told to re-impose model code for MPTC/ZPTC polls

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, MAY 21

The Andhra Pradesh High Court has directed the State Election Commission (SEC) to issue fresh notification to resume elections process for MPTCs/ZPTCs from where it was stopped and re-impose the model code of conduct in the state, strictly adhering to Supreme Court direction.

A single member bench headed by Justice M. Satyanarayana Murthy delivered the verdict here on Friday, based on petitions filed by Jana Sena and Telugu Desam, seeking cancellation of elections held to MPTCs/ZPTCs on April 8, for violation of the apex court order that said the poll code should be imposed for four weeks prior to the date of polling.

The court observed, "Even a common man who can read, write and understand English language can easily find out the direction of the apex court. But the state election commissioner despite being a senior

THE STATE Election Commission held elections on April 8, for 9,696 MPTCs in which 2,371 were elected unanimously and also for 652 ZPTCs in which 126 were elected unanimously.

Nilam Sawhney for taking a decision in utmost haste to resume the election process on the day she took charge of her office, after retirement with six month extension of service as the Chief Secretary in the same government.

The court said, "The State Election Commissioner interpreted the judgement of the apex court on poll code, that the poll code should be imposed for four weeks prior to the date of polling. The court observed that the election notification issued on April 1 by the SEC was illegal as it was contrary to the SC direction on poll code. It said that the election notification was issued, limiting the poll code from April 1 to 10 and opined that such a move was meant to scuttle a level playing field for political parties and their candidates in the elections.

The court made critical observations against SEC

most IAS officer could not understand the simple direction in right perspective and it creates doubt as to her suitability and fitness to the post of Election Commissioner. The state election commissioner failed to understand the apex court order for the reasons best known to her.

The State Election Commission held elections on April 8, for 9,696 MPTCs in which 2,371 were elected unanimously and also for 652 ZPTCs in which 126 were elected unanimously. Though counting votes was to be held on April 10, it was not allowed.

On behalf of the state government, advocate general S. Sriram and for State Election Commission, senior counsel C.V. Mohan Reddy argued in the court.

Petitioners Ch. Srinivasa Rao from Jana Sena and Varla Ramaiah from TD were represented by their counsels V. Venugopal Rao and V. Venkata Ramana respectively. The petitioners moved the court, alleging poll-related irregularities like violence, prevention of candidates from filing nominations and forcible withdrawal of nominations by the contestants and asked for cancellation of elections already held and conduct them afresh.



A large number of people, wait for a formulation that is claimed to protect them from Covid-19, at Krishnapatnam village in Nellore district on Friday. — DC

10-MONTH-OLD BABY RECOVERS FROM COVID-19

PULI SHARAT
KUMAR I DC
KARIMNAGAR, MAY 21

In what comes as a happy ending of an otherwise gloomy story, a 10-month-old baby girl won her battle against Covid-19 pandemic which continues its dance of death across the globe.

The infant girl, Aradhya, who tested positive for Coronavirus along with her mother, tested negative on Friday after 14 days of home isolation and proper medication.

A few weeks ago, Vemula Anand, Aradhya's father, suspected he might be under virus attack when he started showing symptoms of Covid disease. He went to the hospital and got a rapid test done. He tested negative.

After a few days, Anand noticed similar symptoms in his wife and daughter Aradhya. He took both of them for testing. The result came out positive for both. Without panicking, Anand and his wife remained in home quarantine along with Aradhya, as their symptoms were mild. Anand provided medicines and nutritious food to his wife and daughter as per advice of doctors.

He made sure all of them were cheerful and had proper diet during the treatment. And hope, faith and dedication yielded results.

AS PER the suggestion of Ayush medical team, they distributed only oral preparation on Friday and skipped the eye drops.

about the medicine and submit a report to the government.

The expert team reported that none of those who took the concoction complained of any ill-effects and mentioned that one of the Covid patients claimed his oxygen levels rise to 95 from 83 in just an hour after getting two drops in his eyes.

"We are preparing the medicine with natural ingredients and no harmful substances are used. We are making and distributing it in three categories – one for preventing Covid, the second one is for those with mild symptoms and the third one is for infected persons who need oxygen support," Anandaiah said.

The police personnel had a tough time controlling the crowds and even resorted to a slight lathi-charge to disperse the huge gathering.

As per the suggestion of Ayush medical team, they distributed only oral preparation on Friday and skipped the eye drops. After some time, they ran out of the concoction and distribution had to be stopped.

Meanwhile, the AP government has decided to send concoction to ICMR for a detailed study of its efficacy. Besides, Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu asked Union Ayush minister Kiren Rijiju, and ICMR Director Balram Bhargava to conduct a study on the preparation.

At a high-level review meeting on Covid-19 in Amaravati on Friday, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy directed officials to get scientific evidence for the concoction, which is being promoted by his party MLA Govardhan Reddy. The CM decided to get it studied by the ICMR and other experts to find out its efficacy.

DEADLY GREED

Antifungal injections stolen from city hospital

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

Hills, wherein he stated that someone has stolen three vials of Ambisome 50 mg, used for fungal infections, on the intervening night of May 18 and May 19 from the central pharmacy located in the second floor of the hospital.

"It was also informed that during the night, Anand Rao Doreddula, a pharmacist and Akash Ganesh, a guard, were on duty. Therefore the management suspects them," said police, who booked a case and started a probe.

The North Zone Task Force on Friday apprehended two persons along with an SUV, which had 'TPCC OBC department co-ordinator' written on the front and back number plates, for illegally selling remdesivir and methylprednisolone sodium succinate (MSS) injection vials. Officials seized 40 MSS and 12 remdesivir vials from them.

The accused, Dalapati Bhuvaneshwar Raju, 37, is into the civil contract business, and Kanneganti Manasa (32), is employed at a consultancy in Banjara Hills. They were selling each vial for ₹15,000.

TWO ARRESTED FOR ILLICIT SALE OF LIQUOR IN HYDERABAD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MAY 21

The West Zone Task Force on Friday apprehended two men illegally selling liquor bottles in the city.

In the first arrest, Mohd

Ghouse (46) was nabbed for selling IMFL (Indian-made foreign liquor) bottles without valid documents in Panjagutta. Police seized 35 IMFL bottles worth ₹4,500 and ₹800 cash from his possession. The accused, along

with the seized bottles was handed over to the Panjagutta police.

In the second case, while patrolling in Mangalhat, the team apprehended Ganesh Singh, 32, who was running a belp shop.

Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) Kanchanbagh PO, Hyderabad - 500 058

Advertisement for the Award of Junior Research Fellowship (JRF)

(Last date for receipt of application: 30 days from date of advertisement in Employment news)

Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad, one of the Premier Research Laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) engaged in Research & Development of Missile Systems for Indian Armed Forces. DRDL invites applications from young and meritorious Indian Nationals, who desire to pursue defence related research as Junior Research Fellow (JRF).

| S.No. | Fellowship | Subject/ Discipline | Tentative No. of Vacancies | Essential Educational Qualifications |
|-------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 | Junior Research Fellow (JRF-01) | Mechanical Engineering | 07 | B.Tech./B.E. with First Class in Mechanical Engg. from UGC recognized University with GATE valid score (Paper code: ME). (or) M.E./M.Tech with First-Class in Mechanical Engg. from UGC recognized University and B.Tech/B.E. (Mechanical Engg.) with First Class from UGC recognized University. |
| 2 | Junior Research Fellow (JRF-02) | Aeronautical/Aerospace Engineering | 03 | B.Tech./B.E. with First Class in Aeronautical/Aerospace Engg. from UGC recognized University with GATE valid score (Paper code: AE). (or) M.E./M.Tech with First-Class in Aeronautical/Aerospace Engg. from UGC recognized University and B.Tech/B.E. (Aeronautical/Aerospace Engg.) with First Class from UGC recognized University. |

Stipend (Monthly): JRF will receive a stipend of Rs. 31,000/- plus HRA as per DRDO Rules.

JRF Tenure: Initially the offer is for a period of two years which may be extendable for further two years subject to internal Screening Committee recommendations.

Medical Benefits: The medical facilities, for self only, available in DRDO will be extended through MI Room.

Age Limit: The upper age limit is maximum of 28 years as on the closing date of advertisement. The upper age limit shall be relaxable to the candidates belonging to SC/ST is 5 years and OBC is 3 years.

Application Procedure: Eligible candidates may send their duly completed applications as per enclosed format which can be downloaded from www.drdo.gov.in. Duly filled in application form must be sent to "The Director, Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex, Kanchanbagh PO, Hyderabad - 500 058". Candidates should write in bold letters 'APPLICATION FOR JRF RECRUITMENT' on TOP of the cover of envelope.

* The filled application should be sent with self attested copies of DOB Certificate, Degree/ Provisional Certificate along with Marks Memos, GATE score card, Caste Certificate, NOC & other testimonials. Copies of GATE Score Card, B.Tech/M.Tech marks memos are compulsorily enclosed to the application form.

* The candidate must submit the supporting document for converting CGPA / CPI to equivalent percentage (%) from concerned University.

Late Date: The last date for receipt of application at DRDL is 30 days from the date of publication in Employment News or before 14/06/2021 as per DRDO website notification. Applications received after due date for whatsoever reasons, shall not be entertained. Incomplete applications are liable to be rejected.

Selection Process:

* Eligible candidates will be shortlisted basis on valid GATE score and percentage of marks obtained in minimum qualifying degree.
* GATE paper and subject of qualifying degree must be related to the subject/discipline against which the candidate is applying.
* Shortlisted candidates will be required to appear for personal interview to be held at DRDL, Hyderabad or through video conferencing as decided by the Director, DRDL, which will be communicated to the individual separately.

* The time and date of interview will be intimated by speed post/email.

* Candidates serving in Govt. or in Govt. owned organization will be required to produce "NOC" from their respective Department/Employer at the time of interview failing which the candidate will not be allowed to appear for the interview or they should apply through proper channel.

* Working experience in the area of subject will be preferred.

Venue of Interview: Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Ministry of Defence, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex, Kanchanbagh PO, Hyderabad - 500 058.

Important Instructions:

- * Only those candidates who have been awarded Degree/Provisional Certificate are eligible to apply.
- * Candidates should make their own arrangement for their stay and transport in Hyderabad.
- * Candidates need to produce Original Certificates/Testimonials for proof of Caste, Age, Educational Qualifications and No Objection Certificate (where applicable), along with two passport size photographs at the time of interview.
- * It may please be noted that offer of Fellowship will under no circumstances confer on candidates any right of absorption in DRDO.
- * Award of Fellowship shall not be claimed by any candidate as a matter of right. It shall be entirely at the discretion of the Selection Committee of the Lab, which may refuse to admit any candidate without assigning any reason thereof.
- * The candidate may be allowed to register for part-time Ph.D. with any University/Institution during the tenure of the fellowship.
- * No TA/DA will be paid for attending the interview or for joining, if selected.
- * Number of vacancies may increase or decrease without prior notice.

DRDL, Hyderabad is situated at Kanchanbagh PO and it is connected by Bus Route from Secunderabad & Koti: Bus Number (102); From LB Nagar: Bus Number (300).

For details contact DRDL: 040-24583150/24583151 between 09:00 to 17:00 hrs on all working days (Monday to Friday).

APPLICATION FOR AWARD OF JRF IN DRDL (DRDO), HYDERABAD

| | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| Fellowship | | : JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP | |
| Subject (tick mark one only) : MECH ENGG./AERO.ENGG. | | | |
| 1) Name in full in BLOCK letters | | | |
| 2) Father/Husband's Name | | | |
| 3) Present address for correspondence | | | |
| 4) Mobile Number & E-Mail Address | | | |
| 5) Date of Birth & Age (ad | | | |

DECCAN Chronicle

22 MAY 2021

Israel's Gaza war ends, but will peace endure?

A ceasefire has brought to a halt the 11-day Gaza war. Only time will tell if this is a true harbinger of peace between Israel and the Palestinians of Gaza and the West Bank. The fear is this will be as short-lived as several peace initiatives brokered in the past proved. The ceasefire, pursued vigorously by Egypt on top of US President Joe Biden's increasingly stern advice to Israel PM Benjamin Netanyahu, is the best thing to happen as it puts an immediate stop to the toll of lives. As many as 230 Palestinians, including 65 children and 35 women and 12 Israelis, including two children, have perished after lives of millions were torn asunder when thousands of rockets and GPS-guided missiles and bombs were raining on the region.

The question is, when will the next escalation come as victory is already being declared by the Hamas militants over a more powerful Jewish state even as Palestinians and Israelis cautiously welcome the cessation of hostilities? A cycle of violence followed by temporary truce has been the historical pattern and it will change only if Mr Biden becomes even less supportive of Israel, which is largely dependent on US funding and protection, besides an endless supply of precision-guided weapons. The US has said it will route humanitarian aid to rebuild Gaza only through the recognised Palestinian Authority, headed by Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank and not the shadowy Hamas commanders.

Not too much credence can be given to the Palestinian militants' claim that Mr Netanyahu has promised to halt further action at the Al Aqsa Mosque as well as planned evictions from Sheikh Jarrah in east Jerusalem. The two flashpoints marked the run up to the most recent war though its direct cause may have been the invasive action of the firing of 4,000-plus rockets into Israel from Gaza. Whatever be the historical

background to intractable confrontations, the fact remains that Hamas was the aggressor in raining fire though Israel reacted excessively in bombing Gaza in its hunt for militant targets, especially the network of tunnels, nicknamed "The Metro".

The ultimate solution lies in the two-State principle granting recognition to a homeland for the Palestinian people, millions of whom were displaced during the creation of Israel in 1948 and after the 1967 war. The timing may seem awkward right now when war wounds are still being tended but international diplomacy would have to get cracking for any progress to be made in initiating talks on the right of the Palestinians to a homeland in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It stands to reason that the economic blockade of Gaza must end in any fair solution and the return of the displaced to Jerusalem and other Palestinian territories must be considered though it is hugely complicated.

There is no pretending that the Hamas, voted to power in Gaza in 2006 over the moderate Fatah, are not an impediment to peace in their fanatical belief in "infidels". What happens from here would, however, be subject to how much the US is prepared to back any plan in which the state of Israel, whose right to existence is not in question anymore, may have to compromise in recognising a Palestinian homeland and if it seeks to live in peace.

Live-in ties: Courts confused?

The contradictory positions taken by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on live-in relationships could send confusing signals to the people who see constitutional courts as their last refuge in their pursuit of justice. A week ago, two benches of the High Court rejected the pleas of couples who approached it seeking protection from their relatives who do not approve of their relationships. The judges were of the opinion that such relationships are "morally and socially unacceptable" and that they could "disturb society's moral fabric". A week later, a third bench has now extended state protection to a couple holding that an individual has the right to formalise the relationship with the partner through marriage or to adopt the non-formal approach of a live-in relationship. The right to life and liberty the Constitution guarantees includes the right of an individual to full development of one's potential in accordance with one's choice, and for such purpose, one is entitled to choose a partner of choice, the court held.

The Preamble of our Constitution upholds the idea of liberty, which forms the bedrock of a democracy, and it is the job of the state to frustrate attempts of all forces that seek to undermine that eternal value. The executive branch of the government, which is a product of contemporary politics, could fail to uphold it but the judiciary, which is led by the Constitution and constitutional morality, cannot afford to do so. In fact when the court failed the first two applicants, it failed the Constitution too. This is unacceptable.

The Supreme Court recently came out with detailed guidelines for all courts that try sexual assault cases, asking for extreme sensitivity on the part of the judges. It is time the apex court considered coming out with another set of guidelines for considering cases such as live-in relationships. Subjective interpretation of constitutional principles and citizen rights reflects weakness of the judiciary; the earlier it corrects itself, the better.

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Farrukh
Dhondy

"If the last shall be the first
What happens to in-betweens?
This is the sort of question I asked
When I was in my teens.
But now that I'm a man
And put away childish thoughts
And spend my time in wondering
What happens if crosses are
noughts?"

— From Kaaley Koo Aagey
Dhuklo by Bachchoo

In BoJo's UK, it's okay to hug now. But if cases spurt, fresh ban looms...

The world awaits, with bated breath, the results of the triumph of sense and science over nature. The PM of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, one BoJo, says he is "following the science" and attempting to restore the country in measured steps to something like normality. All manner of measures and the suspension of suspensions have been announced — six people from two different households can now meet indoors; barber shops or hairdressing saloons can reopen; so can gyms.

Perhaps most popular with the public

at large is the reopening of the insides of pubs. Two weeks or so ago, you could, with social distancing, sit in the gardens of pubs or at tables on the pavements outside them, but from last week (hurrah!) you can drink at the bar.

As the first wave of the plague receded, chancellor of the exchequer Rishi Sunak announced a scheme to induce people to eat out at restaurants by promising to pay half the bill or something. People did go to restaurants as a result and the hospitality industry got a boost — but so did the Covid plague. Triumph of ingenuity to the defeat of foresight. Take a bow Rishi, or maybe even take the knee, as proportionately more black people died as a result of the second wave.

But the UK government remained keen on currying favour, so to speak. They have now allowed the opening of restaurants and at last I can go to the Star of India or the Taj Mahal and enjoy a Bangladeshi version of Dhan Sakh! — er, maybe not!

And in the move towards being the cuddly, loveable government, BoJo has announced the crowning measure of opening up Britain. Yes folks, from

the middle of last week people are allowed to hug each other!

Gentle reader, this is not another instance of my warped humour — it's absolutely true. This great democracy has taken to legislating for when its citizens can hug each other.

It's not compulsory. One doesn't have to hug every person one passes in the street, but it now permits grandparents to embrace their grandchildren, etc.

My impression is that different cultures have distinct attitudes towards hugging. I've always thought that Russians and Indian politicians who regard themselves as equals went in for a brotherly hug. As soon as BoJo announced this advance in British freedoms, some commentators in the press protested that they were averse to hugging anyone as it was not acceptable in British culture. One writer even went on to say that where she came from in the north of England, if a gentleman unwittingly hugged her mother in greeting, her father would have assaulted the miscreant and perhaps killed him. A bit severe and perhaps not quite the truth — but then we

columnists have our *peyt ki puja* to consider.

All through the pandemic year, I have thought that the typical Indian greetings and ways of showing love or respect were the safest. So instead of knocking elbows I have resorted to a simple namaste with folded hands. I don't at my age do it myself, but I find the practice of touching an elder's feet and drawing energy from their aura or magnetic field or whatever, would stop you kissing them on both cheeks and inviting a leap of viral infection.

Hugging has, through history, been symbolic of sealing a deal. Traditional enemies come to an agreement and seal it with a hug. I can't be sure, but I think years ago I saw, on film, Richard Nixon hugging Deng Xiaoping — or perhaps it was Khrushchev and Nehru or someone.

Myself? I have always been wary of sealing a deal with an erstwhile enemy with a hug because very early in life the history books told me the story of the Maratha hero Shivaji hugging his enemy, the unwary Afzal Khan, and digging a metal *waag nukh* into his lung and ripping him apart.

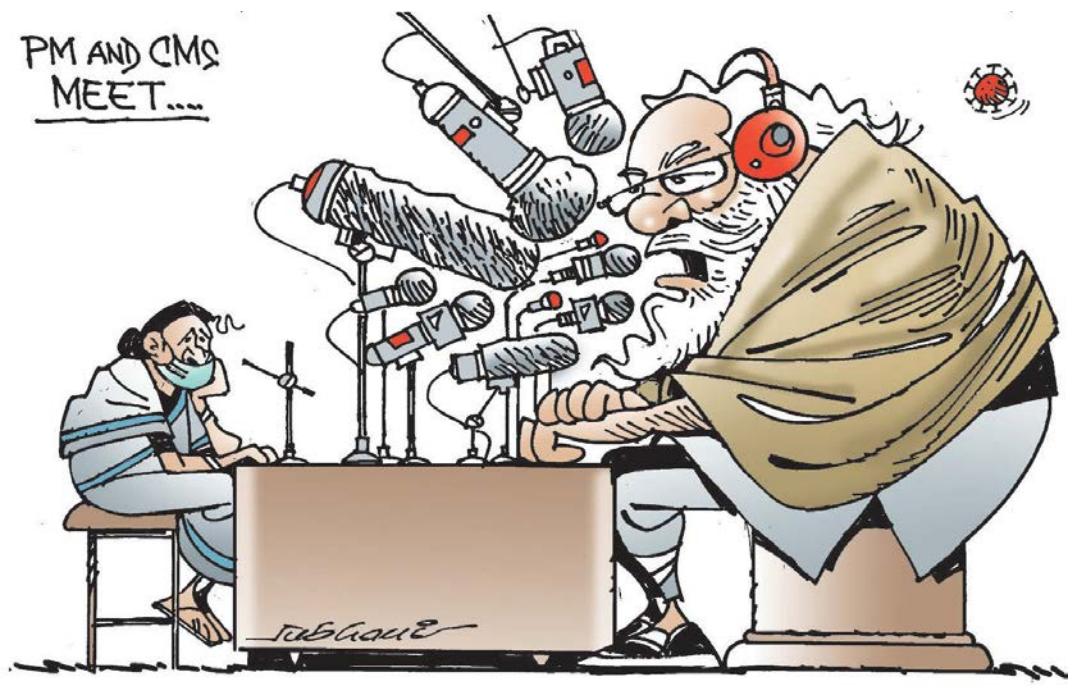
And some part of me has, I must admit, been more inclined to kiss than to *koti*, but depending on the halitosis and the bulk and body odour of the opposite number, I am partial to an indulgence in both. One waits for the British government to lift the ban on kissing.

But enough confession. Every day BoJo's office issues warnings that the relaxation of restrictions and lockdown caveats will be constantly reviewed. There is more than a hint in these communiques that, depending on the statistics of deaths and the spread of fresh infections, this may even result in a reversal of liberties. The "Indian variant" of Covid-19, as it's now universally known, has reportedly spread through 80 British "councils" (municipalities) and "the science" is still trying to determine whether the vaccines we have can stop it generating a third wave.

This science tells us that it is more virulent and spreads faster than its uncles, the original, South African or Kent "variant".

The nation watches this space in trepidation. Will the pubs shut again? Will hugging be banned?

PM AND CMS MEET...



Subhani

The rise of anti-science as Covid-19 cases exploding

Patralekha
Chatterjee

Dev 360

These sentiments and views are not totally novel. What is new is their growing social acceptability.

National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, is the author of *Preventing the Next Pandemic: Vaccine Diplomacy in a Time of Anti-Science*. "We must mount a counteroffensive and build new infrastructure to combat anti-science, just as we have for these other more widely recognised and established threats," he said.

But this has not led to a push for pro-science policies that prioritises evidence-based medicine in these troubled times. Quite the opposite, in fact.

In Meerut, a politician from the ruling BJP has been walking down the streets, blowing a conch shell, and performing a "havan" which he claims will stop the spread of the virus. Behind him, there are people and a bicycle cart with a heap of combustible material, and billowing clouds of smoke.

Gopal Das Sharma, the politician, is not one who shirks the TV camera.

Between blowing conch shells and rallying the faithful, he found time to tell one news channel: "We have mixed 'havan' material with cow dung cakes and ghee of *desi* cow, stems of the mango tree, camphor, etc. to stop the spread of the virus."

What is new is their growing social acceptability.

What is new is their growing social acceptability. That is, in part, linked to the kind of politics on the rise across the country.

Earlier, what was not said so brazenly in public can be said now, with scant consequences.

What is happening in India is part of a global trend. Experts have noted that the rise of populism and the emergence of anti-science politics are occurring simultaneously in many places, raising questions about their possible connection.

Many analysts see this as a natural fallout of the popular dislike for science because science is meant to be evidence-based, objective and demands proof of statements, and it clashes with populist politics which relies greatly on emotion and fears that resonate with a lot of people.

"Anti-science" has emerged as a dominant and highly lethal force, and one that threatens global security, as much as do terrorism and nuclear proliferation," wrote Peter Hotez, in a recent *Scientific American* article. Hotez, a vaccine scientist at the

National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, is the author of *Preventing the Next Pandemic: Vaccine Diplomacy in a Time of Anti-Science*. "We must mount a counteroffensive and build new infrastructure to combat anti-science, just as we have for these other more widely recognised and established threats," he said.

Which brings one back to the question — what does one do if the political leadership itself chooses to overlook public statements which are blatantly anti-science? And how does one advocate for rational thought in a society where faith holds the trump card?

There is no short and easy answer. But one must continue to call out pseudo-science, and one must do that in a language and idiom that is accessible to most people in this country.

Perhaps India's successful fight against polio offers a lesson. It was not just the vaccine that did it.

It was consistent communication with communities and engagement with a wide array of influencers. This included religious leaders.

During the battle against polio, vaccine resistance had varied from the overt to the covert in several districts. I remember several conversations with polio vaccine-refusers. Many were from marginalised communities who had never really had access to other basic services, such as clean water. They were wary of the vaccine and were easily manipulated into believing absurd conspiracy theories.

However, eventually, even the vaccine refusers became acceptors. The change came about through sustained efforts which mostly focused on communities. We need to remember that.

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com.

LETTERS

KCR'S VISITS

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is putting lives of his team at risk with his image building exercise. At the same time he wants the public to embrace a four-hour limit to finish their daily chores and be penalised by seizure of vehicles. How fair is this?

Prabhaker N.
Hyderabad

LOCKDOWN TIME

The lockdown relaxation period is insufficient for people to complete their chores. It must be reworked from 8 am to 2 pm for the benefit of people from all walks of life. Hope the Chief Minister will take the necessary steps.

S.M. Arif Hussain
Hyderabad

Vendors who sell vegetables in weekly bazaars are worst affected by lockdown. The police are forcing them to move out by 9.30 am everywhere. The government should facilitate the sale of the unsold vegetables.

Surisetti Pankaj Kumar
Secunderabad

AYUSH CLAIMS

The claims of AYUSH director in the absence of rigorous evaluation of the drugs as per internationally laid-down procedures and peer-reviewed publications, is appalling (*AYUSH has cure for black fungus, claims director, DC, May 21*). It is unfortunate that an organisation with a ₹3,000 crore budget is bracing to use Covid-19 patients as guinea pigs for barely tested drugs and possibly justify its existence.

M. Saleemuddin
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Everest expedition abandoned

KATHMANDU, MAY 21. The international Everest expedition, which had been dogged by a series of mishaps, has finally abandoned its attempt to scale the world's highest peak.

A message received here from the expedition today said that two British climbers, Don Whillans and Dougal Haston, who were trying to make the assault on the peak from the unconquered south-west face, had failed in their attempt.

The Nepalese Foreign Ministry, received the message from the expedition.



SHORT TAKES**ROAD SAFETY
EXPERT SUCCUMBS
TO CORONAVIRUS**

New Delhi, May 21: Renowned road safety and injury prevention expert Dinesh Mohan succumbed to the Coronavirus infection on Friday, according to IIT Delhi director V. Ramgopal Rao.

"Dinesh Mohan was under treatment at St Stephen's Hospital after he tested positive for Covid-19. He passed away on Friday morning due to a cardiac arrest. He was a stalwart in areas of road safety and transportation, and made immense contributions to research in the area," Rao said. Mohan, 75, was an Honorary Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi.

Noted historian Irfan Habib took to Twitter to express his condolences. "Extremely sad to know that Professor Dinesh Mohan, dear friend and former IIT Delhi faculty succumbed to Covid. Lots of memories of serious discussions on history and science. My sincere condolences to his wife Peggy Mohan," he said.

Congress MP and former Union minister Jairam Ramesh tweeted, "Deeply saddened. Had known him for over 40 years. Passionately devoted to S&T in India including scientific temper which is all but vanishing".

Mohan, who was one of the world's leading experts on traffic safety issues and human tolerance to injury, is known for his work in areas of advancing motorcycle helmet design.

**TEMPLE FOR
'CORONA DEVI'
COMES UP IN TN**

Coimbatore, May 21: As the severe second wave of Covid-19 sweeps across the country, not sparing this district too, a 'Coronadevi temple' has come up on the outskirts of the city, thanks to a murti, seeking divine intervention to put an end to the raging pandemic.

This is in line with a 'Plague Mariamman Temple', dedicated by the faithful to the deity Amman seeking her protection earlier when plague wreaked havoc about 150 years ago.

The Kamatchipuri Adheenam has built a temple near Irugur on the outskirts and consecrated an idol, naming it as Goddess Corona Devi.

The 1.5 foot tall black stone idol was consecrated at the temple in the Mutt premises recently and daily prayers will be held seeking divine intervention to save the people from the deadly disease, for 48 days, sources in the Adheenam said.

It was not for the first time such a temple has come up, as when plague spread across the district taking a heavy toll more than a century ago, an idol of Mariamman was installed and people started offering prayers.

The place turned into a temple and came to be known as "Plague Mariamman Temple".

Only priests and murti officials will be allowed inside the Corona Devi temple in view of the pandemic and to maintain social distancing norms and the place will be strictly out of bounds for the public, they said.

**02 LEAKAGE AT
SILIGURI HOSPITAL
TRIGGERS PANIC**

Siliguri, May 21: Oxygen leakage at the North Bengal Medical College and Hospital in Siliguri triggered panic among Covid patients and their families on Friday morning, officials said.

The incident happened around 9.15 am when the leakage was detected in a pipe supplying oxygen to the Critical Care Unit (CCU) at the Covid block, hospital superintendent Dr Sanjay Mallick said.

The oxygen clouded the room where the leak was detected, triggering panic among the patients who thought that fire may have broken out.

The Covid patients started running out in panic amid the chaos, while large number of people, including their family members, gathered outside the block. Soon, the fire brigade was informed and two fire tenders were rushed from the Matigara fire station, officials said. The situation was brought under control after stopping the oxygen supply for some time, they said.

There were seven patients in the CCU at that time. They were safely evacuated to another block, Mallick said.

No one was injured and no other sorts of damage were reported due to the incident, officials said. The leakage was repaired and normalcy returned, they added.

Modi chokes with emotion while thanking doctors, frontline workers

PM pitches for 'doorstep treatment' for Covid; Warns against new challenge of black fungus

DC CORRESPONDENT
with inputs from
agencies

NEW DELHI, MAY 21

choking with emotion. He took a pause to regain composure and said, "I pay my respects to all these people and offer condolences to their near and dear ones." He lauded the efforts of doctors, nurses, technicians, ward boys and ambulance drivers.

The Centre has asked states to effectively use telemedicine and mobile dispensaries for diagnostics and treatment in rural, tribal and peri urban areas since the Coronavirus has started spreading outside urban areas and entering rural households.

The Prime Minister warned against the "new challenge of Black Fungus" saying the country must be prepared to fight the rare and potentially fatal condition. He added vaccinations should be a mass movement in the long battle against the "unseen and shifting enemy" Covid-19.

Centre says it is making efforts to ramp up supply and availability of Amphotericin-B anti-fungal drug for treatment of Black Fungus disease. Five additional manufacturers have been licensed

The Prime Minister was interacting with doctors and officials of his constituency Varanasi on Covid management. The Prime Minister choked with emotion as he talked about the loss of lives during the second wave of the pandemic.

"This pandemic is so big that despite all the efforts we have not been able to save the lives of our family members. This virus has snatched so many of our near ones," Modi said,



PM Narendra Modi interacts with doctors and frontline workers on Covid-19 situation in Varanasi, through video conferencing, in Delhi on Friday. — PTI

to manufacture the drug within the country while production by existing five manufacturers is also being substantially ramped up.

The Prime Minister also hailed the initiative of micro containment zones and appreciated the home delivery of medicines. He requested the health workers to make this campaign as comprehensive as possible in rural areas. He said bringing doctors, labs and e-marketing companies together to provide a telemedicine facility named 'Kashi Kavach' is also a very innovative initiative. "We have to fight a long battle," he added.

The overall fresh Covid-19 cases remained under 3 lakh for fifth consecutive day as about 2.60 lakh new cases were detected in the last 24 hours. However, the death toll shot up to 4,209 after a brief decline.

In Delhi, the cases dropped to 3,009 for the first time since early April and positivity rate fell to 4.76%. It was expected Delhi may ease up lockdown a bit after positivity rate falls below 5% but the city still has high number of deaths - 252 on Friday. However, some states like Kerala, Karnataka have decided to extended lockdowns.

Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa

on Friday announced extension of lockdown from May 24 to June 7 for a period of 14 days to contain the spread of Coronavirus in the state.

The stringent restrictions are already in effect from May 10 and was supposed to end on May 24. However, due to the new order, they would end on the morning of June 7.

"We have taken some decisions regarding the lockdown after discussing them with our senior ministers, chief secretary and other officials," the Chief Minister told reporters.

"Heeding to the suggestions of experts, we have decided to extend the stringent restriction from May 24 to June 7," he said.

"In view of public health and the suggestions of the experts, the restrictions have been extended, and we expect people's cooperation," Yediyurappa said.

"I appeal to the people to abide by the Covid appropriate behaviour of wearing facemasks in public places, maintaining hygiene and social distancing in public places," he said.

The Karnataka government had put restrictions since April 7 but imposed

strict restrictions from May 10 when the Covid cases and fatalities did not abate.

Karnataka on Friday reported 32,218 fresh infections and 353 fatalities taking the total infections and deaths due to Covid to 23,67,742 and 24,207 respectively.

The state has 5,14,238 active cases.

Similarly, the Kerala government on Friday announced a one week extension of the statewide lockdown till May 30, to contain the spread of the pandemic.

The state has been under lockdown since May 8 after weekend restrictions and lockdown-like curbs imposed earlier failed to create any desired impact in terms of the daily case-load of the infected persons.

On May 16, the lockdown was extended to May 23.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan also announced the withdrawal of "triple lockdown" measures being implemented in three districts - Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Thrissur from May 16.

However, the "triple lockdown" will be continued in Malappuram district.

**ODISHA TRIBALS
FINALLY AGREE
TO UNDERGO
COVID-19 TESTS**

**AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC**

RAYAGADA, MAY 21

The Dongoria Bondh tribals living in Niyamgiri hills in Odisha's Rayagada district have finally agreed to undergo Covid-19 test.

Initially, members of this tribal group who normally live on the hilltops of Niyamgiri stretching nearly 60 km, and come down the hills on a very few occasions to buy their essentials were reluctant for swab tests due to their unique lifestyle in the lap of nature and inadequate exposure to modern medicines and healthcare systems.

The development came following persistent efforts of five days by the Rayagada district administration to spread awareness about the Covid-19 pandemic among the Dongarias.

The Dongoria Kondhs belong to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).

"After persistent persuasion by the Rayagada district administration, two testing camps were organised on Friday in two panchayats of Kalyansinghpur block and swab samples were collected from the tribal people. We were able to convince the Dongria Kondhs by engaging them in discussion with the support of local community leaders," said Rayagada sub-collector Pratap Chandra Pradhan.

The sub-collector informed that Anganwadi workers would do regular thermal screening of the people suffering from cough, cold and fever in the area.

"We are hopeful that people of the area will continue to cooperate with us from now onwards," he said.

Earlier, the tribals had refused to undergo Covid-19 tests citing that nothing would happen to them as they are protected by their deity Niyam Raja (King of Niyamgiri Hills).

"We don't know anything about Covid-19. Nothing will happen to us as we worship our deity Niyam Raja. He protects us," Niyamgiri Surakhyu Manch president Sakaka Ulaka had said justifying the reason behind their hesitation to the test.

Sakaka was made aware of the pandemic by the district administration and he in turn played a crucial role in convincing his fellowmen to take Covid tests.

The local administration also initiated awareness drives for the Dongarias about Covid-appropriate behaviour.

According to sources, a total of 19 Dongaria Kondhs have got Covid-19 infected.

(Left) The DEVELOPMENT came following persistent efforts of five days by the Rayagada district administration to spread awareness about the raging Coronavirus pandemic among the Dongarias.

Lives at risk



(Above) A huge crowd appears after authorities announce the reopening of the market from 9 am to 3 pm amidst a Coronavirus-induced lockdown in Ahmedabad on Friday.

(Left) Volunteers serve food to the needy during a pandemic-related curfew in Jammu on Friday.

— PTI

GREAT LOSS

Environmentalist had fasted 84 days, tonsured head to protest construction of Tehri dam

Bahuguna, known for Chipko movement, passes away

Dehradun, May 21: Noted environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna died of Covid-19 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh on Friday.

Bahuguna breathed his last at 12.05 pm, AIIMS Director Ravikant said.

He is survived by his wife Vimla, two sons and a daughter.

The 94-year-old environmentalist known for his pioneering role in the Chipko movement was under treatment for Covid-19 at the hospital for over a week.

Admitted at the hospital on May 8 after testing positive for the infection, Bahuguna had been critical since last night with his oxygen level dropping drastically.

"It was he who made the

Chipko movement a movement of the masses," Rawat said. The void created by his passing away in the field of environment conservation can never be filled, the Chief Minister said.

He prayed for peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family to bear the loss.

Born on January 9 in Tehri district, Bahuguna is considered the pioneer of the Chipko movement of the 1970s which he had launched along with dedicated environment conservationists like Gaura Devi to save forests.

Started by Bahuguna at the foothills of the Himalayas in 1973 in Uttarakhand, then a part of Uttar Pradesh, the Chipko movement was a

forest conservation movement in India.

It later became a rallying point for many environmental movements all over the world.

Conferred with the Padma Vibhushan and many other honours for his pioneering work in the field of environment protection, Bahuguna also led the protests against the construction of the Tehri dam.

He had observed an 84-day fast and got his head tonsured in protest against the project which displaced a huge population rendering them homeless. He dug in his heels in protest against the project till the last minute. He had lost his own ancestral home due to the construction of the dam.

He also protested against the erstwhile Tehri royals which landed him in jail. He was also one of the most vocal critics of luxury tourism in the Himalayas and the construction of hotels which according to him did irreparable harm to the fragile Himalayan ecology.

He undertook several padyatras to create awareness among people about conserving the Himalayan ecology and environment.

He was a big critic of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Expressing his condolence at Bahuguna's death, another noted environmentalist Chandi Prasad Bhatt described him as a "brilliant social worker".

"His demise is painful for all of us," Bhatt said.

In this file image, noted environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna leads a day-long fasting prayer and mass spinning organised by various Gandhian organisations to protest against the attack on the minorities in many parts of India, at Gandhi Samadhi in New Delhi. — PTI

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SHORT TAKES

**INDIA DIDN'T
BACK OUR ACTION
PUBLICLY: ISRAEL**

SRIDHAR
KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

Hours after an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas came into effect after a high-voltage military campaign by the west Asian nation, Israeli deputy ambassador in India Rony Yedidia Clein on Friday said that there had not been public support from the Indian government for the Israeli actions in Gaza compared to some other nations but added that there was an "understanding" of the Israeli actions by Indian government officials as well as a "great amount of support" from the Indian public.

Evading a direct question on whether Israel was disappointed with India's official position regarding the recent developments in Gaza, Ms. Clein welcomed the condemnation by India at the UN of the rocket-firings from Gaza by Hamas, adding that ties with India were "getting stronger".

She also said that the kin of the 31-year-old Indian woman Soumya Santosh, killed in Israel recently by a Hamas-fired rocket, would be eligible to receive compensation insurance benefits, adding that Israelis considered Ms. Santosh as one of them.

The envoy said that Israel had accepted an Egyptian initiative for an "unconditional bilateral ceasefire" with Hamas according to which "Hamas cannot fire at us and we cannot fire at Hamas".

**STAN SWAMY SAYS
HE PREFERENCES 'SLOW
DEATH' IN JAIL**

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC
MUMBAI, MAY 21

Father Stan Swamy, the 84-year-old tribal rights activist on Friday interacted personally with the judges of the Bombay High Court via video conferencing and refused to get admitted to state-run JJ Hospital. He told the court he would rather prefer staying in Taloja prison where he is currently lodged. He requested the court to consider his interim bail application, as he wanted to go to his hometown Ranchi.

The court adjourned the hearing on his bail plea till June 7, after his lawyer sought time to explain to Swamy that he could be admitted to a private hospital pending his bail application.

As per court's direction he was produced before the court via video conferencing from Taloja jail in Navi Mumbai. The judges wanted to speak to him personally to know his health condition.

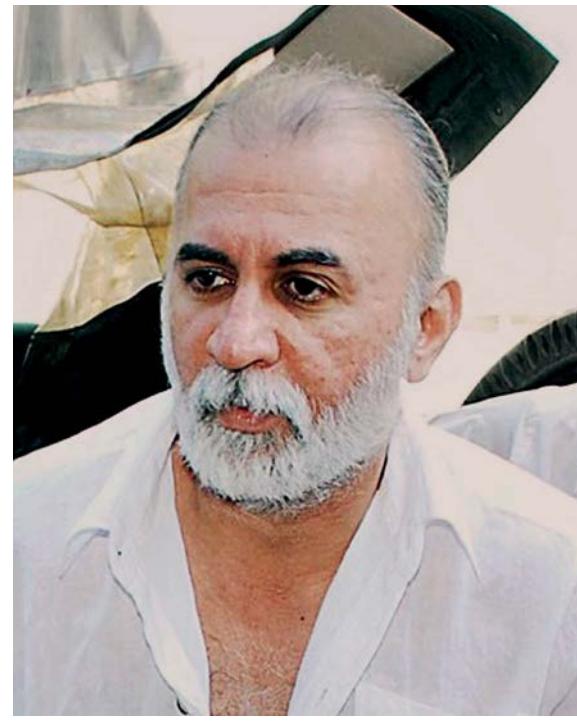
During his interaction with the vacation bench of Justice S.J. Kathawalla and Justice S.P. Tavade, Father Swamy said that his health has progressively deteriorated in the eight months he has spent at Taloja Prison. He also alleged that being in Taloja has brought him to a situation where he can neither eat, write, bathe or go for a walk by himself.

Currently Swamy is in a prison hospital and when judges asked him about shifting him at JJ Hospital, he said he didn't want to get admitted at this hospital. He said he has been there thrice and he knew the set-up there.

He said he would "rather suffer, possibly die very shortly if this were to go on. I would prefer this, than be admitted at the JJ Hospital. It is a very difficult moment for me," he said.

Goa court acquits journalist Tarun Tejpal of rape charges

Acquittal likely to deter other victims from reporting cases, feel activists



Tarun Tejpal said the last seven-and-a-half years had been traumatic for his family as they dealt with the catastrophic fallout of the allegations against him. — PTI

family have unwaveringly followed every mandate of due procedure and abided by every principle of law as laid down in the Constitution.

We have also endeavoured to uphold every norm of decency expected in a case like this, he said. It is with profound respect that I thank this court for its rigorous, impartial and fair trial and for its thorough examination of the CCTV footage and other empirical material on record, Tejpal added.

He also remembered his late advocate Gomes as a dynamic and brilliant lawyer. The Goa police had registered an FIR against Tejpal in November 2013, following which he was arrested.

● **THE GOA** police had registered an FIR against Tejpal in November 2013, following which he was arrested.

● **HE HAS** been out on bail since May 2014.

ment), 354-B (assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe), 376(2)(f) (person in a position of authority over women, committing rape) and 376(2)(k) (rape by a person in a position of control).

The Goa crime branch had filed a charge sheet against Tejpal, who has been out on bail since May 2014. He faced trial under IPC sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement), 354 (assault or criminal force with intent to outrage modesty), 354-A (sexual harass-

ment), 354-B (assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe), 376(2)(f) (person in a position of authority over women, committing rape) and 376(2)(k) (rape by a person in a position of control).

Several women's rights activists on Friday questioned the grounds on which journalist Tarun Tejpal was acquitted in a rape case and said the Goa court's verdict would deter other women from coming forward to report cases of sexual assault

CM says govt to challenge verdict

Panaji, May 21: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Friday said the state government will challenge in the high court journalist Tarun Tejpal's acquittal in a 2013 rape case by a district court here.

A sessions court at Mapusa on Friday acquitted Tejpal of sexually assaulting his former female colleague in an elevator of a five star resort in Goa.

Talking to reporters, Sawant said, We will not tolerate any injustice to be meted out to the women in Goa. We will challenge the district court's order before the high court soon

in this case."

He said he has personally discussed the issue with the public prosecutor and the investigating officer in the case about challenging the verdict in the high court.

Sawant claimed that there was enough evidence against the accused.

Earlier, Talking to reporters, public prosecutor Francis Tavora said the session's court order would be challenged in the high court.

As soon as we get the detailed written order, we will approach the high court challenging it, he said. — PTI

and abuse.

Some of the activists pointed out that Tejpal had himself admitted to attempting to assault the woman and tendered apology, and said the judgement is disappointing and demotivating.

Women rights activist and cyber safety expert Akancha Srivastava said Tejpal himself admitted that he attempted to assault her.

"Half of these cases don't even go in court and those which reach court and are fought and then to have this judgement is extremely demotivating. When a person has already accepted that he has misbehaved, then on what grounds has he been let off. If he is saying he did them he did it," she said.

"When we set precedent with such verdicts then we deter more and more victims from coming forward to filing cases and fighting it, she said.

All India Progressive Women's Association secretary Kavita Krishnan said the judicial system lets down another woman

and the survivor had to go through hell.

"The judicial system lets down another woman. No wonder women do not want to file a complaint with the police, she said in a tweet.

Krishnan said Tejpal

penned several apologies admitting to the incident.

Goa police took suo motu notice, got FIR filed. Since then the survivor has been dragged through hell, she tweeted.

The hell of being yanked around by police, courts, repeatedly to Goa. The hell of having this case tied to her neck like an albatross. The hell of systematic slander campaigns against her by TT (Tarun Tejpal) and Friends. Her integrity being smeared in court and in social parties," Krishnan said in another tweet.

She said at the end of it all, the courageous woman did not get even a tiny taste of justice. Rape trials are deeply violent towards survivors.

Yet again, a survivor has been demeaned, humiliated, and let down, she tweeted. — PTI



Veena George takes oath as Kerala's health minister before Governor Arif Mohammad Khan (not in picture) during swearing-in ceremony on Thursday. — PTI

Veena begins stint as minister with homage to Lini

Thiruvananthapuram, May 21:

A day after taking oath, Kerala's new health minister Veena George on Friday began her new stint paying rich tributes to nurse Lini Puthussery, who had died after contracting Nipah while treating a patient at a hospital in Kozhikode three years ago.

A mother of two, the young nurse succumbed to the virus on May 21, 2018. In her Facebook page, George said sister Lini's sacrifice and frontline fight against the contagious disease would be remembered forever.

The minister also said she called up Lini's husband Sajeesh over phone on her third death anniversary on Friday and hailed the family's donation of food articles to the panchayat's community kitchen marking the painful occasion.

"Keralites can not forget MLA in Kerala, K. Krishnankutty, will be the cabinet minister in the Kerala government, JD(S) leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy said in Bengaluru. "Shri K Krishnankutty, an MLA of Kerala JDS, will represent @JanataDal_S in the Kerala state govt.cabinet," Kumaraswamy tweeted. — PTI

Ulfa-I releases ONGC employee

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, MAY 21

where he is expected to be released.

Refusing to divulge to whom ONGC employee would be handed over by Ulfa-I cadres, security sources said that they have already reached Nagaland.

The Ulfa-I chief's announcement to release the abducted ONGC employee came soon after Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's appeal on Thursday and welcome to Ulfa-I's unilateral ceasefire because of the pandemic.

Referring that he was appealing to Ulfa-I chief as an Assamese not as chief minister because the wife of abducted ONGC employee and parents are suffering immensely and are in distress situation, the chief minister also welcomed the unilateral ceasefire.

He on Thursday said, "We welcome any positive step, but a ceasefire will need ground rules for implementation (and) we look forward to a more solid indication from the outfit."

4 Narada accused in 'house arrest', larger bench set up

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, MAY 21

Four heavyweight Narada stinging bribery accused, who spent four nights in judicial custody since their arrests by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on May 17, were placed under 'house arrest' at their respective residences by the Calcutta High Court on Friday after difference of opinions on their bail plea between two judges of a division bench pushed the case to a larger bench of five judges for hearing next week.

Two among the four accused - Firhad Hakim and Subrata Mukherjee - were allowed by the division bench of acting Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Arjit Banerjee following their lawyers' prayer to perform at least their duties as the cabinet

es, the division bench ordered adding that neither the duo can step out of their residences nor any government official can meet them physically.

These set of rules will be applicable to two other accused - Madan Mitra, TMC MLA of Kamarhati and former Kolkata Mayor Sovan Chatterjee too.

While Mr Hakim returned home from the Presidency Central Jail in the evening, the three other accused however remained admitted to Woodburn Block of SSKM Hospital due to their ill-health.

A larger bench of five judges was constituted by the high court for hearing the case on May 24. It includes Justice Harish Tandon, Justice Indra Prasanna Mukherji and Justice Soumen Sen apart from acting CJ and Justice Banerjee.

Cyclone 'Yaas' likely to intensify: IMD

Bengal coasts around 26th May morning," the IMD said. The landfall location of the system was yet to be predicted by the IMD. The system will be named as Cyclone Yaas when it intensifies into cyclonic storm.

Meanwhile, the Centre has asked Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar Islands to ensure that health facilities are stocked with essential medicines and supplies to meet any exigencies in the wake of Cyclone Yaas which is expected to make a landfall later this month.

Apart from the impact of cyclone in Odisha and West Bengal, there may be widespread rains in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and districts of the east coast that may cause flooding, it said.

Govt objects to Twitter's 'manipulated' tag for Patra

New Delhi, May 21: Hours after a BJP spokesperson's tweets on an alleged Congress 'toolkit' on the Centre's Covid-19 response were labelled as 'manipulated media', the government on Friday asked Twitter to remove the tag, saying the social media platform cannot pass judgment on a matter under investigation.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT wrote a "strong communication" to Twitter registering objection to the use of 'manipulated media' tag while the matter is under investigation.

The 'manipulated media' tagging appeared "prejudiced, prejudiced" and a "deliberate attempt to colour the investigation process." — PTI

law enforcement agency and "influence fair investigation process", sources said, quoting from the communication. When contacted, a Twitter spokesperson declined to comment on the issue.

The sharp rebuke came after Twitter labelled as "manipulated media" a tweet by Patra on the alleged toolkit prepared by the Congress to target the Modi government on its handling of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The government has asserted that investigation will determine the veracity of the content and not Twitter, and asked the microblogging platform not to interfere in the investigation process.

— PTI

Singh said, adding that there was no other loss of life or damage to property.

The pilot's body was found about two kilometres from the crash site, barely 200 metres from a couple of big 'havelis'.

Had the aircraft crashed over these houses, it could have caused heavy casualties, Singh said.

He said the pilot appeared to have deployed a parachute in a bid to land safely. It seems he broke his neck upon impact on the ground, he added.

According to the information we got, the aircraft had taken off from Suratgarh in Rajasthan and caught fire. It was raining heavily at the

time," Singh said, adding that there was no other loss of life or damage to property.

The pilot's body was found about two kilometres from the crash site, barely 200 metres from a couple of big 'havelis'.

Had the aircraft crashed over these houses, it could have caused heavy casualties, Singh said.

There was an aircraft accident last night involving a Bison aircraft of IAF in the western sector. The pilot, Sqn Ldr Abhinav Choudhary, sustained fatal injuries. IAF condoles the tragic loss and stands firmly with the bereaved family," the IAF said in a tweet. — PTI

Jagraon near Ludhiana and was on the way back after a training sortie when it crashed, Singh said.

He added that IAF officials from Halwara and Bathinda with medical teams and ambulances had reached the crash site, about 12 km from Baghapatra town on the Mudki road.

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SHORT TAKES

TAIWAN 'GROSSLY INTERFERED' IN OUR AFFAIRS: HK

Hong Kong: Hong Kong's government on Friday said it has pulled all of its staff out of Taiwan and accused the island's government of having "grossly interfered" in the semi-autonomous Chinese city's internal affairs.

It said the Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office will remain closed while it closely monitors developments and considers the way forward "in a holistic manner." Relations between the sides have deteriorated in recent years as Beijing tightens its control over Hong Kong and ratchets up diplomatic, military and economic pressure on Taiwan, a self-governing democracy China claims as its own territory, to be brought under its control by force if necessary.

The future of Taiwan's de facto consulate in Hong Kong, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, also appears bleak, with Hong Kong refusing to issue visas to several of its officials, reportedly because they refused to sign declarations endorsing Beijing's contention that Taiwan belongs to China.

BOMB TARGETING ISLAMIST LEADER KILLS 6 IN PAK

Quetta: Six people were killed and several others were wounded on Friday when a powerful roadside bomb exploded near a vehicle carrying a local leader of an Islamist political party in Pakistan, police and a government spokesman said.

It was unclear who was behind the attack in Chaman, a town in the southwestern Baluchistan province.

Local police chief Abdul Bashir said the attack took place when Abdul Qadir, a local leader of a faction of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party, was on his way to attend a rally in support of the Palestinian people.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack and police said they were still investigating. Liaquat Shahwani, a spokesman for the provincial government in Baluchistan, tweeted a condemnation of the blast. It came as Pakistanis across the country were gathering for anti-Israel rallies.

PAK BUYS DILIP, RAJ ANCESTRAL HOMES FOR RS 2.30 CR

Peshawar: Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government has handed over ₹2.30 crore to Peshawar's Deputy Commissioner for purchasing the ancestral houses of legendary Bollywood actors Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor located in the heart of this city to convert them into museums.

The amount was released to the Deputy Commissioner by the Archaeology Department as final notices were issued to the owners of both the historic buildings for their procurement.

The DC Peshawar is in close contacts with the owners to find out an amicable settlement hampering the process of taking over custody of the buildings by the government authorities. Director Archaeology KPK Abdus Samad said the government would take custody of both the houses shortly and would start work to restore the structures in its original shape.

JAPANESE FREED FROM MYANMAR: INMATES ABUSED

Tokyo: A Japanese journalist who was freed from a Myanmar prison said on Friday that military and police interrogators repeatedly asked him about his friends, clients and made-up allegations.

Yuki Kitazumi, a freelance journalist and a former reporter for Japan's Nikkei business news, also said other inmates told him about abuses they suffered at the hands of authorities, including repeated beatings during nonstop, dayslong interrogations.

Kitazumi was detained at Yangon's notorious Insein prison for a month before his release and return to Japan last week. He was arrested by authorities while in the country covering the aftermath of the February's military coup and accused of offenses including violating the terms of his visa.

The ruling military junta said he was released as a gesture of friendship toward Japan.

Israel, Hamas opt for truce after 11 days

Toll crosses 240 in deadly escalation before global pressure to end violence in volatile region

Jerusalem, May 21: Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas have agreed to a ceasefire, bringing to an end 11 days of bombardment, the heaviest flare-up since the 2014 Gaza War, that has left over 240 people dead and threatened to destabilise the volatile region.

The ceasefire, which followed mounting pressure from the US, Egypt and other international brokers to halt the violence, came into effect on Friday.

The Israeli Security Cabinet voted to accept the ceasefire late Thursday as the Israeli south and Gaza remain inflamed.

The Security Cabinet unanimously agreed to a "mutual and unconditional" cessation of hostilities, according to statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Office.

"The political leadership emphasised that reality on the ground is what will determine if the campaign continues or not," the statement said.

Netanyahu did however inform the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to prepare for a scenario in which Hamas did not respond to Egypt's ceasefire offer.

Celebratory demonstrations took place in the Gaza Strip and West Bank as well, following the ceasefire. Fireworks, singing, and parades down the streets could be seen in uploaded videos on social media.

Fireworks, singing, and parades down the streets could be seen in uploaded videos on social media.

Both Israel and Hamas have claimed victory in the conflict that has left over 240 people, including an Indian caregiver in Israel, dead.

Soumya Santosh, 30, was killed in a rocket attack by Palestinian militants from Gaza.

Santosh, who hailed from Kerala's Idukki district, worked as a caregiver attending to an old woman at a house in the southern Israeli coastal city of Ashkelon.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi thanked US President Joe Biden for his role in the success of the Egyptian brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

He added that both see the urgency in managing the conflict between the parties through diplomacy. Biden hailed the ceasefire, saying both Palestinians and Israelis deserve to live safely.

"I believe the Palestinians and Israelis equally deserve to live safely and securely and to enjoy equal measures of freedom, prosperity, and democracy. My administration will continue our quiet, relentless diplomatic



Israeli security forces and Palestinian Muslim worshippers clash in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound, the third holiest site of Islam, on Friday. Fresh clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police broke out at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound today, in the latest unrest at the sensitive religious site police said. — AFP



Palestinian supporters of the Hamas movement celebrate after a ceasefire brokered by Egypt between Hamas and Israel, in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, on Friday. — AFP

UN: Gaza has significant trauma, medical needs

Geneva, May 21: The World Health Organisation has tallied "significant trauma needs" in Palestinian areas, where at least 243 people have been killed during 11 days of fighting between Palestinians and Israelis. WHO spokeswoman Margaret Harris said a total of 8,538 people had been injured across Palestinian areas during the violence, and 30 health facilities in Gaza had been damaged — with one clinic fully destroyed and

another sustaining significant damage.

She said damage to infrastructure was impeding the access of ambulances.

The comments to a UN briefing in Geneva came as humanitarian aid workers assessed the fallout from the latest fighting between Hamas militant fighters and Israeli forces.

Fabrizio Carboni, regional director for the Near and Middle East at the International Committee of the Red Cross, estimated there were "several hundred" pieces of unexploded ordnance strewn about in Gaza and said medical supplies were a pressing need.

Matthias Schmale, Gaza director for UNRWA, the UN aid agency for Palestinian refugees, cited a "window" of several hours on Friday during which aid and supplies could be brought in through the Kerem Shalom crossing point into Gaza. — AP

Indonesia irked by Israel strikes

● **THE PROTESTERS** marched from several mosques after Friday prayers to a major street outside the embassy, which was under heavy police guard.

suits, were deployed to secure the embassy and the nearby presidential palace and United Nations mission. Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, does not have formal diplomatic relations with Israel and there is no Israeli embassy in the country. It has long been a strong supporter of the Palestinians, and President Joko Widodo has condemned the Israeli airstrikes.

Authorities with loudspeakers warned protesters to maintain social distancing during the demonstration, organised by the Islamic Student Association and several other groups, to prevent the spread of the Covid.

More than 3,000 police, many wearing hazmat

sticking to pledges to raise Germany's defense spending. "We will have to speak about Russia and Ukraine policy, and of course about China policy," she said.

"But this isn't measured in millimeters and grams — partnerships are based on trying to react to the other's thought processes and positions in order to find good compromises." Nord Stream 2 is owned by Russian state company Gazprom, with investment from several European companies. Domestic critics in Germany — including Laschet's main opponent in the election.

Merkel added that she and Biden will soon see each other at Group of Seven and NATO meetings. She noted that she and Armin Laschet, her party's candidate to succeed her after Germany's Sept. 26 election, advocate

for finding good compromises.

Nord Stream 2 is owned by Russian state company Gazprom, with investment from several European companies. Domestic critics in Germany — including Laschet's main opponent in the election.

— AP

Moon to nudge Biden for North Korea diplomacy

Washington, May 21: South Korean President Moon Jae-in hopes White House meeting with President Joe Biden will lead to renewed diplomatic urgency by the US on curbing North Korea's nuclear programme.

The White House, however, is signalling that it is taking a longer view on one of the most difficult foreign policy challenges Biden faces.

Ahead of Friday's meeting — just the second in-person foreign leader session for Biden because of the coronavirus pandemic — White House officials said North Korea will be a central focus of talks.

Coordination on vaccine distribution, climate change and regional security concerns spurred by China are also high on the president's list.

Asked at Thursday's White House briefing whether Biden was open to holding direct talks with Kim, as Trump did twice, press secretary Jen Psaki demurred. "I don't expect that to be top on his agenda," she said of Biden.

Still, Moon has made clear he plans to nudge Biden to renew diplomatic efforts with the North. "I will not be pressed by time or become impatient during the remainder of my term. However, if there is an opportunity to restart the clock of peace and advance the peace process on the Korean Peninsula, I will do everything I can," Moon said. — AP

Germany to discuss Russian ties with US

Berlin, May 21: Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday that Germany will discuss "necessary common ground" with the US on relations with Russia after President Joe Biden opted not to punish the company overseeing a Russia-Germany pipeline project that Washington opposes.

The Nord Stream 2 pipeline has been an irritant in relations between the US and Germany for years. Washington, which has battled to block it, argues that the pipeline — now 95% complete — threatens European energy security, heightens Russia's influence and

poses risks to Ukraine and Poland in bypassing both countries.

On Wednesday, the Biden administration imposed sanctions on Russian companies and ships for their work on the pipeline, but Biden angered many

Democratic and Republican lawmakers by opting not to punish Nord Stream 2 AG, the company overseeing the project. Waiving penalties regardingally Germany was "in line with our commitment to strengthen our Transatlantic relationships as a matter of national security," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement.

Merkel said on Thursday that "President Biden has now taken a step toward us in connection with the Nord Stream 2 conflict, where we have different views but where we will now talk further about

what the necessary common ground is in the relationship with Russia."

Speaking at an event organised by German broadcaster WDR in Berlin, she didn't elaborate on that common ground.

Asked what Biden will get from Germany or Europe for waiving sanctions, Merkel replied:

"Look, that's not how it works."

Merkel added that she and Biden will soon see each other at Group of Seven and NATO meetings. She noted that she and Armin Laschet, her party's candidate to succeed her after Germany's Sept. 26 election, advocate

for finding good compromises.

Nord Stream 2 is owned by Russian state company Gazprom, with investment from several European companies. Domestic critics in Germany — including Laschet's main opponent in the election.

— AP

Sense of touch drastically improves functionality of prosthetics

Mind control arm restores touch

Washington, May 21: Imagine being able to control a robotic arm from a distance, using only your mind. Now imagine being able to feel when its fingers grasp an object, as though it were your own hand.

US researchers published a study in the journal Science on Thursday about the world's first brain-computer interface that allowed a volunteer with paralysis from the chest down to accomplish

this very feat.

The team say their work demonstrates that adding a sense of touch drastically improves the functionality of prosthetics for quadriplegics, compared to having them rely on visual cues alone. "I am the first human in the world to have implants in the sensory cortex that they can use to stimulate my brain directly," Nathan Copeland, 34, said.

"And then I feel as if a

sensation is coming from

my actual hand."

In 2004, Copeland was in a car accident that left him with a serious spinal cord injury and without the use of his hands or his legs.

He volunteered to participate in scientific research, and six years ago underwent a major operation to have tiny electrodes implanted in his brain. Two sets of 88 electrodes the width of a strand of hair are arranged into "arrays" that resemble tiny hair

brushes and penetrate deep into the brain's motor cortex, which directs movement.

"When we're grabbing objects, we use this sense of touch very naturally to improve our ability to control," explained Gaunt.

The team developed an interface that is "bi-directional" — meaning not only can it "read" instructions from the brain and send them to the artificial limb, it can also "write" sensations from the device and transmit them back. — AP

SHORT TAKES

IMRAN LAUNCHES CHINESE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday inaugurated the country's first Chinese-assisted 1,100MW nuclear power plant in Karachi that coincided with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the all-weather allies.

Khan virtually performed the inauguration of the plant, formally known as Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (Kanupp-2 or K-2), which was built with the support of China.

The prime minister who attended the ceremony from Islamabad said the completion of the project was made possible due to the collaboration between Pakistan and China.

"The project will produce 1,100 megawatts of clean energy, which is particularly important for us as Pakistan is one of the 10 countries most affected by climate change," he said.

5 FEARED DEAD IN FIJI AFTER VIOLENCE ON BOAT

Wellington: Authorities said Friday they feared for the lives of five people who leapt from their fishing boat near Fiji earlier this week after alleged violence on board.

A sixth crew member who abandoned the vessel was found alive Thursday on an overturned life raft, while two more people who had remained aboard the fishing boat were due to be picked up by a military patrol boat.

The Fiji navy said it was working with police to sort through the series of events that had occurred aboard the Tiro II, a longline tuna boat.

The New Zealand military, which helped with the search, said it had been told the five missing crew had not been wearing life jackets.

Fiji navy Cdr Timoci Natuva said in emails that they were continuing to look for the missing crew but because they had been in the water since Monday and the weather had deteriorated, "the search will be really challenging."

HIZB UT-TAHRIR OPERATIVE HELD IN BANGLADESH

Dhaka: Bangladesh police have arrested a 30-year-old operative of the banned Hizb ut-Tahrir militant organisation for alleged terrorism related offences, according to a media report on Friday.

An Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) picked up HM Mehedi Rana from the Jamtoli area of Cox's Bazar on Wednesday, the *Dhaka Tribune* newspaper reported.

A case under the Anti-Terrorism Act has been filed against Rana at the Ukhia Police Station, it said.

Rana was staying in a house in Patuakhali in Cox Bazar, which is owned by one Abu Taher, a non-permanent resident in Saudi Arabia.

Speaking to the newspaper, ATU Assistant Superintendent of Police Wahida Parvin said Mehedi was spreading the outfit's message through the internet.

"Evidence of his involvement in the outfit's online conferences and campaigns has also been found," Parvin said.

NATO TO CONTINUE AFGHAN TRAINING DESPITE LEAVING

Brussels, May 21: NATO will continue to train Afghan special forces outside the country after it winds up 18 years of security work in conflict-torn Afghanistan in coming months, the military organisation's top civilian official said on Friday.

"As we end our military presence, we are opening a new chapter," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters in Paris after talks with French President Emmanuel Macron that were focused on preparations for a summit of the alliance's leaders next month. Stoltenberg said NATO's revised role would involve giving "advice and capacity-building support" to Afghan security institutions, as well as continued financial support."

He said NATO also plans "to provide military education and training outside Afghanistan, focusing on Special Operations Forces." It was not immediately clear where the training will take place.

China rejects EU plea on sanctions to save trade pact

Beijing, May 21: China on Friday rejected European Parliament demands that it lift sanctions against European Union legislators in order to save a trade deal between the two sides.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said the sanctions were justified and demanded that the European side "immediately stop interfering in China's internal affairs (and) abandon its confrontation approach."

"The unreasonable sanctions imposed by the EU have led to difficulties in China-EU relations. That is what China does not want to see, and the responsibility does not lie with the Chinese side," Zhao said at a daily briefing.

The European Parliament warned China on Thursday it won't ratify a long-awaited business investment deal as long as sanctions against European Union legislators remain in place.

China made its sanctions move after the EU, Britain, Canada and the United States launched coordinated sanctions against officials in China over human rights abuses in the far western Xinjiang region.

Among those targeted were five members of the European Parliament — Reinhard Butikofer, Michael Gahler, Raphael Glucksmann, Ilhan

Kyuchuk and Miriam Lexmann.

The investment accord was agreed to in principle in December and needs lawmakers' approval to take effect. In addition to the lifting of sanctions, legislators said they will take into account the human rights situation in China when deciding whether to approve the deal.

The EU hopes the agreement, known as CAI, will create new investment opportunities for European companies in China by ensuring they can compete on an equal footing, and help correct a trade imbalance.

China is now the EU's second-biggest trading partner behind the United States, and the bloc is China's largest trading partner, according to EU figures. China and Europe trade on average over 1 billion euros (\$1.2 billion) a day.

Zhao reiterated China's stance that the agreement is a "balanced and win-win deal that benefits both sides, rather than a gift or favor bestowed by one side to the other."

"China has always been sincere in promoting cooperation between the two sides, and we hope that the European side will move in the same direction as us, with less emotional outburst and more rational thinking, and make the right decision in their own interests," Zhao said. — AP



An icebreaker makes way for a cargo ship near a port on the Alexandra Land island near Nagurskoye, Russia. — AP file

US leads bid to halt Russia control over shipping in Arctic

Reykjavik, Iceland, May 21: The Biden administration is leading a campaign against Russian attempts to assert authority over Arctic shipping and reintroduce a military dimension to discussions over international activity in the area.

As Russia assumed the rotating chairmanship of the Arctic Council on Thursday, the US rallied other members to oppose Moscow's plans to set maritime rules in the Northern Sea Route, which runs from Norway to Alaska, and its desire to resume high-level military talks within the eight-nation bloc. Those talks were suspended in 2014 over Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The effort reflects growing concerns in Washington and among some NATO allies about a surge in Russian military and commercial activity in the region that is rapidly opening up due to the effects of climate change. Russia has expressed similar suspicion about NATO's motives.

At a meeting of Arctic Council foreign ministers in Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the group should maintain its focus on peaceful cooperation on environmental issues, maritime safety and the well-being of indigenous people in the region.

Blinken left Iceland after the meeting to deliver the same message in Greenland, which attracted international attention when former President Donald Trump expressed interest in buying the world's largest island from Denmark and later cancelled a state visit to Copenhagen when his interest was widely mocked and rejected by the Danes and Greenlanders alike.

Asked whether the Biden administration had dropped Trump's interest in the purchase of Greenland, Blinken replied: "I can confirm that is correct." — AP

TAIWANESE URGED TO STAY HOME AS CASES RISE

Taipei, May 21: Taiwan reported 312 new confirmed cases on Friday as part of its worst outbreak since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Health Minister Chen Shih-chung says most of the cases have a clear source, but 72 of the new ones were not apparently linked to the previous infections. Chen urged the island's residents to refrain from socialising and stay at home.

"On these two days, if everyone can reduce the flow of people to the lowest level, and if then we can gradually cut the line of transmission, it will be greatly helpful to us," he told a daily briefing.

— AFP

HISTORY REPEATS

Three centuries later, the parallels with the Coronavirus pandemic are uncanny

Old records show vax hesitancy to fight smallpox

Boston, May 21: A highly contagious disease originating far from America's shores triggers deadly outbreaks that spread rapidly, infecting the masses.

Shots are available, but a divided public agonises over getting jabbed.

Newly digitised records — including a minister's diary scanned and posted online by Boston's Congregational Library and Archives — are shedding fresh light on devastating outbreaks of small-

pox that hit the city in the 1700s.

And three centuries later, the parallels with the coronavirus pandemic are uncanny.

"How little we've changed," said CLA archivist Zachary Bodnar, who led the digitization effort, working closely with the New England Historic Genealogical Society.

"The fact that we're finding these similarities in the records of our past is a

very interesting parallel," Bodnar said in an interview. "Sometimes the more we learn, the more we're still the same, I guess."

Smallpox was eradicated, but not before it sickened and killed millions worldwide. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say the last natural outbreak of smallpox in the United States occurred in 1949. In 1980, the World Health Organization's

decision-making arm declared it eradicated, and no cases of naturally occurring smallpox have been reported since.

But in April 1721, after an English ship, the HMS Seahorse, brought it to Boston, it was a clear and present danger. By winter of 1722, it would infect more than half of the city's population of 11,000 and kill 850.

Much earlier outbreaks, also imported from Europe, killed Native

Americans indiscriminately in the 1600s. Now, digitized church records are helping to round out the picture of how the colonists coped when it was their turn to endure pestilence.

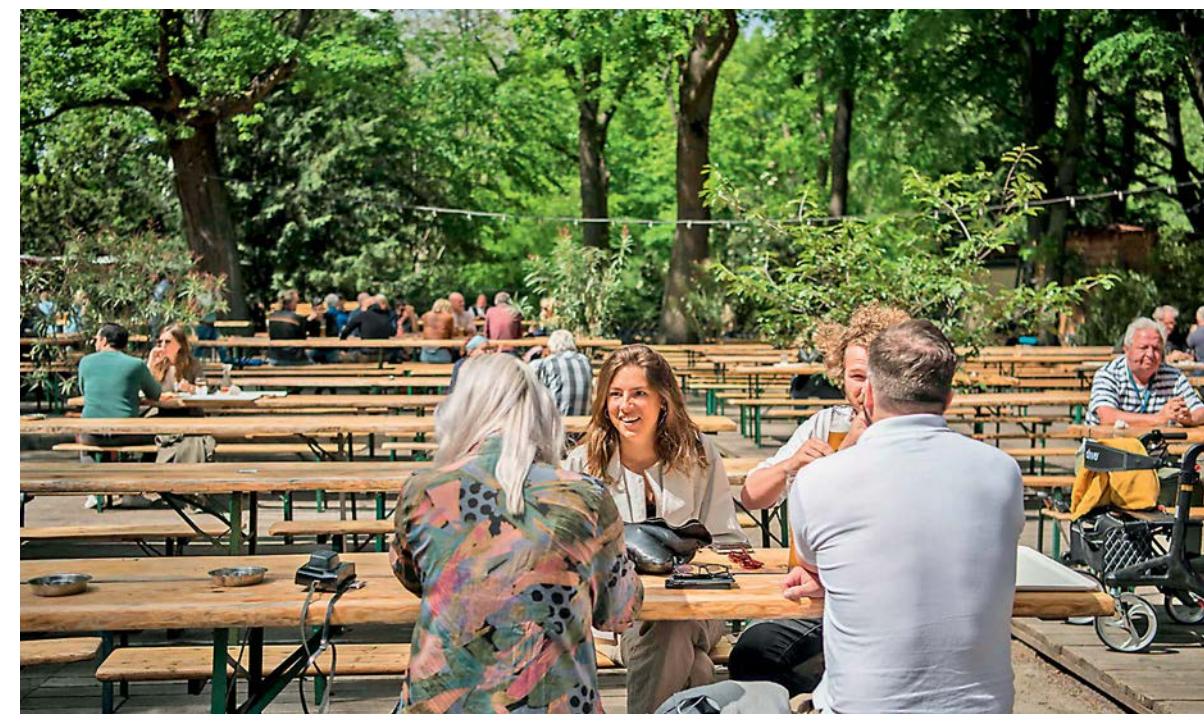
The world's first proper vaccination didn't occur until the end of that century, when an English country doctor named Edward Jenner inoculated an 8-year-old boy against smallpox in 1796.

— AP

Lord Day April 1, 1764. This the goodness of God I have this day had an opportunity to send a note of thanks to his house, to write a digitised copy of a page from a handwritten 18th century diary by the Rev. Ebenezer Storer, during a period of smallpox, in Boston, shows an April 1764 entry that includes a prayer Storer wrote weeks after arranging to have his own children inoculated. — AP

Vaccine firms pledge 3.5 bn doses for poorer countries

IMF proposes \$50 billion plan to end pandemic with vaccinations



Guests sit on benches during sunny weather at the beer garden 'Café am Neuen See' in Berlin on Friday as parts of the country began easing Covid-19 curbs. Many Germans were able to visit a beer garden, dine outdoors or go swimming for the first time in months on May 21 as parts of the country began easing Covid-19 curbs. — AFP

EU COUNTRIES COMPROMISE ON COVID-19 PASSES

Brussels, May 21: European Union citizens can start packing for summer vacations in the bloc's 27 nations without having to worry about quarantines: they should be able to travel freely across the EU.

European Union legislators and member countries found a compromise Thursday for launching Covid-19 certificates before the height of the summer holiday season, a move aimed at boosting travel and tourism following the restrictions of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The various players managed to reconcile their differences during another round of discussions, paving the way for the trans-border travel passes to be introduced. Officials said the system should be up and running by July 1. — AP

UK boosts vaccine drive to fight B1.617.2 variants

London, May 21: The UK government says it has bolstered its Covid-19 vaccine drive as part of a series of enhanced measures to tackle "clusters" of the B1.617.2 variant of concern (VOC) first identified in India, as the latest data confirmed its numbers rose by 2,111 over the past week to hit 3,424 cases across the country".

"As we prepare for the next pandemic, our priority must be to ensure that we all overcome the current one together," Draghi told the summit.

"We must vaccinate the world — and do it fast."

In Washington, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) report emphasised the same message, with a \$50-billion (41-billion euro) plan to end the pandemic focused heavily on expanding vaccines.

It noted that as of last month, less than two percent of people in Africa had been vaccinated while more than 40 percent of the population in the United States and more than 20 percent in Europe had received at least one dose.

The summit will end with a "Rome declaration" on the guidelines to avoid another pandemic, from investment in global healthcare systems, improved data sharing and surveillance of human and animal diseases. But it is not expected to endorse the contentious idea of a temporary global waiver on patent protections for coronavirus vaccines.

Instead, the leaders will advocate the use of other tools such as voluntary licensing agreements and technology transfers, EU officials said. — AFP

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Taipei, May 21: Taiwan reported 312 new confirmed cases on Friday as part of its worst outbreak since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies says Asia faces a Covid-19 vaccine supply crisis amid grim record daily death tolls.

It said in a statement Friday that Nepal and Bangladesh have run out of vaccines while a majority of countries in the region are struggling with shortages. It says hospitals in India, Nepal, Malaysia and the Philippines are full to the brim with

Covid-19 patients. The organisation said many richer countries have purchased enough vaccines to immunize every person several times over while most parts of Asia have only a fraction of that.

The group's Asia Pacific director, Alexander Matheou, said sharing vaccine doses between countries and through the United Nations' COVAX facility is now the only option to address the shortage and prevent a further catastrophe.

The Red Cross urged pharmaceutical companies and governments to work together to ensure better supply of vaccines in Asia, which is now the epicenter of the global pandemic with the most number of new cases. It also called on rich countries to accelerate plans to ship out excess vaccine stocks. It said vaccines have become more critical with the spread of Covid-19 variants but vaccination rates remain very low in Asia.

— PTI

Red Cross says Asia facing Covid-19 vaccine crunch

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— PTI

Spain to lift restrictions on travellers from UK

Madrid, May 21: Spain is lifting its restrictions on travellers from the United Kingdom beginning Monday, saying British tourists play a key role in the Spanish economy.

The rule change noted that the European Union is discussing whether to scrap limits on travel into the bloc from the UK and

travel from Japan were also lifted.

In 2019, Britain sent 18 million people to Spain, the most of any country. Tourism is a mainstay of the Spanish economy.

Spanish authorities published the rule change in the government gazette Friday. Restrictions on

Japan, and that the change is likely to be approved.

However, a major snag remains for British tourists. Spain is on the UK government's so-called amber list, meaning people travelling back to the UK from Spain need to go into quarantine for 10 days and get tested twice.

— AP

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digitised copy of a page from a handwritten 18th century diary by the Rev. Ebenezer Storer, during a period of smallpox, in Boston, shows an April 1764 entry that includes a prayer Storer wrote weeks after arranging to have his own children inoculated. — AP

quick BITES

| INDICATORS | % |
|------------------------|------------|
| Sensex | 50,540.48 |
| Nifty 50 | 15,175.30 |
| S&P 500* | 4,156.10 |
| Dollar (₹) | 72.83 |
| Pound Sterling (₹) | 103.53 |
| Euro (₹) | 89.06 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹) | 47,995▲119 |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)* | 66.47 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield | 5.977 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 1.635 |
| * As of 8:30 PM IST | 0.001 |

RBI fixes gold bond issue price at ₹4,842/gram

The issue price for the second tranche of the sovereign gold bond issue has been fixed at Rs 4,842 per gram, the Reserve Bank of India said. The Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2021-22 - Series II or the second tranche will be open for subscription from May 24 to 28. Investors applying online and making payment through digital mode will get a discount of Rs 50 per gram. For them the price will be Rs 4,792 per gram.

US proposes 15% minimum tax on global corp. profit



The US Treasury Department said it supports a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 per cent, below the 21 per cent minimum it has been seeking to impose on the foreign profits of US-based companies. The offer comes as the OECD and the G-20 economies seek an agreement on a minimum corporate tax rate, as countries compete with each other to cut tax rates and lure multinational companies.

Pawan Goenka, Bijapurkar to join Sun board

Sun Pharma has announced appointment of Pawan Goenka, former MD of Mahindra and Mahindra, and management consultant Rama Bijapurkar as additional independent directors with effect from May 21. Goenka retired as the MD and CEO of M&M on April 2. He is currently chairman of the board of governors of IIT Madras and IIT Bombay. Bijapurkar has a management consulting practice and works across sectors.

MSN Labs to sell posaconazole for black fungus

MSN Laboratories announced the launch of posaconazole in India under the brand name PosaOne as 100 mg delayed release tablets & 300 mg injections, respectively. Posaconazole is a triazole antifungal agent indicated for treating mucormycosis patients. MSN has developed the active pharmaceutical ingredient and the formulation of PosaOne in its in-house R&D and manufacturing units.

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Board okays dividend that exceeds Budget estimate RBI to bolster govt coffers by ₹99K cr

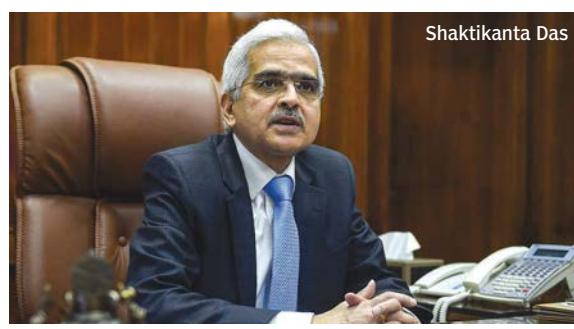
FALAKNAAZ SYED

MUMBAI, MAY 21

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday approved paying Rs 99,122 crore as dividend to the central government for the accounting period of nine months ended March 31, 2021. The dividend is likely to alleviate some burden off the government's shoulder at a time when the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic has hit government finances. The government is staring at an extra-ordinary fiscal deficit target of 6.8 per cent in 2021-22 (April-March), higher than the usual 3.5 per cent.

The central bank is mandated by the RBI Act 1934 to transfer surplus funds or balance profits to the government. The RBI earns its profits primarily from the interest it gets from the purchase and sale of government securities, the interest earned from lending to banks and an interest earned on bond holdings earned on open market principles.

The dividend is substantially higher than the budgeted surplus transfer of Rs 53,500 crore by the RBI and the nationalised banks for FY22 and Rs 57,130 crore by the RBI for FY21. The central bank recently switched to an April-March fiscal year from July-to-June previously, and the payment this time around is for a nine-month period. Since fiscal accounting is cash-based, the dividend transfer will be accounted in



Shaktikanta Das

Market sees dividend driving stimulus, Sensex gains 975 pts

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

MUMBAI, MAY 21

The market recovered after two straight sessions of losses on Friday, gaining close to 2 per cent to register the best weekly gain since February on lower daily Covid cases and the RBI deciding to transfer Rs 99,122 crore surplus as dividend to Government of India, triggering hopes of fresh stimulus.

The Sensex gained 975 points, or 1.97 per cent to close at 50,540, largely due to heavy gains in banks and financials. The Nifty-50 closed at 15,175, up 269 points, or 1.81 per cent.

The broader market

underperformed with gains of less than one per cent each for BSE Mid-cap (0.82 per cent) and Small-cap (0.65 per cent) indices.

Banks and financials gained the most during the week with the BSE Bankex gaining 7.34 per cent, followed by BSE Auto (5.15 per cent) compared to gains for the Sensex (3.71 per cent) and the Nifty-50 (3.39 per cent). On Friday SBI's fourth quarter performance announcement lifted investors' sentiments towards bank and financial stocks.

FPIs were net buyers of equities worth Rs 510.16 and domestic institutions, by Rs 649.10 crore.

FY22 for the Centre.

"While we await the detailed document to gauge the sources of higher RBI income and thus transfers, it needs to be seen if they used the

revaluation reserves in order to pay higher dividend. Nonetheless, this is definitely a relief for the government on revenue front whose finances would soon come under

pressure amid: (1) Fears of delayed execution of ambitious divestment target of Rs 1.75 lakh crore, (2) Higher possible doles payouts than budgeted on food, fertiliser subsidy and NREGA, and (3) Also possible fading of the positive upside surprises of fiscal tax buffers on account of modestly budgeted indirect taxes," said Madhavi Arora, lead economist at Emkay Global.

"Given the strengthened domestic assets and record foreign reserves that RBI holds, we feel that there might be another round of special dividend in case of additional requirement in future due to the uncertain environment," said Mohit Nigam, head of portfolio management services at Hem Securities, a domestic stock brokerage house.

The decision to transfer the surplus to the central government was taken at the meeting of the Central Board of Directors of RBI. The meeting was held through video conferencing. The RBI Board, according to the press release, also reviewed the current economic situation, global and domestic challenges and recent policy measures taken by the Reserve Bank to mitigate the adverse impact of the second wave of COVID-19 on the economy.

During the meeting, the board, headed by governor Shaktikanta Das, also "approved the Annual Report and accounts of the Reserve Bank for the transition period.

Internet Explorer to retire in June 2022

Washington, May 21: Microsoft has said that it is retiring its long-standing browser Internet Explorer on June 15 next year after serving the netizens for over 25 years.

The web browser was released with Windows 95, the tech giant said in a blog post on Wednesday.

The Internet Explorer 11 desktop application will be retired and go out of support on June 15, 2022, for certain versions of Windows 10.

Sean Lyndsay, a Microsoft Edge programme manager said while commenting on the decision.

"The future of Internet Explorer on Windows 10 is in Microsoft Edge. Not only is Microsoft Edge a faster, more secure and more modern browsing experience than Internet Explorer, but it is also able to address a key concern: compatibility for older, legacy websites and applications."

"Microsoft Edge has Internet Explorer mode (IE mode) built in, so you can access those legacy Internet Explorer-based websites and applications straight from Microsoft Edge," Lyndsay said. Internet Explorer mode in Microsoft Edge will be supported till at least 2029, the blog post said.

On its debut in 1995, Internet Explorer became an instant hit. It killed off Netscape Navigator and achieved a virtual monopoly in the early 2000s.

— PTI

SBI to create ₹10K cr Covid book for healthcare & pharma

FC BANKING BUREAU
MUMBAI, MAY 21



Dinesh Khara

The country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI), is planning to create a Covid-19 loan book of Rs 10,000 crore for the domestic healthcare and pharma sector. The country's leading vaccine makers Bharat Biotech, Biological E have already received credit lines from the lender.

"The Covid book that is expected to be created under the recent guidelines that have come from the RBI on May 5, we are quite upbeat on this particular sector. We will certainly support this sector. We have some plans and have come out with some schemes which we will be rolling out as of now. As of now we have observed that the pharma sector is of course cash rich...Rs 10,000 crore of Covid portfolio we want to create," said Dinesh Khara, chairman SBI while announcing the bank's Q4 earnings.

Given the widespread resurgence in Covid-19 infections across the country, the RBI this month announced an on-tap liquidity window of Rs 50,000 crore, with a tenor of up to three years, that can be provided by banks for lending support to entities such as hospitals, diagnostics, pharmacies, pharmaceutical companies or importers, medical oxygen manufacturers and suppliers and other operators involved in the critical healthcare supply chain. This has been done to ease the liquidity position and financial constraints being faced by these emergency healthcare service providers, consequent to the significantly higher load on these entities in the recent weeks.

Meanwhile, the lender registered a net profit of Rs 6,451 crore in Q4FY21 as compared to Rs 3,581 crore in Q4FY20, an increase of 80 per cent on lower provisions, stable asset quality and other income. Sequentially the net profit increased by 24.14 per cent.

SB1 continued to be resilient by containing asset quality within guidance. Total slippages and restructuring for FY21 was at Rs 46,416 crore, within the guidance of Rs 60,000 crore. The provision buffer stood at Rs 25,376 crore, including Covid related provision of Rs 6,346 crore. Gross NPA saw a decline of 45 basis points QoQ to 4.98 per cent from 5.44 per cent. Net interest income grew by 18.8 per cent YoY and declined 6 per cent QoQ.

IGST on imported O2 concentrators unconstitutional: HC

New Delhi, May 21: The Delhi High Court Friday held as "unconstitutional", the imposition of integrated goods and services tax (IGST) by the Centre on import of oxygen concentrators by individuals for personal use.

A bench of Justices Rajiv Shakdher and Talwanti Singh quashed the May 1 notification issued by the Ministry of Finance, which says that such oxygen concentrators imported for personal use, irrespective of whether they are a gift or otherwise, will be charged with an IGST of 12 per cent. The court said the individuals will have to give an undertaking to the authorities that the oxygen concentrator is being imported for personal use and not commercial use.

The petition had challenged imposition of IGST on import of oxygen concentrators for personal use, as the essential equipment is already in shortage in the country during the pandemic.

The plea said the May 1 notification was violative of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution since the same is arbitrary and infringes the right to life of patients reeling under the Covid-19 pandemic. It said the notification unconstitutionally mandates that the petitioner and other similarly placed Indian citizens to pay IGST on something as crucial as oxygen concentrator.

The court, which had earlier directed that the oxygen concentrator being imported by the 85-year-old petitioner be released by the customs authorities, subject to his depositing

with the court an amount equivalent to the IGST payable, said the money be released to the man with accrued interest.

It had earlier issued notice and sought response of the Centre on the petition by the senior citizen, who was suffering from Covid-19. He had said his nephew sent an oxygen concentrator for him as a gift from the US to ameliorate his condition.

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Under the April 12 NIT, ONGC had invited bids in respect of 2.0 million metric standard cubic metre per day (mmscmd) of gas from its KG-basin in Kakinada.

With the observation the court listed on June 4 the pleas by GMR Vemagiri Power Generation Ltd and GMR Rajamundri Energy Ltd challenging the NIT and seeking a stay

on any new allocation or allotment of gas from the KG-basin of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).

Under the April 12 NIT, ONGC had invited bids in respect of 2.0 million metric standard cubic metre per day (mmscmd) of gas from its KG-basin in Kakinada.

They have also told the court that pursuance to the Centre and ONGC's assurance they have made substantial investments to

GAS OUTPUT RISES 23% AS RIL-BP FIELDS START PRODUCTION

New Delhi, May 21: India's natural gas production jumped 22.7 per cent in April after Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner BP Plc ramped up output from their eastern offshore KG-D6 block, government data released on Friday showed.

India produced 2.65 billion cubic meters of natural gas in April, up from 2.16 bcm in the same month last year, as per the data released by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

While state-owned ONGC's production was

flat at 1.72 bcm, output from fields operated by the private sector and joint ventures tripled to 710.86 million standard cubic meters. The bulk of this came from 409.12 mmcm output from eastern offshore fields.

The data did not give individual field productions.

Reliance-BP, which in December last year started putting the second wave of gas discoveries in KG-D6 block to production, last month started output from the Satellite Cluster fields.

They have also claimed that the auction was in complete variance with the statutory framework for allocation of coal for coal based power projects.

The two companies have also challenged a March 21, 2016 notification of the petroleum ministry that provides for forward auction—gas would be allocated to the highest bidder—and they have contended that this would be discriminatory to them.

The two companies had told the bench that if the auction was not stayed, they will be compelled to bid and participate in the e-auction for procuring allocation of the gas, which was to be allocated to them as per the assurances of the Centre and ONGC and therefore, irreparable loss and injury would be caused to them.

— PTI



Covid-19.

Some of the banks are implementing systems where employees will book "hot seats" on particular days and be monitored while they are sitting at them, sources said. In some buildings, there are activity trackers for their own health, but not necessarily okay with having their employers knowing

when they are seated at a desk.

Employees will need to get over these hang-ups because the technology is necessary for safety and saves companies money, industry sources and consultants said.

"We have to be more mindful about how space is being used and when it is being used," said Neil Murray, CEO of corporate solutions at JLL, which manages offices for JPMorgan, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs and others.

Staff returning to JPMorgan's Manhattan headquarters will soon have a new app that uses

algorithms and artificial intelligence to book seats.

It is part of an "optimum rotation" plan, Daniel Pinto, JPMorgan's co-president and chief operating officer said recently. That means getting the right people together on the right days for in-office collaboration.

HSBC and Deutsche also plan to launch reservation apps and online systems. While all three banks are still working out the details, apps like these can use card-swipes at security turnstiles to identify patterns and suggest when someone should book a desk to meet teammates.

— Reuters

PERFORMANCE STREET

JSW STEEL PROFIT JUMPS MANIFOLD

New Delhi, May 21: JSW Steel on Friday posted a manifold jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 4,191 crore for the quarter ended March 31, from Rs 188 crore a year ago, mainly on account of higher income. Its total income in January-March 2021 jumped to Rs 27,095 crore from Rs 18,009 crore in the year-ago period. Total expense rose to Rs 20,752 crore against Rs 17,056 crore a year ago.

The firm said it will spend over Rs 25,000 crore on projects in Odisha, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir. — PTI

HINDALCO Q4 PAT ZOOMS TO ₹1,928 CR

New Delhi

SHORT TAKES
Boxing coach
Bhardwaj no more

New Delhi: India's first Dronacharya awardee coach in boxing, O. P. Bhardwaj, died on Friday after battling prolonged illness and age-related issues here. He was 82 and had tragically lost his wife Santosh to illness about 10 days ago. Bhardwaj was bestowed the highest national honour in coaching jointly with Bhalchandra Bhaskar Bhagwat (wrestling) and O. M. Nambiar (athletics), when it was introduced in 1985. Bhardwaj was India's national boxing coach from 1968 to 1989 and also served as a selector. Under his tutelage, Indian pugilists won medals at the Asian Games, the Commonwealth Games and the South Asian Games. Boxing Federation of India President Ajay Singh condoled his demise. — PTI

AFI medical chief loses Covid fight

New Delhi: The Athletics Federation of India's medical commission chairman Arun Kumar Mendiratta, who was set to travel with the Indian contingent for the Tokyo Olympics, died on Friday due to Covid-19 related complications at a hospital here.

He was 60. The Athletics Federation of India condoled the death of Mendiratta, who was also part of the Asian Athletics Association for over 25 years.

"He led AFI's relentless fight against age-fraud and doping. He was also the architect of our no-needles policy," AFI President Adille J. Sumariwalla said. Mendiratta was appointed as the chief medical officer by the Indian Olympic Association for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics. — PTI

Fielding coach wants fit players

New Delhi: India's women cricketers are not as athletic and strong as their foreign counterparts when it comes to running around the park and that is something fielding coach Abhay Sharma will work on extensively with them during the upcoming UK tour.

Sharma, who has worked a lot with the men's India U-19 team, was with the national women's team for the first time during the home series against South Africa in March. "Overall development is needed as far as fielding is concerned. The game is changing, you have to be more athletic. Work needs to be done. What I observed is that a lot of girls are struggling with their throwing techniques," Abhay said. — PTI

Ronaldo to lead Portugal in Euro

Lisbon, Portugal: Cristiano Ronaldo will lead a talented Portugal squad that will try to defend its European Championship title.

Coach Fernando Santos announced his list of 26 players for next month's tournament, when Ronaldo will be supported by the likes of Bruno Fernandes, Bernardo Silva, Diogo Jota and Joao Felix. Also included in the Euro 2020 squad was 22-year-old Sporting Lisbon forward Pedro Goncalves, who has never played for national side. — AP

U-17 women's WC in India next year

New Delhi: The U-17 women's World Cup will be held in India from October 11 to 30 next year, FIFA Council said on Thursday. India were earlier scheduled to host the 2020 U-17 World Cup but it was postponed to 2021 before being cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council also approved dates for the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2022 (October 11-30, 2022), FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup Costa Rica 2022 (August 10-28, 2022), as well as a 14-team play-off for the FIFA Arab Cup 2021 between June 19 & 25 this year. — PTI

Live on TV

FOOTBALL
 Spanish League (title-deciding last round): Real Valladolid vs Atletico Madrid; Real Madrid vs Villarreal from 9.30 pm on LaLiga page on Facebook

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Make room for IPL

BCCI wants ECB to advance Tests, open window for rich league

London, May 21: The BCCI has requested England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) to advance the five-Test series by a week from its current August 4 start to give them a better shot at completing the remaining 31 matches of the now-postponed Indian Premier League.

While no one from BCCI has officially confirmed the development, former England captain and renowned cricket writer Michael Atherton reported about the development in London's *The Times*.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India has enquired about the possibility of moving the final Test of the English summer in order to make room to complete the postponed Indian Premier League," the report said.

"Informal discussions have been had between the respective boards as cricket continues to grapple with a schedule ravaged by Covid," it added.

Indian team are looking at a potential gap of six weeks after the completion of World Test Championship final against New Zealand which is scheduled from June 18-22 in Southampton and start of the England series.

The five-Test series starts with first match at Nottingham (August 4-8), followed by Lord's (August 12-16), Leeds (August 25-29), Oval (September 2-6) and Manchester (September 10-14).

However, a potential start in the last week of July, with lesser gaps between the Tests would open the entire month of September in which BCCI can complete the IPL either in UK or more likely in the UAE. Atherton further wrote that ECB's own calendar as well as those hosting counties, which have already sold tickets would be in a fix with this request from the BCCI.

— PTI



New Zealand star pacer Tim Southee in this file photo.

Southee upbeat for WTC final

Anytime you get to play a Test match for New Zealand, it's an amazing opportunity and I don't think you treat them as warm-ups. But great to have the two-match series leading to the World Test Championship final.

— TIM SOUTHEE
 New Zealand star pacer

it's an amazing opportunity and I don't think you treat them as warm-ups. Our focus is first and foremost on the two match series against England."

But the 32-year-old with 302 Test wickets didn't deny that it was indeed a great opportunity to gear up for the big battle against India.

Asked if the focus will be on the WTC final, Southee said: "Anytime you get to play a Test match for New Zealand,

those matches leading to the final. So for us, it's great preparation for that final but we are looking at two-match series against a quality English side in their conditions," Southee said.

Southee also didn't feel that three Tests in three weeks will be much of a workload after a welcome break for many.

It's exciting to play three Test matches in a short space of time," Southee said after his first training session at the Ageas Bowl following a three-day hard quarantine.

"It is something that the team doesn't get to do that often. We've come off a bit of a break, which has been nice, and (we have) been able to get some conditioning into our bodies...." Southee said.

He believes that they will be ready to cope with the rigours with some quality training sessions in the next two weeks.

— PTI

Spanish title down to last game



Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone gestures in this file photo.

desperation could be what it needs to pull off the upset.

Olivas will be tasked with helping defend Luis Suarez, whose late goal last weekend secured a 2-1 comeback win over Osasuna that kept Atletico at the top of the standings and in control of its fate.

Atletico will face the finale without its most-used center back, Stefan Savic, who will serve a one-game suspension for accumulation of yellow cards.

Elche and Huesca are also fighting with Valladolid to not go down, with two of the three clubs destined for the drop.

For Valladolid defender Kiki Olivas, his team's

Poland, aiming to win the first major title in club history. If it beats the English powerhouse, it will also qualify for the Champions League.

Besides needing Valladolid to at least draw with Atletico, Madrid must beat a Villarreal side that has played well all season but may be looking ahead to an even more important game.

Villarreal will face Manchester United in the Europa League final on Wednesday in Gdansk,

— AP

Poland, aiming to win the first major title in club history. If it beats the English powerhouse, it will also qualify for the Champions League.

Meanwhile, the Argentine star Lionel Messi has been given permission to skip the team's final game of the Spanish league season — at Eibar on Saturday — so he can have extra rest ahead of the Copa America. Messi didn't train on Friday.

— AP

Withdrawing from a Grand Slam goes against all my instincts and aspirations as an athlete, but it is the right and only decision to make," Halep said.

Halep is a three-time finalist at the French Open. She beat Sloane Stephens in the 2018 final in Paris for her first major singles title.

"The thought of not being in Paris fills me with sadness, but I will focus my energy on recovery, staying positive and getting back on court as soon as it is safe to do so," she said.

— AP

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"The thought of not being in Paris fills me with sadness, but I will focus my energy on recovery, staying positive and getting back on court as soon as it is safe to do so," she said.

Maradona, who led Argentina to victory in the 1986 World Cup, died of a heart attack November 25 at a rented residence outside Buenos Aires following brain surgery two weeks earlier. He was 60.

A medical board's report given to prosecutors this month concluded that Maradona was in agony for more than 12 hours, did not receive adequate treatment and could still be alive if he had been properly hospitalised.

Prosecutors on Wednesday charged neurosurgeon Leopoldo Luque and psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov, the two leaders of Maradona's medical team, and five other health professionals with involuntary manslaughter.

A doctor, a psychologist, two nurses and a nurse coordinator were the others.

The medical panel's report said the patient's signs of risk of life were ignored, adding that Maradona showed unequivocal signs of a prolonged agony period of at least 12 hours.

The care that Maradona received at the rented house, the report said, did not fulfill the minimum requirements for a patient with his medical history, and that he would have survived with adequate hospitalization. Maradona had suffered a series of medical problems, some due to excesses of drugs and alcohol. He was reportedly near death in 2000 and 2004.

Julio Rivas, a lawyer for Luque, said earlier this month that medical forensics of the report were flawed and biased... with no scientific foundation.

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HCA match: Now, it's Shivlal vs Azhar

DC CORRESPONDENT
 HYDERABAD, MAY 21

There seems to be no end to the tug-of-war at the Hyderabad Cricket Association top. A day after president Mohammed Azharuddin questioned the appointment of Suneel Kante as CEO, secretary R. Vijayanand has announced former Test player, HCA secretary and BCCI interim president N. Shivlal Yadav as HCA's representative for the national cricket body's Special General Meeting scheduled to be held on May 29.

On the other hand, Azharuddin has positioned himself as HCA's nominee, setting up another showdown ahead of the BCCI meet to discuss upcoming cricket season in India, including the T20 World Cup scheduled in October-November.

Thankfully, it's a virtual meet, which avoids the otherwise embarrassing prospect of both turning up at the venue and presenting a poor picture.

"This has been done in accordance with the resolution passed at the last AGM under Rule No. 8 (j) of the HCA Constitution where Shivlal Yadav's name as HCA representative was unanimously approved," Vijayanand said.

That decision was taken at last month's AGM which continued after the president ended it abruptly (after a ruckus) and walked out with his supporters without completing the agenda.

"We have sent an email to the BCCI informing the decision and requesting them to send the virtual password to Shivlal Yadav to enable him to attend the virtual SGM," Vijayanand added.

Later, Azhar's group put out a note saying the president was appointed HCA's representative at BCCI meets in a single point

GRIEF-STRICKEN KABADDI PLAYER GETS ₹2 LAKH AID

New Delhi, May 21: The Sports Ministry has approved financial assistance of ₹2 lakh for double Asian Games gold-medallist woman kabaddi player V. Tejaswini Bai, who recently battled Covid-19 and lost her husband to the dreaded infection.

The assistance has been sanctioned under the new joint initiative with the Indian Olympic Association to support former athletes and coaches during the pandemic. The financial assistance has been sanctioned from the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Welfare Fund for sportspersons. Tejaswini and her husband contracted Covid-19 on May 1. While she is on the path to recovery at home, her husband Naveen succumbed to the deadly virus on May 11.

Medics charged in Maradona's death



Diego Maradona

Buenos Aires, May 21: Seven health professionals who tended to Diego Maradona in the days before his death have been charged with involuntary manslaughter.

Maradona, who led Argentina to victory in the 1986 World Cup, died of a heart attack November 25 at a rented residence outside Buenos Aires following brain surgery two weeks earlier. He was 60.

A medical board's report given to prosecutors this month concluded that Maradona was in agony for more than 12 hours, did not receive adequate treatment and could still be alive if he had been properly hospitalised.

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