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HYDERABAD | SATURDAY | 24 APRIL 2021

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Gov. tells SEC to submit poll report

COURT DISPLEASED WITH STATE GOVT

VUJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan on Friday sought a detailed report from the State Election Commission on the holding of polls for the Warangal and Khamman municipal corporations and five municipalities that has been scheduled for April 30.

The Governor, who is presently in Puducherry, called State Election Commissioner C. Partha Sarathi and discussed the polls amidst media reports on the rapid increase in Covid-19 positive cases due to public gatherings in connection with the polls.

She was also reacting to representations made by the Opposition parties including the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress urging that the elections be postponed.

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy wrote a letter to the Governor to stop the elections to the urban local bodies in view of the pandemic and the Supreme Court itself declaring it as a national emergency.

Official sources told this correspondent that the Governor was concerned about the safety of people and wanted to know the measures taken by the SEC to ensure that the political parties strictly follow Covid-19 restrictions.

The Governor is under pressure from political parties and social groups to order the postponement of the elections as, otherwise, the lives of thousands of people would be at risk.

■ Page 6: Notified polls were never put off, says CEO

KTR TESTS +VE FOR CORONAVIRUS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

IT and industries minister K.T. Rama Rao, the TRS working president, has tested positive for Covid-19 just ahead of the elections to urban local bodies on April 30.

■ Full report on Page 3

GANDHI, TIMS SEE 100 COVID DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Irrespective of what the government says about the Covid-19 fatalities in its bulletin, Friday turned out to be a shocker of sorts with between 80 and 100 deaths being reported from Tims at Gachibowli and Gandhi Hospital in Secunderabad.

■ Full report on Page 5

Modi to CMS: Act against hoarding

PM asks states to prevent panic buying

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

After the perusal of a report on steps taken by the state government to stop Covid spread, the Telangana High Court on Friday observed that the government was not candid enough in dealing with the second wave of Covid-19.

■ Full report on Page 5

CADILA GETS NOD FOR DRUG AGAINST COVID

New Delhi, April 23: Zydus Cadila on Friday said it has received restricted emergency use approval from the Indian drug regulator for the use of Pegylated Interferon alpha-2b in treating moderate Covid infection. A single dose subcutaneous regimen of the antiviral Virafin will make the treatment more convenient for the patients, it said.

■ Full report on Page 11

Air Force to reduce one-way travel time.

He added that the Centre has provided

more than 15 crore doses of essential medicines to the states free of cost and urged them not to neglect the safety of hospitals.

Modi further said awareness must be increased to alleviate panic purchasing of medicines.

Though the Prime Minister's meetings with Chief Ministers are never aired live, the Delhi Chief Minister's Office telecasted Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's appeal to Modi during the meeting. Modi, however, did not appreciate the Delhi CM's move.

Terming the conduct "inappropriate," the Prime Minister said this is the first time a Chief Minister has broken the protocol and showed live a meeting between the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers.

1,500 sq. yd. plot for ₹2L!

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

A 1,500-square yard plot in upmarket Jubilee Hills which would cost at least ₹50 crore was sold for just ₹1.91 lakh and registered in the name of a person who allegedly impersonated a non-resident Indian.

Claiming that the sale concluded by the previous managing committee

of the Jubilee Hills Cooperative Housing Society was fraudulent, B. Ravindranath, the newly-elected president of the society, has approached the Telangana High Court and sought a direction to the police to register a case against his predecessors.

Ravindranath, in the affidavit filed in the High Court, said that the Hyderabad police com-

missioner, DCP, Central Crime Station, and the station house officer of Jubilee Hills police, had been ignoring the detailed complaint that he had lodged along with evidence and failed to register a first information report under pressure "from very top functionaries of the state."

■ Page 6: Buyer executed a gift deed to another man

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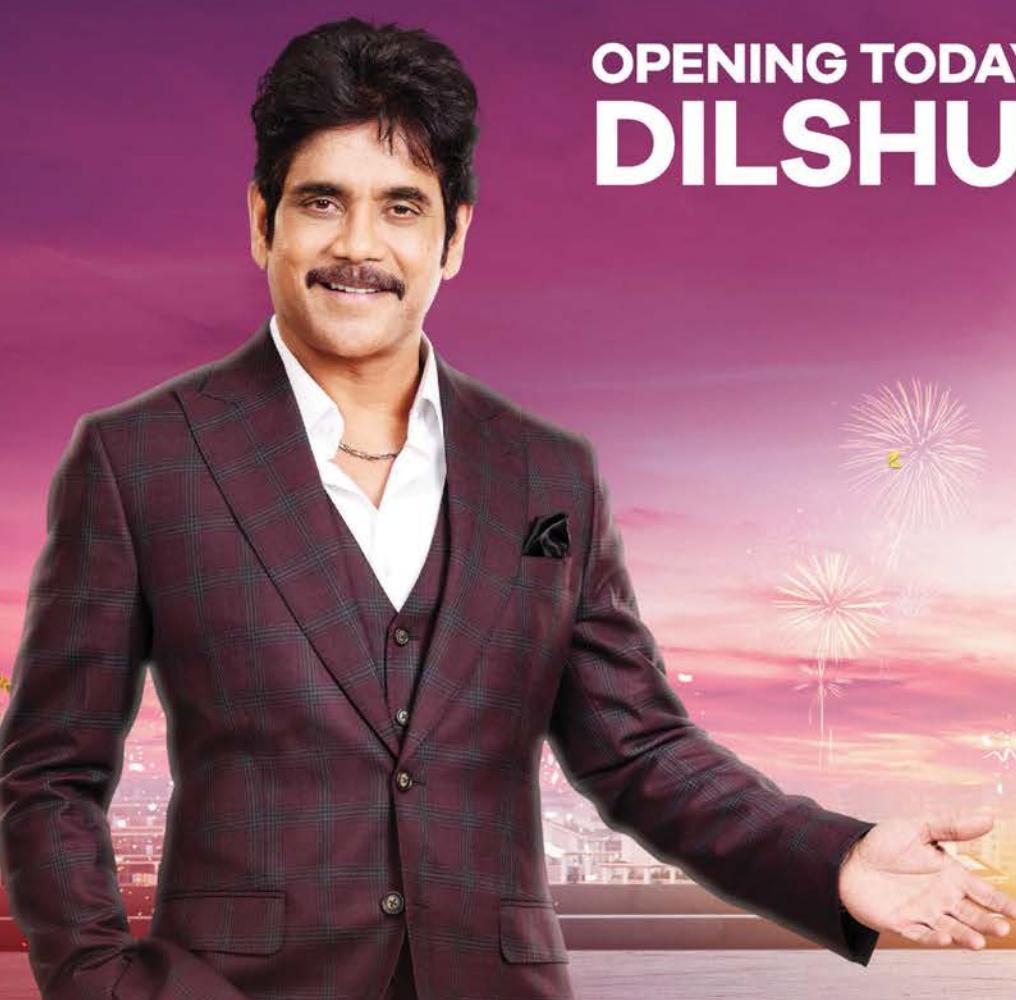
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WEATHER

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Min: 25.4°C
RH: 38%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky. Rain likely in some parts.
Max/Min temp. 38/25°C

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana
Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Dwadasi till 7.11 pm

Star: Purvaphalguni till 6.20 am; Uttaraphalguni till 4.21 am (Sunday)

Varjyan: 1.27 pm to 2.25 pm

Durmuhuram: 5.57 am to 7.37 am

Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

HJRI CALENDAR

Ramzan 11, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajr: 4.51 am

Zohar: 12.24 pm

Asar: 4.39 pm

Maghrib: 6.40 pm

Isha: 7.50 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.34 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.54 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 2.55 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 3.03 AM

RAMZAN TIMINGS

IFTAR: 6.40 PM (TODAY)

SEHRI: 4.29 AM (TOMORROW)

COUNTER POINT



I am getting more oxygen under the tree than in the ICU!

IN BRIEF

Forest department cancels festival

KHyderabad: In view of surge in Covid-19 cases, the forest department cancelled the Saleshwaram festival and requested devotees to stay away. Nagarkurnool district forest officer G. Krishna Goud said on Friday that in view of the increase in Covid-19 cases and the safety of Chenchus, a primitive tribal group living deep inside the Amrabad tiger reserve, officials had decided to cancel the jatara. Special poojas were scheduled on April 26 and 27.

RESTRICTIONS ON ENTERING TEMP TS SECRETARIAT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

The state government on Friday issued orders imposing restrictions on entry of visitors into BRKR Bhavan, the temporary secretariat of Telangana, amid spike in Coronavirus positive cases among employees and officials working in the building complex. Over 80 employees and officials, including Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, who work from BRKR Bhavan, have tested positive in the past three weeks. Four staff of the chief secretary's peshi also contracted Covid-19 positive on Thursday.

In his orders, Somesh Kumar stated, "Routine issue of visitors' and temporary passes should be suspended. Only those visitors, who have proper permission of the officer who they want to meet, should be allowed after being properly screened."

In addition, general measures like face mask, social distancing and frequent sanitisation of the premises shall be strictly adhered to.

Only three persons, in addition to the lift operator, will be allowed in the elevator at a time. Entire staff BRKR Bhavan have been directed to ensure compliance with physical distancing norms at all times, including during lunch break. All employees will have to bring their own lunch and individually have their meal, without mingling with others.

All drivers will sit in the concerned peshi and not be together in the parking.

All officers have been advised to refrain from using air conditioners in their respective rooms and ensure adequate ventilation.

GHMC's containment zones down, cases up

People frightened as zones not barricaded, sanitised

Minister KTR tests positive before polls

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

While the number of Covid-19 positive cases has been increasing alarmingly in the city limits, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is reducing the number of containment zones. The GHMC, which set up 63 micro containment zones for 989 C-positive cases on Thursday, brought down the number to 52 on Friday even as another 1,005 new Covid cases have been added to the city's caseload.

Lack of enforcement of containment regulations in seriously affected localities is a matter of worry for residents in the adjoining areas.

With the spike in Covid-19 cases, the GHMC has identified 63 containment zones in various places under LB Nagar, Charminar, Khairatabad and Serilingampally areas. Under LB Nagar Zone, Kapra-1, Uppal-2, Hayathnagar-3, Soroornagar-4 and LB

tested and take care."

Incidentally, Rama Rao accompanied his father and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao to Yashoda Hospital on Wednesday. Also with the CM was his nephew, Rajya Sabha member J. Santosh Kumar to the hospital who tested positive on Thursday. Three members of the CM's family including the CM testing positive within a span of four days sent shockwaves among the TRS leaders and cadre.

Nagar areas have two containment areas each. Also, Malakpet-6, Santoshnagar-7, Chandrayangutta-8, Charminar-9, Falaknuma-10 and Rajendranagar-11 have two containment areas each under the Charminar zone.

Five areas in Khairatabad zone — Mehdipatnam-12, Karwan-13, Goshamahal-14, Khairatabad-17 and Jubilee Hills-18 — have two zones each while Yousfuguda-19 and Chandanagar-21 under zones

have three each. Apart from that, two other areas — Patancheruvu-22 and Serilingampally-20 under Serilingampally zone have two containment zones each. However, the claim made by the GHMC to trace, test and track the potential carriers of the virus has not been put into practice at the ground level. Even the micro containment zones declared by the GHMC were left unattended. The corporation has neither been barricading the micro-containment zones nor taking up the sanitization activities, unlike last year.

Surprisingly, the civic body that has announced 63 micro containment zones in Thursday's health bulletin has reduced the number to 52 on Friday's bulletin despite the nearly 1,000 new additions to the list of infected.

When *Deccan Chronicle* contacted an official for details of the containment zones and the fall in the numbers, he said there was a clerical error.

Entry or no entry?



A man scales the gate of Gandhi Hospital to enter the premises as there were no clear instructions on whether attendants will be allowed to accompany their relatives who are admitted inside.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

6,206 new Covid cases, 29 die

2.11 LAKH ABOVE 45 YEARS VACCINATED

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Fatalities due to Covid-19 in the state continue to rise, with 29 deaths being reported on Thursday due to the disease, even as the GHMC area reported more than 1,000 new cases.

This is the highest single-day toll due to the disease. On Wednesday, the state had recorded 23 deaths. The overall toll stood at 1,928.

The state health department said that the state added another 6,206 cases during the day, taking the overall caseload to 3,79,494.

The number of cases in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation area has doubled in the past week; on April 16 it had recorded 598 cases against

1,005 cases on Thursday. The GHMC area was followed by Medchal-Malkajgiri district with 502 cases and Nizamabad 406. As of 8 pm on Thursday, the active cases stood at 52,726. A total of 1,05,602 samples

remaining received the second dose. So far 31,59,780 persons have received their first dose of the Covid vaccine in the state. Another 4,42,954 individuals have received their second dose.

On Thursday, 1,89,358 persons aged 45 years and above were vaccinated at government facilities, whereas in private hospitals 15,866 persons got their shots.

were collected for testing on Thursday, and reports pertaining to 5,531 were awaited. Of the samples, 49.9 per cent belonged to primary contacts and 12.1 per cent to secondary contacts of infected persons.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Covid | Impact Unions say 1,200 staffers infected

Power utilities affected

KDC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

The Coronavirus pandemic has badly attacked staff at the power utilities in the state. Nearly 700 employees working in TS Transco, TS Genco, the northern and southern distribution companies (TSSPDCL and TSNPDCL) have tested positive for Covid so far, as per official statistics.

Data show that 113 employees working in TS Genco, 30 in TS Transco, 328 in TSSPDCL and 300 in TSNPDCL have contracted the Coronavirus from April 1 to 22. However, employee unions in the power utilities claim that over 1,200 employees were infected in the Covid second wave. They say the majority of the employees who were infected included engineers and artisans involved in maintenance and power restoration works.

Singareni Collieries is also witnessing increasing

round the clock in shifts to ensure uninterrupted power supply to hospitals, laboratories, residential, commercial and all other sectors. They have to travel and attend duties at ground-level to resolve power supply issues. They face the risk of contracting virus while performing duties.

He said that the corporation had sought vaccination for the power staff in the first phase. "But it was not done," he said. Instructions were issued to power staff to undergo vaccination at hospitals of their convenience.

The increasing cases has created panic among staff and their family members. Members of the Telangana Electricity Engineers Association met Prabhakar Rao on Friday and submitted a representation seeking certain preventive measures to minimise Covid cases in power utilities.

Docs boycott Covid work

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL I DC

HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

offices after signing the attendance register," the association president said.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Dr M. Naresh said "This is an emergency situation, many doctors are exposed to the virus, and there are more chances that these doctors may contract the disease. Another major problem is of wearing the PPE kits. Wearing them causes health problems."

"If doctors get infected, it will lead to a major medical emergency. The government is dodging the health workers' demands. We urge it to concede to our six demands."

The demands are: Quarantine leave; 15 days' leave in the Covid-19 Protocol; 2 Quality PPE Kits; the PPE supplied to the government should be of good quality. 3 Cash incentive of 10 per cent of salary as promised by the government should be given. 4 Accommodation to doctors should be provided by the management for them to take rest after completing duty.

5 Transportation should be provided for doctors during these Covid-19 phase. 6 Hospital ICU beds must be reserved for doctors and their family members.

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LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ONLINE APPLICATION: 14/05/2021 (11:59 P.M.)

Gazette No. GHCMC-52

Dated: 8-04-2021.

No. B/3/2021

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/Special Collector (LA) & Commissioner, GHMC, that a total of 796.77 Sq. Yds land is required in the Hyderabad for public purpose namely Proposed 18M (60') wide Road from Puranapool Gandhi Statue to Bhogida Khaman (Mangalihalli main road).

Therefore it is decided that for the above said project in the Hyderabad land measuring more or less 796.77 Sq. Yds, of Standard measurement, whose detailed description is as following, is proposed for acquisition:

Sl. Premises No. Type of Title Extent in Sq. Yds Name & Address of person interested Boundaries Trees Structures

No. No. Land Description Area in Sq. Yds. No. Type No. Area in Sq. Yds.

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

As per sketch

1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

15 13-1-7491D - - 25.29 R. Naval Singh - - - - - - - -

16 13-1-7491/A - - 41.61 Shirav Veer Singh - - - - - - - -

17 13-1-7491 - - 22.62 Kamal Singh S/o Danraj Singh - - - - - - - -

18 13-1-7491/A - - 43.97 Kishore Singh - - - - - - - -

19 13-1-7491 - - 86.59 Manohar Singh - - - - - - - -

20 13-1-7481&3 - - 44.36 Rajan Singh - - - - - - - -

21 13-1-74

SHORT TAKES

POLLS WILL BECOME 'SUPER SPREADER': UTTAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

State Congress president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Friday sought the intervention of Governor Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan for the cancellation of the municipal polls scheduled on April 30. He warned that the elections would become 'super spreaders' of Covid-19.

He said that the process should be stopped now, and resumed when the pandemic subsides. The Governor's intervention had been sought since the State Election Commission had refused to stop the process despite the urging of senior leaders. The way the SEC was conducting the elections was "unbecoming and highly biased." Uttam Kumar Reddy said that the SEC has done the pre-poll preparations in a hurried manner while the Covid-19 second wave was sweeping across the state. Even the Supreme Court had called it a "health emergency," he pointed out. He said the SEC was not meeting political delegations.

He alleged the SEC was following the directives of its "political masters" to complete the polling on April 30 as they wanted to ensure that the voters are not influenced by the adverse result in the Nagarjunasagar by-election which would be out on May 2. He pointed out that the High Court of Telangana has observed that SEC was the right body to take decision on the elections as the number of infections and deaths were on the rise. However, instead of taking a decision by itself, the SEC referred the matter to the government.

He pointed out that the health minister had described the pandemic situation as "very severe" but the government has asked the SEC to continue the poll process.

On the other hand, the TRS government has failed miserably in strengthening medical infrastructure. Private hospitals are fleecing poor patients. While treatment to Covid is free in Andhra Pradesh, it was not included in Aarogyasri in Telangana state, he said.

"Not a single ventilator bed is available in any government or private hospital. There is a severe shortage of oxygen and vaccines," the Congress leader said. Despite this, the government was rushing to hold the elections.

DELAY IN TESTS, RESULTS SPREADING COVID VIRUS FASTER

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS I DC
ADILABAD, APRIL 23

Many people are hesitant to come to the PHCs for Covid tests in view of the soaring temperatures. Even for those who come in, their patience is being tested with the delay in the tests. Also, a shortage of rapid test kits is felt at various places.

These are leading to an increase in the number of Covid positive cases and faster spread of the virus in the old Adilabad district. Several people with symptoms complained about the huge delay in tests at PHCs and in giving the results.

The medical staff is spending considerable time collecting names from the people who visit the test centres and this also delays the process. Many elderly persons are going back home without getting tested, unable to bear with the strain and weather conditions for long. There are snags in conducting the RTPCR tests at RIMS, Adilabad. In some places, the medical staff is asking the people to wait till as many as 50 people gather, and then would collect samples. There are also allegations that some medical staff are asking for bribe to give the test result immediately, at the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS).

Many asymptomatic people are unknowingly transmitting the Covid virus to others. People are freely moving and mingling without taking Covid precautions on assumption they were not affected by the pandemic. Many who are already affected by the virus but did not get test results yet as positive are carelessly moving around among the public. Some political leaders have criticised alleged negligence on part of the medical staff in conducting the tests and the delay in giving the results.

It is also noted that there is no proper supervision of the medical staff involved in the medical tests at PHCs and urban health centers.

Only TRS fights from all seats

Rebels from all parties remain in the fray, file papers as independents

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

THE TRS has fielded candidates for all 43 wards in the Siddipet municipality, the BJP could put up candidates for 40 wards and Congress 30. The other parties which fielded candidates include CPI and CPI one each, AIMIM 4 and 116 Independents.

Commission (TSEC). In the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GVMC), the TRS and the BJP fielded candidates for all the 66 divisions, the Congress 65, the CPI and the CPIM 16. There were 52 candidates from other registered parties and 237 Independents in

the fray. In Khammam Municipal Corporation (KMC), the TRS has fielded 57 candidates and allotted three divisions to the CPI. The BJP could field candidates for 47 divisions and the Congress 48. Among the others, CPM fielded nine candidates, Telugu Desam eight,

Independents 67 and recognised parties in other states and other registered parties with TSEC 12.

The TRS has fielded candidates for all 43 wards in the Siddipet municipality, the BJP could put up candidates for 40 wards and Congress 30. The other parties which fielded candidates include CPI and CPI one each, AIMIM 4 and 116 Independents.

In Nakrekal municipality of the 20 wards, the TRS fielded candidates for all of them. The BJP could put up 14 and the Congress 16. Candidates of other parties who filed nominations include the

CPM three, TD one, other registered parties 14 and Independents 25.

TRS candidates filed nominations for all 27 wards of the Jadhcherla municipality. The Congress managed 25 and the BJP 22. Others who filed nominations include CPI three, CPM one, AIMIM seven and Independents 27.

Atchampet and Kothur municipalities are exceptions, where the three major parties have fielded candidates for all the wards. Atchampet municipality has 20 wards and Kothur 12. In Atchampet, 6 Independents are in fray while in Kothur there are 11 Independents.



Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on hunger strike at Nakrekal market yard on Friday. — DC

Will go on fast again for farmers: Venkat Reddy

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Friday sat on hunger strike at Nakrekal market yard, demanding that the government purchase paddy from the procurement centres in the erstwhile Nalgonda district.

He said that responding to his hunger strike Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar had

agreed to purchase paddy from farmers.

The MP said that CS had assured the purchase of 10,000 paddy bags per day and would also arrange manpower in this regard.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Venkat Reddy said that he would once again sit on an indefinite fast if the government did not keep its promise. He said that the farmers had been waiting

for a month for the government to purchase the produce.

The government, however, had been ignoring them after the Nagarjunasagar bypoll was concluded on April 16. He said that paddy brought to market yards was damaged due to unseasonal rainfall. As promised by the government, it should purchase every grain from the farmers, Venkat Reddy demanded.

Bandi thanks PM for arranging O2 supplies

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Bandi Sanjay Kumar

who were affected with Covid but the state ministers were levelling allegations against the Centre.

He said the Prime Minister was holding a review with officials to take measures to control the pandemic.

In another statement, former MLC N. Ramchander Rao said that it was unfortunate that TRS leaders were criticising the Centre for the pricing of oxygen. He said the Centre made

it very clear that all those aged above 45 years will be vaccinated for and those above 18 years would be vaccinated from May 1.

He alleged that the state government was trying to cover up its own failures and blaming the Centre. The former MLC said that state government bore the responsibility for the shortage of medical personnel and infrastructure.

At a press meet, former MLA N.V.S.P. Prabhakar accused the state government of hiding the Covid cases and deaths and alleged that it had failed in control of the Covid cases. He said that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao's failure to take the vaccination was an insult.

Mallu: Create action plan to control Covid

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Covid19 patients have been living in panic since they were deprived of ventilators, oxygen cylinders and hospital beds.

The Congress said that IAS, IPS and health officials at the district level should coordinate and provide medicines, oxygen cylinders and ventilators during an emergency. He also demanded postponement of the April 30 civic polls.

Ravi said that the government should form health committees especially in the Hyderabad police limits with a comprehensive action plan.

the Bhagyalakshmi temple at Charminar for the quick recovery of party leader Rahul Gandhi and former prime minister Manmohan Singh, who are down with Covid-19. He challenged ministers K.T. Rama Rao and Etala Rajendar on their "fake figures and hidden facts" regarding Covid19 pandemic situation. He also questioned BJP state president Bandi Sanjay on the Central government's negligence and failure in supplying Covid-19 related equipment.

Earlier on the day, AICC secretary and former MLA S.A. Sampath Kumar performed a maha puja at

SHRADHANJALI



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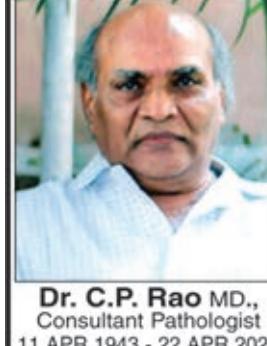
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Inserted by :

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Radhika & Hardeep Singh Monga

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Dr. Shashidhar Cherukuri & Vijaya Nandini

Grandchildren & Great Grandchild

(B/2122/D00010)

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DOD : 26-03-1991

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Ph: 9885155979



DOB : 26-4-1959

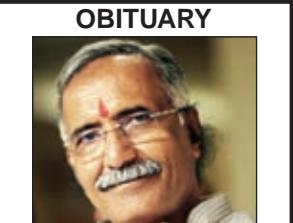
TELUKUNTA RAJKUMAR

S/o Late Telukunta Ramulu Left for heavenly abode on 21 April 2021

Inserted by

T. Sarojini (Mother), T. Amarnath (Brother), T. Shantha (Sister-in-Law) T. Vikas, T. Sruthi, T. Aadhy, T. Vishruth, G. Harish, G. Vaishnavi, G. Arush

Ph: 9885155979



DOB : 26-04-1959 D.O.B. 21-04-2021

"We miss you every moment in our life you are always there in our heart."

Inserted by K. Bharat Palaxmi,

G. Sai Kumar, Heeralal Pandiya, Sunil Upadhyay, Akula Pratap, Nilesh Kumbhar.



A Special place in our hearts is always kept open

Inserted by : Classmates Mahabub College High School 1975-76 - Batch

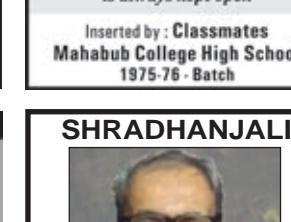


DOB: 13-04-1958 D.O.B: 17-04-2021

"We miss you every moment in our life you are always there in our heart."

Inserted by K. Bharat Palaxmi,

G. Sai Kumar, Heeralal Pandiya, Sunil Upadhyay, Akula Pratap, Nilesh Kumbhar.



Sri UMEDAL DWARKADAS KOTECHA

Father : Rusal Patel Father-in-Law of Koteswari Patel

In Grief

Aarti, Kunjal, Meena, Nitin, Rohit, Rupesh, Gujarati High School, Secunderabad Class of 1994

(S/2122/D00095)



DOB: 24-04-1943 D.O.B: 24-04-2021

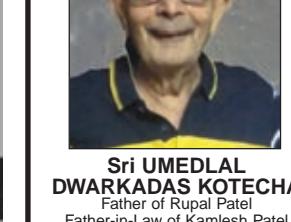
"I Shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever". Psalms 23

Your Memories, Love & Blessings

remind us your presence every moment in our lives.

Fondly remembered by: Bathla Family

Husband - Mohindernath Bathla Sons - Sanjay & Sunil Daughter-In-Laws - Lakshmi & Sonia Grand Children

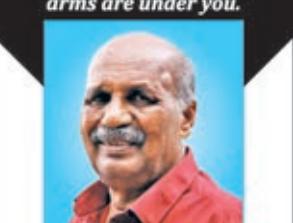
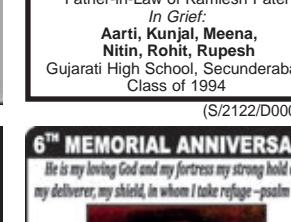


DOB : 24 April 2020

KG Thomas

Mrs Aleymma (Wife)

NAVJEEVAN CHIT FUNDS



DOB: 15-7-1936 D.O.B: 24-4-1999

The eternal God is your refuge and his everlasting arms are under you.

Inserted by:

Mother : K. Sharanya Rani Father : K. Hariswaran Rani

Family Members, Relatives & Friends.



DOB: 6-4-1992 D.O.B: 24-4-2014

You will always be in our hearts because you are still aware in our hearts.

Inserted by:

IN BRIEF

Kumbh returnees must self isolate

Hyderabad: The health department issued an advisory saying that it was mandatory for devotees who participated in Kumbh Mela at Haridwar during the last two and a half weeks, from April 1 to April 17, to be in isolation on their return home. According to the department, the devotees should not come in contact with anyone, including their family members. The department said that the devotees if they were suffering from symptoms like cold, cough, fever and headache to undergo Covid-19 test at the nearest primary healthcare centre. If they had any doubt, they can call the toll-free number 104.

Cyber stalker arrested

Hyderabad: One Chapala Praveen, 22, was arrested by the Rachakonda cybercrime police on Friday for cyber-stalking a girl who had turned down his proposal. Police said Praveen created a fake Instagram ID and sent a friend request to the victim. When she accepted it, Praveen started sending her abusive and threatening messages, the police said. Acting upon a complaint from the victim, the police arrested Praveen.

Man arrested for investment fraud

Hyderabad: The Rachakonda cybercrime police arrested one Pichala Vamsidhar Reddy for an investment fraud. He allegedly approached his victims offering trade with high returns in US dollars through a trading website, 'Insta Global Pay'. Police said Reddy cheated his victim of ₹16 lakh. Based on technical evidence, the police arrested Reddy at KPHB and efforts are being made to arrest the other absconding accused.

APOLLO RELEASES RED BOOK ON COVID PROTOCOLS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

The Apollo Hospitals Group on Friday released a special Covid-19 Red Book, a collection of protocols and processes with best practice guidelines for hospitals, nursing homes and healthcare workers. It summarises guidelines to support big and small healthcare institutions in making quick decisions for diagnosis, treatment and management of Covid and non-Covid cases during the pandemic.

The red book can be downloaded from <http://bit.ly/ApolloRedBook>, Apollo Hospitals Group said.

It includes a set of checklists for every department that will help healthcare organisations negotiate through the complex workload.

"As we face the second wave, healthcare professionals will face challenges in delivering active and effective processes to tackle the rising number of cases coming to the hospitals, continuously evolving restrictions, and new protocols for management of cases. The Red Book will serve as a guide to healthcare institutions in the implementation of responsive practices with roles, structures and processes clearly marked out," Sangita Reddy, joint managing director, Apollo Hospitals Group, said.

The Red Book is part of Project Kavach, a comprehensive strategic approach to the pandemic launched by the Apollo Hospitals Group.

HC raps state for fudging Covid data

**VUJJINI
VAMSHIDHARA I DC**
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Going by the details placed before it by the government that were 'contrary' to the statements of ministers and bureaucrats about medicines and oxygen supply, the Telangana High Court on Friday observed that it was not being candid and not doing enough in dealing with the second wave of Covid-19.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice B Vijayesh Reddy observed: "It appears that the details submitted by the government on Covid testing, availability of beds, oxy-

gen, medicines and mortality rate are a sackful of salt, window-dressing and fudged numbers."

"On the one hand, the secretary of medical and health appeared before the court two days ago and said the hospitals were fully equipped with beds, infrastructure, oxygen and life-saving medicines to treat the infected. On other hand, your health minister says there is a deficiency of more than 120 tonnes of oxygen in the state due to the (unhelpful) attitude of the Union government. Which of these contentions should be trusted? How such a paucity of oxygen and medicines within one day? Is it that the situation became

critical within one day?" Chief Justice Kohli asked the government.

The CJ said the government might be looking at things in terms of revenues and expenses. "But when the life of the citizens of the state is in danger, it should be given utmost importance." The bench was dealing with a batch of petitions related to Covid management.

The court criticised the Centre's stand: "You (Union government) take over the vaccines and medicines manufactured in the state. You don't give to the state what it requires and dole these out to the other states. Where are the citizens of the Telangana state in the

last 10 days, only 21,500 remdesivir vials were distributed to Telangana whereas the demand is very high. We need an answer from the Central government," the CJ said.

The court directed assistant solicitor general Namavarapu Rajeshwara Rao, representing the Centre, to come to court with details immediately. But, post-lunch, additional solicitor general Surya Karan Reddy sought a day's time.

The assistant solicitor general complained that the state government had not appointed a nodal officer as was suggested by the Centre to co-ordinate with Delhi. The court directed the government

cines in government hospitals. Even I came across one such issue, where one person accessed me for medicine (remdesivir and another life-saving drug), which are not available in the hospitals. Even I couldn't help them," Chief Justice Kohli observed.

The court pointed to the flaws in submissions related to RT-PCR tests. It asked why the five-member expert committee did not conduct a meeting in the last two months to suggest the steps to curtail the spread of the virus.

In three hours of virtual adjudication, the court faulted the government for allowing rallies for the civic elections, non-declaration of containment zones and lack of efforts to assuage the migrant workers' concerns, laxity in conducting raids to catch hoarders of life-saving drugs.

Direct Zakat to poor finds takers

Push to bypass organisations

ATHER MOIN I DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

SAUDI CURBS TO DISAPPOINT HAJIS THIS YEAR

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

A contactless drive through facility to perform RT-PCR tests for Covid was launched by Apollo Diagnostics on Friday at Madhapur. Residents from Gachibowli, Kukatpally, Madhapur, KPHB, and Kondapur can avail the facility hassle-free, Apollo Diagnostics said.

The process from registration, sample collection and payment is a touchless and contactless procedure.

Explaining the idea behind setting up a drive through facilities for testing in Hyderabad, Apollo Diagnostics said, "Due to the sudden surge of Covid cases during the second wave, infrastructure pertaining to testing has come under heavy pressure. The state government and private hospitals with testing facilities are overloaded, and unable to handle the growing numbers," it said.

Young reformers of the community have started a campaign called 'Direct Zakat Movement' a few years ago. Founder and convener of the Direct Zakat Movement Mohammed Mansoor Ali said that in the last few years, it was found that institutions were getting huge sums, ranging from a few lakhs to ₹10 crore. "There were instances of misappropriation of money by some of these organisations, and hence the direct Zakat campaign.

"We are not against any organisation serving the community honestly and spending money prudently on genuine causes and maintaining their accounts fairly. However, it is our opinion that it is better to support close relatives financially with the Zakat. With this, we can remove poverty among family members. In Islam, it is permissible to give Zakat to own brothers and sisters if they are eligible."

Arshad Hussain, a reformist, said that with this concept, "we can bring down financial disparities. If we give Zakat to someone directly to help him establish a petty business, he will need no Zakat in future and be capable of giving Zakat to others in a few years."



'100 dead' in TIMS, Gandhi

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

at Gachibowli, and the Gandhi Hospital.

It was reliably learnt that more than 30 deaths occurred at TIMS on Friday, more than one every hour, and most of these deaths were in the wards treating around 600 Covid-19 patients. There

have been constant reports from TIMS that oxygen saturations for many patients was not the case. However, it was reliably learnt that this was indeed the case from multiple sources.

supplying the life-saving gas into the wards, was not being reached. On Thursday, TIMS had 20 deaths from among its patients. TIMS, as is Gandhi, is a Covid-19 only hospital.

Meanwhile, upwards of some 50 deaths were reported from Gandhi on Friday, though officials maintained that this was not the case. Most deaths are attributed to comorbidities – other health conditions a patient may have been suffering from.

Gandhi Hospital, as do other government or private hospitals in the state do not make public the deaths among patients.

Officials maintain that not every death is because of Covid-19 and explain about an elaborate procedure that a committee follows to determine the cause of death of each patient.

Most deaths are attributed to comorbidities – other health conditions a patient may have been suffering from.

DENTISTS SEEK RELIEF DUE TO INCOME LOSS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Telangana Dental Association has sought financial help from the state government in dealing with loss of income due to the second wave of Coronavirus.

The association has written to both Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao and health minister Etela Rajendar that they too must be helped by the state government, just as the state government has extended help to teachers.

In its letter written on Friday, Telangana Dental Association requested the state government to grant them an ex-gratia of ₹10,000 per month for a period of six months, starting from April 2021 onwards.

This would be of immense help to self-employed dentists, who are facing a financial crunch as patients have become scarce. "We are unable to pay rents of clinics and also support our families," the association pointed out.

It said the way it has saved teachers fraternity, the state government should similarly help dentists too.

● **TELANGANA DENTAL**
Association requested the state government to grant them an ex-gratia of ₹10,000 per month for a period of six months, starting from April 2021 onwards.

Reverse migration creates MNREGA work demand

**DURGA PRASAD
SUNKU I DC**
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

Reverse migration from the urban areas to villages during the pandemic has led to an increase in demand for work under MGNREGA, the rural jobs guarantee programme, according to an analysis of data performed by LibTech India, a team of engineers, social workers, and social scientists.

With another round of reverse migration starting during the second wave of the pandemic, the stipulated wage for a worker per day is ₹237 in

the state government to increase the number of work days above 100 under the programme.

According to its report, 'MGNREGA implementation in Telangana for 2020-21', there has been an increase of 507.2 lakh person days in employment for 2020-21 compared to the previous year, marking a 47.4 per cent rise.

Chakradhar Buddha, programme director, LibTech India, said, "In our field visits, we noticed that the full work assigned usually doesn't happen. For instance, the stipulated wage for a worker per day is ₹237 in

Telangana state, and the worker finishes only half the work assigned for that day. Then the worker earns half the wage, or ₹118.5," explained Buddha.

According to the report, workers from the state received ₹2668.2 crore as wages, up 62 per cent over the previous year. They

would have earned an additional ₹1,000 crore if they would have completed the work.

He said that if TS followed the dual muster roll like in AP, the state

could generate more work and increase the income of the workers.



An oxygen tanker is being loaded on to the Indian Air Force's C17 aircraft at Hyderabad, to be flown to the Rourkela Steel Plant in Odisha where it will be filled with the gas. — DC

lives of the people. He said the government was committed to saving lives.

The state government sent two oxygen tankers in a C17

airlifted to Odisha. The process is expected to be completed by April 27 when the state will have secured 150 metric tonnes of LMO.

The minister said liquid oxygen tanks have been set up in 22 government hospitals. There will be no oxygen shortage in the state, he said. Under the directions of the Chief Minister, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, along with senior officers Sunil Sharma, Ali Rizvi, Sarfaraz Ahmed and Preeti Meena oversaw the airlift.

Wing Commanders Chaitanya and Nirjawan from the IAF are coordinating with state government.

Rin Liquid
**INSTANT DISSOLUTION.
INSTANT SHINE.**



99 (incl. of all taxes) for 800ml bottle.
Based on test conducted on select fabric and stains.
Tested select dyes on the fabric under lab condition.
Result may vary according to the amount of chlorine in the water and dyes of the fabric.

QUICK WORK

Move to cut time for journey to Odisha by 3 days

IAF airlifts O2 tankers for filling

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

The Indian Air Force pressed into service two of its heavy-lift C17 'Globemaster' cargo aircraft to fly trucks carrying empty oxygen tanks from Hyderabad to Bhubaneswar where they will be filled with the life-saving gas. Airlifting the trucks will save three days of travel time.

Health minister Etala Rajendar on Friday stated that by airlifting the trucks, the K. Chandrashekhar Rao government had showed that it would not hesitate to make any effort to save the

time.

— DC

IN BRIEF

Star Hospital doc gets online slot

Hyderabad: Dr Lokeswara Rao Sajja, senior consultant cardiothoracic surgeon at Star Hospitals, has been listed in the 'Find Expert MD' website. It is an online big data resource to quickly find top published experts, both MDs and scientists, in specific diseases, medical procedures, and surgeries. These expert listings are for individual patient use without a fee.

BRAHMOTSAV BEGINS AT CHILKUR TEMPLE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

The seven-day Brahmotsavam, an annual affair at the Chilkur Balaji temple, took off on Thursday. There would, however, be no devotees. "We are following all the Covid-19 protocols. That is why we are not allowing any devotee into the temple. Only priests and temple staff will be allowed," Chilkur Balaji temple head priest C.S. Rangarajan told *Deccan Chronicle*. As part of the event, naivedyam would be given to childless women, he said.

NOTIFIED POLLS WERE NEVER PUT OFF: CEO

From Page 1

The SEC is said to have briefed the Governor about various precautions taken by the commission including making social distancing and mask mandatory for voters on polling day. He referred to the Panchayat Raj Act necessitating the SEC to take concurrence of the state government on conducting polls. He explained that the campaign in municipal polls was very localised.

When contacted, Partha Sarathi said he was constantly monitoring with collectors and top police officials on whether or not the candidates were following Covid regulations. There are no public meetings, he said, adding that the campaign would end three days before polls instead of the regular 48 hours.

"Elections are held in West Bengal also with all precautions and there are no precedents of elections being postponed after notification was issued," he added.

AP RECORDS 11,766 NEW COVID CASES, 38 DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 23

With no let up in daily surge in Covid-19 infections, Andhra Pradesh registered 11,766 and 38 deaths in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities reported on Friday that out of 45,581 samples tested, 11,766 persons were infected with Covid-19. Out of a total number of 1,58,80,750 samples tested so far in the state, 10,09,228 persons were found infected with the virus and of them, 9,27,418 were recovered while 74,231 are still active with the virus.

Among the daily cases, five districts crossed 1,000 mark while the remaining districts too crossed 100 mark. Chittoor continued to be the worst affected with 1,885 followed by 1,593 in Guntur, 1,201 in Anantapur, 1,180 in Kurnool, 1,052 in Srikakulam, 949 in Nellore, 910 in Visakhapatnam, 831 in Krishna, 796 in East Godavari, 448 in Vizianagaram, 370 in Prakasam, 361 in Kadapa and 190 in West Godavari.

Chittoor reported highest number of cumulative active cases at 11,356, followed by 9,247 in Srikakulam, 7,806 in East Godavari, 7,094 in Kurnool, 6,931 in Guntur, 5,984 in Nellore, 5,958 in Visakhapatnam, 5,957 in Krishna, 4,308 in Anantapur, 4,142 in Prakasam, 2,728 in Vizianagaram, 1,745 in Kadapa and 975 in West Godavari.

Nellore recorded the highest number of daily deaths at six followed by five in Chittoor, four each in East Godavari, Krishna, Kurnool, Prakasam and Srikakulam, three in Visakhapatnam and two each in Guntur and Vizianagaram. Death toll rose to 7,579.

The state health authorities discharged 4,441 patients after recovery.

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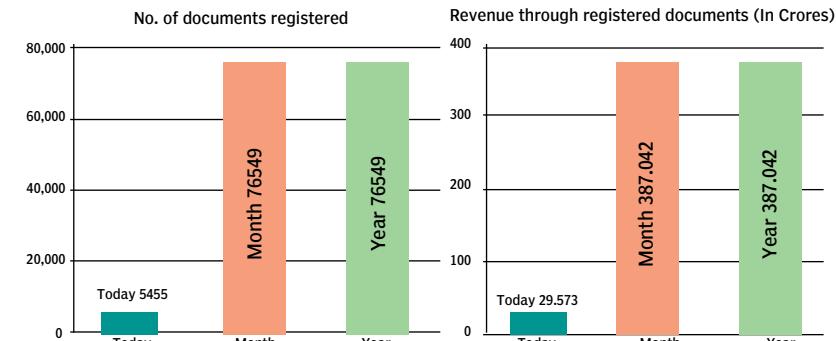
Safe swimming

Inflatable baby pools kept for sale on the roadside as demand rises in the summer. Many parents do not want to send their children to swimming pools due to the spike in Covid-19 cases. — R. PAVAN

Property sales earn TS ₹387 cr in just 15 days

TS expects to earn ₹12K-cr from stamps, registration

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

STATISTICS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2021-2022**Documents Registered & Revenue 2021-2022**

both agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. But, under the new system, daily registrations average between 4,900 and 5,500 just from the non-agriculture property sector alone.

Registration officials said that people were in a hurry to register their properties as the

second wave of Covid-19 has started hitting. They fear that if the Centre imposes a lockdown after the four states' election results are announced on May 2, they will then have to wait till after the lockdown is lifted to register their properties. Another aspect is that

realtors and builders are trying to close registrations of their properties before the government revises the market value of lands, whether agricultural or non-agricultural. Otherwise, they will have to pay a higher percentage of value towards registering their properties.

TECHIE TURNS CRICKET BOOKIE AGENT, ARRESTED

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

From Page 1

An electronic engineer turned bookie's agent who was facilitating cricket betting on a Telegram channel was arrested by the LB Nagar special Operations Team (SOT) police, who seized ₹30 lakh from him.

Policeman said the accused, Bantu Rajesh, completed his engineering in 2015. He started placing bets on cricket matches but later became a bookie's agent.

During questioning, he told the police that the betting ring organisers had created a Telegram channel named 'Ferrari Line' which had nearly 15 lakhs members. They placed bets on different cricket leagues including the IPL.

AP IT MINISTER TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, APRIL 23

From Page 1

AP industries and IT minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy announced on Friday through Twitter that he has tested positive for novel Coronavirus.

"I have mild symptoms & upon testing, my report came as COVID positive. I am taking the required treatment & currently in isolation. Those who have met me in last one week, please follow Covid protocols, get tested & take care," he tweeted.

The minister had on Thursday attended a meeting to review oxygen supply across the state.

writer, he alleged.

Making matter more serious, the owner of the house in the name of Sirisha, who produced just a voter ID as proof of identity and the registering authority, for reasons best known to him, did not insist on the Aadhaar card.

The complainant alleged that the photograph of Sirisha is different from the photo in the voter ID and there were a lot of variations in the signatures of the purchaser. It is a clear case of impersonation as the original Sirisha did not come to India, he claimed.

The phone number of Sirisha shown in the registration fee challan belongs to a document

writer, he alleged.

Making matter more serious, the owner of the house in the name of Sirisha, who produced just a voter ID as proof of identity and the registering authority, for reasons best known to him, did not insist on the Aadhaar card.

Within days of registering the property in her name, the so-called Sirisha executed a gift deed in the name of a person called Srihari who the complainant alleged was a 'benami'.

Society president Ravindranath demanded that it should be probed if both were eligible to conclude a gift deed as per the income-tax laws.

Northeast colonies seek Rajnath help as Army shuts down roads

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

From Page 1

The Federation of North Eastern Colonies of Secunderabad (FNECS) on Friday wrote to defence minister Rajnath Singh about the closure of another public road, this time leading to Yaprak, in the Secunderabad Cantonment area by the Local Military Authority (LMA).

C.S. Chandrasekhar, general secretary, FNECS, wrote: "Almost 20 roads have been closed in Secunderabad by the LMA. Some of these roads have been closed since 2013, as we have informed earlier. Others

issued by the ministry of defence (No 14(9)/2018-D (Q&C) dated September 4, 2018)"

Chandrasekhar mentioned that the road closures were in violation of orders issued by the Army headquarters. It also stated that the CEO of the Secunderabad Cantonment Board had listed out the roads that were still closed despite the reopening orders.

"These public roads were lifelines for residents of the area for over a century and a half. Their closure has cut off access for residents of north-eastern Hyderabad from the rest of the city, extended delays in commutes, led to extra expenditure on fuel, and led to increased congestion and accidents on the few roads which are still open," Chandrasekhar wrote to the defence minister.

"It is incomprehensible to us how the ministry can continue to turn a blind eye to this blatant violation of its own orders, its own SOPs, and, indeed, of the Cantonments Act itself, and leave over 10 lakh affected residents to fend for themselves. Officials of Secunderabad Cantonment Board such as its CEO and its Board Members, and also the Defence Estates Officer, are also well aware of this illegal closure," Chandrasekhar wrote.

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HC: SHOW DATA OF REPLACEMENT SAPLINGS IN TS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

The Telangana High Court on Friday directed the roads and buildings and the forest departments to submit photographs and details of saplings which were planted in lieu of those that were felled for road widening from Suryapet to Siddipet via Jangoan. In 2016, as part of widening the road, 2,083 trees that were more than 100 years old were indiscriminately uprooted. Challenging this, Suryapet resident Yarala Indrasen Reddy had filed a PIL before the High Court in 2017.

The court had directed the roads and buildings to deposit money with the forest department to plant saplings to replace those that had been chopped. The court had said that in place of the 2,083 trees uprooted, double the number of plants should be grown. The PIL remained pending and came up for hearing on Friday. A division bench headed by Chief Justice Hima Kohli directed the departments to produce the evidence to show that the saplings had been planted, and their age now.

ACB ARRESTS TD LEADER OVER IRREGULARITIES

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 23

Former MLA and Telugu Desam leader Dhulipalli Narendra Kumar was arrested and jailed by the state anti-corruption bureau on Friday over allegations of serious financial and other irregularities in the Guntur-based Sangam Dairy.

An ACB team swooped down on Narendra's house at Chintalapudi village in Ponnur mandal along with a large number of policemen in the early hours of the day effected the arrest and brought him to Vijayawada.

Narendra Kumar is chairman of the Sangam Dairy, a post that had been bestowed on him by TD leader Chandrababu Naidu while as chief minister of undivided AP in 2010. The ACB has filed a case against him under Sections 408, 409, 418, 420, 45, 471, and 120b of the IPC.

The TD government had converted the Sangam Dairy into a mutually aided cooperative society (MACS) and the new entity was given complete ownership of its properties, skipping counter-check by the cooperative department. Taking advantage of the lack of supervision by the Cooperative department, Narendra allegedly minted money from the dairy.

The dairy was set up on a 77-acre area. Narendra allegedly made false certificates about the land and took a loan of ₹116 crore by keeping the land as security.

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Fire personnel on the alert at AP's Covid care centres

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 23

Fire service personnel in Andhra Pradesh are put on high alert at Covid hospitals and care-centres to ensure avoiding mishaps of the kind that took place in Maharashtra a day ago.

As the Covid caseload is high and large numbers of infected patients are being admitted to care centres and hospitals, the power consumption will be more. Medical oxygen use will also be high in these facilities. This may result in electric short circuit and leakage, it is feared.

THE FIREMEN have been issued guidelines and asked to get details of health facilities in respective districts.

ity of adequate ventilation at health centres to release smoke and avoid choking in case of a fire.

The fire personnel would give the phone numbers of nearest fire stations to the managements of the health centres. These centres will need to identify alternative health facilities in the vicinity in case a mishap happens and patients need be shifted.

Firemen would keep PPE kits ready for wear and to fight the fire.

Regional fire officer G. Srinivasulu said, "We have issued a series of instructions to our personnel so that they will respond to any fire mishaps promptly."

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
Superintending Engineer (W.R.C.B.) CTN No.: 2/SE/T/S/2021-22
Dated: 19/04/2021
Name of work: Construction of Four Counting Complex at Nalgonda District. Amount of Estimate Contract Value: Rs. 706.60 Lakhs
Tenderers can download the tender schedules for the above works from emarketplace i.e. <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> from 22/04/2021 at 5.30 PM onwards. The last date of receipt of tenders is on or before 03/05/2021 up to 3.30 PM. Further details are available at e-procurement marketplace i.e. <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Superintending Engineer (R&B) Region, Nalgonda

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER MAHANADI PROJECT, RAIPUR (C.G.) NATIONAL OPEN COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT (Two-Envelope Bidding Process with e-Procurement)
e-PROCUREMENT REQUEST FOR BIDS eProcurement Portal: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>
CORRIGENDUM NO. 2
In Tender ID No. 2021_WRCWB_624787/_RFB No. 19/SAC/2020-21/Rudri/Drip-II Dated 30.03.2021 G.No. 60005 and In Tender ID No. 2021_WRCWB_624791/_RFB No. 20/SAC/2020-21/ Rudri/Drip-II Dated 30.03.2021 G.No. 60006. Detail amendments is upload in (<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>) Sd/- Executive Engineer, E&M H.E.M. Division Rudri for Chief Engineer Mahanadi Project Water Resources Department Raipur G-60310/5

भारत सरकार Government of India परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग Department of Atomic Energy क्रम एवं मंड़ा निवेदन Directorate of Purchase & Stores संदर्भ/Ref : DPS/CPU/09/D1/1279/19-20/230 Date: 08-04-2021 e-Tender Notice

SHORT TAKES
'UK VARIANT LIKELY BEHIND SURGE IN DELHI'

New Delhi, April 23: The current wave of the Coronavirus pandemic in Delhi could have been fuelled by the UK variant as its prevalence in genomes sequenced nearly doubled from the second to the last week of March, Sujeev Singh, director of the National Centre for Disease Control, said on Friday.

Speaking at a webinar, 'Genome Sequencing of SARS-CoV-19', Singh said the UK variant of Coronavirus is also dominant in Punjab.

In Delhi, there are primarily two types of variants — B.1.617 and the UK strain — found in the genome sequenced samples, the NCDC director said.

The B.1.617 variant of Coronavirus is also known as the double mutant strain.

The UK variant was found in 28 per cent of samples in the second week of March.

In the last week of the month, 50 per cent of samples had this variant, Singh said.

"If we try to correlate, the surge we are observing in Delhi, it directly correlates to the type of variant which we are observing," he said.

MAMATA: CENTRE DIVERTING OXYGEN FROM BENGAL

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, APRIL 23

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday accused the Centre of diverting tonnes of oxygen from the state to others, ruled by the BJP, like Uttar Pradesh after she skipped Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with other states' CMs on Covid-19.

At Durgapur in Burdwan West the Trinamul Congress supremo alleged, "Oxygen and medicines are unavailable here in the market. The oxygen, which was being supplied by SAIL to our state, is now being diverted to UP. Thus, the chain in Bengal is taken away to create scarcity of oxygen here. We have fixed the total oxygen, which is consumed at the industrial units, for its use in medical purpose. That means we have taken over the industrial oxygen for health purpose."

She said, "As a result, we were able to arrange 5000 cylinders yesterday. Altogether we have 20,000 cylinders in stock now. I have also spoken to another for providing us the oxygen supply because the central government wants to kill Bengal every possible way. Where would I get my share of oxygen from since SAIL has been directed to supply it to UP? I also need to look into it. How can one state's share be given to another? If there is a need, no discrimination should be made. I also have no objection in that case."

The Chief Minister's grievance assumes significance as the state government stated, "Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Department, Govt. of India recently on 21st April, 2021 allotted 200 MT of oxygen from different plants located in West Bengal to outside the state. As per the current patient load and the rising trend of the infections, it is expected that the consumption level in West Bengal will radically rise to roughly 450 MT per day in the next couple of weeks."

Delhi: 25 Ganga Ram hosp. patients die as need for oxygen gets frantic

More than 500 patients, including 150 on high flow oxygen support admitted in the hosp

New Delhi, April 23: Twenty-five of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital's "sickest" Covid-19 patients died in 24 hours and the lives of 60 more hung in precarious balance, officials said on Friday, as the scramble for oxygen got increasingly frantic in hospitals across the national capital.

Sources said low pressure oxygen could be the likely cause of the deaths in Ganga Ram, one of the city's biggest and most high-profile hospitals where healthcare staff was reduced to manually ventilating patients in its ICU and emergency department.

The hospital announced the deaths shortly after 8.00 am.

After the unprecedented crisis of the morning, an oxygen tanker did reach Ganga Ram in Central Delhi at 9.20 am but it was enough to last up to about five hours depending on consumption, an official at Ganga Ram said.

"It is wrong to say the deaths occurred due to oxygen shortage. We provided oxygen to patients manually when the pressure dipped in the ICU," SGRH chairman Dr D.S. Rana said.

More than 500 Coronavirus patients, including around 150 on high flow oxygen support, are admitted in his hospital.

"Ventilators and BiPAP machines are not working effectively. Lives of another 60 'sickest' patients are at risk. Major crisis likely," a senior official at the hospital said.

The oxygen emergency was mirrored at the Max Hospitals as well.

Though no deaths were reported, Max Healthcare sent out an SOS on Twitter at 7.43 am, saying that Max Smart and Max Hospital Saket had less than an hour of oxygen left for about 700 patients admitted.

Indian Spinal Injuries Centre in Vasant Kunj also posted on Twitter at 4.20 pm that it was left with only one hour of oxygen and asked for help at the earliest.

A senior official of the Batra Hospital said the oxygen situation at their facility is extremely poor. Sources at the Holy Family hospital also said that they had received emergency oxygen supply from the Delhi government but the "stock can last for six hours". Meanwhile, Dwarka-located Aakash Healthcare managed to refill their cylinders through small vendors across the city.

St Stephen's hospital in Tis Hazari also said they had received a oxygen tanker in the morning.

Faced with a staff shortage and resource crunch, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences also discontinued contact tracing of exposed healthcare workers and quarantine of asymptomatic contacts.

Only symptomatic healthcare workers (HCWs) will be tested and only those testing positive will be isolated and managed as per the clinical condition.

— PTI



Mass cremation of Covid-19 victims at Old Seemapuri Crematorium as Coronavirus cases surge across the country, in New Delhi on Friday. — PTI

Maha: 14 Covid patients dead in hospital ICU fire

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, APRIL 23

who have serious injuries. According to the sources, the cause of fire seems to be a short circuit in an air conditioning unit of the hospital.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray expressed grief over the incident. He directed the administration to make arrangements for the treatments of those people who were taking the treatments at Vijay Vallabh Hospital.

"The cause of the fire should be investigated properly. The administration has been instructed to see whether the appropriate fire safety measures were taken in the hospital and conduct a proper inquiry in it," Thackeray said.

Surendra Singh Raj of Satyamev Jayate, an NGO based in Vasai and Virar, alleged that most of hospitals including this hospital

tal in Vasai and Virar did not have fire safety equipment, fire alarm and smoke detectors.

Relatives of the victims reached the hospital soon after they got to know of the incident and demanded that stringent action be taken against those responsible for the tragedy.

TV pictures showed the smoke-filled ICU in a disarray after the blaze, with the ceiling falling off in some places, beds and other furniture strewn around and kin of the deceased wailing outside the hospital.

In his tweet in Marathi, the state home minister said, "A fire broke out in the intensive care unit of Vijay Vallabh Hospital in Virar, killing 13 patients. The incident is very unfortunate and painful. A heartfelt tribute to the victims of the accident!"

Under the scheme, additional 5 kg wheat and rice along with 1 kg pulses to each family per month was provided to beneficiaries registered under the National Food Security Act (NFS). But this year, only grains will be given.

"We will provide 5-kg additional food grains for free to PDS beneficiaries under the PMGKAY for two months — May and June. This time, we are not providing pulses under this scheme," food and public distribution secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said.

About 80 lakh tonnes of food grains will be required to meet the demand for two months. The move, in line with the Prime Minister's commitment to the poor, will cost the exchequer over ₹26,000 crore, he added including on account of interstate transportation of food grains, he added.

— PTI

Govt resumes free foodgrain services

New Delhi, April 23:

The government on Friday decided to resume providing free food grains to the poor in May and June to help them tide over the economic hardship in the second wave of the Coronavirus pandemic, officials said.

"We will provide 5-kg additional food grains for free to PDS beneficiaries under the PMGKAY for two months — May and June. This time, we are not providing pulses under this scheme," food and public distribution secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said.

The Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY) was announced in 2020 for three months till July and later extended till November to combat the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the poor.

— PTI

Under the scheme, additional 5 kg wheat and rice along with 1 kg pulses to each family per month was provided to beneficiaries registered under the National Food Security Act (NFS). But this year, only grains will be given.

Free grains — which will be distributed on the same pattern as earlier — will be given to 80 crore beneficiaries. The free grains will be over and above the monthly entitlement under the National Food Security Act (NFS), he said.

About 80 lakh tonnes of food grains will be required to meet the demand for two months. The move, in line with the Prime Minister's commitment to the poor, will cost the exchequer over ₹26,000 crore, he added including on account of interstate transportation of food grains, he added.

— PTI

NOT STOPPING HCs FROM HEARING COVID CASES: SC

PARMOD KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

Peered over its criticism on taking suo motu cognizance of the worsening Covid situation and gaps in its management, the Supreme Court on Friday said that it did not stop the High Courts from hearing Covid related cases or demand of transferring them to itself.

Apparently displeased over its criticism, by a section of senior lawyers, based on the "perception", that top court after taking suo motu cognizance of the prevailing "health emergency" will transfer to itself all the Covid related matters being heard by the HCs, a bench comprising Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde, Justice L. Nageswara Rao and Justice S. Ravindra Bhat said, "You have imputed motives to us without reading the order."

The hearing was adjourned to April 23, 2021, as Centre needed time to file its response to notice on the suo motu proceedings that was issued yesterday (April 22, 2021).

The court accepted senior lawyer Harish Salve's request seeking to recuse from being amicus curiae to assist the court in the matter.

The court had on Thursday (April 22) appointed Salve as amicus curiae in the matter. The court had said that on Friday it will hear Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Salve only.

Pointing to Supreme Court Bar Association, President, Vikas Singh, Justice Rao said, "You have read the order. Is there any intention to transfer the case?" Even before reading the order, there was criticism about something which was not there in order. This is how the institution is being destroyed."

KERALA: CPM CALLS FOR STIR ON JAB POLICY

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 23

The ruling CPM in Kerala has decided to organise protest against Centre's new vaccine policy even as the state on Friday yet again recorded biggest single day spike with 28,477 cases. The total number of active cases in the state has gone up to 1.60 lakh.

At a press conference here, CPM acting secretary A. Vijayaraghavan said that his party has decided to hold demonstrations across the state on April 28. As part of the protest, party workers will stand outside their homes holding placards against Centre's vaccine policy which places huge financial burden on the states besides giving a free hand to the companies to charge at will.

At the prescribed rate of ₹400 per vaccine, the state would need a whopping ₹1,300 crore to provide free vaccine to the designated population. He said the new vaccine policy was a declaration of war against the people of the country. The CPM has appealed to party workers, sympathisers and fellow travellers to contribute liberally towards the Chief Minister's Disaster Relief Fund (CMDRF).

Kerala records biggest single day rise

Meanwhile, 1,30,617 samples were tested across the state on Friday and the test positivity rate was recorded as 27.78 percent. The state reported 27 deaths taking the death toll due to Covid-19 to 5,055.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said restrictions amounting to lockdown would be enforced on Saturday and Sundays. All government, private and commercial establishments will remain closed on April 24 and 25. However, essential services will function as usual.

DCGI nod for hepatitis drug for virus

New Delhi, April 23:

Drug firm Zydus Cadila on Friday said it has received restricted emergency use approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for the use of 'Virafin', PegIFN in treating moderate Covid-19 infection in adults, Zydus Cadila said in a regulatory filing.

Covid-19.

The company has received restricted emergency use approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for the use of 'Virafin', PegIFN in treating moderate Covid-19 infection in adults, Zydus Cadila said in a regulatory filing.

Earlier in the month, the company had sought approval from the DCGI for the additional indication of hepatitis drug Pegylated Interferon Alpha-2b (PegIFN) in treating moderate Covid-19 infection in adults, Zydus Cadila said in a regulatory filing.

Zydus Cadila said the company has received restricted emergency use approval from the DCGI for the use of 'Virafin', PegIFN in treating moderate Covid-19 infection in adults, Zydus Cadila said in a regulatory filing.

in a regulatory filing. PegIFN has very well-established safety with multiple doses in chronic Hepatitis B and C patients for many years.

A single dose subcutaneous regimen of the antiviral Virafin will make the treatment more

convenient for the patients, the filing said.

When administered early on during Covid, Virafin will help patients recover faster and avoid much of the complications.

It will be available on the prescription of a medical specialist for use in a hospital/institutional setup, Zydus Cadila said.

The fact that we are able to offer a therapy which significantly reduces the viral load

when given early on can help in better disease management.

It comes at a much-needed time for patients and we will continue to provide them access to critical therapies in this battle against Covid-19," Cadila Healthcare MD Sharvil Patel said.

Shares of Cadila Healthcare, the listed entity of the Zydus Group, closed at ₹571.20 per scrip on BSE, up 3.43 percent from its previous close.

— PTI

RESCUE OPS

IAF has swung into action to airlift oxygen containers, medicines

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

Amid reports of shortage of oxygen in the hospitals during the second wave of Covid-19 across the country, Armed Forces Medical Services has decided to import oxygen generation plants and containers from Germany to cater to the shortage.

Some 23 mobile oxygen generation plants are being airlifted from Germany. These will be deployed in military hospitals catering to the Covid patients. These oxygen generating plants are expected to reach within a week.

Each plant has a capacity to produce 40 litres of oxygen per minute and 2,400 litres an hour. At this rate it can cater to 20-25 patients round the clock. The advantage of these plants is that they are easily portable.

Earlier this week, Defence

minister Rajnath Singh had directed the Armed Forces and other stakeholders to go ahead with procurement of critical medical requirements under emergency powers of procurement. As per the orders issued on Friday, Director General Medical Services (Army/Navy/Air Force) has been sanctioned emergency procurement powers of ₹5 crore, Maj Gen rank medical officers ₹3 crore and Brigadier rank medical officers ₹2 crore.

This is a pro-active measure taken by defence ministry to enable AFMS to provide medical services to the personnel of the Armed Forces as well as aid the civil administration. Armed forces hospitals are also seeing a rush due to the second wave of Covid-19.

In Delhi, Indian Army's Base Hospital Delhi Cantt has been converted into an exclusive Covid facility for

238 more doctors. Indian Air Force (IAF) has also swung into action by carrying out sorties from various parts of the country to airlift oxygen containers, cylinders, essential medicines, equipment required for setting up and sustaining Covid hospitals and facilities in the fight against fresh surge in Covid-19 cases.

The IAF Transport aircraft and helicopters have been pressed into service.

These include transport aircraft C-17, C-130J, IL-76, An-32 and Avro. Chinook and Mi-17 helicopters are on standby. Tasks undertaken include airlift of doctors and nursing staff from Kochi, Mumbai, Vizag and Bangalore for various hospitals at Delhi.

The C-17 and IL-76 aircraft of IAF have started airlifting big empty oxygen tanks from their place of use to the filling stations across the country to speed

up the distribution of much needed oxygen. It is to be noted that IAF is only transporting empty oxygen tanks to filling stations in other states to save time on one way and they come back through road or railways. This is because it is not safe to fly tanks filled with liquid oxygen.

In addition to this, the C-17 and IL-76 have transported large quantity of load comprising big safety cabinets and autoclave machines for setting up of an additional Covid test facility at Leh. The IAF transport and helicopter assets are on standby to be deployed at short notice.

Last year, in the initial days of COVID-19 outbreak, the IAF ran several sorties to deliver medicines, medical and other essential supplies required to combat the pandemic as well as brought back stranded Indian nationals from abroad.

SHORT TAKES

MODI ENDS
BENGAL
CAMPAIGNRAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, APRIL 23

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday wrapped up his long campaign for the Assembly Election in West Bengal in a virtual address with an advice to the voters that is likely to trigger a speculation in the political circle about whether the remaining two phases - seventh and eighth - of polls would be clubbed due to an explosion of Covid-19 cases in the state.

Mr Modi, who had kickstarted his poll campaign on February 7 from Haldia in East Midnapore, toured the state nearly 12 times since then and addressed two rallies on April 17 during the fifth phase of polls in his last visit here, suggested to the people to go out "only once" to exercise their franchise though the polls are scheduled on April 26 and 29.

"Now only two phases of polls are left to be held in Bengal. From the perspective of polls, it would have been my last rally if I could have come to you physically for thanksgiving. Virtually anyway, it is my last campaign rally also," the PM said in his virtual rally for the voters of Kolkata, Birbhum, Malda and Murshidabad.

Keeping the rising Covid-19 cases in mind, he observed, "So far people of Bengal cast their votes very well. The polling has been so heavy that can be an inspiration for the nation. I appeal to you to continue this in the next phases also. Though only two phases are left, you have to go out only once to cast your votes. You will cast your votes while ensuring that you follow the Covid-19 protocol."

NEWS OF HER
DEATH SHOCKS
SUMITRADC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, APRIL 23

Former Lok Sabha speaker and senior BJP leader Sumitra Mahajan was on Friday shocked when misinformation on her death was circulated in social and other media, leading to pouring of condolence messages mourning her 'demise'.

According to Ms Mahajan's office, a WhatsApp message ran the fake news about her death late on Thursday evening inspiring other social media networks as well as some mainline visual media to run the story.

Later, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor and BJP national spokesman Sambit Patra posted condolence messages mourning her death in their Twitter accounts, leaving Ms Mahajan, who was currently recuperating from fever in a private hospital in Indore in Madhya Pradesh, shell-shocked.

Her younger son Mandar Mahajan later issued a statement saying that her mother was very much in good health. "My mother is fine. She has even tested negative for coronavirus," a video-recorded statement by Mr Mahajan said. According to the former speaker's public relations officer Rajesh Agrawal, Mr Tharoor rang up Mr Mahajan expressing his regret over his wrong tweet on the former LS speaker.

AVALANCHE IN
UTTARAKHAND'S
CHAMOLI DISTRICT

Gopeshwar (U'khand), April 23: An avalanche occurred in an area close to the Niti valley in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on Friday.

Information was received about a part of a glacier collapsing beyond the Sumna Chawki near Malari in the Niti valley. Border Roads Organisation (BRO) officials, who were on their way to the spot, said.

No contact has so far been established with the area due to heavy snowfall, they added.

A BRO official confirmed the sliding down of a glacier in the area, where labourers are engaged in road-construction work.

A BRO OFFICIAL confirmed the sliding down of a glacier in the area, where labourers are engaged in road-construction work.



1) Cremation of Covid-19 victims at Nigambodh Ghat Crematorium in New Delhi on Friday.

2) Disposed PPE kits after being used in Covid-19 bodies' cremation at Nigambodh Ghat crematorium in New Delhi on Friday.

3) Health workers and family members, wearing protective suits, carry the body of a person who died of Covid-19, at Cremation Ground in Jammu on Friday.

4) Family members and relatives bury a Covid-19 victim, amid a surge in coronavirus cases, at a burial ground in New Delhi on Friday.

- PTI

HIGH PRAISE A-G congratulates Chief Justice of India for steering the court during the pandemic in March

I leave with the satisfaction that I did my best: Bobde

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde on Friday said that he is leaving the top court with a satisfaction that he did his best in leading the institution and leaves with "happiness, goodwill and very fond memories."

"I leave with the satisfaction that I did my best. I hand over the baton to Justice Ramana who will, I am sure, very ably lead the court," CJI said in his farewell speech on his last working day in the Supreme Court.

Saying that he is experiencing mixed feelings as

he is bidding farewell to the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of India said, "I leave this court with happiness, goodwill with very fond memories of wonderful arguments, excellent presentation, good behavior, commitment to the cause of justice from not only Bar but all connected with it."

Having spent 22 years on the bench as judge starting with Bombay High Court, CJI said that his stay in the Supreme Court has been his richest experience.

"Camaraderie with my brother judges has been wonderful", he said

Bobde recalled the transition to the virtual mode through video-conferencing as the Coronavirus pandemic broke out during his tenure and called for ironing out many unsatisfactory things about the virtual hearings.

He thanked the registry for helping make a success of the virtual hearing.

The Attorney General K.K. Venugopal congratulated CJI for steering the Court during the pandemic in March last year when the bar thought the court will close down.

"But then CJI rose to the occasion and started virtual hearing and almost

50,000 cases have been disposed of. It's a great achievement," Venugopal underlined.

As Attorney General Venugopal said that Chief Justice of India should have a minimum of three year tenure, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Vikas Singh said that 65 years is no age for a top court judge to retire and advocated amendment to constitution to increase it.

Hailing CJI for his involvement with the issues, Vikas Singh said, "Till the last day you were concerned about what is happening. You had taken

up such a contentious matter of Covid on the last day too. This shows the involvement of the judges to ensure oxygen supply can be maintained in the hospitals."

The Chief Justice of India was a judge for 21 long years, elevated to the Bombay High Court on March 29, 2000 as additional judge and sworn in as Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court on October 16, 2012.

He was elevated to the Supreme Court on April 12, 2013 and took the oath as the Chief Justice of India on November 17, 2019.

Cong netas now moved to resort

Assam Congress wants to save them from poaching

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, APRIL 23

don't want to leave anything to chance. The Congress had snatched away a sure RS seat of opposition in 2010.

This was more visible when Rupijyoti Kurmi, the party's three-time MLA from Mariani constituency, told reporters that the BJP has been sending feelers to a few candidates. "Everybody knows what happened in Goa and Manipur. The BJP will try to buy some victors among us or browbeat the opposition MLAs with threats of implication in some cases or the other," he said.

However, Congress spokesperson Bobbeeta Sharma played down the issue and told reporters, "The candidates want to stay together for a few days in a relaxed environment away from public contact." The last phase of polling, the All India United Democratic Front had packed off most of its 20 candidates in a chartered flight to a resort in Rajasthan. They returned a few days back due to Covid situation. Another constituent of the Congress led grand alliance—the Bodoland People's Front, has also sent its candidates to some Congress ruled states.

Delhi, 9 states account for 75 % of Covid cases

New Delhi, April 23: Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Karnataka, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and West Bengal are displaying an upward trajectory in daily new cases, the ministry said.

India's cumulative recoveries have surged to 1,36,48,159 with 1,93,279 recoveries being registered in a span of 24 hours.

The National Mortality Rate has been falling and currently stands at 1.15 per cent, the ministry said.

A total of 2,263 coronavirus-related deaths were reported in a span of 24 hours.

Delhi and nine states account for 81.79 per cent of the new deaths. Maharashtra saw the maximum casualties (568). Delhi follows with 306 daily deaths, the ministry said.

On the other hand, the cumulative number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has crossed 13.54 crore as part of the world's largest vaccination drive.

Cumulative 13,54,78,420 vaccine doses have been administered through 19,38,184 sessions, as per the provisional report till 7 am, the ministry said.

— PTI

Court as he was tossed around even to become the Chief Justice of Gujarat or Maharashtra High Court as a Modi government's aversion towards him for remanding to police custody Home Minister Amit Shah, who was then a Gujarat minister, in 2010 in the case of an alleged encounter of Sohrabuddin Sheikh.

Again Justice Akil Kureshi had upheld then Gujarat Governor Kamla Beniwal's decision to appoint the state Lokayukta, without consulting then Chief Minister Narendra Modi.

SHORT TAKES

UK SPY CHIEF:
WEST RISKS LOSING
KEY TECH CONTROL

London, April 23: Western countries risk losing control of technologies that are key to internet security and economic prosperity to nations like China and Russia if they don't act to deal with the threat, one of the UK's top spy chiefs warned Friday.

"Significant technology leadership is moving east" and causing a conflict of interests and values, Jeremy Fleming, director of government electronic surveillance agency GCHQ, said in a speech.

Singling out China as a particular threat, he said the country's "size and technological weight means that it has the potential to control the global operating system." China is an early adopter of emerging technologies but it also has a "competing vision for the future of cyberspace," and it's playing an influential role in the debate around international rules and standards, he said.

He raised the possibility of countries with "illiberal values" like China building them into technical standards that the world ends up relying on, and using their state power to control and dominate technology markets, turning them into arenas of geopolitical competition.

Russian hacking and other nefarious online activity, meanwhile, poses the most acute threat to the UK but, like a smartphone app vulnerability, could be avoided.

Biden to make first overseas trip in June

US President will attend the Group of Seven summit in England, hold meetings with EU leadership

Washington, April 23: President Joe Biden will embark on his first overseas trip in office in June, the White House is set to announce on Friday, with the aim of demonstrating his administration's commitment to the transatlantic alliance and reengagement with key allies. Biden will attend the Group of Seven summit in Cornwall, England, set for June 11-13, followed by a visit to Brussels, where he will hold meetings with European Union leaders and attend the June

14 summit of leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

The meetings with the United States' closest allies come as Biden has invited Russian President Vladimir Putin to a summit in the coming months in a third country, though no date has yet been set. Most recent American presidents have selected North American neighbors for their first cross-border trips, though former President Donald Trump, whose penchant for unilateral action and

THE TRIP will mark the most ambitious travel schedule yet for Biden since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, as the president has sought to model safe behaviour for the nation.

open skepticism of the NATO alliance unsettled American allies, made his first overseas stop in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

For Biden, the first trip is meant to turn the page

from Trump's approach to alliances. "It's both a practical chance to connect with key allies and partners on shared opportunities and challenges," said Yohannes Abraham, the chief of staff and executive secretary of the National Security Council.

"But also it's an illustration of something that the president has been clear about that the transatlantic alliance is back, that revitalising it is a key priority of his, and that the transatlantic relationship is a strong foundation on

which our collective security and shared prosperity are built." Biden, for his part, held "virtual bilateral" meetings with the leaders of Canada and Mexico in February and March, respectively.

The June trip will follow after Biden's first in-person bilateral meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga at the White House last week and next month's planned visit by President Moon Jae-in of South Korea. The announcement comes shortly after the

conclusion of Biden's two-day virtual climate summit, in which he received praise from leaders, particularly those in Europe, for returning the US to the Paris Climate Agreement and reengaging on a host of other issues of shared concern.

The trip will mark the most ambitious travel schedule yet for Biden since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, as the president has sought to model safe behavior for the nation. It comes as the US has stepped up its trav-

el warnings for much of the world due to the virus. Both the UK and Belgium are listed by the State Department under level four, the highest, "do not travel" advisory, and are the subject of specific prohibitions preventing most travel to the US by noncitizens.

"There's going to be components of this trip that probably look and feel different than they did in the past because we are taking the health of all involved very seriously as we plan this," said Abraham. —AP

Politics takes nasty turn over death threats in Spain

Madrid, April 23: Most political parties in Spain put aside their differences on Friday to condemn a series of death threats mailed to the country's interior minister, the director of the Civil Guard police force and the leader of a far-left political party.

The threats were delivered in envelopes filled with bullets and accompanied by anonymous letters either demanding the three officials step down from their positions or plainly menacing the recipients and their relatives. —AP

on the threats. Vox Party Madrid leader Rocío Monasterio said she was against all kinds of violence but, during a radio debate with Iglesias, refused to back away from earlier remarks that she didn't believe her opponent's account.

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Demonstration against French govt



Members of the exhibition and animation spaces "Les machines de l'île" walk with equipment cases as they take part in a rally called by workers in the cultural sector, French trade unions CGT and others, against a reform of France's unemployment benefit system, in Nantes, western France on Friday. — AFP

CINEMA

3rd WEEK

SUDARSHAN 35MM
11.00am, 2.15, 5.00pm

VISWANATH 70 : 11.45, 2.45, 5.00

SRI LAXMI 70 : 12.00, 3.00, 5.00

MANJU 70 **SUSHMA 70 SENSATION**
11.00, 2.00, 5.00 11.15, 2.15, 5.15 11.00, 2.00, 5.00

PVR

FORUM - Kukatpally - 10.10, 11.00, 1.20, 2.20, 4.30 I
GALLERIA - Punjagutta - 10.00, 11.00, 1.10, 1.45, 4.20 I
RK - Banjara - 11.10, 4.20 I **S2 - 10.00, 1.10, 4.20 I**
INORBIT - Cyberbad - 10.55, 1.10, 2.05, 4.20 I
IRRUM MANZIL - 10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 4.20 I
MOSARAMBAGH - 10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 4.20 I
PRESTON - Gachibowli - 11.20, 4.15 I
ICON - Hitech - 10.00, 1.10, 4.20 I

MANTRA - Attapur - 10.30, 4.30 I
CCPL - Malkajgiri - 11.00, 4.45 I
DSL - Uppal - 10.20, 1.25, 4.30 I

INOX

GVK - Banjara - 10.20, 11.30, 12.45, 1.45, 3.00, 4.15 I
GSM - Miyapur - 11.00, 12.00, 1.00, 2.30, 3.30, 4.30 I
MP - Kachiguda - 11.30, 12.45, 1.30, 3.00, 4.30 I

PRASAD MULTIPLEX - 12.00, 1.00, 3.00, 4.00 I

AMB CINEMAS - 11.05, 1.15, 4.25, 4.45 I

TIVOLI CINEMAS - 11.00, 2.00, 5.00 I

TALLURI - 11.00, 2.00, 5.30

SLN - 1.00, 4.00 I

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SANDHYA 35-RTC X ROADS
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11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

ANJALI 70MM-SEC'BAD
11.15, 2.15, 5.45PM

SAPNAABIDS 11:30, 2:30
SVCINESQUARE 11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

SENSATION 1NSO 11:30, 2:30 & 5:30
VENKATASA 170 11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

SRLAXMIKALAMANDIR-ALWAL
11.30, 2.30, 5.30PM

PVR **FORUM-2.10PM** | **INORBIT-5.00PM**
GALLERIA-2.10PM | **ICON-2.05PM**
MUSARAMBAGH-5.20PM | **RK-1.50PM**
IRRUMMANZIL-5.20PM | **PRESTON-1.35PM**

INOX **GVK-5.00PM** | **MP-1.00PM**
GSM-5.00PM

Cinépolis **MANTRA-5.30PM** **OAMB 2.15 PM**
CCPL-12.10PM

NOMA TALKIES-4.20PM

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INDONESIAN SUB RESCUERS GET 'SIGNAL'; U.S., OZ JOIN SEARCH

Bali, Indonesia, April 23: Indonesia's desperate search for a missing submarine and its 53 crew was focused on a signal from an unidentified object on Friday, with just hours to go before the stricken vessel's oxygen reserves ran out.

Nearly two dozen warships were taking part in the ramped-up hunt, as Australia and the United States joined the search off the coast of Bali where the sub disappeared more than two days ago during training exercises.

The military said it had picked up signs of an object with high magnetism at a depth of between 50 and 100 metres (165 and 330 feet).

Ships equipped with specialized tracking equipment were deployed in the hope that it may be the KRI Nanggala 402, which was equipped with oxygen reserves that could last until early Saturday, authorities said.

The search zone covers an area of about 10 square nautical miles (34 square kilometers).

"We've only got until 3:00 am tomorrow (Saturday) so we're maximising all of our efforts today," Indonesian military spokesman Achmad Riad said earlier.

But by Thursday afternoon, there was still no word on whether the object was the missing vessel.

"There was a strong magnetic field detected there," Riad said, but he added that "we've yet to find the exact location".

— AFP

Terror probe after French female cop stabbed to death

Rambouillet, France, April 23: French prosecutors opened a terror inquiry Friday after a police employee was stabbed to death at a station southwest of Paris by a suspected Islamist extremist from Tunisia who was then shot dead by the security forces.

President Emmanuel Macron said France would never give in to "Islamist terrorism" after the attack in Rambouillet, a tranquil commuter town about 60 kilometres (40 miles) from Paris, which revived the trauma of a spate of deadly attacks last year.

France's national anti-terrorism prosecutors said that they had opened a terror investigation, also involving the DGSI domestic intelligence service, into the murder of a person holding public authority.

A source close to the inquiry said that the attacker shouted "Allahu Akbar" (God is Greatest) during the attack.

Chief anti-terror prosecutor Jean-François Ricard, who spoke outside the station along with Prime Minister Jean Castex, confirmed that "comments made by the assailant" indicated a terror motive, without further details.

The attack took place in the secure entrance area of the station at around 2.20 pm (1220 GMT), a police source added, asking not to be named.

The 49-year-old woman, an administrative assistant and mother of two who was returning from a lunch break, was stabbed in the throat twice and died of her wounds shortly afterwards, the source said.

The attacker, 36, was fatally

wounded when an officer opened fire on him.

He arrived in France illegally in 2009 but had since obtained residency papers, a police source said, adding that he was unknown to security services. He had just moved to Rambouillet.

Macron vowed on Twitter that "in our fight against Islamist terrorism, we will never give in," identifying the murdered woman as Stephanie.

"The nation is by the side of her family, her colleagues and security forces," he said.

Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, who also visited

French police forces conduct a search at the house of a Tunisian man who stabbed to death a female police employee at a police station in Rambouillet, southwest of Paris, on Friday. — AFP

officers in Rambouillet, said security would be stepped up at stations nationwide.

Several attacks over the last year have reignited concerns about the spread of radical Islam inside France as well as immigration.

In September, a Pakistani man wounded two people with a meat cleaver outside the former offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, which had printed cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

On October 16, a young Chechen refugee beheaded teacher Samuel Paty who had showed some of the caricatures to his pupils. — AFP

UK's budget deficit highest since 1946

London, April 23: Britain has seen its budget deficit rise during the Coronavirus pandemic to its highest level since the year after the end of World War II, official figures showed Friday.

The Office for National Statistics said public sector net borrowing, the official gauge of the difference between the government's spending and taxes reached 303.1 billion pounds (USD 420 billion) in the financial year to end-March.

This was equivalent to 14.5 per cent of the country's annual gross domestic product, the

highest level since 1946, when the deficit hit 15.2 per cent of GDP.

The causes of the spike are simple. While tax receipts have ebbed as a result of the deepest recession in more than 300 years, the government has splashed out billions of pounds trying to prop up the economy and jobs since the pandemic first struck more than a year ago.

Notably, it has been covering the lion's share of the salaries of people unable to work during the country's many lockdowns and providing further support to hard-hit businesses.

The scale of the borrowing the government has undertaken in the wake of the pandemic is evident in the size of the increase in the deficit from 57 billion pounds in the previous financial year.

The increase on the pre-pandemic forecast is unprecedented and highlights the extraordinary impact of the pandemic on government revenues and spending, said Isabel Stockton, research Economist at the well-respected Institute for Fiscal Studies.

Stockton thinks the actual deficit will end up being higher, perhaps quite significantly, as many businesses won't be able to repay government-backed loans.

In the post-war era the deficit peaked in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, hitting around 10% of GDP. The average deficit since 1970 has been 3.4% of GDP.

The borrowing undertaken by the government has pushed public sector net debt up to 2,142 billion pounds, which is 97.7% of Britain's GDP. This is the highest proportion since the early 1960s.

IN BRIEF

Navalny ends hunger strike

Moscow: Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny said on Friday that he was ending a 24-day hunger strike he launched to demand medical treatment behind bars, after allies said his life was in danger. The announcement came after Navalny's personal doctors said on Thursday that he had received treatment at a civilian hospital and urged him to put a stop to his protest. "Taking into account the progress and all the circumstances, I am beginning to end my hunger strike," Navalny said on Instagram.

130 migrants die in shipwreck

Cairo: More than 100 Europe-bound migrants are feared dead in a shipwreck off Libya, independent rescue groups said, in the latest loss of life as attempts to cross the Mediterranean increase during the warmer months. Humanitarian organisations have accused the Libyan coast guard and European authorities of failing to meet their responsibilities to save lives. A Libyan coast guard official said that they searched for the boat but could not find it with their limited resources.

Over 120 hurt in Jerusalem clash

Jerusalem: Over 100 Palestinians and 20 Israeli police were wounded in overnight clashes in annexed east Jerusalem, medics and police said on Friday, as tensions mount over a police ban on gatherings and videos of attacks on youths. The violence broke out outside one of the entrances to the walled Old City where far-right Jews had completed a march, during which participants harassed Palestinians and chanted "death to Arabs". There have been nightly disturbances in the area since the start of Ramadan on April 13 with Palestinians complaining that police were blocking access to the promenade around the walls, a popular gathering place for Palestinians after the end of the daytime Ramadan fast.

4 killed, 23 hurt in Dhaka fire

Dhaka: At least four people, including a woman, were killed and 23 others injured after a fire broke out at a chemical warehouse here in the Bangladeshi capital early on Friday, according to media reports. The fire started at the ground floor of the building in Old Dhaka's Armanitola area after 3 am, Mahfuz Riben, an official at the Fire Service and Civil Defence department, told the Dhaka Tribune. He said the ground floor stored a number of inflammable substances. The fire was brought under control by 6 am, as 20 fire tenders were rushed to the scene. Officials are yet to identify all the deceased, though it is said the building's security guard is among the dead, the newspaper reported.

MEXICAN PREZ PUSHES FOR AFFORESTATION

Kopoma (Mexico), April 23: Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has made a strong push for his oft-questioned tree-planting programme, trying to get the United States on board to fund a massive expansion of the programme into Central America as a way to stem migration.

López Obrador pitched his Planting Life programme, which aims to plant 1 billion fruit and timber trees, to US President Joe Biden at Thursday's climate change summit.

López Obrador claims the programme can help prevent farmers from leaving their land and migrating to the United States, though he also proposed that the US grant six-month work visas, and eventually citizenship, to those who participate in the programme.

But environmentalists question whether planting big swaths of commercial species sometimes on land that held native forests is a good idea and opinions are mixed in Mexico on whether the programme is really working, or whether it can offset Mexico's other policy of encouraging the use of fossil fuels.

You, President Biden, can finance the Planting Life program in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, López Obrador said during Thursday's videoconference session of the summit.

Single vaccine dose can cut Covid rate 65%, says study

UK study says 1 jab of two-dose vaccine protects vulnerable, healthy people

London, April 23: A single dose of either the Oxford/AstraZeneca or Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines, currently being administered in the UK, cut the rate of Coronavirus infections by around 65 per cent, according to a new UK study on Friday.

A combination of two studies by the University of Oxford and the Office of National Statistics (ONS), which are yet to be published, also found that a single jab of the two-dose vaccines protected older and more vulnerable people almost as well as younger and healthier individuals. The findings indicate a promising effect on hospitalisations and deaths from Covid-19 infections after vaccinations. But researchers caution that vaccinated people could still be re-infected and trigger an asymptomatic spread of the deadly virus, making the need for social distancing and face masks still crucial.

The researchers analysed Covid-19 test results from more than 350,000 people in the UK between December 2020 and April 2021 and found that 21 days after a first jab — the time it takes the immune system to mount a decent response — new Covid-19 infections dropped.

"Odds of new SARS-CoV-2 infection were reduced 65 per cent in those =21 days since first vaccination with no second dose versus unvaccinated individuals without evidence of prior infection," the study noted. "In those vaccinated, the largest reduction in odds was seen post-second dose (70-77 per cent). There was no evidence that these benefits varied between Oxford/AstraZeneca and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines," it added.

The researchers, in the large community surveillance study, conclude that vaccination with a single dose of Oxford/AstraZeneca or Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines, or two doses of Pfizer/BioNTech, significantly reduced new SARS-CoV-2 [Covid-19] infections.

The second study, in nearly 46,000 adults who had been vaccinated with one dose, found strong antibody responses — a sign that the vaccines are stimulating the body's defence system to protect against the virus — in all age groups. These antibody responses were "broadly sustained" out to 10 weeks afterwards, the researchers said. "We don't yet know exactly how much of an antibody response, and for how long, is needed to protect people against getting Covid-19 in the long term — but over the next year, information from the survey should help us to answer these questions," said Professor Sarah Walker, chief investigator on the studies, from Oxford University.

Both studies are based on data from the Covid-19 Infection Survey, a partnership between the University of Oxford, the ONS and the government's Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC). The results will come as a boost for the UK's vaccination programme. — PTI



European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen (second right) speaks to German scientist, CMO and co-founder of BioNTech Ozlem Tureci (right), Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla (left), and Belgium's Prime Minister Alexander De Croo (second left), during an official visit to the Pfizer pharmaceutical company in Puurs, Belgium on Friday. — AFP

US defends limiting export of raw material for vaccine

Washington, April 23: Defending US' restrictions on the export of key raw materials for the manufacture of Covid-19 vaccine that threatens to slow India's vaccination drive, a senior State Department official has said the Biden administration's first obligation is to take care of the requirements of the American people.

When asked when the Biden administration would decide on India's request to lift a ban on the export of vaccine raw materials, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said:

SINGAPORE PASS HOLDERS, INDIAN VISITORS NOT ALLOWED

Singapore, April 23: All long-term pass holders and short-term visitors who have travelled to India within the last 14 days will not be allowed to enter or transit through Singapore from April 24, as the city state was on "heightened alert" against Covid-19, according to a media report.

The decision will also impact people who have prior approval to enter Singapore, said Education Minister Lawrence Wong, co-chair of the multi-ministerial task force handling the pandemic, said on Thursday.

In addition, people who have recently travelled to India and have not completed their 14-day stay-home notice (SHN) by 11.59pm on Thursday night will have to complete their additional seven-day SHN at a dedicated facility rather than their places of residence. This group will undergo three polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests for the virus. — PTI

"...the United States first and foremost is engaged in an ambitious and effective and, so far, successful effort to vaccinate the American people."

"That campaign is well underway, and we're doing that for a couple of reasons. Number one, we have a special responsibility to the American people. Number two, the American people, this country has been hit harder than any other country around the world more than 550,000 deaths, tens of millions of infections in this country alone," he said on Thursday.

The researchers, in the large community surveillance study, conclude that vaccination with a single dose of Oxford/AstraZeneca or Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines, or two doses of Pfizer/BioNTech, significantly reduced new SARS-CoV-2 [Covid-19] infections.

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It is not only in the US interest to see Americans vaccinated; but it is in the interests of the rest of the world to see Americans vaccinated, he said.

"The point the Secretary of State Antony Blinken has made repeatedly is that as long as the virus is spreading anywhere, it is a threat to people everywhere. So as long as the virus is spreading uncontrollably in this country, it can mutate and it can travel beyond our borders. That, in turn, poses a threat well beyond the US," Price said in responses to questions. — PTI

The last flight from India before the red list categorisation, which includes 40 countries considered high-risk zones for the spread of new variants, comes in as

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Experts are still studying whether any of the mutations mean the variant can be transmitted more easily, is more deadly or can evade the effectiveness of vaccines or natural immunity.

At this point they are designated Variant Under Investigation (VUI) with a year, month, and number. Following a risk assessment with the relevant

Families and students who were able to make it back in time must now self-isolate at their own homes or student accommodation registered on passenger locator forms and take follow up coronavirus tests for the National Health Service (NHS) to continue tracking their results. — PTI

The ban comes in as

Health England (PHE) confirmed 55 more cases of the so-called double mutant Indian variant, B.1.617, from all Coronavirus cases tracked until April 14, taking the total for the Variant Under Investigation (VUI) in the UK to 132.

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CANADA ALL FLIGHTS FROM INDIA BANNED FOR FULL 30 DAYS

Toronto, April 23: Canada has said it would ban all flights from India and Pakistan for 30 days due to the growing wave of Covid cases in that region.

Transport Minister Omar Alghabra said the ban would start late Thursday, speaking hours after India reported a global record of more than 314,000 new infections in the previous 24-hours. — PTI

UNITED STATES AMERICANS ASKED TO NOT TRAVEL TO INDIA, 4 NATIONS

Washington, April 23: The US has advised its citizens to avoid travelling to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and the Maldives due to the sudden surge in Covid-19 cases in the region.

In a series of travel advisories on Thursday, the authorities also urged Americans to reconsider travel to China and Nepal. — PTI

JAPAN THIRD COVID-19 EMERGENCY IN TOKYO, OSAKA

Tokyo, April 23: Japan declared a third state of emergency for Tokyo and three western prefectures on Friday amid skepticism it will be enough to curb a rapid Coronavirus resurgence ahead of the Olympics in July.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced the emergency for Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo from April 25 through May 11. Japan's third state of emergency since the pandemic began comes only a month after an earlier emergency ended in the Tokyo area. — PTI

UK begins Covid 'red list' travel ban

London, April 23: The expert committee, they may be designated Variant of Concern (VOC), PHE said of the Indian variant, designated as VUI-21-Apr-01.

The last flight from India before the red list categorisation, which includes 40 countries considered high-risk zones for the spread of new variants, comes in as

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Minority groups laud US report for tagging India

India is Country of Particular Concern, groups advise US

Washington, April 23: Several Indian-American Muslim, Sikh and Christian groups have applauded the US Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) for its latest report wherein it has recommended India be designated as a "country of particular concern (CPC)" for the alleged deterioration of religious freedom in the country.

In separate statements, these groups urged the US State Department to accept the recommendations of the USCIRF, a Congress-constituted quasi-judicial body. Its annual report on international religious freedom and recommendations are non-binding on the US government.

"Designating India as one of the world's worst violators of religious freedoms, while unfortunate, is expected and justified," said Rasheed Ahmed, executive director of Indian-American Muslim Council. "We hope the US Department of State will accept the USCIRF's recommendations and designate India as a CPC for the year 2021," a statement said. In a joint statement, three US-based Sikh organisations thanked the USCIRF for analysis of status of religious minorities in India. — PTI

Russian troops pull back from Ukraine

Moscow, April 23: Russian troops began pulling back to their permanent bases on Friday after a massive buildup that caused Ukrainian and Western concerns.

On Thursday, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu declared the sweeping maneuvers in Crimea and wide swathes of western Russia over, and ordered the military to pull the troops that took part in them back to their permanent bases by May 1. At the same time, he ordered their heavy weapons kept in western Russia for another massive military exercise called Zapad (West) 2021 later this year.

The weapons were to be stored at the Pogonovo firing range in the southwestern Voronezh region, 160 kilometers (100 miles) east of the border with Ukraine. The concentra-

Brexit fishing water tension flares up

Paris, April 23: The French government called on Friday for a quick implementation of a post-Brexit accord on mutual access to fishing waters, after French fisherman blocked trucks trying to bring in catches from Britain overnight.

"We're acting within the spirit of European solidarity and cooperation with the UK, but the urgency demands an acceleration of our collective efforts," Europe Minister Clement Beaune and Maritime Minister Annick Girardin said in a statement.

More than a hundred fisherman launched the blockade late Thursday at Boulogne-sur-Mer, France's busiest fishing hub, to protest a "sham" deal on access in place since Britain left the European Union on January 1.

Despite a provisional trade accord, they say UK authorities have granted licences to only 22 of the 120 French boats seeking permission to fish between six and 12 nautical miles from the British coast. — AFP

Four astronauts to reach International Space Station after 23-hour ride in Dragon capsule

SpaceX launches 3rd crew with recycled rocket

Cape Canaveral (US), April 23: SpaceX launched four astronauts into orbit on Friday using a recycled rocket and capsule, the third crew flight in less than a year for Elon Musk's rapidly expanding company. The astronauts from the US, Japan and France should reach the International Space Station early Saturday morning, following a 23-hour ride in the same Dragon capsule used by SpaceX's debut crew last May. They'll spend six months at the orbiting lab. It was the first time SpaceX reused a capsule and rocket to launch astro-

nauts for Nasa, after years of proving the capability on station supply runs. The rocket was used last November on the company's second astronaut flight. Embracing the trend, spacecraft commander Shane Kimbrough and his crew weeks ago wrote their initials in the rocket's seat, hoping to start a tradition.

"If you have rapid and complete reusability, then that is the gateway to the heavens. That's what we're trying to get done, and the support of Nasa makes a huge difference," Musk said after the launch.

Just a week ago, Nasa awarded SpaceX a nearly USD 3 billion contract to provide the lunar lander that will deliver astronauts to the surface of the moon — Musk's Starship, intended to be fully reusable to attain his ultimate prize of carrying astronauts to Mars and building a city there. It was a stunning scene: The launch plume glowed against the dark sky, reflecting the sunlight at high altitude. Despite the early hour, spectators lined surrounding roads to watch the Falcon take flight an hour before sunrise. Liftoff was delayed a day to take advantage of better weather along the East Coast in case of a launch abort and emergency splashdown. — AP

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INDICATORS	%
Sensex	47,878.45
Nifty 50	14,341.40
S&P 500*	4,184.37
Dollar (\$)	75.02
Pound Sterling (\$)	104.13
Euro (\$)	90.46
Gold (10gm)* (\$)	47,273.24
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	65.76
IN 10-Yr bond yield*	6.035
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.574
* As of 8:30 PM IST	

Reliance buys UK country club Stoke Park

Reliance Industries Ltd has bought Britain's iconic country club and luxury golf resort, Stoke Park, which featured in James Bond movies, for 57 million pounds (about Rs 592 crore). The acquisition adds to Reliance's current stake in Oberoi hotels and hotel-managed residences in Mumbai that it is developing. Over the past four years, Reliance has announced \$3.3 billion in acquisitions.

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Breach of RBI's data storage norms Amex, Diners barred from adding clients

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday imposed restrictions on American Express Banking Corp and Diners Club International Ltd from on-boarding new domestic customers onto their card networks over non-compliance with the central bank's norms on storage of payment system data.

American Express Banking Corp and Diners Club International Ltd are payment system operators authorised to operate card networks in the country under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

Imposing the restrictions on American Express and Diners Club, the RBI said, "These entities have been found non-compliant with the directions on Storage



of Payment System Data."

In April 2018, all payment system providers were directed to ensure that within a period of six months the entire data full end-to-end transaction details / information collected / carried / processed as part of the message / payment instruction) relating to payment systems operated by them is stored in a system only in India.

They were also required to report compliance to the RBI and submit a board-approved system audit report (SAR) conducted by a CERT-In empanelled auditor within the timelines specified.

Again, in June 2019, the

RBI said all data related to payment transactions must be stored in India and such information, if processed abroad, should be brought back within 24 hours.

"The entire payment data shall be stored in systems located only in India," the RBI said, adding, "The data should be deleted from the systems abroad and brought back to India not later than one business day or 24 hours from the payment processing, whichever is earlier."

The RBI had also clarified that the data stored in India can be accessed or fetched when required for handling disputes or so.

Cadila gets nod to use hepatitis drug for Covid

New Delhi, April 23: Zydus Cadila on Friday said it has received restricted emergency use approval from the drug regulator for using Pegylated Interferon alpha-2b (Peg-IFN) in treating moderate Covid-19 infection in adults.

The drug firm had sought the DCGI's approval for the hepatitis drug's additional indication for treating Covid-19. The company has now received restricted emergency use approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for the use of 'Virafin', PegIFN in treating moderate Covid-19 infection in adults, Zydus Cadila said in a filing.

PegIFN has very well-established safety with multiple doses in chronic Hepatitis B and C patients. A single dose subcutaneous regimen of the antiviral Virafin will make the treatment more convenient for the patients, the filing said.

When administered early on during Covid, Virafin will help patients recover faster. It will be available as a prescription drug for use in a hospital/institutional setup, Cadila said. — PTI

Market ends in red for the third week

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

The market registered third successive week of decline as Covid-19 cases continued to rise.

During the holiday-truncated week, the Sensex slumped 953.58 points, or 1.95 per cent, while the Nifty-50 tanked 276.50 points, or 1.89 per cent.

The big fall in the Sensex on Monday by 882 points was not challenged by the bulls effectively though the market closed in the green on Thursday, gaining over 375 points.

Nifty-50 and Sensex ended 65 and 202 points lower on Friday, closing at 14,341 and 47,878, respectively. But the broader markets ended in the green, with Nifty Mid-Cap 100 and Nifty Small-cap 100 rising 0.3 per cent and 0.4 per cent, respectively.

On Friday, foreign portfolio investors were net sellers of equities worth Rs 1,360.76 crore but the domestic institutions were net buyers by Rs 1,995.59 crore, as per the provisional data.

"A deadly wave of coronavirus infections raises concerns over business recovery," said Deepak Jasani, head of retail research, HDFC Securities.

Reports of a possible increase in capital gains tax in the US took a toll on the global equities, which also impacted the Indian market just before the weekend close as traders didn't want to carry risks, with Mondays, of late, witnessing bear attacks.

The earnings season has not boosted market sentiments, as it did in the previous quarter; since big IT companies and banks have reported mixed financial performance so far and the market is more focused on the likely fallout of full blown pan-India pandemic.



India's economy is expected to grow at a rate of 10 per cent in the current financial year, according to the World Bank.

Honda to go all-electrical by 2040, put \$46 bn in R&D

SHIHO TAKEZAWA

APRIL 23

Honda Motor Company set what it called a challenging target for all of its sales to be electric vehicles by 2040 as it tries to keep up with the global EV race and revive profits under the new leadership of Toshihiro Mibe.

The Japanese company also said it will invest about 5 trillion yen (\$46 billion) in research and development over the next six years, "regardless of fluctuations in our sales revenue."

Automakers around the globe are rushing into the EV sector as the industry shifts to electrification and self-driving cars. Among them, Jaguar Land Rover has vowed to go fully electric by 2025, and Volvo by 2030.

Honda's new goals include EVs accounting for 40 per cent of sales in North America and China by 2030 and 80 per cent by 2035. It has a 20 per cent goal for Japan by 2030 and 80 per cent by 2035. Japan's target is different because it is a huge consumer of hybrids, Mibe said. The carmaker wants to achieve an operating profit margin of 7 per cent even as it shifts to EVs, he said.

Toyota Motor Corp. has been able to assuage investors' concerns on EVs with the introduction of its "bZ4X."

— Bloomberg

Area under summer crop up 21%

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, APRIL 23

Summer crop sowing in the country is 21.5 per cent higher than last year. This is the second successive year; the area under summer crops has shown an increasing trend.

The total summer crop area has increased to 73.75

lakh hectares from 60.67 lakh hectares a year ago.

As on April 23, 2021, the area sown under pulses has increased to 12.75 lakh ha from 6.45 lakh ha, nearly a 100 per cent increase. The increased area is mainly reported from the states of Tamil Nadu, MP, West Bengal, UP, Gujarat, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Mah-

arashtra and Karnataka.

Area under oilseeds has increased 16 per cent to 10.45 lakh ha from 9.03 lakh ha in West Bengal, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, UP, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh.

Rice area too has increased 16 per cent to 39.10 lakh ha from 33.82

lakh ha in West Bengal, Telangana, Karnataka, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu and Bihar.

Encouraging water levels in most reservoirs helped in protecting both the rabi and summer crops. As whole productivity and production is expected to rise significantly.

Magical Messi on the double

Leo's brace fires Barcelona to victory over Getafe, Atletico beat Huesca



Barcelona's Lionel Messi (right) duels for the ball with Getafe's Damian Suarez during their Spanish league match at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on Thursday. — AP

Atletico withdrew from the breakaway competition on Wednesday but Barca and Real Madrid remain part of a project that would transform the fabric of European football.

Getafe were wearing t-shirts in protest against the European Super League, even as they gave Barcelona a guard of honour to mark the Catalans' cup success. Messi now has 33 goals in all competitions and 25 in the league, one more than the total scored by the whole Getafe team. Getafe are not safe yet, four points the gap above the bottom three.

Messi got to work in the eighth minute, silid

through by a piercing pass by Sergio Busquets and sending a shot into the far top corner, despite a touch by Getafe goalkeeper David Soria.

Yet Getafe were level four minutes later as Angel met Marc Cucurella's cross and the ball cannoned off the unsuspecting Clement Lenglet and flew in.

Another own-goal restored Barca's lead with Sofian Chakla failing to spot Soria coming out before passing the ball beyond the goalkeeper and into his own net.

The game looked secure when Messi made it three. Lenglet's looping header gave him the chance to volley left-footed against the far post but the ball arched back to the striker, who finished from the angle with his right.

Getafe need a nervy last 20 minutes when Ronald Araujo trod on the ankle of Enes Unal, who scored the penalty to give the visitors hope. But Barcelona pulled away with two late goals, Araujo heading in a corner from Messi, who then passed up the chance to score his third by giving Griezmann his first.

— AFP

Laxmikant extends his stay at Hyd FC

Hyderabad: Indian Super League side Hyderabad FC handed a one-year extension to experienced goalkeeper Laxmikant Kattimani, the club announced on Friday. The Goa-born custodian has inked a fresh deal till the end of the 2021-22 season. "I have now spent two years with the club and I am really happy here. I know the club and the people involved pretty well and it was an easy decision for me to extend my time with Hyderabad FC," Kattimani was quoted as saying in a media release. Laxmikant has been with Hyderabad FC since its inception. — AP

Nadal rallies past Cameron, in semis

Barcelona: Rafael Nadal brushed aside Cameron Norrie 6-1, 6-4 to ease into the semifinals of the Barcelona Open on Friday and moved closer to a record-extending 12th title at the event. After Nadal breezed through the first set, Britain's Norrie won back a break in the second. Nadal, however, took the advantage right back and closed it out when he converted on a second match point by smashing a forehand just inside the line. Nadal will face Pablo Carreno or Diego Schwartzman on Saturday for a spot in the final. Nadal needed three sets to get past Kei Nishikori and Ilya Ivashka in the first two rounds. — AP

Kakinada port sees sea of talent

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23



Kakinada Sea Ports chairman K. Venkateshwara Rao (third from right), director Shreya (second from right) pose with badminton coach Pullela Gopichand (right), cricketer Pranav Chandra (fourth from left), chess player Dronavalli Harika (second from left) on Friday. Director Ms Shreya said: "We have to do our bit in supporting sportspersons, who, I am sure, will be spurred with gestures like utilising it to participate in European golf tournaments.

Speaking on the occasion, Kakinada Sea Ports

these to win laurels for the country."

Gopi echoed the sentiment. "I feel very happy that Mr K. V. Rao has been very generous to extend this large fund to my Academy for improving training facilities during this tough period when everyone is being affected," he said.

"This amount is of huge help and will fund my travel, equipment and other expenses in England. I am glad to receive such support," Pranavi said.

"It feels nice to aid sport and promising sports persons, who could use such support to propel themselves and do the country proud," said Chamundeshwar Nath, vice-president, Telangana Badminton Association.

Speaking on the occasion, Kakinada Sea Ports

ARCHERS ATANU, DEEPIKA MARCH INTO SEMIFINALS

Guatemala City, April 23: Country's top archery couple Atanu Das and Deepika Kumari battled heavy winds to storm into their respective semifinals of the recurve section as India continued to make giant strides in the World Cup Stage 1 here.

Returning to the World Cup after almost two years, Das and Deepika, who got married last year, also paired up to advance to the bronze playoff in the recurve mixed event on Thursday night to keep India in the hunt for five medals.

Deepika displayed some incredible shooting to down German archer Michelle Kroppen in straight sets. — PTI



Krish Tyagi and Apurva Vemuri pose with their trophies after receiving them from cricketer Mohammed Asaduddin (right) at the SMTA in Hyderabad.

Krish and Apurva champs at SMTA

Krish Ajay Tyagi and Apurva Vemuri emerged winners in the boys and girls sections respectively at the AITA Super Series tennis tournament for Under-16 years held at Sania Mirza Tennis Academy in Hyderabad.

Krish had it easy as he beat Shivaraj Chandan in straight sets at 6-0, 6-3 in the final while Apurva dropped the first set before coming back to defeat Abhaya Vemuri 4-6, 6-2, 6-4.

THE RESULTS

■ Boys final: Krish Ajay Tyagi bt Shivaraj Chandan 6-0, 6-3. Semifinals: Krish Tyagi bt Debasish Sahoo 7-6 (5), 1-6, 6-4; Chandan Shivaraj bt Bharat Phulwaria 6-1, 6-2. Quarterfinals: Debasish Sahoo bt N. R. Darwin Mar 6-1, 7-6 (0); Krish Tyagi bt Venkat Rishi Batlanki 6-2, 6-2; Chandan Shivaraj bt Anoop Keshavamurti 3-6, 6-0, 6-2; Bharat Phulwaria bt Vatsal Manikantan 6-2, 6-4. ■ Girls final: Apurva Vemuri bt Abhaya Vemuri 4-6, 6-2, 6-4. Semifinals: Abhaya Vemuri bt Manognya Madasu 6-2, 6-3, Apurva Vemuri bt Avani Chitale 6-0, 6-1; Manognya Madasu bt Aaditi Bhat 6-2, 6-3; Saumya Ronde bt Malishka Kuram 6-4, 6-1; Apurva Vemuri bt Raja Sarvagnya Kilaru 6-2, 6-4.



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DECCAN CHRONICLE, HYDERABAD, SATURDAY, 24 APRIL 2021

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ORANGE	
Shikhar Dhawan, DC	231
KL Rahul, PBKS	221
Rohit Sharma, MI	201
PURPLE	
Harshal Patel, RCB	12
Rahul Chahar, MI	9
Deepak Chahar, CSK	8

Off the field



Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola poses with an RCB jersey.
— Instagram

Morris not worth the money: KP

Following a bidding war, Chris Morris was eventually snapped up by RR for ₹16.25 crore, becoming the costliest ever cricketer in IPL history, but former England cricketer Kevin Pietersen has said that the South African went for way too much money.

"This is going to sound harsh, but he went for a lot more money than I would have ever paid for, to be completely honest. I just don't think that he's worth that kind of number. I think there's pressure on him. He's not a first choice for the South African side. So, I think we're expecting too much. There's too much talk about him," Pietersen said.

For Punjab Kings, Deepak Hooda was economical with 1 for 15 in 3 overs, while Mohammed Shami and Ravi Bishnoi had the joint best figures of 2 for 21.

Punjab Kings produced a discipline bowling performance to restrict MI to 131 for six despite a fine half-century by Rohit Sharma in the IPL here on Friday. Mumbai struggled to 21 for one in the first six overs, the lowest powerplay score this season after being put into bat.

A 79-run stand between

Rohit (63 off 52) and Suryakumar Yadav (33 off 27) steadied the ship for the five-time champions but they could not find the final flourish, managing only 34 runs in the last five overs for the loss of four wickets.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi, playing his first game of the season, was the standout bowler for Punjab Kings with two wickets for 21 runs in four overs. Lead pacer Mohammad Shami (2/21 in four overs) was also impressive.

As has been the case so far at Chepauk, batsmen found it extremely difficult to get going early in the innings on a slow surface.

Quinton de Kock perished as early as the second over after he mistimed one off spinner Deepak Hooda to be caught at mid-on.

Ishan Kishan (6 off 17) came ahead of Suryakumar Yadav at number three but the southpaw struggled once again before being caught behind in Bishnoi's first

over, making it 26 for two in seven overs.

Rohit, at the other end, managed to keep the scoreboard ticking. Left-arm spinner Fabian Allen bowled a high full toss to Rohit in the 10th over and duly dispatched it over the cow corner for a six to release some pressure.

After Suryakumar joined Rohit in the middle, batting suddenly started looking much easier. A well-set Rohit started playing the ball late and was good with finding the gaps. Suryakumar, at the

other end, got into the groove with a four and six off left-arm pacer Arshdeep. Their partnership ended after Suryakumar failed to execute a reverse sweep to be caught at short third man off Bishnoi's bowling, leaving Mumbai at 105 for three with 23 balls left in the innings. Some much-needed lusty blows were expected from the likes of Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard in the death overs but Punjab were able to keep them quiet.

— Agencies



Punjab Kings skipper K. L. Rahul plays a shot en route to his unbeaten fifty against Mumbai Indians at the M. A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Friday. — IPL

KINGSIZE WIN

Rahul, Gayle guide Punjab to a 9-wicket victory over Mumbai

Chennai, April 23: Punjab Kings humbled defending champions Mumbai Indians by nine wickets in their IPL match here on Friday. Chasing a modest target of 132, Punjab Kings completed the task with 14 balls to spare.

Punjab Kings captain KL Rahul scored an unbeaten 60 and veteran Chris Gayle remained not out on 43 for the victors.

Earlier, MI skipper Rohit Sharma scored his first half-century of the season but still his team could only manage 131 for 6.

Rohit said it was not a bad wicket to bat on. "You can see how Kings won with nine wickets in hand. If you get 150-160 you're always in the game and that is something we've failed in the last two games, we need to look at that."

"We can look at it either way — their bowlers bowled very well in that powerplay. Ishan was trying to hit but couldn't get it, even myself. We were trying but the wicket was easy. In the last four games we really batted well in the powerplay but today we failed to do so," added Rohit.

Rohit scored 63 off 52 balls while Suryakumar Yadav contributed 33 off 27 balls on a sluggish Chepauk surface.

The duo added 79 for the third wicket while Kieron Pollard chipped in with an unbeaten 16 off 12 balls towards the end.

For Punjab Kings, Deepak Hooda was economical with 1 for 15 in 3 overs, while Mohammed Shami and Ravi Bishnoi had the joint best figures of 2 for 21.

Punjab Kings produced a discipline bowling performance to restrict MI to 131 for six despite a fine half-century by Rohit Sharma in the IPL here on Friday. Mumbai struggled to 21 for one in the first six overs, the lowest powerplay score this season after being put into bat.

A 79-run stand between

SCORECARD

Mumbai Indians: Quinton de Kock c Henriques b Deepak Hooda 3, Rohit Sharma c Allen b Mohammed Shami 63, Ishan Kishan c Rahul b Ravi Bishnoi 6, Suryakumar Yadav c Gayle b Ravi Bishnoi 33, Kieron Pollard (not out) 16, Hardik Pandya c Hooda b Arshdeep Singh 1, Krunal Pandya c Pooran b Mohammed Shami 3, Jayant Yadav (not out) 0. Extras (b 4, w 2) 6. Total (for six wickets in 20 overs) 131.

FoW: 1-7, 2-26, 3-105, 4-112, 5-122, 6-130.

Bowling: Moises Henriques 3-0-12-0, Deepak Hooda 3-0-15-1, Mohammed Shami 4-0-21-2, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-21-2, Fabian Allen 3-0-30-0, Arshdeep Singh 3-0-28-1.

Punjab Kings: KL Rahul (not out) 60, Mayank Agarwal c Suryakumar Yadav b Rahul Chahar 25, Chris Gayle (not out) 43. Extras (nb 1, w 3) 4. Total (for one wicket in 17.4 overs) 132.

FoW: 1-53.

Bowling: Trent Boult 2-4-0-30-0, Krunal Pandya 3-0-31-0, Jasprit Bumrah 3-0-21-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-19-1, Jayant Yadav 4-0-20-0, Kieron Pollard 1-0-11-0.

Live on TV

Kolkata Knight Riders vs Rajasthan Royals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

two and we will be on our way and flying. I think there's a feeling that we can win from basically anywhere," Cummins had said.

RR, on the other hand, are coming into the match after a humiliating 10-wicket loss against RCB. They have failed to inspire after posting their only win of the tournament, against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Facing bottom-placed Rajasthan Royals, who have been the most inconsistent team so far in the season, KKR will be desperate for a turnaround.

"Everyone's pumped. I am sure if we get a win or

— PTI

NATARAJAN IS SET FOR KNEE SURGERY, RULED OUT OF IPL

Chennai, April 23: Sunrisers Hyderabad pacer T. Natarajan has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL due to a knee injury for which he will have to undergo a surgery.

The 30-year-old Natarajan had played only two out of the four games for Sunrisers Hyderabad this season. He originally sustained this injury during the tour of Australia earlier this year.

"I am sad to miss the remaining games (this IPL). Since I played well last season and went on to play for India, my expectations were high. Unfortunately, I have to undergo knee surgery and will miss this season," the yorker specialist said in a video posted by Sunrisers Hyderabad on their official Twitter handle.

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