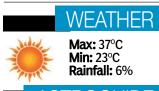
THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

**COIMBATORE | WEDNESDAY 21 | APRIL 2021** 



ASTROGUIDE

Pilava: Chithirai 8 Tithi: Navami Star: Ayilyam Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm Yamagandam: 7.30 am to 9 am **PRAYERS Fajar:** 4.45 am Luhar: 12.14 pm **Asar:** 3.19 pm

Maghrib: 6.22 pm

Isha: 7.34 pm **SUNSET TODAY 6.34 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM MOONRISE TODAY 1.17 PM MOONSET TOMORROW 3.03 AM** 

**CORONA C\*UNT** 

CASES

(+1,781)(+2,71,623)1,55,86,512 1,82,331

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS (+10,986)

TN: 10,13,378

**WORLD CONFIRMED CASES** 

14,31,93,032 **DEATHS** 30,49,591

worldometers.info

#### Kerala badly hit by 2nd Covid wave, faces jab shortage

**GILVESTER ASSARY I DC** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

With the second wave of Covid-19 posing a serious threat. Kerala recorded the biggest single-day spike on Tuesday with 19,577 new cases taking the total number active cases in the state to 1,18,673. Nine of the 14 districts have reported a daily spike in cases ranging from 3,000 to 1,000. The state reported 28 deaths taking the death toll to 4,978. During the last 24 hours, 1,12,221 samples were tested in Kerala and the test positivity rate was as high as 17.45. Of the new cases reported on Tuesday, 17,839 got infected through contact while 397 came from outside the

state. Among the districts. Ernakulam continued to report the highest number of cases. On Tuesday Ernakulam reported 3,212 cases followed by Kozhikode — 2,341, Malappuram — 1,945, Thrissur — 1,868.



This is not what I meant when I said stock essentials...

STATE | 3 Kamal Haasan complains to ECI



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WORLD | 5 Avoid travelling to India, US to citizens over Covid spike

SPORT | 8 Don't want anyone to say I'm unfit: MSD



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## TN tops in vaccine wastage, tightens review mechanism

■ 12% vaccine is lost ■ Not enough people for last vial: health secy

T. SUDHEESH | DC

Reports of the high Covid-19 vaccine wastage in the state has forced the health department to launch strict district and site-wise review to avoid wastage of doses. An RTI reply revealed that Tamil Nadu, with 12 per cent, topped the table of states that had reported the highest vaccine wastage till April 11.

According to health department data, the State inoculated a total of 48.07 lakh doses till April 19. Health Secretary J. Radhakrishnan told DC that there was high wastage of vaccines in the state as vaccination centres were not getting enough people to finish the final vial which has at least 10 doses.

"It was difficult for the last set to be quantified with 4,000 vaccine centres across the state. So it became an issue. We are now very strict and started reviewing district and site wise to reduce it," he said.

Health minister Dr Vijay Bhasker explained that it was not possible to keep people waiting for hours for the numbers to fill up for the final vial and that wastage became higher owing to

The state kickstarted its vaccine drive on January 16. As per the RTI reply, apart from Tamil Nadu, Haryana (9.74 per cent), Punjab (8.12), Manipur (7.8) and Telangana (7.55) topped the list of states with vaccine wastage. Over 44 lakh doses were wasted out of 10 crore doses used by states till

For the last few days, future," he said.

### Lockdown last resort, micro containment zones key: PM

New Delhi, April 20: As more states went for lockdown-like restrictions to more states went for lockdown-like restrictions to and a record 1,761 new as he urged the people to reduce their movement and take vaccination. battle the raging second Covid-19 wave, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday stressed that use of lockdown should be the "last resort" and that the focus should rather be on micro-containment zones.

Mr Modi's remarks in his address to the nation where he also said the second wave has become a major crisis came on a day when India's active Covid-19 cases crossed 20

many districts in the state

had reported a shortage of

vaccines. Many states

Punjab and Delhi had demanded delivery for more

doses of vaccines as they

The demand could intensi-

fy with vaccinations being

opened to all above 18 from

May 1. Dr. Rex Sargunam, President, Tamil Nadu

Association, said that it hap-

pened due to lack of plan-

ning and implementation by the authorities. The vial-based wastage could have

easily been avoided if the people at the centre had

taken correct decisions. It's

important that the govern-

ment recruit more people and train them properly to

appoint at vaccine centres to

avoid such incidents in the

were running out of stock.

Maharashtra,

Development

including

Health

"In the current situation, we need to save our country from a lock-down. I would also request states to use the lockdown as the last resort. We have to do our

best to avoid a lockdown and our focus should rather be on micro-con-

tainment zones," he said. "If we all follow Covid-19 protocols, there'll be no need to impose lockdowns," Mr Modi added,

The Prime Minister said the country is again faced with a big battle against Covid-19 and that conditions will improve with the decisions taken in the recent days.

ing but "we need to fight it out with all our might" and expressed confidence that the coronavirus will be defeated with the combined efforts of the peo-

#### Mr Modi said people were undergoing suffer-

### **Curfew effect**



A deserted Poonamallee high road in Chennai on

### **STATE HAS NO SHORTAGE OF VACCINE: MIN**

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

There was no scarcity of Coronavirus vaccine in the state as six lakh doses of Covishield arrived on Tuesday in addition to the one lakh doses of Covaxin that came a few days ago. There was no shortage of oxygen either, health min-ister C. Vijayabaskar said. Addressing the media on

Tuesday, Dr Vijayabhaskar clarified that the two deaths at a hospital in Vellore were not due to oxygen short-age. The reason for the deaths had been explained by the dean of the hospital, he said and claimed that there was adequate supply of oxygen in the hospitals across the state as 240 tonnes of oxygen was available in the state.

The minister wastage of some amount of vaccine was inevitable as people could not be made to wait for long hours for the necessary numbers to gather before opening a

The wastage would stop when more people turned up for the vaccine. As of vaccination was going on in full swing across the state through 4,487 centres and of the total 55,00,820 doses received, 48,07,148 doses had been used, he said.

## SC clears ad hoc judges in HCs

Terming pendency of around 57 lakh cases in high courts as docket explosion, the Supreme Court on Tuesday activated a dormant constitutional provision to pave way for appointment of retired high court judges as ad-hoc ones for a period of two to three years to clear backlog and came out with guidelines to reg-

ulate appointments.
Article 224A, used rarely, of the Constitution deals with appointment of ad-hoc judges in high courts and says the Chief Justice of a high court for any state may at any time. with the previous consent of the President, request any person who has held the office of a judge of that court or of any other high court to sit and act as a judge of the high court for that state.

A bench of Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and Justices S.K. Kaul and Surya Kant issued a slew of guidelines pertaining to issues such as the trigger point when the appointment process can be set in motion, tenure, procedure for appointment, salary, perks, maximum number of such judges and their role in adjudicating cases.

The court also said the appointment of ad-hoc four months. The court also said the

judges would not be at the expense of the regular judges. "We may, however, hasten to add that the objective is not to appoint ad-hoc judges instead of judges to be appointed to the regular strength of the high court," the bench

Referring to the Article, the verdict said, "The very provision makes it clear that it does not in any way constrain or limit the regular appointment process and consent of the retired judge is sought to sit and act as a judge of the high court. One may say that this largely a transitory methodology till all the appointment processes are in place, though that may not be the only reason to take recourse to the aforesaid Article."

The CJI wrote the 37 page judgement on a PIL of NGO 'Lok Prahari' seeking appointment of ad-hoc judges in high courts un-der Article 224A in order to reduce pendency of cases. The bench said the guidelines, at the stage, cannot be exhaustive and sought a report from the ministry of law and justice as to how progress has been made on appointments and fixed the plea

# SC stays HC fiat

PARMOD KUMAR | DC **NEW DELHI, APRIL 20** 

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the Allahabad High court's order directing lockdown Pradesh Lucknow. Kanpur, Allahabad, Gorakhpur.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde and comprising Justice A.S. Bopanna and Justice V. Ramaeubeer Ramasubramanian passed the stay order on a plea by Uttar Pradesh government against April 19, 2021, order of the Allahabad High Court.

The High Court had ordered a week-long lockdown in the five cities that was to last till April 26 to arrest the rampant spread of Covid. Having

the lockdown order by the High Court, the top court, however, directed that the Uttar Pradesh government shall immediately inform the HC within a week about the stens has taken and to be taken in future to contain and curb the Covid. Issuing notice the court ordered, "Until further orders, there shall be an interim stay of the impugned order passed by the HC. However, the petitioner — state government shall immediately report to the HC about the steps it has taken and proposes to take in the immediate future within a period of one week in view of the current pandemic." The Court appointed senior law-yer P.S. Narasimha as amicus curiae in the case.

ordered interim stay of

## positive for Covid-19

New Delhi, April 20: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said he has tested positive for COVID-19 and has mild symptoms. "After experiencing mild symptoms, I've just tested positive for Covid," the 50-year-old posted on Twitter. "All those who've been in contact with me recently, please follow all safety protocols and stay safe," he wrote.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wished him a

speedy recovery.

Meanwhile, chief election commissioner Sushil Chandra and election commissioner Rajiv Kumar have tested postive for Covid-19 on Tuesday. At present, the EC is a two-man

### Rahul, CEC, EC test | PM cancels Portugal visit for Indo-EU meet

New Delhi, April 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not travel to Portugal for the India-EU summit next month in view of the Covid-19 situation and the meeting will be held virtually.

The ministry of external affairs (MEA) said it has been decided, in consultation with the European Union and Portuguese leadership, to hold the summit in a virtual format on May 'In view of the Covid-19 situation, it has been decided, in consultation with the EU and Portuguese leadership, to hold the India-EU leaders' meeting in a virtual format on May 8, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

### Armed forces told to be ready to help states

PAWAN BALI |DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 20

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday asked the armed forces to be in close contact with state governments and be ready to provide any required assistance on Covid-19 situation. Mr Singh held a virtual meeting to review the preparedness of ministry of defence and armed forces to deal with the recent spike in Covid-19 cases. He urged the defence PSUs, Ordnance Factory Board and DRDO to work on war footing to provide oxygen cylinders and extra beds to civil administration and state governments at the earliest.

## TN exempts key units from curfew

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

manufacturing essential commodities and continuous process industries were given exemption for the night curfew and Sunday lockdown brought in from Tuesday with a view to protecting people's livelihood and the econo-

Industries such telecommunications and related activities, informa-

tion technology and service organisations engaging staff in their offices, data centres and backend operations for medical, revenue and transport services and warehousing activities

qualify for exemption.

Essential maintenance services relating to fire services, protection of machinery and labour protection would be exempted, the release said. Those making medical,

pharmaceutical and sani-

tary products, oxygen, medical equipment and textiles and related raw materials, growing chicken, pets, livestock and related food processing units, fertilisers and agriculture equipment are also exempted from lockdown.

Factories and organisations taking export orders, those making spare parts for the security department, vehicle manufacturing for security services, agriculture and health departments and packag-ing units for all these exempted manufacturing units will exempted.

The exempted continuous process industries are refineries, TMT bar makers, cement, sugar, tyre and fertiliser factries, chemical industries, float glass plants, foundries, big paper factories, electronic factories dealing in mobiles and surface mount technology and vertically integrated large textile units.

## Virus-filtering material for masks soon

New Delhi, April 20: lished in the prestigious Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Chemical Society — The team claims the nanomaterial constitution of the American Chemical Society — Claim the mark by Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi have developed a virus-filtering, self-cleaning and antibacterial mater ial that can be used to make face masks and other PPE equipment to prevent the

spread of Coronavirus.
The team claims that the developed nanomaterial can clean the mask by simply keeping it in bright sunlight and make it ready to wear again.

The results of the research have recently been pubApplied Materials and Interfaces. According

researchers, face masks have become a default piece of apparel to be worn in public in these pandemic times.
"Keeping the urgency of the pandemic situation and

cost-effectiveness in mind, we have developed a strategy to repurpose existing PPEs, especially face masks, by providing an antimicrobial coating to the nanomaterial can clean the mask by simply keeping it in sunlight and make it ready to wear again.

these protective clothing and textiles. For this, the research team has used such materials that are a hundred thousand times smaller than the width of the human hair to confer antimicrobial properties to polycotton fabric," Amit Jaiswal, assistant professor, School of Bas Sciences, IIT Mandi, said. The team has incorporated nanometre sized sheets of molybdenum sulphide, MoS2, the sharp edges and corners of which act as tiny knives that pierce bacterial and viral membranes, thus

killing them. "The 'nanoknife'-modified fabrics demonstrated excellent antibacterial activity even after 60 cycles of washing. Improperly disposed off PPEs are a serious secondary source of transmission, and having reusable

antimicrobial masks can help circumvent this risk. The reusability of the fabric will also enable it to be integrated with homemade

"The researchers have developed prototypes of a 4layered face mask using the MoS2 modified fabric. They report that these masks, in addition to killing microbes and being light-cleanable, can also filter more than 96 pc of particles that are in the size range of the Covid virus (120 nanometres).

### **Capital victory**



Shikhar Dhawan (45 runs) and Amit Mishra (four wickets) helped Delhi Capitals beat Mumbai Indians by six wickets in an IPL game in Chennai on Tuesday.



### OTHER STORIES **Indian national** violates travel advisory, visits Libya; held at airport

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

An Indian national was arrested at Chennai airport on Monday night for travelling to Libya despite India banning its residents from travelling to the country . He was arrested in Chennai airport under the

Passport Act of 1967.

Mohammed Sameem (46)
arrived here from Qatar on
Qatar airlines on Monday night. When the immigration officials at the Chennai airport checked his passport, it was revealed that he has travelled to Libya and stayed there for two years. He arrived at the Chennai

from Qatar via Istanbul via Libya. Since the authorities suspect that he might have undergone training with terror outfits, the officials detained the person.

During an investigation, Mohammed Sameem confessed to having traveled to Libya. He said he was a pharmacist and was sent to Libya from his company. He added that he was not aware of the travel restrictions. However, he was handed over to the Central Crime Branch police for further questioning. The Indian Government in its travel advisory had said that the security situation in Libya continues to be fragile and urged the Indian nationals to avoid travelling to Libva.

#### **Puducherry** registers 638 more cases of coronavirus

Puducherry, Puducherry registered 638 more cases of coronavirus during the last 24 hours ending 10 am on Tuesday, raising the total infection count to 48,974.

Four more people succumbed to the disease taking the toll to

Director of the Department of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar said the 638 new cases were identified at the end of examination of 5,670 samples and these cases are spread over Puducherry 465, Karaikal 99, Yanam 42 and Mahe 32. The Director also said 253

patients recovered during the last 24 hours and were discharged from hospitals.

The fatality and recovery rates in Puducherry were 1.46 percent and 88.18 percent respectively.

The Director noted that 7.37 lakh samples have been tested so far and of them 6.69 lakh turned out to be negative.

There were 5,073 active cases inciuaing 4,169 home isolation.

### Don't believe rumours against vaccination: Min

He called upon the people not to believe the rumours against vaccination and urged them to take the vaccine, which was being provided free of cost in the government facilities. Action would be taken against the private hospitals that charge more than the government stipulated amount, he

Vaccination was being carried out through the special drive and during the three-day 'vaccine festival, 2,17,000 persons took the vaccine, he said.

On complaints of Coronavirus patients being shunted from one place to another, he said that some patients land at the King's Institute or the Government Hospital in the Omandurar Estate without any prior information.

When they are referred to the screening centres, where they could be assessed and then directed properly to the appropriate treatment centre, they complain of being made to run from pillar to post, he said, urging people to first approach the

## **Trading community** resents new restrictions

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Implementation of the new restrictions, including a night curfew and Sunday lockdown, gave rise to a sense of overwhelming resentment among the trading community that is just keeping its fingers crossed hop-ing that the next govern-ment would provide them some succor from the curbs even as they prepared themselves for the immediate eventuality.

Traders at the Koyambedu market comthe plex expressed uncertainty over their business prospects and night curfew would throw their operations of out of gear. Vegetables, fruits, flowers and other such goods are transported to the market at night to enable the start

of trading by dawn.
Since the marketplace that does not sleep at night

Traders at the Koyambedu market complex expressed uncertainty over their business prospects and night curfew would throw their operations of out of gear. Vegetables, fruits, flowers and other such goods are transported to the market at night to enable the start of trading by

will now have to shut down the unloading and loading operations as vehicles cannot enter or leave the premises at night hours, everything could run into disarray, fear the traders.

Even otherwise, the traders are badly hit by the pandemic as the 1800 retails shops are now opened on alternate days at the behest of the officials who wanted to cut down the crowding in the premises, which was once a cluster for Covid-19

Armed with the threat of another shut down of the market, as it happened last year, Corporation officials were running roughshod over the traders, taking them to task for alleged violation of Covid-19 norms like face masks and social distancing. How could traders be held responsible for viola-

customers?, wondered Koyambedu traders union leader Rajasekharan. Whenever clients did not wear the mask properly or failed to maintain social distancing, the shopkeepers are

tions committed by the

taken to task, he alleged. It was happening everywhere in Chennai, said V. P. Mani, additional secretary of the Tamil Nadu Federation of Traders Associations. Though the government announced a fine of only ₹1,000 for such violations,

the officials were collect ing ₹5,000, he said, regretting that they had been given targets for fine collection.

Citing a couple of instances of harassment by officials, he said that at a shop in Triplicane the owner was fined because a couple of persons were sipping tea with their masks lowered and in another vessels shop 12 officials barged in at the same time, brushing aside the security at the entrance, and fined the shopkeeper ₹3,000.

Owners are film theatres, too, are worried over the night curfew as they had to cancel the night shows now. Even otherwise, the restriction on the seating had put a heavy strain on them and now with a crucial show gone, they are expecting more losses. Probably they might hold one more day show but are skeptical

## TN crosses 10K-mark in Covid tally for third day

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Tamil Nadu on Tuesday crossed the 10,000-mark in daily Covid-19 cases for the third straight day. According to the data provided by the health department, 10,987 new cases were reported on Tuesday, a rise from 10,940 on Monday. At least 44 deaths were also reported

across the state.

This takes the total Covid-19 tally in the state to 10,13,378, including 4,432 in Chennai alone,

and death toll to 1,305. Chennai registered 3,711 new cases and 17 deaths. The new cases surged from 3,347 on Monday. With this, the district recorded a total of 2,90,364 cases.

The new cases in Chengalpattu district, which has a total of 68,526 positive cases, crossed the thousand mark touching 1,029, a surge from 970 on Monday. It also reported three deaths.

The total Covid-19 tally in the state to 10,13,378, including 4,432 in Chennai alone, and death toll to 1,305

Chennai registered 3,711 new cases and 17 deaths. The new cases surged from 3,347 on Monday. With this, the district recorded a total of 2,90,364 cases

Meanwhile, the number of daily cases in Coimbatore has come down to 686 compared to the previous day's 735. Chennai, Coimbatore,

Chengalpet and Tiruvallur districts continue to record 500-plus. While Madurai, Salem

and Tiruchy continue to register 300 plus cases, Erode, Kancheepuram, Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Tirupur and Vellore crossed 200 plus cases. At least 12 other districts in the state registered 100 plus cases.

The contribution of state.

districts Tiruvallur Tiruvallur and Chengalpet touched 5,248, a rise from 4,852 on

Monday. Active cases in the state reached a new peak on Monday with 79,804, a surge from 75,116 on Monday. The total active cases in the Chennai district now stand at 28,005, increasing from 26,194 on

Monday.

While five people died at
Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram and Cuddalore recorded three deaths each. Kanyakumari, Nagapattinam, Madurai and Thanjavur recorded two deaths each.

Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Namakkal, Salem, Thiruvannamailm, Tirunelveli, Tirupur, Virudhunagar and Vellore also reported death cases. A total of 99,246 persons took RTPCR tests, a dip from 1,09,533 on Monday. At least 2,10,56,094 individuals tested so far in the

### Revoke tourism ban: Ooty MLA to CM

**B. RAVICHANDRANIDC** OOTY, APRIL 20

Ganesh MLA R. Ganesh (Congress), Ooty, has appealed to the Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami to relax Covid-19 norms on tourism to allow tourists to visit Ooty during the ongoing summer tourist season, to help tourism stakeholders in Ooty and other parts of Nilgiris earn their liveli-

In a letter that Ganesh sent to the Chief Minister, he noted that it is a fact that Covid-19 second wave has been threatening the nation and the government has been taking various measures like night curfew and Sunday lockdowns to prevent its

rapid spread.
In line with this, the government announced the closure of tourist spots in hills like the Nilgiris, Kodikanal and Yercaud, that has already stymied tourist influx to the hill resorts during sum-

It is obvious that for tourism stakeholders in the hills, tourism is their life and livelihood. Their family economy and revenue solely bank upon tourism. As tourism is a major life line and part and parcel of the hill economy, any curbs on tourism will adversely affect their livelihood, especially hoteliers, small traders and other roadside vendors who constitute the bulk of the tourism stakeholders here.

While lockdown is considered to be a necessary measure for Covid-19 control activities, giving due consideration for the livelihood rights of the people, especially tourism stakeholders is very impor-

Since, the government has allowed cinema theatres and even Tasmac outlets to function with 50 per cent capacity, the government should also revoke the total closure of tourist spots, and instead allowed those tourist spots to function with regulated tourist inflow to ensure that the tourism sector continues to earn their livelihood, Ganesh st-



Omni buses operate only at day time. A scene from Koyambedu terminus on Tuesday.



nna Nagar Tower park closed in view of fresh curbs imposed by the government.



Kovambedu semi wholesale traders organise corona vaccine awareness rally in the market area.



rasmac workers give token to customers. Sale of

## Omni buses finding the going tough

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Omni bus owners almost stopped the operations as it was impossible for them to adhere to the new norms, under which the buses had to reach their destinations by around 10 pm. An executive meeting of the bus owners association met to take stock of the situation and decided that they would have to stop running the buses.

Union leader Jayapandian said that passengers did not prefer to travel during the day time and there were no takers for the few services on offer. Though there was a rival union that had decided to operate omni buses to the districts, the timings are unlikely to help the own-

ers get business. The time schedule announced by the state transport corporation is proof of it. The last bus to Nagercoil would leave at 7 am and those for Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi and Paramakudi would leave at 8 am, THOOTHUKUDI, APRIL 20

"Sufficient stocks of medical oxygen are available for Covid-19 treatment in Thoothukudi district. The district also has adequate medical oxygen stock with the availability of two oxygen tanks with a capacity of 10 KLD and 6 KLD at the Thoothukudi government medical college hospital," said collector K.

Senthil Raj on Tuesday. The collector also said that special mobile medical teams have been deployed to conduct fever clinics across the district. "As of today (April 20), a total of 36 the schedule said. Even for Tiruchy, the last

bus would leave at 2.30 pm. For Bengaluru and Hosur it is 1.30 pm and Madurai 12.25 pm. So, passengers who preferred taking the bus at night and reach their destinations by dawn or early morning, were all rushing to the railway stafever clinics have been conducted in all the 12 blocks in the district," he added.

The district has a total number of 1,953 Corona patients under treatment with an average number of around 250 new cases reported during the last five days. There are 700 beds for corona patients at the Thoothukudi govern-ment medical college hospital and 450 beds at the district hospitals at Kovilpatti and Tiruchendur district, apart from around 1,500 beds in all the private hospitals. The district administration also has created Corona treatment centres at the Thoo-

tions, a source said. Also the fares in buses, particularly in omni buses, were higher than in trains, which are now running without any restrictions and all through the night. That only 24 omni buses arrived in Chennai on Tuesday morning from the

**Enough oxygen stock in T'kudi hosps: Collector** thukudi government polytechnic college, Adithanar college of arts and science at Thiruchendur and the Lakshmi Ammal Polytechnic college at Nallatinputhur, for treatment of patients with mild symptoms. Positive people without symptoms have been advised to isolate themselves

at home, said the collector. The district health department is said to have deployed microbiologists to monitor treatment standards in private hospitals. All private hospitals have also been advised not to delay shifting of corona patients to government hospitals.

against the usual 130 buses is another proof that people have started shunning buses even now. Mohammed Afzal, president of Tamil Nadu Omni Bus Owners Association, said 20% of services would be operated from early morning so that they reach their destinations by 9.30-10 pm.

### 12,000 beds to be set up at Covid care centres DC CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI, APRIL 20

A meeting chaired by Harmander Singh, principal secretary (municipal administration and water supply), on Tuesday decided to set up 12,000 beds at 15 Covid Care

Centres under the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) limits in view of spiralling Covid-19 cases in the city. As part of intensifying the containment strategy,

the volunteers appointed by the GCC will create door-to door awareness on Covid-19 appropriate behaviour including wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Since cases are increas-

ing in the city, the number of tests will be increased from 16,000 to 25,000. The number of fever clinics will be doubled from 200 to 400. The daily clinics will be conducted in all 200 wards of the corporation.

In order to enforce Covid-19 protocol, special inspections will be conducted in crowded places and shops. Those caught without face masks wil be fined. So far, the GCC has collected Rs 3.5 crore as fine for Covid protocol violations. The other day the GCC

introduced 12 advanced screening centres in the city so that they could reduce the patients who seek hospital and Covid Care Centre beds. After screening, the asymptomatic patients will be sent back home for home isolation. Only complicated and symptomatic patients will be referred to hospitals and Covid care centres. The meeting was attended by GCC commissioner G. Prakash and other Covid task force officials in the city.

### **Private** hospitals to allot 50% beds

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

All empanelled private hospitals in the State have been instructed to earmark at least 50 per cent of their beds exclusively for coronavirus patients and reduce the number of selective procedures and planned admissions.

A letter from the Director of Medical and Rural Health Services on Tuesday said the measure was due to the rapid surge of Covid-19 positive cases in the second wave of pandemic, which had to an increased need hospitalisation.

So the private hospitals contributing to the health care services in addition to the designated government institutions in the combat of the pandemic are directed to follow the Government of India protocols.

Hospitals have also been instructed to submit the daily report to the Joint Director of Medical Rural Services in the districts or the Director of Medical and Rural Health Services and Director of Public Health and Medicine Preventive without fail.

The joint directors have been urged to monitor the action taken by the hospitals in the dis-

The hospitals have been asked to update details in the government portal: https://stopcorona.tn.go v.in/portal regularly.

### Covid patient ends life in Chennai hospital

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

A 57-year-old Covid patient allegedly ended his life at a private hospital in Kelambakkam. He was found dead by the hospital staff early on Tuesday.

According to police, Rangan, a 57-year-old resident of Hastinapuram in Chromepet was being treated for Covid at Chettinad hospitals in Kelambakkam. Sources said Rangan was undergoing treatment at the corona ward since April 16.

Meanwhile on Monday night, he allegedly hanged

himself in his room in the private hospital.

Following the incident, the hospital authorities alerted the Kelambakkam police, who have recovered his body and sent it to Chengalpet government hospital for post- mortem. A case of unnatural death has been registered and further investigation is on.

Health minister Dr C. Vijayabaskar and health secretary Dr J. Radhakrishnan on DMS campus check 6 lakh vaccines that landed in Chennai on Tuesday.

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUNELVELI, APRIL 20

Beaches, parks and waterfall picnic spots all across the southern districts wore a deserted look on Tuesday, following the ban on visitors to visit tourist

Even the few tourists staying in hotels in Kanyakumari also were banned from visiting the beach, and the road was blocked. Poompuhar shipping corporation also can**Even the few touri**sts staying in hotels in Kanyakumari also were banned from visiting the beach, and the road was blocked

celled its ferry services to the Vivekananda Rock memorial Thiruvalluvar statue. The Gandhi Mandapam in Kanyakumari and Mathur Palam Thirparappu falls were

also closed for tourists. Similarly, tourists were banned from bathing in the Manimutharu falls above the Manimutharu dam in Tirunelveli district, while the falls in Courtallam in Tenkasi district that had good flow for the last few days due to unexpected rains, also wore a deserted look without visitors and all shops

in the main falls area in

Courtallanathar temple,

remained closed

of the ancient

Beaches, parks in deep south look deserted The Roache park in the beach in Thoothukudi and the Port Trust guest house beach in Thoothukudi district were also closed. Devotees to the Arulmigu Subramanyaswamy temple at Thiruchendur returned disappointed as they were not allowed to have holy dip in the sea in

front of the temple. There were complaints about operation of buses to Chennai, Coimbatore and Bengaluru from the southern districts, which

was said to be not helpful for passengers, and many were said to have cancelled tickets they booked in advance. Several passengers complained that the bus timings were not comfortable, as the SETC 10 am from Kanyakumari to Chennai, Bengaluru and Tirupati.

According to sources from SETC, 10 buses were operated Kanyakumari Nagercoil to Chennai,

Coimbatore, Bengaluru and Tirupati, and none had 100 percent Similar was the passen-

ger strength at the 11 SETC buses (8 to Chennai, 3 to Coimbatore, one each Bengaluru Tirupati) Thoothukudi. Passengers also were sceptical about

private omni bus services, as one of the bus owners associations had declared complete cancellation of its services.

SHORT TAKES

### **Ceiling collapses in** Amma Unavagam

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Entire ceiling of an Amma Unavagam located Kanchipuram government hospital came crashing down early on Tuesday. No one was injured in the incident, as the government run eatery was closed early in the morning.

According to police sources, the mishap occurred at around 2: 30 am on Tuesday. Locals who heard a loud noise from inside the eatery alerted the police.

A team of officials from Vishnu Kanchi police station arrived and examined the spot District revenue officials also inspected the spot, sources said. An investigation has been ordered and a case registered with Vishnu Kanchi Police.

### **TNCC opens Covid** care centre

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Congress Nadu Committee (TNCC) has opened a Covid Help Centre at its headquarters, Sathyamurthy Bhavan, to help people affected by Coronavirus, TNCC president K S Alagiri said on

Tuesday. The 24-hour centre would be operated with the help of Congress leader Sashikanth Senthil and TNCC medical

wing president Kaleel Rahim. A team of medical professionals would soon be formed to run the centre that would help those affected by the virus to get treatment. The contact number for the centre

is 9884466333. criticized Alagiri AIADMK government for letting the pandemic go out of control in the State and pointed out that the number of infected persons had gone up to 11,000 and the total number of infections had crossed 10 lakh. He said 44 deaths had occurred in a day due to Covid and that pointed to the government's indifference in handling the crisis.

## In-laws cannot be left out Form panel to curb pollution in bride suicide cases: HC

Chennai, April 20: The Taking advantage of that, zens, the judge added from their liability, saying Madras high court on Tuesday held that in-laws should not be allowed to go scot free in bride suicide cases, just because they did not live with the woman and refused to suspend a jail term imposed by a lower court on the parents of a newlywed groom.

"Since the in-laws are not residing with their son and the victim woman and they are seeking suspension of sentence on that ground...

a wrong message has gone to society that the parents can easily escape from their liability and the alleged offence,' Justice P Velmurugan has

The parents should not stop with providing shelter and good education to their children and motivate them to get a job

Their first and foremost responsibility is that they should groom their chilwhile dismissing a criminal miscellaneous petition from the parents of a person who were sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment in a dowry harassment case, where their daughter-inlaw allegedly committed suicide.

The court said there has been an increase in instances of women committing suicide due to dowry harassment.

On the other hand, the

that they were not living with their son.

Even though they lived separately, they induced their sons to get dowry in the form of money or jewelry, two or four wheelers, the judge noted.

"Given the nature and gravity of offence committed by the accused, this court is not inclined to suspend the sentence, the judge said and posted the main appeal challenging the sentence to April 28.

# in rivers, HC directs state govt

Chennai, April 20: The Dhanasekaran, who prayed Tuesday directed the Tamil Nadu government to constitute an expert body to ensure that rivers, their waterways and water bodies in the state do not get polluted either by discharge of effluents by industries or by

The first bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy gave a direction to this effect while passing further interim orders on a public interest writ for a direction to clean river Amaravathi and remove encroachments on its water-

The river water was so polluted that the same was not fit for irrigation or drinking by humans and animals.

The bench said that the panel, consisting of persons with impeccable credentials, should find the ways and means to maintain the purity of the river and waterways by curbing the discharge of effluents by industries or by way of relocating them to far off places.

It was the responsibility of rivers and water bodies and there can be no compromise on this issue, the judges said.

Earlier, the Chief Justice said that he is able to smell the foul air even while travelling in an air conditioned car whenever it passes through Napier Bridge across the Cooum river in

The stench could be felt even when judges go for a walk near their residential areas on Greenways Road,

### HC upholds quashing of ryotwari patta

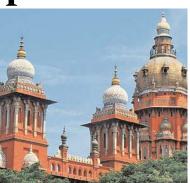
DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Observing that ryotwari patta in respect of water catchment lands was issued in a biased manner due to vested interests, the Madras high court has upheld an order of a single judge, which quashed the orders passed by the assistant settlement officer (ASO) and the tahsildar granting ryotwari patta to three persons for 4.85 acres, which is a catchment area, by cancelling the classification of Eri Ulvoy and reclassifying the same into ryotwari lands in

Thiruvannamalai district.

A division bench comprising Justices M.M. Sundresh and R.N. Manjula dismissed the appeals filed by P. Haribabu, P. Chandrasekar and P. Lakshmi, challenging the order of

the single judge.
Originally, the Malaymapattu Ei Pasanadarar Sangam filed a petition to quash the orders passed by the ASO and tahsildar and consequently to forbear the three individuals from interfering with the rights of the members of the petitioner Sangam and the villagers from having water for irrigation and water supply from the lands with survey numbers 70/5, 70/6,70/7, 70/8 and 72/5 of Malayampattu village, Pungambadi Post, Arni taulk, Thiruvannamalai



district. A single judge allowed the petition. Aggrieved, the trio filed the present appeals

The bench said granting orders for Ryotwari patta was done behind the back of the villagers. The petitioner sangam was formed for protecting the local agriculturists and in that capacity filed the writ. Under these circumstances, the appellants cannot expect the sangam not a party to the enquiry, alleged to have been made by the ASO, to file an appeal before the appropriate revenue authority. Since the orders of the ASO and tahsildar were not in accordance with law and against the interest of the villagers, the sangam has rightly chosen to invoke the writ law remedy, the bench added.





(Far above) Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit inspects a vaccination centre and interacts with vaccinated people at Primary Health Centre in Kanakammachatram, Tiruvallur district, on Tuesday. District collector P.Ponniah

Corporation Commissioner P.Kumaravel Pandian inspects MTP road bus-stand on Tuesday where onion and wholesale market will be shifted from MGR market to control Covid spreading in Coimbatore.

### Collector inaugurates Miyawaki forest scheme

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUCHY, APRIL 20

Over 130 varieties of tree saplings were planted under the Miyawaki forest scheme in five different locations planted jointly by the revenue, HR&CE, Railway and town panchayat departments across the district, said Collector S. Divyadarshini, after inau-

gurating the planting of 75,000 tree saplings of 50 varieties in an area of six Venkatachalapuram near Pullambadi, in Tiruchy dis-

trict, on Monday. In Srirangam area alone,

35,000 saplings were planted in five different locations, and the plants are growing

The district administration also planted 15,000 seedlings in an area of 1.75 acres near Lalgudi railway station, and another 20,000 in an area of 1.30 acre at Kallakkudi town panchayat area. At the temple premis-Mahakaliamman temple at Mahaligudi village near Samayapuram, 10,000 plants were planted in an area of 0.85 acres and 50,000 more were planted in Siruganur-Konalai village, added the collector.

### Special prayers by nadhaswaram artistes near Mayiladuthurai

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC MAYILADUTHURAI, APRIL 20

A section of nadhaswaram artistes led by popular nadhaswaram artistes K.N. Karthik performed a special prayer by playing Sankarabharanam ragam on the nadhaswaram at Sri Ramavaradhahini Mutt at Marudur village near Mayiladuthurai on Monday, with a prayer that would reduce the impact of the

second Corona wave. According to Karthik, based on the scientific truth that music can cure disthey Sankarabharanam ragam on the nadhaswaram, on the occasion of the third annual 'Samvatsari Abhishekam' event. They also played Thevaram songs in the Sankarabharanam ragam, while mutt priests performed homams and special poojas, he added.

### Corona: Over ₹5L netted as fine

Thaniavur to have more Covid care centres

DC CORRESPONDENT PERAMBALUR, APRIL 20

DC CORRESPONDENT

THANJAVUR, APRIL 20

The district administration here has collected a fine of Rs. 5,65,100 from 2.752 persons from last month till date for not adopting Covid-19 preventive measures like wearing face masks and following social distancing. In a release here on Tuesday,

Covid care centres will be opened

soon this time also at Kumbakonam

and Pattukottai as done during the

first corona wave, said Collector M.

Govinda Rao here on Tuesday, after

inaugurating the free Corona vacci-

nation programme at the panchayat

Rao said that 963 persons who

recently tested Corona positive, are

being given treatment at the Covid

centre, Thanjavur medical college

A section of CITU lorry booking

office loadmen association of

Gandhi market here, along with

their family members led by secre-

tary. Ramar, staged a gruel centre

(kanchi thotti) demonstration near

the collectorate here on Tuesday,

condemning the suspension of five

Loadmen seek wage hike

union school, at Marial here.

DC CORRESPONDENT

TIRUCHY, APRIL 20

Collector Sri Venkata Priva, said the fines were collected from across the district by officials of the health, revenue, police and municipality, and such drive will continue. She appealed to the public to cooperate with the district administration by following anti-Covid-19 measures, and protect themselves and their families from the infection

hospital. The centre will be opened

the people to wear masks, maintain

collector said that there are no

side effects with respect to

vaccination, and urged people to

Ramar said, their demands

include reinstating the suspended

employees immediately, to convene

a tripartite meeting and finalise

wage hike, to prevent overloading

of vehicles. Among others includ-

ing CITU Urban district Secretary

Rangarajan, CPI(M) urban district

secretary Raja and others spoke.

distancing and sanitisers to manage Covid. The

tenements at Vallam

take it without fail.

### SHRC seeks report on forced labour of 19 Odisha girls

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has directed commissioner, labour department, Chennai and the discollector. to file a detailed report in connection teenage Odisha girls at Annai College, Kumbakonam and Slum clearance board housing allegedly forced to unit, Pattukottai. Already a Covid care centre is functioning at work against their will at a private gar-Slum clearance board ment company. They were rescued by the Thanjavur. The collector appealed to police two days ago.

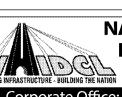
Based reports, SHRC mem- $\operatorname{Dr}$ Chittaranjan Mohandoss initiated suo motu proceedings and directed the officials to file the report in two weeks.

According to the report, officials from employees who demanded wage the Tirupur district administration and Tirupur city police rescued 19 Odisha girls from a private garment factory at 15 Velampalayam two days ago. Hailing from Rayagada district in Odisha, they were working in the gar-

ment factory from December 2020. They reached the city for a three-month training programme. were allegedly forced to stay back and work without adequate remuneration after the training period enaea.

Recently, they alert ed their parents and narrated their ordeal Following this, their parents lodged a petition with officials in Odisha, who, in turn, alerted Tirupur city commissioner police G. Karthikeyan. A team comprising

officials from the revdepartment, directorate of industrial safety and health and department of social welfare and local police was formed. They conducted an inspection at the garment company on Sunday midnight, rescued the 19 girls and provided them accommodation at a wedding hall in adherence to the Covid-19 safety protocol. The officials made the effort to send them back to



#### NATIONAL HIGHWAYS & INFRASTRUCTURE **DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED** (A Govt. of India Undertaking)



Corporate Office: 3rd Floor, PTI Building, 4-Parliament Street, New Delhi – 110001

F.No. NHIDCL/2(8)/Rectt Fin & HR/2021/HR

National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited has been set up by the Government of India as a Corporation under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways to fast pace construction/up-gradation/widening of National Highways in the North - Eastern Region and areas that share International boundaries with neighbouring countries.

Applications are invited from dynamic, effective and experienced eligible retired Officers from Central Government Ministries Departments, Army, Navy, Airforce, BRO (GREF), Autonomous Bodies, Public Sector Undertakings, State Government Departments and State Government Public Undertakings on Engagement on Contract basis on the Terms & Conditions

SI. No.	Name of the Posts	No. of Vacancy*	Pay Matrix Level in CDA pattern
1.	General Manager (T/P)	**	Pay Matrix Level-13 of 7th CPC
	[Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern		[Pre-revised PB - 4 of Rs. 37,400 - 67,000/- plus
	States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay Rs.8,700/~]
2.	Deputy General Manager (T/P)	20	Pay Matrix Level-12 of 7th CPC
	[Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern		[Pre-revised PB-3 of Rs.15,600 - 39,100/- plus Grade
	States, A&N Islands etc.]		Pay of Rs. 7,600/- ]
3.	Deputy General Manager (Fin)	05	Pay Matrix Level-12 of 7th CPC
	[Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in Leh (Ladakh),		[Pre-revised PB-3 of Rs.15,600 - 39,100/-plus Grade
	J&K, North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]		Pay of Rs. 7,600/- ]
4.	Manager (T/P)	20	Pay Matrix Level-11 of 7th CPC
	[Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in North Eastern		[Pre-revised Pay Band-3 of Rs.15,600-39,100/- plus
	States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay of Rs. 6,600/- in CDA Pattern]
5.	Manager (Fin)	05	Pay Matrix Level-11 of 7th CPC
	[Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in Leh (Ladakh),		[Pre-revised Pay Band-3 of Rs.15,600- 39,100/- plus
	J&K, North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay of Rs. 6,600/- in CDA Pattern]
6.	Manager (Legal)	01	Pay Matrix Level-11 of 7th CPC
	[NHIDCL HQrs/ Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in		[Pre-revised Pay Band-3 of Rs.15,600-39,100/- plus
	Leh (Ladakh), J&K, North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay of Rs. 6,600/- in CDA Pattern]
7.	Assistant Manager (HR)	02	Pay Matrix Level-8 of 7th CPC
	[NHIDCL HQrs/ Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in		[Pre-revised Pay Band-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus
	Leh (Ladakh), J&K, North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay of Rs. 4,800/- in CDA Pattern]
8.	Junior Manager (HR)	06	Pay Matrix Level-6 of 7th CPC
	[NHIDCL HQrs/ Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in		[Pre-revised Pay Band-2 of Rs.9,300- 34,800/- plus
	Leh (Ladakh), J&K, North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay of Rs. 4,200/- in CDA Pattern]
9.	Junior Manager (Legal)	01	Pay Matrix Level-6 of 7th CPC
	[NHIDCL HQrs/ Regional Offices of NHIDCL located in		[Pre-revised Pay Band-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus
	Leh (Ladakh), J&K, North Eastern States, A&N Islands etc.]		Grade Pay of Rs. 4,200/- in CDA Pattern]
10.	Junior Manager (Rajbhasha)	01	Pay Matrix Level-6 of 7th CPC
	[HQrs, NHIDCL]		[Pre-revised Pay Band-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus
			Grade Pay of Rs. 4,200/- in CDA Pattern]

\* Further, NHIDCL reserves the right to prepare a Panel of selected Candidates for filling up the indicated and future vacancies that may arise in NHIDCL. The number of vacancies in the Posts may vary, depending upon the requirement.

Last date for submission of Application: 31.05.2021 (Monday) up to-18:00 hrs.

For detailed Terms and Conditions please visit- www.nhidcl.com

NOTE 1: Officers presently serving in the Central Government Ministries/ Departments, Army, Navy, Airforce, Autonomous Bodies, Public Sector Undertakings, State Government Departments and State Government Public Undertakings and satisfying the prescribed eligibility criteria may also apply for the post on Deputation basis in the prescribed proforma along with copy of ACRs/APARs for last five years, No Objection Certificate (NOC) and Vigilance Clearance (VC). Those applying for appointment on deputation basis can be of any age. Subsequent to their retirement they may be allowed to continue in NHIDCL on contract basis subject to both party agreeing to it. If their parent organisation need them to revert back for retirement formalities, they may be allowed to do so for a period up to one week. Thereafter they can continue on contract basis on the terms and conditions applicable to Contract employees.

NOTE 2: Any change or amendment in this Vacancy Circular will be posted on the NHIDCL Website only.

NOTE 3: Incomplete applications or those received after the prescribed date shall be summarily rejected.

Dy. General Manager (HR)

## Kamal Haasan complains to ECI

**DC CORRESPONDENT** CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Makkal Needhi Maiam founder Haasan submitted a memorandum to the Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahoo, listing a series of complaints and also suggestions on prevention of multiple voting and tallying the votes polled in the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) with the VVPAT

He said that it had come to his attention that many people had more than one voter identity card and that they voted multiple times. By telling the officials at polling booths that they were allergic to the indelible ink marked in their fingers, those voters got only their nails inked and then removed it using chemicals. Several such instances of people having more than



one voter Identity card had come to light, Haasan said in the complaint and suggested that the authorities do a proper check to prevent such irregularities in the interest of democracy.

the one month gap between

voting and counting, he said

that the reason given for the

also found several flaws in the manner in which the EVMS were protected in the counting centres.

Narrating four suspicious incidents that happened in the counting centres, three Taking strong objection to of them relating to vehicles entering the where the EVMs were being stored in strong rooms and wait was unacceptable and

premises strong proper another in which 31 persons

the premises in Ramanathapuram, Haasan said they gave rise to doubts over the safety of the He said the conking out of CCTV cameras around the strong rooms and the myste-

armed with laptops entered

rious vehicles that entered campuses Coimbatore Government College of Technology, Perumalpattu Sriram Engineering College and Chennai Loyola College added to doubts over the protection provided to the EVMs.

Demanding total protection to the strong rooms, he wanted a ban on entry of outsiders into the premises, installation of CCTV cameras showing the interiors and on all sides around the rooms facilities for the agents of the political parties staying there.

**BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDING THE NATION** 

### SHORT TAKES

#### **FAROOQ, OMAR TEST NÉGATIVE FOR COVID-19**

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, APRIL 20

Former Jammu and Kashmir ministers Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah have tested negative for the Covid-19, about two weeks after testing positive for the virus. The sources close to the Abdullahs said that results of the father-son duo came out to be negative on RT-PCR on Tuesday.

Junior Abdullah had tested positive for Covid-19, a couple of days after his father was discharged from a Srinagar hospital where he was treated for the virus for five days. Faroog who is the president of National Conference was discharged from the hospital despite his second test coming positive as doctors were of the opinion that he could recover at home since all his parame-

#### **ODISHA RECORDS HIGHEST EVER SINGLE-DAY SPIKE**

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 20

There seems to be no respite in the surge of Covid-19 cases in Odisha. The state which clocked 4,445 new cases on Monday, registered 4,761 fresh Covid-19 positives on Tuesday, evoking stricter guidelines from the state government. The state reported five more

deaths on Tuesday, taking the total casualties to 1,953. The state government banned entry of devotees in all temples in Bhubaneswar and a few other famous shrines, including Tarini Temple in

Keonjhar district. As per the state health department sources, Tuesday's figure was the highest ever tally of daily Covid-19 infections in Odisha since the outbreak of the pandemic last year. The total number of cases in the state climbed up to 3,77,464.

work pressure.

## 15-day complete lockdown likely to be imposed in Maha from today

Shops selling groceries, all types of food, including meat will be open between 7-11 am

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC with agency inputs MUMBAI, APRIL 20

Maharashtra Chief Mini ster Uddhav Thackeray led MVA government is planning to impose a "complete lockdown" for 15 days in order to contain the Coronavirus infections in Maharashtra. The decision is likely to be announced on Wednesday.

Despite imposing the night curfew and section 144 in daytime, the numbers of the patients have been increasing.

In the meeting held on Tuesday, most of the Maharashtra cabinet ministers insisted for "complete lockdown", said a government official.

The public transport including suburban trains and BEST buses may be operational for the essential services personnel.

Maharashtra on Tuesday reported 62,097 new cases taking a total number of active cases to 6,83,856. While 519 new deaths were Maharashtra reported. Cabinet minister Aslam Shaikh told this newspaper, "It will be a complete lockdown excluding outstation trains and flights for the next 15 days."

He said that the suburban trains and BEST buses would remain operational for government employ-ees, who are working in essential services and

## J&K announces fresh tough measures

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, APRIL 20

Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday extended night curfew in all 20 districts of the Territory besides announcing a slew of other tough measures in view of an upward trajectory in Covid-19 cases. However, Kashmir's Divisional Commissioner, P.K. Pole said that the government has no plan to impose fresh lockdown in the Valley as the administration is following the mantra of "Jaan" bhi, Jahaan bhi."

Meanwhile, the authorities in J&K and Ladakh have informed the Union government that the surge in the Covid-19 positive cases in the twin UTs is a result of inbound travellers as many of them have turned out to be the

Public health minister Rajesh Tope also confirmed that the cabinet has advised the Chief Minister to impose complete lockdown.

Tope also clarified that the lockdown similar to the one imposed during the first surge of Covid is

**QUICK CROSSWORD** 

A women waits to register her name for Covid-19 test as cases continue to surge, in Srinagar on Tuesday.

the government's decision

that only 50 per cent shops

and other businesses will

carriers of the asympto- Manoj Sinha, announced remain open on an altermatic transmission of The J&K Lt. Governor,

needed to be imposed to deal with the present situ-

Tope said that the Chief Minister would himself announce the lockdown on Wednesday evening.

Meanwhile, the state government on Tuesday tightened curbs in the state. Shops selling groceries,

vegetables, fruit, dairy products, and all types of food, including meat and poultry, will be open between 7am and 11am, an

The new curbs will be effective from Tuesday itself. The disaster management unit (DMU) of

order by the state govern-

the relief and rehabilitation department issued an order in this regard. "All grocery, vegetable hops, fruit vendors, shops,

native basis within the

municipal and urban body

limits in the UT from

dairies, bakeries, confectioneries, all types of food shops including chicken, mutton, poultry, fish and eggs, shops related to agricultural implements and

pending in high courts, which has now crossed the figure of

almost 40 per cent.

8 pm, but the time window can be changed by local authorities, it said. intent behind including the provision was slightly differto deal with the unprecedented situation arising from the backlog of cases ent, nothing prevented it from

Thursday. He tweeted, "Only 50% shops in mar-

ket complexes / bazaars / malls within the munici-pal limits / urban local

body limits shall be open

on an alternate basis

through a rotation sys-

Sinha said that the magistrates of all districts have been told to devise a

mechanism to implement

the order, preferably in

consultation with local

market associations. He said that curfew from 10

pm to 6 am in force for the

two weeks in eight dis-

tricts has been extended to

all twenty districts of the UT. "Corona Curfew at night shall be extended to

all municipal /urban local

body limits of all 20 districts of J&K. It was

already in force in eight

districts earlier, from 10 pm to 6 am," he said in

farm produce, pet food

shops, shops related to materials for impending

rainy season" will remain

open from 7 am to 11 am,

said the order. Home deliv-

ery from such shops may

be allowed between 7 am to

being utilised to subserve an

endeavour to solve an existing

another tweet.

57 lakh coupled with the conproblem. sistent ratio of vacancies of "It is trite to say that we have a docket explosion in our coun-Observing that change is the try and that it is difficult for only constant, the apex court said any Constitution has to be adjudication to take place within a reasonable period of

### **ASSAM ORDERS CLOSURE OF GROCERY SHOPS, MALLS BY 6 PM**

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, APRIL 20

A day after reviewing the situation, Assam government on Tuesday issued new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to contain the escalating Covid situation and directed closure of grocery shops, shopping malls and other establishments by 6 pm

from Tuesday.

Making face mask compulsory in all public places, Assam chief secretary Jishnu Barua told reporters that they would be reviewing the situation in next three

"If situation continues to escalate, we may impose more restric-tions," said the chief secretary requesting the people Covid-19 appropriate behaviour.

increasing Besides tests across the state, the chief secretary said that they have stock of more than five lakh vaccines. 'We have taken steps to intensify the vaccination drive and the health department has already prepared a roadmap to complete the vaccination," he said.

The state administra-tion in its new SOP said that shop owners shall ensure a minimum six feet distance among customers and shall not allow more than five persons inside the shop. In addition, shop owners should compulsorily keep sanitisers and hand wash in their

shops, it added. "Barber shops, salons and parlours shall continue to provide service with strict compliance of Covid appropriate behaviour such as wearing of face masks, face cover, hand gloves," the

## SC clears ad hoc judges

13

6.Nonsense! (10) 8. Healing ointment (5) 10. Fundamental (5)

13. Diesel train (anag) (11) 14. Slight push (5)

1. Pus-filled swelling (4)

**Word Mine** 

0

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names

foreign words and proper names

are not allowed.

Ε

17. Characteristic (5)

19. Stretchiness (10)

#### FROM PG1

It termed the case as the matter of continuous mandamus needing monitoring and said, "We have taken the first step with the hope and aspiration that all concerned would cooperate and retiring/retired Judges would come forth and offer their services in the larg-er interest of the judiciary. The

guidelines cannot be exhaustive and that too at this stage. If problems arise, we will endeavour to iron them out. We must set aside apprehensions, if any, to chart this course and we are confident that there will be a way forward.'

The judgement said its intent was to activate a dormant provision of the Constitution on the appointment of ad-hoc

#### dynamic, and thus, even if the



000

HA! YOU'RE JUST A FIGUREHEAD! YOUR DUTIES ARE CEREMONIAL! I HAVE ALL THE REAL

CALVIN AND HOBBES | Bill Watterson WHAT? I'M DICTATOR-FOR

IF YOU'RE SO
IMPORTANT, HOW
COME YOU SING
THE SOPRANO
PART OF OUR
ANTHEM? JUST TILL MY YOICE CHANGES!

#### tension at your workplace. Taurus: You need to keep your anger and ego in control. Husband / wife would have financial improvements. Tensions will prevail due to

Aries: You succeed in getting rid of negative emotions. Sudden hike in salary / financial benefits will cheer you up. There may be slight

**Your day today** By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam

**COFFEE-BREA** 



Gemini: You may have to forego some comforts for your near and dear ones. Despite working hard you may face disappointment regarding rewards and remuneration.



Cancer: Kids will work hard even for simple things. Financially you will be very sound. There may be a slight rift in the relationship with friends.



Leo: You are likely to invest in a property. Couples would have great financial benefits. Parents would be fine. They would pay a visit to temples.

Virgo: You will not be able to increase savings. But



the expenses would be for good reasons. Some expenditure would bring you happiness. Entertainment would divert you from regular duties.

Elizabeth II is Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other

You share your b'day with

Commonwealth realms. Elizabeth was born in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. She is the longest-

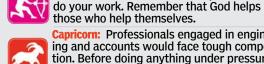


ibra: Hard work would get you more income. You may finalise marriage for someone in the family. Love affair may bring some trouble for

lived and longest-reigning British monarch.



: Travel would bring pleasure as well as profit. Friends and relatives would do favours and you would feel very happy in their company. Sagittarius: Do not share your confidential



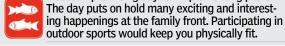
Capricorn: Professionals engaged in engineering and accounts would face tough competition. Before doing anything under pressure just listen to your heart's voice to begin a love

matters with others. Do not expect others to



come their way. Arrival of a new baby in the family would lift the spirits of all. A vibrant financial position would enable them to rapidly expand business. isces: A promising day for implementing plans.

Aquarius: For some overseas business offers could



bridge

**ALDER** 

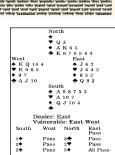
DO WE **ADJUST SPELLINGS OF WORDS?**  The English are known for their dry, quirky humour. Ben Fogle, in "English -- The Story of Marmite, Oueuing and Weather" (William Collins), gives a whole chapter to the subiect. He highlights English

three decades. This deal occurred during a multiple-

understatement by pointing out that Spike Milligan's epi-taph is "I told you I was ill." Tony Forrester is generally considered England's best player over the last two or

team event. Forrester was the only declarer to make five dia-monds. What did he do after West led a trump?

North's two-heart rebid was fourth-suit game-forcing. On the next round, he should have bid a forcing three diamonds, but he was an inexperienced player. (With game-invitational values, North would have immediately raised two diamonds to three diamonds.) Forrester aimed to lose one spade and one heart, but his



## 16 3. Attire (4) Across: 1. Ethics, 3. Aped, 7. Iron, 8. Period, 10. Sarcasm, 13. Viaduct, 16. Revise, 17. Undo, 18. Tidy, 19. Patent. 4. Addition symbol (4) 5. Invest at a risk (9)

7. Alienated (9) 9. Competing (5) 11. In search of (5) 12. Turkish cap (3) 15. Clock face (4) 16. Consumes (4) 17. Mark correct (4)

18. Pretentiously artistic (4)

jumble **DJEUG TRBHE DMELOU SCCUTA** 

Jumbles: GIVEN MERGE FREELY BESIDE communications were tenuous. Spotting the best line, he won trick one in hand, then ruffed a spade on the board with the diamond king. (Ruffing low would have cost

dummy's heart queen to West's king. Winning the trump return in hand, declarer ruffed a spade with dummy's diamond ace, played a heart to his 10, drew the outstanding

the contract.) Next. South ran

his hand was high, Forrester

Down: 1. Exit, 2. Hookah, 4. Prim, 5. Dodgem, 6. Seaside, 9. Eclipse, 11. Secret, 12. Sconce, 14. Avid, 15. Tout.

Others played in five diamonds by North. When East led a heart, ducked to West's king, no declarer realized the necessity of unblocking the to kill the contract.

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DID YOU KNOW THAT IN THE COCOON, THE CATERPILLAR DIGESTS ITSELF. THEN. CERTAIN REMAINING CELLS USE THE PROTEIN-RICH SOUP TO FEED THE-



### ARCHIE|Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman





**BLONDIE** Dean Young and John Marshall





ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN|Edgar Rice Burroughs







IN BRIEF

### **Cops shoot man** with 'handgun'

Dallas, April 20: Dallas police officers shot and killed a man Monday who pointed at them what turned out to be a replica handgun, authorities said.

Police responded about 4 p.m. Monday after receiving a call about a man walking along a residential street about one mile north of the US 75-Interstate 635 interchange. The man pointed at arriving officers what appeared to be a handgun before fleeing on foot. Shortly thereafter, officers responded to a report of an armed man stealing from a drug store. They tracked the man as he crossed all lanes of Interstate 635 on foot just west of US 75, then shot and killed him.

### **Dubai princess:**

#### **UN seeks info**

Geneva, April 20: Independent experts working with the UN human rights office on Tuesday called on the United Arab Emirates' government to provide more details about the fate of a daughter of Dubai's powerful ruler who has claim-

ed she was taken hostage.

The experts called for the immediate release of Sheikha Latifia bint Mohammed Al Maktoum, who turned up in videos broadcast by the BBC two months ago in which she questioned whether she would

They expressed concerns about alleged rights violations she has faced, and possible threats to her life.

### 40,000 displaced

### in Mozambique

Johannesburg, April 20: Some 40,000 displaced and urg-ently needing food, work suspended on a multi-billion-dollar gas investment, and scores of dead still being counted.

The damage caused by Mozambique's extremist rebels on the town of Palma continues to be assessed.

Four weeks after the rebels launched a three-pronged attack, which lasted at least five days, Mozambican police and relief agencies are working to help the thousands uprooted by the violence and restore the town to daily life. Although the fighting has

ended, Palma does not appear to be completely secure.

#### **Egypt fires top** railway official

Cairo, April 20: Egypt's transportation minister on Tuesday said he sacked the country's top railway official, following three train accidents in less than a month that left at least people dead and some 320

The firing of Asharf Raslan, head of the railway authority, was part of a wide ranging overhaul of the rundown railway system's leadership amid public outcry over repeated train crashes.

Raslan, who headed the railway authority since July 2018. was replaced Mustafa Abuel-Makarm, the office of Transportation Minister Kamal el-Wazir said in a statement.

The changes included the main departments of the railway authority that manages train traffic in the Arab world's most populous country.

### **CHAD PRESIDENT KILLED AFTER 30 YEARS IN POWER**

N'Djamena, April 20: Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno, who ruled the central African nation for more than three decades, was killed Tuesday on the battlefield in a fight against rebels, the military announced on national television

The stunning announcement came just hours after electoral officials had declared Deby the winner of the April 11 preside ntial election, paving the way for him to stay in power for six more years.

The circumstances of Deby's death could not immediately be independently confirmed due to the remote location of the battlefield. It was not known why the president would have visited the frontlines in northern Chad or participated in ongoing clashes with the

rebels who opposed his rule. Deby, a former army commander-in-chief, first came to power in 1990 when his rebel forces overthrew then-President Hissene Habre, who was later convicted of human rights abuses at an international tribunal in Senegal.

Over the years Deby had survived numerous armed rebellions and managed to stay in power until this latest insurgency led by a group calling itself the Front for Change and Concord in Chad

# WH mum on lifting vax raw material India export ban

The Serum Institute of India has urged President Biden to lift the embargo

The White House on Monday did not respond to questions on the request by Serum Institute of India to lift export ban on certain raw materials needed for ramping up production of Covid-19 vaccine. The question in this regard was asked twice on

Monday — once during the morning White House briefing on Covid-19 and later during the daily news conference by White House Press Secretary Jen

The Serum Institute of India has been saying that the Biden administration is blocking exports of raw materials that it needs to make Covid vaccines, and the Serum Institute has also urged President Biden to lift that embargo. So I wanted to ask which raw materials are at issue here? And do you have any plans to address Serum's concerns? asked a reporter during the morning news conference by the White House Covid-19 Response Team.

Both Dr Anthony Fauci, Director at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and Dr Andy Slacitt, the White House Covid-19 response senior advisor said they had no answer.

I don't I'm sorry. We could

French cops protest

### Avoid travelling to India, US to citizens over Covid spike

Washington, April 20: The US has advised its citizens to avoid travelling to India, even if they are fully vaccinated as there is a 'very high level' of

Covid-19 in the country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) on Monday released travel recommendations by destination. It uses science-based Travel Health Notices to alert travellers to health threats around the world and advise on

get back to you on that, I'm

sure. But I don't have any-

thing for you right now, Fauci said.

Let us get back to you. Suffice to say we are tak-

ing very seriously the

global threat from the pan-

demic. We've been a leader in the funding of COVAX,

have done several bilateral

transfers of vaccines, and

are looking very hard and

taking very seriously all of

these complex issues, we'll

get back to you on the specifics, Slavitt said.

A similar question was

asked during the daily

how to protect themselves.
The CDC has a 4-level system for COVID-19 and in that India is placed in 'Level 4: Very high level of Covid-19'.

In the note Monday, the department noted that "the Covid-19 pandemic continues to pose unprecedented risks to travellers." The CDC has urged Americans to avoid all

travel to India.
Travellers should avoid all travel to India. Because

India even fully vaccinated travellers may be at risk for getting and spreading Covid-19 variants and should avoid all travel to India, the CDC

said in a statement. "Because of the current situation in India even fully vaccinated travellers may be at risk for getting and spreading COVID-19 variants and should avoid all travel to India.

### **NEWLY FOUND INSECT NAMED AFTER CORONA**

Pristina (Kosovo), April 20: Kosovar biologist Hal-il Ibrahimi believes the virus restrictions haven't all been bad — he completed his research, raised public awareness of pollution of river basins and named a newly discovered insect after the virus. He had spent years working on a research report on a caddisfly species found in Kosovo's western Bjeshket e Nemuna national park.
— AP

J&J virus vaccine manufacturing halted at plant that ruined doses

Washington, April 20: The US Food and Drug Administration requested that production of the Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine be halted at a factory that previously reportedly ruined about 15 million doses of the shot.

March it had identified a

The pharmaceutical giant told AFP at the end of

did not meet quality standards," but did not confirm the specific number affected. The *New York Times* later reported the batch consisted of about 15 million doses.

Emergent BioSolutions said in a regulatory Secur-

batch of doses at a plant in Baltimore run by Emergent BioSolutions "that ities and Exchange Commission filing on Monday that the FDA had requested a pause on April 16 in production of the singleshot vaccine pending an inspection at the Balti-more, Maryland facility. Johnson & Johnson had

said it was sending experts to the site to oversee vaccine production. — AFP,

### DON'T MEDDLE IN OTHER'S **AFFAIRS: XI**

Beijing, April 20: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday hit out at the United States, saying there should be no "boss-ing" and "meddling" in the internal affairs of other countries as Beijing is increasingly coming under pressure from Washington and its allies over issues of human rights violations,

Taiwan and Hong Kong. "Bossing others around or meddling in others' internal affairs would not get one any support. We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilisations to promote the progress of human civilisation," Xi said, without directly referring to the United

"What we need in today's world is justice, not hegemony," he said .

Police officers hold flags during a demonstration called by French National Police Union Alliance PN to protest against the verdict in the appeal trial of 13 people for the attack in 2016 of a police vehicle in Viry-Chatillon with Molotov cocktails, in Montpellier on Tuesday.

## French envoy ouster plea in Pak parl

resolution was tabled in the lower house of the Parliament on Tuesday for the expulsion of the French ambassador from Pakistan over the issue of blasphemous cartoons being published in the European country. Amjad Ali Khan of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party presented the resolution in the National Assembly with Speaker Asad Qaiser in the chair.

Technically, it was not an official document as it was moved by a member in his private capacity but it was accepted for discussion. The resolution condemned

mous caricatures by French magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in September last year and expressed regret over the French's president "encouragement of the elements hurting the sentiments of the hundreds of millions of Muslims in the name of freedom of expression". "The House condemns the publication of insulting sketches by the controversial French magazine Charlie Hebdo and Muslims around the world had also expressed outra-

the publication of blasphe-

ge at the publication of the sketches," it added. It stated that a debate should be held in the Hou-

French ambassador from Pakistan over the issue of caricatures. "This House also demands that the state should decide matters of international relations and no person, group or party can exert unnecessary illegal pressure," according to the resolution.

It also said that all European countries in general and France in particular should be made aware of the seriousness of this issue of blasphemy. The resolution said that the issue should be raised collectively on international

### REINSTATE TRAVEL BAN TO KEEP U.S. SAFE FROM ISLAMIC TERROR: TRUMP

Former US President Donald Trump has urged his successor Joe Biden to reinstate the travel ban on certain Muslim countries in order to keep the country safe from radical Islamic terrorism.

If Joe Biden wants to keep our country safe from radical Islamic terrorism, he should reinstitute the foreign country travel ban and all of the vetting requirements on to Trump', said — PTI those seeking admission US president.

Washington, April 20: that go with it, along with the refugee restrictions I successfully put in place, Trump said in a statement on Monday.

Terrorists operate all over the world and recruit online. To keep terrorism and extremism out of our country, we need to have smart, commonsense rules in place so we don't repeat the many immigration mistakes made by Europeand the USA prior to Trump', said the former

2-MINUTE | SILENCE

### Special security cover to all churches in island nation

## Lanka Easter attack 2nd anniv today

Colombo, April 20: Sri Lanka's Catholic church will observe a two-minute silence on Wednesday morning to mark the second anniversary of the deadly Easter Sunday attacks in 2019 that killed 258 people, including 11 Indians. Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo, has requested people to observe a twominute silence at 8.45 am on Wednesday in memory of the victims of the

Easter Sunday attacks. Nine suicide bombers belonging to local Islamist extremist group National

Thawheed Jamaat (NTJ) linked to ISIS carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through three churches and as many luxury hotels on April 21, 2019, killing 258 people, including 11 Indians.

Cardinal Ranjith said that two main memorial services would be held at the St Anthony's Church in Colombo and the St Sebastian's Church in Negombo the two of the three churches devastated by the suicide attacks two

Cardinal Ranjith, who be presiding the

memorial service at the St Anthony's Church, said that it was at 8.45 am on April 21, 2019 when the first suicide bomber targeted a church.

The police said there will be a special security cover to all churches throughout the island nation.

All provincial police stations have been directed to provide appropriate security tomorrow during the memorial events, police spokesman senior deputy inspector general Ájith Rohana said.

The Muslim Council of Sri Lanka (MCSL) has also

called upon all Sri Lankans to support and join the call of the Archbishop of Colombo in observing the two-minute silence.

We also call upon Muslims to make supplications for these victims in this holy month of Ramadan, said the MCSL statement issued by Vice President Hilmy Ahamed.

It also urged the Government to hasten a thorough investigation on the Easter Sunday attacks and bring the real perpetrators to justice without relying on anecdotal evidence. The Muslim community

the Muslim community denied an Islamic funeral for the suicide bombers, the statement added. The MCSL said the

Muslim community has been targeted by some in a hate campaign for the carnage of a few who called themselves Muslims.

condemns the suicide bo-

mhers as Islam totally for-

bids killing of innocents

even during a war; hence

Cardinal Ranjith has vowed to take drastic action if the real culprits were not dealt with by the second anniversary of the attacks on April 21. — PTI

## US: SC likely to bar some 'green card' applicants

Washington, April 20: their advocates say. The Supreme Court appeared ready Monday to prevent thousands of people living in the US for humanitarian reasons from applying to become permanent residents.

justices seemed favourable, in arguments via telephone, to the case made by the Biden administration that federal immigration law prohibits people who entered the country illegally and now have Temporary Protected Status from seeking "green cards" to remain in the country permanently.

The designation applies to people who come from countries ravaged by war or disaster, protects them from deportation and allows them to work legally.

The case pits the administration against immigrant groups that contend federal law is more forgiving for the 400,000 people who are TPS recipients. Many have lived in the US for many years, given birth to American citizens and have put down roots in this country, position held consistently for 30 years by administrations of both parties.

President Joe Biden supports changing the law to put TPS recipients, among other immigrants, on a path to citizenship. Legislation that would allow people who are here for humanitarian reasons to adjust their immigration status has passed the House, but faces uncertain prospects in the Senate. Justice Brett Kavanaugh said the court should be "careful about tinkering with the immigration statutes as written," espe-cially when Congress could act. "But just kind of big picture, why should we jump in here when Congress is very focused on immigration?" Kavanaugh asked.

The case turns on whether people who entered the country illegally and were given humanitarian protections were ever "admitted" into the US under immigration law.

### **FLOYD DEATH CASE AGAINST EX-COP GOES TO THE JURY**

Minneapolis, April 20: The murder case against former Minneapolis poli-ce Officer Derek Chauvin in the death of George Floyd has gone to the jury. Twelve jurors — six of them white, six Black or multiracial — are beginning deliberations in a city on edge against

During closing arguments Monday, prosecutors contended that Chauvin squeezed the life out of Floyd by pinning his knee against Floyd's neck last May, ignoring bystanders, his own training and common sense.

another round of unrest.

The defence argued that the now-fired white officer acted reasonably and that the 46-year-old Black man died of an underlyi-

ng heart condition and illegal drug use. Officer Derek Chauvin

"had to know" he was squeezing the life out of George Floyd as the Black man cried over and over that he couldn't breathe and finally fell silent, a prosecutor told the jury Monday during closing arguments at Chauvin's murder trial.

"Use your common sense. Believe your eyes. What you saw, you saw,' Steve Schleicher said, referring to the excruciating bystander video of Floyd pinned to the pavement with Chauvin's knee on or close to his neck last May for up to 9 minutes, 29 seconds, as bystanders yelled at the white officer to get off.

e-TENDER NOTICE (Running Contract) Online bids are invited for the supply and installation of the following equipment for Medicine Rack, Medium and Low Duty Rack Crash cart Various Types, Sterilizer-Various Types, Air Conditioner - Various Types, Hospital Furniture various types, Multi 7.04.2021 10.05.2021 functional Couch, OT Table (Ophthalmic) 11.00 a.m. 05.00 p.m With Chair, Fire Extinguisher - Various Type Fully Loaded Dental Chair Electrically Operated, Oxygen Generator - Various Types, Medical Gas pipeline System.

Anaesthesia Workstation Various types Ventilator Various types, Mobile 100MA X-Ray Machine, Point Of Care ABG Machine, ENT Operating Microscope Model B, Oxygen Cylinder (B) With Trolley, Vertical 8.04.2021 14.05.2021 11.00 a.m. | 05.00 p.m Autoclave - Various Type, Fully Automated Horizontal Autoclave Model B (Double Door), CGM MACHINE, Insulin Pump with Integrated CGMS. High Speed Lathe with Suction, Plating system for midface Trauma and Mandiable, Vaccum Cleaner, Paediatric bed, GC With FID,NPD and ECD Detector, Subcutaneous Bilurubinometer, Binocular Microscope -Various Type, Centrifuge - Brushless Type-.04.2021 5.05.202 11.00 a.m. | 05.00 p.m 8 wells. Semiautomatic Coaquiation Analyser, Hot Air Oven Various Type Incubator Lab -Various Type, Dialysis Consumables, Water Bath Large Reagent Rental Contract - Fully Automated 26.04.2021 15.05.2021 Immuno Hematology Analyser Model B. 11.00 a.m. 05.00 p.m Test kit for new born screening programme (ImmunoFluroscence Method) 11.00 a.m. 03.05.2021 T402 (R) Reagent Rental Contract - Fully Automated N.A. Immuno Hematology Analyser, SPET CT Scanner
Implant Kit Physio Dispensor Ultrasonic Impiant Kit Physio Dispensor Ultrasonic Scalar, Microwave Oven, Bar code Reader and Printer, Submarine Horizontal Gel Electrophoresis. Piezo Electric Surgery System, Diesel Operated Ride on Sweeping Machine, Mini Ride on Scrubbing Machine. Machine, Mini rice on Schobing Machine, SICS Set, Materials for the setting up of LIMB fitting centre, Digital Dental X-ray Unit (Pediatric), T-Piece Resuscitator, Goniometer With 4 Mirror, Infantometer, Air Oxygen Blender, ECG Machine Single channel, Neonatal Cooler, Automated CPR 03.05.2021 N.A. 05.00 p.m channel, Neonatal Cooler, Automated CPR
System Various types, Endotracheal Cuff
Pressure Monitor, Hand Held Color
Doppler, ICP Monitoring System, Perkins
Hand Held Tonometer, Prisms and
Cambridge Crowding Cards and TNO Set,
Vacuum' Pressure Pump, Intra Osseous
Gun, Homogenizer, Lab Blender, Vertical
Horizontal Shaker
Green Laser with Stit Loop and Indian Green Laser with Slit Lamp and Indirect Delivery System (Multispot), Flexible Derivery System (Multispot), Flexible Intubating Endoscope, Video Intubating Bronchoscope Model B, Oven with Windows and vacuum machine with accessories Type B, Dialysis consumables (Introducer Set), Generator 20 KVA, Sample Homogeniser 5L. Obl. Polarimeter, Tympanometer, Setting up of IVF center on turnkey basis, OT Table fully automatic, Trauma Accessories, ENT and Ophthalmic Examination Head, Ausculation Trainer, AV Fistula, Platelet Aggregometer, Portable Ventilator for ALS Ambulance, Leasunit (Doubt). 03,05.2021 T404(R)/ N.A. 05.00 p.m Laser unit (Dental), Pulse oxymeter Baby & Adult, Biosafety Cabinet Various types, Point of Care Ultrasound with echo probe, Oto acoustic Emission Screeners Type B, Laminor Flow Cabinet, Live 3D(4D) Echocardiography system, Transpor

Ventilator State Public Sector undertakings and MSMEs registered in the State or registered outside the state satisfying the policy of Government of India are exempted from remittance of tender document cost and EMD subject to the submission of valid locuments, provided all the offered products are manufactured by them. Tende focuments and all other information related to tender and bidding process can be lownloaded from the website www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.

Sd/- Managing Director (Tender Inviting Authority)



## Chronicle

21 APRIL 2021

### Vaccination: Set realistic targets, don't pass buck

he Union government's decision to open up vaccination against Covid-19 for all those aged above 18 is a welcome step but the deci-sion to halve its procurement of vaccines and let the state governments and private players do the rest of the job throws up uncomfortable questions. The demand for relaxing eligibility conditions for vaccination was voiced by many state governments, and was raised in the letter former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi the other day. The decision makes more than 98 crore of the 136 crore Indians eligible for vaccination; inoculating them all would be a major step for the nation to return to business as usual.

The Centre needs to explain how its decision to let the vaccine manufacturers sell 50 per cent of the production to state governments and private players will make its vaccination targets more achievable. It seems to have little planning to augment production in a drastic way in a short period of time: Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan, in his uncharacter-

The Centre refused to pay heed to the call of the two manufacturers for more financial aid all these days, and when it did, it also gave them a chance to make super profits

istically distasteful reply to Dr Singh, was silent on the former Prime Minister's practical suggestion to use the compulsory licensing route to do so. In effect, all that the Centre has done is to liberalise the sale of half of the production of the vaccine at a time when the nation is facing an acute shortage of it. The Centre refused to pay heed to the call of the two manufacturers for more financial aid all these days, and when it did, it also gave them a chance to make super profits. It's ad-hocism at its worst.
This is not the first time the Centre has been

found wanting in the fight against the pandemic: From the Prime Minister's assurance last year to the nation that we shall defeat the virus

in 21 days to launching the "world's largest vaccination programme" with little planning on this New Year Day, ad-hocism and chest-thumping have been its hallmark. And the data on the milestones India has covered reflects that of a poor performer: we do not talk about flattening the curve at all, and have inoculated fully only one per cent of the population in the last four months. It's incomprehensible that the health minister jeered at Dr Singh's suggestion to look at the percentage, instead of the absolute

It is time that the Centre sets achievable targets and works hard towards them, coordinating the efforts of all the stakeholders. It must rescind the decision to earmark half of the vaccine produced locally to the channel other than its own; it is in effect handing over the responsibility of making the vaccine available to the larger chunk of the population to the state governments while still holding all the purse strings, including those of the PM-Cares Fund. The government must also explore all options, including easy imports and compulsory licensing, to jack up availability of the vaccines. Impulsive decision making and chest-thumping can hardly replace careful planning and resolute action

### Man's Ingenuity on Mars

hen Wilbur and Orville Wright flew their motor-operated plane in 1903 it was airborne for 12 seconds only. When Neil Armstrong took his first step on the moon in 1969 it was a small one for man but it represented a giant leap for mankind. So too with *Ingenuity*, just 48 centimetres tall and weighing 1.8 kg and which was airborne for exactly 39 seconds after climbing to only three metres above the rugged Martian surface. But such a short flight on another plan-— where the atmosphere of mostly carbon dioxide is thin (about a hundredth of that on Earth) and there is no air to push against — is symbolic of a technological breakthrough that comes only once in a few generations. *Ingenuity* needed a heater and thermostat to be kept warm to withstand up to the minus 100 degrees Celsius temperatures of Martian nights.

The short flight opens up exciting possibilities for the future of space exploration; which need not be limited to a rover on wheels needing a surface to move on. Ingenuity's chief engineer Dr Bob Balaram, an alumnus of IIT Madras, believes such flight capabilities could evolve and help explore the moons of Saturn in the future. Helicopters and fleets of drones with heavier payloads can spot the most interesting terrain for rovers to move to and explore. The conquest of technology might even lead to the designing of helicopters that can one day fly even in the rarefied atmosphere around Mount Everest.

A comparison, however bizarre, may help bring out the extent of man's ingenuty in handling the complexities of Mars when you consider the failure just the other day of a self-driving Tesla car, running at high speed and not negotiating a turn on the road to crash into a tree and kill two occupants. The Perseverance rover was only 60 metres away recording the historic flight but just imagine the capabilities of flying machines that can cap ture images at close quarters of worlds millions of miles away from earth. Such breakthroughs may encourage men who envisage colonising planets in the solar system to dream on.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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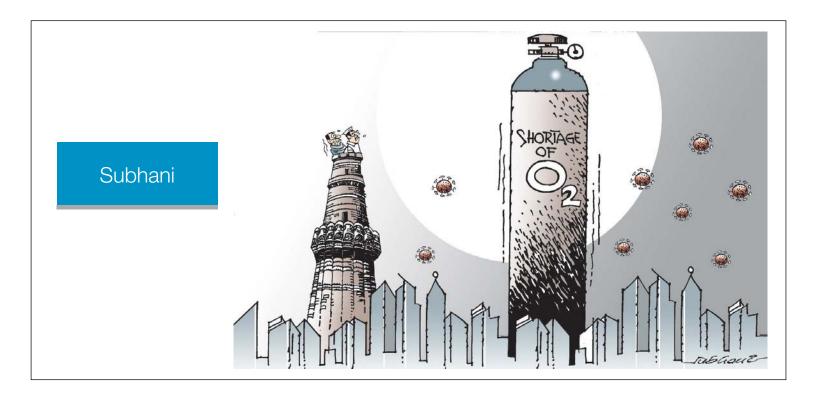
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## 'Hindu politics' by Opp. is a sign of BJP's New India



Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay

Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav? Besides the latter being a joint recipient of her letter, written last month to 15 Opposition stalwarts asking them to join forces to fight assaults on India's constitutional federalism, both have also recently publicly displayed their Hindu identities. Mr Yadav's efforts at

projecting his Hindu identity was unfortunately followed by his testing Covid positive, possibly because he had bathed at Haridwar during the Kumbh Mela and met with a Hindu seer, who was perhaps infected with the coronavirus. Ms Banerjee demonstrated that she was not a lesser Hindu than her adversary-in-chief, Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chandi Path to launch her campaign in Nandigram several weeks ago.

Ms Banerjee, as well as Mr Yadav, in ways more than one, embody the majority of India's Opposition leaders who have since 2014, taken recourse to startling innovations to wear their hitherto invisible Hindu birthmarks on their sleeves. Rahul Gandhi's efforts to publicly display being a Dattatreya Brahmin in the run-up to the Gujarat Assembly polls are widely known and were commented upon adequately.

Alongside widely embracing their religious identity, the (Hindu) Opposition leaders now mask past commitment and efforts at increasing the political representation of religious minorities, especially Muslims. They also no longer promise minori-ty-specific development programmes with the same gusto as they once did. Some years ago, Sonia

Gandhi had bemoaned that her party suffered electorally due to its "pro-

minority" image.

The contagion of overanxious display of one's Hindu identity is in complete contrast to the unanimity in the political class, at dawn of the republic in 1950, that India's majority community was obligated to make the religious minorities, especially the Muslims, feel secure, respected and instil in them the belief that the majority was sensitive to their faith and

tradition. The chief minister of Bihar, Nitish Kumar, drew strength from this unspoken agreement when he mocked Prime Minister Modi for his refusal to wear a skull cap offered by a Muslim cleric in 2011. It is useful to recall Nitish Kumar's didactic advice: "In a country as diverse as ours, symbols must be respected. In order to maintain harmotimes one has to wear a cap and sometimes one needs to sport a tilak."

Barely eight years after this taunt, the fortunes have reversed. Mr Kumar is now a much-diminished executor of Mr Modi's policies, albeit with a baulk at times on matters related to hard Hindutva. The Prime Minister has also successfully politically coerced his opponents to become mindful of the ways of the "New India", where being merely sensitive towards the concerns of religious minorities is deemed a political handi-

cap, or perilous. The Opposition parties are driven by their assessment that in the people's perception, whatever may be shortcomings of Prime Minister Modi and his government's deliveries, he has one most important "accomplishment" beneath his belt — that he has "fixed" Muslims. The Opposition parties are driven by their perception of In more states than one, the **Opposition to the** BJP is its veritable B-team. Take the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party for instance in Delhi.

majoritarian elation and are now unwilling to risk loss of support among Hindus. In more states than one, the Opposition to the BJP is its veritable B-team. Take the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party for instance in This explains Akhilesh

Yadav's conscious deci-

sion to refrain from critiquing Hindu nationalistic politics in recent years, especially after 2017, the way his father Mulayam Singh Yadav, the Samajwadi patriarch, did three decades ago when he pledged in October 1990 not to allow even a single "bird to flutter" over Ayodhya's skies on the day of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's promised com-mencement of the "kar seva" at the disputed site. The impression that there has a complete reversal is the outlook of large sections of Hindus towards several of Mamata Banerjee's decisions too, most visibly in the significantly lesser number of Muslims she has nominated as candidates in these

elections. Ms Banerjee and Mr Yadav have another commonality. Prashant Kishor and his brand of ideological agnosticism is part of their campaign to return to power, the former's currently and Mr Yadav's in 2017. Since his advent in India's political space as an electoral strategist, first for Mr Modi and later for others, Mr Kishor has preached that political commitment to ideas and policies is redundant. Winning polls, he asserts, is all about reading the data right, an effective communication strategy and making the right moves at opportune moments. His philosophy enables him to move to one "client" party from another. Mr Kishor's belief in post-ideology politics is reflected in the weakened commitment to political beliefs of Ms Banerjee, Mr Yadav and several others. His influence was visible

in Ms Banerjee's letter to the Opposition leaders. It was an unambiguous effort at opening a door for a post-poll pact with the Congress while staking claim to a national role in the event of the Trinamul Congress returning to power in West Bengal. But Ms Banerjee chose not to criticise the BJP's corrosive ideology. Instead, she used the passage of the law that clipped the powers of the Delhi government and held it as evidence of the ruling side's objective of establishing "one party authoritarian rule in India'

Ms Banerjee's letter was silent on the abrogation of Article 370 and taking away Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, a precursor to the law clip-ping the Delhi government's powers. The letter listed the reasons why the Opposition parties must forge a common cause. But none of these were ideological. Ms Banerjee limited herself to listing instances showing that the BJP consistently undermines India's federal character; hang-handed governors, using inves tigative agencies to target political opponents, limiting fiscal independence of states, dissolution of consultative bodies, worsening Centre-state relations and so on.

Mamata Banerjee has not sought allies among the Opposition parties to protect India from a majoritarian onslaught. Instead, it is a call to unite to safeguard its federal character and autonomy. Although people in more than one hundred seats are still to vote, the letter is the final proof of the BJP winning this round politically. Whether it has secured West Bengal electorally too shall be known only on May 2.

The writer is an author and journalist based in the Delhi-NCR region. His books include The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right and Narendra Modi: The Man, The Times. He tweets at @NilanjanUdwin.

### **COVID CRUELTY**

It is really a matter of concern that more than 40 lakh doses of covid-19 vaccines have been wasted in India. Most of the above were in Tamil Nadu and Punjab. Kerala and West Bengal are reported to have fully utilised the vaccines. It is high time the people stopped blaming the governments (Central and State) for the shortages. People in Tamil Nadu have lost their chance of getting vaccinated when they were readily available due to various reasons (including ignorance) and are now scrambling and blaming the governments. They are trying their best to get vaccinated to escape from the clutches of coronavirus as realisation has dawned on them very

M.C. Vijay Shankar,

#### **WRITING ON THE WALL**

THE MUCH-VAUNTED aim of the central government to provide affordable and accessible universal health coverage to all our country-men by 2022 now looks like a distant mirage. The onset of the second wave of the Covid pandemic has laid bare the glaring inadequacies in our wobbly healthcare infrastructure, which is literally on the verge of a major chasm between promise and performance on the healthcare front does not bode well for a "Swastha Bharat". Budgetary allocation on the health sector warrants a quantum leap, for mere lip service won't suffice. Amit Banerjee, Mumbai

### **THOUGHTFUL MOVE**

The request made by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee to the election commission to advance the dates of polling of the remaining constituencies in West Bengal to complete them in a single day or two days is a thoughtful one. The decision by her to cancel massive rallies to avoid crowd gathering is the right step. The cancellation of campaigning by the Congress leaders Sonia and Rahul is also a welcome move. The EC should realise the seriousness of the situation and arrange for polling of remaining phases in a single day. The Supreme Court which was against the postponement of Bihar elections, should intervene and issue necessary directions to complete the entire process of polling in West Bengal and counting of votes in all 5 states as expeditiously as possible. EC should realise that the life of people is more important than adhering to its schedule.

S. Hariharan,

### Sanjay Kumar

Bengal lesson: Drawbacks of a multi-phase state election

fter various incidents of violence in the first four phases of voting in West Bengal, the Election Commission of India ordered the election campaign to end 72 hours before the fifth phase of polling. This order of bringing the campaign to an end, 24 earlier than the mandated 48 hours is an indication of EC not being in full command. The EC tried to send out a message of being tough by putting a 24-hour ban on Mamata Banerjee's campaign and another 48-hour bar on that by BJP leader Rahul Sinha, and issuing notices to BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari. These steps are welcome, but it can't possibly evade the question — why in spite of an eight-phase election, on grounds that it was necessary so that polling took place in a free and fair manner, has it not been able to curb violence in the earlier phases that resulted in the death of a few

The multi-phase election and few days of gap between different phases is aimed at facilitating move-

ment of security forces from one location/district to another as an adequate number of forces are needed to be deployed at each polling booth for a free and fair election. But visuals from the ground especially at booths where violent incident took place clearly indicated that though security forces were deployed inside the polling booths, they were hardly seen outside them. It is a wellknown fact that violence mostly take place outside the polling booth and hardly inside. The question that the EC actually needs to answer is this, was planning an eight-phase poll spread over a month, and during a pandemic too boot, wrong, after all? While there are advantages to holding a phased election, were there also challenges that it failed to take into account? Equally, was not deploying security forces outside polling stations in spite of visible signs of tension in many villages due to shortage? It so happened that more than 1,000 companies of central forces were deployed in West

Bengal at the time. As noted above, the huge gap

between the different phases of polling in the 2021 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election was kept to facilitate comfortable movement of security forces between locations. The EC did the right thing following this protocol. However, it failed to assess that these days could also be used by anti-social elements for movement from one place to another. Thus, questions should also be asked for the rationale behind the eight-phase election. Why could the elec-tion not be planned over fewer

Even though there is no data on the number of violent incidents in different phases, there is a general sense that violent incidents have increased in the later phases of the election compared to the earlier phases of voting. As we have noted before, a multiple-phase election does help in movement of security forces ultimately resulting in deployment of an adequate number at each polling station, but at the

same time, spread over a month, it provides an opportunity for escalating violence, as workers of different parties fighting against each other get time to settle scores, right from one phase on to the next. Election in one phase could minimise this possibility, as they would not otherwise get the opportunity to organise themselves. Whatever violence takes place would then only be spontaneous. There may be some other disadvantages, but a single-day polling can certainly help in reducing the duration of tension between party workers.

A multi-phase election results in a very long period of election campaign. The campaign comes to an end 48 hours before the polling only in those constituencies where vot ing is scheduled to take place. There is no restriction on campaigning in constituencies where voting is scheduled at a later date. It has now almost become a rule that senior leaders of political parties will address rallies in con-

place on a later date on the same day that voting is in progress in some other constituency. It has also become customary for these leaders to accuse leaders of their rival parties of their involvement in violent incidents in their speeches delivered during these rallies. This only raises the tempers of party workers that at times trigger violence in the said constituency on the voting day. A single-phase election or polling over fewer phases will certainly restrict the campaign period that will only help in keeping the political temperatures down, ultimately leading to less violence on the polling day.

Elections are due to be held in many states next year, Uttar Pradesh being a large one. Possibly, EC would think about a phased election. While so doing, it should keep the West Bengal lesson

The writer is a professor at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and a political analyst. The views expressed here are personal.











## FINANCIAL



INDICATO	<b>RS</b>	%
Sensex	47705.80	-0.51
Nifty 50	14296.40	-0.44
S&P 500*	4,135.25	-0.67
Dollar (₹)	74.89	-0.01
Pound Sterling (₹)	104.71	-0.60
Euro (₹)	90.31	-0.18
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,756▼305	0.65
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	66.35	-1.04
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.074	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.585	-0.014
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

### **HERO MOTOCORP TO** SUSPEND OPS AT ALL **PLANTS FROM 22ND**

Two-wheeler MotoCorp said it is temporarily stopping operations at all its manufacturing facilities across the country, including its Global Parts Centre (GPC), in the wake of a surge in Covid-19 cases. The firm has six manufacturing units located at Dharuhera and Gurugram, Haryana; Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh; Haridwar in Uttarakhand; Neemrana in Rajasthan, and Halol in Gujarat with a capacity of 90 lakh units.



### ■ Move part of efforts to boost supply

## **Govt mulls duty** cut on oxygen

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, APRIL 20

Anticipating a shortage of oxygen from the sharp spike in Covid-19 cases in many states, the government may encourage private companies to import oxygen to boost ramped up domestic supply. Besides, it is also expected that the Centre may relax the total duty—which includes integrated GST on medical oxygen by at least 10-12 per cent to boost private trade, a government source said.

The government move came soon after its decision on Monday to open vaccinations for all above 18 years of age from May 1.

A senior government official said, "We are closely looking into the development on oxygen supply and demand. If needed, we will allow private firms to import it with some duty relaxation. They may get a waiver of a minimum 10-12 per customs duty on oxygen if they intend to import."

As per industry estimation, the demand for the much sought-after liquid medical oxygen (LMO) has jumped manifold amidst the second wave of Covid-19. "During the first wave of Covid-19 last year, the demand for LMO increased four times to 2,800 tonnes per day. Further, with the second wave, the demand has gone up to more than 5,000 TPD," an industry

source said. When asked about the likelihood of pricing control on oxygen, the official



### STOP INDUSTRIAL USE OF OXYGEN: HC

New Delhi, April 20: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday said that economic interests cannot override human lives, and in view of hospitals in the national capital running low on oxygen, the Centre should immediately implement the ban on industrial use of oxygen instead of wait-

ing till April 22. A bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said oxygen supply of various hospitals will run out in 4-8 hours and in such a situation there was no justification in implementing the ban from April 22 as the need

The court directed the Centre to forthwith implement the ban and divert the oxygen to hos-

The court also issued notice to INOX Air Products, which pro-

said the government is looking into all aspects of oxygen requirement. 'In order to save the lives

of people now we are try-

ing our best to meet the

duces oxygen, as to why contempt action be not initiated against it for not complying with court orders to supply oxygen and directed the presence of the compa-ny's MD on the next date of hearing on April 22.

The court also sought the presence of the Uttar Pradesh government on the next date.

The direction came after senior advocate Rahul Mehra told the bench that INOX did not supply oxygen as directed by the court claiming that doing so would lead to a law and order situation in UP from where the supply was to come.

The court also directed the Centre to issue appropriate orders and also meet the representatives of the steel and petrochemical industries to divert some portion of their oxygen.

demand and boost supply About the pricing, I think they could also be given the freedom to set pricing of their own," the official

### **BHARAT BIOTECH TO BOOST VACCINE OUTPUT**

**CHRIS KAY** 

Bharat Biotech International Ltd will ramp up production of its Covid-19 shot to about 700 million doses on an annual basis as the country struggles to contain a fresh and virulent coronavirus wave.

The planned expansion comes after the government last week gave the firm a Rs 65 crore grant. New Delhi pushed Bharat Biotech to double its output by June and churn out 100 million doses of its inactivated Covaxin shot per month by September.

Inactivated vaccines, while highly safe, are extremely complex and expensive to manufacture, resulting in lower yields compared to live virus vaccines," the firm said. — Bloomberg

### DBS, StanChart weigh bids for Citi consumer business citibank

ANSHUMAN DAGA, NUPUR ANAND &
SUMEET CHATTERJEE APRII 20

DBS Group, Mitsubishi Financial Group G), OCBC and Standard Chartered are set to bid for parts of Citigroup's consumer business in Asia, people with direct knowledge of the matter said.

The sale process will start within a couple of weeks, they added, declining to be named as they were not authorised to speak to media.

The move comes after Citi said it would exit from its consumer franchises in 13 markets, 10 of which are in Asia, as it refocuses on its more lucrative institutional and wealth management businesses in these markets

Potential bids from the regional banks and StanChart, which makes most of its profit in Asia, underscores their growing appetite for businesses like credit cards and mortgages in a push to lock in long-

term income growth. The businesses Citi is exiting had \$82 billion in assets and were allocated \$7 billion in tangible common equity last year.

As Citi is not giving up its banking licences in most of the markets it is exiting, the sale of the consumer banking portfolios and branches will only appeal to lenders with existing presence in these coun-

tries, the people said. Representatives at MUFG and StanChart, and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, which the sources said was another potential bidder, declined to com-

"DBS has always been open to exploring sensible bolt-on opportunities in markets where we have a consumer banking fran-Southeast Asia's biggest lender said.

In 2016, DBS bought ANZ's wealth management and retail businesses in five Asian markets for about \$80 million.

Citi's sprawling India consumer business, comprising retail deposits, mortgages and credit cards, and its Taiwan business would be among the most valuable parts of its Asian consumer portfolio, the sources said.

DBS, the only big foreign bank with a fully owned Indian subsidiary, is eyeing Citi's India business, which is also set to attract StanChart and Kotak Mahindra Bank and Axis Bank, the sources said. SBI Cards and Payment Services is also weighing a bid for Citi's credit card portfo-

### Container shortage eases but freight rates still high

**SANGEETHA G** CHENNAI, APRIL 20

While the hurdles in container availability, which troubled exporters for several months at a stretch, have eased, the freight charges are still ruling high, and are still 40 to 50 per cent higher than last vear. Container shortage and demand issues had dragged down the consolidated cargo traffic at government-run ports to a three-year low in FY21.

The government on Tuesday claimed that the shortage of containers has been eased in the country. Around 58 per cent additional exports were handled in March and around one lakh empty containers were repositioned on Indian ports from across the world by the shipping lines. The Container Shipping Lines Association (India) said it has increased availability by more than 17-18 per cent compared to March 2019.

India is also targeting to manufacture containers domestically. State-run Concor has already issued an order of 2,000 contain-

 $_{
m BHEL}$ Braithwaite. Discussions have been initiated with steel manufacturers, for producing corten steel in India at competitive prices, and railway wagon manufacturers like BHEL, DCM-Hyundai Balmer & Lawrie to set up production lines for manufacturing containers.

Though containers are now available, exporters complain that freight charges are still high. Compared to last year levels, freight charges are 40 to 50 per cent higher, said A Shaktivel, chairman of the Apparel Promotion Council. Some exporters suspect shipping lines have formed a cartel and are controlling

the rates. Meanwhile, the total consolidated cargo traffic handled at the government-run major and non-major ports--in FY21 dropped to a three-vear low and was 5.3 per cent lower than in FY20. In volume terms, the total cargo managed at 1,248 million tonnes was 70 million tonnes lower than in FY20 and 34 million tonnes less than FY19.

SHORT TAKES

### **Achinta finishes**

**2nd at Asian meet** 

Tashkent: Indian weightlifter Achinta Sheuli finished second in the /3kg group B competition at the Asian Championship here on Tuesday. The Commonwealth Championship gold medallist lifted 309kg — 139kg in snatch followed by 170kg in clean and jerk. The Indian had the best snatch lift (139kg) in the fourman field. However, he failed to lift 174kg in his final clean and jerk attempt which would have seen him top the group. Kazakhstan's Sairamkez Akmolda 310kg (130kg+180kg) finished first in the group. Achinta's final standing will be determined after the end of the group A proceedings. - PTI

### **No request for** pre-Oly vaccines

Tokyo: Tokyo 2020 organising committee said on Tuesday that they received no request from athletes to vaccinate them before the opening of the Olympic games. The vaccine rollout in Japan has been very slow with less than 1 per cent vaccinated, causing concern about the postponed Tokyo Olympics that are scheduled to open in just over three months. Naoko Takahashi, chairperson, Athletes' Committee, Tokyo 2020 said during a press conference that while athletes have questions about the Covid-19 vaccinations, they were not about whether athletes can get them or not. -AP

#### **Curry too hot** for Philadelphia

Los Angeles: Steph Curry extended his scoring streak with an electrifying 49-point display as the Golden State Warriors upset the Philadelphia 76ers 107-96 on Monday. Curry, who scored 47 points in a defeat to Boston on Saturday, bagged his 11th straight game with 30 points or more to give the Warriors a crucial victory in their fight for a playoff berth. It was another spellbinding performance from the Warriors talisman, who is fast becoming the frontrunner for this season's NBA Most Valuable Player award with an average of 31.4 points per game. Curry's 49 points included 10 three-pointers. — AFP

## No change in WTC final dates

### ICC confident big game will go ahead as planned despite India being 'red-flagged'

Dubai, April 20: The ed how we can stage inter-World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand will go ahead planned Southampton from June

the International Cricket Council (ICC) has assured after Britain added India to its travel 'red list' following a massive surge in Covid-19 case-

India's entry into the "red list" effectively bans all travel from the country and makes a 10-day hotel quarantine compulsory for **ÜK** residents arriving back

However, the ICC expressed confidence in staging the WTC final in a bio-secure environment. The ECB and other members have demonstrat-

national cricket safely in the middle of a pandemic and we are confident that we can continue to do that and that the WTC Final will go ahead as planned in June in the UK," said the ICC in a statement on Monday night.

'We are currently discussing with the UK Government the impact of countries being on the red list'." it added.

A BCCI source said that it's difficult to say any-thing at this point in time and the Board is hoping that India will not be in the 'red list' by the time the team leaves for UK in early June for the WTC final.

"We still don't know how the situation will pan out in June. The travel related India's entry into the British "red list" effectively bans all travel from the country and makes a 10-day hotel quarantine compulsory for UK residents arriving back home.

SOPs are always dynamic as per Covid situation. When India leaves for UK at the start of June, it might be that the country is not in red list which requires 10 days of hard

quarantine.
"But, if it is needed, it would be done. The situation is too fluid right now,' the source said on condi-

tions of anonymity. Media reports in the UK said that in case it is required, the Rose Bowl in Southampton and it on-site notel could be cleared for 'red list' arrivals by reverting to the full bio-secure set up that saw it successfully stage international fixtures last season.

"We are currently discussing with the govern-ment the impact of countries being on the 'red list'. By working collaboratively we demonstrated how we can stage international cricket safely in the middle of a pandemic and hope to be able to do so again this year," an ECB spokesperson was quoted as saying

by 'Guardian' newspaper. Indian women's cricket team is also sched-

FIFA vows 'consequences'

uled to tour UK in June while the men's team is to play five Tests in England starting August 4. There is also concern

about now the inclusion ( India in the 'red list' will impact the England and New Zealand cricketers who are currently playing in the IPL and intend to fly to the UK for the two-match Test series between the two countries that starts at the Lord's on June 2. The IPL will conclude on May 30 with the summit clash scheduled in Ahmedabad. India has reported 2,59,170 new positive cases in last 24 hours, the highest sin-gle-day surge, taking the country's Covid-19 caseload past the 1.5 crore

### YOUTH WORLD | CHAMPIONSHIP

### Indian boxers book seven semis berths

New Delhi, April 20: With the confirmation of Babyrojisana Chanu out- seven more medals, the 20-European cnampion Alexas Kubicka as seven Indian boxers stormed into the semi-finals at the youth world championships for men and women in Kielce, Poland.

Along with (51kg), Choudhary (69kg), Sanamacha Chanu (75kg), Narwal (64kg), Arundhati (91kg), Vishal Gupta Bishwamitra Chongtham (49kg) and Sachin (56kg) assured themselves of at least a bronze by advanc-ing to the last-four stage on Day 7 of competitions.

defending member Indian contingent is now assured of 11 medals from the ongoing championship.

Earlier on Day 6, Vinka, Alfiya, Gitika and Poonam had advanced to the semifinals. In a clash between two strong gold contenders in women's 51kg category, Asian youth champion Chanu put up a strong tactical performance. She did not allow her Polish opponent Kubicka to score any point, blanking her 5-0. The Manipuri boxer will now take on Lucia Ayari of Italy.

### **FORMER TNBA PRESIDENT DYANESWARAN NO MORE**

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Former Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA) president chairman, Dyaneswaran passed away on Monday. He was 73. A former India player, Dyaneswaran made a name for himself as an administrator. He played a key role in constructing the JJ indoor stadium at Kilpauk Dyaneswaran was



the vice-captain of the Indian team at the Asian Basketball Championship at Seoul in 1967. Dyaneswaran's two sons, Senthureshwaran and Sugavaneshwaran, also played the game at the high-

Sathish shines for Valavanur CC D. Sathish Kumar's scintillating century helped Valavanur CC post an 83-run win over Sakthi CC in

the first division of the Villupuram DCA league. Brief scores: I-Division: Valavanur CC 218 in 42.1 overs (D Slimbarasan 37, A. Partheeban 32, D. Sathish Kumar 100; D. Saravanan 4/32) bt Sakthi CC 135 in 30.5 overs (K. Vinoth 33, S. Arun Raj 37; A. Partheeban 4/31, S. Sathish kumar 4/35); United CC 'A' 77 in 27.1 overs (T. Deeparasu 25; A. Prabhakaran 4/24) lost to Ammu CC 78/6 in 13.4 overs; Kallakuruchi CC 168 in 32.2 overs (V.L. Narayanan 58, B. Raji 4/34) lost to Friends CC 169/3 in 22 overs (G. Srirangan 44, B. Raji 38 (not out), B. Vinoth 52 (not out)). **II-Division:** Evergreen CCC 138/5 in 25 overs (P. Venkatesan 32, S.Gokul 38) lost to SRTCA 139/2 in 23.3 overs (N.Balan 58 (not out), R. Sukanthan 39 (not out)); New Yg. Ind. CC 100/8 in 25 overs (S. Krishnakumar 37, S Keerthivasan 43) lost to Karna CC 104/1 in 16.6 overs (G. Govindraj 33, D. Manimaran 34 (not out)). III-Division: Suriua g.o.i 207 in 25 overs (L. Rajapandiyan

30, S. Ravendiran 52, B. Bharathi Raja 29, P. Karunakaran 28; K. Nithiyanandan 4/12, N. Tharun Nawin 4/50) bt VDCA XI 54 in 22.3 overs (V. Rajasekar 3/17, J. Gunaselan 3/11, E. Elavasaran 3/8).



SA captains fear

The three skippers Dean Elgar, Temba Bavuma and Dane van Niekerk have signed a joint statement expressing their concerns before the ICC statement came as a relief.

expressed concerns over possible suspension by the game's global govern-

'The ICC encourages Members to work with governments to resolve issues. Not all government intervention is problematic and for the ICC to get involved it requires a formal complaint from our Members that it is unwanted," the apex body said in a statement.

"Should that happen we will evaluate the situation based on the facts provided and plan an appropriate course of action. An ICC source said that Cricket South Africa

(CSA) hasn't yet reached a





Dane van Niekerk

situation that demands the apex body's interven-

"ICC doesn't want to press the panic button yet and want them to solve the issue themselves," the source said.

Earlier, the players feared if the current impasse is not resolved soon, South Africa may not been able to take part in the ICC T20 World Cup, to be held in India in October-November. — PTI

#### for Super League clubs Montreux (Switzerland), April 20: FIFA gianni Infantino on Tuesday that clubs involved in the European Super League could face

"consequences", as the backlash built against the deeply divisive plans. Infantino leant his support to European football's governing body as it attempts to quash an initiative that threatens its prized Champions League and the health of domestic competitions such as

England's Premier League.
"It is our task to protect the European sport model, so if some elect to go their own way then they must live with the consequences of their choices, Infantino said at UEFA's congress in Switzerland. "They are responsible

for their choices. Twelve powerful clubs six from England, and three each from Spain and Italy — have signed up for the Super League, which offers guaranteed spots for its founding members and billions of dollars in



payments. Liverpool, Chelsea, Arsenal, Manchester Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur are the English clubs involved, together with Barcelona, Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid from Spain and Italian trio Juventus, AC Milan and Inter Milan.

Currently, teams have to qualify for the Champions eague each year through their national competitions, and face a lengthy group phase before reaching the high-profile latter

The Super League would guarantee a spot for its

founding members every year, removing the uncertainty of qualification and the accompanying risks to revenue. The breakaway plan prompted a furious reaction from fans and officials, with UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin saying on Monday it was motivated by "greediness, selfishness and narcissism", and Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp saying its closed nature was "not

right". On Tuesday, Ceferin implored club owners, particularly those of Premier League teams, to row back on the plans.

• RAJASTHAN ROYALS • ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE • SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

DECCAN CHRONICLE, COIMBATORE, WEDNESDAY, 21 APRIL 2021

Shikhar Dhawan, DC Glenn Maxwell, RCB KL Rahul, **PBKS** 

**PURPLE** Harshal Patel, RCB

**Avesh** Khan, DC Rahul

Chahar, MI

### Off the field



A pug sports a Delhi Capitals

#### Kohli urges people to follow protocols

 $V_{
m appealed}$  to Indian public to follow Covid-19 protocols and "wear mask, keep social distance & hand hygiene" in a video posted by the Delhi Police.

"As you all know, Covid cases are on the rise in India again. If you're venturing out for essential services, please wear a mask. Please maintain social distancing," Kohli said

in Hindi in the video.
"Please keep sanitising your hands. Taking these precautions is very necessary," he

#### Liam pulls out due to bubble fatique

Rajasthan Royals' English recruit Liam Livingstone has pulled out of the IPL due to bio-bubble fatigue, his franchisc chise announced on Tuesday. Livingstone has flown back home late on Monday due to bubble fatigue "accumulated over the past year"

The franchise confirmed the development and said that it respects his decision and will continue supporting the cricketer in any way it can. "Liam Livingstone has flown back home late last night, due to bubble fatigue accumulated over the past year. We under-stand and respect his decision, and will continue supporting him in any way we can," the franchise said in a

RR had already lost Ben Stokes to a finger injury.

#### Fleming says Ali adds value to CSK

Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming feels that England player Moeen Ali has strengthened the team as he brings all-round value to it, which was missed in the last IPL season. Fleming said Ali's impres-sive batting at No. 3 has been

instrumental in the team getting good scores so far this season. "He is adding an allround aspect to our game which we lacked last year," Fleming said of Ali, who hit a quickfire 26 and returned with figures of 3/7 in CSK's 45-run win over Royals.

"His contribution was just what we were looking for. We are absolutely happy with the way he has started."

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# DELHI DYNAMITE

### Mishra's explosive spell (4/24) fires Capitals to a six-wicket victory

Chennai, April 20: Delhi Capitals notched up a six-wicket win over defending champions Mumbai Indians in a low-scoring match here on

Experienced leg-spinner Amit Mishra snared four wickets as Delhi produced a disciplined bowling per-Mumbai to a below-par 137 for nine after deciding to bat first at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Chasing the total, Shikhar Dhawan scored a 42-ball 45 and added 53 runs with Steve Smith (33) for the second wicket. Once they back in the hut, Lalit Yadav (22) and Shimron Hetmyer (14) held their nerves to take DC home in 19.1 overs.

Earlier, Mishra spun his web as Mumbai suffered a middle-order collapse on a sluggish Chepauk track after they were 67 for 2 at one stage as Delhi led by Mishra (4/24) made a spectacular comeback.

Opting to bat, Mumbai lost opener Quinton De Kock  $(\bar{1})$  early, who edged a Marcus Stoinis (1/20) delivery to Rishabh Pant in the third over.

Suryakumar Yadav (24) then joined Rohit Sharma (44), who got his first boundary with an elegant drive, which raced to deep extra cover fence in the third over.

The duo rallied the innings with their 58-run

stand. Rohit took on ace offspinner Ravichandra Ashwin (0/30) in the 4th which fetched 15

The Mumbai skipper hammered a boundary and a maximum with a loft over extra cover, while Surya also got one boundary, courtesy an outside

Rohit then hit Kagiso Rabada (1/25) for a six over long-off. Surya then



Delhi Capitals leg-spinner Amit Mishra celebrates a Mumbai Indians wicket during an IPL game in Chennai on Tuesday.

hit successive fours off Mishra as Mumbai raced to 55 for one after six

However, Delhi pegged back the defending champions by grabbing three quick wickets.

First Avesh Khan (2/15)

dismissed Surya, who nicked one to Pant and then Mishra removed Rohit and Hardik Pandya (0) in the 9th over as Mumbai slipped to 77 for

Both Rohit and Hardik

Mumbai then lost half its side for 81 as Krunal Pandya (1) chopped an under-cutting arm ball by Lalit Yadav (1/17) onto his stumps.

Mishra then used his googly to trap Kieron Pollard (2) in front of the

Live on TV

Chennai Super Kings vs Kolkata Knight Riders

from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

for David Miller, Riyan

Parag and Chris Morris

in his match-turning 3/7.

their abysmal campaign in UAE, youngster Sam

Curran has also made

some impact both with

Be it his 15-ball 34

against in a losing cause to Delhi Capitals, or his

bowling in the Powerplay,

Curran is giving Dhoni

the bat and ball.

many options.

The only brightspot of

who became Mishra's fourth wicket, coupled with Jayant Yadav's 23 took the side beyond the 125-run mark.

#### **SCORECARD**

Mumbai Indians: Rohit Sharma c Smith b Mishra 44, Quinton de Kock c Pant b Stoinis 2, Suryakumar Yadav c Pant b Avesh Khan 24, Ishan Kishan b Mishra 26, Hardik Pandya c Smith b Mishra O, Krunal Pandya b Lalit Yadav 1, Kieron Pollard Ibw b Mishra 2, Jayant Yadav c & b Rabada 23, Rahul Chahar c Pant b Avesh Khan 6, Jasprit Bumrah (not out) 3, Trent Boult (not out) 1. Extras (lb 5) 5. Total (for nine wickets in 20 overs) 137. FoW: 1-9, 2-67, 3-76, 4-77, 5-81, 6-84, 7-123, 8-129, 9-135

**Bowling: Marcus Stoinis** 3-0-20-1, R. Ashwin 4-0-31-0, Kagiso Rabada 3-0-25-1, Amit Mishra 4-0-24-4. Avesh Khan 2-0-15-2, Lalit Yadav 4-0-

Delhi Capitals: Prithvi Shaw c & b J Yadav 7, Shikhar Dhawan c KH Pandya b Chahar 45, Steven Smith Ibw b Pollard 33, Lalit Yadav (not out) 22, Rishabh Pant c KH Pandya b Bumrah 7, Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 14. Extras (lb 3, nb 3, w 4) 10. Total (in 19.1 overs)

FoW: 1-11, 2-64, 3-100, 4-115.

Bowling: Trent Boult 4-0-23-0, Jayant Yadav 4-0-25-1, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-32-1, Krunal Pandya 2-0-17-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-29-1, Kieron Pollard 1.1-0-9-1.

wicket, as MI was teetering at 84 for six.

In the end, a responsible 26 from Ishan Kishan,

#### **Points** Net RR 6 +0.750 6 +0.426+1.1942 0 - 0.633 3 2 0 2 - 0.719 2 0 2 - 0.967 - 0.483

**POINTS TABLE** 

# Sunrisers eager to turn it around

**Chennai, April 20:** Bruised and battered after suffering a hat-trick of desperate Hyderabad defeats, Sunrisers would seek inspiration from skipper David Warner to arrest any fur-David ther slide when they take on Punjab Kings in an IPL match here on Wednesday.

SRH couldn't have asked for a worse start to the season as they slumped to three straight defeats, and in all occasions while chasing. Punjab are a tad better than SRH, having registered one win out of three games to be placed at seventh in the standings, a rung above the Wednesday's opponents.

Chasing has been Sunrisers' achilles' heel so far in the league. They failed to get past a low score against Mumbai Indians in their last match. SRH have been hit hard by the lack of depth in their playing XI and below-

par Indian bench strength. In these circumstances, the onus rests on Warner to do some magic and inspire his side to bounce back in the tournament.

A big innings is due from the SRH captain as he has scored just 93 runs from the three matches he has played so far with the 54 against Royals Challengers Bangalore being the highest. He also needs some serious introspection before deciding his playing XI on Wednesday.

Warner and Rashid Khan are certainties in the foreign players' slots, but the of Williamson has been badly

Live on TV Punjab Kings vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 3.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

**HEAD to HEAD** 

**Matches** SRH 11 PBKS

FOR THE RECORD KL Rahul who has scored 4,999 runs at an average of 42 in 142 innings needs just one run to become the 11th Indian and 70th batsman overall to score 5,000 runs

Manish Pandey who has hit 95 fours in 42 innings needs just five more to become the fourth batsman to complete a century of fours for

**LAST YEAR'S MATCHES** Sunrisers beat Punjab by 69 runs

Punjab beat Sunrisers by 12 runs

**STATS:** S. PERVEZ QAISER

felt as he can provide solidity to the middle-order, especially after they faltered in three consecutive chases. Going by Wridhhiman Saha's poor form, Jonny Bairstow is the frontrunner for the wicket-keeper's position.

But what would be troubling Warner most is the lack of depth in the team's local batting resources. It's high time the likes of

Manish Pandey, Vijay Shankar, Abhishek Sharma and Abdul Samad pulled up their socks.

## Knights run into vintage Kings

KKR spinners Harbhajan Singh (left) and Pawan Negi.

Mumbai, April 20: On a roll after back-to-back wins, the vintage Chennai Super Kings would look to extend their winning run when they clash with struggling Kolkata Knight Riders in their next IPL match here Wednesday.

After their abject campaign in UAE last year, the CSK started the season in an ominous fashion, losing to Delhi Capitals by seven wickets in a one-sided affair. But since then, the MS Dhoni-led side has come

on its own with the 'Captain Cool' making the most of his resources at the batting-friendly Wankhede stadium.

Deepak Chahar's brilliance handed them their

against Punjab Kings it's been a tale of two Englishmen — Moeen Ali and Sam Curran for the Explosive all-rounder Ali has embraced the number three spot with

Delhi Capitals), 46 off 31

(Punjab Kings) and 26 off

20 in his match-winning first win of the season

knocks of 36 from 24 (vs

show against Rajasthan Royals on Monday. He is also quietly doing

the job with his off-spin with Dhoni cleverly bringing him in the mix in the non-friendly condi-In their chase of 189, Jos Buttler had started to

look ominous and sent a

Ravindra Jadeja into the stands as the ball had to be replaced.

Well aware that the dry ball would turn more than the dew-laden wet ball, Dhoni stepped up his attack with Jadeja and Ali from both ends.

in one over, Ali accounted

Against a side which will play its first match of the season at the Wankhede, smarting successive defeats, CSK will start as

overwhelming favourites against KKR as Eoin Morgan is all set to ring in some changes to revive their campaign. After their emphatic start against Sunrisers Hyderabad, KKR have While Jadeja dismissed the dangerous looking slipped to fifth spot. Buttler and Shivam Dube

**HEAD to HEAD** 

**22** 

Matches

CSK 14 KKR **FOR THE RECORD** 

 Faf du Plessis who has scored 5,999 runs at an average of 29.99 in 226 innings needs just one run to become the sixth South African

plete 6,000 runs in T20. Dinesh Karthik who hit has 596 fours in 278 innings needs just six more to become seventh Indian to

and 46th batsman overall to com-

hit 600 fours in T20. LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

 KKR beat CSK by 10 runs at Abu CSK beat KKR by 6 wickets at

STATS: S. PERVEZ QAISER



CSK skipper MS Dhoni poses with Rajasthan Royals pacer Chetan Sakariya.

### DON'T WANT ANYONE TO SAY I'M UNFIT: MSD

Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Monday said it is hard to "keep up" with younger players in the squad but it will be a "big positive" for the 39-year-old if they are not able to point fingers at him over his fitness.
The 39-year-old Dhoni, who retired from interna-

tional cricket last year, admitted that "getting old and being fit are two difficult things" "When you are playing,

you don't really want anyone to say he's unfit. I have to keep up with the younger guys, they are very fast, it's good to challenge them," Dhoni said after CSK beat Rajasthan Royals by 45 runs in their IPL match. "Performances are some-

thing that's guaranteed. I wasn't guaranteeing per-formances when I was 24. I can't guarantee when I am

can't point finger at me that he's unfit then that will be a

big positive for me."

Talking about the match, he said he was glad CSK scored 180-plus, though he said they could have got more. "I felt Sam bowled really well. Deepak, there was a bit of miscalculation with the knuckle delivery. So I felt a good start was important. Even the wet

## Who knows how many black sheep are embedded in game?



Ayaz Memon **Over The Top** 

The ICC handing out 8-year bans to former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak and former Sri Lanka all-rounder Dilhara Lokuhettige last week is a grim reminder that cricket is still not totally free, as imagined, of match/spot fixing and cor-

the world was focused on Indian Premier the League, these two cases showed why cricket administrators — ICC and by extension all affiliated cricket boards — have an onerous task ahead in freeing the sport of this

While Lokuhettige may While the attention of not register on every-

body's radar, he is still an charge, one might say, is ex-international having superfluous in the context ex-international having played 11 white ball matches for Sri Lanka in early and mid-2010s. In 2019, he was charged with corruption after being featured in a sting expose by Al Jazeera TV facilitating and promoting corruption in a T10 tournament in the UAE in 2017.

Lokuhettige's 8-year ban by the ICC announced holds him guilty of being party to fix or influence matches solicit or entice other players into corruption, fail to disclose to the ACU approaches made to him by bookies. The third

of the other two. Even more damaging for

the sport was Heath Streak's involvement in corruption. Streak is a Zimbabwean cricketing legend, arguably his country's greatest cricketer and at his peak, among the best players in the world. As captain, he was widely respected for his inspiration leadership, and his own strong performances.

Why someone with such sterling credentials get sucked into corruption — for a couple of bitcoins, a fancy cellphone and some

ing, but also brings about a

sense of déja vu. The 2000-match fixing scam, it might be recalled, featured some of the biggest names in cricket then. Even the best can succumb to temptation. Greed, after all, is one of the tragedies of the human condition. Before these two cases, Sanath Jayasuriya copped a twoyear ban and Shakib Al Hasan one year ban from the ICC. Both these are stellar names in the game Streak has admitted to five breaches of the ICC's

anti-corruption code. At

the crux was his association with a bookie, Mr X (name not disclose), to whom he passed inside information and introduced him to players (four, including a national captain), all with the aim of

influencing matches. What's alarming is that Streak's unholy shenanigans with Mr X stretched over 15 months starting from September 2017, and spread over tournaments like the Bangladesh Premier League, Afghanistan Premier League, 2018 tri-series involving Bangladesh, Zimbabwe

Afghanistan and Zimbabwe series, and IPL 2018 when he was bowling coach of KKR.

The sweep of Streak's misdemeanours highlights the monumental challenge cricket faces. With white ball tournaments and leagues cropping up all over the world, it is not just players, but also franchise owners/manage-ment (as the IPL scam of 2013 showed), and support staff now as well, that are

above suspicion. Who knows how many black sheep are embedded in the game?