

Womenia

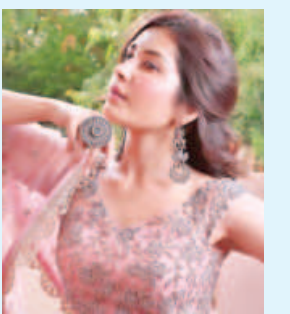
TWEET PATROL



RAASHII KHANNA
@RAASHIIKHANNA_

Happy birthday
@Karthi_Offl

Wish you be blessed with great health
and happiness always..



Covid Medicine Recycle: An initiative by a Mom and Daughter

TEJAL SINHA

At a time, when there has been a continuous shortage of medical aid, this mother and daughter duo come to the rescue to help the COVID-19. The initiative is aimed at helping the Covid 19 affected patients with necessary medicine supplies. The initiative was started on May 01, this year.

Under the initiative, the duo is not buying medicines to give to the people, but instead, collecting extra medicines left with people post their usage, from all over India and facilitating it to reach the people in need.

Supriya shares, "My daughter, Sahria Malik, an eleven-year-old child, saw the need for medicines when her dad's family was infected with covid. She saw the panic in her family of procuring the basic medications that weren't available in the market. She wondered how she could use the Indulgeo Essentials network to help Covid patients and asked me to act upon the same. Taking her initiative forward and putting it into an action plan, me and my team started working towards the initiative and found both the donors and the patients."

She shares that it isn't easy to gain people's trust that they would deliver the medicines to them on time. Due to the situation and many frauds happening, it is challenging to convince the patient or their family to believe and their speedy delivery.

Two weeks back Sahria Malik along with her mother, began picking up unneeded

medicines from recovered Covid 19 patients and employing the logistics of Indulgeo Essentials, to make the medicines available to people who needed them. From Fabiflu to Medrol and Crocin to vitamin tablets, they have been given medicines across India. They have also received thermometers, oximeters and



Sahria Malik and Supriya Malik

nebulisers as well. They donate the medicines to the patients after checking their prescription, Aadhaar card and covid positive reports.

Adding more details about the initiative, she adds, "Our goal is to collect leftover medicines from a Covid recovered person and deliver it to the patient facing difficulties in procuring them due to a shortage of medicines in the market or lack of resources. We're listing down the steps for you to understand our initiative better. First, we will take the list of medicines from the donor, but we will only get them picked up once we have somebody who is in need or we're working closely with an organisation that has a constant demand. Indulgeo Essentials is completely handling the logistics part. All we need is your support and leftover medication. If we have an immediate receiver in the donor area, Indulgeo Essentials will coordinate the logistics and directly ship it to the person

The mother-daughter duo, Supriya Malik, founder of Indulgeo Essentials, and her 11-year-old daughter Sahria Malik, student of Pathways world school, Aravali have started an initiative called The Covid Medicine Recycle. The aim of this initiative is to help Covid 19 patients with leftover medicines

who needs them with no money involved. If we do not get an immediate receiver in their area, we will consolidate their package with other packages and deliver it to an NGO that directly treats the patients."

As many states are under lockdown, they do have brand permission to deliver essentials. The logistics have been of enormous



The Covid Medicine Recycle

tablets. They have been able to help 36 individuals and 2 NGOs, Guru Ka Bagh gurudwara in Agra and Gurgaon Nagrik Seva Manch.

This initiative is pan India. They are delivering and picking up medicines from all over the country. Apart from Delhi and Gurgaon, they have received a large number of donations from Hyderabad.

If you are a covid survivor and you would like to help someone with just your leftover medications please contact them on Instagram: covidmedicine.recycle or WhatsApp them on : +917042780014 and they will manage all the logistics for you till it reaches the person in need.

support to us to pick up and deliver the medicines on time. However, states like Chhattisgarh, Indore and Madhya Pradesh, where there are no operational logistics, has been a massive challenge for the duo.

From the day they started this drive, they have received donations from 42 people, and the offerings are approximately 4400+

Feel stylish while you work from home

FASHIONISTA

Working from home takes a bit of adjusting to get used to. There should always be coffee and healthy snacks on hand, and you should keep a routine just like you would if you were leaving your home to go to the office. And just like you would make your bed first thing in the morning, you should also be hopping out of those pajamas. When you get dressed in "real clothes," it will make your feel more alert and productive. It also helps when your boss asks you to hop on a last minute Zoom call.

But that doesn't mean you need to wear your best skirt or sit around in a constricting button down shirt. You just need a handful of comfy yet stylish pieces to help you come up with your best work from home outfit ideas. Here are tips to look stylish while doing work from home.

Dress for your mood

With all the uncertainty swirling around, clothes can be a source of comfort. The cool thing about fashion is that you can constantly switch it up based on your mood and the same taken ap-



What to wear for a virtual meeting

With Zoom meetings and Google hangouts being a life line for business communications, knowing how to dress appropriately for face to face virtual work meetings may feel like uncharted territory. While each company has their own culture and expectations, these tips will act as a solid foundation to follow when picking out your outfit for a virtual meeting. You wouldn't show up to the office in your PJs, right? Right. When getting dressed for a virtual meeting, do so as if you were about to walk into your office conference room. Dressing the part will help you stay focused and keep you in workmode. In addition to your outfit, taking other factors into account are suggested. Example: your hair style + surrounding + lighting.

Play around in your closet

With all the extra time spent at home, why not have fun playing in your closet! This is the perfect opportunity to take inventory of your closet and shake things up a bit. Whether you add in a pop of color with a sparkley accessory, mix bold colors with neutrals or paint on some sassy lipstick - try whatever new look speaks to you!

If you're looking for inspiration, head to your favorite fashion blogger's Instagram page and take a few tips out of their book. Point being, have a party in your own closet! You may be surprised how much fun it is.

THREE CHEERS



Traditionally dressed girls wear masks to raise awareness on wearing masks in social gatherings. Photo: Srinivas Setty

NEWS ROUNDUP

Yuvika Chaudhary apologises for community remark in last video

Actress Yuvika Chaudhary apologised after the hashtag 'Arrest Yuvika Choudhary' started trending on Twitter. Yuvika drew netizens ire for posting a video featuring Prince on YouTube where she made a casteist remark.

In the video, Yuvika can be seen filming Prince as he gets a haircut. She refers to a certain community and says he looks like them. This led to the hashtag 'Arrest Yuvika Choudhary' trending on Twitter.

"Hey #yuvikachoudhary you should be ashamed of your words. The people you addressed are actually keeping this nation presentable. They should be respected. You senseless people create chaos in society," a guy tweeted.

The actress has now posted an apology on Instagram.

She wrote, "Hi guys I didn't know the meaning about that word what I used in my last vlog. I didn't mean to hurt anyone and I can never do that to hurt someone I apologise to each n every one I hope you understand, love you all."

Prince, too, took to his Instagram stories to apologise to fans.



TIPS TO SHOW YOU AGELESS

BEAUTY FUNDA



becoming less active. Use a light oil-based moisturiser that will keep your skin soft and supple.

- Include exfoliation in your beauty regimen. Choose a soft scrub according to your skin type. For dry skin, use a cream-based scrub that will not only cleanse but also moisturise the

skin. For oily skin, use a gel-based scrub that will help control oil secretion and give squeaky clean skin.

- Include an antioxidant-rich vitamin C serum into your morning routine. Use anti-ageing retinol serums with vitamin A. It helps to correct texture and

reduce the appearance of visible signs of ageing.

- Acne scars, pigmentation, blemishes and dark spots are the other forms of ageing. So, use a dark spot corrector which contains vitamin C and apply on the spots regularly to make them fade away.
- Use a night cream. Wash your face with a mild cleanser and apply a night cream. It will hydrate your skin and make it softer and glowing.
- Drink sufficient water and consume a healthy diet. Consume fresh fruits and vegetables which provide essential antioxidants to your skin. Hydrated skin looks naturally young and radiant.
- Fine lines and wrinkles around the eyes are one of the symptoms of ageing. Use a good under eye gel or cream that will nourish your eyes and help get rid of the fine lines and wrinkles while you sleep.

Senior health and fitness day

For Grandma, Grandpa, Granny, Gramps, Nana, Papa, and all our well-loved elders, Senior Health & Fitness Day is a time to explore the many senior-friendly physical activity options and to understand the importance of exercise and nutrition for ongoing health and illness-prevention.

A healthy diet can boost energy and immunity, and regular exercise is necessary to retain bone mass and lower the risk of fractures and to build muscle strength and reduce the risk of falls. Various community events will be staged on Senior Health & Fitness Day, and seniors are encouraged to attend for health screenings and diet and exercise information sessions.

Low-impact, non-competitive exercise program choices may include stretching, walking and swimming, all designed to increase strength and flexibility. And although Grandma is probably an excellent cook, she may be able to pick up a few healthy tips to make her legendary meals even more delicious and nutritious.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY with HANS INDIA



India fights social media biggies sans data protection law

NISHANT ARORA
NEW DELHI

THE tussle between Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook and the Union government has reached its nadir, and the fact is that an absence of a stricter personal data protection law is forcing the concerned authorities to take routes like sending copies to closed Twitter offices in the pandemic or writing heaps of notices that have resulted in zero action to date, while social networking giants continue to take the country for a ride.

The war of words between the IT Ministry and Twitter that began in February during the farmers' protests has now turned ugly with the latest toolkit controversy.

On the other hand, WhatsApp has gone ahead with implementing its controversial user privacy policy from May 15, clearing stating that "we will maintain this approach until at least the forthcoming PDP (personal data protection) law comes into effect".

In between the ruckus, with the deadline to comply with the new IT (intermediary) rules meant for big social media platforms in India ending on Tuesday, Facebook had said it is still working towards putting operational processes in place to meet the new guidelines and "continues to discuss a few of the issues which need more engagement with the government".

According to leading experts, while the government can initiate



action for suspension or blocking of intermediary apps or websites if they fail to comply with its directions over various issues, a strong data protection law is what can tame the social media platforms, the way the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in the European Union (EU) has achieved.

According to Virag Gupta, the

lawyer of former RSS ideologue KN Govindacharya, who is arguing the social media Designated Officers' matter before the Delhi High Court, the government notified the IT (intermediary) rules after a long delay and now, the same are not being strictly enforced.

"The government must come with a notification showing the

compliance status by various social media companies doing business in India. As per Rule 7 in Part II of the rules, intermediary exemption of these platforms will not be available to them and they must be prosecuted under the IT Act and IPC for illegal content present on their platforms," Gupta told IANS.

After the Twitter toolkit controversy, "It also needs to be explained why the government authorities and parliamentary committee met the Indian counterpart of foreign tech companies who are neither authorised nor ready to take legal liability for their Indian operations," Gupta argued.

In case Twitter fails to comply with the government directions, the latter has the powers to resort

to penal consequences.

"In that direction, appropriate FIRs can be registered against intermediaries and service providers and their top management can also be made liable for the said contravention under Section 85 of the Information Technology Act, 2000," said Pavan Duggal, one of the country's top cyber law experts.

The government can exercise its power under the Section 69(A)(1). In case, any service provider or intermediary fails to comply with the provisions of the same, then there are penal consequences prescribed under Section 69A(3).

Non-compliance with directions for blocking is a non-bailable serious offence punishable with imprisonment for a term

which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine.

India has to learn from the EU when it comes to formulating a legal framework to secure data and tackle hateful or abusive online content, the experts said.

The EU GDPR has been designed to harmonise data privacy laws across Europe -- to protect and empower all EU citizens' data privacy and to reshape the way organisations across the region approach data privacy.

The fact of the matter is that social media biggies now listen and quickly tweak their actions -- be it over the presence of controversial, hateful and fake content or user data privacy -- according to the law of the land in the EU where a central data protection law is firmly in place.

Priyanka slams removal of shrouds on Ganga banks

LUCKNOW

THE Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is now facing flak for removal of saffron shrouds from shallow buried bodies in sand on the banks of rivers in Prayagraj.

Sharing a video clip that showed workers pulling off saffron shrouds from the bodies buried in sand, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra tweeted: "They were not given treatment while they were alive, they did not get dignity in their death and did not find a place in the government data."

"Now shrouds are being ripped off their bodies. What kind of a cleanliness drive is this? This is showing disrespect to the dead, to



the religion and to humanity."

The State Government has come under severe criticism after a large number of bodies were found buried in shallow sand graves or washed up on the Ganga river banks in the state as people found it difficult to bear the ex-

pense of such cremation.

In Prayagraj, photos showed hundreds of bodies buried in the sand along the banks of Ganga as rain exposed shrouds. The discovery caused panic among people living in nearby areas as many complained that dogs were dig-

ging the graves and feeding on the bodies on river banks.

A drone footage, shot by a foreign news agency, showed hundreds of bodies, separated by bamboo sticks and covered with saffron cloth, buried along the banks in Prayagraj.

Adityanath has asked officials for continued patrolling by water police of the State Disaster Response Force and Provincial Armed Constabulary around all the rivers of the state and asked to ensure that the bodies were not disposed of in water under any condition.

To address the issue, the Uttar Pradesh government said it would take the help of religious leaders to create awareness among people not to dump bodies in the rivers.

Only 2-3% vaccine wastage in Haryana: Official

CHANDIGARH

THE vaccine wastage in Haryana is nearly two-three per cent and not six per cent, said state Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Rajeev Arora on Tuesday.

Data released recently by the Central government said Haryana had six per cent vaccine wastage of Covishield and 10.2 per cent wastage of Covaxin.

"The state Health Department found that there was a data mismatch between the state and the Centre. We corrected the data mismatch and the wastage percentages dropped from six per cent for Covishield to 3.1 per cent and 10.2 per cent of Covaxin to 2.4 per cent. Thus, the average wastage percentage is two-three



per cent," he added.

Arora said National Health Mission Director (Haryana), Prabhjot Singh, along with the immunisation team have identified the districts with high vaccine wastage. They were Hisar, Palwal, Nuh, Kaithal, Rohtak and Bhiwani.

He said 53,72,311 vaccine doses have been administered in the state till date. The best performing districts on the vaccine administration -- Gurugram has administered the highest number of 6,34,610 vaccine doses,

followed by Faridabad (5,00,600) and Ambala (3,94,162).

A total of 2,07,892 healthcare workers have been administered the first dose of vaccine while 1,33,828 were administered the second dose.

Among the frontline workers, 1,64,609 have been administered the first dose of vaccine and 75,740 administered both doses.

Among people above 60 years and those falling within age group of 45-60 years, 32,70,712 people were administered the first dose of vaccine and 7,74,105 administered both doses.

In those falling in the 18-44 years age group, 43,88,638 persons were administered the first dose of vaccine and 983,673 administered the second dose of the vaccine.



Haryana to provide one lakh Coronil kits to Covid patients

CHANDIGARH: Amid the ongoing row over Baba Ramdev's statements against allopathy, Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij announced to provide one lakh Ayurveda-based Coronil kits to coronavirus patients in the state free of cost. Vij informed in a tweet that half of the cost of the kits has been borne by Patanjali and the other half by the state government from the Covid Relief Fund. Each kit contains three items -- Coronil tablets, Swasari Vati and Anu Taila.

Thanking the Haryana government, Baba Ramdev said other states should also come forward to make the state free from coronavirus.

"Patanjali is committed to stand for a cause," he added.

Last week a video went viral on social media in which Baba Ramdev is allegedly heard saying "allopathy ek aisi stupid aur divaliya science hai" (Allopathy is a stupid science).

Snakes rescued by Wildlife SOS from various places in Agra

AGRA

A number of snakes, including a cobra, have been rescued by the Wildlife SOS from various spots here.

In the first incident, a cobra was spotted inside a house at the Radhey Greens residential colony in Dayalbagh after which a Wildlife SOS team came to the rescue of the reptile which was stuck in a door of the house.

In a separate incident, a keelback snake was spotted sitting in the flush tank of a toilet in Saraswati Vihar area on Gwalior road following which the Wildlife SOS team came to the spot and extricated the reptile.

They also rescued a cobra from the staff kitchen at Perfect Footwear Company in Artoni and two rat snakes from a Gitti Plant at Churmura in Mathura. Another rat snake was res-

cued from O P Chains Group Anthem in Sikandra.

Kartick Satyanarayan, CEO & Co-founder of Wildlife SOS, said, "Organisations like ours are tasked with maintaining the fragile balance between urban and wild communities, and



much of it is dependent on community participation. We are extremely grateful to people for reaching out to Wildlife SOS in times of aid, as we can ensure safety for all involved."

Baiju Raj, M.V, Director Conservation Projects for Wildlife SOS, said, "At any given time, the most number of calls we receive are about reptile sightings. These rescues are highly sensitive and sometimes even risky, hence the necessity of having trained rescuers carry out such sensitive operations, in the interest of public safety and protection of urban wildlife."

Step out of comfort zone: UP Minister to Akhilesh

LUCKNOW

UTTAR Pradesh Minister and government spokesperson Siddhartha Nath Singh has slammed Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav for criticising Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's tours to districts.

In a statement, Singh said that the SP leader is no longer aware of the problems of people and should step out of his 'cool comfort zone' to see reality and accept it.

The minister was reacting to Yadav's remark which said that the chief minister's tours were a waste of government resources and time.

"The chief minister even visited Sefai, the Yadav clan's village, and Azamgarh, the parliamentary constituency of Akhilesh, to take first-hand account of arrangements and ensure all facilities are being provided without any discrimination. "It is historic that any

chief minister has travelled across the state in a fortnight to ensure proper health facilities for people.

"The problem of Akhilesh Yadav is that his politics is confined to



Twitter, away from people and their issues. It is high time he steps out of his comfort zone to see reality and accept it," he added.

Singh also questioned Yadav's silence on the improvement of Covid situa-

tion in UP, saying he has not given any credit to the Yogi government for bringing down Covid cases within 23 days.

"He has spoken about deaths in some villages. I challenge him to tell their location. A leader who has never stepped out of his drawing room is questioning Yogi Adityanath, who has been on ground all through," Singh said.

The minister further said that it is ridiculous for Akhilesh Yadav to question Yogi Adityanath about the Team 9 meetings without even knowing that the team meets every day.

"In fact, it is the efficiency of Team 9 which has helped in lowering the number of Covid cases," Singh said.

Team 9 is a high-powered committee, comprising ministers and bureaucrats, formed by the chief minister for Covid management.

IIT-K starts new courses in statistics, data sciences

KANPUR

IIT Kanpur has announced four-year Bachelor of Science (BS) and a five-year Bachelor of Science-Master of Science (BS-MS) degree programmes in "Statistics and Data Science" to be offered from 2021-22 session by its department of mathematics and statistics. Abhay Karandikar, Director, IIT-K, said, "The admissions to the programs will be through Joint Entrance Examination-Advanced. The programme will be tailor-made for students interested in the study and analysis of data. The academic senate and the board of the institute have approved both the courses." He further said "The programme will focus on areas of fundamental statistical and mathematical, computational and data science application courses with students having opportunity to do elective courses from the department of computer science and engineering and electrical engineering." The programmes will prepare and arm students with skills relevant to the rapidly growing interdisciplinary field of big data analytics. The graduates of the programs will be empowered with the skills and knowledge to build flourishing careers in data science industry and also pursue higher studies in classical and modern statistics, and data science.

Lucknow traders want curfew relaxation now

LUCKNOW

LUCKNOW traders, who had voluntarily shut down their establishments on April 15 following a surge in Covid cases in the state capital, are now urging the state government to cut down on restrictions and allow business to open.

The corona lockdown in Uttar Pradesh has been extended to May 31. Hazratganj Traders Association President Kishan Chandra Bambhani said that since corona cases had come down considerably, the government should lift restrictions so that traders can resume business. He said that traders had, on their own, shut their shops in mid-April and it had been almost 40 days since the markets were closed.

Lucknow Vyapar Mandal General Secretary Amarnath Mishra said that while some traders were running their business in a clandestine manner, those who had kept their shutters down were suffering.

"The traders have not been given any concessions in electricity bills,



taxes and other overhead charges. If we are not allowed to restart business, we will not be able to pay the bills," he said.

UP Kapda Vyapar Mandal President Ashok Motiyani said: "We

should allow the markets to reopen with strict safety protocols. The corona cases have come down and we cannot afford to allow shops to remain closed for a longer period."

Another traders' leader Deven-

dra Gupta also said that businessmen were using their savings to survive since there was no generation of income. Shops should be allowed to reopen even if it is for a limited time duration, he felt.

Covid containment zones in Gurugram down to 50

GURUGRAM

AS Covid-19 cases decline in Gurugram, the city now has 50 containment zones compared to the earlier 107 as on May 21, according to the district administration order.

The health officials said the numbers of containment zones will soon come down further as the number of Covid cases have been decreasing in Gurugram.

During the screening in rural areas of Gurugram since May 15, the district health department workers have visited 28,129 houses, nearly 1,49,810 Covid tests were done and nearly 41 people tested positive for Covid-19.

Meanwhile, 212 fresh coronavirus cases were reported in Gurugram on Monday. Nine deaths were also reported from the city taking the district's



Covid toll to 763, said health officials.

The Covid-19 tally in Gurugram has now risen to 1,78,849, of which 1,74,150 have recovered, including 1,252 on Monday, according to an official daily health release. On Monday there were overall 3,936 active Covid-19 cases in the city.

The Health department said of the 763 deaths, 514 died of comorbidities and the remaining 249 without comorbidities.

According to the health officials, nearly 14,77,823 tests have been conducted in Gurugram

district of which 12,89,724 have tested negative for the infection. Nearly 9,250 tests were conducted in the district during the last 24 hours.

Nearly 5,656 vaccine doses were given in the district on Monday. With this nearly 6,34,270 people have received corona vaccine in Gurugram.

The Covid helpline (1950) service started by the district administration last year during the pandemic giving information related to Covid-19 has also received a good response.

An official said when this pandemic started in March last year, they received nearly 1,20,000 calls from needy people and appropriate help had been provided to them. Most of the calls were received during April and May. This year, the number of calls received were 29,168 from April 18 to May 24.

Balancing key in social media curbs

As the deadline for complying with the new regulations for big social media firms approaches, confrontation of some degree seems to be the order of the day. On February 25 this year, the Centre announced rules to curb misuse of social media platforms and regulate the OTT platforms. These guidelines covered the likes of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Koo, and all OTT platforms. According to the regulations, all significant social media intermediaries have to appoint a chief compliance officer, nodal contact person, resident grievance officer for addressing the concerns of aggrieved persons or institutions. The rule also mandates that each of these people have to reside in India. Apart from these rules, social media intermediaries need to have a physical contact address in India published on its website or mobile application or both. The central government gave three months time period for complying with these regulations which ended on May 25.

Sources in the know said that most social media giants are yet to comply with the new regulations. Only India-born Koo has appointed a resident grievance officer, a chief compliance officer and a nodal contact person yet. Social media giants like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp are yet to comply with these regulations. Meanwhile, raids on the Twitter office in New Delhi on May 24 have made matters worse. The company premises were raided after Twitter had marked one of the tweets of BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra as 'manipulated media.'

The guidelines mandate that if these significant social media platforms don't comply with the new regulations, they may lose their status and protections as intermediaries and may become liable for criminal action as per the existing laws of India. Currently, these platforms known as intermediaries have been exempted from liabilities under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, for any third-party content

hosted by them.

As the debate over the compliance regulations rages, Facebook said on Tuesday that it aims to comply with the new norms and is in discussion with the government over a few issues. Whatever may be the outcome of these discussions, the faceoff between the Indian government and significant social media platforms is not ruled out. Over the years, these platforms have emerged as one of the biggest influencers of public policy across the world. These platforms are also increasingly being used by normal citizens to post their views and grievances. During this pandemic period, emergency calls for oxygen, hospital beds, blood plasma and key drugs is a case in point. Though the Jury is still divided whether such non-government organisations should be regulated or not and if yes, to what extent, the Indian government like many other nations across Europe and Asia wants to put a check on the influence of these platforms. While the outcome of the current confrontation will play out in the near future, it will be wise to take a middle path where accountability and free expression can be accommodated under one roof.



Can State governments do better in procuring vaccine and avoid wastage?

NAGARAJU THOTA, PRANESH BHARGAVA AND ACV SUBRAHMANYAM

PHASE-3 vaccination rules and regulations, released by the Government of India (GOI) on April 19, mention two channels of procurement and distribution of vaccines from Indian vaccine manufacturers. GOI receives 50 per cent of the monthly vaccine production from the manufacturers, and distributes it to the states and Union Territories on the basis of their performance, infection rate, and the record of wastage of the prior allocation. This share gets used to vaccinate the healthcare workers, front line workers and all citizens aged above 45 years. The manufacturers can sell the other 50 per cent doses in the open market to the state governments, private hospitals and industrial establishments. This policy was effectively implemented from May 1 onwards.

Three important take-aways from this release are: (i) although the central government itself has not mentioned anything about the nationwide lockdown, the state governments have the option to take various lockdown measures; (ii) the allocation of GOI procured vaccines will take the into consideration the wastage of doses by the state governments; and (iii) the state governments have the choice of buying the vaccines directly from the Indian and foreign manufacturers to fulfil the demands within their states.

Compensating the central government's reluctance in imposing a nation-wide lockdown, most of the state governments have imposed the state-level lockdowns to combat the second-wave, while a couple of states

The only practical way forward is to come up with a flexible contract that allows for a phase-wise delivery of the required number of doses over an extended period of time to the state governments. Additionally, the contract should have the facility that if there is lower than expected consumption of doses in the previous phases, then the state governments may cancel or reduce the size of the orders for subsequent phases, with a prior notice to the manufacturer. This will allow significant reduction in the wastage of doses

have elected for partial lockdowns, weekend and night curfews. With an option to buy vaccines independently, many state governments have swiftly moved to negotiate the procurement of doses with the Indian vaccine manufacturers. Some have advanced to inviting the tenders from foreign manufacturers, yet there are others which have yet to make any plan. Since the state governments have no common guiding principles or a uniform strategy for procurement from the manufacturers and distribution of the vaccines, there is a clear and present danger of the vaccine drive becoming mis-co-

ordinated, and leading to the problem of unfortunate wastage of vaccine.

Since wastage is a key criterion in central government's allocation of vaccines to the states, it is necessary that the state governments minimise the vaccine wastage while procuring the doses independently, and distributing them the way they deem fit. Some issues can already be foreseen in this regard. For example, to decrease the cost of vaccination through economies of scale, the state governments will try to buy the vaccines in bulk to cover all of its non-vaccinated population through a common contract or a single contract. The problem is that given the large population, and the limited, even though improving, vaccine manufacturing capabilities currently, no Indian manufacturer might be able to deliver the entirety of the demanded quantity immediately. So, even if in theory the state governments have the means to procure and vaccinate in one go, on the ground, they are limited to only a time-bound phase-wise vaccination over a longer time.

Another issue is that of the vaccine hesitancy. Since most state governments have imposed full or partial lockdowns, the infection rate will come down even if the vaccination itself has not picked up speed. This falling rate of infection may erode away the sense of urgency and instil a lull in the minds of public and administration. This may lead to a large proportion of the state's population hesitant in taking the vaccine provided by the state governments.

To compound to the aforementioned problems, if a better vaccine is launched in the market, even as the vaccination programme is going on, the willing vaccine-takers may want to switch to the new vaccine, instead of continuing with the already procured stock of the vaccines. This will lead to further non-consumption of the state government's vaccines. This is not good, because the vaccines have a limited shelf-life, after which the vaccines must be discarded. If the vaccines are not consumed because of the aforementioned reasons, it will lead to a large-scale wastage of vaccine in India.

As mentioned earlier, ideally, the state governments would want to come up with special contracts to get all the required doses delivered in one go, and subsequently implement the mass vaccination drive in a single phase. However, as noted earlier, this option has feasibility issues. As of now, the manufacturers are not sitting on pile of excess vaccines that can be delivered in one go. Additionally, the number of vaccines that can be produced per day is not high enough to meet the requirements of large and medium sized states in India. Due to this, the acquisition of population-sized consignments of doses in a short span of time, is out of the question. The only practical way forward is to come up with a flexible contract that allows for a phase-wise delivery of the required number of doses over an extended period of time to the state governments. Additionally, the contract should have the facility that if there is lower than expected consumption of doses in the previous phases, then the state governments may cancel or reduce the size of the orders for subsequent phases, with a prior notice to the manufacturer. This will allow significant reduction in the wastage of doses.

Given the asymmetric lockdown and preventative measures adopted by the various state governments, it is not inconceivable that instead of the whole country facing a Covid wave in unison, the cases surge in few states. In such a scenario, these surging states would require more doses than they had ordered in the ongoing and upcoming phases. The manufacturer may find it impossible to fulfil this sudden additional demand, leaving the state in a vaccine crunch.

On the other hand, some other states with better lockdown and preventative measures, or dwindled public willingness to get the vaccines, may find themselves holding on to the stocks of unused vaccines. Because of the limited shelf-life of vaccines, such unused stocks may be facing the condemnation to waste. In such a scenario, a manufacturer who sells to multiple state governments, may procure the excess stock from one state government and provide it to the other one in dire and immediate need, meanwhile continuing to create fresh doses for replacement of the stocks in the state that has just shed its excess stock.

This kind of mechanism with the common manufacturer at the helm of coordination will simultaneously meet the extra demand while avoiding the waste of unused stock on the shelf, and avoiding the excess pressure on the manufacturer. This is the strength of the second strategy.

To summarise, while the economics of scale indicate that a bulk procurement provides the least cost solution and time-bound vaccination, it is pertinent that state governments can achieve better results by procuring vaccines in a phased manner. They not only reduce the risk of losing out on having effective vaccines down the line, but also benefit from minimizing the vaccine wastage. The old adage, one should not place all their eggs in one basket, is more apt today in this situation than ever.

(The views expressed in the article are personal and do not represent the views of the organisations to which the authors belong. The authors are Asst. Professor - Economics & Finance and Asst. Professor - Humanities - BITS Pilani Hyderabad Campus and Research Scholar - School of Economics - University of Hyderabad, respectively)

Anandayya: The harbinger of happiness?



Dr Ramu Suravajjula

FROM November 17, 2019, the day a 55-year-old from Hubei province in China approached doctors with Covid-19 symptoms, the health and well-being of every single individual on Planet Earth has been under threat.

The one-point agenda of scientists, researchers, doctors, and international agencies is to bend the Covid curve.

India wowed the world with its stringent measures, including the toughest lockdown last year. It was such a pioneering benchmark that even super powers like the USA took inspiration from the 'Indian model' to halt the macabre. India's reputation skyrocketed, thanks to the jet-speed with which vaccines were invented.

Applauds, however, were to be short-lived. Attribute it to callousness or foolishness of the highest policy-makers, we were caught off-guard when the enemy revisited in a more deadly manner in the form of a second wave. The governments' ill-preparedness was exposed in the absence of proper infrastructure and suitable medication to deal with the pandemic. From the day a Wuhan-returned 20-year-old Kerala woman registered herself at Thrissur general hospital as the country's first Covid-19 case on January 27, 2020, the virus cut short the lives of one million Indians, says The Economist.

Amidst the gigantic humanitarian medical crisis, the widely-accepted allopathic medicine, a system in which medical doctors and other healthcare professionals treat symptoms and diseases using drugs, radiation or surgery, has come under the scanner. Though this system is better equipped with data and case studies, compared to last year's groping in the dark situation, no protocol proved effective to contain the spread and fatalities. Even as indigenous vaccines are unavailable for all Indians, the trial-and-error method is taking a heavy toll leading to unimaginable devastation, destruction and distress.

The most inhuman aspect of the dance of death is the failure of the Indian healthcare system. Lack of infrastructure and wherewithal is a small part of the larger canvas. The worst part is the governments' failure to rein in corporate and private hospitals that are brazenly committing daylight robbery and getting away with it. A fear psychosis is haunting every household, thanks to abnormal virus and medical bills.

Even as people are suffering from breathlessness due to the pandemic and infodemic, like a whiff of fresh air comes a humble soul from Nellore district, who seems to have discovered a near-magic potion to flatten the Covid curve with the help of locally available herbs.

The 'miracle medicine' inventor Bonigi

Anandayya, a self-claimed Ayurvedic medical practitioner from an obscure place Krishnapatnam, is the cynosure of all eyes. In an age when everyone tries to claim credit and applies for patents, howsoever miniscule his invention, the greatness of this man is that he has revealed the ingredients that go into the preparation without any qualms and inhibition.

Putting to shade the prophets of doom, thousands of people are rushing to Krishnapatnam. The concoction of herbal medicine has reportedly revitalised individuals, who were in near-comatose state following plummeted levels of oxygen saturation.

The eye drops given by Anandayya are being hailed as being nothing short of a miracle. Going by innumerable social media posts and clippings, most of them by the 'beneficiaries', the healing powers of the medicine are unimaginably quick. The best part of this medicine, and one which comes as a slap on the face of the materialistic, profit-minded hospitals is that it is given free of cost as a humanitarian gesture. It has brought a new lease of life into the helpless victims of private and corporate medical system.

Caught unawares by the sudden surge of patients rushing to Krishnapatnam straight from ICUs, the State government has swung into action. Apparently convinced by the Nellore District Magistrate's report that states that the medicines have not shown any visible side-effects, the Jagannathan Mohan Reddy government is reportedly planning to make it available to its people after getting formal approvals from competent medical authorities.

A top official of the Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH) prima-facie has given a virtual clean chit while averring that the ingredients used in the medicine are not at all harmful, albeit they could be classified as 'ayurvedic medicine.' It may be called as an 'indigenous' (naatu in Telugu) medicine. Well what's in a name! The country's premier scientific body, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), is expected to give its opinion on this medicine soon.

Anandayya's medicine is in for a severe scrutiny by allopathic doctors, rationalists and other scientific-tempered activists. They rubbished the 'miracle medicine' as bogus and called for scientific substantiation and approval. I wish to argue in favour of Anandayya and call for encouraging him to continue his mission, but in a more organised and scientifically-woven manner.

First of all, one should not downgrade the allopathic medical system just to highlight Anandayya's reported triumph. Allopathy has made giant strides with mind-boggling innovations and praiseworthy technological advancements. Modern medical practitioners are doing their best to ensure the overall well-being of people. Despite this, however, it is true that a large section of people is skeptical about this system, perhaps because of a plethora of di-



agnostic tests, awful costs, unbearable procedures, suspected side-effects or a combination of all. For every ailment, there are alternative medical experts who are as popular, if not more, as modern medicine practitioners. Many people adopt alternative medical systems, after being disillusioned with allopathy.

Many argue that Anandayya's medicine, notwithstanding the much-needed scientific back up or data analysis, is a big hit because of the failure of modern medical system. According to them, allopathic medicine for Covid is still an illusion as people are suffering in the absence of a reliable protocol. Today's medicine (Ex: Remdesiver) or method (ex: Plasma) are tomorrow's 'no-no' as new diseases like black fungus are erupting from nowhere adding to the fears of the public and the healthcare community, as a whole.

Given the ambiguity and uncertainty, there is no harm in taking Anandayya's medicine since it is reportedly curing all ailments related to Covid-19. The AYUSH ministry had already launched a campaign to distribute poly herbal ayurvedic drug AYUSH 64 and Sidha medicine Kabasura Kudineer to Covid-19 patients in home isolation (mild to moderate cases). The efficacy of these drugs has been proved through robust multi-centre clinical trials, a ministry statement claimed, thereby giving enough scope to believe that Indian herbs have the medicinal value to deal with the virus.

Herbalism, in fact, is not new to human beings and it should not be seen as being anti-science. It is a traditional medicinal or folk medicine practice based on the use of plants and their extracts. It is estimated that there are about 3,50,000 species of plants, including seed plants, bryophytes, and ferns, among which 2,87,655 species have been identified, according to a paper published by Si-Yuan Pan, Gerhard Litscher and others in 2004.

Written records about medicinal plants date back at least 5,000 years to the Sumerians, who described well-established medicinal uses for such plants as laurel, caraway, and thyme. Archaeological studies have shown that the practice of herbal

medicine was in vogue 60,000 years ago in Iraq and 8,000 years ago in China, researchers said. Abundant literature is available in Indian scriptures too. Kerala, Communist's fiefdom, is in the forefront of Ayurveda treatments.

According to an estimate, India possesses almost eight per cent of the biodiversity of the world with around 1,26,000 species. Of the about 400 families of flowering plants in the world, at least 315 are reportedly native to India. Isn't that a great treasure for Ayurvedic medicine system? What is harm in encouraging unsung heroes like Anandayya?

We can draw the following points from Anandayya's invention:

1. Blind rejection is as foolish as blind faith. Allopathic system should accord importance and show respect to other systems. Allopathic doctors shouldn't see Anandayya's phenomenon as an impediment to their ways of dealing things
2. Inter-disciplinary rivalry should be eschewed; knowledge sharing and regular dialogue among all medical systems should be the order of the day
3. Every effort should be made to reduce the death rate and pain by way of vigorous research and data-sharing to deal with the global humanitarian crisis
4. The common goal of all medical systems should be reducing the cost of diagnostics and treatment because people are vexed with exorbitant medical expenses.
5. Anandayya's selflessness is worth-emulating! It is a big lesson for the money-minded foursome-medical equipment manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies, corporate Hospitals and 'commercially-inclined' doctors.

Rig-Veda aptly sums up limitless open mindedness: Let noble thoughts come to us from every side (Aanobhadrakrtayo yantuvishwatah)

It is time we put it in practice and make the world a more liveable place without pain and suffering.

(The author, a PhD in Communication and Journalism, is a senior journalist, journalism educator and communication consultant)

structive opinion and idea. The travails of the pandemic are not confined to India alone; but are a global reality. India is doing far better in the prevailing circumstances by way of producing its own Covid vaccine to be able to help other countries in this regard - which the so called rich and developed countries are proving to be increasingly selfish to be needlessly storing vast quantities of vaccines, beyond the legitimate requirement of their need.

S Lakshmi, Hyderabad

Recipe for disaster

DR Bharat Jhunjhunwala's "Taking loans will not pull us out of Pandemic" clearly shows that Indian economy is on a weak wicket due to heavy debt. But the remedies suggested by him are a sure-fire recipe for fall of government. Already people are groaning under the high prices of petrol and diesel. The professor is suggesting a further increase to make the retail price of petrol Rs 150 per litre. Diesel also is to be increased likewise. This will break the back of middle class who are already burdened. To add to the misery he had suggested slashing of the salaries of government salaries. Even if they have merit, these are not workable solutions.

Instead, I suggest that the salaries of people's representatives may be reduced to bare minimum. We know that most of this class are filthy rich. Professor's last line is poignantly true- It is a shame that supplier of the vaccines to the world is importing vaccines for her own use.

Vinay Bhushan Bhagwat, Hyderabad

Raju bail, an eye-opener

IT is unfair to view every action of the AP government in negative and uncharitable light. Contrary to the considered opinion of the legal luminary, expressed in the

article "Bail to Raju exposes credibility of AP" (Hans India, 25 May), the verdict of the honourable apex court, in granting conditional bail to RRR, is seen by the Telugu people in the state, as a lesson on political etiquette, and a warning to the elected representatives with "barbed tongue". Be it LOP or the MP/ MLA, or the ministers, they are supposed to maintain decency and decorum in their political statements and public speaking. Being a MP, one is expected to talk and walk like a parliamentarian, but not otherwise.

Further, the orders of the apex court are an eye opener to a section of media to do it's legitimate duty with utmost impartiality. Therefore, in the final analysis, the bail to MP RRR, is not a setback, but a wake-up call for political etiquette, and to end hate filled abusive language used in political discourse in AP today, mainly by the defeated and disgruntled political parties and their leaders.

P H Hema Sagar, Secunderabad

Brazen profiteering

COUNTLESS corruption cases in many hospitals, medical services and doctors have been reported during this Corona pandemic. But, The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has not taken any hardcore action against its own institutions. However, when Yoga Guru Baba Ramdev made comments on Allopathy, the IMA erupted strongly. Sadly, the government also is not ready to encourage Ayurveda practitioners to come up with medicines for Corona. The reality is, the profit of the medical industry surged like a skyrocket in this pandemic, and who wants to lose that business?

Prasanna Venkatapur, Hyderabad

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Warangal selected for plastic-free project

WARANGAL

GREATER Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) along with Surat Municipal Corporation has been selected for developing plastic waste-free cities project under the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and Alliance to End Plastic Waste.

In January, the GWMC applied for the project along with nine other cities in the country. Municipal Commissioner Pamela Satpathy, who attended a virtual meeting on March 19, explained about the backdrop of the urban local body besides focusing on technical and economic etc matters. Following which the ICLEI has selected Warangal for the project.

Under the project, Warangal will be developed as a plastic-free city by July 2022. The project is expected to get underway in November this year. Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) is to provide funds anywhere between Rs 2 crore and Rs 6 crore for the project, it's learnt.

Former MLA Chekuri Kasaiah passes away

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

FORMER MLA and former ZP Chairman Chekuri Kasaiah (86) died due to heart attack on Tuesday morning in Hyderabad. He was suffering with age related health issues for some days and was admitted in hospital in Hyderabad for treatment. While undergoing treatment, he breathed his last, informed his family members. He is survived by two sons and two daughters. Kasaiah was elected as ZP chairman in 1987 from TDP with CPM support and elected as Kothagudem MLA in 1972 and 1978 Telangana Praja Samithi (TPS) and Janata party. After that, he joined the Congress.

Later, he started an NGO, Gurudakshina Foundation and conducted various social service he programmes with the help of friends.

Kasaiah was native of Takkelappadu village under Yerrupalam mandal. He worked as a teacher in the early days and played a key



Former MLA and former ZP chairman Chekuri Kasaiah

role in Telangana movement in 1969. Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu expressed deep condolences on the sudden demise of Chekuri Kasaiah and sent a condolence message to his family members. Transport Minister P Ajay Kumar, MP Nama Nageswara Rao, former Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, district MLAs and others expressed deep condolences over the demise of Kasaiah. They paid floral tributes to Kasaiah at his house and conveyed condolences to his family members.

Free cremation for Covid victims in Khammam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

TRANSPORT Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar has directed the municipal officials to conduct free cremation for those, who died of Covid-19. Along with Stambhadri Urban Development Authority Chairman Bachu Vijay Kumar and Municipal Commissioner Anurag Jayanthi, the Minister visited Ballepally Vaikuntha Dhamam here on Tuesday.

Ajay Kumar told the Commissioner that Khammam Municipal Corporation should provide firewood and other material needed for cremation free and not to charge even a rupee from the family of the deceased. He wanted the officials to make suitable arrangements so that family members of the deceased would not face any problems. He enquired about the number of cremations that took place at Vaikunta Dhamam and arrangements made for the purpose.



Transport Minister P Ajay Kumar inspecting Vaikunta Dhamam in Ballepally village on Tuesday

City Mayor P Neeraja, Deputy Mayor Shaik Fathima Zohara, corporators Kamartapu Murali, Karnati Krishna, Nagandla Koti and municipal staff were present on the occasion.



MLA Nomula Bhagat Kumar interacting with the staff during inspection at Kamala Nehru Hospital in Nagarjuna Sagar on Tuesday

Conduct 150 tests per day in Sagar: MLA Nomula

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NAGARJUNA SAGAR

NAGARJUNA Sagar MLA Nomula Bhagat Kumar stated that around 150 tests per day will be conducted in every Mandal in the constituency to control coronavirus effectively in this region. He advised the doctors of Kamala Nehru Hospital to render valuable services to corona patients.

On Tuesday along with local people's representatives, he inaugurated Covid Isolation Center at Zilla Praja Parishad School in Peddadevulapally village of Tripuraram Mandal in the constituency and inspected Kamala Nehru Hospital in Nagarjuna Sagar.

Addressing the gathering at Peddadevulapally, the MLA urged the people with Covid

symptoms to take the test and advised them to stay at home for their safety and also of their families.

Later, he inspected Government Primary Health Center in Peddadevulapally and inquired about the treatment being provided to the patients. He also inspected Kamala Nehru Hospital. He advised the doctors to provide best treatment to everyone, who comes to the hospital in the present corona pandemic. Doctors must be available round the clock to give treatment to corona patients, he directed.

Informing that he will inspect the hospital any time, he warned that action would be taken on the erring doctors. The MLA asked the doctors to bring to his notice if they have shortage of kits and medicines for necessary action.

IGP Stephen Ravindra meets Covid +ve police personnel



West Zone IGP Stephen Ravindra distributing corona safety kits to a police official at border check post at Ramapuram crossroads in kodad Mandal on Tuesday. District SP R Bhaskaran also seen

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SURYAPET / NALGONDA

WEST Zone IGP Stephen Ravindra directed the district police to implement the lockdown strictly in the district and advised them to take precautionary measures to save themselves from getting infected with corona while discharging duties.

On Tuesday, along with district SP R Bhaskaran, he toured Suryapet district. During the tour, the IGP met the families of police personnel, who were victims of corona and under home quarantine in Suryapet town. He

inquired about the health condition of police, infected with corona, and distributed fruits and medicines to them and wished them speedy recovery with courage and confidence. He advised the victims' families to bring to the notice of superiors if they face any problems.

Later, IGP Ravindra inspected the implementation of lockdown in the town and appreciated the duty police. Later, he visited TS-AP border check post at Ramapuram crossroads of Kodad Mandal and examined the lockdown status. He had lunch with duty

police at the border check post after interacting with them and distributing PPE kits, masks and sanitisers to them.

The IGP expressed satisfaction over the strict implementation of lockdown rules and regulations at the State border. He directed the police officials to allow ambulances unconditionally and allow other vehicles into the State if they have e-pass.

He also visited Nalgonda and along with district SP AV Ranganath and DSP inspected implementation of lockdown in the town and conducted a review meeting at DPO office.



SRMIST Director (International Relations) Kartar Singh presenting 10 oxygen concentrators to SRM MCH&RC's Pro-Vice Chancellor (Medical & Health Sciences) Prof Lt Col Dr A Ravikumar and Dean (Medical) Dr A Sundaram on behalf of National TsingHua University (NTHU), Taiwan

SRM Hospital receives 10 oxygen concentrators from NTHU, Taiwan

KATTANKULATHUR

SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre (SRM MCH&RC) in Kattankulathur, Tamil Nadu has received ten oxygen concentrators from National TsingHua University (NTHU), Taiwan as a sign of goodwill to help us battle Covid-19. These 10 Oxygen concentrators were sent as part of the "Love from NTHU, Taiwan" campaign. The money was sourced from voluntary donations from the NTHU Alumni Association and the Centre for India Studies at

NTHU. SRMIST is one of the strategic partners of NTHU, through which a dedicated Taiwan Education Centre has been established on campus, working to build the education and cultural partnership between the university and Taiwan higher education institutions.

On behalf of NTHU, SRMIST's Director (International Relations) Kartar Singh presented these concentrators to SRM MCH&RC's Pro-Vice Chancellor (Medical & Health Sciences) Prof Lt Col Dr A Ravikumar and Dean (Medical) Dr A Sundaram.

KRISHNAPATNAM HERBAL MEDICINE

Somireddy demands immediate resumption of distribution

- Alleges that YSRCP leaders are getting the medicine for themselves and their followers by confining Anandaiah in CVR Institute and making him to prepare the medicine there

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELLORE

TDP leaders demanded the state government to start distribution of Anandaiah's herbal preparation for Covid-19 immediately for saving lives of the poor without waiting for approvals from Ayush and other statutory bodies. They witnessed a demonstration of Anandaiah's eye drops in Krishnapatnam village where a youngster from Manthani in Peddapalli district of Telangana suffering from Covid for more than 20 days was administered the drops.

Party senior leader Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy criticised that the medicine is now being supplied to some close relatives, friends of the ruling party leaders and industrialists in the state and Anandaiah was confined to CVR Institute located on the Port premises where he was asked to prepare the concoction and eye drops. He asked what the district collector and SP were doing when the ruling party leaders are ille-



A young Covid patient from Manthani expresses his happiness after receiving medicine in the form of eye drops in the presence of TDP leaders at Krishnapatnam on Tuesday

gally getting the medication without approvals from the Ayush and ICMR. He appealed to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to give directions for preparation and distribution of the medicine in open to save the victims of pandemic.

During their visit to Krishnapatnam, the TDP leaders on Tuesday witnessed administration of the medicine in the form of eye drops to Prakash, of Manthani who was accompanied by his mother Malleeswari. According to video footage distributed by TDP leaders, the man who is said to be suffering from Covid recovered from the ailment within minutes.

Chandramohan Reddy wondered as to why the state government is saying there is a need to get a nod from the Centre though the Ayush department said the medication is harmless. He said the inventor of the medicine has been now detained in the name of approvals otherwise he would have provided medicine to at least 10,000 victims of Covid.

The TDP leader asked the government to arrange tight police protection for distribution of the medicine in a systematic manner following the time slot system.

TDP general secretary and MLC B Ravichandra, party Nellore city in-charge K Srinivasulu Reddy, and others were present.

YSR FREE CROP INSURANCE

AP CM transers ₹1,820 cr into accounts of 15 lakh farmers

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Tuesday credited Rs 1,820.23 crore under 'YSR Free Crop Insurance' scheme into the bank accounts of 15.15 lakh farmers who have lost their crop during 2020 kharif.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the government had taken the responsibility of supporting farmers in all hard times and thus brought in the free crop insurance scheme, without imposing the burden of premium on farmers. Unlike during the previous government, where the farmer had to pay his share, while both state and Central governments will be paying an even share of the premium amount to avail insurance, the state government had revamped the scheme by paying the entire insurance premium ensuring that all the farmers enrolled in e-crop platform get their share of insurance directly with no middlemen.

The Chief Minister said that a total of Rs 3,788.25 crore was spent on this crop insurance scheme in the last 23 months, including the dues of Rs 715.84 crore left by the previous government. Besides these, the state



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy releases compensation under YSR Free Crop Insurance scheme into accounts of farmers at Tadepalli on Tuesday

government had spent Rs 83,000 crore towards farmer welfare in the last 23 months, whereas for Rythu Bharosa alone Rs 17,029 crore was spent.

Further, the Chief Minister said that the government has been working to safeguard the interests of the farmers and thus established 1,0778 Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) integrating with village secretariats to benefit the farmers. He said that loss in kharif 2020 is being compensated by the onset of next kharif, ensuring that no farmer suffers from losses.

Taking transparency in governance to the next level, all these

details, compensation for the crop loss will be displayed at RBKs for social audit and those missing out from the list can get enrolled at RBK itself. Not just from seeds to marketing but RBKs also serve the purpose of crop purchasing centres, he said.

The Chief Minister said that the state government had credited Rs 1,038 crore as Input Subsidy for those farmers who lost their crops to natural calamities, with no delays ensuring that every farmer gets compensated in the same season.

Besides, the government had spent Rs 18,342 crore for procur-

ing paddy and Rs 4761 crore towards purchasing other crops and support the farmers. In order to provide free nine-hour electricity to farmers during daytime, Rs 17,430 crore was spent. Additionally, the government had cleared Rs 960 crore paddy procurement arrears and Rs 384 crore seed procurement arrears left by the previous government.

Supporting the farmer community, the government had set up Agriculture Advisory Committees at village level, zonal level, district level and state level in connection with the RBKs to guide the farmers in crop planning.

Label manipulative media on tweets of 10 *mantris*: Cong

Earlier, Twitter tagged tweets of Union Min Shekhawat and BJP leader Patra as ‘devious media’

NEW DELHI

THE Congress on Tuesday wrote to Twitter demanding ‘manipulative media’ tag on tweets of several Union ministers for allegedly spreading lies and malicious propaganda.

In this regard, Congress general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala has written to Twitter’s Lead for Legal, Policy and Trust and Safety Vijaya Gadde and Deputy General Counsel and Vice President (Legal) Jim Baker. The Congress leader sought action against several Union ministers in the Narendra Modi-led BJP government at the Centre for spreading forged documents through their official Twitter handles.

Surjewala alleged that “the subject matter of the

forged Toolkit document was created by certain BJP leaders to gain undue and wrongful political advantage by spreading potentially dangerous, false and fabricated material through their Twitter handles against the Indian National Congress and its leaders”.

Earlier, Twitter had tagged tweets of BJP leaders Sambit Patra and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat as ‘manipulative media’, according to The Indian Express report.

The 11 Union ministers against whom the Congress has sought action are Giriraj Singh, Piyush Goyal, Smriti Irani, Ravi Shankar Prasad, Prahlad Joshi, Dharmendra Pradhan, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Thawarchand Gehlot, Harsh Vardhan, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and .

The ministers, with a clear mal-intent to exploit the



social media space (Twitter), used their handles to spread lies and malicious propaganda throughout the territory of India, Surjewala wrote in the letter. He also said, “The forged, fabricated material and the claims made under the #CongressToolkitExposed by various ministers are identical to the material that has already been marked as ‘manipulative media’ by Twitter.”

The letter also carried the URLs of the specific tweets by these ministers which the Congress demanded to be marked under ‘manipulative media’.

“Further, it is a matter of fact that people tend to believe ‘true’ and take on face value, any information that is put up directly by a Union Minister of the Government of India through his/ her official/ verified Twitter account. Hence, it becomes all the more im-

perative to tag, ‘manipulative media’, on all such tweets made by Ministers of the Government of India on the above referred forged toolkit document created by the BJP,” he said in his letter.

It is reasonable to expect that the aforementioned individuals will be dealt with the same yardstick as applied in other cases where the Twitter platform is misused to broadcast forged and fabricated material and all the aforesaid Tweets ‘manipulative media’ by Twitter Inc,” Surjewala added.

The Delhi Police Special Cell on Tuesday served notices to Congress social media head Rohan Gupta and party spokesperson M V Rajeev Gowda in connection with the BJP’s ‘toolkit’ allegations. BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra is also likely to be summoned for questioning in the coming days.

WINDOWS

3 top Manipuri rebels die in road accident

KOLKATA: Three top leaders of the banned Manipuri separatist group, People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), including its acting chairman Khumujam Ratan, have died in a road accident.

One of Manipur’s most wanted rebel, Ratan, 58, had three more aliases in police record -- Sathy, Hera and Awangba Meitei.

The two other rebel leaders killed were Mayengbam Joychand (3 aliases -- Joy Luwang, Chamba and Michael) who was organising secretary of the outfit and ‘General Staff Officer 1’ R.K. Ramananda (alias -- Basan, Rozer and Bijoy Gobinda).

A PREPAK press note said, “the untimely demise of the three cadres has left an irreparable loss” to the outfit.

But it did not disclose the exact spot and circumstances leading to the accident.

Gang rape in Saharsa, one nabbed

PATNA: A woman in her early 20s was abducted and gang raped by 4 men in Bihar Saharsa district. The incident occurred on Monday night when the victim, along with her friend, was returning home from a marriage function on a motorcycle. The four accused spotted them travelling on a deserted road, and intercepted them in a car. They thrashed the victim’s friend and kidnapped her in the car near Baluaha canal under Sadar police station. The accused took her to an isolated area in Saharsa and raped her one by one. After committing the crime, the accused threatened her with dire consequences and released her. The victim reached home in the morning hours and revealed her ordeal to her parents. The victim’s parents immediately contacted Sadar police station and filed a written complaint against them. “We have raided the houses of all four accused by four separate teams but managed to arrest only one accused -- Upendra Yadav alias Santosh, a resident of ward 13 in Saharsa,” said Santosh Kumar, DSP of Saharsa (Sadar).

Vaccinations fall by 35% amid shortage

‘PM Cares’ ventilators: 113 of 150 supplied in Marathwada defective, Centre asked to explain

AS the vaccine mismanagement and the resultant shortage continue, the daily vaccination has come down to 980 per million people as of May 23, down from 1,455 per million a week earlier and against the world average of 3,564 per million, according to a report. The only saving grace is the continuing decline in the pandemic caseload, which has been trending downward for the second week in a row as daily cases declined 22 per cent sequentially in the week ended May 23, which is faster than the 15 per cent fall the week before, Crisil said in the report.

This means that the infections may have crossed the peak on May 6, when the country had reported 4.14 lakh cases.

Daily new cases now average 2.5 lakh, down from 3.3 lakh in the week ended May 16. More significantly, as of Tuesday, the daily caseload has fallen below the 2-lakh mark in the past 24 hours there were only 1,96,427 new coronavirus infections.

With the vaccine availability remaining a national bottleneck, the pace of vaccination has been steeply falling and as of May 23, daily vaccinations have come down to a low of 980 per million people from 1,455 per million a week earlier, down over 35 per cent.

The Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court on Tuesday took serious cognizance of “defective” ventilators supplied to the Marathwada region through PM Cares funds and directed the Central Government’s lawyer to inform about the action to be taken against the supplier and remedial steps to be taken to address the issue.

After taking cognizance of news reports, the High Court noted that out of 150 ventilators supplied through PM Cares funds in the region, except 37 ventilators which are yet to be unboxed, 113 ventilators put to use at government or private hospitals are found to be defective.

Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi has sent three truckloads of firewood to enable the poor to cremate their dead in Rae Bareilly, her parliamentary constituency. According to party spokesman Vinay Dwivedi: “Soniji has directed her representative K.L. Sharma to arrange wood for cremation and now the party cadres will help the poor in cremating their near and dear ones.”

In view of the rising Mucormycosis (commonly known as black fungus) cases across the country, the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers on Tuesday informed that it has allocated 19,420 additional vials of Amphotericin-B to various States and Union Territories.



A health worker collects swab sample of a child passenger at New Delhi Railway Station; (Right) a medic (not in picture) administers a dose of the Covid-19 vaccine to a woman during a special vaccination drive in Srinagar, on Tuesday



States to get 19,420 vials of Black Fungus drug

Sonia sends firewood for cremation in Rae Bareilly

No home isolation in 18 Maha dists

The Maharashtra government has decided to stop home quarantining of COVID-19 patients in 18 districts where the positivity rate is high and all active patients in these areas would be admitted to COVID Care Centers, health minister Rajesh Tope said here on Tuesday.

Of 36 districts in the state, Satara, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Osmanabad, Beed, Raigad, Pune, Hingoli, Akola, Amravati, Kolhapur, Thane, Sangli, Gadchiroli, Wardha, Nashik, Ahmednagar and Latur have above-average positivity rates, as per the health department data.

Ordinarily, asymptomatic patients or those who have mild symptoms of coronavirus infection are advised home isolation.

Govt to fix price of O2 concentrators

NEW DELHI: The Centre apprised the Delhi High Court that it is in process of coming up with the formula for fixing the Maximum Retail Price of oxygen concentrators. Advocate Kirtiman Singh, appearing for Central Government told the Delhi High Court that National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has initiated the process of fixing of formula for the pricing of oxygen concentrators. A Division Bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Jasmeet Singh, thereafter, posted the matter for further hearing next Monday. Earlier, Centre had informed the court that NPPA has asked all the manufacturers or importers of pulse oximeter and oxygen concentrators to submit the MRP details within 7 days.

MP CM announces unlock from June 1

BHOPAL: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said the process of unlocking will start in the state from June 1 for which a team of ministers will be formed. Chairing a cabinet meeting, Chouhan said, “We will start the process of unlocking in the state from June 1 but Covid testing will also continue so that no Covid-infected person becomes a carrier of the infection.” He said we have to be prepared well in advance to stop the third wave of the pandemic. We have to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and encourage others to follow it as well as trust the medical system, he added. “A team of ministers will be formed to assess the process of unlocking.”

Hospital owner who ‘exposed’ UP govt on O2, arrested for beating TV scribe

Lucknow

THE owner of Lucknow-based Sun Hospital, booked for allegedly “spreading rumours” about oxygen shortage, was arrested on Tuesday on charges of assaulting and robbing a TV news channel employee.

The news channel employee has claimed that Akhilesh Pandey assaulted him on Monday night inside the hospital, according to Indian Express report.

However, Pandey’s wife Preeti has alleged that the arrest and the entire case is part of a conspiracy to put pressure on Pandey because he refused to toe the line of the administration after an FIR was lodged against him for “spreading rumours over oxygen shortage at the hospital on May 3”.

On May 5, Pandey was booked on the basis of a complaint from the Lucknow administration. After the FIR, the hospital administration, which had put up a notice on May 3 asking relatives to take away patients as it was facing oxygen shortage, had moved the Allahabad High Court challenging the FIR.

On May 11, the Allahabad High Court stayed any coercive action against Pandey in connection with the case after the hospital filed an intervention application, alleging there was no supply of oxygen cylinders to the hospital by the district administration and “totally false statements had been given about the supply of oxygen to the hospital by the District Magistrate”.

Thereafter, on Monday (May 24), a case was lodged against Pandey at Vibhuti Khand police station for allegedly confining a news channel employee illegally.

“He has been accused of loot, illegally confining a news channel representative and extortion. We had received a complaint from news channel employee Nitin Mishra, and lodged an FIR,” said a police officer.

‘577 Covid orphans reported by States’

NEW DELHI

AS many as 577 COVID orphans have been reported by states so far and all of them are with their immediate families, sources have said.

Clarifying that these children are not abandoned and are under the watch and protection of district authorities, the sources said that if such children need counselling a team at NIMHANS is ready.

“There are 577 orphan kids due to COVID-19 identified by states. They are not abandoned

and under the watch and protection of district authorities,” a source said, adding that all the 577 children are with their families. The source further said that there is no shortage of funds for ensuring the welfare of these children.

“The Centre is in constant touch with states and districts about these kids. There is no shortage of funds for their welfare. The Women and Child Development Ministry has held meetings with all stakeholders, including the UNICEF,” the source added.

Chennai school teacher held for alleged sexual harassment

CHENNAI

City police has arrested a school teacher on charges of sexual harassment of his students, police said.

The police arrested G. Rajagopalan, who teaches accountancy to students at the Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan School here, following social media posts by school students and alumni accusing him of indulging in sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour like appearing topless for an on-line class on Monday. He was remanded to judicial custody till June 8. The school management had suspended him on Monday.



The Padma Seshadri group runs a clutch of schools and has notched up a good reputation.

The school management has said it is taking suo moto notice of the allegations and will take the necessary steps to address the situation in a free, fair and transparent manner.

Assuring the parents of its students, the school said it has zero tolerance towards any behaviour that adversely affects the physical, emotional and psychological well being of the students.

Choksi goes missing

NEW DELHI

FUGITIVE diamondaire Mehul Choksi, wanted in a Rs 13,500 crore loan fraud in Punjab National Bank, has gone missing in Antigua and Barbuda where he has been staying since January 2018, his lawyer and the Royal Police Force of the Caribbean island nation said. The businessman was last seen on Sunday in his car.

Police recovered the vehicle after a search but Choksi could not be found, a statement from the Antiguan police said on Monday night India time. His lawyer Vijay Aggarwal confirmed that Choksi had been missing since Sunday. “Police in Antigua have started search operations for him. The family is worried about his safety. We are keeping a

watch on developments,” Aggarwal told PTI on Tuesday.

The CBI, which is probing allegations against Choksi, is verifying the reports through “formal and informal” channels, including the Interpol that has issued a red corner notice against him on a request from the agency, officials here said.

The statement from the Antiguan police, which launched a missing person operation on Sunday, carries a photograph of the businessman and seeks information from the public. “The Police are investigating a Missing Person Report made of 62-year-old Mehul Choksi of Jolly Harbour. Mehul was reported missing on Sunday 23rd May 2021 at the Johnson Point Police Station,” it said.

Humble Pai: The man who found the antidote to Black Fungus

WITH cases of mucormycosis or so-called black fungus mushrooming across the country alongside the coronavirus pandemic, a shortage of drugs to treat this rare infection has resulted in several deaths. Liposomal Amphotericin B is a lifesaving medication that helps patients overcome this deadly fungal disease. And the brains behind the development of this medicine in India, back in 2010-11, is B Srikantha Annapa Pai. Pai was the head of the research and development team at Bharat Serums and Vaccines Limited in Mumbai. Now, when that medicine is saving lives across the country, all that he feels is “grateful”, according to News 18 report

Pai is a native of Gangolli village in Kundapura Taluk of Karnataka’s Udupi district. He got a degree of Bachelors in Pharma from the Government Pharmacy College in Bengaluru and completed his post-graduation from Ma-

nipal. “Job opportunities in Karnataka weren’t great. So I moved to Mumbai and stayed with my sister and started hunting for work. After several interviews, I landed a job with Bharat Serums,” he recalled.

Pai served the company for 17 long years. Gilead Sciences, an American company, originally owned the patent to the drug for the treatment of mucormycosis. The patent expired in 2008. “India didn’t have the necessary technology to create an alternative and so lots of research and development was necessary. So it took two long years for the team to finally come up with an efficient product,” said Pai. “There was no SoP (standard-operating procedure) for the redevelopment of the medicine. Only the basic formula of the drug is shared (by the company that created it) and they will only tell if the drug is made right or wrong. Hence, we had to do every other research and reach the clinical trial phase. We also



had to get permissions from the FDA and European Medical Agency before the trials. After all this, the drug was finally released in 2010-11.”

Mucormycosis, caused by a group of moulds called mucormycetes, is more common among people whose immunity has lowered due to Covid-19, diabetes, kidney disease, liver or cardiac disorders, age-related issues, or those on medication for auto-immune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. The disease begins to manifest as a skin infection in the air pockets located behind the forehead, nose, cheekbones and in between the eyes and teeth. It then spreads to the eyes, lungs and can even spread to the brain. It leads to blackening or discoloration over the nose, blurred or double vision, chest pain, breathing difficulties and coughing of blood. Experts say that the use of steroids in the treatment of Covid-19 and the fact that many of these patients have

diabetes as co-morbidity could be one of the reasons behind the spurt in black fungus cases.

“Mucormycosis majorly targets the lungs, liver and spleen,” said Pai. “Amphotericin B is the source of injections that are available everywhere. Four different varieties of injections have been developed from this primary source. The first one is the traditional product. The second is the liposomal amphotericin injection, which is 75% more effective than normal jabs. The third is lipid complex, which is 20 times more effective than the second one. The last one is amphotericin emulsion, which is 150 times safer than regular jabs.”

Pai has the patent for lipid complex and amphotericin in his name. He also holds 16 other patents including of protocol drugs used while administering anaesthesia while performing surgeries. He now leads a peaceful post-retirement life with his family in Mumbai.

TODAY's QUOTE

Pvt banks should continue fin services

Private sector banks should ensure continuity in the provision of various financial services, including credit facilities to individuals and businesses, in the face of challenges brought on by the pandemic. We had announced a slew of measures, including term liquidity facility of Rs 50,000 crore.


- Shaktikanta Das, RBI Governor



LOCKDOWN EFFECT

Mythological TV shows in demand

With a majority of States under lockdown, it is a repeat of last year's trend for television networks, with viewers showing a greater proclivity to watch mythological shows, BARC said. Viewership of mythological content increased to 15.2 billion minutes, which is a 73% growth over the 8.8 billion billion minutes recorded.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)				
US Dollar	73.49		South	
Euro	90.07		African Rand	6.05
UAE Dirham	20.4		Hong Kong Dollar	10.78
Thai Baht	2.55		Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.21		New Zealand Dollar	53.16
Australian Dollar	57.05		Saudi Riyal	21.33
Canadian Dollar	61.02		Swedish Krona	10.13
Swiss Franc	82.24		Singapore Dollar	55.99

DELHI WEDNESDAY 26 MAY 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Auto output falls 21%

Total vehicle production, excluding commercial vehicles, declined by 21 per cent month-on-month in April, due to an 11 per cent fall in manufacturing of passenger vehicles (PVs) and a 23 per cent drop in two-wheelers during the previous month, owing to the second wave. Besides, the three-wheeler production fell a massive 86 per cent in April over March, amid lower demand in the domestic market, India Ratings (Ind-Ra) said in the report. The ratings agency said it believes that the second wave of Covid-19 has interrupted the momentum recorded by the industry in the third and fourth quarters of 2020-21. Many original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) also advanced maintenance shutdowns to April and May on account of dampening consumer sentiments, closure of automotive dealerships, as well as supply-side constraints.

Dizo brand from realme

Dizo, the first brand under the realme techlife ecosystem, has announced its global launch. Pronounced as 'dee-zoe', the brand aims to break the clutter of tech similarities and offer solutions. It offers technology that complements individuality of a consumer, empowers them, and becomes an extension of their respective personalities. Dizo will receive unwavering support from realme, on three key aspects - industrial design, supply chain and AIoT experience. Madhav Sheth, Vice President, realme, Chief Executive Officer, realme India, Europe said: "This is a momentous occasion as Dizo goes live with its mission to offer innovative and diversified AIoT solutions to its consumers. I am very excited to tell you that Dizo already has great products in the pipeline to offer to the people. We wish Dizo good luck."

Bosch's initiative

Auto components major Bosch Group on Tuesday said it provided insurance cover of Rs 70 lakh in case of demise of any of its employees in India due to Covid-19. The group, which had pledged Rs 50 crore last year through its companies in India towards implementing various community welfare initiatives to combat Covid-19, also said it is continuing to extend medical insurance coverage for dependents of deceased employees for a period of three years from the date of demise. "Bosch India remains committed to helping the government fight the social disruptions caused by the second wave of the pandemic in a reliable and stable manner," Soumitra Bhat-tacharya, Managing Director, President, Bosch Group in India

Newgen net at ₹52.7cr

Newgen Software Technologies on Tuesday said it has clocked a 27.2 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 52.7 crore for the March 2021 quarter. The company had registered a net profit of Rs 41.5 crore in the year-ago period, Newgen said. Its revenue grew 4.8 per cent to Rs 200 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 190.8 crore in the year-ago period. "In FY'21, we continued to witness business momentum with expanded customer engagements and the addition of 67 new logos under our umbrella. We are on our path to the transformation from new license revenues to more stable subscription revenues and are witnessing a continuous increase in this segment," Diwakar Nigam Chairman, Managing Director, Newgen Software Technologies

Sensex snaps 2-day rally as investors book profits

The BSE benchmark falls 14 pts, Nifty up 11 pts

MUMBAI

THE BSE benchmark Sensex took a breather on Tuesday after a two-session rally as investors cashed in gains in index heavyweights HDFC twins and Reliance Industries despite firm global cues and declining Covid-19 cases.

The 30-share gauge settled 14.37 points or 0.03 per cent lower at 50,637.53. The broader NSE Nifty inched up 10.75 points or 0.07 per cent to 15,208.45. HDFC Bank was the top laggard among the Sensex constituents, dropping 2.02 per cent, followed by Axis Bank, Reliance Industries, IndusInd Bank, HDFC and ITC.

On the other hand, Asian Paints topped the gainers' list with a jump of 3.38 per cent. Titan, Bajaj Finserv, ONGC, TCS, Infosys and Power Grid were among the other major winners. The market breadth was positive, as 21 stocks advanced while 9 closed in the red in the 30-share pack. "Domestic equities traded in a range. While



BFSIs witnessed some profit-taking after sharp recovery recorded in last couple of trading days, others traded positively," said Binod Modi, Head Strategy at Reliance Securities.

Notably, metal stocks witnessed recovery as sharp correction in the last couple of days brought investors' interest back to metal companies, which have reported robust earnings in 4Q FY21 and have given out healthy guidance for the ensuing quarters, he added. He, however, stated that participants will continue to focus on trajectory of daily Covid-19 cases and vaccination ramp up in the country in the near term, and possible withdrawal of restrictions in a phased manner by states from next week should boost the market mood.

The daily count of Covid-19 cases in the country fell below the 2-lakh mark after over a month at 1,96,427, while the death toll also slipped to the lowest in 21 days at 3,511, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday. Sector-wise, BSE consumer durables, IT, teck, metal, auto and FMCG were among the gainers, while power, energy, finance and bankex ended in the red. Broader BSE mid-cap index fell 0.31 per cent, while the small-cap gauge rose 0.26 per cent.

SIDDHARTHA SINGH

INDIA is preparing a stimulus package for sectors worst affected by a deadly coronavirus wave, aiming to support an economy struggling with a slew of localised lockdowns, people familiar with the matter said.

The finance ministry is working on proposals to bolster the tourism, aviation and hospitality industries, along with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the people said, asking not to be identified as the deliberations are private. The discussions are at an early stage and no timeline for an announcement has been decided, they said. A finance ministry spokesman declined to comment.

The latest wave of Covid-19 infections has made India the global hotspot for the pandemic and has decimated travel since the second wave picked up in March even though Prime Minister Narendra Modi has refused to implement a strict nationwide lockdown. With nearly 2,00,000 cases daily many local governments, including India's most industrialized States -- have imposed curbs against the spread of the virus.

That's prompted many economists to cut their forecasts for the financial year that began on April 1, as rising unemployment and dwindling savings among consumers dim the chances for dou-

VSEZ nod for new IT, ITeS units in TS

HANS BUSINESS VISAKHAPATNAM

THE Unit Approval Committee (UAC) of Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone at a meeting held virtually for Telangana, approved setting up of few SEZ IT/ITES based units, besides granting routine approvals for broad banding and procurement of duty free material worth hundreds of crores for the upcoming SEZs in Hyderabad such as Sustain Properties.

There are a total of 61 SEZs operational under VSEZ as on date with 527 operational units, in and out of that 30 SEZs fall under IT Sector, and 26 are operational in Telangana alone.

The 2nd UAC meeting of the VSEZ for the FY 2021-22 chaired by VSEZ Development Commissioner A. Rama Mohan Reddy on Monday approved setting up of two new units, one of them a mega unit namely M/s Qualcomm India Pvt Ltd (U-2), over an area of 1.57 million sq feet in 17 floors, in Sustain Properties Pvt Ltd SEZ,

which was recently notified as SEZ in Hyderabad.

Qualcomm is basically into Wireless technologies, 5G R&D, Auto R&D, Artificial Intelligence, will set up a mega facility in Hyderabad which will be operational by September 2022. This SEZ is developed by Raheja Group. The total proposed investment by Qualcomm is Rs 3,904 crore and will export IT services of Rs 28,658 crore and provide employment to 8,700 in the next five years.

The other unit to be set up is of Vector 97 Software and Services Pvt Ltd, to be set up in DLF Infocity Hyderabad Pvt Ltd, and will achieve FOB value of exports to the tune of Rs 13 crore and generate jobs to 100 persons over a period of five years.

The meeting was attended virtually by all the senior officials who are members of the UAC viz., representative of DGFT (Director General of Foreign Trade), Revenue, Excise, Customs, Drug Controller, and TSIT, besides the units and developers as well as VSEZ.

MSN Labs begins Phase III trials of Covid capsules

HYDERABAD

CITY - BASED drug firm MSN Laboratories on Tuesday said it is initiating a phase III clinical trial of Molnupiravir capsules for the treatment of Covid-19 in India.



The company said it has received its clinical trial approval on May 19, 2021, from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) to perform an efficacy and safety study on Molnupiravir capsules on mild to moderate Covid-19 patients. The company will start its clinical trials in more than 40 sites across the country and the first dosing is expected to begin soon, MSN Laboratories said in a regulatory filing. The clinical trials will be performed on more than 2,400 subjects suffering from mild to moderate Covid-19, it added. Molnupiravir is an experimental drug having antiviral properties and is currently under clinical-stage study for Covid treatment.

Gujarat gets highest FDI for 4th time

The State receives \$30.23 bn, a 37% out of total foreign investments in the country

AHMEDABAD

FOR the fourth consecutive year, Gujarat has retained the top position in the country during 2020-21 in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), the state government said in a statement on Tuesday.

Gujarat was ahead of all other States by securing 37 per cent out of the total foreign investments that came in the country during 2020-21. With 37 per cent share, Gujarat received a total FDI of \$30.23 billion in 2020-21.

The country managed to garner a total FDI of \$81.72 billion in 2020-21, an increase of 10 per cent from the previous financial year, said the statement. This is the fourth consecutive year when Gujarat topped the list of States in attracting FDI, said the statement adding that the State managed to retain the top position despite the coronavirus pandemic.

Almost 94 per cent of the in-



vestment that came in Gujarat during 2020-21 was in the computer hardware and software sector, the statement said. It added that Gujarat alone accounts for 78 per cent of the country's total investment in this sector. With 27 per cent, Maharashtra was on the second position after Gujarat in attracting FDI. Karnataka was on third position with 13 per cent share, the State government said citing the Centre's data.

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani said investors are preferring the State because of transparent governance, industry-friendly policies and steps taken by his government to ensure ease of doing business.

Virtusa opens Covid care centre in Hyderabad unit

Facility open for team members, family and customers

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

VIRTUSA Corporation, IT services and solutions company, on Tuesday opened their 24/7 Covid care isolation facility at their Hyderabad campus. The company said that they are in the process of launching similar facilities across its major office campuses in the country. Recently, Virtusa launched a Covid Care portal and a mobile app for its team members and this facility marks the next set of initiatives taken by the company.

The isolation facility will have 30 beds, showers and washrooms, and nutritional diet for those admitted. Doctors and nursing staff at the site are from Renova Hospitals, overseen by a medical offi-



cer. All staff members at the facility will have the mandatory PPE kits and all other safety measures as prescribed by the government. This facility will initially serve team members, their family members and customers of Virtusa. All patients will be regularly monitored by doctors, nurses and essential medication provided.

Sundar Narayanan, the Chief People Officer (CPO) of Virtusa, said, "We have introduced several initiatives under our Covid care cover for our team members, their families and our clients.

No major impact on client deliverables

The company has increased hiring of university graduates as well as lateral hires

NEW DELHI

IT major Infosys on Tuesday said it has seen no major impact on client deliverables due to the ongoing pandemic, and has been working proactively with clients to mitigate any potential impact.

The Bengaluru-based company has also enabled vaccination for 14,150 employees and their family members through its centres, and is in the process of setting up additional facilities across its campuses in India.

Besides, Infosys is providing financial support, exploring training and job opportunities for the next of kin and offering necessary assistance to support dependents of deceased staff members. "We continue to operate in a remote model across our



INFY ON COVID

offices and see no major impact on our client deliverables due to the ongoing health situation.

In few instances, where we have had challenges, we have been working proactively with our clients to mitigate any potential impact," Infosys said in a

statement. As part of its localization strategy, Infosys has made significant investments in near shore hubs across many countries in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific over the last few years in terms of building capabilities and acquiring talent, it

added. The company has also significantly increased hiring of university graduates as well as lateral hires, over the last few quarters, globally.

"While the second wave in India is having a far more adverse effect, for companies like ours, having large bench strength (talent pool) both in India and internationally is helping us ensure seamless client delivery. Our clients too, continue to be very supportive during this time," Infosys noted.

As India reels under the impact of the deadly second wave of coronavirus infections, several organisations across the spectrum have come forward to support the relief efforts to tackle the shortage of medical oxygen, beds, and other resources.

IPL to tentatively begin on Sept. 18 or 19, 10 double-headers in three-week window

NEW DELHI

THE postponed Indian Premier League will resume tentatively on September 18 or 19 in the UAE with as many as 10 double-headers expected to be played during a three-week window, a senior BCCI official told PTI on Tuesday. The final might be held on October 9 or 10.

The three-week window will be enough for the league to complete its remaining 31 games for the season, a win-win scenario for all the primary stakeholders including the BCCI, franchises and broadcasters. The IPL was postponed on May 4 after multiple COVID-19 cases inside its bio-bubble came

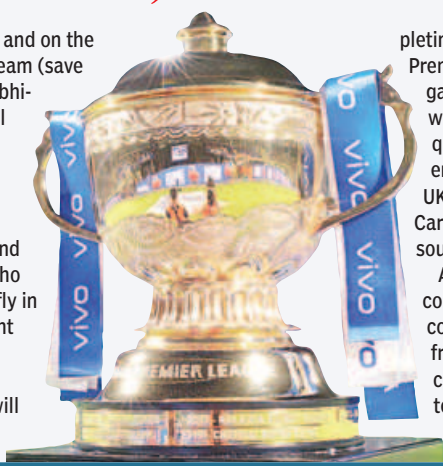
to light. "The BCCI has spoken to all the stakeholders and the likely start could be between September 18th to 20th. Since September 18 is a Saturday and 19 a Sunday, it is more likely that you would want to re-start it on a weekend date," the official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"Similarly, October 9th or 10th will be the final as it's a weekend. We are finalising the itinerary and there will be 10 double headers and seven evening matches along with four main games (two qualifiers, one eliminator and the final), which completes the list of 31 matches," the official added.

The Indian team's last Test match against England is set to finish on Septem-

ber 14 at Manchester and on the next day, the whole team (save Hanuma Vihari and Abhimanyu Easwaran) will be flown to UAE in a chartered flight for a "bubble to bubble" transfer.

"The Indian team and the English players who will be available will fly in the same charter flight from Manchester to Dubai. Similarly, the West Indies players will also fly in after com-



pleting the Caribbean Premier League engagements. There will be three-day quarantine for players arriving from UK and the Caribbean," the source said.

A franchise official confirmed that a communication from BCCI has come on the matter. "We have been told by the BCCI

to be ready for the tournament. We have been given a September 15 to 20 window," a team official said.

India's white ball series against South Africa cancelled:

The BCCI has decided to cancel India's T20 series against South Africa scheduled in September, which was a build-up to the side's World T20 preparations.

"The series can't be held and in any case there can't be any better preparation for the T20 World Cup than playing a high intensity tournament like IPL. Since the T20 World Cup will start within a week or 10 days after completion of the IPL, the SA series can only be held at a later date.

"There is a chance that India might play extra games when they tour South Africa early next year," the source said.

The two-Test home series against NZ could also be shifted:

The India home season also had a two Test series against New Zealand in November and the dates of which could be shifted depending upon when the T20 World Cup ends.

While BCCI, as of now, will not give up its hosting rights and wait how the COVID-19 situation in India pans out, there is very little chance that countries will want to travel to India which is facing its worst health emergency since independence. (PTI)

Railways suspends arrested star wrestler Sushil Kumar

NEW DELHI

TWO-time Olympian Sushil Kumar, who was arrested by the Delhi Police on Sunday in connection with the death of wrestler Sagar Dhankar, has been suspended by the Indian Railways until further orders, officials said on Tuesday.

Northern Railway spokesperson Deepak Kumar said, "A case against Sushil Kumar, (Adhoc)JAG/IRTS, on premature repatriation to Northern Railway from NDMC, in respect of a criminal offence, is under investigation. He was detained in police custody on May 23 for a period exceeding forty-eight hours."

"Now, therefore Sushil Kumar JAG/(Adhoc) IRTS is deemed to have been suspended with effect from the



date of detention i.e. May 23, 2021 in terms of Rule 5 (2) of (D&A) Rules, 1968 and shall remain under suspension until further orders," he said.

Meanwhile, the Crime Branch of the Delhi Police on Tuesday took two-time olympian Sushil Kumar to Chhatrasal Stadium and his flat in the national capital to further probe the case of the death of wrestler Sagar Dhankar.

The Crime Branch sleuths took the wrestler first to the Chhatrasal Stadium here and questioned him. The police sleuths asked Kumar about the chain of events on May 4, when the brawl took place, in which Dhankar was badly injured. Dhankar had succumbed to his injuries in the hospital later.

The police also took Kumar to the parking lot, where the brawl took place.

Later, the forensic team joined the Delhi Police sleuths and collected material from the spot. The Crime Branch team then arrived at Kumar's Model Town flat and questioned him again.

Kumar was arrested after staying on the run for 18 days after the death of wrestler Dhankar.

According to Delhi Police officials, Kumar had travelled to Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Haryana during the 18-day-long cat and mouse chase game.

He was finally arrested from Delhi's Mundka area on Sunday morning, when he had come to collect some cash and also borrowed a scooter from a national level player.

10 SUPERSTARS WHO WENT WRONG

1. Bruno Souza: Brazilian goalkeeper was given 22 years for the murder of former girlfriend, Eliza Samudio. In a chilling revelation, Bruno's teenage cousin said that some of Samudio's body parts were fed to dogs.

2. Oscar Pistorius: Known as the 'Blade Runner', the South African sprinter was sentenced to 13 years and five months for the premeditated murder of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp.

3. Deepak Pahal: Indian boxer, now on the run after making a daring escape, was involved in multiple murders. The former junior national champion is one of the most wanted criminals in India.

4. Iqbal Singh Boparai: India athlete, Iqbal Singh was charged with the double murder of his wife and mother in the US. He was one of India's top shot putters in the 80s.

5. Lance Armstrong: Considered as one of the greatest cyclists of all time, the iconic American cyclist was stripped of all his Tour de France titles following a doping scandal.

6. Hansie Cronje: Died in a plane crash, the former South Africa cricket captain was banned for life for his role in a match-fixing scandal during Proteas' tour of India in 2000.

7. Mike Tyson: The American boxing great was named 'The Baddest Man on the Planet' and he was bad. Once, he was disqualified for biting Evander Holyfield's ear, then charge for rape and assault.

8. Navjot Singh Sidhu: Former Indian opener was found guilty and sentenced to a three-year prison term for homicide following a road rage incident.

9. Boris Becker: The German tennis great was once the youngest Grand Slam champion, winning Wimbledon as a 17-year-old in 1985. Becker was given two-year probation for tax evasion.

10. Geoffrey Boycott: Former England batsman and a celebrated commentator, Boycott was given a suspended sentence for domestic violence.

NEW DELHI

ARRESTED in a murder case, double Olympic-medallist Sushil Kumar is set to be dropped from the Wrestling Federation of India's annual contracts list along with Pooja Dhanda on account of non-performance when the body holds a review meeting next month.

The meeting between the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) and sponsors Tata Motors was to be held in 2020 but was put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic. A WFI source said the decision to drop Sushil is purely based on performance and has nothing to do with his arrest for his alleged involvement in the murder of a fellow wrestler, Sagar Dhankar, at the Chhatrasal stadium.

"It is clear that Sushil and Pooja have not done anything notable since they were offered contracts. They will not make the cut when the review meeting is held next month," a WFI source told PTI.

The WFI had taken a leaf out of BCCI's book to offer central contracts to its players in 2019. About 150 wrestlers had got one-year contracts which are subject to review. Sushil was promoted to Rs 30 lakh Grade A contract after initially being placed in Grade B that gave the wrestlers an annual remuneration of Rs 20 lakh.

Pooja was also placed in Grade A. Sushil could not win any medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta and also bowed out of the 2019 World Championship with a close first-round defeat. He has not competed since then. The 2018 World Championship bronze-medallist Pooja too has lost

her place in the 57kg category. She did not compete in 2020 and her last medal-winning performance came in July 2019 when she won a silver at the Grand Prix of Spain.

When contacted, WFI Assistant Secretary Vinod Tomar did not confirm exclusion of the two wrestlers but hinted such a step cannot be ruled out either. "All decisions will be made at the meeting only. But one

thing is sure that sponsors' money will not be distributed for nothing. We have to utilise the money wisely," Tomar said.

Much before Sushil got embroiled in the shocking case, there were questions as to why WFI was keeping him in the contracted list given his lack of participation at the international level. To this, Tomar explained that, "Sushil was not paid his full contract amount in 2020."

"See, we did not give fresh contract to any wrestlers in 2020 because there was no review. We paid Sushil a sum only for one quarter in 2020 and he got nothing after that because he was not competing," he said.

A decision on Olympic bronze-medallist Sakshi Malik, who has been beaten by the young Sonam Malik four times in the last 15 months in the 62kg category, will also be keenly watched.

Sakshi, who has a Grade A contract, was forced to compete in the non-Olympic 65kg division, where she won a silver medal at the Asian Championships in Almaty, last month. Tomar said there are good chances that Seema Bisla, who qualified for the Tokyo Games in 50kg, will be given a contract. (PTI)

UEFA puts 1,700 Champions League final tickets on sale

NYON (SWITZERLAND): With only four days to go before the Champions League final in Portugal, UEFA put 1,700 tickets on sale Tuesday for fans worldwide for the game between Manchester City and Chelsea.

UEFA said the tickets, which cost between 70 and 600 euros (\$78 and \$670), were being sold on its website from 1200 GMT. Buyers are limited to two tickets.

The Estádio do Dragão in Porto will be one-third full with up to 16,500 spectators for Saturday's game.

It was moved from Istanbul because of current travel limits in Turkey amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Man City and Chelsea each had an allocation of 6,000 seats to sell to their fans. UEFA gave three options for spectators to get into the stadium: proof of being vaccinated; a negative PCR test dating no earlier than Wednesday; a negative antigen test result from Friday or Saturday.

Border controls in Portugal will also apply to countries where fans have traveled from, UEFA said.

Portugal is hosting the final instead of Istanbul for the second straight year. Last August, Bayern Munich beat Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 in Lisbon. (AP)

Mohali stadium named after hockey icon Balbir Singh Sr



CHANDIGARH

THE Mohali International Hockey Stadium in Punjab near here was dedicated to legendary centre-forward Balbir Singh Senior at a formal ceremony on his first death anniversary on Tuesday.

State Sports Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi said once the COVID pandemic eased out an international hockey tournament would be held in the stadium to mark the hockey stalwart's sporting journey.

He said the sports department would start a scholarship in the name of the three-time Olympian for sportspersons belonging to the state.

He said a statue in his memory would be installed at the stadium entrance. The minister planted saplings in the memory of the sportsperson.

Balbir was part of the Indian teams that won gold at the 1948 London Olympics, Helsinki 1952 and Melbourne 1956. His record for most individual goals scored in an Olympic men's hockey final remains unbeaten. He had set this record when he scored five goals in India's 6-1 win over the Netherlands in the gold medal match of the 1952 Games.

He was the head coach of the Indian team for the 1975 men's World Cup, which India won and the 1971 men's World Cup, where India earned a bronze medal. He was also conferred the prestigious Padma Shri in 1957. (IANS)

Ankita advances to second round of French Open qualifiers

PARIS

INDIA'S ace woman tennis player Ankita Raina defeated Australian Arina Rodionova 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 in first round of French Open qualifiers and will face Greet Minnen of Belgium in second round on Wednesday.

Ankita lost the first set but came back to defeat the Australian in the next two sets to advance.

Her opponent Greet defeated Poland's Urszula Radwanska in a three-set battle.

The Belgian starts favourite due to her better WTA ranking. She is ranked 125 in singles as against Ankita's rank of 182.

Ankita is yet to make the main draw of the singles event at any Grand Slam.

Earlier this year, she became the fifth Indian woman to qualify for the main draw of a Grand Slam when played the first round

doubles at the Australian Open.

India's Ramkumar Ramanathan advanced to the men's singles second round of the French Open Qualifiers but Prajnesh Gunneswaran crashed out following his first-round defeat, here on Tuesday.

Ramkumar erased a one-set deficit to beat American Michael Mmoh 2-6 7-6(4) 6-3 in his opening round that

lasted one hour and 54 minutes. He will next take on Uzbekistan's veteran Denis Istomin, who also recorded a three-set win against

Bosnia's Damir Dzumhur. However, left-handed Prajnesh, seeded 32nd, suffered a rather tame 2-6 2-6 loss to Germany's Oscar Otte.

Later today, India's ace male tennis player Sumit Nagal will face Roberto Marcora of Italy in the first round of qualifiers. Due to better rank (143), Nagal is favourite to beat Marcora who is 192. (IANS)

Would like to have breakfast with Serena: Sindhu

HYDERABAD

BADMINTON star and 2016 Rio Olympics silver medallist PV Sindhu said that she would like to have breakfast with tennis legend Serena Williams because of her "jovial" and "friendly" nature.

In response to a question on which famous stranger would she like to have breakfast with and why, the 2019 World Championships gold medallist in Basel, said, "Serena Williams. I also like it when people are jovial and friendly and greet you in the morning, ask how you are. I think that is very nice." Talking about her training schedule, Sindhu, who is a medal contender at the Tokyo Olympics in July, told moneycontrol.com that the mornings are reserved for warm-ups and match practice, while she does her running and physical training in the evening.

"Mornings, I play on court. I leave my home at 6.40 am, start warming up at 7 and start playing at 7.30. Evenings are for running, gym or other physical training," said Sindhu, who has five World Cham-

pionships medals between 2014 and 2019. Sindhu, 25, said that she is comfortable with early starts even if she has to retire to bed late. "I'm used to getting up early for practice but I'm also a night person. I used to be up around 4.15 am at one point. Now I wake up at 6 in the morning. I say night person because when we travel, we have late flights, at 2 or 3 am. So I'm used to that also," said the Hyderabad player. The Commonwealth Games gold medallist in mixed team event, however, says she needs to take adequate sleep to recover from the rigours of training and competition.

"I need a minimum of 6-7 hours of sleep. I also sleep in the afternoon for one-and-a-half or two hours. And I do my gym work in the evening. Yes, at times the alarm goes off and you are too tired to notice. And then you get up after some time and realise you are late and rush for practice. It's fun and it happens to everyone. But it doesn't happen very often at tournaments. Because then we are very focused on the schedule," said Sindhu. (IANS)

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