

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | WEDNESDAY 21 | APRIL 2021

WEATHER



Max: 37°C
Min: 23°C
Rainfall: 6%

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 COUNT

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

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+10,986)
TN: 10,13,378 13,205

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

14,31,93,032
DEATHS
30,49,591
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
219

worldometers.info

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

GILVESTER ASSARY I DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
APRIL 20

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



WORLD | 5

Avoid travelling to India, US to citizens over Covid spike

SPORT | 8

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



TN tops in vaccine wastage, tightens review mechanism

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

T. SUDHEESH | DC
CHENNAI, APRIL 20

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 this.

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 April 11.

For the last few days,

Lockdown last resort, micro containment zones key: PM

New Delhi, April 20: As more states went for lockdown-like restrictions to 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

lakh after 2,59,170 new coronavirus infections and a record 1,761 new fatalities.

“In the current situation, we need to save our country from a lockdown. 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-containment zones,” he said.

“If we all follow Covid-19 protocols, there’ll be no need to impose lockdowns,” Mr Modi added,

as he urged the people to reduce their movement and take vaccination.

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.

Mr Modi said people were undergoing suffering 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 people. — *PTI*

Curfew effect



A deserted Poonamallee high road in Chennai on Tuesday night.

— *DC*

Rahul, CEC, EC test 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 positive for Covid-19 on Tuesday. At present, the EC is a two-man panel.

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 8. “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.

— *PTI*

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.

SC clears ad hoc judges in HCs

New Delhi, April 20: Terminating 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 regulate 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

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 said.

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 under 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 for consideration after four months. ■ **P4**

SC stays HC fiat on curbs in UP

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, APRIL 20

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the Allahabad High court’s order directing lockdown in five cities of Uttar Pradesh — Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, and Gorakhpur.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde and comprising Justice A.S. Bopanna and Justice V. 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

ordered interim stay of 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 steps it 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 lawyer P.S. Narasimha as amicus curiae in the case.

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.

— *IPL*

Virus-filtering material for masks soon

New Delhi, April 20: Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi have developed a virus-filtering, self-cleaning and antibacterial material 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 published in the prestigious

journal of the American Chemical Society — Applied Materials and Interfaces.

According to the 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 team claims 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 profes-

sor, School of Basic 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 masks.

“The researchers have developed prototypes of a 4-layered 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).

— *PTI*

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 Libya.

Puducherry registers 638 more cases of coronavirus

Puducherry, April 20: 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 717.

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 including 4,169 patients in home isolation.

— PTI

Don't believe rumours against vaccination: Min

From P1

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 said.

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 screening centres.

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 hoping that the next government would provide them some succor from the curbs even as they prepared themselves for the immediate eventualities.

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 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 dawn.

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 retail 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

spread. 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 violations committed by the customers?, wondered Koyambedu traders' union leader Rajasekharan. Whenever clients did not wear the mask properly or failed to maintain social distancing, the shopkeepers are 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 had announced a fine of only ₹1,000 for such violations,

the officials were collecting ₹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 about the crowd turnout.

Revoke tourism ban: Ooty MLA to CM

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, APRIL 20

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 livelihood.

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 has 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 summer.

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 also very important.

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 stated.



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



Anna Nagar Tower park closed in view of fresh curbs imposed by the government. — DC

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 owners 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,

Omni buses finding the going tough

Enough oxygen stock in T'kudi hosps: Collector

ARULOLI M | DC
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 sta-



Koyambedu semi wholesale traders organise corona vaccine awareness rally in the market area. — DC



Tasmac workers give token to customers. Sale of liquor will be till 9 pm only. — DC

thukudi government polytechnic college, Adithanar college of arts and science at Thiruchendur and the Lakshmi Ammal Polytechnic college at Nallattinpur, 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.

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 southern districts as

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

Chennai and surrounding districts including 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 state.

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 increasing 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 will 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.

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

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUNELVELI, APRIL 20

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

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-

celled its ferry services to the Vivekananda Rock memorial and Thiruvalluvar statue. The Gandhi Mandapam in Kanyakumari and Mathur Thottai Palam and 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 were a deserted look without visitors and all shops in the main falls area in front of the ancient Courtallanathar temple, remained closed.

Even the few tourists staying in hotels in Kanyakumari also were banned from visiting the beach, and the road was blocked.

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-

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 did not operate buses after 10 am from Kanyakumari to Chennai, Bengaluru and Tirupati.

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

Coimbatore, Salem, Bengaluru and Tirupati, and none had 100 per cent occupancy.

Similar was the passenger strength at the 11 SETC buses (8 to Chennai, 3 to Coimbatore, one each to Bengaluru and Tirupati) from 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 near 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

Tamil Nadu Congress 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 Kaeel 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.

Alagiri criticized the 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 in bride suicide cases: HC

Chennai, April 20: The 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...

Taking advantage of that, a wrong message has gone to society that the parents can easily escape from their liability and the alleged offence," Justice P Velmurugan has said.

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

Their first and foremost responsibility is that they should groom their children as responsible citizens,

the judge added while 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-in-law 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 in-laws were escaping

from their liability, saying 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. —PTI

Form panel to curb pollution in rivers, HC directs state govt

Chennai, April 20: The Madras high court on 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 sewage.

The first bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy gave a direction to this effect while passing further interim orders on a public interest writ petition from

Dhanasekaran, who prayed for a direction to clean river Amaravathi and remove encroachments on its waterways.

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 the state to maintain the 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 city.

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

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 Ulvooy 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 Malayampattu Eri Pasanadarar Sangam filed a petition to quash the orders passed by the ASO and tahsildar and consequently to forfeit 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 taluk, 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 Kanakammachattam, Tiruvallur district, on Tuesday. District collector P. Ponniah also seen. —DC

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. —DC

Corona: Over ₹5L netted as fine

DC CORRESPONDENT
PERAMBALUR, 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,

Thanjavur to have more Covid care centres

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, APRIL 20

Covid care centres will be opened soon this time also at Kumbakonam and Pattukkottai as done during the first corona wave, said Collector M. Govinda Rao here on Tuesday, after inaugurating the free Corona vaccination programme at the panchayat union school, at Marial here.

Rao said that 963 persons who recently tested Corona positive, are being given treatment at the Covid centre, Thanjavur medical college

Collector Sri Venkata Priya, 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 at Annai College, Kumbakonam and Slum clearance board housing unit, Pattukkottai. Already a Covid care centre is functioning at the Slum clearance board tenements at Vallam near Thanjavur. The collector appealed to the people to wear masks, maintain social distancing and use sanitisers to manage Covid. The collector said that there are no side effects with respect to vaccination, and urged people to take it without fail.

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, APRIL 20

A section of CITU lorry booking office loadmen association of Gandhi market here, along with their family members led by secretary, Ramar, staged a gruel centre (kanchi thotti) demonstration near the collectorate here on Tuesday, condemning the suspension of five

SHRC seeks report on forced labour of 19 Odisha girls

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, APRIL 20

The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has directed the commissioner, labour department, Chennai and the district collector, Tirupur, to file a detailed report in connection with 19 teenage Odisha girls allegedly forced to work against their will at a private garment company. They were rescued by the police two days ago.

Based on news reports, SHRC member Dr A. Chittaranjan Mohandoss initiated suo motu proceedings and directed the officials to file the report in two weeks.

According to the report, officials from 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. They were allegedly forced to stay back and work without adequate remuneration after the training period ended.

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

Loadmen seek wage hike

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, APRIL 20

A section of CITU lorry booking office loadmen association of Gandhi market here, along with their family members led by secretary, Ramar, staged a gruel centre (kanchi thotti) demonstration near the collectorate here on Tuesday, condemning the suspension of five



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.

Taking strong objection to the one month gap between voting and counting, he said that the reason given for the wait was unacceptable and

armed with laptops entered the premises in Ramanathapuram, Haasan said they gave rise to doubts over the safety of the EVMs.

He said the conking out of CCTV cameras around the strong rooms and the mysterious vehicles that entered the campuses of 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 strong rooms and proper facilities for the agents of the political parties staying there.


Kamal Haasan complains to ECI

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) founder Kamal 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 slips.

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



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 indicated below:-

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

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDING THE NATION

SHORT TAKES

FAROOQ, OMAR
TEST NEGATIVE
FOR COVID-19DC CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, APRIL 20

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief 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. Farooq 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 parameters were fine.

ODISHA RECORDS
HIGHEST EVER
SINGLE-DAY SPIKEAKSHAYA 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.

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 Minister 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 reported. Maharashtra 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 employees, 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 Union Territory (UT) 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

offices.

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



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

carriers of the asymptomatic transmission of virus. The J&K Lt. Governor,

needed to be imposed to deal with the present situation.

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,

Manoj Sinha, announced the government's decision that only 50 per cent shops and other businesses will

vegetables, fruit, dairy products, and all types of food, including meat and poultry, will be open between 7am and 11am, an order by the state government said.

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

remain open on an alternate basis within the municipal and urban body limits in the UT from

the relief and rehabilitation department issued an order in this regard.

"All grocery, vegetable shops, fruit vendors, dairies, bakeries, confectioneries, all types of food shops including chicken, mutton, poultry, fish and eggs, shops related to agricultural implements and

Thursday. He tweeted, "Only 50% shops in market complexes / bazaars / malls within the municipal limits / urban local body limits shall be open on an alternate basis through a rotation system," he tweeted.

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 districts 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 another tweet.

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 delivery from such shops may be allowed between 7 am to 8 pm, but the time window can be changed by local authorities, it said.

intention behind including the provision was slightly different, nothing prevented it from being utilised to subvert an endeavour to solve an existing problem.

"It is trite to say that we have a docket explosion in our country and that it is difficult for adjudication to take place within a reasonable period of time."

SC clears ad
hoc judges
in HCs

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 larger 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

judges to deal with the unprecedented situation arising from the backlog of cases pending in high courts, which has now crossed the figure of 57 lakh coupled with the consistent ratio of vacancies of almost 40 per cent.

Observing that change is the only constant, the apex court said any Constitution has to be dynamic, and thus, even if the

provision was slightly different, nothing prevented it from being utilised to subvert an endeavour to solve an existing problem.

"It is trite to say that we have a docket explosion in our country and that it is difficult for adjudication to take place within a reasonable period of time."

COFFEE-BREAK

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



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



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.

You share your b'day with

Elizabeth II is Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms. Elizabeth was born in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. She is the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch.



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



Scorpio: 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 matters with others. Do not expect others to do your work. Remember that God helps those who help themselves.



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 ride.

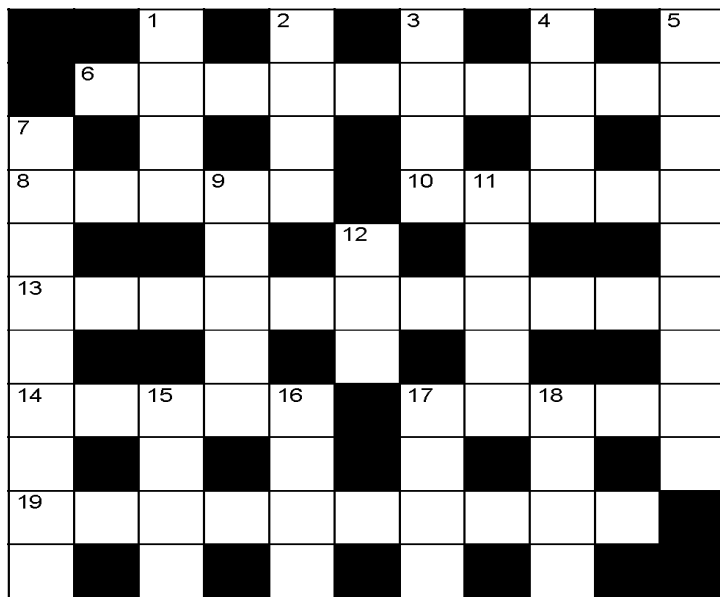


Aquarius: For some overseas business offers could come their way. Arrival of a new baby in the family would lift the spirits of all. A vibrant financial position would enable them to rapidly expand business.



Pisces: A promising day for implementing plans. The day puts on hold many exciting and interesting happenings at the family front. Participating in outdoor sports would keep you physically fit.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

6. Nonsense! (10)
8. Healing ointment (5)
10. Fundamental (5)
13. Diesel train (anag) (11)
14. Slight push (5)
17. Characteristic (5)
19. Stretchiness (10)

Down

1. Pus-filled swelling (4)

2. Small island (4)
3. Attire (4)
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)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

- Across: 1. Ethics, 3. Ape, 7. Iron, 8. Period, 10. Sarcasm, 13. Viaduct, 16. Revise, 17. Undo, 18. Tidy, 19. Patent.
Down: 1. Exit, 2. Hookah, 4. Prim, 5. Dordgem, 6. Seaside, 9. Eclipse, 11. Secret, 12. Scone, 14. Avid, 15. Tout.

Word Mine

B
T T R
S I O E F

TODAY'S RATINGS: 15 AVERAGE: 17
GOOD: 19 OUTSTANDING

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 are not allowed.

North: 4 3 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100
West: K Q 10 4
K 8 8 5
K 9 7
A J 10
South: A 9 8 7 5 3
A 10 7
Q J 10 4
Dealer: East
Vulnerable: East-West
North: Pass
West: Pass
East: Pass
South: Pass
West: Pass
East: Pass
Opening lead: ♦ 7

jumble

DJEUG
TRBHE
DMELOU
SCCUTA

Jumbles: GIVEN
Answer: The lawyers who had faith that teaming up would result in success were — FIRM BELIEVERS

What about, "None mention it again?" did he not understand?

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Copyright United Feature Syndicate (Asia Features)

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



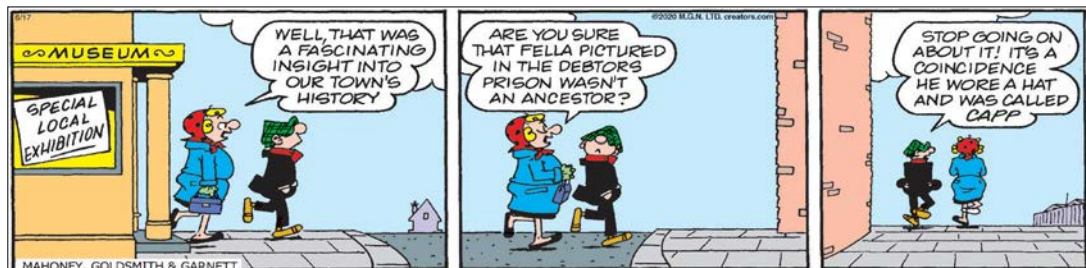
ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



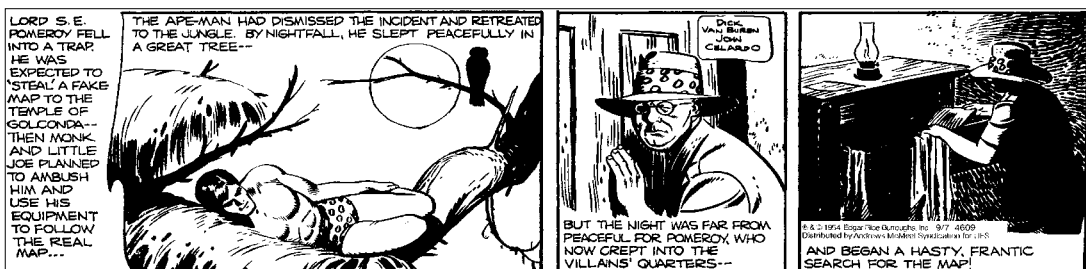
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs

ASSAM ORDERS
CLOSURE OF
GROCERY SHOPS,
MALLS BY 6 PMMANOJ 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 days.

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

Besides increasing 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 administration 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 new SOP stated.

bridge

DO WE
ADJUST
SPELLINGS
OF WORDS?

The English are known for their dry, quirky humour. Ben Fogle, in "English — The Story of Marmite, Queuing and Weather" (William Collins), gives a whole chapter to the subject. He highlights English understatement by pointing out that Spike Milligan's epitaph is "I told you I was ill."

Tony Forrester is generally considered England's best player over the last two or three decades. This deal occurred during a multiple-

team event. Forrester was the only declarer to make five diamonds. 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 experienced player. (With game-invitational values, North would immediately raised two diamonds to three diamonds.) Forrester aimed to lose one spade and one heart, but his

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 claimed she was taken hostage.

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

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 urgently 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 29 people dead and some 320 injured.

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 and radio.

The stunning announcement came just hours after electoral officials had declared Deby the winner of the April 11 presidential 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

Washington, April 20: 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 Psaki.

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 Slavitt, the White House Covid-19 response senior advisor said they had no answer.

I don't I'm sorry. We could

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

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

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, 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.

— PTI

NEWLY FOUND INSECT NAMED AFTER CORONA

Pristina (Kosovo), April 20: Kosovar biologist Halil Ibrahim 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.

The pharmaceutical giant told AFP at the end of March it had identified a

batch of doses at a plant in Baltimore run by Emergent BioSolutions "that 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-

ities and Exchange Commission filing on Monday that the FDA had requested a pause on April 16 in production of the single-shot vaccine pending an inspection at the Baltimore, 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 "bossing" 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 States.

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

French cops protest



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-Châtillon with Molotov cocktails, in Montpellier on Tuesday. — AFP

French envoy ouster plea in Pak parl

Islamabad, April 20: A 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

the publication of blasphemous 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 outrage at the publication of the sketches," it added.

It stated that a debate should be held in the Hou-

se on the expulsion of the 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 forums.

— PTI

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

Washington, April 20: 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 those seeking admission

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 European and the USA prior to Trump," said the former US president. — PTI

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

Cardinal Ranjith, who will be presiding the

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 Negombo the two of the three churches devastated by the suicide attacks two years ago.

Cardinal Ranjith, who will 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 Ajith 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

condemns the suicide bombers as Islam totally forbids killing of innocents even during a war; hence 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.

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: The Supreme Court appeared ready Monday to prevent thousands of people living in the US for humanitarian reasons from applying to become permanent residents.

The 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,

their advocates say.

The Justice Department says it is maintaining a 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 uncertainty in prospects in the Senate. Justice Brett Kavanaugh said the court should be "careful about tinkering with the immigration statutes as written," especially 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. — AP

FLOYD DEATH CASE AGAINST EX-COP GOES TO THE JURY

Minneapolis, April 20: The murder case against former Minneapolis police 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 another round of unrest.


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.

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

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. — AP

		KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD. (Department of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of Kerala) THYCAUD PO, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 695014 Tel: 0471-2945646, 2945600 Fax: 2945647 website: www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in , e-mail: etenders_apg@kmscl.kerala.gov.in CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616		
No. KMSCL/EP/5930/2021		Dated : 20.04.2021		
e-TENDER NOTICE (Running Contract)				
Online bids are invited for the supply and installation of the following equipment for various Government healthcare institutions across Kerala				
Sl. No	Tender No.	Description	Online Bid Meeting	Last date of Online submission
1.	T398/2021	Medicine Rack, Medium and Low Duty Rack, Crash cart Various Types, Sterilizer-Variety Types, Air Conditioner - Various Types, Hospital Furniture Various types, Multifunctional Couch, OT Table (Ophthalmic) With Chair, Fire Extinguisher - Various Type, Fully Loaded Dental Chair Electrically Operated, Oxygen Generator - Various Types, Medical Gas pipeline System.	27.04.2021 11.00 a.m.	10.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
2.	T399/2021	Anaesthesia Workstation Various types, Ventilator Various types, Mobile 100MAX-Ray Machine, Point of Care ABG Machine, ENT Operating Microscope Model B, Oxygen Cylinder (B) With Trolley, Vertical Autoclave - Various Type, Fully Automated Horizontal Autoclave Model B (Double Door), CGM MACHINE, Insulin Pump with Integrated CGMS.	28.04.2021 11.00 a.m.	14.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
3.	T400/2021	High Speed Lathe with Suction, Plating system for midface Trauma and Mandible, Vacuum Cleaner, Paediatric bed, QC With FID,NPD and ECD Detector, Subcutaneous Bilirubinometer, Binocular Microscope - Various Type, Centrifuge - Brushless Type-8 wells, Semiautomatic Coagulation Analyser, Hot Air Oven Various Type, Incubator Lab - Various Type, Dialysis Consumables, Water Bath Large	29.04.2021 11.00 a.m.	15.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
4.	T401/2021	Reagent Rental Contract - Fully Automated Immuno Hematology Analyser Model B.	26.04.2021 11.00 a.m.	15.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
5.	T402 (R)/ 2021	Test kit for new born screening programme (Immunofluorescence Method) Reagent Rental Contract - Fully Automated Immuno Hematology Analyser, SPET CT Scanner	26.04.2021 11.00 a.m.	03.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
6.	T403(R)/ 2021	Implant Kit Physio Dispenser Ultrasonic Scalp, 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, SICS Set, Materials for the setting up of LIMS fitting centre, Digital Dental X-ray Unit (Pediatric), T-Piece Resuscitator, Gonimeter With 4 Mirror, Infantometer, Air Oxygen Blender, ECG Machine Single 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	N.A.	03.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
7.	T404(R)/ 2021	Green Laser with Slit Lamp and Indirect Delivery 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, 10L, Polarimeter, Tympanometer, Setting up of IVF center on turnkey basis, OT Table fully automatic, Trauma Accessories, ENT and Ophthalmic Examination Head, Auscultation Trainer, AV Fistula, Platelet Aggregometer, Portable Ventilator for ALS Ambulance, Laser unit (Dental), Pulse oximeter Baby & Adult, Biosafety Cabinet Various types, Point of Care Ultrasound with echo probe, Oto acoustic Emission Screeners Type B, Laminar Flow Cabinet, Live 3D(4D) Echocardiography system, Transport Ventilator	N.A.	03.05.2021 05.00 p.m.
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 furnishing of tender documents. The submission of the tender documents, provided all the offered products are manufactured by them. Tender documents and all other information related to tender and bidding process can be downloaded from the website www.etenders.kerala.gov.in .				
Sd/- Managing Director (Tender Inviting Authority)				

State Public Service 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 documents, provided all the offered products are manufactured by them. Tender documents and all other information related to tender and bidding process can be downloaded from the website www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.

Sd/- Managing Director (Tender Inviting Authority)

DECCAN Chronicle

21 APRIL 2021

Vaccination: Set realistic targets, don't pass buck

The Union government's decision to open up vaccination against Covid-19 for all those aged above 18 is a welcome step but the decision 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 uncharacteristically 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 number of doses.

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.

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 number of doses.

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

When 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 planet — 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 ingenuity in handling the complexities of remote-controlling the helicopter's flight on 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 capture 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 offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2753285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-088s

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 13A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
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 maker Hero 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 import 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 waiting 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 was now.

The court directed the Centre to forthwith implement the ban and divert the oxygen to hospitals.

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

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 company'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. —PTI

said the government is looking into all aspects of oxygen requirement.

"In order to save the lives of people now we are trying our best to meet the

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

BHARAT BIOTECH TO BOOST VACCINE OUTPUT

CHRIS KAY
APRIL 20

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 has 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

ANSHUMAN DAGA, NUPUR ANAND & SUMEET CHATTERJEE
APRIL 20

DBS Group, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG), 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 countries, the people said.

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

ment. "DBS has always been open to exploring sensible bolt-on opportunities in markets where we have a consumer banking franchise," 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 portfolio. —Reuters

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 year. 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-

ers to BHEL and 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 and 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 Export 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 ports—both major and non-major ports—in FY21 dropped to a three-year 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.

Games

SHORT TAKES

Achinta finishes 2nd at Asian meet

Tashkent: Indian weightlifter Achinta Sheuli finished second in the 73kg group B competition at the Asian Championship here on Tuesday. The Commonwealth Championship gold medalist lifted 309kg — 139kg in snatch followed by 170kg in clean and jerk. The Indian had the best snatch lift (139kg) in the four-man 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 Akmolada 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 World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand will go ahead as planned in Southampton from June 18, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has assured after Britain added India to its travel 'red list' following a massive surge in Covid-19 case-load.

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

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

ed how we can stage international 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 anything 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 its on-site hotel 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 government 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. The Indian women's cricket team is also sched-

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 how the inclusion of 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 single-day surge, taking the country's Covid-19 case-load past the 1.5 crore mark.

— PTI

SA captains fear ICC suspension

Johannesburg, April 20: The ICC on Tuesday said it will not intervene in the governance crisis engulfing South African cricket till the country's board asks for it, after the three national team captains expressed concerns over possible suspension by the game's global governing body.

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.

"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



situation that demands the apex body's intervention. "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 be able to take part in the ICC T20 World Cup, to be held in India in October-November. — PTI

FIFA vows 'consequences' for Super League clubs

Montreux (Switzerland), April 20: FIFA president Gianni Infantino on Tuesday warned 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, Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester City, 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 League each year through their national competitions, and face a lengthy group phase before reaching the high-profile latter stages.

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.

— AFP

YOUTH WORLD | CHAMPIONSHIP

Indian boxers book seven semis berths

New Delhi, April 20: Babyrojisana Chanu outclassed defending European champion Alexs Kubicka as seven Indian boxers stormed into the semi-finals at the youth world championships for men and women in Kielce, Poland.

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

With the confirmation of seven more medals, the 20-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 semi-finals. 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.

— PTI

FORMER TNBA PRESIDENT DYANESWARAN NO MORE

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, APRIL 20

Former Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA) president and chairman, A.N. 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 Sugavaneswaran, also played the game at the highest level.



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: Suriaa g.o.i 207 in 25 overs (L. Rajapandian 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).

