# onicle

**NELLORE | MONDAY | 26 APRIL 2021** 



Forecast: clear. Max/Min

temp. 37/28 ºC

Rainfall: Nill

#### ASTROGUIDE

Plava; Uttarayana Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Chaturdasi Star: Chitta till 11.03 pm Varjyam: 8.56 am to 10.20 am; 3.58 am to 5.23 am (Tuesday) Durmuhurtam: 12.39 pm to 1.29 pm; 3.10 pm to 4 pm **Rahukalam**: 7.30 am to 9 am **HIJRI CALENDAR** 

(SHAHI MASJID) **Fajar:** 4.36 am **Zohar:** 12.08 pm Asar: 4.31 pm Maghrib: 6.26 pm Isha: 7.40 pm SUNSET TODAY 6.25 PM **SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.49 AM** MOONRISE TODAY 05.46 PM MOONSET TOMORROW 05.53 AM

Ramzan 13,1442 AH







We will give 2 oxygen cylinders to each family if voted to power!

**Apex court judge** passes away

New Delhi: Supreme Court judge Justice Mohan M Shantanagoudar died at a private hospital in Gurgaon, sources said on Sunday. He vas 62. Justice Shant goudar was admitted to the Medanta hospital due to a lung infection and was in the ICU, the sources said. The sources did not confirm or deny whether the judge was suffering from Covid-19.

His mortal remains will be taken to his residence in Bengaluru, where last rites will be conducted.

### **CoWIN registration**

must for vaccine

New Delhi: Getting registered on the CoWIN portal and taking an appointment to get a Covid vaccine jab will be mandatory for those aged between 18 and 45 years as walk-ins will not be allowed initially, official sources said. Those above 45 years can avail the facility of on-site registration to get vaccinated, they said. As India witnesses a sudden surge in coronavirus cases, it has decided to allow everyone above 18 years of age to get vaccinated from May 1.



## WORLD 5

Saudi to ship 80 MT of oxygen to India



## SPORTS 8

Jadeja's all-round show puts CSK on top

#### **TABLOID**

Finally, talent gets its due

PM CARES to finance 551 dedicated generation plants

**Modi orders installation** 

of oxygen plants swiftly



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## Long wait for oxygen refill



Relatives of Covid patients wait to refill cylinders with medical oxygen at Badarpur in New Delhi on Sunday during the second wave of pandemic.

## AP caps fees charged for CT, HRCT scan at ₹3,000

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 25

The Andhra Pradesh government on Sunday capped the fees charged for CT scan services by private hospitals, scanning centres, and laboratories at ₹3,000. The computerised tomography (CT) scan has become a key tool to detect Covid-19 infection and the government has warned against

violation of the fee cap.
The government step ped in to regulate the fee after it received several complaints against exorbitant fees by the private entities for CT scan to diagnose Covid-19. Anil Kumar Singhal, principal government

health, medical and fami-

**DC CORRESPONDENT** 

At least 60 people, includ-

ing priests, working at the Srisailam temple have been infected with Covid-

19, while one had succumbed to the virus, said

temple executive officer

Following the spurt in

the Covid-19 cases in the

temple town, the adminis-

tration has imposed pro-hibitory orders under Section 144 of the Indian

Penal Code, apart from

the night curfew, to dis-

courage people from staying at the temple town.

The executive officer

said only those people who have Covid-19 nega-

tive certificates, will be

allowed to have dar-shanam. This decision, he said, has reduced the

KURNOOL, APRIL 25

K.S. Rama Rao.

Section 144 curbs

in Srisailam town

Minister Alla Kalikrishna Srinivas appealed to people to lodge complaints by calling to 1902 if they find any entity collect-ing more for CT scan

ly welfare department, issued GO 47 on Sunday fixing the CT scan fees.

Medical and health minister Alla Kalikrishna Srinivas alias Nani appealed to people to lodge complaints by calling to 1902 if they found the collection of excess amount more than ₹3,000 for CT scanning and assured about taking stern measures against norm violating hospitals

number of people visiting

the temple.
"It is the Ugadi rush that

has brought the pandemic

to Srisailam as many peo-

ple from Maharashtra and

Karnataka had visited the

Srisailam tahsildar Singh Rajendra Singh said Covid-19 cases have

spiked in Srisailam and

Sunnipenta, and a Covid

care centre is being set up

at Sunnipenta. "We have a new facility in the multi-purpose hospital at Sunnipenta where at least

80 patients can be accom-

modated. About 600 posi-

tive cases have been reported at Srisailam so

Srisailam Annadanam

administrator Srinivas

said the temple has been

supplying free food to all the needy in the town.

tahsildar

temple," he said.

about CT scanning fees without fail on their premises and to give bills to every patient. The minister directed all hospitals, labs, and scanning centres to upload details of all suspected Covid-19 persons into the government website.

and labs to display boards

He warned of the cancellation of licenses if the fee cap was not adhered to.

The order stated that it was found that exorbitant charges are levied for CT Scan which results in reduced accessibility and affordability leading to missing an opportunity to identify the disease early.

Page 2: Fee cap includes masks and PPE kits also

## **COVID CURBS IMPOSED AT DURGA TEMPLE**

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 25

Covid-19 restrictions have been imposed at the famous Kanaka Durga temple in Vijayrestraining darshan timings and suspending several pujas. While the pujas. While the Antaralaya Darshanam (sanctum sanctorum) has been cancelled, devotees would be allowed to enter into the temple from 6.30 am to 7.30 pm only fol-lowing Covid-19 guide-

On Saturday, a priest working at the temple had succumbed, and 45 people working at the Durga temple had been infected by Covid-19.

Pg 2: No entry at Durga

## US set to resume vax input supply

DC CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, APRIL 25 In a major announcement, the United States National Security Adviser (NSA) Jake Sullivan told his Indian counterpart Ajit Doval late on Sunday evening that the US has "identified sources of specific raw material urgently required for Indian manufacture of the Covishield vaccine that will immediately be made available for India" and that the US has also "identified sup-plies of therapeutics, rapid diagnostic test kits, ventilators, and Personal Protective Equipment

vaccines by the end of (PPE) that will immediate-

able for every person above 18 in the country. This comes amid a severe oxygen crunch for hospitals in several parts of the country due to the sharp and deadly spike in Covid

cases that has already claimed thousands of lives

The United States also is

pursuing options to pro-

vide oxygen generation and related supplies on an urgent basis, he said, adding that his country is

'working around the clock to deploy available resour-

The American NSA also said the U.S. Development

Finance Corporation (DFC)

is funding a substantial

expansion of manufactur-

ing capability for BioE, the

vaccine manufacturer in India, "enabling BioE to

ramp up to produce at least

1 billion doses of Covid-19

ces and supplies"

in the past few days. Assuring that the Centre is "applying its entire might to give a fillip to the

## YOGI TO INVOKE NSA AGAINST **MISINFORMATION**

New Delhi: UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asked officials to invoke the National Security Act and the "Gangsters Act" against those spreading "rumours" on shortage of oxygen cylinders.

## REPORT ON PAGE 4 **NEW COVID CASES**

New Delhi: With a record single-day rise of 3,49,691 new coronavirus infections, India's total tally of Covid-19 cases climbed to1,69,60,172, while active cases crossed the 26-lakh mark, official data said.

#### REPORT ON PAGE 4

ments," Mr Modi also "appealed to the states to extend the benefit of this free vaccine campaign of the Government of India to the maximum number of

## Aarogyasri helps 1L Covid patients

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL. 25

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi on Sunday ordered the swift installation of 551

dedicated Pressure Swing Adsorption Medical

Oxygen Generation Plants

inside public health facili-

ties in the country that will

be financed by the PM

Cares Fund in the war

against the deadly second "storm" of Covid-19 batter-

ing the country. Directing that these PSA oxygen plants should be made

functional as soon as possi-ble, Mr Modi said they would serve as a major

boost to oxygen availabili-ty at the district level.

In his monthly Mann ki

Baat radio address on Sunday, Mr Modi admitted

that the second coronavirus "storm has shaken the country" when the nation had been full of

enthusiasm and self-confi-

dence after "successfully confronting the first wave

Urging people not to get

"swayed by any rumour about the vaccine", Mr Modi pointed out that from

May 1 onwards, the vac-

cine would be made avail-

of corona".

Adsorption

Over one lakh Covid-19 Andhra patients in radesh have got free treatment in private hospitals under the government's Aarogyasri scheme in the last year. For this, the state government had spent over

According to a report, a total of 1,01,387 Covid-19 patients have received medical treatment free of cost at various private hospitals in the state through . Aarogyasri from April 1, 2020, to April 23, 2021, in the state.

The Covid-19 patients, who recovered from the Covid-19, have termed the

Minister said that YSR Congress government would not flinch from providing Corona treatment in private and corporate hospitals under Aarogyasri and termed the health scheme as Covid-19 pandemic.

Aarogyasri as a life saviour. While September witnessed the highest number of patients — 28,924 treated for Covid-19 under the Aarogyasri, private hospitals treated 21,042 patients in August and 15,423 patients in October 2020. For the rest of the period, the private hospi-

tals have been treating less than 10,000 patients every month. During this month till date, the private hospitals have treated 4,746 Covid-19 patients under the Aarogyasri scheme.

Officials have informed that the government had a mammoth sum of ₹5,87,534 towards the medical bills of 49-year-old Ramanaiah Manda, a resident of the Nellore district who availed free treatment Apollo Speciality Hospitals.

They added that a sum of ₹4,68,312 was approved towards the bills of 58-yearold Sheikh Nazeer. The family members of Nazeer observed that without the Aarogyasri scheme, they would have been under severe financial strain for getting him treated.

Minister for medical and health Alla Kalikrishna Srinivas said Andhra Pradesh is the first state to include Corona treatment in the Aarogyasri health scheme which one lakh Covid-19 patients to get treatment for Covid-19 in private and corporate hospitals under the Aarogyasri network in AP. He stated that YSR Congress government would not flinch from pro-

viding Corona treatment in private and corporate hospitals under Aarogyasri and termed the health scheme as the life saviour in this Covid-19 pandemic.

Polling officials with their Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and other election materials on the eve of seventh phase of the West Bengal Assembly polls, in Kolkata, on

## **VIRAL** I SEASON **Constable's video on denial of leave goes viral**

far," he said.

## Covid-hit cop blames seniors

DC CORRESPONDENT ANANTAPUR, APRIL 25

A video of a constable from Tadipathri rural police, who tested positive for Covid-19, blaming his sub-inspector and circle inspector for refusing leave went viral. The cop shared his video with others while he was being shifted to Anantapur Super Specialty Hospital in an ambulance. Ganesh Kumar has been

working as a constable at the Tadipathri rural police station in the district.
According to the video, he suffered a serious illness

three days ago with Covid-19 symptoms. Though he requested for a Casual Esubabu the constable was found negative for Covid-19 when HRCT was conducted on his as part of the department's preventive measure. On Saturday, he was tested positive for Covid-19

Anantapur SP Satya

Leave, the Tadipathri rural sub-inspector Khaja Hussain refused and allotted duties. The constable had to attend remand duties to Gooty and Anantapur towns even during illness.

Ganesh Kumar's sickness exacerbated on Saturday and was shifted in an ambulance from Tadipathri to the super specialty hospi-

tal's Covid Care hospital at Anantapur.
While travelling in an

ambulance, the constable blamed the sub inspector for harassing the constables even suffering of covid posi-tive through selfie video.

"The sub-inspector will be responsible, if any untoward event happens in my life, because I have been suffering for the past three days," the constable said and added that the Tadipathri rural circle inspector had also support-

ed the sub-inspector.
While the video of the constable went viral, Anantapur SP Satya Esubabu directed the Tadipathri DSP Chaitanya to inquire into

the matter. Esubabu ruled out the negligence of higher authorities and harassment of constables.

He said the constable was found negative for Covid-19 when HRCT was conducted on his as part of the department's preventive measure and he was given three-day permission.

On Saturday, however, the constable was tested positive for Covid-19 and he was immediately sent to the Super Specialty Hospital by

arranging an ambulance..

He is being treated at the hospital and doctors said he was safe. SP observed the constable might have made allegations in emotion after he was tested positive.

#### EC rejects Mamata's allegations Officer "A section of the media

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC** KOLKATA, APRIL 25

A day after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee threatened to drag the Election Commission to the Supreme Court after accusing it of arresting her party workers during the Assembly Election, the central poll panel refuted the Trinamul Congress supremo's charges as "baseless, false and misleading." On Sunday the EC stated,

have reported about allegations made by Hon'ble chairperson AITC and CM West Bengal that instruc-tions have been given by some officers of ECI and Observers to arrest "TMC goons". Such statements supposedly attributed to ECI Officers and Observers are absolutely baseless, false and misleading. No such instructions have been given by any observer, Chief Electoral Officer

Commission to act against workers of any Party (ies).' It said, "No court case has so far been reported to CEO, or the Commission where any instance of preventive action against a non-criminal has come to the notice. Misleading narratives apart, leave alone any court case, no specific instance of illegal preventive action against any worker of party has been reported till 25.4.21."

### MANGO FARMERS **REEL UNDER POOR DEMAND**

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, APRIL 25

Despite lower mango yield this year, farmers are not optimistic about finding buyers for their produce because of Covid-19 lockdowns. They are not sure about getting good prices for their produce.

No one is coming for-

ward to buy mangoes in cities like Mumbai, Pune, and Nashik in Maharashtra as markets are closed due to Coronavirus. Exports too came to a standstill as markets remained closed in several parts of the

northern states.
With northern states and export markets remaining out of reach, the farmers are looking to rely on the local market in Kadapa itself. However, mangoes from Vijayawada, Visanna-peta, Damalacheruvu, Kottakotta, Srinivasapur in Karnataka, and other parts of the state reached the local markets.

Railway Koduru con-stituency is famous for its mango crop in south India. Farmers cultivate about 100 varieties here. While the Benisha type is the main crop, other types are Rumani, Tothapuri, Neelam, Khader, Mallika, Pulihora, etc.

## SHORT TAKES

## **SPECIAL TRAIN TO YESHWANTPUR**

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 25

The Railways launched a weekly summer special express between Yeshwantpur and Guwahati.

Express launched its services from April 23 and will continue till June 25. The train that left Yeshwantpur will reach Guawahati at 6 am on

4th day of its journey. In return direction, the train will leave Guwahati on every Monday at 7.35 pm from April 26 which will reach Duvvada on the 3rd day of its journey at 04.55 am and depart at 4.57 am and reach Yesvantupur at 4.30 am on the 4th day of its jour-

Meanwhile, for security reasons, it has been decided to short-terminate and short-originate the Visakhapatnam-Kirandul-Visakhapatnam express at Jagdalpur. The train leaving Visakhapatnam on April 25 and April 26 will be short-terminated at Jagdalpur. In the return direction, the train will start from Jagdalpur instead of Kirandul.

#### **FEE CAP INCLUDES MASKS AND PPE KITS ALSO**

FROM PAGE 1

The order stated that in the current second wave of Covid-19, many cases are being reported which have to be admitted and treated on the basis of CT/HRCT Scan and clinical picture without wasting any further time and to save precious lives. If this important diagnostic test is not affordable and accessible to the general public, then the disease will spread in the com-munity leading to more cases and a resultant burden on the health infrastructure.

The AP government decided to make CT/HRCT accessible and affordable to all by regulating rates of CT / HRCT scan to a maximum of ₹3,000 including all consumables like PPE, mask, spreadsheets, etc. No hospital or diagnostic center in the State shall charge more than ₹3,000 for CT/HRCT Scan.

All the diagnostic centres, scanning centres and hospitals which are providing CT scan for suspected Covid positive cases directed to register on the website:http://dashboard.covid19.ap.gov.in/ctscan The government has also directed them to upload the name, phone number, CT / HRCT Image, and signed copy of the CT / HRCT Report for every CT/HRCT scan done. These details shall be made available to all hospitals in the state to access and make an admission on the basis of the image and report.

#### **NO ENTRY AT DURGA TEMPLE AFTER 7.30 PM**

FROM PAGE 1

As a precautionary measure, the temple administration has imposed curbs following a meeting between executive committee chairman Pyla Somi Naidu, executive officer D. Brahmaramba and priests.

Temple timings changed in view of night curfew being imposed from 10 pm to 5 am to contain the spread of Covid-19 and to restrain the spread of the disease on the temple premises.

Temple executive officer Brahmaramba said that the devotees coming to the temple for darshan should wear masks and maintain physical distance.

She explained that all the Arjitha Sevas will be performed in ekantham (solitude), and the devotees will be allowed for darshan from 6.30 am to 7.30 pm.

She said the devotees will be denied entry through the Ghat Road and Mahamandapam route after 7 pm, and the Antaralaya darshan for devotees has been cancelled. The EO stated that ₹200 fine will be imposed for temple staff for violating rules.

Temple trust committee chairman Somi Naidu said that for every one hour Sodium Hypochlorite will be sprayed in the queue lines through which the devotees enter the temple premises.

He said the devotees shall not form groups and maintain distance and disburse from the premises after the darshanam.

Antaralaya darshan for devotees has been cancelled

the devotees will be denied entry through the Ghat Road and Mahamandapam route





Top: People in large numbers throng a medical store to purchase medicines for Covid and remdesivir injection near Ramnagar in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. Above: Busiest Jagadamba junction wears a deserted look due to the night curfew imposed by the state government to curb the

# Tough action against hosps charging exorbitant fees

Toll free number to complain against private hospitals medical stores

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, APRIL 25

"Tough action will be initiated against those private hospitals and medical stores who do not comply with regulations, and charge exorbitant rates for the treatment of Covid-19 patients," said minister for panchayat raj and rural development Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy on Sunday.

The minister said this after meeting with Deputy Chief Minister K. Narayana Swamy, district officials, and local legisla-tors and discussing the measures being taken to contain the spread of Covid-19, and take stock of the facilities at hospitals.

Further, he sent out a stern warning that the government would not hesitate to take stringent action against those who sell Covid-19 vaccines and emergency drugs at prices higher than that fixed by the state.

"A committee, led by Y. Rishanth Reddy, ASP, Enforcement Special Bureau, will be formed to monitor prices across the district, and severe action will be taken against those who fail to follow the standard procedures set by the state and those errant hospitals would be placed under a blacklist," he said.

The minister also instructed the health officials to announce the test results within a day Further, he said that a tollfree number, which would allow the public to lodge complaints against private hospitals and medical stores, will soon be announced by the district

administration. Stating that there is a need to enhance bed capacity in many hospi-

## People are stocking up items fearing lockdown

MD ILYAS | DC

Imposition of night cur-few amid rapidly rising cases of Coronavirus has led to fears among people that a lockdown could be in the offing. As a precautionary measure, they have started stocking essential commodities as well as medicines. This has led to mad rush at shops and stores throughout the state.

In fact, majority of traders are already in the lockdown mode, as they are closing their establishments early following imposition of night curfew from 10 pm to 5 am Saturday. since Lockdowns have already been imposed in certain states and people fear AP

will follow suit. There are messages going viral on social media that the state could witness a shutdown

Chamber of Commerce representatives Aanjaneyulu Vidyadhar Rao said trade

Nearly 4.20 lakh Covid

tests have been conduct-

ed in the district since

April 24, out of which

emerged positive, meas-

ures are being taken to

set up Covid care centres

tals across the district,

22,155 cases have

Chamber of Commerce representatives say panic buying will continue until government does not clear the air about possibility of a shutdown.

AP has been reporting around 11,000 new Covidpositive cases

associations have cut down on their business timings due to rising cases of Coronavirus.

They said panic buying will continue until the government does not clear the air about possibility of a lockdown.

AP has been reporting around 11,000 new Covidpositive cases since past 10 days. On Sunday, as many as 12,634 Corona have been registered, apart from 69 new Vijavawada Municipal

Corporation on Sunday ordered closure of mutton, chicken, fish and prawns shops to prevent huge gatherings in front of these places, which

tralise the vegetable mar-

kets in Tirupati and other

Harinarayanan, while

explaining the current sit-

patients.

collector

urban areas.

instructed the district tests have been conducted machinery to ensure conin the district since April 24, out of which 22,155 stant supply of oxygen to cases have emerged posi-He also directed district tive, adding that measures are being taken to set up Harinarayanan to decen-Covid-19 care centres

could spread Coronavirus

However, people of the

city were seen rushing to

nearby Nunna village to

purchase these commodi-

ties. They believe mutton,

chicken, fish and prawns

constitute a healthy diet

to build immunity against

K. Aanjaneyulu, a trader

running a supermarket,

confirmed that people are

rushing to shops and

stores to stock up essen-

tial commodities. Many of

them are buying essentials, which will be suffi-

cient to last for next two

months. Aanjaneyulu said

stocks at his store will

Private employees D. Ramu and S. Raju said the

first lockdown was imposed all of sudden in

March 2020. This created a

lot of difficulties for them.

Thev said immunity-

boosting foods are need of

the hour, besides essential

commodities. Hence they

have come to the store to

purchase commodities

that last for at least two

exhaust soon.

months.

Covid-19.

across the district. About 3,65,312 persons have taken their first dose of the vaccine, and 51,112 have got their second dose including SVIMS and uation, informed that S.V.R. Ruia, the minister nearly 4.20 lakh Covid-19 in the district till date, he

## **RAPID COVID SURGE CLAIMS 69 LIVES IN AP**

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 25

Andhra Pradesh is continuing to witnesses a swift surge in new infec-tions, with the state reporting as many as fresh 12,634 cases and 69 additional deaths in past 24 hours.

As many as eight dis-Srikakulam, tricts Chittoor, Guntur, Anantapur, Prakasam, Nellore, East Godavari and Visakhapatnam showed a hefty single day spike of new cases on Sunday. Srikakulam reported relatively lesser instances of the

virus. Cumulative tally of Covid-19 infections in the state has increased to 10,33,560, with the death toll spiking to 7,685. The daily Corona positivity rate came down to 20.09 per cent, as the number of samples tested increased 62,885 in the past day. The overall positivity rate of 1.599 crore sam-

ples is 6.46 per cent. Recovery rate has been 90.57 per cent, with 4,304 patients being dis-charged on Sunday. Recoveries have thus increased to 9,36,143. There are 89,732 active Coronavirus cases in the state, with majority of patients being in home isolation.

New deaths have been the highest in Krishna district, which reported

## Kodandarama on Garuda Vahanam

Damsel.

After

temple

The

traditional

the

vahana seva the utsava

idols of Swamy and His

consorts were rendered

thirumanjanam. Temple AEO Muralidhar, super-intendent Venkateshaiah,

Dhananjeyulu and other

Sitarama Kalyanam today: SVBC to live tele-

Kalyanam, the grand highlight of the ongoing

Sri

staff were present.

morning

Kalyanam

Sitarama

Ramanavami

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, APRIL 25

TTD organised the holiest and grandeur of all vahanas, Garuda Vahana, on Sunday night, the fifth day of the annual Brahmotsavams of Sri Kodandarama Swamy Temple. The festivities of vahana seva were conducted in ekantham inside the temple in view of the Covid-19 guide-Garuda is not only a

chariot but also a confidante, a friend, a pedestal and an iconic flag of Mahavishnu. The utsava idols of Sri Kodandarama Swamy on the majestic vahana are a cynosure for all devotees. Garuda Seva is held in reverence in over 108 countries across the world. Lord Sri Ramachandra in Mohini alankaram

fifth day, Sunday morning of the ongoing Brahmotsavams at the ancient Kodandaramaswami temple. Mohini avatar is symbolic of Lord's mystic powers to rule over evil

with his mesmerising

held in ekantham on the

Brahmotsavams, will be conducted on Monday in ekantham due to the Covid-19 guidelines and will be live telecast by the SVBC. The awe-inspiring celebrations awaited by the devotees across the globe will be held at the

Kalyana Mandapam inside the famous Sri Kodandarama Swamy temple of Vontimitta. TTD has appealed to devotees to witness the majestic celebrations on the SVBC channel from their homes and beget the Lord's blessings.



Srirama rides Garuda Vahanam on Sunday.

## Over 50 historical sculptures in ruins

DC CORRESPONDENT MAHBUBNAGAR, APRIL 25

More than 50 sculptures of historical importance representing Jaina, Saivite and Saktite religions were found scattered, and in a state of neglect, at Kankal village in Pudur mandal of Vikarabad district.

Based on the information given by president of the Nallamala Nature Patnam Foundation  $\operatorname{Dr}$ Krishnaraju, Sivanagireddy, archaeologist and CEO, Culture Centre of Vijayawada and Amaravati, rushed to the spot to examine the sculp-Dr Reddy revealed that

the sculptures found near the Ganesha, Veerab-hadra and Pochamma temples included a two-Ganesha, Saptamatrika Panel, a Parsvanatha Jaina idol, and a paadastal of Vardhamana Mahavira carved with lions, among others. He said that the different structures display the iconographical

and artistic styles of dif-ferent dynasties that ruled Telangana.

Further, Dr Reddy said that there are two inscriptions, dating back to the twelfth or thirteenth century, in Telugu-Kannada script. One was at the Veerabhadra temple and the other at Namagadda

Pallekurva Santosha Viranna said that these inscriptions were copied by the Department of

Archaeology Museums some 15 years ago, and they have been waiting for the historical consent from the department. She added that there was a stepped well on the outskirts of the village, which was in ruins and required immediate

Further, she stated that sculptures were scattered in the fields around the village.

attention.

Based on the historical and archaeological significance of the sculptures, Dr Reddy appealed to the government to preserve

## ILLEGAL | PROPERTY Officials alleged that the owners of the property encroached the national highway

## GVMC officials demolish TD leader Palla's building

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 25

Town planning officials of the Greater Visakha-patnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) demolished a five-storey com-mercial building which was being developed by prominent leader of the Telugu Dsam Srinivas Rao and his family, at old Gajuwaka, early

on Sunday morning. The officials, who were accompanied by a large number of police personnel, alleged that the ownof the property

encroached the national highway for raising the building in old Gajuwaka to an extent of 636 square yards.

According to one official, the road's width, which was 80 metres according to the 2006 master plan, had now been reduced to 60 metres. Rao and his brothers had

a heated argument with the GVMC and police officials, alleging that the demolition was illegal. He said they had obtained a proper plan from the GVMC in 2019 and had followed all rules and regula-

The road's width which was 80 metres according to the 2006 master plan, had now been reduced to

The former Gajuwaka MLA and his brothers had planned to construct a five-storied commercial building

tions of the municipal

body. The former Gajuwaka MLA and his brothers had planned to construct a five-storied commercial

building with a cellar, and Ramakrishnababu told had finalised an agreement with a well-known jeweller for the lease of one floor of the building.
While addressing the media, Rao blamed Rajya

Sabha member and national general secretary of the YSRC, V. Vijaya Sai Reddy for the demolition. "Reddy had invited me to

join the YSRC and offered me the post of mayor, which I declined. He developed a grudge against me and today, he got the building demolished," he said.

MLA

reporters at a press conference that the ruling YSRC government was only targeting the properties of TD leaders. "It has nothing to do with GVMC laws. The demolition was an act vengeance, Ramakrishnababu said,

while blaming Reddy vice president Pasarla Prasad said they would pay back in their own currency after coming to power.
"It is mindless to go for

demolitions at times of Covid-19 and night cur-Velagapudi few," he said.

## **JAGAN TARGETING OPPOSITION LEADERS, ALLEGES TD CHIEF NAIDU**

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, APRIL. 25

Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu on slammed the Sunday Jagan Mohan Reddy Government for "target-Jagan ting" the Opposition leaders at a time when it should have initiated proper measures to rescue the people from the Covid second wave. He condemned the demolition of build-

ings belonging to TD former MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao in Patha Gajuwaka in Visakhapatnam without giving prior notice to him.

Mr Naidu deplored that while the other states were busy rescuing their people from the deadly infections, the Jagan Mohan Reddy Government was only preoccupied with harassment of the Opposition leaders for political vengeance.

#### SHORT TAKES **GAMBLING ON** RISE IN THE EG DISTRICT

**DC CORRESPONDENT** KAKINADA, APRIL 25

Police have faced criticism for failing to curb gambling in East Godavari district despite strict orders from Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and other senior police

Recently, four police officials were suspended for failing to curb gambling, and for their involvement in it. Gambling, wherein people play cards, hold cockfights and other such activities, remains unchecked in several parts of the district, including Virava, Gokivada, Jamulapalli, Madhavapuram

and Pithapuram.
Recently, cockfighting tournaments were organised on a large-scale on Rama Navami, even as the police buckled under pressure from the politi-

As the gambling issue came to light, Eluru Range DIG K.V. Mohan Rao suspended Pithampuram circle inspector Pithampuram circle inspector Ramachandra Rao and Pithampuram rural sub-inspector Pardha Saradhi for their involvement and failure to control gambling. In Mummidivaram, sub-inspector K. Nagarjuna and assistant sub-inspector G. Zamindar were suspended for playing

In raids conducted on gambling dens during Sankranthi, Rs 6.50 lakh was seized, but was allegedly not included in the case. Amalapuram DSP Y. Madhava Reddy inquired into the matter and submitted a report, following which the liable police officials were sus-

According to some police personnel, the suspended officials had just yielded to political power, and when a police complaint was filed against them, the politicians failed to lend

any support.
Superintendent of Police
Adnan Nayeem Asmi said,
"There will be no tolerance towards any anti-social activities, in particular, any type of gambling activities, and if any police officer is involved, they shall be strictly punished."

He said that society is suffering due to Covid-19 and asked the police officials to perform their duties responsibly. "All steps are being taken to curb gambling," he added.

Meanwhile, Mummidivaram circle inspector Janaki Ram conducted raids on gambling dens in Mattadipalem, Karrivani Revu and other areas, and has filed cases.

Law and order issues were also reported under Pedapudi police limits after clashes broke out between two groups. The police were criticised once again for failing to maintain law and order.

#### **TENSION AT ALLAMCHARLARA JUPALEM VILLAGE**

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, APRIL 25

There was tension for some-Sunday on Allamcherla Rajupalem village of T. Narasapuram mandal of West Godavari District as there were clashes between the Forest Department and some of the village people over a piece of land. The T. Narasapuram police said that some of the village people entered into the land and cleaned it for cultivation. Knowing the information, the forest officials rushed to the spot and tried to prevent them and they claimed the land belongs to the forest depart-ment. The village people said that the land was given to them by the government which gave pattas also. In the process, there was jostling among them and the forest officials were ejected from the land. The forest department officials lodged a complaint with the Narsapuram police. The T. Narasapuram Station House Officer K.Ramakrishna said that cases were booked against seven persons in the village and case is being investigated. He said that an inquiry will be done on the land by verifying

There was jostling among them and the forest officials were ejected from the land. The forest department officials lodged a complaint with the T. Narsapuram police. The T. Narasapuram Station House Officer K.Ramakrishna said that cases were booked against seven persons in the village and case is being investigated. He said that an inquiry will be done on the land by verifying the records.

the records.



Montessori Educational Institutions charitable trust alumni Dr Ammanna, K.S.N. Prasad presenting medical equipment and Covid funds to collec-

## **Coronavirus cases rise** rapidly in East Godavari

managements

6 people died in past 24 hours, 952 cases recorded, active cases 9,394

private hospital

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, APRIL 25

The rapid rise in the number of Covid-19 cases has become a matter of great concern among officials and the general public in East Godavari district.

As per the government bulletin, six people had died in the past 24 hours, 952 cases were recorded and the total number of active cases rose to 9,394, Sunday. Former Rajamahendravaram municipal councillor and her husband also passed away due to Covid-19.

Even as people affected with the virus scramble to find a bed at a Covid-19 hospital, many are suffering from respiratory issues, with some even struggling to breathe. Doctors are struggling to treat people whose oxygen levels drop drastically and are unable to provide oxygen due to respiratory problems.

According to some relatives of patients, hospitals

are denying entry to those in a serious condition.

G. Harsha Kumar, the former MP from Amalapuram, appealed to the government to pay more attention to Covid-19 treatment, and also provide full information to patients about where they can avail said treatment.

He further said that more tests should be conducted, and people should be made aware of what to do in case of any emergency and where to get themselves tested.

Mr Kumar maintained

that the government had failed so far in providing treatment to patients and said that the government is not able to confirm whether patients are suf-fering from Covid-19 or not. Meanwhile, East Godavari's district collector, D. Muralidhar Reddy, who inspected government hospitals Rajamahendravaram on Sunday, said that there was no need for panic as even though there were 10,000 active cases in the district currently, this number was smaller as compared to the previously recorded 25,000 cases.

Advising people remain cautious, he asked them to use masks, hand sanitizers, and maintain Pvt hospitals' fees under scanner DC CORRESPONDENT

The district vigilance department has focused on allegations that several private hospitals in the district, including Kadapa, are charging including exorbitant fees for corona treatment. Hospital bills are being checked by relatives of patients. Covid-19 patients are treated free of charge in government hospitals. As the number of patients increased, some private hospitals were also given permission to provide treatment under the Arogyasri scheme. This has led to allegations that

DC CORRESPONDENT

SRIKAKULAM, APRIL 25

add more beds, keeping in

view the growing number

patients," said district col-

Speaking to the media

after a meeting with nodal officials of the hospital,

on Sunday, Niwas stated

that medical professionals

and others were told not to

waste oxygen. He said that

Even as people affected

with the virus scramble to

find a bed at a Covid-19

hospital, many are suffering

from respiratory and some

social distance. He also

urged people to stay

struggling to breathe.

lector J. Niwas.

Covid-19 positive

KADAPA, APRIL 25

19 patients were admitted to six hospitals in Kadapa, four in Proddatur and one in Rayachoti under the Arogyasri scheme in the district. A few other hospitals have also applied for corona treatments under Arogyasri. Permits are likely to be granted within one to two days.
There are allegations that some private hospitals that

exploiting patients. Covid-

provide medical care have opened up to exploitation. There are allegations that they rob patients by intimi-dating them suffering from corona when they go to the

highest Covid-19 cases in state

help desks have been established at all hospitals

to provide information to

dition of patients at these

He said there were 1,750

beds in the district, and

1143 are undergoing treat-

ment. We will be adding another 200 shortly in Rajam, Palakonda,

Tekkali and Srikakulam

where more cases are

being reported every day,

"There is no shortage of patients and their rela-

oxygen in the district, and tives. Dependants can also

efforts are being made to ask about the health con-

help desks

hospital tired and coughing. They are demanding a higher amount without providing treatment at the price prescribed by the government. If you want a bed in a hospital, it seems that it will not be given unless you deposit lakhs of rupees in advance. In Kadapa, one hospital is charging a deposit of ₹3 lakh, while another hospital is charging a deposit of ₹1.5 lakh and another ₹2 lakh, relatives of the patients said. Joint Collector Saikant Verma, who oversees Covid-19 treatments, inspected the two hospitals and fined each of them ₹5 lakh. treatments,

Further, he stated that there were 80 patients on

ventilator, and 278 on oxy-

The death toll is also

less when compared to the

Over 1,680 positive cases

were reported in the day,

the highest in the state for

the second consecutive day. Health officials said

that while 9,726 people are

in home isolation, 991 in

Covid-19 care centres and

1,143 in hospitals. Total active cases are 11,860.

number of positive cases,

gen support.

he said.

Umamaheshwar speaking to Deccan Chronicle said that if the owners of private hospitals anywhere are charging more than the prescribed fees, the patient's relatives should file a complaint with the respective receipts. He said people can complain through WhatsApp to their mobile number to 8886564694 if they are in trouble anywhere through private hospitals. Srikakulam district records

## **JANA SENA PULLS UP STATE GOVT FOR ESCALATION OF COST**

In this context, the district vigilance department has also focused on the per-

formance of hospitals.

Additional superintendent

of Police, vigilance and

Enforcement Borugudla

DC CORRESPONDENT

Jana Sena demanded the Water Resources Minister P explain reasons for the escalation of Rs. 89 Cr estimated modernizing works of the Sarvepalli Canal in Nellore to Rs. 102 Cr despite ruling party claims over saving a huge amount of money through the Reverse Tender

Process. Pointing to plans to construct the retaining wall of the canal only up to Muthukur Gate, Jana Sena leader K Vinod Kumar Reddy expressed surprise over not extending the facility to Nellore rural constituency.

Speaking to media here on Sunday, he alleged that the ruling party leaders are more concerned on the welfare of the Benami contractors rather than the city development.

Vinod Kumar also found fault with the ruling party leaders for ignoring their assurance to clear encroachments on the irrigation canals that flow through Nellore city.

He lamented over the plight of people living on the banks of the canal as they would be displaced because of modernisation works.

## Police perform last rites for two orphaned bodies

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIZIANAGARAM, APRIL 25

The final rites of two people, who had passed away ignored by their kin, was

performed by the state police on Sunday. Gurla police performed the last rites of an aged man after his relatives and locals backed away. K. Lakshmana Rao, the 70-year-old victim, was a native of Seetharamunipeta under

Nellimarla mandal in Vizianagaram district.

The police said that Rao, who was found under a tree, was not in great shape. Although the head constable of the police station had given Rao food and water, the old man passed away on

Due to fear of contracting the virus, neither his distant relatives nor the locals came forward to shift his body to the cre-

mation grounds.

This was when the Gurla police, led by Subinspector P. Neelavathi, decided to step in, and arranged a make-shift

stretcher to shift his body to the burial ground. She also monitored the entire process at the burial

ground. The police then performed Rao's funeral, following all Covid-19

sub-inspector appreciated the team for rising up to the occasion. In another incident, a 45-year-old man, who died in a hospital with suspect ed Covid-19 symptoms in

Srikakulam, was cremat-

ed by the police, with the help of the Red-cross organization, on Sunday. A few weeks ago, a woman sub-inspector woman named K. Sirisha had car ried the body of an 80year-old homeless person for over one km as nobody claimed the body, at Adavi Kotturu in Srikakulam.

In March this year, Rambilli police Visakhapatnam district carried a semi-decomposed, unidentified dead body, which was found washed ashore at Seethapalam, for over three km along the coast when locals had backed

## Woman killed in bus accident

**DC CORRESPONDENT** TIRUPATI, APRIL 25

A woman was killed and three others sustained grievous injuries when a state-run Road Transport Corporation bus hit them on a busy road in Tirupati city on Sunday morning.

East Division Circle Inspector Siva Prasad Reddy said the driver of the APSRTC bus travel-ling from the Tirupati Railway Station to Tirumala lost its control as it entered into the Karnaal Veedhi. It rammed into three

two-wheelers and two electric poles, besides hitting some pedestrians.

Mr Reddy said the damage would have been more if the bus had not hit the third electric pole and came to a halt. A pedestrian – Ammulu (32), who was grievously

over her, has died on the spot, while her brother Reddy Prakash and one ous injuries.

The injuried persons were immediately shifted to the S.V.R. Ruia Government General Hospital and they were being treated now.

They were out of danger and based on their complaint, East division police have registered a case and took the driver depot into custody and further investigation is being done, CI Mr Reddy

Meanwhile, police suspect that the accident might have occurred due to the negligence of the driver and the passengers in the bus also alleged that the driver was unable to control his sleep and hit the electric injured as the bus ran poles.

## **Curfew impact**



block due to Covid -19 in Vijayawada on Sunday. -DC

## Traders shut shops by 2 pm in Nellore

indoors and avoid unnecessary movement in pub-

lic places.
Additionally, he advised the doctors to use oxygen

only as per requirement as there was a nationwide shortage in supply. He said that 18 types of services were available for patients, and the government will give permission for Covid-19 treatment to more hospitals.

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, APRIL 25

Amid a sharp rise in Covid-19 cases, traders volunteered to restrict their working hours from 6 am to 2 pm in Buchireddypalem civic body limits.

Commissioner Srinivasa Rao appreciated the traders for their initiative, adding

that a new Covid-19 care centre will be opened

Ramachandrapuram, near Buchireddypalem, as per the directions of the district collector. Rao also urged Covid-

19 positive patients to call the care centre in case of any emergency, at any time. The Covid-19 care centre can be reached at 91544 40101.

OIL PRICING

## **Leaders thanked CM Jagan Mohan for defending farmers**

## Oil palm farmers welcome HC verdict

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 25

The national oil palm farmers' association and the AP oilpalm farmers association have welcomed the high court verdict in support of the state government decision visa-vis revising the pricing structure for oil palm

Oil palm processing companies had challenged the government decision in court, saying that while this helped oil palm farmers it hurt their business.

The leaders of the two

associations thanked chief

minister Jagan Mohan

Reddy, minister for agri-

Oil palm processing companies had challenged the government decision in court, saying that while this helped oil palm farmers it hurt their business.

culture Kurasala Kannababu and others for defending farmers' interests in court. National oil palm farmers' association general secretary Dr K Kranthi Kumar Reddy pointed out that the AP government had issued order on January 19 last, fixing the oil extraction ratio percentage (OER%) at 18.682 for the oil-year 2020-21 to help oil palm This was done as these

farmers were incurring losses due to the low OER percentage.

Reddy said that during the term of the Telugu Desam government, the OER was less and hence oil palm farmers took up the matter with Jagan during his Padayatra. Jagan promised an increase of OER percent-

age and fulfilled the promise later by issuing the GO. "The oil palm companies severely opposed the order and filed petitions in the high court. Then we requested the government

to present strong arguments to help the farm-

ers," Reddy said.

He said the government and state's advocates succeeded in protecting the interests of the oil palm growers as is evident from the dismissal of the petitions by the high court. A delegation of oil palm

farmers met adviser on public affairs to the government Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy and thanked the Jagan govern-ment for its help to oil palm farmers to the tune

of ₹200 crore. They urged the govern ment to immediately direct the companies to pay the arrears in view of

the high court verdict without delay.



officials demolish the encroached shops on the beach road near Rushikonda in Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

SHORT TAKES

#### PT RAJAN MISHRA **DIES OF COVID IN DELHI HOSPITAL**

New Delhi, April 25: Renowned Hindustani classi-cal vocalist Pt Rajan Mishra died due to Covid-19 complications at a hospital here on Sunday evening, his nephew said. He was 70.

Mishra, who along with his brother Sajan Mishra was one of the foremost exponents of khayal gayaki, had a heart attack in the afternoon and then another in the evening, his nephew Amit said. "Pandit Rajan Mishra ji

passed away at around 6.30 in Delhi's St Stephen hospital. He had Covid-19 and was admitted to the hospital. He had taken the first dose of the vaccine about 15-20 days ago. He had a heart attack in the afternoon and he had another attack at around 5.30 pm," Amit said.

Mishra was a Padma Bhushan awardee. The brothers belonged to the Banaras gharana.

#### **ODISHA SEES** UNRELENTED **SURGE IN CASES**

**AKSHAYA KUMAR** SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 25

The Covid-19 surge in Odisha continued unabated on Sunday as the state recorded 6,116 new cases while seven patients succumbed to the dis-

The fresh surge pushed the state's Coronavirus positive tally to 4,07,457 while the death toll climbed to 1,988. The active cases in the state stood at 45,949 while 3,59,467 patients

have recovered so far. According to state health and family welfare department data, of the fresh cases spread across 30 districts, 3,546 were detected among people in quarantine and 2,570 were local infections.

Two fatalities were reported from Rayagada. One death each was reported from Ganjam, Kalahandi, Khordha, Puri and Sundargarh districts

### TMC CANDIDATE **KAJAL SINHA PASSES AWAY**

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, APRIL 25** 

The fresh wave of Covid-19 claimed the life of the third Assembly election candidate: Kajal Sinha of the Trinamul Congress while infected another: Babul Supriyo of the BJP in West Bengal as the daily spike in cases crossed 15,000 mark in the state with 57 fresh deaths in the last 24 hours.

According to the state health department, 15,889 persons have contracted Covid-19 in an all-time high during the secsince Saturday when the figure of fresh infection stood at

Out of 15,889 new cases, 3,774 alone are in Kolkata.

Sinha who contested from Khardah in North 24 Parganas was admitted to Infectious Hospital Diseases Beliaghata on April 21 after he tested positive for the deadly

Two days later he was put on a ventilator as his condition worsened. At around 9.45 am the 58-year-old died there.

#### **BHOPAL: MAXIMUM BODIES CREMATED ON SINGLE DAY**

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC **BHOPAL, APRIL 25** 

crematorium here on Saturday witnessed cremation of a record number of bodies of Covid victims amid a spike in Coronavirus cases in Madhya Pradesh. A record number of 118 bodies were cremated in the Bhadbada Ghat crematorium on the outskirts of Bhopal on Saturday. Of them, 100 bodies were cremated with corona guidelines, according to the

records of the crematorium. "So many bodies have never been cremated in a single day in the history of Bhadbhada Ghat crematorium", Mamtesh Sharma, secretary of the crematorium told this newspaper

He described how pyres were lighted in both the phase one and phase two sections of the crematorium literally roundthe-clock since six in the morning till past might on

Saturday. "The horrific sight will shake even a hard soul. I have never seen such a mass funeral of bodies going almost round-the-clock in a crematorium", Sharma said.



Connaught Place street wears a deserted look during the Covid-induced lockdown in New Delhi on Sunday. With the positivity rate as high as 36 per cent in the past few days, the lockdown in the national capital was extended.

## Delhi extends lockdown till May 3 as cases rise rapidly

Services of courier outlets, electricians, shops selling books permitted

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA & SUNIL THAPLIYAL | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday announced the extension of the ongoing lockdown in the national capital for another week, saying that the severity of Covid-19 was unabated, and the positivity rate has been as high as 36 per cent in the past few days.

The lockdown imposed on April 19 night will now continue till 5 am on Monday, May 3. Before the extension, it was due to end at 5 am on April 26. "We will have to watch the situation for a few more days on whether the cases decrease or increase," he

Delhi Disaster Management Authority, in an order for extension of the lockdown, has allowed the services of courier outlets, electricians and plumbers, repair of water purifiers, and shops selling books and electric

The Chief Minister said the onslaught of the Coronavirus has not subsided even as the govern-

RAHUL ALLEGES

**DEATHS BEING** 

**UNDERREPORTED** 

New Delhi, April 25: Congress leader Rahul

Gandhi on Sunday

alleged that the truth

about the pandemic is

shrouded and deaths are

Deny oxygen shortage.

Underreport deaths. Go-

vernment of India (GOI)

is doing everything.....to save his fake image," he

He shared the front

page of 'The New York

Times' showing a pictu-

re of cremations being

conducted and headlin-

ed, "As Covid ravages In-

dia, true toll is underco

unted". Gandhi earlier

alleged that the "system has failed" and it is the

duty of the party to pro-

vide help to fellow citi-

zens suffering due to the

sudden spurt in Covid-19

His comments came on a day PM Narendra Modi in his 'Mann ki

Baat' radio programme

said the second wave of

the Covid-19 pandemic

has shaken the country and assured the people

that the Centre was

working with all its

power to help the states.

important to do Jan ki

baat," Gandhi said on

Twitter. "In this crisis,

the country needs responsible citizens. I

request my Congress

colleagues to leave all political work — just

provide all help and ease

the pain of our country-

men," he added. -PTI

"System failed, so it's

cases in the country.

said on Twitter.

being under-reported. "Shroud the truth 3.52 lakh more cases added as 2,688 die, 28 lakh active

DC CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, APRIL 25** 

India on Sunday reported 3,52,541 new Covid-19 cases, 2,688 deaths and 2,14,712 discharges in the last 24 hours, as per Union health ministry. India's total tally of Covid-19 cases has climbed to 1,73,04,308, while active cases have crossed the 28lakh mark, according to the Union health ministry. The death toll has increased to 1.94.998. The active cases have increased to 28,09,308, this comprises

ment imposed a six-day lockdown as the last weapon in its arsenal.

"Public opinion is in favour of an extension of lockdown. The positivity rate reached up to 36-37 per cent in past few days although it has slightly dipped now. It is around 29

Twitter and other social

media platforms have

removed about 100 posts

and URLs after the gov-

ernment asked them to

remove content that was

critical of the handling of

the current medical crisis

or spreading fake news

Twitter said it has noti-

fied the impacted account

holders of its action taken

in response to a legal request from the Indian

Facebook did not com-

Sources said the compa-

nies have complied with

the order. However, it was-

while

around the pandemic.

government,

ment on the issue.

infections. The national Covid-19 recovery rate has further dropped to 83.05 per cent. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has surged to 1,42,92,791, while the case fatality rate has further dropped to 1.13 per cent, the data said.

West Bengal registers highest single-day spike of 15,889 Covid-19 cases, 57 more fatalities. Kolkata alone accounted for 2,970. One of two persons undergoing RT-PCR tests in Kolkata and its suburbs is

every two hours on a por-

what the removed posts

were. Meanwhile, government sources said the IT

ministry, on the recom-

mendation of the ministry

of home affairs, asked the

social media platforms to

remove the posts and

URLs (uniform resource

obstructions in the fight

against the pandemic and

disruption of public order

due to the said posts.
They added that the ord-

er was issued in view of

the misuse of social media

platforms by certain users

to spread fake or misleadi-

ng information and create

panic about the pandemic

"prevent

locators) to

tal set up by it.

per cent today," he said. "This is to ensure the To keep a close watch on oxygen availability, the Delhi government has decided that manufacturers, suppliers and hospitals will update the supply and consumption data

Twitter, FB take down 100 posts

n't immediately known in the society by using what the removed posts unrelated, old and out of

Delhi government knows where a shortage might be resources in that direction in time," he said.

positive. In the rest of the

state, one of four RT-PCR

report is Covid positive. That is a five-fold jump from the beginning of the

month, when only one of

Maharashtra reports

66,191 new Covid-19 cases,

61,450 discharges, and 832

deaths in the last 24 hours

Active cases-6,98,354, Total

discharges-35,30,060, Dea-

th toll-64,760. Mumbai recorded 5,542 new cases, its

lowest single-day rise in

infections so far this mo-

nth, the civic body said.

20 tests was positive.

He said the Centre had further increased Delhi's oxygen quota by 10 MT per day and hoped the chaotic

the context images or vis-

uals, communally sensiti-

ve posts and misinformat-

ion about Covid-19 norms.

gested that the posts criti-cal of government handli-

ng of the medical crisis

were asked to be removed,

sources said the governm-

ent is open to criticism an-

d suggestions in the collec-

tive fight against Covid-19.

However, they said it is

necessary to take action

against those users who

are misusing social media

during this grave humani-

tarian crisis for unethical

Although reports sug-

situation due to the oxygen crisis in Delhi will end in a few days. The Centre has incr-

eased Delhi's quota from 480 MT to 490 MT per day. But we are yet to receive the full quota. Currently only 330-335 tonnes per day supply is being received by ' he said.

The Chief Minister said his government is getting a lot of support from the Centre and both are properly coordinating to solve the oxygen supply problem. Kejriwal, who had written letters to the Chief Ministers of several states for helping Delhi with spare oxygen and tankers, added, "Negotiations have begun with some states and I will update you about any positive results as and when they come."

Noting that the ministers and officers of his government were working overnight to ensure steady oxygen supplies to hospitals, he said: "I do not claim all our efforts have reaped successful results. In some cases, we have failed, and in others we have managed to ensure oxygen supply to their des-

Twitter removed or rest-

ricted access to more than

50 posts in the past one

month at the behest of the

government, including tw-

eets that criticised its han-

dling of the pandemic. Ot-

her posts removed showed pictures and videos of a

recent Maoist attack in

Earlier this year, more

than 500 accounts were

suspended and access to hundreds of others in India blocked after the

government ordered the

microblogging platform to

restrain the spread of mis-

information and inflam-

matory content related to

farmers' protests. -PTI

Chhattisgarh.

## Yogi threatens to slap NSA on oxygen rumours

SANJAY BASAK | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

At a time when Uttar Pradesh has recorded over 35,000 new Covid cases and over 200 deaths in just 24 hours, the highest since the pandemic broke out a year ago, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asserted that there was "no shortage of oxygen" in the state and asked officials to invoke the National Security Act and the "Gangsters Act" against all those spreading "rumours" on the social media and attempting to "spoil the atmos-

For the Chief Minister, who announced this at a virtual press conference with select journalists on Saturday, the actual problem is "black marketing and hoarding" of oxygen cylinders.

Claiming that there was "no shortage of oxygen at any Covid hospital, be it private or government", he said the "main prob-lem is black marketing and hoarding, and stern action will be taken against the culprits". It was reported in a regional paper that the Chief Minister had said the "state government will pay for the treatment of those Covid patients who could not get hospital admission".

According to the local daily, the Chief Minister said those who failed to get admission into hospitals should get them YOGI SAID main prob-lem is black marketing and hoarding, and stern action will be taken against the culprits.

OFFICIALS TOLD to invoke the NSA, **Gangsters Act against** all those spreading "rumours".

selves "treated on their own and the state government would bear the medical expenses'

The Chief Minister said it would be a "huge mistake to take Covid as a normal viral fever. I am also in its grip. I have been following all Covid protocols since April 13 while in isolation"

As the UP Chief Minister planned to tackle the oxygen crisis, reports indicated the country during the last 24 hours recorded 3,49,391 new Covid-19 cases and 2,767 deaths.

Reports of oxygen crisis in Delhi's hospitals continued to pour in. A pri vate hospital indicated it had "barely an hour's

supply".

A TV channel reported that New Delhi's Fortis Escort Heart Institute, 'which has at least 100 patients on oxygen support, said it would not patients".

The oxygen situation remained grim at Lok Nayak Hospital, largest Covid-19 facility



Relatives of a Covid-19 patient pleading to media for their support in providing oxygen for their relative admitted in the hospital in New Delhi on Sunday. -PTI

## C'garh: Lockdown extended in 20 dists

DC CORRESPONDENT BHOPAL, APRIL 25

The Bhupesh government on Sunday announced to extend lockdown in 20 districts amid surge in Coronavirus cases in Chhattisgarh.

While lockdown has been extended from April 26 to May 5 in the districts Rajnandgaon, Dhamtari, Kanker, Kondagaon, Jashpur, Surajpur, Bemetra, Surajpur, Balrampur, Ambikapur and Narayanpur, total shutdown has been extended from April 26 to May six in the districts of Raipur, Durg, Mahasamund, Balod. Jagdalpur, Bilashpur,

Raigarh, Kawardha and Meanwhile,

ttisgarh has reported more than 16,000 positive cases for the second day. While the state reported 16,731 Coronavirus positive cases on Saturday, 16,750 positive cases were

reported on April 22. The state recorded 203 deaths on Saturday and 219 deaths on Friday.

"The infection rate has increased by four times in the last four weeks in Chhattisgarh", health minister T.S. Singhdeo said. The tally of positive cases in the state has reached 6,396,96 and the tally of toll due to the virus increased to 7,111.

**CSIR | SURVEYS | 10.14% sero-positivity suggests India had large pool of recovered immune subjects** 

## Recurrence of virus due to lack of antibodies: Report

New Delhi, April 25: The recurrence of Coronavirus outbreak in March could have been due to lack of "meaningful antibodies" in seropositive people after a peak in September last year, suggests a survey by the Council for Scientific and Industrial

Research (CSIR). The CSIR conducted a sero-survey on 10.427 people comprising the staff members of its 40 laboratories, including contractual employees, and their family members from 17 states and two union territories

In 10,427 people, the average sero positivity was 10.14 per cent. The survey measures (more than 30

suggested that the neutralising antibodies declined significantly after five-six months, making people prone to reinfections.

The cases in the country peaked in September 2020 and there was a nationwide decline of new cases starting in October, said Shantanu Sengupta, one of the lead authors of the paper, "Our data shows that while anti-NC (nucleocapsid) antibodies provide long-lasting evidence of viral exposure or infection, about 20 per cent of seropositive individuals lack meaningful neutralisation

activity after 5-6 months. "Using more stringent

per cent inhibition of surrogate receptor-spike protein binding), the loss of neutralisation may be even higher. We speculate that this may be related to recurrence of outbreaks in March 2021 after the peak in September 2020,"

the paper said. India is currently witnessing a massive surge in infections with logging a daily case count of over 3,00,000 on four consecutive days According to the paper,

the aggregate sero-positivity of 10.14 per cent in its multi-centre study suggests India had a large pool of recovered immune subjects by September

2020, especially amongst its high contact workers and people using public transport, leading to a decline in new infections.

"However, the duration of such immunity may not be sufficient to prevent future outbreaks, even in highly affected regions, the paper said.

States like Maharashtra have witnessed an explosion of cases since March. The present study, which

recruited subjects from 24 cities in India, provides an important and timely snapshot of the spread of SARS CoV2 pandemic across India shortly before the peak of new cases, the paper said.

## SERO-POSITIVITY 'LOWER' IN SMOKERS, **VEGETARIANS; O BLOOD GROUP 'SAFER'**

New Delhi, April 25: Smokers and vegetarians were found to have lower sero-positivity, while those with blood group 'O' may be less susceptible to Coronavirus, according to a survey by an top research body. The pan-India serosur-

vey, conducted by the CSIR, studied the presence of antibodies against SA-RS-CoV-2. the virus that causes the Coronavirus. and their neutralisation capability to infer possible risk factors for infection.

The study, done by a team of 140 doctors and scientists, assessed 10,427 adult individuals working in more than 40 CSIR labo ratories and centres in urban and semi-urban settings, and their family members. These people voluntarily participated in the study.

The survey suggested that despite Covid-19 being a respiratory disease, smoking might be acting as first line of defence due to its role in increasing the mucous production.

#### **Five held over** France attack

Paris, April 25: French authorities detained a fifth person on Sunday in an anti-terrorism investigation seeking to identify potential accomplices and motives after a police official was fatally stabbed.

French police killed the 37year-old Tunisian attacker shortly after he stabbed the unarmed employee on Friday at the entrance of her police station in Rambouillet. Anti-terrorism prosecutor Jean-Francois Ricard said police are questioning a cousin of the suspect. The suspect's father, a couple who had provided him with an address for mail and administration, and another cousin were also being questioned, Ricard said.

#### **China: 3 ships** commissioned

Beijing, April 25: China has commissioned three main battle warships, including a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, a large destroyer and the country's largest amphibious assault ship that can carry around 30 helicopters

and hundreds of troops.

The ships were commissioned at a ceremony on Saturday attended by President Xi Jinping at Sanya, China's main naval base in the disputed South

China Sea in Hainan province. The vessels commissioned included the Type 075 amphibious assault ships, which can carry an estimated 30 helicop ters and hundreds of troops. It is China's largest amphibious assault ship.

#### **European gear on** China moon probe

Beijing, April 25: China will launch its next robot lunar lander in 2024, and it will carry equipment from France, Sweden, Russia and Italy, the

official news agency reported. Plans call for Chang'e 6 to land near the lunar south pole and collect samples for return to Earth, the programme's chief designer, Hu Hao, said at a conference Saturday, according to the Xinhua News Agency. The Chang'e landers are part of Chinese space exploration efforts that also include a probe that is preparing to land a robot rover on Mars. There are also plans for a crewed orbital station, landing a human on the moon and retrieving soil from an asteroid

### **Fashion designer Elbaz dies at 59**

Paris, April 25: Israeli fashion designer Alber Elbaz, best known for being at the helm of

died at the age of 59, luxury conglomerate Richemont said. In a statement released on Sunday, Richemont's chairman Johann Rupert said "it was with shock and enormous sadness that I heard of Alber's su-

dden passing. Alber had a richly deserved reputation as one of the industry's brightest and most beloved figures.

"I was always taken by his intelligence, sensitivity, generosity and unbridled creativity. He was a man of exceptional warmth and talent, and his singular vision, sense of beauty and empathy leave an indelible impression," Rupert said.

### PRO-TRUMP FILM 'ABSOLUTE PROOF' **WORST AT RAZZIES**

Los Angeles, April 25: The election-fraud film "Absolute Proof", singer Sia's heavily panned directorial debut "Music" and Rudy Giuliani, former New York City mayor, were the top winners at the 2021 Razzie Awards, given to the worst movies and performances of the year. The Golden Raspberry Awards, popularly known as the Razzies, were held a day before the Oscars night, as is

the tradition. "Absolute Proof", directed by My Pillow CEO Mike Lindell, which claimed that the 2020 presidential election was stolen from former President Donald Trump, was named the worst picture at the ceremony, reported Entertainment Weekly. The pro-Donald Trump film also bagged the worst acting title for Lindell for his appearance in the film as himself.

Sia's "Music", which was heavily criticised for its depiction of autism, took home three awards, including worst director, worst actress for Kate Hudson, and worst supporting act ress for Maddie Ziegler.

Actor-filmmaker Sacha Baron Cohen starrer "Borat Subsequent Moviefilm" won two Razzie awards, both for Giuliani for his infamous both for cameo in the film. The film is nominated in two categories at the Oscars.

## 82 killed in Baghdad hospital fire

Initial reports suggest oxygen cylinder blast caused death of the Coronavirus patients

Baghdad, April 25: Iraq's Interior Ministry said Su-nday that 82 people died and 110 were injured in a catastrophic fire that broke out in the intensive care unit of a Baghdad hospital tending to severe Coronavirus patients.

Negligence on the part of hospital authorities has been blamed for the Saturday night fire, which initial reports suggest was caused when an oxygen cylinder exploded in the ward of Ibn al-Khatib hospital.

Iraq's prime minister fired key hospital officials hours after the catastrophic incident. Among the dead were at least 28 patients on ventilators battling severe symptoms of the virus, tweeted Ali al-Bayati, a spokesman of the country's independent Human Rights Commission.

The commission is a semi-official body. Firefighters rushed to battle the flames that raged across the second floor of the hospital. Civil defence teams put out flames until the early hours of the morning. Ambulances transported dozens of wounded.

The Health Ministry said at least 200 people were rescued from the scene. Doctors at the scene were frazzled by the chaos unfolding around them. They said numerous burned bodies were carried out by paramedics from the hospital floor. The fire came as Iraq grapples with a severe second wave of the Coronavirus pandemic. Daily virus cases now average around 8,000, the highest since Iraq began recording infection rates early last year. At least 15,200 people have died of Coronavirus in Iraq among a total of at least 100,000 confirmed cases. In response to the fire, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi fired the director-general of the Baghdad Health Department in the al-Rusafa area, where the

hospital is located. He also fired the director of Ibh al-Khatib Hospital and its director of engineering and maintenance, from the Health Ministry and his office. After the fire first broke out, Al-Khadhimi held an emergency meeting at the headquarte rs of the Baghdad Operations Command, which coordinates Iraqi security forces, according to a stateunt. In the meeting he said the incident amounted to

negligence. "Negligence in such matters is not a mistake, but a crime for which all negligent parties must bear responsibility," he said. He gave Iraqi authorities 24 hours to present the results of an investigation.



Iragis wait for their relatives who are patients with Covid-19 in front of the Al-Khatib Hospital in Baghdad, on Sunday, after a fire erupted in the medical facility reserved for the most severe Coronavirus cases.

## UK, EU respond to India's call for help to fight Covid

early on Tuesday, with fur-

ther shipments later this

KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

Both Britain and the European Union (EU) on Sunday responded to India's urgent calls for help against the Covid storm ravaging the country, with Britain saying that "ventilators and oxygen concentrator devices due to leave UK today" for India and that the "first package is

Britain said "nine airline container loads of supplies, including 495 oxygen concentrators, 120 non-invasive ventilators and 20

due to arrive in Delhi

BANGLADESH

**DHAKA SHUTS** 

**LAND BORDERS** 

Dhaka, April 25: Bangle

adesh will close its land

borders with India for the

next 14 days due to the

unprecedented surge of

Coronavirus cases in the

neighbouring nation, For-

eign Minister A.K. Abdul

Momen announced here

infections in a day on Su-

nday, taking its total tally

1,69,60,172. The death toll

increased to 1.92.311 with

a record 2,767 daily new

fatalities, according to the

Union Health Ministry

from India to Bangladesh

via land will remain closed from Monday. — *PTI* 

Covid-19 cases to

Passenger travel

India logged a record of

on Sunday.

WITH INDIA

manual ventilators" are being sent to India this week and that "the support follows a request from and partner during what is a deeply concerning time in the fight against

Covid-19. The EU too said that India had requested it for assistance, adding that it

British PM Boris Johnson said, "We stand side by side with India as a friend

#### is "pooling resources to respond rapidly to India's request for assistance via the EU Civil Protection

Mechanism", including Oxygen and medicines. The EU also said it "stands in full solidarity

## Merkel: Preparing 'support' for India

Berlin, April 25: German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Sunday her government was preparing emergency aid for India as the country struggles to cope with an explosion in Cor-

onavirus infections.

"To the people of India I want to express my sympathy on the terrible suffeain brought over your communities," Merkel said in a message shared on Twitter by her spokesman

Steffen Seibert. "The fight against the pandemic is our common fight. Germany stands in solidarity with India and is urgently preparing a

mission of support. There were no immedi-

of aid Germany would offer. But Der Spiegel weekly, citing unnamed sources, on Saturday said Germany's armed forces had received a request to **GERMANY** 

ate details about the kind

help organioxygen supplies. With

Cronavirus variant spreading through its 1.3 billion the world's top Coronavirus hotspot in recent days, reporting 349,691 new cases on Sunday alone. Germany will from

Monday impose new travel restrictions on passengers coming from India in a bid to curb in the spread of the new variant.

## SAUDI ARABIA **RIYADH TO SHIP**

## **80MT OF OXYGEN** TO NEW DELHI

Dubai, April 25: Saudi Arabia is shipping 80 metric tonnes of liquid oxygen to India as the country is running low on supplies due to an unprecedented spike in Covid cases. It is being undertaken in cooperation with the Adani group and Linde com-pany. "Embassy of India is proud to partner with Adani group and M/s Linde in shipping muchneeded 80MT liquid oxygen to India. Our heartfelt thanks to the Ministry of Health," the Indian mission tweeted. — PTI

#### **PAKISTAN**

### **ISLAMABAD'S RELIEF OFFER TO NEW DELHI**

Islamabad, April 25: Pakistan has offered to provide relief support, including ventilators, to India to help the country fight the deadly wave of Covidtries can explore possible ways of further cooperation to mitigate the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The Foreign Office in a statement late Saturday night said Pakistan was items quickly once the modalities were worked

"Two officers were taken to hospital. Thankfully, they are not believed to be

injured in London anti-curb protest DEMONSTRATORSMARCHED along Oxford Street and other central areas of the UK capital city before gathering at Hyde Park on Saturday,

ntral London, the Metrop olitan Police said. Demonstrators marched along Oxford Street and other central areas of the UK capital city before gathering at Hyde Park on Saturday, where some hurled bottles and other items at the police when they tried to disperse the

8 police officers

large crowds Protesters, holding placards calling for an end to lockdown rules, could be heard sloganeering against curbs such as masks.

**London, April 25:** Eight police officers were injured and five people arrested

during an anti-lockdown

protest that involved clas-

hes in small pockets in ce-

"Eight officers were injured as they worked to disperse crowds in Hyde Park," the Met Police said.

seriously injured. Five

where some hurled bottles and other items at the police when they tried to disperse the large crowds.

people were arrested for offences, including assault on police, and are now in custody," it said

Home Secretary Priti Patel took to Twitter to condemn the "criminal minority" behind the unrest and pledged tougher sentences for such attacks on police officers. "Our brave police are the best of us and should not be the target of senseless violence by a criminal minority for just doing their job,'

## Nepal issues record permits for Everest

Kathmandu, April 25: Nepal has issued a record 394 permits so far this year for expeditions to Mount Everest, the world's highest peak, despite the surging Coronavirus

"We have issued permission to those expedition teams, which applied for the same with due procedures," Meera Acharya, director at the Departm-

The Ministry of Tourism and civil aviation issued a record 394 permits for the expeditions to Everest till Friday, breaking the earlier record of 381 permits

t's move has come amid

about the traffic jam on

"The enthusiasm shown by the international clim-

An underwater robot eq-

## **ITALY TO BAN ARRIVALS FROM HOTSPOT INDIA**

pandemic.

ent of Tourism, said.

issued in 2019, she said. The Nepali governmen-

intense scrutiny over a reported traffic jam on Mt. Everest, whose revised height is 8848.86 metres.

income generated from Everest expeditions. "I have no information

the Everest." Acharva said in response to a question. A foreign climber needs to pay \$11,000 per person for getting permission to climb Mount Everest.

Rome, April 25: Italy is to ban arrivals from Coronavirus hotspot India, apart from Italian residents, Health Minister Roberto

Speranza said Sunday. 'I have signed a new decree banning people from entering Italy who have been in India within the past 14 days," Speranza

rote on Facebook 'We can't let our guard down" ahead of a limited reopening set to begin across Italy on Monday,"

he added. 'Residents of Italy can return but must take a (Coronavirus) test before eparture and

and remain in quarantine" once on Italian soil Speranza said. bers to Mt. Everest shows,

their growing passion and Mingma Sherpa, chairman of Seven Sun Treks of Kathmandu. Seven Summit

## Genocide: Turkey summons US envoy

**Istanbul, April 25:** Turkey's foreign ministry has summoned the US Ambassador in Ankara to protest the US decision to mark the deportation and killing of Armenians during the Ottoman Empire as "genocide".

Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal met with David Satterfield Saturday to express Ankara's condemnation. "The statement does not have legal ground in terms of international law and has hurt the Turkish people, opening a wound that's hard to fix in our relations," the ministry said. On Saturday, US President Joe Biden followed through on a

THE STATEMENT was carefully crafted to say the deportations, massacres and death marches took place in the Ottoman Empire.

campaign promise to recognise the events that began in 1915 and killed an estimated 1.5 million Ott oman Armenians as genocide. The statement was carefully crafted to say the deportations, massacres and death marches took place in the Ottoman Empire. "We do this not to cast blame but to ensure that what happened is never repeated," it said.

## FM: CHINA, US **DIFFERENCES CONTINUING**

Beijing, April 25: The differences between the US and China are continuing as Washington is yet to find the right way to deal with Beijing while holding on to misunderstandings, Chinese Fo-reign Minister Wang Yi said, warning that playing the "Taiwan card"

is "playing with fire" China hoped that the Biden administration would view its development objectively and rationally, and explore with China a new path of peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation. Wang, also the State Councillor, said in a video conference. — *PTI* 

## Indonesia: Sub wreckage found Banyuwangi (Indones-

ia), April 25: Indonesia's military on Sunday officially said all 53 crew memhers from a submarine that sank and broke apart last week are dead, and that search teams had located the vessel's wreckage on the ocean floor.

The grim announcement

comes a day after Indonesia said the submarine was considered sunk, not merely missing, but did not explicitly say whether the crew was dead. Officials had also said the KRI Nanggala 402's oxygen suppwould have run out early Saturday, three days after vessel went missing off the resort island of Bali. "We received underwater pictures that are confirmed as the parts of the

AN UNDERWATER robot equipped with cameras found the lost

submarine was lying in at least three pieces on the ocean floor at a depth of 838 metres (2,750 feet), said Adm. Yudo Margono, the navy's chief of staff.

submarine, including its rear vertical rudder, anchors, outer pressure body, embossed dive rudder and other ship parts," military chief Hadi Tjahjanto told reporters in Bali on Sunday. "With this authentic evidence, we can declare that KRI Nanggala 402 has sunk and all the crew members are dead," Tjahjan-

uipped with cameras found the lost submarine was lying in at least three pieces on the ocean floor at a depth of 838 metres (2,750 feet), said Adm. Yudo Margono, the navy's chief of staff. That's much deeper than the KRI Nanggala 402's collapse depth of 200 metres (655 feet), at which point water pressure would be greater than the hull could withstand, according to earlier navy statements. The wreckage is locate ed 1,500 metres (yards) to the south of the site where the submarine last dove Wednesday, off Bali's nort-

hern coast, Margono said. The underwater robot was deployed by Singaporean vessel MV Swift Rescue provided the images, el KRI Rigel had scanned the area where the submarine was believed to have sank using multibeam sonar and a magnetometre, Tjahjanto said. The cause of the disappearance was

still uncertain. The navy had previously said an electrical failure could have left the submarine unable to execute emergency procedures to resurface. An American reco nnaissance plane, a P-8 Poseidon, landed Saturday and had been set to join the search, along with 20 Indonesian ships, four aircraft and a sonar-equipped Australian warship. The German-built diesel-powered KRI Nanggala 402 had been in service in Ind-

INTENSE | BIDDING | Pattern forgotten as Mint continued creating silver dollars

## 1st \$ coins prototype auctioned for \$8.4L

Jacob Lipson of Heritage

Washington, April 25: A piece of copper that was struck by the US Mint in Philadelphia in 1794 and was a prototype for the fledgling nation's money was auctioned off for \$840,000, considerably more than

expected, an official said. Heritage auctions spokesman Eric Bradley said the "No Stars Flowing Hair Dollar" opened at

\$312,000 when it was put

up Friday evening but "in

less than a minute, intense bidding quickly pushed the coin to its final auction price of \$840,000 The coin, formerly owned by businessman and

Texas Rangers co-chairman Bob Simpson, was expected to sell for \$350,000 to \$500,000, Bradley said. While it closely resembles silver dollars that were later minted in Philadelphia, it gets its name because it is missing stars.

Auctions said earlier that starless coins are considered by collectors and insti tutions as "one-of-a-kind prototypes for the silver examples that would follow." Known as a pattern, the front features the flowing hair portrait of Liberty and the date 1794, while the reverse side shows a

Similar starless exampl-

ates the unique rarity was excavated from the site of the first Philadelphia Mint before 1876," Lipson said. small eagle on a rock with-

That was how the coin's first owner described its history at its first auction

Numismatic Collection.

rs. "Coin collecting lore st-

es are part of the Smithsonian Institution's National pattern is corroded and not in perfect condition, The pattern was forgott-Lipson said, likely becauen as the Mint continued se it was buried at the site the process of creating the of the original Mint. nation's first silver dolla-There are some scratch-

es and other marks on its brown surfaces. It has traded hands eight times, according to the auction house. Simpson, 73, purchased it along with other patterns in 2008 to add to his large collection.

### **Putin-Biden meet** may be held in June on Moscow and the health Moscow, April 25: A top

aide to Vladimir Putin said Sunday that a possible summit between the Russian leader and his US counterpart Joe Biden could take place in June.

Biden earlier this month offered a meeting between the two leaders in a neutral country, as tensions between Russia and the West escalated shar-Ukraine, new sanctions

of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny. The Kremlin has said it

is still considering the offer, but on Sunday, Putin's top foreign policy aide, Yury Ushakov, said that planning is underway.
"June is being named,

there are even concrete dates," Ushakov said on state-run television channel Rossiya-1.

DECCAN CHRONICLE | NELLORE | MONDAY | 26 APRIL 2021

## **Chronicle**

26 APRIL 2021

## CJI should make judiciary kinder, faster, transparent

new chapter in Indian judiciary starts with Justice N.V. Ramana having taken oath as the 48th Chief Justice of India (CJI) on April 24, which can and should be glorious. Till his tenure ends on August 26, 2022, CJI Ramana must focus on addressing three crucial issues — humaneness of judicial processes and systems, especially in the criminal side of law and justice,

with great stress on speed and efficiency, and openness and transparency.

The absolutely first area to priority is administrative. The CJI must ensure all the pending vacancies in the judiciary, especially in the higher echelons of the Supreme Court and the various high courts, must be filled within the first 90 days of his term on a war footing. This numbers-led priority is to ensure the judiciary is operating at maximum mandated capacity and to a full strength to focus on the

next area of priority — speedy delivery.

Justice delayed is justice denied. Time gap has been an underlying weakness and area of concern with our judicial system for a long while now. Systems need to be created to ensure timely dismissal of cases and the recent suggestive directive empowering high courts to hire retired justices

The expectation from **CJI** Ramana is that he will strive hard to humanise criminal iustice and focus on ensuring higher regard for law and human rights amongst the law enforcement agencies

to dispose pending cases is welcome and must be taken to a logical conclusion under stern supervision. There can be suggestions made to the government, a mandated litigator, to withdraw a large number of cases through a matrix of stake involved versus the time since the case has stretched. Automatic disposal of petty and routine cases can also go a long way in unburdening

the judicial load. The CJI will hearten the citizenry by ensuring the implementation of faster and timely disposal of criminal cases against politicians and bureaucracy and give them punishment.

A lesson that no one is too mighty to get away from the clutches of the law is an expectation that has waited long enough to be delivered with urgency, and who better than the author of this extraordinary hope-giving judgment to ensure its implementation? The highest expectation from CJI Ramana is that he will strive hard to humanise criminal justice systems and focus on ensuring higher regard for law and human rights amongst the law enforcement agencies, particularly the lathi-happy police.

Fake encounters too can and will likely become a thing of the past, if his record is anything to go by — with strongest action likely in custodial death cases. Ensuring police respond to sensitise their departments and officers regarding human rights would be a great achievement.

A larger effort is needed to make it clear to the government and officials that they cannot ignore judicial pronouncements, which could be one of the most significant contributions of this tenure.

Finally, the judiciary must make itself even more open and transparent in coming out with unambiguous guidelines to dealing with grievances and complaints

A judicial ombudsman is needed, comprising members of the bar, and of different states in composition at state-level and representatives of the government. Brothers and sisters of the judiciary must be able to handle all such instances in a way as to raise the respect for the blindfolded lady with a balance even higher.

At the start of CJI Ramana's tenure, history might well ask — if not here where; if not now — when; if not you — who?

## We're safe when all are safe

t is in the DNA of every pandemic that it is global, all the more so in a truly globalised world. It hardly makes sense for a nation to think that it can fight the pandemic all alone and be safe; it will not be long before it realises that the microorganism that causes the pandemic has reached its shores by means it can hardly block. Eliminating the virus from the face of the earth is an economic priority, too, as it would bring productive people back in action and the global economy back into black; not to forget the humanitarian angle as a pandemic devastates lives and often extinguishes them on a mass scale.

The US government's fight against pandemic Covid-19 has entered a decisive phase with close to 70 per cent of its population having been vaccinated. The country has the capacity to manufacture more as the vaccination programme advances and hence the demand in the country to help countries such as India where people have started dying in their thousands every day.

The US has spare vaccines which are part of the Indian vaccination programme

and hence can be put in the logistics chain on arrival. There are also redundant quantities of anti-viral drugs such as Remdisivir, as well as oxygen, which could save lives in India.

It's not just in the case of the ready-to-serve products that Indian wants the US to take a global view. The Serum Institute of India which makes the Covishield vaccine had recently appealed to US President Joe Biden to relax the ban on the export of the raw materials for the vaccine but to no avail.

One cannot fault the US administration's policy that "it is not only in the US's interest to see Americans vaccinated; but it is in the interests of the rest of the world to see Americans vaccinated". The point of difference is that we will all be safe when we all are vaccinated; nationality hardly counts.

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## Mishandling elections in the time of a pandemic



Shikha Mukerjee

voters and contestants, every election is necessarily different, because the ways in which the thousands of acts of omission, commission, violation and bad faith by the incumbent government or the challenger are in a constant state of change. For the Election Commission, tasked with conducting the process through which the voter chooses a representative who is adequate to fulfil the aspirations and expectations he or she has, every election is both different and the same.

The context in which an election is held is certainly material to the way the Commission undertakes the exercise of holding free and fair polls so that the people's sover-eign will is exercised without obstruction or violation. If the EC fails to comprehend the context, then what follows is a superspreader event of terrifying proportions in the state that has been victim of the whims of the poll panel in its refusal to recognise that the Covid-19 crisis could turn into a catastrophe.

Dismissive of the pleas of West Bengal's ruling party and the state government, of all other Opposition parties barring the BJP that the eight-phase six-week poll schedule would be seriously risky at a time when new mutant strains of the coronavirus were detected and whose impact had pushed Britain and Europe to declare new lockdowns, new protocols and manage a new crisis, the EC maintained it had no power to alter the schedule after it was announced or notified. It insisted it was entirely capable of ensuring its strict guidelines on how campaigning and voting should be done in Covid times were followed by all candidates and of course their parties.

Having announced its guidelines, mobilised the largest force of security personnel drawn from every Central paramiliforce imaginable, adding up to over 1.5 lakh jawans and officers and innumerable support per-sonnel, brought in over 200 general observers, added to the original 54 appointed as police observers, the EC flooded West Bengal with the paraphernalia necessary to do two things simultaneously — hold peaceful, free and fair polls over eight phases and ensure adherence to its Covid guidelines. It failed on both counts at an incredibly high cost to the public exchequer.

Citizens exposed to the virus through super-spreader events and shoddy observance of Covid protocols are paying twice over for the EC's failures and its outrageously unrealistic assessment of its own capacity to deliver a flawless election process. The death of two candidates from the virus, a large number of candi dates ill or critically ill because of the infection and the final humiliating confirmation of its inadequacy as the order from the Calcutta high court lashed out that the role of the EC cannot be just "issuing circulars" and

"holding meetings" It took a searing indictment from the high court to get the commission to implement its own guidelines. It took a threat from the high court to ensure that big rallies were

banned. The Calcutta high court last week said the judiciary would step in and "act like T.N. Seshan", the legendary tough chief election commissioner, who had postponed and threatened to cancel elections in Bihar and West Bengal if political parties failed to disastrous mismanagement by the EC that has cost lives and skyrocket-ing state public health expenditure to cope with the outfall of the speed of the spread of the deadly virus, the then chief election commissioner Sunil Arora and current CEC Sushil Chandra said they were powerless to listen to reason and heed the context of this election in West Bengal, namely the danger of an even greater surge of the evolving virus.

Election Commission dismissed the plea by Mamata Banerjee that the eightphase election was very risky. It seemed to pay more attention to the BJP's jeers that the eight-phase election was necessary to ensure peaceful, free and fair elections. The Election Commission rejected the April 16 appeal by all political par-ties in the fray in West Bengal, besides the BJP, that the remaining three phases should be clubbed together. Defending the eight-phase polls, BJP candidate Swapan Dasgupta said anything else would affect the "democratic spirit" of the process. His assurance and that of his party that all Covid protocols would be maintained cut no ice with the Calcutta high court, as its indictment reveals

In declaring that it couldn't change the schedule once it as notified, the Election Commission forgot that it has the power to do so and there is a precedent. In 1984, the Lok Sabha elections were held in all states, except Punjab and Assam. Elections there were held in 1985 because the circumstances called for it. In 1991, the EC decided that the Lok Sabha elections would be

Can it be a mere coincidence that **Prime Minister** Modi cancelled his final four rallies, out of a total of 18, minutes before the commission announced the ban on rallies?

dates because after some states had voted, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated and there was turmoil. The Representation of the People Act is rigid, but the law isn't stupid. It does admit there can be an obstruction to the polling process after a natural calamity or any other sufficient cause.
As a result, West Bengal saw an unprecedented number of public rallies

and meetings organised on mega scale for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, at least a dozen or more star campaigners from the BJP's very large and varied pool of leaders, including defence minis-ter Rajnath Singh and UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath. A comparison of one day of campaigning by the BJP and Ms Banerjee is revealing; the BJP held at least nine major rallies, roadshows and meetings on one day while Mamata Banerjee managed only four.

As the challenger in West Bengal, the BJP's capacity to spread havoc without being restrained by the EC, outdid all other political parties on a daily basis. Can it be a mere coincidence that Prime Minister Modi cancelled his final four rallies, out of total of 18, minutes before the commission announced the ban on ral-A pandemic on the scale

of Covid-19 is unprecedented. If the EC failed to grasp this simple fact, so did the Prime Minister. Not till the nationwide oxygen shortage began killing patients in hospitals patients across India, ICU beds ran short and private hospitals went to court did the magnitude of the calamity impress itself on Mr Modi, whose office had earlier reportedly turned away Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray's desperate SOS for help. Can the democratic spirit freely exercise its franchise if disease and death stalk the voter? The EC will eventually have to answer this question.

> Shikha Mukerjee is a senior journalist in Kolkata

## **OXYGEN SHORTFALL**

The number of patients dving due to lack of oxygen is heart breaking. All the deaths due to lack of oxygen happened in metro cities where highend medical facilities are available. The reason for this cannot be attributed entirely to the overwhelming demand. The lack of preparedness by governments for the likely worsening pandemic has played the major part in the havoc. Kerala and AP did a good job in foreseeing the problem and reserving oxygen supply.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao Vizianagaram

#### **FIRE SAFETY**

Hospitals with NOC from fire safety department who have executed an undertaking should have been notified (Covid hospitals yet to get NOC from fire department, DC, April 25). But after notification, insisting that they adhere to safety norms and get an NOC from fire safety wing serves little purpose. Jagannadham Chowdari

#### **CANCEL EXAMS**

The demand of Nara Lokesh and that of many a parent/student for cancellation or postponing SSC and Intermediate examinations in AP is genuine and should have been considered favourably. Unfortunately, the state govern-ment is taking a risk in the name of providing 'quality' by conducting the examinations. The government has failed to contain the second wave and started night curfew to break the chain. If the number of tests increase, the actual Covid sit-uation will look even more grim. Govardhana Myneedu

## YEARS AGO IN **Chronicle** 1 dead, 55 hurt in rail mishap

HYDERABAD, April. 25 A nine-year-old girl was killed and 55 other passengers were injured, five of them seriously, when a passenger train collided with a goods train this evening between the Asifabad Road and Ralapet stations in the Kazipet-Balharshah section of Secunderabad Division of the South Central Railway.

Kishwar **London Diary** 



A fitting farewell for Prince Philip; Cameron, Carrie graft entertains

ne headlines here lately, about India, have been worrying. Many of them are about the Indian Covid crisis, and it is sad to see the terrifying predictions that are doing the rounds. While Boris Johnson thinks about sending respirators to India, many are wondering what happened to the great advantage India had last year. Now all we see are the burning pyres, and an ever-expanding body count. The question everyone asks is how could this have happened when India was doing so well? Yes, there had been a harsh lockdown earli- $\rm er-but$  then that was the only way to deal with the enemy, who was unknown at the time. But now the bonds between the two countries are being sealed, ironically, by the "Indian" strain in the UK, and "British" mutant in India. The alarming difference is that while the UK is slowly opening up, India seems to be in the midst of a severe medical tsunami. Could it be also because the UK had vaccinated such a large proportion of its population?

he big event of the past fortnight has, of course, been the Royal funeral. The Monarchy is perfectly adept at staging the most spectacular coronation (not seen, happily, since 1952), weddings (the most recent, of Harry and Meghan, was beautiful but is proving unforgettable for other reasons) and, of course, funerals. There has not been a Royal funeral since Elizabeth the Queen Mother died at the ripe old age of 101 a while ago. The funeral for the Duke was planned

well in advance and indeed he had participated in its arrangements, choosing the carriage specially designed by himself for the occasion. But as luck would have it, the Duke's funeral became unique because of Covid. And this brought to the fore the discipline maintained by the Royalty as it abides by the laws it is formally responsible for promulgating through it is the civilian government which thinks them up. For example, even through the Second World War, the Royal Family ate only the rations permitted to their subjects.

he sparseness of numbers at the funeral, the lack of street crowds, the location at Windsor rather than London gave the occasion its own special magic. He was after all 99, just one week short of his centenary. The Queen is, more or

less, universally respected and much loved by all but a few diehard Republicans. The Duke had to earn respect given to him. Press delighted in his more acerbic and "politically incor-rect" views. He himself had joked about his "foot in the mouth" problem. But the sheer length of his presence on the public platform, discreetly walking a few steps behind his wife, won people

ost watched the ceremony on TV where the BBC yet again turned up trumps as it does on such occasions. It was a sombre but a beautifully staged occasion. Even so, it was the Queen sitting by herself in the chapel, which was the most dramatic sight. She had already placed her own written farewell into the coffin and then she sat quietly, the picture of dignity in grief. While the media wanted to make a fuss about Harry and William, the Palace managed to make them all behave themselves. And the emotion of the moment almost made everyone forget THAT

vides the entertainment. Not a Lweek goes by without another corruption scandal. David Cameron, the former Prime Minister, has been caught lobbying for a company Greensill where he is the director. His text messages to Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor, asking for financial help, have been revealed. (When will these "leaders" learn what every teenager knows — that if you use your smartphone, there is no secrecy?) The Prime Minister himself is under attack by his former chosen Special Adviser Dominic Cummings (who had to be let go after he had antagonised everyone including Carrie Symonds, the PM's fiancée). He has now leaked more ammunition against his old friend alleging that Boris stopped a public inquiry when government rules were broken. Par for the course. But the target, more and more, seems to be the Prime Minister's fiancée about whom stories are churned out every week And now, under media scrutiny, Boris has had to pay 58,000 pounds for the redecoration of his residence at Downing Street, already undertaken by the young Ms Symonds. Yes,

n a mundane world, politics pro-

the Prime Minister in the UK cannot use taxpayers' money to re-do the official home in London. Can such a rule ever work in India, hmmm?

But Boris has retained his amazing luck. While he has presided over the shambles of Covid mismanagement, he is doing very well thanks to the widely successful vaccination programme. The UK has become the envy of EU, if not the world, for its vaccination performance. Even Brexit has been forgot-

Actually Boris was supposed to be in Delhi today, on April 26. His earlier trip to Delhi for the Republic Day on January 26 had to be postponed due to Covid. But the two Prime Ministers seem to be fated never to meet in India (especially not if the date is the 26th) and the British PM has once again cancelled his trip. Call the astrologer!

Kishwar Desai's latest book, The Longest Kiss: The Life And Times of Devika Rani, has just been published and she is the Chair of the Trust that set up the world's first Partition

Museum in Amritsar

**VW WARNS** 

DECCAN CHRONICLE | NELLORE | MONDAY | 26 APRIL 2021

# quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	47,878.45	-0.42
Nifty 50	14,341.40	-0.45
S&P 500*	4,180.17	1.09
Dollar (₹)	75.02	-0.06
Pound Sterling (₹)	104.13	0.07
Euro (₹)	90.46	-0.24
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,273 <b>▼</b> 24	0.05
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	65.76	0.55
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.035	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.574	0.018
* As of Friday/Saturday		

## Steel companies produce 3,474 t medi-oxygen/day

The steel industry produced 3,474 tonne of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) on Saturday, higher than its daily production capacity to meet the shortage of the life-saving gas. A steel ministry statement said on Sunday, there are 33 oxygen plants in the steel sector, of which 29 are tapped regularly. The total daily oxygen production capacity of steel plants is 2,834 tonne. The production of LMO was 3,474tonne on April 24.



**GAMES** 

SHORT TAKES

**Amit settles for** 

**bronze** in Russia

Indian boxer Amit Panghal (52kg) settled for a bronze

medal at the Governor's Cup in

down to world champion and

ver-medallist, lost 5-0 to the

in the semifinals.

Olympic champion.

July-August.

familiar foe Shakhobidin Zoirov

Amit, a world championships sil-

Uzbek, who is also the reigning

This was the Indian's second loss

to Zoirov after the 2019 world championships. In that event, he

had lost to Zoirov in the finals.

Both the boxers are bound for

the Tokyo Games, to be held in

St Petersburg, Russia after going

## ■ Indian ops boost US giant's profit Flipkart to get \$1 bn more from Walmart

2021 primarily due to

Flipkart's improved mar-

gin mix and reduced fuel sales in the UK. This is

against a 136-points reduc-

tion in gross profit in

FY20 primarily due to

Flipkart, as well as a

change in merchandise

Walmart finalised the

valuation of assets and

liabilities of Flipkart in

the second quarter of FY20. As per this, Flipkart

CHENNAI, APRIL 25

Walmart has decided to pump in around \$1 billion more to support the operations of Flipkart.

Walmart said its international segment's cash and cash equivalents of \$2.8 billion may not be freely transferable to the US due to local laws or other restrictions. Of this, approximately \$1 billion can only be accessed through dividends or inter-company financing arrangements, subject to approval of the Flipkart minority shareholders. This cash is expected to be utilised to fund the opera-tions of Flipkart, Walmart said in its annual

report. Walmart's gross profit rate increased 50 basis points in financial year

which comprise primarily of \$2.2 billion in cash and cash equivalents, \$2.8 billion in other current assets, \$5 billion in intangible assets and \$13.5 billion in goodwill.

Of the intangible assets, \$4.7 billion represents the fair value of trade names. The remaining \$0.3 billion of intangible assets primarily relate to acquired technology with a life of

three years.
Flipkart has liabilities of \$3.7 billion, which comprise primarily of \$1.8 billion. lion of current liabilities and \$1.7 billion of deferred income taxes and non-controlling interest of \$4.3 billion. The company began consolidating the financial statements of Flipkart in the third quarter of FY19, using a one-

## **BHARAT BIOTECH SEEKS NOD TO EXTEND SHELF LIFE OF COVAXIN**

New Delhi, April 25: Bharat Biotech has written to the drug regulator, seeking extension of the shelf life of its indigenously developed vaccine, Covaxin, from six to 24 months, sources said on Sunday.

Bharat Biotech was given permission for sale distribution Covaxin with a shelf life of six months when stored at two to eight degrees Celsius.

"Now, we are herewith applying for the extension of shelf life from six months to 24 months when stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius," the firm said in its applica-tion to the Drugs Controller General of

Bharat Biotech has submitted updated accelerated and real-time stability port of its claim.

## to be tested in event-heavy week **RAVI RANJAN PRASAD**

Mkt momentum

The equity market is lacking foreign and domestic institutional investors support, as the Covid-19 cases saw almost a verti-

cal rise to above 3 lakh infections daily, leading to caution. The Indian currency has also weakened against the US dollar to the levels seen during the market crash last year. Foreign portfolio inves-

tors (FPIs) were net sellers of equities worth Rs 8,674 crore in April so far. The previous six months have been good for the market, as after September 2020 FPIs had turned net buy-

ers in a big way.

Mutual funds also reduced equity buying in April so far to just Rs 1,251.72 crore against Rs 2,476.45 crore net buying in March. But domestic institutional investors, including mutual funds, insurance, banks and pension funds, were net buyers by Rs 7,960.71 crore.

With the rupee expected to weaken further this year, FPIs may not resume buying in a big way unless the currency stabilises.

"The Indian rupee, Asia's best-performing currency in March, is going to slide right back to levels last seen in the depths of the pandemic meltdown; the currency will drop toward 76.5 to a dollar by the end of the year," according to Parul Mittal Sinha, head of macro trading, India and South Asia financial markets, Standard Chartered.

'We do not see the volatility easing out in the



coming week too, thanks to scheduled data and events," said Ajit Mishra, VP-research, Broking.

"The monthly expiry of April month derivatives contracts will keep the traders on their toes. On the data front, core sector data will be unveiled on April 30. The recent proposal by the US president to raise capital gains tax has started showing its impact in US markets which may cascade to others in the coming week Needless to say, the Covid-related updates will remain on the partici-pants' radar," Mishra said. "Details of US President

Joe Biden's proposed wealth tax will start emerging next week. Biden wants to raise the federal capital gains tax to 43.4 per cent for the richest of individuals, bringing combined state and federal rates in places such as New York and California to well above 50 per cent—the highest ever in US history. Expect volatility whenever these details emerge," said an analyst tracking Indian market.

The market will also react to earnings of many blue chips this week.

## **OF WORSENING SITUATION** April 25: Volkswagen AG

**CHIP SHORTAGE:** 

has warned managers to prepare for a bigger production hit in the second quarter than the first due to a global chip shortage, the Financial Times reported.

"We are being told from the suppliers and within the Volkswagen Group that we need to face considerable challenges in the second quarter, probably more challenging than the first quarter," Wayne Griffiths, president of Volkswagen's Spanish brand Seat, said.

Griffiths called the shortage the "biggest challenge" the company faces at the moment.

He said production at Seat's Martorell plant outside Barcelona was currently "hand to mouth", with the brand deciding what cars to build only after it receives chips from suppliers, the report

Volkswagen has said it expects chip supply to remain tight in the coming months, adding it could not provide visibility for the full year.

The company has been unable to build 100,000 cars due to the shortage, CEO Herbert Diess said last month, adding the group would not be able to make up for the shortfall in 2021. "The situation has been

exacerbated i.e. by the blizzards that have occurred in Texas, as the large chip manufacturers based there had to stop or reduce their production. For that reason further adjustments to production cannot be ruled out", Volkswagen said in an emailed statement.

- Reuters

## Govt has to keep up fiscal support to poor: IMF SANGEETHA G

CHENNAI, APRIL 25

The government will have to keep up its fiscal support to those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic, as the country runs the risk of pushing a large number of people into extreme poverty.

The International Monetary Fund fears that the pandemic might have resulted in some 100 million more people falling into dire poverty globally, with India accounting for a significant portion of that.

According to Alfred Schipke, IMF mission chief for India, "The inequality and poverty has increased globally due to the pandemic. We estimate that globally people who have been pushed into extreme poverty or those surviving on \$1.90 a day have gone up by 100 million. A large part of that, 50 per cent or 50 million, are estimated to be in India. Around 22 million

Hence, the government will have to continue its

sub-Saharan

fiscal support to those who have been adversely affected. India responded with fiscal support, which was 8.4 per cent of the GDP, of which 5 per cent was below-the-line support in the form of government guarantees.

However, due to the economic impact of the pandemic, the fiscal space has been limited. While the fiscal position of most counhas deteriorated, India's debt to GDP ratio has gone up to 90 per cent last fiscal, he said in a roundtable last week.

According Gaspar, director, Fiscal Affairs Department, IMF, where the country will have to improve its medium-term fiscal framework to avoid scarring. Even before the pandemic, there was a strong case for an upgrade in the mediumterm fiscal framework. The case has been made stronger by the pandemic. needs framework sound forecasting of revenues. India has a track

record of substantial fore-

cast errors, he said.

## Bess hated game after bubble pain

England off-spinner Dom et" after his prolonged stay inside a bio-bubble during the Test tour of India earlier this year.

Bess got just five wickets from two Tests in the fourth-match series which India won 3-1. He was dropped after helping England to victory in the first Test in Chennai, only to return for the final match in Ahmedabad, where he went wicket-less during an innings defeat.

After spending around seven weeks inside the bio-bubble in India, the 23year-old Bess is currently involved in the county season, looking to rediscover his form with Yorkshire.

"After India I had a good break away from it, because I really did start hating cricket," Bess was quoted as saying by ESPNCricinfo.

"It got too much at times, certainly in that bubble in India, there's a lot of pressure going on and it was really important for me to come back and get away from it," he said. On returning from India,

Bess had "two or three weeks off", getting to know his new home in Leeds and spending time with his girlfriend and the



puppy they have adopted. "It was nice to see them and get away from it. because in India, in the bubble, everything was about cricket. And it's fine when you're going well but when things aren't going well it is very tough," he said.

"But I only see what I had in India as a great positive. It's been a tough time really, but one hell of a learning curve for me. And it terms of where I see my game, I know what I've got to do. That's so exciting, knowing that I've still got so much work to do, when I'm so close as well, at times.' Bess said he learnt some

really tough lessons in India and felt that should improve his chances of achieving success with England in the long run.

## Amit was the lone Indian to make the medal round. — PTI **Barty survives early**

scare to win title

Stuttgart, Germany: World number one Ashleigh Barty earned her third WTA title this year by beating Aryna Sabalenka in the final of Stuttgart's clay-court tournament on Sunday. After winning in Miami and a pre-Melbourne on hard court, Barty

Australian Open event in added the Stuttgart title, her first tournament on clay this season. A day after her 25th birthday, the Australian rallied from losing the first set to claim a 3-6, 6-0, 6-3 win over Sabalenka, who needed a medical time-out after the second set for an adductor injury.

— AFF

#### **Nadal sets up final** date with Tsitsipas

Barcelona: Rafael Nadal will face a red-hot Stefanos Tsitsipas in the Barcelona Open final after the 11-time champion eased past fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreño 6-3. 6-2 on Saturday.

Nadal roared out to a 5-1 lead before Carreno pulled back a break. Carreno then had three break chances on Nadal's next service game, but the latter saved them all and closed out the set. The top-seeded Nadal improved to an 8-0 career record

against Carreño. The second-seeded Tsitsipas advanced after beating Jannik Sinner 6-3, 6-3 for his eighth consecutive straight-set victory including last week's title run at Monte Carlo. - AP

## Andhra skaters on a roll DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

Andhra Pradesh skaters Championship held in Chandigarh, Punjab, recently, returning with a clutch of medals from the tournament.

Rayudu Arun Kumar and Farheen Shaik won the gold in the Above 17 years pair skating as well as couple dance skating events while Preetam and Laasya took silver in the couple dance category.

Arun also won a bronze

in the boys above 17 free dance skating, in which Harikamal took gold.

Harikamal also took silver in the above 17 figure event and was part of the Above 17 quartet team Venu, Farheen, Anmisha, Harikamal) that won gold. Anmisha, Samhitha, Siddi Vinayak were among the skaters who won multiple medals.

MEDAL WINNERS Above 17 age group, figure event: Boys — Harikamal (silver), Sahith (bronze). Girls — Lasva (bronze). ■ 14-17 age group figure: Girls - Tanvi Vinayak (gold). Boys - Mohan Kiran (silver), Rishab (bronze). ■ Above 17, freestyle: Girls Rayudu Arun Kumar (right) and Farheen Shaik perform on way to winning the Above 17 years pair skating event at the National Roller Skating Championship held in Chandigarh, Punjab.

– Anmisha (gold). Boys –

Venu (silver), Rayudu Arun Kumar (bronze). ■ 14-17 freestyle: Girls — Samhitha (gold), Meghana (silver). Boys — Mohan Kiran (gold), Vaishnav (silver). Above 17 inline: Girls — Anmisha (gold). Boys -Venu (bronze). 14-17 inline: Girls

Meghana (gold), Samhitha (silver), Swetha (bronze). Boys — Vaishnav (gold), Rishab (silver). Above 17 pair skating: Rayudu Arun Kumar Farheen Shaik (gold).

14-17 pair skating: Vaishnav & Grishma (gold). Above 17 free dance skating: Boys - Harikamal (gold), Rayudu Arun Kumar (bronze). Above 17 couple dance

**skating:** Rayudu Arun Kumar

Farheen Shaik (gold), Preetam & Laasya (silver). Above 17 quartet team: Venu, Farheen, Anmisha, Harikamal (gold).

14-17 quartet team: Vaishnav, Vishal, Samhitha, Swetha (gold). ■ 11-14 boys freestyle: T.

Nihal (gold), Sowrya Nathani

■ 11-14 girls freestyle: Siddhi Vinayak (gold), Greesham

(bronze) 11-14 boys figure: Tej Nihal

■ 11-14 girls figure: Siddhi Vinayak (bronze).

(silver), Saheera Pondala

■ 11-14 boys inline: Sowrya

Nathani (gold), Kyvalya (sil-

■ 11-14 girls inline: Siddhi

Vinayak (gold), Saheera Pondala (silver), Greeshma

(bronze)

#### MAN UNITED HELD GOAL-LESS Zidane's men slip in title BY LEEDS; BURNLEY WIN BIG race after draw at home spots in the Premier

**London, April 25:** Manchester United drew 0-0 with Leeds on Sunday to stay on track for a second-place finish in the Premier League after Burnley took a giant step towards survival

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's men beat their bitter rivals 6-2 at Old Trafford in December but both sides looked short of energy and imagination in a lacklustre encounter at Elland Road.

The result takes United to 67 points after 33 games, 10 points behind champions-elect Manchester City but eight points clear of third-placed Leicester.

City, Manchester United, Manchester Leicester and Chelsea currently occupy the top-four

League but just seven points separate Leicester eighth-placed Everton. Most of the teams have

just five games to play. Earlier, Chris Wood scored a first-half hattrick as Burnley pum-melled Wolves 4-0 to lift themselves nine points clear of the Premier League relegation zone.

Chelsea took control of the battle to secure Champions League football next season as Timo Werner's goal earned a 1-0 win over West Ham on Saturday, while Liverpool conceded a stoppage time equaliser to draw 1-1 with Newcastle. Liverpool are now four points adrift of the top four.

Madrid, April 25: Real Madrid handed the initiative back to Atletico Madrid in La Liga on Saturday by drawing at home to Real Betis, a result that raises doubts about the team's condition

ahead of Tuesday's Champions League semifinal against Chelsea. Eden Hazard thrown on for the last 15 minutes of the 0-0 draw at Valdebebas in what was only the Belgian's second appearance in three months but Madrid could

not find a way through.

Atletico are now two

points clear at the top of La Liga and can extend

that advantage to five by winning away at Athletic Bilbao on Sunday. Barcelona could pull

level on points with Real Madrid if they overcome Villarreal.

Real Madrid struggled for chances and the concern will be that numerous injuries and fatigue are catching up with Zinedine Zidane's side at a crucial moment in the sea-"It's two points dropped,

that's obvious, we lacked a lot going forward, espegame," said Zidane.

cially at the start of the "We weren't sharp but that can happen. We have

to go again on Tuesday." They play Chelsea at home on Tuesday in the first leg of the Champions League semi-finals and it is possible none of Toni Kroos, Sergio Ramos, Mendy, Fede or Lucas Ferland Valverde Vazquez, all absent due to

injury, will return. Hazard could feature against his former club after coming on for the final quarter of an hour but the fact Zidane waited so long to introduce him suggests he is still not considered match fit, having now played 30 minutes since the end of January. -AFP

## **AZAM FASTEST TO REACH**

Harare, April 25: Pakistan captain Babar Azam became the fastest batsman to reach 2,000 Twenty20 international runs Sunday, achieving the feat in 52 innings, four fewer than India skipper Virat Kohli. Azam lifted his T20 total to 2,035 runs by making 52 as Pakistan defeated Zimbabwe by 24 runs to win a

T20 series 2-1 at Harare Sports Club. Kohli has scored 3,159 runs in the 20-over format but it took him 56 innings to pass the 2,000-run land-

Azam won the toss, opted to bat and the tourists made 165-3 in 20 overs as they sought redemption after a shock 19-run loss two days ago. The batting of Mohammad Rizwan (91 not out) and

Azam (52) and career-best bowling from Hasan Ali (4-18) ultimately ensured Pakistan would not suffer the humiliation of losing the series. Brief scores: Pakistan 163/3 in 20 overs (Mohammad Rizwan

91 not out, Babar Azam 52; L. Jongwe 3-37) bt Zimbabwe 141/7 in 20 overs (Madhevere 59, Marumani 35, Hasan 4-18, Rauf 2-34).

PBKS Faf du

Plessis, CSK

**PURPLE** 

Harshal Patel, RCB

Avesh

Rahul Chahar, MI

Khan, DC

Off the field



Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit

#### Tye pulls out due to personal reason

Rajasthan Royals' Andrew Tye on Sunday flew back home due to "personal rea-sons" making him the fourth overseas recruit of the franchise to pull out of the ongoing Indian Premier League. Earlier, Englishmen Jofra Archer (hand surgery), Ben Stokes (finger fracture) and Liam Livingstone (bubble fatigue) had opted out. "AJ Tye flew back to Australia earlier today due to personal reasons. We will continue to offer any support he may need," Royals tweeted on

Sunday.
The 34-year-old Tye hasn't yet got a game in this edition of the tournament.

#### Kohli fined ₹12L for slow over-rate

Royal Challengers Skipper Virat Challengers Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh for his team's slow over-rate against Chennai Super Kings in an IPL game on Sunday. "As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Mr Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh, a press release said.

### **Hussey backs Gill to** fire again for KKR

**B**acking the out-of form Shubman Gill, Kolkata Knight Riders team mentor David Hussey said the opener is a "class act" who will be among the highest-scoring batsmen by the end of the IPL. The highly talented 21-year-old has not been at his best this season, managing 80 runs from five matches.

"He is a star player, he took the Test match arena by storm in Australia. He is very specific and he has a great work ethic," said Hussey.

"All I can say is that form will come and go, class is always permanent. He is one class individual, both on and off the field. Mark my words, he will be one of the highestscoring batsmen by the end of the tournament. He is an absolute class act," Hussey

Asked why Kiwi speedster Lockie Ferguson has not got a game yet, Hussey said team management will be going back to the drawing board in terms of strategies.

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## SUPER DELHIVERY

## Axar does star turn as Capitals edge Sunrisers in Super Over

**Chennai, April 25:** Delhi Capitals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad in a thrilling Super Over contest in the Indian Premier League here on Sunday.

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS • DELHI CAPITALS • KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS • MUMBAI INDIANS • PUNJAB KINGS
 RAJASTHAN ROYALS • ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE • SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

Batting first, Delhi Capitals managed to score 159 for 4 with opener Prithvi Shaw back in form with a 53 off 39 balls. Skipper Rishabh Pant scored 37 off 27 balls. Steve Smith remained not out on 34 off 25 balls. For SRH, pacer Siddarth Kaul took 2 for 31 in 4 overs.

In reply, SRH scored 159 for 7 with Kane Williamson contributing 66 nt out off 51 balls as the match went into Super

In the Super Over, SRH managed only 7 off Axar Patel while DC scored the runs of the last delivery.

SRH skipper David Warner said: "I thought the way the bowlers came back after the powerplay was fantastic. Vijay is not one of our strike bowlers, but he was fantastic. Johnny at the top and Kane batted deep but we couldn't make it. They bowled fantastically in the middle and brought it back. If you hit the ball to a world-class fielder, you get run-out nine times out of ten.

Earlier, Prithvi Shaw hit a sparkling fifty but Delhi Capitals frittered away a bright start to settle for

The 81-run stand between openers Shaw (53) and Shikhar Dhawan (28) had set a perfect plat-form for DC for a huge total but Hyderabad spin-ners Rashid Khan (1/31 in 4 overs) and Jagadeesha Suchith changed the course of the innings with their tight spells.

Skipper Rishabh Pant (37) and Steve Smith (34 not out) raised a 58-run stand for the fourth wicket to ensure a fighting total after electing to bat.

Shaw began with a hattrick of fours off pacer Khaleel Ahmed. Those breathtaking strokes, straight out of text book.

gance in his cover drives, both along the ground and the ones played over the 51 without loss



Delhi Capitals spinner Axar Patel celebrates after taking a Sunrisers Hyderabad wicket in an IPL game on Sunday.

field as Shaw backed his timing with precision and

six off pacer Siddarth Kaul over long on and the ramp shot over short third-man off the same bowler bore testimony to his supreme touch.

ing the second fiddle as the Capitals put on board years, as the two bowlers

Powerplay overs.

Left-arm spinner Suchith, playing his first game for SRH, did a decent job, giving away only 21 runs in his fourover quota. He consistent-

ly troubled Dhawan. in put brakes on the run flow. batsmen at the crease.

Rashid also provided his side with first breakthrough when he found stumps of Dhawan, ending DC's 81-run opening

Shaw's splendid knock ended in a run out after a Suchith bowled in tan- mix-up with skipper Pant. Australia captain Steve Smith were now two new

stand.

#### **SCORECARD**

Delhi Capitals: Prithvi Shaw run out (Ahmed/Suchith) 53, Shikhar Dhawan b Rashid Khan 28, Rishabh Pant c Suchith b Kaul 37, Steven Smith (not out) 34, Shimron Hetmyer c Williamson b Kaul 1, Marcus Stoinis (not out) 2. Extras (b 1, nb 1, w 2) 4. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 159. FoW: 1-81, 2-84, 3-142,

**Bowling:** 4-0-42-0, Abhishek Sharma 1-0-14-0, Siddarth Kaul 4-Jagadeesha Suchith 4-0-21-0, Vijay Rashid Khan 4-0-31-1.

Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner run out (Rabada/Pant)

Bairstow Dhawan b Avesh Khan 38, Kane Williamson (not out) 66, Virat Singh c Stoinis b Avesh Khan 4, Kedar Jadhav st Pant b Mishra 9, Abhishek Sharma Ibw b Patel 5, Rashid Khan Ibw b Patel 0, Vijay Shankar b Avesh Khan 8, Jagadeesha Suchith (not out) 15. Extras (b 2, lb 1, w 5) 8. Total (for seven wickets in 20 overs) 159. FoW: 1-28, 2-56, 3-84,

4-104, 5-117, 6-117, 7-

Bowling: Rabada 3-0-26-0, R. Ashwin 4-0-27-0, Marcus Stoinis 1-0-12-0. Axar Patel 4-0-26-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-34-3, Amit Mishra 4-0-31-1.

Delhi Capitals won the Super Over.

They kept the scoreboard

Smith was dropped on 14 by Kaul off Vijay Shankar. Khaleel had also missed out on a chance offered by Pant a few balls ago off

The duo managed to get bowlers largely controlled the proceedings.

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## Can Knights end miserable slump?

Ahmedabad, April 25: Their three-match losing Live on TV streak finally over, Punjab Kings would seek to build a Punjab Kings vs Kolkata Knight Riders winning momentum when they face the struggling Kolkata Knight Riders in from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1 an IPL match here on Monday. Punjab made a

winning start but then

slumped to three straight

losses before producing a clinical show to beat

defending champions Mumbai by nine wickets

on Friday, and they would

look to notch up another

triumph against KKR which have suffered four

Captain KL Rahul has

been one of the few consis-

tent performers in the for-

midable-looking Punjab batting unit and he once again led by example against MI with an unbeat-

en 60, his third fifty in five

Mayank Agarwal has been the other main per-

former and the return to

Chris Gayle against MI

with a 43 not out should be

good news for Punjab. But Deepak Hooda, who

has not done much after

one impressive innings,

will have to step up if

Punjab want to perform

consistently.
The place of Nicholas

Pooran, who has scored 0,

0, 9, 0, in the playing XI is

review though his turn did

not come in the last match. The Punjab bowlers, who

have been pedestrian in

earlier matches, came good

in their last match with the

talented Ravi Bishnoi (2/21) and senior India pacer Mohammad Shami

(2/21) leading the charge.

has been a consistent

from five matches.
On the other hand, KKR,

led by England's World Cup

bowler with

Young Arshdeep Singh

form of 'Universe Boss

defeats on the trot.

games.

**HEAD to HEAD** 

Matches 18 PBKS 9 KKR

**FOR THE RECORD** 

 Eoin Morgan with 6,957 runs at an average of 27.07 in 300 innings needs 43 runs to become the fourth Englishman and 23rd batsman overall to complete 7,000 runs in T20.

Chris Gayle has scored 700 runs at an average of 46.66 in 18 innings against Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL.

**LAST YEAR'S MATCHES**  KKR beat Punjab by two runs at Abu Dhabi.

Punjab beat KKR by 8 wickets at **STATS:** S. PERVEZ QAISER

winning skipper Morgan, continued to slide after losing to Rajasthan Royals by six wickets in their last match. Their batting unit need a

complete turnaround in form if KKR has to snap their losing streak.
The top-five batsmen con-

tinued to struggle with only Nitish Rana — two half centuries — and Dinesh Karthik doing anything of worth. Pacer Pat

Cummins played incredible an innings -— 66 not out — for a losing cause against Chennai Super Kings but KKR would like their spe-cialist batsmen to deliver consistently instead of relying on the lower order. Gill and Morgan have they desperately need big

scores to make themselves count.

## High sir! Jadeja puts CSK on top

irrepressible Ravindra Jadeja blasted an IPL record-equalling 37 runs in one over and then grabbed three big wickets in an outstanding allround display as Chennai Super Kings crushed Royal Challengers Bangalore by 69 runs here on Sunday.

Jadeja pummelled 62 off 28 balls and lifted CSK to 191 for four after skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni opted to bat in a top-ofthe-table clash.

Then, with his slow-left arm spin bowling, the star all-rounder picked up the important wickets of AB de Villiers and Glenn Maxwell to derail RCB's run chase on a sluggish Wankhede pitch.

After a cracking start that saw them cross 50 in five overs, RCB were stopped at 122 for nine in 20 overs. The immenselytalented Devdutt Padikkal top-scored with a blazing 34 off just 15

Veteran South African leg-spinner Imran Tahir (2/16) picked up two wickets for CSK while giving away very few runs. Jadeja began the final

over of CSK innings by clobbering four consecutive sixes off Harshal Patel before adding another off the fifth ball. He smashed the last ball

over square leg for four as Harshal, who had figures of 3 for 14 going into the final over, finished with 4-Jadeja, batting at No.5,

was yet to open his account when he was dropped by Dan Christian off Washington Sundar. Playing for RCB, Chris Gayle had also scored 37



#### SCORECARD

Chennal Super Kings: Ruturaj Gaikwad c Jamieson b Chahal 33, Faf du Plessis c Christian b Patel 50, Suresh Raina c Padikkal b Patel 24, Ambati Rayudu c Jamieson b Patel 14, Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 62, MS Dhoni (not out) 2. Extras (lb 1, nb 2, w 3) 6. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 191. FoW: 1-74, 2-111, 3-111, 4-142.

Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 4-0-32-0, Kyle Jamieson 3-0-31-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 3-0-24-1, Navdeep Saini 2-0-27-Harshal Patel 4-0-51-3, Dan Christian 2-0-12-0, Washington Sundar 2-0-13-0.

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Virat Kohli c Dhoni b Curran 8, Devdutt Padikkal c Raina b Thakur 34, Washington Sundar c Gaikwad b Jadeja 7, Glenn Maxwell b Jadeja 22, AB de Villiers b Jadeja 4, Dan Christian run out (Jadeja) 1, Kyle Jamieson run out (Imran Tahir) 16, Harshal Patel b Imran Tahir O, Navdeep Saini c Raina b Imran Tahir 2, Yuzvendra Chahal (not out) 8, Mohammed Siraj (not out) 12. Extras (lb 3, w 5) 8. Total (for nine wickets in 20 overs) 122.

FoW: 1-44, 2-54, 3-65, 4-79, 5-81, 6-83, 7-89, 8-94, 9-103. Bowling: Deepak Chahar 2-0-25-0, Sam Curran 4-0-35-1, Shardul Thakur 4-0-11-1, Ravindra Jadeja 4-1-13-3, Imran Tahir 4-0-16-2, Dwayne Bravo 2-0-19-0.

runs, against Kochi Tuskers Kerala in the 2011 edition, the bowler being Prasanth Parameswaran on that

occasion. The left-handed Jadeja made full use of the reprieve to ruin what was turning out to be an excellent outing for purple cap holder Harshal, Patel, with his brutal last over

onslaught. With CSK placed at 154/4 when Harshal was handed the ball, Jadeja hit the first four balls for towering sixes and followed them with another maximum and a boundary in the seven-ball final

Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni remained not out on 2.

Jadeja's assault came after the RCB bowlers — Patel and Mohd Siraj (0/32) — had kept CSK in

Earlier, a second straight half-century for Faf du Plessis (50 off 41 balls) propelled CSK before Harshal delivered a double blow for RCB in the 14th over, getting rid of Suresh Raina (24) and the former South African captain off successive deliveries.

Raina belted three sixes during his 18-ball knock which gave CSK the move-on after the openers had set up a good platform with a 74-run partnership.

Ambati Rayudu, who came in at No.4, hit a huge six in his 14 and looked good for more before he holed out off Harshal's bowling a few deliveries after appearing to have hurt himself while stretching to get back to the crease. — *PTI* 

## **RAVINDRA CAN TURN MATCH ON HIS OWN: DHON**

Mumbai, April 25: Allrounder Ravindra Jadeja's significant improvement in batting convinced nas convinced his Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni to give him "those extra deliveries" that can change the complexion of a game. "Jaddu is some-body who can change the game on his own. In the last few years, we've seen significant change in batting and it's worth it to give him that extra bit of time, extra deliveries, Dhoni said.

The bowlers have found it difficult to contain left-handers, and that helps as well," Dhoni

## **KOHLI HAPPY TO SEE JADDU FIRE AHEAD OF T20 CUP**

Mumbai, April 25: Premier Ravindra Jadeja's brilliance may have ruined the Virat Kohli-led Royal Challengers Bangalore's plans in the IPL here on Sunday but with one eye on this year's T20 World Cup, the India captain was not complaining.In fact, Kohli seemed delighted to see his India teammate make an excellent return after a long injury layoff.

"His (Jadeja) ability has been there for everyone to see. I am very happy to see him perform with the bat, ball and on the field, Kohli said at the postmatch presentation ceremony. — PTI mony.



IPL begins from Monday.

## **OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP PEOPLE HAPPY, SAYS MORRIS**

Mumbai, April 25: Rajasthan Royals all-rounder Chris Morris says the COVID-19 catastrophe in India has been discussed in his team multiple times and the players can feel the pain that the pandemic is causing

in its deadly second wave here. India is reeling under the second wave of the pandemic with cases rising by over 3 lakh everyday, a crisis compounded by shortage of some crucial medicines and oxygen supplies. Morris said it is "difficult

to comprehend" what is happening. "As a team, we have been talking about it quite a lot over the last couple of days. We have seen how badly this pandemic has taken over the specific parts, if not all of India," Morris said at the post-match press conference after his side defeated Kolkata Knight Riders

by six wickets here on Saturday. "It is quite difficult to comprehend what is happening. It is a responsibility for us to play with smiles on our faces because we have a reason to smile and that we are healthy and get to play cricket.

"We hopefully get to keep people happy on the other side of the screen. Whether we winning or losing, it is an opportunity to keep people smiling, if that gives people a reason to smile, then we are doing well as a sport," he added.