

**THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA**  
**KARIMNAGAR | TUESDAY | 1 SEPTEMBER 2020**



## SPORTS | 8

## CSK may part ways with Raina

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**Jammu:** The Pakistan army on Monday violated ceasefire by resorting to heavy firing and mortar shelling in forward areas along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said. The Indian Army retaliated befittingly. "At 2115 hours today (9.15 pm), Pak Army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms & intense shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera sector", defence spokesman said. Pakistani rangers resorted to firing along the International Border in Jammu frontier, he said. — PTI

## ■ Page 4: Pranab's career defined by Gandhis



## SHORT TAKES

## LPF ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The Lila Poonawalla Foundation (LPF) has announced that it will offer merit-cum-need-based scholarships for girl students wishing to pursue undergraduate studies in engineering, starting from the 2020-21 academic year. The LPF which has for 25 years operated in Maharashtra is for the first time set to start operations in Hyderabad district.

Scholarship application forms will be available on the <https://www.lpf scholarship.com> from Tuesday. Details about the LPF can be found at <https://www.lilapoonawalla foundation.com>.

Meanwhile, the Sarojini Damodaran Foundation (SDF) has invited applications for its Vidyadhan scholarship programme from students coming from economically backward families with an annual income below ₹2 lakh. The students should have passed their Class 10 exam in 2020 with 90 per cent marks or 9.0 CGPA (75 per cent or 7.5 CGPA for students with disability) and studying for Intermediate in Telangana state.

Eligible students can apply online by logging into [www.vidyadhan.org](http://www.vidyadhan.org) till September 30. More details can be found at [vidyadhan.telangana@sdf foundationindia.com](http://vidyadhan.telangana@sdf foundationindia.com) or by contacting Lakshmi Tejaswini at 6300391827, 8367751309.

## EX-MINISTER THREATENS WORKERS, HELD

**Hyderabad, Aug. 31:** A former Andhra Pradesh minister was arrested for allegedly threatening some canal construction workers with a gun in Nalgonda district, police said on Monday.

According to police, the incident happened on Sunday evening when G. Mohan Reddy reportedly objected to the works taken up in his farm land and took out his licensed weapon and allegedly intimidated the site engineer and other workers to stop the work.

In a video, which has gone viral on social media, the former minister of undivided Andhra Pradesh is purportedly seen pointing the gun towards a man following an argument and later chasing another man who was apparently shooting the video.

"The land was acquired by the government and compensation was also paid to him. He had some grievance and entered into an argument with the site engineer and threatened him with the weapon to stop the work," Nalgonda superintendent of police A.V. Ranganath said.

Following a complaint, the former minister was arrested, the SP said. The police seized his weapon. —PTI

## KTR ASSURES MORE FUNDS FOR WEAVERS

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Minister K.T. Rama Rao on Monday said that the government may provided another installment of funds under the Nethanna Ku Cheyutha' (thrift scheme) to help weavers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He said that during the lockdown the government had relaxed the mandatory lock-in period of three years. A total of ₹96.43 crore was given to handloom weavers and ₹13 crore to powerloom weavers which benefited 25,000 weavers, Rama Rao said.

Appreciating the move, the weavers were appealing to the government to once again implement this scheme, he said during a review meeting on the handloom and textiles department. A decision will be taken soon on this.

He also held a review meeting on the Bathukamma sari distribution scheme and asked officials to complete the production of the saris soon and complete distribution by the second week of October. He instructed the handloom and textiles officials to issue guidelines to be followed by the collectors during the distribution of the saris.

He asked the officials to focus on the branding of TSCO handloom clothes. Rama Rao asked the officials for an action plan to set up showrooms in different places of Hyderabad city. Later, he visited the Golconda Handicrafts Showroom.

## Violation of Motor Vehicle Act



Several garbage trucks of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation seen plying on roads without registration number plates. — S. SURENDER REDDY

## Victim: Man who helped file plaint also raped me

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA  
T. I DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The case of rape of a woman allegedly by 139 persons, being investigated by the Central Crime Station (CCS), took a serious turn with the victim stating on Monday that the man who prompted her to approach the police had also blackmailed and exploited her sexually.

The victim alleged that the names of several innocent persons including film actors were put on the list of accused at the behest of the man, who she identified as Raj Sreekar. She said Sreekar runs an NGO and alleged that he encouraged her to lodge the police complaint.

On August 20, the 25-year-old woman lodged a complaint with the Punjagutta police alleging rape, harassment, threats and blackmail in which she named 139 persons and four others. The police registered a case and transferred it to the Central Crime Station of Hyderabad, where a case was re-registered for a

probe by a woman officer of the rank of deputy superintendent of police.

Even as the probe is underway, the woman along with leaders of the Madiga Reservation Porata Samiti (MRPS) held a press conference on Tuesday in the city. Speaking to media, the victim said, "I was under threat of Raj Sreekar, who threatened to kill my parents and blackmailed me to lodge a complaint naming several persons including film actors. The film actors do not have any role in the atrocities perpetrated on me."

She alleged, "He (Sreekar) raped me on multiple occasions and he exploited me. I was against naming innocent people, but he threatened me and beat me up. If anybody has my private videos and photos, please delete them."

Asked if the victim lodged a complaint against the alleged accused, CCS ACP K. Sreedevi said, "After recording the statements of the victim, further action will be taken."

## TS SAYS LOST ₹8,000CR IN FOUR MONTHS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The state government on Monday said the Centre has no option but to pay full GST compensation to states. It said the state had lost about ₹8,000 crore income during the past four months on account of lockdown to contain the Corona-virus.

MPs from the state will raise the issue in Parliament and the TRS government, if necessary, will knock the doors of courts over the Goods and Services Tax (GST) issue, finance minister T. Harish Rao told reporters after a meeting with his counterparts from five states.

The Centre is trying to shy away from its responsibility of paying GST compensation in the name of 'act of God'. It is not fair for the Centre to tell states to borrow (to make up the GST losses)," he said.

The meeting was attended by the finance ministers of Punjab, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and West Bengal, besides Telangana state, official sources said here on Monday.

## Leaders condole death of Pranab Mukherjee

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Governor Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan led the state in condoling the death of former President Pranab Mukherjee. In a message, she said, "A great visionary, a statesman par excellence, a great orator, a writer, a shrewd parliamentarian and above all a great human being – all in one. The passing away of this great son of India is a loss not only to India but humanity at large."

Condolences poured in from ministers and Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) leaders. IT minister K.T. Rama Rao recalled that Mukherjee had played a key role in the formation of Telangana state.

Minister T. Harish Rao said "we will remember his immense contribu-



Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan

tions forever in the formation of Telangana state."

Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy, ministers N. Niranjan Reddy, G. Jagadish Reddy, T. Srinivas Yadav, V. Prashanth Reddy, A. Indrakaran Reddy, TRS

Parliamentary party leader Dr K. Keshava Rao, Rajya Sabha member J. Santosh Kumar and others expressed shock at the demise of the former President.

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, party MPs A. Revanth Reddy, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, former minister K. Jana Reddy, Geeta Reddy, CLP Leader Bhatti Vikramarka, MLC T. Jeevan Reddy and other senior leaders has expressed their deep grief over the demise of Mukherjee.

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, MPs D. Arvind and S. Babu Rao also expressed their condolence along with party leaders D.K. Aruna, K. Laxman, K. Krishna Sagar Rao and Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy.

## COPS FIND NO TRACE OF FOUR PRISONERS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The special teams despatched to neighbouring states drew a blank in their attempt to trace the four Covid-19 positive prisoners who escaped from Gandhi Hospital on August 27.

Convicts M. Somasunder, 20, and P. Narsaiah, 41, and under-trials Md Abdul Arbaz, 21, and Md Javed, 35, escaped from the prison ward that is situated on the second floor of the hospital.

## BIG CAT

## Villagers advised not to venture out before 6 am and return early

## More tigers seen in Adilabad forests

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS  
| DC  
ADILABAD, AUG. 31

Sighting of tigers has increased in several areas of Adilabad, Kumarambheem Asifabad Mancherla districts. It is said as the prey base of herbivores is less in the forest along the Penganga, some tigers are coming nearer to villages on the fringes of forests and targeting cattle.

Farmers are scared of the presence of tigers and avoiding their fields to water or apply pesticides

to their standing crops.

Tiger sighting has been reported at Karanji in Bheempur mandal of Adilabad district, Khairguda in Tiryani mandal in Kumarambheem Asifabad district, and Mandamarri, Nennel and near Gollavagu project in Bheemaram mandal of Mancherla district.

Villagers of Karanji in Bheempur mandal said a tiger moving in the area killed a cow on Thursday night. They requested forest officials to take steps for ensuring the safety and security of people and

## Never ignore early Covid symptoms

## Senior paediatrician wins battle against virus with little care

## FIRST PERSON

I tested positive for Covid-19 on July 14 with a rapid antigen test. As a paediatrician and head of the neonatology department in a hospital, I was constantly seeing child patients.

Since children do not wear masks, it is clear that they are the asymptomatic carriers and it was bound to pass on to their treating doctors.

I had the initial symptoms of fever, bodyache and cough. The symptoms made it clear that it was Covid-19 despite my CT scan showing that I was negative.

I did not want to take a chance. My wife is a gynaecologist and she tested negative. I quarantined myself in a different room and wore the mask at home. It was important for me to protect her and others by wearing a mask always.

I was under home treat-



Dr T.P. Karthik

ment of my pulmonologist as the symptoms were mild and the medicines worked but required complete rest, sleep, eating healthy and drinking enough water. Apart from that, I checked my parameters regularly and reported. This made medical management easy.

I recovered in two weeks but when I returned to work it was clear that all of us should practice social distancing and personal protection kits were a must when seeing

patients. This has helped all of us as there is not a single positive case in my hospital now.

I also went ahead and donated plasma for my friend's father. It is very important that we register and volunteer for this donation as it helps.

It is very important that doctors and healthcare workers not ignore their symptoms as there is bound to be a high viral load. The earlier we seek treatment better for us, otherwise there are chances of becoming really very, very sick.

Given the high workload, it was a tough decision for me but I acted early. Many doctors and healthcare workers in the younger age group are suffering as they ignored the early signs and it took a drastic and traumatic turn for many of them.

*The writer is a senior paediatrician and chief neonatologist. (As told to Kaniza Garari)*

## HCQ benefitted doctors and healthcare workers

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Doctors and other healthcare workers have benefited from taking hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) tablets every week for protection from Covid-19. These medical personnel say that since March they have been taking HCQ along with multivitamins to survive the high workload and the virus.

Dr. Prabhu Kumar Challagali, senior consultant, internal medicine, explained, "HCQ have worked as protection as we work in close quarters with

asymptomatic and symptomatic patients. This does not mean that PPEs and other protective measures can be given a miss. We have to wear them and only then enter Covid-19 wards."

The impact of HCQs is worrisome for those who have heart problems and diabetes. But if they are under constant medical care, those problems can be treated.

Those who have been taking HCQ, when tested positive, were found to have less viral load and recovered soon.

A senior doctor, on condi-

tion of anonymity, said, "We have been treating patients with HCQ and their outcomes have been good. As a preventive medicine, it has worked for those who have regularly taken it and done Covid-19 duties. Till the pandemic ends, there is no other option for medical workers."

There are consultations for offering favipiravir for frontline workers

but many doctors are sceptical. Their contention is that HCQ has worked and till the caseloads come down they will stick with it.

## Fewer cases reported as testing drops on holiday

BALU PULIPAKA | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Covid-19 cases showed a significant drop on Sunday due to an equally steep fall in the number of people tested for the disease. The health department on Monday said fresh Covid-19 cases registered between Saturday and Sunday evening were 1,873, down from 2,924 the day before. The number of Covid-19 determination tests fell to 37,791 from 61,148 on Saturday.

As per the Covid-19 bulletin issued by the health department, nine more persons lost their lives taking the toll to 827. The total Covid-19 cases stood at 1,24,963 of whom, 92,837 have recovered, the

department said. As on Sunday evening, Telangana state, it said, had 31,299 active cases with 24,216 of these cases in home or institutional isolation.

The number of cases in GHMC area continued to be the highest in the state at 360. The other districts to register high number of cases were Karimnagar with 180, Ranga Reddy with 129, Khammam with 103, Nizamabad and Warangal Urban with 94 each, and Siddipet with 85 cases.

## 1 held for woman's murder

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The Chevilla police arrested a 24-year-old man who allegedly murdered a Sikkim woman and abandoned her body under a bridge at Chevilla during March this year.

On March 18, the Chevilla police had recovered the naked body of a woman with her face disfigured at Thangadapally. She was later identified as Dawa Passi Sherpa, 37, a native of Gangchun.

The probe led to the arrest of Akhtar Bari, an engineering student from UP, on March 31. On Tuesday, his cousin and prime accused in the murder, Jaki Akhtar, 24, who works at a garment store in Mumbai, was arrested.

The Cyberabad police said that Jaki, a UP native, met Sherpa, a mother of two, through Facebook and developed a friendship. In March, Jaki went to Sikkim and brought Sherpa along with him to Mumbai. A

missing case was registered at Sikkim.

As she was pressing him for marriage, Jaki brought her to the city from Mumbai. He and Akhtar took her in a rented car towards Chevilla, strangled her and abandoned the body. "They searched on Google Maps to find a route without toll gates and reached Mirzaguda. After killing her, they undressed her and disfigured her face to prevent her identification," police said.

## MOST DOCTORS WERE IN 30-50 AGE GROUP

From Page 1

Dr Sanjiv Singh Yadav, Telangana state secretary of Indian Medical Association (IMA), said, "Three reasons are noted for the death of these doctors. One, there was minimal protection in the beginning and the infectious nature of the virus was not taken seriously by many. Two the first few batches of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits were not of good quality. Third, use of face shields in non-Covid 19 practice was not followed."

Doctors in the age-group of 30-50 years have died, leading to alarm in the IMA. In Telangana state, 11 doctors have died and three in a serious condition.

Experts state that none of the doctors were asymptomatic; they did not act in time when there were symptoms.

Cough, cold, fever, diarrhoea and gastric problems which were missed due to the high workload.

Dr C. Vijay Kumar, senior pulmonologist at Apollo Hospitals, explained, "While wearing protective gear, we cannot even drink water. Some healthcare workers removed masks and face shields to drink water and contracted the virus. This makes it very important to follow the protocols of hand washing and wearing masks in hospital set-ups."

A total of 87,000 healthcare workers have been infected with Covid-19 nationwide, of whom 2,006 are undergoing treatment.

## DOES ANY HOSP RUN IN HERITAGE BUILDING, ASKS HC

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA  
| DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Does any hospital function from a heritage building in any part of the world, the Telangana High Court asked the petitioners who want the Osmania General Hospital (OGH) to continue functioning from the heritage structure.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijayans Reddy was on Monday hearing a batch of four Public Interest Litigations (PILs) related to the heritage OGH structure.

The court observed that there are situations where hospitals are run from churches and temples, but it is rather rare that a hospital is located in a heritage building.

Justice Vijayans Reddy asked senior advocate V. Satyam Reddy whether any hospital works out of a heritage structure anywhere in the world.

Satyam Reddy stated that the building was constructed for the hospital and was later placed on the heritage list. Since it is a heritage structure, it cannot be demolished and has to be protected.

The hospital premises has 16 acres of open land which can be used for construction of a new building to house the OGH, senior counsel said.

Rachna, counsel, said that since the OGH building is notified as a heritage structure, it cannot be demolished going by the order passed by the High Court on the Erramanzil Palace.

The judges while going through the site map of the hospital premises observed that the structures and other information were not legible.

The High Court bench adjourned the hearing to September 8 and directed the petitioners and Advocate General (AG) B.S. Prasad to furnish a legible coloured site map.



## IN BRIEF

**Couple dead, daughter injured**

**Warangal:** A couple died and their daughter escaped with injuries in a road accident after two bikes collided with each other at Damera mandal during the wee hours of Monday. The deceased were identified as Tadem Srinivas, 45, and his wife Mamatha, 38, who were natives of Regonda in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district. They were returning home to Warangal from their village on a two-wheeler when another two-wheeler rammed into them near Damera on NH - 163. The couple fell on the ground and Srinivas died on the spot. The police shifted the injured mother and daughter to the MGM Hospital in Warangal. While the mother succumbed to injuries, the daughter is said to be out of danger. Police SI U. Bhaskar Reddy said the accident was caused by rash driving and three persons were travelling on the other two-wheeler at the time of the mishap. The trio, who too sustained injuries, have been booked and an investigation is on.

**Youth washed away at Bogatha**

**Warangal:** A 24-year-old youth is missing in the Bogatha waterfalls in Vajedu mandal. His body is yet to be recovered. Gopinath, a native of Warangal along with his two friends, went to see the waterfall late on Sunday evening. Although the waterfalls has been closed for visitors since the outbreak of Covid-19, the trio was able to reach the falls through a path in the forest, from Gummadidoddi village, skipping the security. Unaware of the water-level, Gopinath ventured into the waters for a bath and got washed away in the flow. Local police SI K. Tirupati Rao said that they deployed fishermen to search for Gopinath's body.

**Indur politicians remember Pranab**

**Nizamabad:** Following news of former President of India Pranab Mukherjee's death, political leaders in Nizamabad recollected their association with him, during his visit to Nizamabad in 2008. Rajya Sabha member D. Srinivas said that Pranab Mukherjee was instrumental in the formation of separate Telangana state. "He (Pranab) reacted on suicides of youths during the agitation and initiated steps for realising separate Telangana," he said, adding that Mukherjee's death was a huge loss to the people of Telangana. Mr Srinivas said that he had close rapport with Mukherjee and that he even invited Pranab for his 60th birthday celebrations in Nizamabad. For the convenience of Gulf migrant workers, Pranab Mukherjee sanctioned passport office in Nizamabad, he said. Minister for roads and buildings, legislative affairs and housing V. Prashanth Reddy also expressed grief over the death of the former President.

**Mini tank bund will be ready soon**

**Nizamabad:** Nizamabad Urban MLA Bigala Ganesh Gupta said that mini tank bund works at Raghunatha tank will be completed in six months. He said that people of Nizamabad would enjoy the tank bund soon. He also said that a pool will be constructed for immersion of Bathukammas in the town. The MLA, along with Mayor Dandu Neethu Kiran and municipal officials, inspected other developmental works in the town on Monday. He set the foundation stone for an open gym at Telangana Martyrs Memorial at Vinayaknagar. He also inaugurated public toilets in the town. Road divider works and plantation works at Rajiv Gandhi Chowrasta were also inspected. The MLA inspected Vinayakula Bavi at Vinayaknagar for immersion of Ganesh idols. He directed officials to make arrangements for smooth conducting of Shobha yatra and idols immersion.

**Driver, cleaner die in mishap**

**Adilabad:** The driver and cleaner of a van died when the van hit a container parked on NH-44 near Bhattisavargan on the outskirts of Adilabad in the wee hours of Monday. The driver and cleaner were identified as Mohd Pasha and Ifteyar of Hyderabad and the van was carrying biscuits to Maharashtra from Hyderabad. The container was on its way to Rajasthan from Hyderabad and parked on the national highway when one of its tyre was got punctured, the mishap occurred as the lorry was parked beside the road without the dipper on.



City Mayor Y. Sunil Rao shakes a leg with the revellers while taking Ganesh idol for immersion in Karimnagar on Monday. — PULI SHARATH KUMAR

## Defects in DBR housing put govt. in tight spot

### Youths filmed poor quality works on mobile phone

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM, AUG. 31

The defects in the construction of double bedrooms turned out to be a curse to the state government. Not just the quality wing but even the aspirants wanting to occupy them are looking into the discrepancies and trying to expose them. Instead of solving the problems, the government is trying to suppress the criticism against the project.

As part of the DBR housing, 50 houses are nearing completion in Harichandrapuram in Kampepalli mandal. Power

connections are yet to be given to the houses.

Applications were invited from the eligible beneficiaries and 118 applications were received for the 50 houses.

Some of the aspirants who had applied for the houses found some defects and even shot them on their cell phones and this annoyed the higher officials and asked the housing assistant engineer Yousuf Ali to file a case against three persons, including Boda Naresh and O. Rambabu.

The political parties and other organizations found fault with this action

taken by the government. Lambada Ikya Vedika convenor Bhadrui Naik said, "Instead of taking action against the contractors, the government is filing cases against the youth, who exposed the construction defects".

Communist Party of India district secretary Potu Prasad said there are scores of complaints on the sub-standard construction of DBR houses and some of the houses even leaked during the recent rains, after the beneficiaries occupied the houses.

He said that about 100 beneficiaries left the hous-

es due to the low quality construction works.

On the other hand, the support of housing engineers to the contractor annoyed the beneficiaries. The engineer, in his complaint, alleged that the youth tried to create fear among the beneficiaries by taking up false campaign.

Interestingly, the contractor tried to take up repairs after the video was played in the presence of police officials. The government was shocked at the unprecedented support to the youth from the society and tried to maintain silence on it.

## MORE CASES IN KHAMMAM, BHADRADRI

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM, AUG. 31

The Covid-19 cases witnessed a surge in the last three days in Khammam district. Nearly 1,502 Covid-19 positive cases were reported in the district, causing worry among the people.

About 568 cases were detected on Monday, 324 cases on August 30 and 610 on August 29.

About 300 cases were reported in Khammam town only during the three days. Ashtagurthi in Khammam turned out to be a hotspot and 40 cases were registered there.

In Bhadrachalam, about 72 cases were exposed in the holy town for the last three days.

About 31 positive cases were reported on Monday, 14 on August 30 and 27 cases on August 29. Aswaraopet and Aswapuram mandals in Bhadrachalam district witnessed a rise in cases with as many as 100 cases being reported in the last three days in both the mandals.

## Rise in bed occupancy reflects Covid-19 intensity

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC NIZAMABAD/KAMAREDDY, AUG. 31

Covid-19 cases are on the rise in undivided Nizamabad district for the last one week. People of different age groups were affected with Coronavirus and have been admitted in either government or private hospitals.

Covid-19 cases are getting reported from rural and urban areas equally in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts. Around 88.4 per cent bed occupancy reflects the intensity of the spread of the virus in the district.

For the last one week, more than 100 positive cases have been reported in Nizamabad district.

On August 24, over 142 Covid cases were reported while on the next day 136 were recorded and on August 26, 112 cases were registered. On August 27, the number stood at 129, on August 28, it was 113 cases and 140 on August 29, and on August 30, cases registered were 94.

In Kamareddy district, on August 24, 64 Covid-19 cases were registered and on August 25, 76 cases were recorded, August 26 55 cases were registered, 51 cases on August 27, 65 on August 28, 56 on August 29 and 25 cases on August 30.

In this context, bed occupancy is also increasing in Covid-19 hospitals located in Nizamabad, Bodhan, Kamareddy and Domakonda.

In Government General

Hospital alone, which has 250-bed capacity, 221 were occupied by Covid-19 patients.

Based on the condition of the patients, doctors provided oxygen and ventilator facilities too.

The district hospital at Kamareddy has 40 beds, of which 5 beds were occupied by Coronavirus positive patients and 34 are vacant.

In Bodhan area hospital, of 22 beds, 9 beds are occupied by Covid-19 patients.

Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) are being conducted in 48 centres in Nizamabad district, including Government General Hospital, area hospitals, urban health centres, community health centres and primary health centres.

On the same lines, Covid-19 tests are being conducted in 31 centres in Kamareddy district, including district hospital, area hospital, community health centres, urban and primary health centres.

On the other hand, a few Covid-19 patients are approaching private hospitals in Nizamabad for treatment.

Symptomatic patients and their primary contacts are preferring Antigen Rapid Tests to know if they are infected.

The district medical and health department is working round-the-clock to treat the Covid-19 patients.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, noted surgeon Dr Madhusekhar said that they were trying to boost up the morale of Covid-19 patients. More than the

## COVID CONTROL ROOM SET UP FOR PATIENTS, KIN

DC CORRESPONDENT NIZAMABAD, AUG. 31

A control room was set up at Praja Nilayam in Morthad mandal headquarters to provide essential commodities to the Covid-19 patients and their family members.

Two in-charges for each mandal in Balkonda Assembly constituency were appointed to distribute the essential commodities, including immunity boosters.

Bahujan Samaj Party leader Muthyala Sunil Reddy has taken initiative to supply the essential commodities to Covid-19 patients.

Rice, dal, oil, sugar, soaps, fruits, honey and other items are being supplied to the needy in 120 villages of the segment.

Two mobile vans have been kept available to shift the patients to hospitals in Balkonda Assembly constituency.

"It is our responsibility to help the needy during the Covid-19 pandemic," he said on Monday.

infection, the patients are suffering from fear, which is leading to more complications, he said.

"We provided telemedicine to more than 100 patients in the Armour area for Covid-19 treatment", he added.



Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao, along with other officials and public representatives, inspecting the Mamnoon airport. —ANUDEEP CEREMILLA

## CM keen on resuming air services at Mamnoon

DC CORRESPONDENT WARANGAL, AUG. 31

Telangana state is leaving no stone unturned in its efforts to resume air travel services at the Mamnoon airport in Warangal, said minister for panchayat raj Errabelli Dayakar Rao.

He, along with district collector Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanth and local public representatives, inspected the airfield at Mamnoon on the Warangal-Khammam highway.

Out of the 1,140 acres of land required for the airport, the minister said about 750 acres is avail-

able now and the remaining land would be purchased from farmers of surrounding villages.

"Air services were available at the airport since 1980 but remained non-functional ever since. It is a long standing demand of the Warangal people to have a functional airport here. Even the previous governments too neglected the issue a lot," he said.

Reminding that the KCR government has repeatedly given representation regarding the airport to the central government, he said it led to a fresh survey.

"Apart from the avail-

able government land in the surroundings, we would be requiring about 250 acres which will be procured from Nakkalapally and Gadepally villages. Tests are being conducted to see if the land being procured is feasible for an airport. The state government is ready to allot as much land required for the airport. The farmers who will be parting with their land will be suitably compensated," he said.

Government chief whip Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar, Wardhannapet MLA Aroori Ramesh inspected the airfield in Mamnoon.

### MONEY | BENEFIT

■ Each employee saved ₹2-₹5L during service

## Pay SRBS amount to RTC staff: CITU

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC KARIMNAGAR, AUG. 31

The district secretary of the Centre of Indian Trade Union (CITU), Adla Ramesh, on Monday demanded the government to sanction the amount of Service Retirement Benefit Scheme (SRBS) to the retired Road Transport Corporation employees which are pending from 2018.

The retired RTC employees, along with the members of the CITU, staged a protest in front of the RTC regional manager office

■ The retired RTC employees, along with the members of the CITU, staged a protest in front of the RTC regional manager office and submitted a memorandum to the office staff in Karimnagar district.

■ Retired employees have been waiting to take the money so that they can use it for some purpose

and submitted a memorandum to the office staff in Karimnagar district.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Ashok said that many RTC employees saved around ₹2 to ₹5 lakh from their income in the SRB scheme hoping that the amount would help them after their retirement.

However, since 2018, the department has not been sanctioning the amount due to which retired RTC employees are facing a lot of hardships.

He alleged that the RTC is using the money of retired RTC employees for some other needs and is boasting that it invested the money for the develop-

ment of the Corporation and is not sanctioning the saving amount to the retired RTC employees.

The government must intervene to resolve the issue of retired RTC employees and must sanction the SRB scheme amount immediately which has been pending for the last two years, he demanded.

The members of the association Punnam Ravi, P. Mallaiiah, D. Rajamouli, G.R. Mallaiiah Kumar, Shankar, M.S.S. Reddy, Shyam Sundar and L.B. Reddy were among those who submitted the memorandum.





## SHORT TAKES

MAOISTS KILL  
ABDUCTED COP IN  
CHHATTISGARHDC CORRESPONDENT  
BHOPAL, AUG. 31

Suspected Maoists killed an assistant sub-inspector who was abducted by them at Mengapat under Kutru police station in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Bijapur on Sunday evening.

Body of Korsia Naigaiya (59), posted in Kutru police station, was recovered at Ketulnar nearly two km from Mengapat on Monday, a senior Bijapur district police officer said.

The slain cop had taken a fortnight's leave to visit his home in Dantewada in south Bastar and started for Dantewada on his bike on Sunday evening, police said.

He was abducted by Maoists at Mengapat, nearly five km from his place of posting at Kutru.

His abduction came to light when the police found his bike abandoned in Mengapat.

"A search operation was launched by security forces to rescue him. His body was recovered at a deserted place in Ketulnar. A Maoist leaflet was found near his body", police said.

In another incident, a Naxal was gunned down in an encounter with security forces under Pushav police station in Dhamtari district in Chhattisgarh on Monday.

The slain has been identified as Ravi, member of Gabra Local Organisation Squad of CPI (Maoist).

SP STUDENT WING  
MEMBERS  
LATHICHARGED

**Lucknow, Aug. 31:** Police on Monday lathicharged and detained Samajwadi Party student wing members protesting near the Raj Bhavan here against conducting the NEET and JEE Main amid the Covid-19 pandemic, police said.

Carrying placards with messages such as India united to postpone JEE and NEET, 'Satyagrah against exams during Covid-19' and 'Stop atrocities against students', the party workers were marching towards the Raj Bhavan when they were stopped by police.

As they insisted to move ahead, police used lathicharge to disperse them, and later detained them, a senior police officer said.

Samajwadi Party national spokesman Rajendra Chowdhury said police lathicharged peaceful protestors.

Other party leaders said holding medical entrance exam NEET and engineering entrance exam JEE Main amid a raging pandemic is not in the interest of students. It should be postponed till situation improves, said one of them.

While engineering entrance exam JEE Main has been planned from September 1-6, the NEET is scheduled to be held on September 13.

Earlier on August 27, Samajwadi Party workers were lathicharged by police when they were marching towards the Raj Bhavan in protest against the Centre's decision to hold these exams.

Party president Akhilesh Yadav had last week written an open letter against holding the two exams.

## It is double whammy for guest workers, entrepreneurs in Odisha

AKSHAYA KUMAR  
SAHOO | DC  
BHUBANESWAR, AUG. 31

The Covid-19 crisis had hit them hard. But their spirit always remained high and they had refused to surrender to economic challenges posed by the pandemic. However, the floods in the major river systems of Odisha have convincingly vanquished them.

So much so that many of them are staring at dark days ahead if the state government does not take care of them.

First-time rural entrepreneurs and guest workers who had undertaken agriculture activities in the coastal areas of Odisha have lost all their investments as the high floods in the major river system washed away their dream projects.

"I had invested nearly ₹5 lakh on raising a poultry farm. The birds had grown fully and I was about to sell them in the next few days. I was expecting a return of

● **MAJOR RIVERS** in Odisha, including Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Birupa, Luna and Chitratopala were flowing above their danger marks by the evening on Monday.

nearly ₹7 lakh. Now, hope is completely shattered as the flood water in the Baitarani river system has washed away my poultry unit," said Rajanikant Satpathy, a poultry farm owner of Panasa village in Jajpur district.

Dozens of poultry farmers in the adjoining areas have lost their investments. Akshaya Rout, a guest worker of Dharmasala in Jajpur district had returned from Surat in April after the nationwide lockdown was announced.

He had undertaken brinjal and other vegetable cultivation in his two hectares of land after borrowing some money from the bank.

"I had grown various veg-

etables on two acres of land on the bank of Brahmani river. The swirling water of Brahmani has destroyed it all. There is no trace even of the roots of the vegetable plants," said Rout.

A few other guest workers who had opened carpentry, pottery and iron furniture fabrication units also narrated similar harrowing stories.

"I was working as a mechanic in a textile unit in Bangalore. After I returned, I had opened a furniture fabrication unit with a savings of ₹2 lakh rupee. My unit was washed away in the Mahandi flood," said Tapan Kumar Swain of Banki in Cuttack district.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has assured all the affected entrepreneurs a compensation after the flood damage assessment exercise is completed by the district authorities.

Major rivers in Odisha, including Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Birupa,

Luna and Chitratopala were flowing above their danger marks by the evening on Monday. Floods in the Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Budhabalanga, Kharasrota and Subarnarekha in Odisha have ravaged almost all the coastal districts.

The Chief Minister on Monday afternoon undertook an aerial visit of the affected areas and later reviewed the responses of various departments to mitigate the plights of the people.

After the review meeting, the Chief Minister announced that all people hit by the floods will be provided with cooked food / dry food as long as they are in shelter. He also announced 50 kilograms of rice and ₹500 as immediate support to the families of the severely affected / submerged villages.

"One polythene sheet will be provided to each eligible family whose house has been demolished," he said.

## Pranab wanted 'Red Diary' to be cremated with him

The diary is apparently the 'truthful account of his political journey'

SANJAY BASAK | DC  
NEW DELHI AUG. 31

A magazine once described him as "The man who knew too much."

Pranab Mukherjee, former President was the "veteran insider" in the corridors of power. The man, who apparently had "the memory of an elephant." Pranab, the treasure trove of political secrets was an avid diary writer as well.

His much talked about 'Red Diary' is apparently the "truthful account of his political journey." It is believed that this diary if ever published could stir the hornet's nest in Indian politics.

In his e-book - *Akothito Pranab* (Untold Pranab), journalist and author, Goutam Lahiri wrote that Pranab Mukherjee had said, "My Red Diary will never be published. It will be cremated along with my body." There were speculations that he would eventually handover his 'Red Diary' to his daughter Sharmishtha.

Pranab Mukherjee's, political journey began in West Bengal in 1969, as the election agent for V.K. Krishna Menon, who was contesting a Lok Sabha by-election as an independent candidate.

In his 50-odd years, he was the ultimate insider. He had a vast network of key political players, cutting across party lines. He was not only close to the CPI(M) leader and the then West Bengal chief minister, Jyoti Basu but had often invited RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat to Rashtrapati Bhawan during his tenure as the President.

He had powerful allies and equally powerful enemies.

The man, who was virtually "number two" during the rule of Indira Gandhi was expelled from the party by her son, Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv influenced by Congress leaders, like Arun Nehru, A.B.A. Gani Khan Chowdhury,

Balaram Jharkhar among the few not excluded Mukherjee from Union Council of Ministers but later expelled him.

He was told that Pranab nurtured the ambition of being the Prime Minister after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984.

Lahiri in his e-book recounts the details of this "misunderstanding."

Lahiri writes, "Rajiv Gandhi (on his way to Delhi from Bengal) sought Pranab's advice on "who after Indira".

Mukherjee reminded that when Jawaharlal Nehru died in 1964 and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1966, the senior-most cabinet minister, Gulzari Lal Nanda was appointed as acting PM.

Pranab Mukherjee was

## Mukherjee signed AP Reorganisation Bill

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG 31

Former President Pranab Mukherjee had signed the AP Reorganisation Bill to form Telangana state, after it was passed by Parliament on February 20, 2014. He had earlier headed the sub-committee on Telangana constituted by the UPA-1 government.

B. Vinod Kumar, former MP and Telangana State Planning Commission vice-chairman, said Mukherjee had complete understanding of Telangana issue. He said Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao had first met Mukherjee prior to the 2004 elections. Rao had gone to meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi for a pre-poll alliance, and she asked Mukherjee to talk to Rao. "After their one to one meeting Mukherjee assured KCR in my presence that he will ensure that Telangana is formed if the UPA comes to power," Vinod Kumar told *Deccan Chronicle* on Tuesday.

BALU PULIPAKA | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

It was some time early in 1999 that I first met Pranab Mukherjee. I had just been posted in New Delhi as *Deccan Chronicle's* correspondent. Duties included 'covering' the Congress, the primary opposition, while Atal Bihari Vajpayee was Prime Minister.

24 Akbar Road, the Congress headquarters, soon became a regular haunt and it was not very long before I began getting to know people there and they me.

Pranab Mukherjee, a redoubtable senior Congress leader, had a fairly smallish room for his office in the building. The room may have been small, but he never stopped anyone from

number two in Indira Gandhi's cabinet. This apparently was distorted and the coterie close to Rajiv Gandhi indicated that Pranab was pitching for himself.

This was the beginning of Pranab's fall during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure.

However, hit by Bofors scam, a revolt by V.P. Singh later forced Rajiv Gandhi to get Pranab back into Congress in 1988. Sometime before his assassination, Rajiv in a magazine interview had confessed, "Things people told me about Pranab

He said Mukherjee was instrumental in including the Telangana issue in the Common Minimum Programme of the UPA-1 government.

When the TRS decided to leave the UPA-1, it was Mukherjee who tried to stop them as Telangana state would be a reality during the UPA tenure.

When the UPA sub-committee on Telangana, headed by Mukherjee, said that it would be able to finalise its report only after receiving responses from all political parties, Rao started consultations with all other parties, Kumar said.

"I used to hand over consensus letters collected from various parties and Pranab Mukherjee always appreciated our efforts."

Chief Minister, in his condolence message said, "the former President used to say that there was justice in the demand for a separate Telangana and he used to offer several useful suggestions."

● **PRANAB** Mukherjee had a fairly smallish room for his office in the building. The room may have been small, but he never stopped anyone from entering it and having a quick chat.

entering it and having a quick chat.

One day, after the daily media briefing, I wanted to know more about some facts and figures related to the economy and the budget. And the best person to explain was Pranab da.

I had in the past squeezed into his room along with other 'well-established' Delhi journoes who knew him for a long time. But this time was different. He did not know me at all, I was still a greenhorn as far as 24

Mukherjee were wrong."

The content in the "Red Diary", if ever seen the light of the day, could lift the curtains, which even in his book, *The Coalition Years* Mukherjee refrained from doing.

His book displayed caution and actually is not a tell-all memoir. Pranab had been privy to all the redefining moments in Indian politics ranging from creation and rise of the militant Sikh leader, Jarnail Singh, anti-Sikh riots and demolition Babri Mosque among others.

## People teach parties a lesson, Pranab had said

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Pranab Mukherjee, then President, strongly believed that the beauty of Indian democracy was that the people teach befitting lessons to political parties and force their leaders to do mid-course corrections.

I was excited when assigned to accompany him to Allahabad on Christmas in 2013 during his Southern sojourn. Paying rapt attention to his English heavy with the Bengali accent, I spent considerable time on board the President's aircraft and spoke with him on many issues.

On our return, we were told by his press secretary that Mukherjee was tired and would not interact with us. I insisted that we be allowed because it's a rare opportunity.

He agreed on the condition that we do not discuss politics but little did the press secretary realise that Mukherjee was a politician to the core and would love to talk politics

more than anything else.

Referring to five, instead of three, elections between 1989 and 1999, Mukherjee said that politicians, accustomed to single party rule could not adjust to coalition politics. The people forced them to do mid-course corrections by continuing to give fractured mandates.

The result, he said, was an unwritten understanding among the parties that stability should not be disturbed. From then on the country saw stable governments despite fractured mandates. "You people (media) even suggested Constitutional amendments to ensure stability but people have their own way of setting things right," he said smiling broadly.

I wanted his views on the highly sensitive issue of state bifurcation. He started saying that people and parties come together to resolve issues but his press secretary barged in and said a strict no.

Pranab then moved on to the simplicity of yesterday politicians.

Akbar Road was concerned. I was apprehensive but I clearly remember how warm and welcoming Pranab Mukherjee was as I asked him if I could enter his office. I also clearly recall how he ordered some samosas for me as we got down to business.

As I told him I was having some difficulty in reading the country's budget and had questions. He answered my questions and we spent about an hour or so discussing the budget. And then he made an offer I could not refuse.

"Come home tomorrow morning and I will teach you how to read the budget," Pranab Mukherjee had said. For me it was a double delight. Pranab da would get to know me a little more. On top of that, I

probably just landed the best teacher as far as reading a government budget and understanding it was concerned.

The next day I showed up at his residence in the morning, around 11 am if I recall correctly and he spent the next two hours explaining how a budget is prepared, how to read and understand the numbers and what each 'head' of the budget meant.

And that was only the first lesson. After that day, I visited him at his house several times to sit with him and learn more about country's economy and budget preparations.

He was a willing teacher and I wish I was a better student. Today, at his passing, I grieve the loss of one of the best teachers I ever had.

## Pranab's career defined by Gandhis

From Page 1

Mukherjee was born on December 11, 1935 at Mirati, a village (now in Birbhum district of West Bengal). He studied history, political science and law at Calcutta University.

His political journey began in 1969 when he became the election manager of V.K. Krishna Menon, who was contesting as an Independent. Indira Gandhi got him into the Congress and sent him to the Rajya Sabha. His rise under Mrs Gandhi was meteoric. At 47, he became India's youngest finance minister in 1982. He was one of the few leaders who stood by Indira when she imposed Emergency in 1975 and when she split the Congress in 1978.

After the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, he fell from favour as then PM Rajiv Gandhi and his coterie felt Mukherjee, as the seniormost Cabinet minister, saw himself as the rightful heir to the throne. Rajiv not only dropped Mukherjee from the Cabinet but also expelled him from the party. In his memoir *The Turbulent Years: 1986-96*, Mukherjee wrote that he was "shellshocked and flabbergasted".

Mukherjee formed his own political party — Rashtriya Samajwadi Congress — in 1986. In 1989, Mukherjee was recalled and he merged his outfit with the Congress. Rajiv Gandhi later said many things told to him about Mukherjee were

"untrue". In Mukherjee's words — "to return to the question of why he (Rajiv) dropped me from the Cabinet and expelled me from the party, all I can say is that he made mistakes, and so did I. He let others influence him and listed to their calumnies against me. I let my frustration overtake my patience."

After Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, Mukherjee returned to the government as external affairs minister under P.V. Narasimha Rao, while then RBI governor Manmohan Singh became finance minister.

Once again he missed the coveted throne when Sonia Gandhi chose Dr Singh to lead the UPA. Even if he was "upset",

he was "unacceptable" to them. Realising they could not lose the presidential election, several meetings were held among UPA partners, and the Left proposed Mukherjee's name, which was seconded by others. Sonia endorsed his candidature.

Mukherjee wrote in *The Coalition Years: After briefing the meeting on the presidential election, Sonia Gandhi bid me an emotional farewell... Thereafter, with a mischievous smile, she looked at me and said: 'Along with that, of course, I will miss some of his tantrums'.*

Mukherjee hit the headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.

● **MUKHERJEE HIT THE headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.**

Mukherjee did not let that influence his work and in 2004-2014 he was heading most of the groups of ministers. Speaking at the launch of Mukherjee's book *The Coalition Years*, Dr Singh said: "He (Pranab) had reason to feel upset but he respected me and we have a great relationship which will continue till we live." There were rumours that it was Rahul Gandhi who took the final call.

The Gandhi family also seemed reluctant at first about nominating him for President. Some say the Gandhi family (post-Indira) "could never fully trust Pranab da". Mukherjee wrote: "She (Sonia) told me frankly, 'Pranabji, you are the most eminently suited for the office, but you should not forget the crucial role you are playing in the functioning of the government. Could you suggest an alternative?'"

Then came something which virtually forced Sonia's hand. Mamata Banerjee, at a joint press conference with Mulayam Singh Yadav said their presidential nominees were A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Dr Singh and Somnath Chatterjee. Ms Banerjee revealed that Sonia Gandhi had proposed the names of Hamid Ansari and Mukherjee, which were "unacceptable" to them.

Realising they could not lose the presidential election, several meetings were held among UPA partners, and the Left proposed Mukherjee's name, which was seconded by others. Sonia endorsed his candidature.

Mukherjee wrote in *The Coalition Years: After briefing the meeting on the presidential election, Sonia Gandhi bid me an emotional farewell... Thereafter, with a mischievous smile, she looked at me and said: 'Along with that, of course, I will miss some of his tantrums'.*

Mukherjee hit the headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.

## SSR case: ED grills Goa hotelier

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI, AUG. 31

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday grilled Goa hotelier Gaurav Arya in connection with actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide and possible laundering of his money as per allegations of his father. Arya's name cropped up after some text messages on narcotics substances were allegedly shared between Rhea Chakraborty, the main accused in the case, and him.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is also like-

● **THE ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE** began questioning Gaurav Arya from 10.30 am at the agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of money and on the narcotics messages that were exchanged in 2017.

ly to grill Arya in connection with the drugs angle. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) meanwhile grilled Chakraborty for the fourth consecutive day on Monday.

The ED began questioning Arya from 10.30 am at the agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of money and on the narcotics messages that were

exchanged in 2017. The text messages were later shared with the NCB and the CBI by the ED. Arya has however refuted the allegations saying he neither ever peddled drugs nor spoke to Rhea till date.

The Enforcement Directorate earlier questioned Rhea, her brother Showik and two sisters of Rajput apart from his chartered accountant and other staffers.

Meanwhile, the CBI again summoned Chakraborty on Monday for questioning at their DRDO guest house in Santacruz. "Chakraborty and her brother Showik, Rajput's cook Neeraj Singh were questioned on Monday. They may be summoned again as the probe progresses," said an officer privy to the investigation.

On Sunday, Rhea was questioned for around nine hours. She along with some other accused in the case have been grilled by the ED on multiple occasions before the CBI took over the probe.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inspects a flood-affected area with Army jawans near Hoshangabad district on Monday. He assured farmers that all possible measures will be taken to compensate for their losses. "Farmers should not get worried about the losses. The government is in action and all possible measures will be taken to compensate them through crop insurance scheme and RBC (revenue book code) provisions," he said.

— PTI



## IN BRIEF

**Nod to Amazon drone delivery**

**San Francisco:** Amazon on Monday said a freshly-issued Federal Aviation Administration certificate has cleared the launch pad for drone deliveries in the US. "This certification is an important step forward for Prime Air and indicates the FAA's confidence in Amazon's operating and safety procedures for an autonomous drone delivery service that will one day deliver packages to our customers," Amazon VP David Carbon said. "We will continue to develop and refine our technology to fully integrate delivery drones into the airspace," he said. — *AFP*

**Chinese-born Oz journalist held**

**Sydney:** A Chinese-born Australian journalist for CCTV-News, the English-language channel of China Central Television, has been detained in China, Australia's government said Monday. Australian officials had a consular visit with Cheng Lei at a detention facility via video link on Thursday, foreign minister Marise Payne said in a statement. They will continue to provide assistance and support to her and her family, Australia had been informed by Chinese authorities of her detention, but made its first public announcement on Monday. — *Agencies*

**2 detained over Ryanair security**

**London:** British counter-terrorism police were holding two men on Monday following a "security threat" aboard a Ryanair flight that led to fighter jets being scrambled to intercept it. Police said they a 34-year-old man from Kuwait and a 48-year-old man from Italy under terrorism laws late on Sunday at Stansted Airport after the flight from Vienna landed. Britain's Royal Air Force said it had launched two Typhoon fighter jets from a base in nearby Lincolnshire "to intercept a civilian aircraft". "The aircraft was escorted safely to Stansted," it added. — *AP*

**2 die in UAE restaurant blast**

**Abu Dhabi:** A powerful blast ripped through a restaurant in the UAE's capital here on Monday, killing two persons, police said. A number of people were injured in the explosion which took place at the fast food restaurant in a building on Rashid Bin Saeed Street, according to a newspaper report. According to on-site investigations, the incident was caused by a misalignment in the gas container fittings following refuelling, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said. Emergency response teams evacuated residents of the building and cordoned off the area. — *PTI*

**SUDAN, REBELS STRIKE DEAL TO END ROW**

**Juba, Aug. 31:** Sudanese leaders and rebel commanders agreed Monday on a historic peace deal, a crucial step towards ending 17 years of conflict in which hundreds of thousands of people were killed.

Leaders of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organisation of rebel groups from the western region of Darfur and the southern states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, raised their fists in celebration after inking the agreement.

Fighting in Darfur alone left around three lakh people dead after rebels took up arms there in 2003, according to the United Nations, with former government leaders accused of carrying out genocide and of crimes against humanity.

Conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile erupted in 2011, in the wake of South Sudan's independence, resuming two decades of war. "I congratulate all in Sudan on reaching a historic comprehensive peace that addressed the roots of the problem and ended the war, God willing," said Gibril Ibrahim, commander of one of rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

He paid tribute to all those killed or affected by the long years of war.

Sudanese paramilitary commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo — best known by his nickname "Hemeti", and who commanded fighters in the war — signed the deal on behalf of Khartoum. — *AFP*

**Israeli flight in UAE**

US National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien speaks next to US Presidential Adviser Jared Kushner (centre) and Head of Israel's National Security Council Meir Ben-Shabbat (left) in front of an airplane of El Al at the tarmac of Abu Dhabi airport, following the arrival of the first-ever commercial flight from Israel to the UAE, on Monday. The US-Israeli delegation took off on a historic first direct commercial flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi to mark the normalisation of ties between the Jewish state and the UAE. — *AFP*

**Trump seizes on protests, Dems slam him for tension**

**Aides want Don to give aggressive message on law, order**

**Washington, Aug. 31:** Democrats accused President Donald Trump of trying to inflame racial tensions and incite violence to benefit his campaign after he praised supporters who clashed with protesters during a deadly night in Portland, Oregon, and announced he will travel to Kenosha, Wisconsin, amid anger over the shooting of another Black man by police.

Trump unleashed a flurry of tweets and retweets the day after a man identified as a supporter of a right-wing group was shot and killed in Portland. The city has been the site of months of daily protests, and a large caravan of Trump supporters and Black Lives Matter protesters clashed Saturday night. Trump praised the caravan participants as 'GREAT PATRIOTS' and retweeted what appeared to be the dead man's name along with a message to 'Rest in peace'.

Trump also retweeted those who blamed the city's Democratic mayor for the death.

"The people of Portland, like all other cities & parts of our great Country, want Law & Order," Trump wrote Sunday. "The Radical Left Democrat Mayors, like the dummy running Portland, or the guy right now in his basement unwilling to lead or even speak out against crime, will never be able to do it!"

Trump has throughout

**State cops in Portland to probe clashes death**

**Portland, Aug. 31:** State Police will return to Portland to help local authorities after the fatal shooting of a man following clashes between President Donald Trump supporters and counter-protesters that led to an argument between the president and the mayor over who was to blame for the violence.

Protesters were back on the streets for a demonstration Sunday night out-

side a public safety building. Police declared an unlawful assembly and arrested 29 people. Two of those arrested had handguns and others had knives and at least one had an expandable baton, police said.

Many wore helmets, gas masks, goggles and external armour. Police said some carried shields and reflective squares used to reflect police lights back toward officers. — *AP*

**4 hurt in shooting at Kansas City club**

**Kansas City, Aug. 31:** Four people were shot and injured Sunday at a night club in Kansas City, Missouri, where a mass shooting occurred in January, police said.

Kansas City Police spokesman Sgt Jake Becchina said the latest shooting at the 9ine Ultra Lounge was reported around 2.30 a.m. Sunday.

The summer cast American cities as under siege by violence and lawlessness, despite the fact that most of the demonstrations against racial injustice have been largely peaceful. With about

Investigators said the shooting was related to an argument that started inside the club and then moved outside where several people fired shots.

One victim found at the scene with several gunshot wounds was taken to a hospital. Three others arrived separately at hospitals. All four victims remained stable. — *AP*

The virus has hobbled the US economy and cast a shadow over President Donald Trump's once-promising re-election prospects. — *AP*

**Lebanon's PM-designate vows reforms**

**Beirut, Aug. 31:** Lebanese Prime Minister-designate Mustapha Adib vowed Monday to swiftly launch a reformist government and seek international financial assistance after the Beirut blast deepened a political and economic crisis.

In a televised speech after his nomination, Lebanon's former ambassador to Germany said there is "a need to form a

government in record time and to begin implementing reforms immediately, starting with an agreement with the International Monetary Fund".

Adib faces the nearly impossible challenge of embodying change after being picked by the political establishment.

Adib's name only emerged on Sunday to replace Hassan Diab,

whose government resigned in the aftermath of the deadly August 4 blast at Beirut port.

The 48-year-old was born in the northern city of Tripoli and is a Sunni Muslim, making him eligible to become Prime Minister under Lebanon's sectarian-based power-sharing system.

His biography on the Berlin embassy website presents him as an aca-

**CORONAVIRUS CASES IN U.S. NEAR 6 MILLION**

**New York, Aug. 31:** The United States neared six million Coronavirus cases on Sunday, nearly a quarter of the planet's total, as nations around the world battle to contain the raging pandemic.

Global Coronavirus infections soared past 25 million, as countries tightened restrictions to halt the health crisis that has upended life for most of humanity.

A million additional cases have been detected globally roughly every four days since mid-July, according to an AFP tally, with India on Sunday setting the record for the highest single-day rise in cases with 78,761.

The United States, had recorded 5.99 million cases of infection as of 0030 GMT Monday, according to Johns Hopkins University's tracker. The death toll is just over 183,000. The US hit five million cases three weeks ago, just 17 days after reaching four million, the tracker said.

The virus has hobbled the US economy and cast a shadow over President Donald Trump's once-promising re-election prospects. — *AP*

**Merkel condemns 'shameful' virus stir****38,000 had gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest restrictions to curb Coronavirus**

**Berlin, Aug. 31:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday condemned as "shameful" an attempt by protesters angry at Coronavirus restrictions to storm Parliament, saying they had abused the right to demonstrate peacefully.

Several hundred people tried to get into the Reichstag building during a rally against Coronavirus rules in Berlin on Saturday.

"This right to demonstrate peacefully is of course a very valuable asset even during a pandemic," Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said at a government press conference in Berlin.

However, he said their actions were "a clear abuse".

"The result was disgraceful images at the Reichstag which are unacceptable, anti-democrats trying to make themselves heard on the steps of our democratic Parliament," he said.

Police estimated 38,000 people, double the number expected, gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest at restrictions imposed to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, such as wearing masks and social distancing. Several hundred broke through barriers and a police cordon to climb the steps leading to the entrance to the Reichstag. They were narrowly prevented from

**Germany tells Russia to probe poisoning**

**Paris, Aug. 31:** Germany on Monday urged Moscow to step up its efforts to investigate the apparent poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny who is currently being treated at a Berlin hospital in a coma.

Foreign minister Heiko Maas said in an address to French ambassadors that Europe needed "constructive" relations with Russia for the sake of the continent's own security but it was clear now that "dark clouds" were hanging over bilateral ties.

"Of course we have the expectation that Russia should contribute more to clearing up of the Navalny case than it is doing at the moment," he said alongside French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian. Berlin's Charite hospital said on Friday there was "some improvement" in Navalny's condition, but the 44-year-old remains in a medically induced coma and on a ventilator. Navalny fell ill after boarding a plane in Siberia earlier this month. — *AFP*

entering the building by police, who used pepper spray and arrested several people.

Merkel praised as "quick-witted and brave" three police officers who were seen pushing back crowds from the entrance to the Reichstag alone until reinforcements arrived. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Monday invited the officers to Berlin's Bellevue Palace to thank them for their work. He described the protesters' actions as "despicable", adding: "We will not tolerate any anti-democratic smear campaign or disparagement of the Federal Republic of Germany at the

Bundestag." About 300 people were arrested in scuffles with police, in front of the Reichstag but also outside the Russian embassy, where protesters pelted police with bottles.

Resistance to Coronavirus restrictions in Germany has gathered pace in recent weeks with demos attracting a diverse crowd of conspiracy theorists, anti-vaxxers and far-right or far-left activists.

Health minister Jens Spahn was spat on at the weekend as he tried to talk to protesters in Bergisch Gladbach. Seibert condemned the incident, saying it was "certainly not democratic dialogue". — *AFP*

**China carries out forced medication on Uighurs**

**Beijing, Aug. 31:** The government in China's far northwest Xinjiang region is resorting to draconian measures to combat the Coronavirus, including spraying detainees with acidic disinfectant, physically locking residents in homes, imposing strict quarantines of more than 40 days and arresting those who do not comply.

Furthermore, in what experts call a breach of medical ethics, some residents are being coerced into swallowing tradition-

al Chinese medicine despite a lack of rigorous clinical data proving it works, according to government notices, social media posts, and interviews with three people in quarantine in Xinjiang.

One middle-aged Uighur woman said that when she was detained at the height of China's Coronavirus outbreak, she was forced to drink a medicine that made her feel weak and nauseous. She and others in her cell had to strip naked once a week as guards hosed them and

their cells down with disinfectant, she said.

"It was scalding," recounted the woman by phone from Xinjiang, declining to be named out of fear of retribution. "My hands were ruined, my skin was peeling."

The latest gruelling lockdown, now in its 45th day, comes in response to 826 cases reported in Xinjiang since mid-July. China's largest caseload since the initial outbreak.

The lockdown is especially striking because of its severity. — *AP*

**Strike chief held in Belarus crackdown**

**Minsk, Aug. 31:** Belarus' authorities on Monday detained the organiser of a strike at a top industrial plant, part of a methodical effort to stifle weeks of protests demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian leader of 26 years after an election the opposition denounced as being rigged.

President Alexander Lukashenko has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets and rejected the European Union's offers of mediation. After a ferocious crackdown on demonstrators in the first days after the August 9 vote that caused international outrage, his government has

avoided large-scale violence against demonstrators and sought to end the protests with threats and the selective jailing of activists.

Anatoly Bokun, who leads the strike committee at Belaruskali, a huge potash factory in Soligorsk, was detained by police and is facing a 15-day jail sentence on charges of organising an unsanctioned protest. The factory, which accounts for a fifth of the world's potash fertiliser output, is the nation's top cash earner. Strike committee spokesman Gleb Sandras said authorities had managed to halt a strike that began two weeks ago. — *AP*

**200 PAKISTANIS STRANDED IN INDIA TO RETURN**

**SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUG. 31**

At least 200 people stranded in India due to the Coronavirus lockdown will return to Pakistan on September 3, officials said Sunday.

Pakistan had sealed its border with India in March after a surge in number of Coronavirus infections. The people who had gone to India got stuck there as a result of the lockdown.

Pakistanis, stranded in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Delhi and Rajasthan, will return via Wagha border. The border between the two countries will be especially opened for them.

According to a source in the foreign office, their return was made possible because of the efforts of the Pakistani High Commission in India.

**SHARIF AT RISK IF EXPOSED TO COVID: REPORT**

**DC CORRESPONDENT ISLAMABAD, AUG. 31**

Fresh medical reports of former PM Nawaz Sharif were submitted in Lahore High Court showed that he may be "at much greater risk than a normal person" if exposed to Covid-19.

Sharif, given his age and significant disease burden, falls in the category of patients who, if exposed to the virus.

## INDIA | ABROAD

**Indian-origin leader underlines need to focus on foreigners' living conditions**

**Singapore, Aug. 31:** Pritam Singh, Singapore's Indian-origin politician scripted history on Monday when the city-state's Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the country's first Leader of the Opposition.

Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 it contested in the July 10 General Election, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's parliamentary history.

As the House began proceedings on Monday, one of the first orders of business

was a ministerial statement by the Leader of the House Indranee Rajah on formally recognising Singh, 43, as the country's first Opposition leader.

Addressing Parliament, Singh underlined the need to focus on foreigners and their living conditions. He said how foreign workers are managed and accommodated needs to be improved.

Their (foreigners) presence gives Singapore a vitality that keeps us economically relevant and also provides jobs and opportunities to our fellow Singaporeans. Many of us

count the foreigners in our midst — regardless of race, language or religion — as our friends, Channel News Asia quoted Singh as saying.

It is precisely because we need foreigners to help power our economy that we need to pay more attention to the Singapore worker... some of whom feel excluded from (the) opportunities created in their homeland, Singh said.

The House passed a motion to double Singh's speaking time from 20 minutes — which is allotted to backbenchers — to

40 minutes, the duration allotted to office holders.

Singh took the seat directly opposite Prime Minister Lee in the chamber. This is similar to the practice in other countries that formally recognise the role of the Leader of the Opposition, Indranee pointed out. Singh called on the Ministry of Manpower to publish the names of "recalcitrant" employers who do not give locals a fair chance in hiring and promotion. The MOM had recently placed 47 companies on the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF) watchlist. — *AP*

**UK Sikh soldier gets promoted, goes viral**

**London, Aug. 31:** A British Sikh soldier's promotion within the UK Army ranks has become a social media sensation after the news posted by his proud wife attracted thousands of messages and comments.

Corporal Chamandeep Singh, a Punjab-born soldier in the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) of the British Army, attended a military

school in India for 12 years.

During this period, he read about another Indian soldier, Havildar Major Rajinder Singh Dhatt, and his heroic involvement in the Burma campaign of World War II. The story of this Sikh war veteran, along with Singh's own father having served in the Indian Army, inspired him to move to the UK. — *AP*



# DECCAN Chronicle

1 SEPTEMBER 2020

## As Covid-19 cases spike, go slower on ‘unlocking’

As the Centre and states open up more sectors and allow the resumption of further activities from Tuesday, September 1, as India begins the “Unlock 4.0” phase, it is important not to forget how the pandemic is spiralling across the country, with daily coronavirus cases crossing 80,000 Sunday, the highest anywhere in the world. The last week of August witnessed a huge spurt in cases, and not just in Maharashtra and some southern states but also Delhi, that earlier seemed to have the numbers under control. And while there has also been a considerable increase in the number of tests per day, which is likely to rise, there is no hard evidence to say the rise in infections detected is primarily due to the increased testing – as health officials and the government fondly hope.

One really wonders how the Centre and state governments are confident that this is the right moment to open more activities. Schools/colleges will remain shut till September 30, but the authorities have decided to go ahead with the JEE and NEET exams for medical and engineering admissions, which will expose thousands of students across the country to the risk of contracting the virus. Also, teachers and some students from Classes 9 to 12 might be called to schools for “guidance” from later in September, the first time most will come into physical contact with each other since March – which again appears to be an avoidable step.

Most important, the government’s decision to allow the resumption of Metro rail services – even if in a staggered manner – appears premature. To allow public transport buses (with 20 people allowed and with seats spaced out; or taxis or autos, with two/three passengers) is one thing, but the Metro trains carry thousands of passengers travelling in close proximity, not to mention the thousands who will collect at Metro stations even if the capacity on the trains is restricted. All this creates a situation which might facilitate the spread of the virus. A serious rethink needs to be done prior to September 7, when Metro services are set to resume, and it should be permitted only in those areas where the Covid-19 pandemic is completely under control. That, unfortunately, is not yet the case in any of India’s major metropolises.

From September 21, social, religious, political, academic and sports functions can be held with up to 100 people, and weddings and funerals (now allowed with lesser numbers) will be permitted with 100 people. This, in our view, is also premature, and should wait till things stabilise further. The festival season is fast approaching, and it is vital to set strict norms now to ensure that low-key celebrations are held which will not endanger people’s lives. There is, of course, the counter-argument: that we must “learn to live with Covid” till a vaccine is found and distributed, which might take up to a year, and that people cannot put off economic and other activities indefinitely. The lockdown that India imposed in March was one of the world’s harshest – which severely hurt a lot of people and its benefits remain debatable. But now we might be swinging to the other extreme – rapidly opening up activities without considering all the consequences. We need to find a balance – and move a little slower.

## Trouble for NRC ‘rejects’

The stalemate in the process of preparing the Supreme Court-mandated National Register of Citizens in Assam has put the lives of 19 lakh-odd people who were excluded from it in serious trouble. The process mandates that each excluded person should be issued a rejection slip which can be challenged in the Foreigners Tribunal, which is empowered to declare a person non-citizen. The failure to issue the slips has stalled the entire process. As a result, those affected face difficulties in matters of their normal life such as finding a job, getting married, going on a foreign tour and contesting polls. The government blames it on Covid-19, which made most government departments other than those involved in the containment of the pandemic non-functional for months on end.

The very process of preparing the NRC was riddled with serious issues. It was at first perceived as an attempt to exclude Muslims who had migrated to Assam from other parts of the country. Serious discrepancies such as members of the same family getting different status were reported as soon as the list was published. The BJP, which had all along called it a tool to ‘eliminate infiltrators’, changed its stand after discovering that a third of those excluded were Hindus. The party’s Assam unit called for the verification of the list but it looks next to impossible after reports said the basic data of the NRC has been lost.

Citizenship is the primary identity of a person, and its denial, rightly or wrongly, compromises the very right to life. No government has the right to keep a decision on it pending for long. The government must admit that it had not thought through the process and hence the present mess. It must either cancel the entire exercise or fast-track it. This is not an issue for which it can blame an act of God.

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Aakar Patel

## ‘Unlock’ rules are illogical: If flights allowed, why not trains?

From Tuesday, September 1, we will have Unlock 4.0. I have lost track of what this means and I do not think anybody really understands it. What the Indian government has done is try and manage the spread of Covid-19 by keeping things shut. If India forces people to stay away from one another by denying them access to services, it will stop or slow the spread of the infection.

This has produced rules that, as I said, I do not really understand. For instance, the airlines have been operating since May, and have been flying for more than three months now. Flights are allowed to be flown at full capacity, with the middle seat occupied. However, the Indian Railways is still by and large largely shut, and has been shut since the lockdown began. From running 17,000 trains daily, it today runs only 230 special ones. What is the logic of not having trains run when planes are allowed to run full? Air passengers cannot maintain the six-foot separation on their seats so it seems illogical to allow people to fly but not travel by train.

The benefit to the stopping the spread of Covid-19 is uncertain but

**Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?**

the damage to the economy is visible. Reports from Surat last month said that the production of textiles was less than 25 per cent of normal and the big reason was the lack of labour.

More than 30 lakh people had left Surat and its surrounding industrial zones in April and May, according to a report in the Hindu Frontline magazine published on July 31. There is almost no way for these people to return to their jobs even if they wanted to now come back. There are reports that mill owners and other businesses have begun flying labourers back. But why not just open the Railways? This has not been explained to us.

Delhi’s Metro will reportedly open this week with 50 per cent capacity (again note the difference with airlines), while Mumbai’s local trains, the city’s lifeline and its artery, have stayed shut. I saw a very moving note from journalists to the chief minister asking that those who were not accredited with the government to be allowed to use the trains because it was too expensive for them to take taxis everywhere.

Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. Again, this makes no sense to me. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

We are told that cinema halls will have to stay shut as it won’t be feasible to run shows with only 25 per cent capacity due to physical distancing norms. But a movie is about as long as a flight and the seats are equidistant in both. What is the thinking behind the decision to disallow movie halls, a very large sector of the entertainment industry and its employment, from opening?

It all seems slightly eccentric to me, and I suspect that some of this is

touched with the moralism that we see in the Prime Minister. For instance, restaurants were allowed to open but not bars. Why? There is no standard format in a restaurant’s seating, as we know. And the same is true for bars. The only reason seems to be that the government in some way looks down on those who drink.

In Unlock 4.0 bars, will be allowed to serve liquor over the counter but not inside. Meaning the bar will be turned into a liquor store and the employment that its waiters and cooks and other staff would have otherwise got is not available even today, in September, more than five full months after the lockdown began.

Some of the confusion has then come from the Centre versus State differences. Apparently, the opening of gyms is allowed by the Centre but many of the states are not letting them do so.

In other nations, the lockdowns have been mostly voluntary. In India, it has been like a curfew. Even today, the Mumbai police can confiscate your vehicle if you cannot show a “good reason” for being out. What is a “good reason” is left for the

police to determine of course.

We have one nation one tax, but we do not have the free movement of people. Those going from one state to another state must fill out some application and ask for permission which may or may not be given.

As I said at the beginning, India has tried to slow or stop the spread of Covid-19 through denial of services. Has it worked? I don’t think so. India is the only large nation along with Argentina whose numbers have continuously and without a break risen from March. The only way of stopping the spread of Covid-19 is good individual behaviour at the mass level. But we have Union ministers in meetings wearing their masks on their chin instead of covering their mouth and nose. How can such people communicate good behaviour to the public? They simply cannot. And so we have the endless tweaking of rules, all leading to failure as is visible in the numbers, with bureaucrats being kept busy making funny and illogical rules for 1.0 and 2.0 and 3.0 and now 4.0.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist

Subhani

INDIA CAPABLE OF BECOMING TOY HUB: MODI



# Is another global eco crisis now inevitable?



Mohan Guruswamy

Speaking at the London Business School recently, former Reserve Bank governor Raghuram Rajan warned that the global economy was “slowly slipping” into the Great Depression-like problems of the 1930s and that central banks must sit together and define the new “rules of the game” to find better solutions. Dr Rajan, who was earlier IMF’s chief economist, was one of the few to have predicted the 2007-08 financial crisis.

The essential problem we must confront is how to rectify a world economic system that has gone hopelessly wrong and resembles nothing like what was envisaged in early 1940s. To understand the situation we are in, imagine living on an island as a part of a small group, in which people are assigned specific vocations and tasks. In this system one person makes clothes, another shoes, someone pots and pans, someone grows food and someone else prints money to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. The shoe-maker exchanges his goods with another for money which he uses to pay for food or whatever. Since everybody in this system can produce as much as possible, the person who prints the money will be best off among all as he can buy whatever he wants and pay for it with his own money. Take this one step further. Producers who hold more paper than they need then start leaving it with the person who prints them to hold.

In 2019, world GDP was about \$88 trillion, and the per capita GDP was \$11,400. In the past 10 years, world GDP growth declined from 3.13 per cent to 2.47 per cent. In 1960, WGDG was \$11.35 trillion (constant 2010). It was just \$1.1 trillion in 1900 and took 50 years to

grow fourfold to \$4.01 trillion. The big leaps began after 1971 when US President Richard Nixon unilaterally delinked the US dollar from the international gold standard. In 2000, it scaled \$51 trillion.

The total world merchandise trade in 2019 was \$19.5 trillion, with China (without Hong Kong) the biggest player, accounting for \$5.31 trillion, with a trade surplus of \$422 billion. The top five global traders account for 50.6 per cent of world trade. The EU’s share is \$4.49 trillion and the United States’ is \$3.91 trillion, also accounting for about a quarter of world trade. The most preferred global currency is the US dollar. Total world reserves in 2019-Q2 was \$11.8 trillion, of which 61.8 per cent was held in US dollars, 20.5 per cent in euros, 5.7 per cent in yen and 1.8 per cent in Renminbi.

Almost all these reserves are held by individual countries in the form of bonds, mostly earning very small or even zero interest rates. This is like money deposited in a bank, but it’s really money lent to the issuing country. As the reserves are mostly in US dollars and euros, the issuing countries have little reason to hold much of them as reserves. The total US reserves are about \$132 billion. Contrast this to India’s \$535 billion (including \$35 billion in gold) and China’s \$3,300 billion.

In 1995, advanced economies held around 67 per cent of total foreign exchange reserves, with 82 per cent of these being allocated reserves. By 2011, the picture had been flipped on its head: emerging and developing countries held 67 per cent of total reserves.

The purpose of sharing these three world economy snapshots is to offer a

**The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US President Nixon delinked the dollar from the gold standard.**

general backdrop on how we have come to this pass. A situation where the rest of the world invests in the US, so that it can splurge on itself. When it’s short, it can just print more dollars, which the rest of us lap up quite happily. Every time the US goes into convulsions due to its innate profligacy and economic mismanagement, the world economies go into a tailspin as the US is the world’s biggest importer and it’s where the world keeps its money. Now let’s turn to how the system actually works.

Countries like China and India produce goods and services at low cost for consumption in the US, which in turn pays them in dollars, that they deposit in American banks. Since money can’t sit still, this money in then lent to Americans, who today have the highest per capita indebtedness in the world, to splurge on houses, cars, flatscreen TVs and computers, that mostly they can often ill-afford. In effect, the rest of the world is plying the US with cheap credit, encouraging it to splurge even more. But there is no global regulator to caution the US on its profligacy or force it to mend its ways.

At the July 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, in the last phase of World War II, Lord Keynes had in mind an elaborate scheme that called for the

establishment of an international reserve currency called “bancor”, administered by a global central bank. But this had to be shelved in the face of American obduracy. This central bank would be vested with the possibility of creating money and with the authority to take action to ensure balanced trade. As outlined by Keynes, countries with payment surpluses should increase imports from the deficit countries, thereby ensuring foreign trade equilibrium.

But the United States, as a likely net exporter and creditor nation, and eager to take on the role of the world’s economic powerhouse, thwarted the Keynes plan. The American delegates seemed more concerned about inflationary pressures in the post-war economy. Its delegate, Harry Dexter White, argued that an imbalance was a problem only of the deficit country. White’s determined obduracy is now under a cloud after he was unmasked as a Soviet spy. Did he scuttle “bancor” at Moscow’s insistence to ensure the crisis we now are living through?

The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US President Nixon delinked the dollar from the gold standard. In the absence of a standard and a useful regulatory function for the IMF, the great private banks were given a licence to run amok. We now reap the bitter harvest. With the US dollar as the world’s preferred currency, the US and its profligate citizens have an apparently endless access to easy credit to satiate their sundry appetites. Ironically, the ever-rising annual US trade deficit is the de facto engine of growth for many economies, like China, the Asean countries and even India.

*The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.*

## LETTERS

### COVID-19

Asymptomatic people also carry heavy load of Coronavirus which is viral and all groups are susceptible (*State over-reported asymptomatic nos, DC, Aug. 31*). Hence, Covid testing must be done by the government in all the localities.

N.S.R. Murthy  
Secunderabad

### MUHARRAM SAFETY

From the outset, the way of viewing the Muharram procession in the context of Covid-19 protocol is a failure (*Mourners ignore Covid, DC, Aug. 31*). But the alternative way of looking at this event is that the Shia community and the police have shown great teamwork. Media should learn to appreciate police leadership in maintenance of order and as well the management of the Muharram procession.

Mansoor Dashti  
Secunderabad

How was the Muharram procession allowed to be taken out, flouting all orders in view of Covid pandemic? Is there no rule of law in our city? When Ganesh pandals banned and the few that were allowed were conducted with such discipline and care, how could the Muharram procession take place with so many thousands, throwing to the winds all the rules?

Vinod Sreebhashyam  
Hyderabad

### BRAHMIN GROOMS

It is unfortunate that Brahmin girls are not willing to marry purohits and archakas (*Girls hesitate to wed Brahmin priests, DC Aug. 31*). They must realise that majority of their forefathers were purohits, considered a noble profession.

Dr O. Prasada Rao  
Hyderabad

## Five die in Calcutta firing

CALCUTTA, AUGUST 31 Five persons were killed and five others seriously injured in police firings at three places in North Calcutta today.

Two most serious incidents were at Bidhan Sarani and Girish Chandra Avenue both in north Calcutta. Police fired four rounds killing two people when a police picket was attacked with bombs near Star Theatre At Girish Chandra Avenue in the Bagbazar area. A police vehicle was subjected to heavy brickbats and bomb attacks. Teargassing proving ineffective police opened fire from revolvers killing two people and injuring four others.

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,628.29	-2.13
Nifty 50	11,387.50	-2.23
S&P 500*	3,505.94	-0.06
Dollar (₹)	73.60	-0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.93	0.50
Euro (₹)	87.50	0.10
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,638.161	0.30
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	45.84	0.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.078	-0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.723	-0.006

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

Trai gives Voda Idea time till Sept. 4 to reply

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has granted additional time till September 4 to Vodafone Idea to respond to its showcase notice on the firm's priority plan, a source said. Trai had slapped a showcase notice on Vodafone Idea over its pay-more-for-priority-treatment mobile plan, saying the tariff offer "lacks transparency", is "misleading" and not in compliance with regulatory framework.

Vedanta ties with SBI for ₹10,000 cr syndicated loan



Vedanta Ltd said it has tied up with State Bank of India for a long-term syndicated loan facility worth Rs 10,000 crore. A syndicated loan is offered by a group of lenders. SBI has given a commitment of Rs 5,000 crore as a lender, Hindustan Zinc, a subsidiary of Vedanta, said in a filing to the BSE. The facility end use stipulates refinancing of near-term debt maturities of Vedanta and for capital expenditure.

Cyient to acquire Oz consulting firm IG Partners

Cyient said it has agreed to acquire Australian consulting firm IG Partners, a move that will help the Indian IT firm expand its end-to-end offerings for the local and regional resources sector. The rationale for the acquisition is gaining access to decision makers with global mining majors, acceleration in Cyient's mining strategy and positioning Cyient as a digital transformation leader in the market, the company said.

L&T completes divestment of Schneider arm

Engineering and construction giant Larsen and Toubro on Monday said it has completed the strategic divestment of its electrical and automation business to Schneider Electric. The move will see India becoming the third largest country in terms of revenues for Schneider Electric. With this, about 5,000 employees of L&T's electrical and automation business will be integrated with Schneider's 2,000 employees.



Sebi's new margin rules sour sentiments Border clash, GDP worries fell stocks

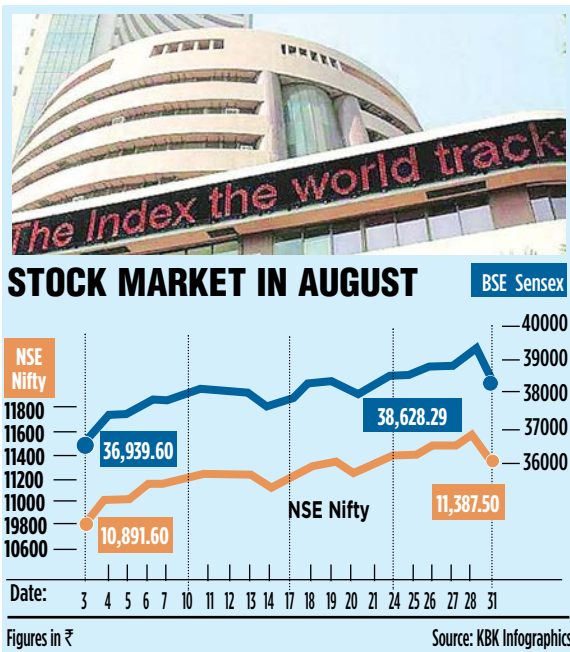
RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, AUG. 31

Market benchmark Sensex fell more than 1,600 points intra-day on fresh China military buildup and unconfirmed reports of clashes in the Ladakh region. This unexpected development together with fear of a likely sharp fall in the first quarter GDP growth, scheduled to be announced after market hours, led to profit-taking in the market.

The selling pressure may increase on Tuesday, with GDP contracting by -23.9 per cent in the June quarter. "Indian Army informed that Chinese troops violated the earlier agreement and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo on the nights of August 29-30," reports said.

Sameet Chavan, chief analyst-technical and derivatives, Angel Broking, said, the sell-off was triggered mainly by the news of India-China clash once again taking place at the border. This resulted in a massive liquidation in the market by continued selling in the remaining part of the day.

New Sebi rule for margins in equity trading coming into effect from September 1 also played spoilsport in the second half of trading, as the market regulator has declined an extension being sought by the broking community. Sensex and Nifty-50 final-



ly closed more than 2 per cent down after strong early morning gains pushed the Sensex above the 40,000 mark. The Sensex closed 839 points down at 38,628.39, recovering partly from the day's low of 38,395.89 and the Nifty-50 closed at 11,387.50, down by 260 points. Investors lost more than Rs 4.55 lakh crore in a day as the broader market fell more, with the BSE Mid-cap Index down 3.79 per cent and the BSE Small-cap Index down 4.73 per cent. All sectoral indices closed down by 2 to 4.5 per cent except the IT index, which was down over half

SWEDEN MOVES CLOSER TO MAKING FOSSIL-FUEL-FREE STEEL

HANNA HOIKKALA & JESPER STARN AUG. 31

A Swedish joint venture that hopes to rewrite the rules of steel production took a major step forward on Monday. Hybrit, an initiative run by steelmaker SSAB AB, iron ore producer LKAB and energy supplier Vattenfall AB, aims to remove fossil fuels from the steelmaking value chain by replacing coking coal with hydrogen and clean energy. The project is now starting test operations for the production of fossil-free sponge iron - something that SSAB's chief executive Martin Lindqvist sees as a "milestone" given the industry accounts for 7 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions globally and 10% in Sweden, he said.

The Hybrit project aims to reduce CO2 emissions to 25 kg per tonne of steel from about 1.6 tonnes by using hydrogen to produce direct reduced iron (DRI) as a feedstock, along with scrap, to make the metal. Electrolysing water from renewable energy sources will generate the hydrogen. "Product launch in a "big, commercial scale" is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and will target "the automotive industry and others," Lindqvist said in an interview. —Bloomberg

Norway fund drops Page Inds. over human rights breach risk

GWLADYS FOUCHE & TERJE SOLSVIK OSLO, AUG. 31



Norway's \$1 trillion wealth fund said it had excluded Taiwan's Formosa Chemicals and Fibre, Formosa Taffeta and India's Page Industries from its portfolio, saying they posed an "unacceptable risk for violation of human rights".

The world's largest sovereign wealth fund sells holdings before announcing such exclusions to avoid excessive market moves.

Formosa Chemicals and Fibre declined to comment. An official reached by telephone at Formosa Taffeta said the company was closed for the day. Page Industries was not immediately reachable for comment.

In recent years, the fund, which operates under guidelines established by the Norwegian parliament, has focused on working conditions in textile factories in Asia, excluding companies it

thinks pose an ethical risk to its investments.

Set up in 1996 to preserve Norway's oil revenues for future generations, the fund holds around 1.5 per cent of globally listed shares and its decisions are often followed by other investors.

At the end of 2019, NBIM held a 0.84 per cent stake in Formosa Chemicals & Fibre, valued at \$144 million, and a 0.64 per cent stake in Formosa Taffeta valued at \$12.2 million.

The stake in Page Industries at that time stood at 0.42 per cent, with a market value of \$15.4 million.

The fund said in the statement that its management will also scrutinise oil firm PetroChina's work, engaging in active ownership in the hope of boosting the company's anti-corruption practices.

PetroChina had been under observation for possible exclusion since 2017 and had not responded to inquiries from the fund's ethics watchdog, the Council on Ethics, Norges Bank said.

The board of the Norwegian central bank, which manages the fund, concluded "active ownership" was therefore appropriate. —Reuters

Singapore's Atlantis launches digital bank

New Delhi, Aug 31: Singapore-based fintech company Atlantis on Monday said it has entered the Indian market with the launch of its digital bank, Neo-Bank.

Eyeing the \$15.7 billion global millennial banking industry, Atlantis has launched Neo-Bank for Gen Z and millennials, a company release said. The financial value of

millennials to the banking system is expected to increase by almost 80 per cent in the next five years to more than \$27 billion from the current \$15.7 billion in revenue that millennials contribute.

The company believes that customer-first intelligent systems and design will drive the future of neo-banking, it said. Neo banking is an online con-

cept where there are no physical branches of a bank and customers transact all services digitally.

The bank is looking to sign up not more than 3,000 users in the first three months as it aims to create a personalised experience for each of its users.

Currently, it accepts a new user either through a waitlist or an invite from an existing member.—PTI

RBI announces measures to cool yields, boost liquidity

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, AUG. 31

Heading to banks' long-pending wish-list, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday allowed banks to park new government bonds acquisition made from September 1, 2020 upto March 31, 2021 under the 'held to maturity' (HTM) category up to an overall limit of 22 per cent of their deposits against the existing limit of 19.5 per cent, thereby allowing an additional purchase capacity of approximately Rs 3.6 lakh crore for banks without worrying about fluctuation risks over this period.

In addition, the RBI also announced a slew of measures to cool bond yields and maintain market stability at a time when more than 50 per cent of the Rs 20-lakh crore plus (Centre and states combined) borrowing programme will be coming up.

Among the other measures, the RBI also announced two more tranches of special open market bond operations, or 'Operation Twist,' and



additional term repo operations of Rs 1 lakh crore at a floating rate basis. The RBI also reiterated that it "remains committed to use all instruments at its command to revive the economy by maintaining congenial financial conditions, mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and restore the economy to a path of sustainable growth while preserving macroeconomic and financial stability."

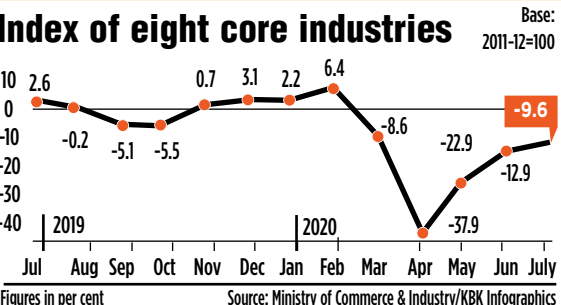
The yields on government bonds have risen in the last one week on two concerns—the RBI MPC minutes released last week while did not say anything new, yet led to consternation on the future course of inflation.

Secondly, concerns on fiscal deficit and future borrowing programme of the government impacted sentiment as it is assumed that there would be a lot of government paper coming into the market. The GST debate has only heightened such expectations. As a result, the 10-year government bond rate rose up to 6.15 per cent.

The 5.79% bond closed at 6.08 per cent on Monday while the 5.77 per cent bond at 6.12 per cent.

Suyash Choudhary, head fixed income at IDFC AMC said, "It is also true that more than 50 per cent of the Rs 20 lakh crore plus (Centre and states combined) borrowing programme is still ahead of us. To that extent one can argue that the announcements today were a "must have" if markets were to continue to behave in an orderly fashion... re-instatement of orderly functioning now allows participants to start deploying risk capital with more confidence to take advantage of what are quite attractive valuations."

Core sector output contracts 9.6% in July



FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

With the phase-wise implementation of unlockdown, production in the country's eight core sectors has shown a slight improvement, contracting to -9.6 per cent in July against the -12.9 per cent contraction in June. This is the fifth consecutive month of contraction for the core industries, according to government data released on Monday.

The data on the core eight sectors—coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity—comes ahead of the government further easing restrictions on the move-

ment and assembly of people in September in a staggered fashion.

The eight sectors collectively have a 40 per cent weightage on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Aditi Nayar, principal economist at Icmr, said that based on the available trends for the core sector, auto production and merchandise exports, "we expect the contraction in the Industrial Index of Production to ease to 7-11 per cent in July 2020 from 16.6 per cent in June 2020".

The production of 8 core sectors had expanded by 2.6 per cent in July 2019, the release said. Output of all sectors showed contraction in July except the fertiliser segment.

Fiscal deficit past full year target in four months

New Delhi, Aug. 31: India's federal fiscal deficit in the four months to end July stood at Rs 8.21 lakh crore (\$111.7 billion), or 103.1 per cent of the budgeted target for the current fiscal year, government data showed on Monday.

Net tax receipts were Rs 2.03 lakh crore while total expenditure was at Rs 10.5 lakh crore, the data showed, indicating the government had stepped up its spending to combat the impact of the coronavirus.

The deficit is predicted to cross 7.5 per cent of GDP in the 2020-21 fiscal year that began in April, private economists said, from initial government estimates of 3.5 per cent, mainly due to a sharp economic contraction triggered by the pandemic.

—Reuters

Emirates got \$2 billion of virus funding

ARCHANA NARAYANAN & LAYAN ODEH AUG. 31

Dubai's government has put \$2 billion into Emirates since March to help its flagship airline sustain operations during the coronavirus pandemic.

The state indicated earlier in the year it was committed to providing financial support to the world's largest long-haul carrier. "Any further support will be subject to the airline's requirements and will depend on the impact and duration of the ongoing Covid-19 situation," according to the document.

Emirates was particularly hit by the pandemic as its business model is built around the biggest category of jets—Airbus SE A380s and Boeing 777s—carrying passengers between all corners of the globe. —Bloomberg

Demand for online doctors creates a \$39-bn titan

RICHARD MACAULEY AUG. 31

Two decades ago, Itaru Tanimura ended a 12-year run at McKinsey & Co to lead M3 Inc, an online provider of medical information and services backed by entertainment giant Sony Corp.

What followed was a flurry of acquisitions that turned the Tokyo-based company into a \$39 billion global behemoth. M3 now has about 40 subsidiaries and affiliates, including MDLinx Inc. in the US and Britain's Doctors.net.uk.

M3 helps pharmaceutical companies, doctors and their patients access information online over its platforms, removing the need for in-person visits - something that proved important in the time of Covid-19. Its

shares have almost doubled this year, surging the most of any company in the Nikkei 225 Stock Average and taking the fortune of Tanimura to \$1.2 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

"Online doctor capabilities are in the spotlight with Covid, as people are staying home," Jefferies Japan Ltd analyst Hiroko Sato said in an interview. "It's really a theme stock." A rush by smaller pharmaceutical companies to digitalize marketing materials after the coronavirus outbreak helped boost sales, with inquiries skyrocketing. M3's operating profit climbed 26 per cent in the quarter ended in June.

The company's name stands for "the three Ms of Medicine, Media and Metamorphosis," and its goal is to change medi-



cine by "making full use of the power of the Internet," according to its website.

Its acquisition-spreed started in 2002, when M3 bought the Japanese unit of US medical portal site WebMD. MDLinx was acquired in 2006 and Doctors.net.uk in 2011. M3, which gets about three-quarters of its revenue from Japan, also has units in China, India and France. One of its US sub-

sidaries was selected to take part in Moderna Inc's Covid-19 vaccine study.

Tanimura, 55, is president and holds a 2.9 per cent stake in M3. Sony owns about a third of the company. M3 declined to comment for this story, while Sony didn't respond to phone calls and an email seeking comment.

The pandemic has produced vast wealth gains amongst both tech and

pharma titans. Amazon.com Inc's Jeff Bezos has amassed more than anyone else, with his fortune hitting \$200 billion, while Tencent Holdings Ltd's Pony Ma and Jiang Rensheng, the chairman of vaccine maker Chongqing Zhifei Biological Products Co, have added more than \$11 billion each.

While M3 said in its earnings report that Covid-19 disrupted some of its business, it always has Sony to lean on. The entertainment giant unveiled a \$100 million relief fund to help tackle the outbreak in April and funnelled some of that cash toward M3.

"Sony and M3 will be able to bring unprecedented ideas to the medical community," Tanimura said.

—Bloomberg



Bindra remains India's only individual gold medallist at the Olympics and he came tantalisingly close to adding another podium finish at the 2016 Rio Games, only to miss out by a point. — *PTI*