

Womenia

TWEET PATROL



KIRAN BEDI
@THEKIRANBEDI
World BiCycle Day.
Most Enviroment+People friendly,
fitness promoting communication
way.. ThrowBack.



NEWS ROUNDUP

Kajol celebrates Bicycle Day with funny ‘Kuch Kuch Hota Hai’ clip

Actress Kajol celebrated Bicycle Day on Thursday with a clip from her film “Kuch Kuch Hota Hai” on social media. Kajol posted a snippet from the 1998 film on Instagram. The video features Kajol and co-star Shah Rukh Khan cycling. After a point the actress takes a tumble.

“And a very Happy Bicycle Day to you too #WorldBicycleDay,” she wrote as the caption. Filmmaker Karan Johar, who directed “Kuch Kuch Hota Hai”, wrote in the comment section, “Oh god! I remember this so clearly! And can’t forget what happened after.”

The romantic blockbuster narrated a love triangle played out by Kajol, SRK and Rani Mukerji, and has superhit music by Jatin-Lalit.

Kajol was last seen on screen in the digitally-released film, “Tribhanga”, directed by Renuka Shahane. The film narrates the story of three generations of women. Kajol plays an actress-dancer who shares a strained relationship with her mother (Tanvi Azmi), a noted author.



Simple hacks to avoid oily hair in summer



Many of us experience oilier-than-usual hair in the summer months because it’s not just the sebum you have to deal with, there’s the sweat and grime too. It is nothing to worry about, for many people; oily hair won’t cause any issues.

However, an abnormally oily scalp may be a concern. The more we sweat, the greasier our hair gets. The sweat gets mixed with sebum, an oily substance produced by the scalp during summers, and then the oil is further pushed down to the hair shaft by our body’s sweat.

An oily scalp is a breeding ground for dandruff. Dandruff can only produce itself with oil as the pores become clogged with hardened oil. It can also trigger off a hair loss problem. Excessive oiliness on the scalp can cause excessive itching and redness.

If your hair is oily, it may need to be washed every third day, or even more frequently during summer. Since the summer heat increases oil production on your scalp, it is important to wash your hair frequently. Tea tree oil, Green tea extracts, Lemon and Menthol based hair products can be beneficial on hotter days. Avoid oil applications if the hair is oily. If you generally oil your hair once a week, reduce it to once in two weeks. It’s



Coconut oil

Coconut milk is the healthiest natural ingredient for healthy hair. Mix freshly extracted coconut milk with a squeezed lemon and 4-5 drops of lavender essential oils. Leave it on for 4-5 hours and then rinse it off.

Aloevera

Mix 3 tablespoons of lemon juice, 1 tablespoon of aloe vera gel, and a cup of shampoo well and use it as a shampoo. Do it twice a week and you will get to see the changes in your hair texture and greasiness.

Rose water

To remove bad odour, add the juice of a lemon and half a cup of rose water to a mug of water and use it as a last rinse after shampoo.

Olive oil

In cases of sticky dandruff, where the flakes adhere to the scalp, hot oil therapy are very useful. Heat olive oil. Apply the oil on the scalp with cotton wool, rubbing gently to dislodge the flakes. Then dip a towel in hot water, squeeze out the water and wrap the hot towel around the head, like a turban. Keep it on for 5 minutes. Repeat the hot towel wrap 3 or 4 times. This helps

the hair and scalp absorb the oil better. Repeat it three or four times.

Avoid hair styling products

Avoid hair styling products like gels during humid weather, especially if the hair is oily. A hair rinse is more suitable during summer. It provides a conditioning treatment to the hair, giving it body and bounce, without making the hair oily. Prepare a rinse at home, using natural ingredients. This can be used after washing the hair, as a final rinse.

Marigold flowers

Add a handful of fresh or dried marigold flowers to two cups of hot water. Allow it to stand for one hour. Strain the water and cool it. Use it as a hair rinse.

Tea water

Have a tea-water and lemon rinse. Take used tea leaves and boil them again in water. You should have about 6 cups of water. The amount of water depends on the length of the hair. Strain and cool the water. Add the juice of a lemon to the tea and use it as a last rinse after shampoo. Tea contains tannin which adds shine to the hair and makes it silky. Lemon reduces oiliness.

From corporate life to being the yoga ambassador

TEJAL SINHA

“I am blessed to be born in the country where Yoga originated,” shares Ankita, who has been a yoga instructor for almost 12 years now.

Since her childhood, she had always followed her grandparents who used to practice certain Yogic techniques early in the morning and somehow, she had developed passion towards learning this ancient wisdom.

She shares, “I finished my MBA in Marketing and was placed in one of the most leading media firms in India- The Times of India Group. My challenging corporate career was growing at a fast pace but after a few years I realised that I am just running in this rat race and not able to be with myself. In 2008, I decided to quit my job and started my

professional Yoga Teachers training degree from the world’s oldest -Yoga Institute in Mumbai and simultaneously did my Masters in Yoga and Philosophy from University of Mumbai.”

Currently, she is pursuing her PhD in Yoga from University of Mumbai. Her first assignment given by my Yoga Guru was to train the Mumbai Police and after that there was no looking back.

She adds, “As a Yoga Consultant, I started teaching Yoga in various Corporates, Universities, Colleges, Schools, Institutions and later represented India in Europe. The best part of being in this noble profession is to serve the people of the globe.”

Yoga helps us to explore our life, eliminate what is not needed and elevate from the gross to the subtle. Yoga teaches us to manage our life

in a balanced manner. The need of the hour is to integrate Yoga and enhance its essence through Value based education.

Ankita shares, “The importance of Yoga was clear during this pandemic of Covid 19 where the focus was to keep the body and mind calm and balanced through various Yoga and meditation techniques. Everyone understood the essence of life and started living in the present with mindfulness. We understand that as we advance there is erosion of values which is leading to corruption, wars, unhealthy lifestyle, psycho-somatic diseases. The aim/role of Yoga is to harmonize the mind, body and spirit which will help in making a better and happy world.”

Her journey of surviving from the virus through yoga The moment Ankita could sense

the first symptom of fever and body ache, she shares that she quickly self-isolated herself in a room. The next step was to get herself tested as soon as possible to know the actual status of my condition.

She adds, Since that time the cases were rising in Mumbai, it was getting more difficult to get a home visit booked for the RT-PCR test. But, I continued my self-isolation which meant I was away from my family members completely. My food and all essentials were kept outside my room. I washed my utensils/clothes myself during my quarantine period. Finally, after 2 days once the test was done, I got a call from BMC stating that I am Covid Positive. That very moment was difficult but as Yoga taught me to accept the situations, I accepted this fact gracefully. As human beings are social in nature, self-isolation may lead to negative thoughts and depressive feelings if the mind and body is weak. That is the time, one has to give that mental jerk. I did the same to myself. My body was extremely weak so lying down on my bed I used to meditate and give a lot of positive affirmations to myself. I started with very gentle lying down breathing. Slowly and gradually, I gained that WILL-POWER and started feeling better both physically and mentally. During my quarantine time, I planned to make my Video Series of my covid journey from positive to negative so that I could motivate and help others during their tough phase.”

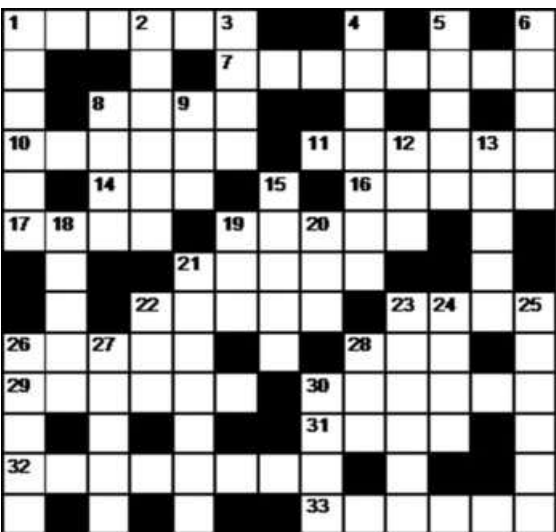
Maintaining healthy lifestyle during the pandemic

- Healthy Diet- fresh



fruits, nutritious food

- Staying Hydrated (Warm water, Lime water for Vit C and fluids)
- Regular Steam
- Taking charge of your Mind (strong will power)
- Gentle breathing practices/ Pranayamas for better lung capacity as it impacts the lungs
- Light meditation with lots of positive affirmations
 - Keep your mind busy with some light activities(writing, painting, listening to good motivational speakers, music)
 - Regular check on your body temperature, Pulse rate, Oxygen levels.



ACTUPFKARMA
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SOLUTION TO JUNE 3

CROSSWORD

Across

- Keen for action, combat (4-2)
- Prevalent (2,3,3)
- Boot part (4)
- Frog sounds (6)
- Thwart (6)
- Employ (3)
- Departing (5)
- Agile (4)
- Music from Louisiana (5)
- Havana native (5)
- Watery matter (5)
- Red planet (4)
- Follow (5)
- Tennis star Henman (3)
- Choose or prefer (6)
- Salty (6)
- Divulged (4)
- Disease producing fits (8)
- Ancient King of Persia (6)

Down

- Favours or garnishes (6)
- Oily (6)
- Paints used by an
- artist (4)
- Firearm (7)
- A dish of roasted game birds (5)
- Peer Gynt Suite composer (5)
- 60 minutes (4)
- ___ out : make living or support with difficulty ? (3)
- Hither’s partner (3)
- Interior (5)
- Afghan capital (5)
- Dried plum (5)
- Hint (3)
- Cram (3)
- Delayed or repressed (7)
- Regret (3)
- A maker of flour (6)
- In the middle of something (4)
- Chimney cleaners (6)
- German industrial city (5)
- Killed (5)
- Chinese principle (3)
- River of Hades (4)

SUDOKU

7				6	1		9
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5	4		7				
6			9		4	2	
		3		4		8	
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SOLUTION TO JUNE 3

2	8	5	3	4	1	7	6	9
6	7	3	8	5	9	1	4	2
4	1	9	6	2	7	5	3	8
5	9	2	7	3	8	4	1	6
1	4	8	5	9	6	3	2	7
3	6	7	4	1	2	8	9	5
9	2	4	1	7	5	6	8	3
7	3	6	9	8	4	2	5	1
8	5	1	2	6	3	9	7	4

Doughnut Day

Is your belly rumbling at the reminder of Doughnut Day? We wouldn’t be surprised if it was, as most of us love these most scrumptious foods.

There’s something about that delicious deep-fried treat that brings a smile to everyone’s face. Doughnut Day celebrates this wonderful treat, it’s history and the ladies who did something very special with these delicious goodies during World War 1. To learn more about this special and tasty day, read on to learn more about this wonderful tradition.

So, what could you do to celebrate Doughnut Day? Well, you could buy yourself a box of Krispy Kremes for starters, and indulge yourself on your favorite flavors.

You celebrate the charitable spirit of the day that brought Doughnut Day to fruition. You could raise funds for the Salvation Army or another charitable group that works with our armed forces, or you could volunteer your time.

If you are going to raise funds, then you might want to learn how to create your own doughnuts, and then sell them to the people who live around you. You could also create doughnuts for any members of ex-members of the Forces within your friends and family, and serve them up a tasty treat.

You might consider showing your charitable side in any other way, be that by donating money to a cause that means something to you, or by volunteering your time to help, perhaps on a regular basis.



Extra-marital affair no ground to deny custody of child to mom: HC

CHANDIGARH

A woman's extra-marital affair is not a ground to deny the custody of her child in a matrimonial dispute as it cannot be concluded that she will not be a good mother, the Punjab and Haryana High Court has held.

The court also noted that in a patriarchal society, it is fairly common to cast aspersions on the moral character of a woman and more often than not these allegations are made without any basis.

The order came following a habeas corpus petition filed by

a woman from Punjab's Fatehgarh Sahib district, seeking custody of her four-and-half-year-old daughter from her estranged husband who is an Australian citizen.

Justice Anupinder Singh Grewal, while allowing the petition of the woman, directed that the custody of the girl be handed over to her mother who is presently residing in Australia.

The petitioner's estranged husband had alleged that the woman was in an extra-marital relationship with a relative.

"Aside of the bald assertion in the petition, no supporting ma-

terial has been brought before this court. It would be worthwhile to note that in a patriarchal society, it is fairly common to cast aspersions on the moral character of a woman. More often than not these allegations are made without any basis or foundation," the court said.

"Even assuming a woman is or has been in an extramarital relationship, the same by itself cannot lead to the conclusion that she would not be a good mother to deny her the custody of her child," said the judge in a May 10 order.

However, in this case, these



allegations against the petitioner being wholly unsubstantiated are not considered rele-

vant to adjudicate the issue of custody of the minor child, as per the order.

"The child would require love, care and affection of the mother for her development in the formative years. The support and guidance of the mother would also be imperative during adolescence. The mother is the natural guardian of the child till the age of five years in terms of Section 6 of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956," the judge wrote in his order.

In the petition, the woman had submitted that she had got married in 2013. Her husband was an Australian citizen and she later joined him in Australia.

The couple had a daughter in June 2017. They later developed matrimonial differences.

The petitioner had alleged that when they arrived in India in January 2020, her husband took away their daughter.

The father of child contended that the minor was residing with him and his parents in a cordial family environment for almost a year and the change of custody at this stage would not be in the interest of the child especially when the petitioner was living alone and thus, would not be in a position to take care of the child.



Uttar Pradesh Board cancels class 12 exams

LUCKNOW

THE Uttar Pradesh Board on Thursday cancelled the class 12 examination.

The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in which Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma, who holds charge of Secondary Education department, was also present. Additional Chief Secretary, Information, Navneet Sehgal told PTI that "examination for the UP board class 12 has been cancelled." Nearly 26 lakh candidates are registered for the class 12 board exams in the state. The state had last month cancelled class 10 UP Board exam following which nearly 30 lakh candidates, who had registered for it, were promoted to

Uttarakhand cancels exam

DEHRADUN

UTTARAKHAND intermediate board examinations were cancelled in view of the prevailing Covid situation in the state.

Making the announcement here, state Education Minister Arvind Pandey said the decision has been taken in the interest of students, teachers and guardians after consulting the chief minister in view of the COVID-19 situation.

Pandey also welcomed cancellation of the CBSE 12th board examinations by the Centre.

A decision on the policy to be adopted for the promotion of students will also be taken soon, he said.

class 11. Many state boards have cancelled the class 12 exam after the Union government on Tuesday decided to cancel the CBSE Class 12 board exams amid the COVID-19 pandemic with Prime

Minister Narendra Modi asserting that the decision has been taken in the interest of students and that the anxiety among students, parents and teachers must be put to an end.

Amarinder welcomes 3 AAP MLAs into Cong

CHANDIGARH

PUNJAB Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh welcomed three suspended Aam Aadmi Party MLAs to the Congress minutes before leaving for Delhi to meet with the party high command amid infighting in the state unit.

AAP leaders Sukhpal Singh Khaira, Jagdev Singh Kamalu and Pirmal Singh Dhaura joined the Congress after their entry was approved by party chief Sonia Gandhi, the Chief Minister said.

Khaira, who was Leader of Opposition in Punjab, joined the party led by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in December 2015 after leaving Congress. He was elected from Bholath on an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) ticket in 2017.

He quit AAP in January 2019 and started his own outfit, Punjabi Ekta Party.

"Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh before leaving for Delhi today welcomed Sukhpal Khaira, MLA and former Leader of Opposition, and his two AAP MLA colleagues namely Jagdev Singh Kamalu, MLA Maur, and Pirmal Singh Dhaura,



MLA Bhadaur, into the party fold," the Punjab Congress tweeted, along with a photo of Mr Singh standing with the three newcomers.

Singh is in Delhi to meet a three-member Congress panel formed to resolve the infighting

in the state. A section of the party has contended that they cannot win the assembly election due next year under the leadership of Mr Singh.

The dissent grew to such proportions that Mrs Gandhi had to form a team to look into the is-

sue. Party sources have said grievances against the Chief Minister are varied, including under-representation of Dalits in the government and the inaccessibility of the Chief Minister due to his coterie.

5 children drown in pond in UP

GONDA

FIVE children of a family drowned in a pond in Rasul Khanpur Mishrauli village here on Thursday, police said on Wednesday. The incident took place when the children had gone to the pond to collect mud and one of them slipped into it, they said. In a bid to save him, others

jumped into the pond and drowned. Their bodies were later fished out with the help of locals.

One Ajay Pandey, who also jumped into the pond to save the children, was somehow rescued by villagers and admitted to a hospital for treatment, they said. Senior officers and local MLA Prabhat Verma reached the spot and the children were cremated in their presence.



The children were identified as Aditya alias Chanchal (8), Shivakant (6), Ragini (8), Prakashini (10) and Muskan (14), the police said. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath condoled their deaths.

Noida cops, Google Maps help reunite differently-abled boy with family

NOIDA

A 16-year-old differently-abled boy who had left home in a village in Sambhal district three months ago and landed in a Noida shelter home was on Wednesday reunited with his family, officials said.

The reunion was made possible following a counselling session at the shelter home and efforts of the Noida Police's Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU), who traced the boy's remote village using Google Maps, they said.

Three months ago, the boy stated that he had left his home in Manni Kheda village of Aligarh district without informing his parents and wandered his way to



reach Noida in Gautam Buddha Nagar, a police spokesperson said.

"He landed here at Sai Kripa Shelter Home and during a counselling session recently was asked about his family. The differently-

abled boy somehow managed to tell the names of his mother, father and village to the counsellor," the spokesperson said.

"After this, the AHTU in-charge inspector Devendra and his team got to work and even

used Google Maps to locate the village mentioned by the boy. The boy had said the village was in Aligarh but it turned out that the village was in Sambhal district," the official said.

BSF seizes highest-ever quantity of 56 kg heroin

NEW DELHI

A seizure of at least 56 kg of heroin, the highest-ever quantity recovered along the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan, was effected by the BSF after it thwarted an alleged narcotics-smuggling bid by Pakistani operatives, officials said on Thursday.

"The incident took place on the intervening night of June 2-3 when troops sensed suspicious movement at the border. A BSF sentry opened fire, forcing the smugglers to run," a spokesperson of the Border Security Force (BSF) said. Officials said the incident was reported from Bundli of Bikaner sector in the desert area of the border state.

During a search, 54 packets of suspected heroin, weighing just



over 56 kg, was recovered, the BSF spokesperson said. This was the highest-ever recovery of drugs during an anti-smuggling operation in the Rajasthan sec-

tor, he added. The spokesperson said the force "foiled attempts by Pakistani smugglers to push contraband substances into India".

NGT directs Punjab govt to look into plea for restitution of public park

NEW DELHI

OBSERVING that parks are the lungs of the society, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Punjab government to look into a plea against concretisation of green area of a public park situated at Kidwai Nagar in Ludhiana.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said that as per its February, 2014 order the tiling or concretisation of pavements should not exceed more than five percent and the foot-path and tracks constructed only with the permeable and semipermeable, perforated blocks.

"There is no doubt that the parks being the lungs of the city

need to be maintained following the best practices, in accordance with the observations of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and this Tribunal, referred to above. There is, however, no presumption that the law on the point will not be followed.

It is not a case that the Tribunal needs to determine any question. Only issue is the compliance of well-established norms by the State authorities.

"Accordingly, the Secretary, Urban Development, Government of Punjab and the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Ludhiana may look into the matter and take such remedial measures as are found necessary, following due process of law," the bench said.

The tribunal was hearing a plea filed by the Council of Engineers seeking restitution of the green area of a public park (Mini Rose Garden) situated at Kidwai Nagar, near Industrial Area-A, Ludhiana and for injunction against commercialization and concretisation of the park under the Smart City Mission.

According to the applicants, "The Ludhiana Smart City Ltd. is developing Mini Rose Garden (land area around 3.50 Acres) under Smart city Mission with a budget of Rs 3.48 crore of Public Funds.

"Despite knowing the facts that the park size is not big as compared to number of surrounding residents of densely populated localities (which is in

core area of Ludhiana), situated very close to Industrial Area of Ludhiana, Ludhiana Smart City Ltd is going to commercialize and concretize the park by constructing buildings for Indoor Badminton Court building, Cafeteria, Water Fountains, Concrete Paths and Parking with solid interlocking tiles in contrary to judgments as held by Supreme Court.

"Due to concretisation of parks and green belts, the rain water does not seep through preventing recharge of ground water. The concretization causes an increase in temperature of the environment as it absorbs heat and cools down very slowly as compared to open earth surface and green areas," the plea said.



Long way to go for democracy in Africa

EVEN before the pandemic, an increasing number of African heads of state had moved to undermine term limits or rig elections to remain in power. But Covid-19 has given them greater leverage, providing further pretext for postponing elections in Somalia and Ethiopia, muzzling opposition figures in Uganda and Tanzania, and imposing restrictions on media across the continent.

The enforcement of pandemic restrictions by security services has often been brutal, provoking demonstrations in Kenya and even in more advanced democracies such as South Africa. As governments across the continent become, with some exceptions, more authoritarian, Africans will be increasingly alienated from those claiming to represent them. Political instability can manifest itself in severe episodes of violence, as is already being seen in

Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Nigeria. Such turmoil will grow as elites compete for power and citizens resist oppressive regimes, and will, in turn, inhibit social and economic development, to the disadvantage of the continent's rapidly growing population. Taken together, these forces also drive internal displacement and outward migration—both to other African countries and to Europe. Addressing these issues will require grappling with long-standing grievances left untreated. When the “third wave” of democratisation swept across much of Africa in the wake of the Cold War, hopes were high that Africans would begin to enjoy the freedoms afforded to citizens living in the former colonial powers.

Initial progress was remarkable: In 1989, two-thirds of African states were “not free,” as measured by Freedom

House. By 2009, two-thirds were considered “free” or “partly free.” However, foreign as well as domestic expectations for liberal democracy in Africa have often been unrealistic, and Africa's setbacks are not surprising. For much of the continent, the foundations of a political culture necessary to sustain liberal democracy have been weak for most of the postcolonial era (roughly six decades for most African states). The persistence of religious and ethnic rivalries has been underestimated by African democrats and their friends abroad.

Also significant has been the role of the police and the army, often vestiges of colonialism, which have been a cause and consequence of power systems favoring a coterie of elites. Authoritarian and semi-authoritarian rulers, mindful of foreign opinion, have dressed their regimes with the forms of democracy,

such as regular (if rigged) elections and de jure (not de facto) separation of powers. Presidential term limits, where in place, have been frequently circumvented through so-called constitutional coups.

Heads of state have deftly manipulated social cleavages and played up fears of malevolent foreign interference to deflect popular pressure away from their illiberal rule. Where democracy stands in Africa today has myriad influences, including the legacy of colonialism and the emergence of the digital age. In its 2021 report, Freedom House rated only eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa as free.

Of these eight, half are small island states: Cape Verde, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, and Seychelles. Others, such as Botswana, enjoy high levels of economic and social development. Democracy, for that matter, needs a long time to mature fully, be it in Africa, the US or even in India. Still, that is the only option we have for rendering justice to all.



Kerala teacher walks 14 km to teach tribal students

ARUN LAKSHMAN

SUKUMARAN TC is an ordinary man with a steely determination and a golden heart for the tribals. While people think twice to take up a job trekking through dense forests to reach a tribal hamlet and to teach dirty, shabby tribal children of “Kattunaykar” community in Pulpally of Wayanad district, Sukumaran took up the mission and is continuing for the fourteenth year straight.

It was in January 1, 2001, that Sukumaran was given the task to teach tribal students within the forest area of Chekkady in Wayanad in a single-teacher environment. It can't be called school as there was nothing there in the tribal colony.

When Sukumaran reached the place, people in the colony ran inside their thatched huts, dilapidated and unclean, as the Kattunaykar community which lives deep in the forest does not have any contact with the outside world and it was an initiative of the then District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in Kerala which made the teacher reach the tribal settlement.

When the DPEP programme officers visited the school premises they found that the children were much healthier and this proposal was then implemented in the whole of Wayanad district to start with and later spread across the state with most of the gram panchayats and local legislators taking the initiative to provide breakfast to children. Mid-day meals were popular in all the general schools of Kerala and it was extended to the single-teacher school in the tribal hamlets

Sukumaran while speaking to IANS said, “It was a long wait in the colony, men, children, and women went inside and I could see them looking from inside their huts through small holes but they were not coming out. I was determined and waited and waited, finally, a woman Kali, came out and befriended me. I told her my mission- it was to start a single-teacher school within the colony for tribal children and she readily agreed.”

The frail woman that she was, Kali was determined that both her children be taught at the school. However there was no school and Sukumaran tilled the soil, cut some bamboos, thatched with palm leaves and started a shanty, and converted it into a school. The year was 2001 and there were 2 students.

Sukumaran who lives in ward no 3 of Pulpally panchayat has to walk 7 km to reach the school and in some stretches there were no roads and the forest was dense and inhabited by wild animals including elephants, tigers, and wild boar and pythons. It was a walk of 7 km one way and 7 km back - 14 km a day and salary when he was posted was Rs 750 a month and payment was erratic, maybe once in three or four months.

The teacher says, “One day as I was walking towards the school, I spotted a wild tusker on the side road and I had to cross him, I could spot him hardly 20 meters from me and there was no question of turning back and running and I continued to walk beside him with heart pounding and by God's will, I luckily crossed him and even now a chill goes down my spine when I think of that incident. Another day a calf and a mother elephant were on the side road but they were inside the forest and had not forayed onto the road. Wild elephants with their calves around are generally violent but luckily for me I somehow managed.”

Sukumaran used to bathe his students, cut their nails, hair and also cook food for them. The tribals of that area were averse to taking baths those days and they never used to cut their hair and nails.

He said, “While I used to bathe them and cut their nails a special bonding developed between the colony people and me and I decided that I will continue with my life here.”

Sukumaran was the first who proposed the idea to provide breakfast to children as most of them don't have anything to eat. A social worker provided the necessary materials from a shop and the teacher had to carry the groceries and cook them and feed the children. It was generally gruel with green grams - a common breakfast in Kerala villages.

When the DPEP programme officers visited the school premises they found that the children were much healthier and this proposal was then implemented in the whole of Wayanad district to start with and later spread across the state with most of the gram panchayats and local legislators taking the initiative to provide breakfast to children. Mid-day meals were popular in all the general schools of Kerala and it was extended to the single-teacher school in the tribal hamlets.

Now the shanty has been converted into a concrete building with facilities including television sets for the children and the apprehensions are gone. Sukumaran even gave the date of birth of these children asking their parents an approximate period of the birth of their child and calculating the age and finally giving a date of birth. This date of birth is now in the official records of these children and even the Kattunaykar community living in Chekkadi ward received their ration cards because of this teacher.

He says, “The children sometimes call me and remind me that it was their birthday and a smile suddenly comes to my lips as it was I who had given them a date but really it is cherishing to be part of something and giving an address to somebody. I find a twinkle in the eyes of the children as well as the elders.”

Sukumaran and several teachers like him who teach in single schools across the state in tribal settlement colonies in deep forests are temporary staff and have already given several representations to make them permanent staff under the Kerala government.

The teacher said, “I have my mother, wife, and three children to look after and I am now getting 18,500 rupees and that too once in three or four months. Since March 2021, I have not received my salary and this is how people like me live. If only the state government could make us permanent under the education department, we could get some pension after our tenure. Hoping that this LDF government would open their eyes and bring solace to people like me.”



SURGICAL STRIKE

K KRISHNA
SAAGAR RAO

IN his social and political career spanning over 40 years, PM Narendra Modi has proven multiple times that he is a reliable 'crisis-leader'. His unmatched ability to look into the eye of a storm, uncompromising courage to stand up against consistent attacks, uncanny intelligence to manage uncertainty and fluid situations have been at display since long. It is not just these characteristics of managing a crisis, but his ability to respond and resolve is what makes him a reliable crisis-leader.

There is a dimension in PM Narendra Modi's natural leadership model that manages any magnitude of crisis. His personal life, political journey and performance record as a leader of governments - both at the state level as the Chief Minister of Gujarat since 2001, and as the Prime Minister of India since 2014, are checkered with massive obstacles, spiteful distractions and monstrous challenges.

PM Modi has neither ducked nor failed at managing any adversity so far. His ability to stay focused on 'solution' when the 'problem' is overwhelming, and his competence to bring massive resources to play using multi-pronged strategies, is what gives him positive results every time. This unique temperament and personal disposition of not getting shaken or stirred during the worst of a crisis, is what makes him a very reliable crisis-leader.

What is a crisis?

Crisis is an unplanned adversity. Every crisis poses a serious challenge to all involved, but it poses bigger challenge to the leader. 'Crisis-Leadership' is all about how a leader responds and overcomes an adversity of massive proportion.

Crisis-leadership in any domain, whether it's social, organisational, political or governmental, is characterised by the quality of response, initiatives, approach, inspiration and delivery. Leaders can be graded, rated and respected based on five primary criteria, while there are many other measures to rate overall leadership competence.

There's an immense possibility that non-performers can rise to leadership roles, without having to be measured on these criteria. Especially when family succession, luck or timing favours them. If they don't encounter major crisis in their journey, they tend to pass through their leadership roles with routine management, where crisis-leadership doesn't

come to play.

However, one big crisis is enough to expose and differentiate an inherited-leader from a crisis-leader. Almost all first generation, hard-working, experiential leaders are mostly crisis-leaders, as they build everything from scratch. Nothing is handed over to them on a platter.

PM Narendra Modi will pass with flying colors, when routed through this leadership test. His entire political career is a 'crisis-test' of sorts. PM Modi has delivered success every time he was challenged by a crisis.

A crisis challenges the core values and beliefs of a leader as it brings along massive uncertainty, instability and fear of the unknown, by destroying the status-quo.

Re-visioning in crisis

A leader is defined by his vision. A leader has a vision, if he can set a larger purpose and visibly see a point of its fulfilment in a clearly defined future timeline.

However, just having vision isn't enough. A leader must effectively communicate his vision, to draw all those who wish to be led there. PM Narendra Modi has been doing this since 2001, no wonder he has won all elections that he fought so far.

Crisis is a huge obstacle for a leader who is on a path to fulfill his vision. Crisis has a huge pull-back effect and will undo months, years and even decades of progress a leader has made moving towards his goals. How a leader manages to reset his course, re-envision his purpose and lead his people on a new path towards a larger vision, is critical during a crisis.

Leaders know that crisis is a possibility and are prepared to face it. Crisis-Leaders are built to absorb shocks of massive magnitude.

'Re-visioning' is the core competence of a crisis-leader. The precision and speed with which a leader can 'Re-vision' impacts the results he can accomplish during and after a crisis. PM Modi has showcased currently and in the past, that he can absorb massive setbacks and shocks, and can still 'Re-vision' to continue progress.

Disproportionate response

A leader is recognized by the initiatives he takes. Great results are not possible without great initiatives. The size, frequency and degree of an initiative defines the greatness of a leader. During a crisis, these initiatives are considered as 'response to a crisis'.

PM Modi has a signature style response mechanism as a 'Crisis-Leader'. Once he senses a crisis, he unleashes disproportionate response. For example, when unprecedented spike in medical oxygen demand turned into a crisis during the second wave of Covid-19, he has unleashed disproportionate response to manage and overcome the crisis.

The government under his leadership, has attacked the issue from multiple quarters with mas-



PM Modi understands that it is his responsibility to inspire and pull people out of distress, hopelessness, lack of confidence and give them new spirit and purpose. Through his decisions, actions, speeches and initiatives, he wades through the muck of negativity to reach out and lead people into light and hope

sive resources and ensured that the crisis is managed in just few days. Knowing how he operates during crisis; I can assure that medical oxygen will never be in short-supply ever in India.

PM Modi's disproportionate response to a crisis, is so massive that medical oxygen production would be surplus in India, and can even be exported at a later date. This is how he approaches any crisis as a reliable 'Crisis-Leader'. As I follow and analyse his long political journey, I see many such examples at every milestone he has travelled and his response has been quite similar every time.

Consistent inspiration

To inspire is to lead. To inspire in great times is easy. Crisis-leadership is about inspiring in tough times, in dire situations and during uncertain times. PM Narendra Modi understands the nuance of consistent inspiration during a crisis.

PM Modi goes on a communication overdrive during a crisis. In a position of power he is at, it is easy to get drawn into heavy-lift routine of planning, reviewing and fire-fighting during a crisis. However, he does quite the opposite.

He makes time and relentlessly engages with all the stake holders through constant communication and inspiration. He doesn't drift into the regular and mundane administrative functions, as he consciously recognises the core function of a crisis-leader is 'Consistent Inspiration' - especially during a crisis.

Crisis has the power to demoralise and derail personal, institutional and national pursuits. Depending on the degree and size of a crisis, it can negatively impact self-confidence, motivation and spirit of purpose. Crisis can directly and indirectly impact the productivity, performance levels of individuals and institutions negatively. It has been proven historically, that prolonged periods

of crisis have the power to increase anxiety, stir up hopelessness, instill self-defeating thoughts and even lead to depression-led suicides or desperation-led crime.

PM Modi understands that it is his responsibility to inspire and pull people out of distress, hopelessness, lack of confidence and give them new spirit and purpose. Through his decisions, actions, speeches and initiatives, he wades through the muck of negativity to reach out and lead people into light and hope.

Crisis - an opportunity

A prolonged crisis can undermine initiatives, action and there by results. However, a Crisis-leader can explore ways and means to turn a crisis into an opportunity to take brand-new initiatives and plan new outcomes.

PM Narendra Modi doesn't allow a crisis to cripple his urge to implement the governance agenda. He will simply find new methods to approach the execution of his agenda differently, sometimes even more efficiently during a crisis. For example, his initiatives of expanding health infrastructure, unifying India through spirit of nationalism, health diplomacy, reforms in manufacturing sector, reforms in agriculture sector, defense preparedness, social-media reforms and many others, are indicators of using crisis as an opportunity to advance the governance agenda in the national interest.

A crisis-leader looks for a silver-lining in a dark cloud. His positive-orientation, emotional intelligence, stable composure allows him to stay positive, alert and convert all adversity into opportunity. The quality of initiatives taken during a crisis by a leader, establishes how a leader can continue to operate efficiently under massive duress and uncertainty.

Method and delivery

Great leaders historically have

adopted methods which are untested by their predecessors. They have turned those methods successfully into globally acceptable models - to achieve great results.

Crisis gives great opportunities to leaders to experiment with new methods and approach the problems from unconventional and different angles. At times, leaders are left with no option but to try new methods, as they are cornered and pushed to act. However, the breed of leaders we are discussing here, proactively use crisis to bring-in new methods, new approaches and new instruments to test.

PM Modi has already initiated new models of managing crisis since 2014. While the opposition is busy attacking him relentlessly, he simply resolves one issue after the other and keeps moving ahead. His level-headedness and confidence in his pursuits for larger national interest, makes him undefeated even during crisis.

PM Modi's ardent critics and distractors are having a field day attacking him, as if he has invented the Covid-19 pandemic. They are wishing, imagining and hoping that this crisis will bring him down. There are hundreds of articles, columns and videos being written, produced and circulated to ensure the false muck of 'incompetence', sticks and instills a negative perception.

PM Narendra Modi is quite a hard-nut to crack under pressure. He is not someone who believes that perception outweighs performance. PM Modi has enough reasons to believe with historic experience, that people of India value performance and delivery. He is simply working towards achieving those results with his performance, as the leader of this nation. His actions will increment and reinforce the trust that Indian voters have reposed in him twice already.

PM Modi has no time for image-management or perception-management. He is busy making decisions and taking initiatives to deliver massive results, to tide-off the current crisis.

Crisis-leadership is a hard ballgame. There are no rules, no precedents, no examples and no mentors. Crisis dissolves everything and opens a Pandora box of uncertainty, pain, confusion and pressure. Keeping eyes on results in the middle of this mayhem, requires sharp focus, courage to navigate in the storm and competence to set and achieve big goals.

As I see, PM Narendra Modi is a crisis leader who is custom-built to ride the roughest storms. India is fortunate to have someone as courageous, strong-willed and result-oriented as PM Modi, to navigate the nation through this crisis.

The world today requires crisis leaders in every major field, to lead their respective domains to steer us through this global crisis.

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LETTERS



Unbridled arrogance

THE unfortunate arrogance and crude language of Union Minister Hardeep Puri used in his especially called press conference to give reply to an open letter written to PM by a group of 60 retired top bureaucrats including some former diplomats expressing their views on the Central Vista construction in New Delhi shows how power blinds and corrupts the mental faculties of politicians. Puri called them 'Padhe likhe murkh' (educated fools) and also termed this group a 'disgrace

to the country'.

It is unbecoming of a central minister who has been a former bureaucrat himself to give his outburst just to please his political bosses. But for the largesse of the current dispensation, what is his contribution in public life, except this outburst?. He got immediate entry in Rajya Sabha even after defeat by over one lac votes in Amritsar in last MP election. In sharp contrast Ms Meira Kumar also a central minister, a former speaker and a former diplomat never behaved like Mr. Puri. Further, if the voice of such elite retired officers who

are awake to people's concerns is to be muzzled this way, what can the common man expect?.

Puri's conduct in showcasing through a press conference is an intent of bulldozing voice of reason and a pointer to still working bureaucrats to fall in line with all diktats of the boss. Neutral and independent thinking persons certainly don't relish such utterances of political masters. One has to be humble.

Brij B Goyal, Ludhiana

Light to moderate rain lashes erstwhile Khammam dist



Farmers shifting soaked paddy bags from the fields in New Lakshmipuram village under Mudigonda mandal on Thursday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

THE erstwhile Khammam district has received moderate rains since last 24 hours. On Thursday, the district received normal rains, giving a big relief to the people from the hot summer. A

few mandals in the district received excess rains, i.e., 20%.

But the untimely rains disturbed the farmers, as it had damaged the paddy that was kept in the fields. Paddy bags kept at paddy procurements centers in the district were soaked.

The officials have started enquiry about loss of paddy in the fields in the district.

35, 36 and 42 divisions in Khammam town were fully inundated in rainwater. Residents of these divisions faced problems as rainwater entered the houses.

Minister observes Munneru check dam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

TRANSPORT Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar on Thursday inspected Munneru checkdam, which was filled with flood water due to rains. He also inspected check dam works. Later, interacting with the media, he said the check dam was being constructed with about Rs 745 crore, which will solve drinking water problem in Khammam town. It was the dream project of Khammam people, he added.

Ajay ordered engineering staff to complete the works as per schedule and maintain quality.



Transport Minister P Ajay Kumar observing Munneru check dam in Khammam on Thursday

Later, he distributed Chief Minister Relief Fund cheques worth Rs 42.58 lakh for 94 victims.

Mayor P Neeraja and other officers have accompanied the Minister.

Food distribution is commendable during corona pandemic: Minister Gangula

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KARIMNAGAR

BC Welfare and Civil Supplies Minister Gangula Kamalakara said that it was commendable to provide food to the needy and poor during Covid times, especially in lockdown.

He was the chief guest at the 11th day charity function organised by Corporator Jayashree Srinivas at Karimnagar RTC bus stand on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Gangula said that there will be drivers, conductors, porters, workers and passengers at the bus stand and the organisers had come forward to satisfy their hunger and distributing home-made meals free of cost.

Beneficiaries receive cheques at their doorstep



Minister Jagadish Reddy distributing Kalyana Lakshmi cheque to a beneficiary at gram panchayat at Tunnala Penpahad on Thursday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SURYAPET

MINISTER for Energy G Jagadish Reddy on Thursday visited the beneficiaries' houses and distributed Kalyana Lakshmi and Shadi Mubarak cheques to them.

He also visited Atmakur and Chevvenla mandals in Suryapeta constituency. The Minister distributed cheques worth Rs 14.616 lakh to 126 beneficiaries of 38 villages in two mandals. He was accompanied by local representatives and officials.

RAINWATER ENTERS YADADRI BALALAYAM

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NALGONDA

INCESSANT rains hit the erstwhile Nalgonda district, whereas Yadadri hillock witnessed sudden downpour in the early hours of Thursday.

According to sources, water entered Balalayam of Yadadri due to uninterrupted rains from the doors of temple main entrance. Water flowed through the stairs and entered into the queue lines of Balalayam as revival works of the main temple are at final stage.

Priests faced problems in performing Suprabhata Seva in the morning as rainwater entered Balalayam. Temple staff drained rainwater with pumps.

Meanwhile, Addagudur, Bhudan Pochampally, Choutuppal, Ramannapet, Athmakur (M), Valigonda, Mothkur, Narayanpur and Bhongir mandals of Yadadri-Bhongir district witnessed moderate to heavy rains. Whereas, Ramannapet recorded lowest rainfall of 0.5 mm and Bhudan Pochampally recorded highest rainfall of 135.4 mm.

In Suryapet district, 18 of 23 mandals witnessed drizzling to heavy rains. Highest rainfall of



Sheshaleti stream overflowing in Nampally of Nalgonda district



Priests performing Suprabhata Seva in rainwater that entered Balalayam of Yadadri on Thursday

13.4 cm recorded in Gridepally mandal and district average rainfall recorded as 22.2 mm.

In Nalgonda district, moderate to heavy rains witnessed in Gurrampodu, Tirumalagiri (Sagar), Kattangur, Kagal, Nampally, Shaligowram, Peddavoor, Miryalguda, Tripuram, Munugodu and Dameracherla mandals.

Chandur mandal received highest rainfall of 12 cm, whereas Sheshaleti stream was overflowing due to heavy rains.

Officials speed up Lakshmi Pushkarini works

HANS NEWS SERVICE
YADADRI

THE construction works of 'Lakshmi Pushkarini' being carried out at Gandhi Cheruvu down the Yadadri hill has been expedited.

The officials of Yadadri Development Authority (YADA) has speed up the Pushkarini works following the announcement by CMO Chief Secretary Bhupal Reddy that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao may visit Yadadri at any time at a review meeting during his visit to Yadadri last Sunday.

Lakshmi Pushkarini is being constructed with an estimation cost of Rs 11.55 crore in 2.20 acres to accommodate 2,500 devotees to take a holy dip at a time.

Beside welcome arches, elephant carvings were embedded



Lakshmi Pushkarini under construction

on the boundary walls of Pushkarini. Railing and flooring works are being carried out as per tradition and culture. Steel grills

are being set up for Pushkarini, wiring and water supply pipes are being installed for the installation of electric lights.

YADA officials said the construction of shower bathrooms and changing rooms are at finishing stage.

RED FM's virtual concert MUSICOM

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD'S No.1 FM Station Superhits 93.5 Red FM is organising a virtual concert called MUSICOM. This virtual concert is a mix of music and comedy. Through MUSICOM, RED FM wants the listeners to deal with Covid-19 stress, pandemic restrictions with ease.

'As we can R (relax) in the confines of your home, E (experience) superhits music and while practicing D (distancing)', This concert will give the netizens one of its kind virtual extravaganza just by staying at home. Musicians and comedians from the industry are offering their time and talent for the fun and

enjoyment. Listeners can tune into Red FM 93.5 or log in to Red FM Telugu digital platforms to experience the super hit music by Hyderabad's renowned children's band V4 band on June 5 from 5 pm onwards and Tollywood singer Bhargavi Pillai on June 12 from 5 pm onwards.

To burst a laugh, RedFM brings in Jabardasth fame Rocket Raghava on June 6 from 5 pm onwards and Tollywood comedian Dhanraj on June 13 from 5 pm onwards. The virtual concert aims to help relax the panic and to uplift the spirit of the people. The virtual concert will be held during the weekends Red FM's official digital pages, RedFM TELUGU. For regular updates on the concert people can tune into Superhits 93.5 Red FM.

Minister inaugurates Rythu Vedika in Nirmal

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NIRMAL

FOREST and Environment Minister Allola Indrakran Reddy said that recognising that country will be good if farmer is good, Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has given top priority to agricultural sector and providing all facilities to them. On Thursday, he inaugurated Rythu Vedika building constructed with Rs 20 lakh in Nirmal. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said the State government would provide investment assistance to farmers under Rythu Bandhu scheme in advance to invest in monsoon cultivation. From June 15, Rythu Bandhu money will be credited into farmers' accounts and the authorities are taking all measures to provide quality seeds and fertilisers to farmers in a timely manner, he added. Rythu Bandhu Samithi district convener Nalla Venkatram Reddy, Municipal Chairman G Ishwar, Nirmal Market Committee Chairperson Narmada Muthyam Reddy and others were present.

APSRTC again invites E-bus bids

AMARAVATI

THE Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) has once again invited bids for selection of fleet operators for procurement, operation and maintenance of 350 air-conditioned electric buses in different cities of the state. The RTC had in December 2019 aborted its first bid to induct electric buses into its fleet after the statutory Judicial Preview Commission asked it to drop the move, objecting to the payment of Rs 45 lakh as subsidy per bus.

In the fresh Request for Proposal floated in May, the RTC once again made the provision for extending the subsidy of Rs 45 lakh per bus but the Judicial Preview Commission judge B Sivasankara Rao objected to it yet again saying "such financial obligation of more than Rs 157.50 crore is non-viable and such a huge incentive is a loss to the exchequer."

Accordingly, the RTC amended the bid proposal and dropped the subsidy clause. With the Government of India extending the Phase-II of

- Withdrew previous bid in Dec 2019 for procurement, operation and maintenance of 350 AC electric buses after Judicial Preview Commission objected to payment of Rs 45 lakh subsidy per bus



- After the Preview Commission opposed the offer of subsidy in the latest bid too, the corporation amends the bid proposal dropping the provision

- The State govt wants to avail the incentive of Rs 55 lakh per bus offered by Centre's Phase-II of FAME initiative aimed at encouraging green technologies

Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles (FAME) in India scheme till June 30, the RTC is rushing the process through so as to avail of the demand incentive of Rs 55 lakh per bus, official sources said.

Last date for submission of bids is June 9. The RTC originally planned to deploy 50 buses on the Tirupati-Tirumalaghat route, 100 each in Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam and 50 each in Kakinada and

Amaravati, to be run on various routes in the respective regions. But now it reduced the number by 50 in Vijayawada (million-plus city) and allotted them to Tirupati (smart city). The Judicial Preview Commission judge reiterated his suggestion that the RTC purchase diesel buses of BS-VI standard rather than electric buses as the technology was still in a developing stage.

The RTC, however, justified the plan to induct e-buses since

the cost of diesel was increasing day-by-day. "From around Rs 62 in 2019, price of diesel has touched almost Rs 100 per litre now. At the same time, battery cost of an e-bus has reduced by 50 per cent and the technology has stabilised. The per-kilometre operation cost of an e-bus will now be almost the same as a diesel bus, which has gone up to Rs 43," a top public transport official said.

Besides, cost of power would be over Rs 35 per kilometre for a diesel air-conditioned bus as against just Rs 6.76 (9-meter) and Rs 8.11 (12-meter) for an e-bus, he pointed out. The 350 e-buses would make only three per cent of the total RTC fleet of 11,300 and it has plans to add another 650 in the next phase. The RTC has installed solar power plants at its depots in Madanapalle, Kakinada, Nandyalu and Chittoor. "There is a proposal to scale up rooftop solar power units in all the RTC bus stations and depots across the state. This will help us reduce the cost of power, which could also be used for charging the e-bus batteries," the official said. PTI

YSR VAHANA MITHRA

CM Jagan to launch 3rd phase on June 15

- Transport Minister Perni Nani urges eligible person to apply by June 8 for the assistance
- Says the names of 17,465 drivers are under verification
- Reminds that the drivers, who are paying electricity bill for more than 300 units per month and submitted I-T returns are not eligible for the scheme

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

TRANSPORT Minister Perni Nani on Thursday said that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy would launch the third phase of Vahana Mithra scheme on June 15 to render financial assistance of Rs 10,000 to auto, taxi and cab drivers in the State. He said the names of eligible people were already displayed in the ward/village secretariats. Addressing the media at the transport commissioner's office, Perni Nani said that the auto, taxi drivers who purchased auto rikshaws and cars recently can apply for the financial assistance of Rs 10,000 under Vahana Mithra scheme by June 8. He added that



Transport Minister Perni Nani addresses media at RTC House in Vijayawada on Thursday

the Chief Minister during his padyatra had assured the auto and taxi drivers that YSRCP government would pay Rs 10,000 financial assistance every year and launched the YSR Vahana Mithra scheme in 2019.

He said the drivers, who purchased the vehicles recently, can upload the applications with the help of local ward/village volunteers to get the financial assistance for the year 2021-22. Perni Nani said that 2,23,238 drivers are already eligible for the scheme and June 8 is the last to apply by people who purchased vehicles recently.

He said that the names of 17,465 drivers are under verification and added that the drivers, who are paying electricity bill for more than

300 units per month are not eligible for the scheme. He said that 300 units power bill costs Rs 1,700 per month and added that poor people could not afford to pay that much. He said drivers, who submitted IT returns are not eligible for the Vahana Mithra scheme.

He said the ineligible drivers, who could not get Vahana Mithra scheme can contact the village/ward secretariats to know the reason for the rejection of the application.

The new applications will be verified on June 10 and the district collector will give green signal for the eligible drivers on June 12. He said that the Chief Minister would launch the YSR Vahana Mithra third phase scheme on June 15.

‘Gambhir Foundation involved in unauthorised purchase of drugs’

NEW DELHI

BJP MP Gautam Gambhir's Foundation illegally bought and distributed Covid medicines without permission, Delhi's drug controller told the High Court today, pledging action in this and other similar cases.

Shortly after the details of the hearing emerged, Gautam Gambhir channeled freedom icon Bhagat Singh in a tweet. The cricketer-turned-politician has held firmly to his version that he has done nothing wrong and will continue to do what he could for the public good, according to NDTV report.

"I am a man and all that affects mankind concerns me - Sardar Bhagat Singh!" - he tweeted.

The Delhi drug controller told the High Court that the Gautam Gambhir Foundation was "found guilty" of buying and distributing Fabiflu medicines to COVID-19 patients without a license. AAP MLA Praveen Kumar also committed a similar offence, the court was told.

An official said: "The inquiry by the drug controller found that the Fabiflu and oxygen were distributed free by both of them but neither had a license to either buy or distribute. So both have been found in violation of Section 18C of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act for the purchase and distribution of Fabiflu and Oxygen without license." The offence carries a punishment of five years in jail.

The drug controller told the Delhi High Court



that action would be taken "without delay" against the foundation.

The drug controller has to file status reports within six weeks. The next court hearing will be on July 29.

The high court is hearing a petition that seeks an FIR on allegations that politicians procured Covid medicines in huge quantities and distributed them while patients were struggling to access them.

Petitioner Deepak Singh, the chairperson of Hrudaya Foundation and a national level shooter, has questioned how politicians could buy large stocks of the medicine without permission.

In April, Gambhir's offer of free Fabiflu in his

constituency had sparked a backlash, with Delhi's ruling AAP accusing him of hoarding medicines at a time there was a shortage in the capital. The BJP MP has emphatically denied any wrongdoing.

During the hearings, the Delhi Police told the court that Mr Gambhir had bought 2,628 strips of Fabiflu using the prescription of a doctor at Sanjay Garg Hospital. Of these, 2,343 strips were distributed to patients and the rest deposited with the Delhi government's Director General of Health Services for distribution, the police said. Last week the High Court had reprimanded the drug controller for "not properly examining" how Gambhir procured such a large consignment when Fabiflu was in short supply.

WINDOWS India will ensure Choksi is brought back

NEW DELHI

INDIA will continue to ensure that fugitive diamondaire Mehul Choksi is brought back to the country, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. "India remains steadfast in its efforts that fugitives are brought back to India. He is currently in the custody of Dominica with some legal proceedings underway. We will continue to ensure he is brought back to India," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said during a briefing. Choksi had gone missing from Antigua on May 23 after going out for dinner and was soon caught in Dominica after Antigua police launched a manhunt for Mehul Choksi last month.

Lockdown restrictions on in Maha

MUMBAI

IN an abrupt U-turn, the Maharashtra government on Thursday said that lockdown restrictions have not been lifted in half the state from Friday, hours after Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vijay Wadettiwar earlier in the day announced partial relaxations. "The lockdown has not been lifted (from Friday). The proposal is still under consideration," said an official statement. The state is still not completely free of the Covid-19 infection, with cases still on the rise in many rural areas and the proposals would be considered and implemented after a detailed review of the departments concerned in all districts, it said.

AURANGABAD /AMRITSAR

IN a significant ruling the Bombay High Court has said that it will be the responsibility of the Centre in case any faulty ventilators supplied by a Gujarat-based company through the PM Cares Fund, cause deaths of Covid-19 patients.

In its verdict on Wednesday, a Division Bench comprising Justice Ravindra Ghuge and Justice B.U. Debadwar said that they would "not permit experimentation of ventilators which have undergone major repairs in treating the patients, since this would be causing a risk/health hazard to the patients, and unfortunately, the use of such ventilators may cause loss of life, which must be averted".

After a submission by the Additional Solicitor-General of India Anil Singh, that a team expert doctors from New Delhi - one each from Ram Manohar Lohiya Hospital and Safdarjung Hospital - would visit the Government Medical College & Hospital, Aurangabad (GMCH) today to inspect the defective ventilators, the court has posted the matter for further hearing on June 7.

The matter pertains to 150 ventilators provided to the GMCH in April under the PM Care Fund which were supplied by Rajkot-based Jyoti CNC, of which around 133 were found to be defective or malfunctioning.

A GMCH committee had submitted a report on the ventilators which suffered continuous breakdowns even after repairs, and hence the machines were not being used as a precautionary measure with the Maharashtra Congress Spokesperson Sachin Sawant raising the issue in a big way.

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Badal on Thursday demanded a high court monitored probe into the manner in which the Congress government in Punjab was playing with the people's lives by creating an artificial shortage of vaccines by selling vaccine doses at a hefty profit to private hospitals.

The SAD president told the media here that a case should be registered against Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu for diverting vaccines meant for the common man to private institutions even as he averred that the issue had the makings of a major scam.

BOMBAY HC ON PURCHASE FROM PM CARES FUND



Punjab selling vaccines at hefty profit to private hospitals: Sukhbir

HC summons Ramdev on false info on Coronil

NEW DELHI: After the Delhi Medical Association (DMA) filed a suit against yoga guru Baba Ramdev and sought to restrain him from disseminating false information about Patanjali's Coronil kit that it is a cure for Covid-19, the Delhi High Court on Thursday issued summons to him. The high court orally directed the counsel for Ramdev to tell him not to make any provocative statement till the next date of hearing on July 13 and respond to the suit.

DMA, on behalf of its doctor members, said Ramdev's statement affects as that medicine does not cure coronavirus and it is misleading.

During the course of arguments, the judge was also critical of the doctor's body which approached the court against Ramdev's comments. "You people should be spending time on finding cure for the pandemic instead of wasting court's time," the court said.

624 doctors died in 2nd Covid wave: IMA

NEW DELHI: At least 624 doctors died in the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic across the country, with the national capital losing the most. According to the latest report of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), so far 109 doctors have lost their lives in Delhi alone in the second wave.

The IMA's latest data revealed that a total of 1,362 doctors have died so far since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. In the first wave as many as 748 doctors lost their lives.

Delhi is followed by Bihar where most doctors' deaths have been recorded. A total of 96 doctors have lost their lives in Bihar, while Uttar Pradesh lost 79, Rajasthan 43, Jharkhand 39 and Andhra Pradesh 34.

AIIMS Delhi to start Covaxin trials on children

NEW DELHI: After All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Patna, now AIIMS Delhi is also planning to start the Paediatric clinical trials of the indigenous Bharat Biotech's COVID-19 vaccine "Covaxin" in few days, sources said on Thursday. The paediatric trials for Covaxin started in AIIMS Patna on Tuesday after Bharat Biotech's COVID-19 vaccine received the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) nod to conduct clinical trials on children on May 11. "AIIMS Patna has started trials in the age of 12-18 years, we have started clinical trials of Covaxin after registration for this age only," said Dr Prabhat Kumar Singh, Director, AIIMS, Patna.

Privacy of users is highest priority: WhatsApp

NEW DELHI

MESSAGING app WhatsApp on Thursday responded to the Centre's claim over the alleged 'trick consent' from users for its updated privacy policy saying it accords the highest priority to the privacy of users.

"We reiterate that we have already responded to the Government of India and assured them that the privacy of users remains our highest priority," WhatsApp spokesperson said in a statement soon after the Delhi High Court adjourned the hearing of pleas challenging the messaging app's revised privacy policy. WhatsApp's statement comes against the back-



drop of an affidavit filed by the Centre in the court earlier in the day. The government has alleged that WhatsApp is indulging in 'anti-users practices' by obtaining 'trick consent' for its updated privacy policy.

"As a reminder, the recent update does not change the privacy of people's personal messages. Its purpose is to provide additional information about how people can interact with businesses if they choose to do so," it said.

The Centre also submitted that the current notification, as being pushed by WhatsApp on its users, whether existing or new, is 'against the very grain of prima facie opinion of the Competition Commission of India's order dated 24/03/2021'.

On Centre's contention against multiple notifications to users about the update, WhatsApp said, "We will not limit the functionality of how WhatsApp works in the coming weeks. Instead, we will continue to remind users from time to time about the update as well as when people choose to use relevant optional features, like communicating with a business that is receiving support from Facebook," the spokesperson added.

Onus of ceasefire holding is with Pak: Army chief



NEW DELHI

ARMY Chief General M M Naravane on Thursday said the longevity of the ceasefire along the Line of Control with Pakistan depends on the actions of the neighbouring country but asserted that there would be "no slackening" of preparedness as terror infrastructure across the border was intact.

"The ceasefire along the LoC is holding as of now. The onus of making sure that the ceasefire holds is squarely on Pakistan. We are willing to observe the ceasefire as long as they do so," he told a few select journalists at the end of his two-day visit to Kashmir. The Army chief said other activities like terror infrastructure including terrorist camps and presence of terrorists on the other side of the LoC were continuing in Pakistan occupied Kashmir. "Therefore, there can be no slackening of our level of preparedness," he added.

Asked if Islamabad can be

trusted as the ceasefire has been holding for 100 days now, Gen Naravane said, "There have been decades of mistrust between India and Pakistan. So, the situation on that score cannot change overnight."

He said if Pakistan observes ceasefire in letter and spirit, the small steps can lead to incremental gains. "If Pakistan continues to desist from fomenting trouble in India, then the small steps can lead to that level of trust that you are talking about," he added.

Naravane said that the army is ready for this year's Amarnath Yatra, but the decision to hold the Yatra lies with the civil administration. The Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB), which organises the annual Yatra, announced on April 22 the temporary suspension of the registration of pilgrims for the Yatra. The SASB had started online registration of pilgrims from April 15 for the Baltal and Pahalgam routes, which lead to the cave shrine.

SC: Every scribe entitled to protection, sedition case against Vinod Dua quashed

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Thursday quashed a sedition case against veteran scribe Vinod Dua for his alleged comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his YouTube show last year, saying a 1962 verdict entitles every journalist to protection.

A bench comprising Justices U U Lalit and Vineet Saran, however, declined the prayer of Dua that no FIR should be registered against any media personnel with 10 years' experience unless cleared by a committee, saying it would amount to an encroachment into the domain of the executive.

On the issue of protection of freedom of speech and expression of media personnel, it said, Every journalist is entitled to protection under the Kedar Nath Singh judgment (the famous verdict of 1962 on the scope and ambit of offence of sedition in the IPC)."

While upholding validity of section 124A (sedition) of the IPC, the top court in 1962 had ruled the sedition charges could not be invoked against a citizen for criticism of government actions as it would be in conformity with the freedom of speech and expression.

The bench on October 6 last year had reserved the verdict on the petition after hearing arguments for Dua, the Himachal Pradesh government and the complainant, a local BJP leader, in the case.

On July 20 last year, the top court had extended till further orders the protection granted to Dua from any coercive action in the case.



The top court had earlier said that Dua need not answer any other supplementary questions asked by the Himachal Pradesh police in connection with the case. An FIR against Dua under provisions of the Indian Penal Code for alleged offences of sedition, public nuisance, printing defamatory materials and public mischief was lodged by BJP leader Shyam at Kumarsain police station in Shimla district on May 6 last year and the journalist was asked to join the probe.

Shyam has alleged that Dua, in his YouTube show, had made certain allegations against the prime minister.

Earlier, in an unprecedented hearing conducted on a Sunday on June 14 last year, the top court had granted protection from arrest to Dua till further orders. However, it had refused to stay the on-going probe against him.

Besides seeking quashing of the FIR,

Dua, in the plea, has sought "exemplary damages" for "harassment".

He has also sought direction from the apex court that "henceforth FIRs against persons belonging to the media with at least 10 years' standing be not registered unless cleared by a committee to be constituted by every state government, the composition of which should comprise of the Chief Justice of the High Court or a judge designated by him, the leader of the Opposition and the Home Minister of the State."

Dua has said freedom of the press is a fundamental right guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution. The plea has said the top court has been "emphasising for distancing the police from the ruling party in the state" but "none of the major political parties which are in power in various states are ready to give up their control over the police".

EVM, VVPAT tally data has 100% match in 5 polls



NEW DELHI

ELECTRONIC Voting Machines (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPAT) show a 100 per cent tally with each other in the recent assembly polls. While speaking to ANI, an official of the Election Commission of India (ECI) said, "Data shows a 100 per cent match between EVMs and VVPATs, which proves its accuracy and authenticity. The result of these two machines in these last assembly elections reconfirms its genuineness as earlier."

Four states - Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam -- and one union territory Pondicherry, went to polls earlier this year.

The EVMs were developed in 1989 by the Election Commission of India. The VVPAT units were used across all constituencies in India in the 2019 general elections, however, in 2014, VVPATs were used in eight constituencies.

There were 1,492 VVPATs in West Bengal, 1,183 in Tamil Nadu, 728 in Kerala, 647 in Assam and 156 in Puducherry in the recently held assembly elections

BIZ BRIEFS

Aditya Birla Sun's new plan

Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance has announced the launch of a hyper-flexible savings plan, ABSU Vision Life Income Plus plan that provides guaranteed regular income plus flexible bonus pay outs. This savings plan provides a customer with the comfort of a guaranteed regular income for up to 30 years to help them achieve their evolving life goals. The plan offers tax-free guaranteed additional income for life, besides providing the benefit of liquidity or cash in hand. Kamlesh Rao, MD, CEO, Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance, said: "Amid the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, ups and downs in the economy and the markets, saving sufficiently for the future tomorrow or three decades from now has become extremely crucial. This will cater to this immediate need of customers."

Digital platform from Parryware

Parryware is making its products more accessible through its online platform, Parryware Safe-Buy. The digital platform assists users to explore, indulge and buy company's products, booking plumbing technicians for service, repair-related queries. The company creates awareness about the platform by launching a #Tap-ToPot marketing campaign; highlighting how Parryware Safe Buy brings the safest and most convenient shopping experience. KE Ranganathan, Managing Director, Roca Parryware, said: "We strive to provide innovative solutions that are easy, safe and quick. People are becoming extremely tech-savvy and opting for online purchase. To help customers overcome this concern, Parryware comes up with a safe buy solution. We are hopeful that our new campaign connects well with consumers and encourages them to go for touchless shopping."

Hitachi unveils new product

Hitachi Air Conditioning India Ltd. has launched SideSmart, slim modular side throw VRF model air conditioners. The product features module of 18 HP, with modular combination up to 72 HP. It is a heat pump type (-20°C to 52°C), created for delivering exceptional performance in all seasons. Its slim design, space saving footprint, easy installation, energy saving operation, high efficiency keeps the system running in case of failure in a combination module. "We constantly research and study air conditioning needs of modern buildings blending with advanced architecture and new age customers' lifestyle. Our VRF air conditioning systems are a frontrunner in the market and with slim modular front throw SideSmart we believe that more consumers would find the perfect", said Gurmeet Singh, CMD, Hitachi Air Conditioning India.

ESAF Bank's IPO to hit mkt

ESAF Small Finance Bank, which had called off its Rs 976-crore IPO plan in March amid the pandemic, will refile the draft papers soon and hit the markets next month, a top company official said on Thursday. The bank had filed the draft red herring prospectus with the market regulator Sebi for a primary share sale in January 2020, but the first wave of the pandemic and the resultant lockdowns forced it to scupper the plan. However, the Thrissur-based bank has only time till July to meet the Reserve Bank's guidelines to bring down promoter stake. "We hope to refile the draft red herring prospectus with Sebi shortly and launch the IPO next month," the bank's founder, chief executive K Paul Thomas.

Mkts hit lifetime highs as infra stocks on roll

Sensex jumps 383 points, Nifty soars 114 points; RBI policy eyed

MUMBAI

MARKET benchmarks ratcheted up to fresh lifetime highs on Thursday after two days of muted trade as banking, finance and infra stocks saw hectic buying ahead of RBI's monetary policy decision.

A rebounding rupee added to the momentum, with midcap and smallcap gauges outperforming the benchmarks. The 30-share BSE Sensex opened strong and carried the gains through the day to finish 382.95 points or 0.70 per cent higher at 52,232.43. The index surpassed its previous closing record of 52,154.13 hit on February 15 this year.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty soared 114.15 points or 0.73 per cent to end at its lifetime peak of 15,690.35. Titan was the top performer in the Sensex pack, spurting 6.69 per cent, followed by ONGC, L&T, Axis Bank, Kotak Bank, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank. On the other hand, IndusInd Bank, PowerGrid, Bajaj Auto, M&M and Dr Reddy's were among the laggards, shedding up to 2.15 per cent. Domestic equities remained upbeat with benchmark indices recording fresh highs, said Binod Modi, Head

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- Strategy at Reliance Securities. Rebound in heavyweight financial services supported the market once again, he said, adding that realty followed by FMCG and metals also witnessed sharp recovery. IT, pharma and auto witnessed some amount of pressure. "Notably, midcap and small-cap stocks continued to outperform broader in-



dices as improved prospects of sustainable earnings recovery continue to attract investors towards this space," he noted. S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities, said the markets remained firmly in the grip of bulls ahead of the RBI policy announcement on Friday, with investors expecting the central bank to continue with its accommodative stance while keeping a watchful eye on inflation. Expectations of vaccinations being ramped up coupled with capex programs is likely to improve credit growth, he added.

All BSE sectoral indices ended in the positive terrain, with consumer durables, realty, capital goods, oil and gas, bankex and finance rallying up to 4.44 per cent. Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices rose 1.04 per cent each. World stocks took a breather ahead of the crucial US payrolls data which will give cues on the economic recovery as well as broader inflation.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the red, while Tokyo and Seoul finished with gains. Equities in Europe were also trading with losses in mid-session deals. International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.18 per cent lower at \$71.22 per barrel.



DPIIT recognises 50,000 startups

NEW DELHI

AS many as 50,000 startups have been recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) till date, an official statement said on Thursday. Startup India is a flagship initiative of the government launched on January 16, 2016. The initiative is intended to catalyse a startup culture and build a strong and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in India. The recognised startups are eligible to avail the benefits across a range of laws, regulations, fiscal and infrastructural support. "As on June 3, 2021, 50,000 startups across have been recognised as startups by DPIIT, of which 19,896 have been recognised since April 1, 2020," the commerce and industry ministry said.

With the launch of the startup India initiative, recognised startups have now spread across 623 districts, it said, adding each State and Union Territory has at least one startup, and 30 States and UTs have announced specific startup policies to support them. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat have the largest number of these entrepreneurs.

GHIAL wins ACI 'Gold Recognition' award

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (GHIAL), has won the 'Gold Recognition' award from the Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2021 in the below 25 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA) category. This is the fourth time in a row that GHIAL receives this award.

ACI's Green Airports Recognition programme promotes environmental best practices to minimise aviation industry's impact on the environment and recognises ACI Asia-Pacific members for outstanding environmental initiatives and projects.



Pradeep Panicker, CEO, GHIAL (2nd from left) and others

"We, at GHIAL consider sustainable airport operations as an integral part of our business and are committed to conduct the operations in an environment-friendly manner. We aimed at zero discharge and zero emissions in collaboration with all our stakeholders," said Pradeep Panicker, CEO, GHIAL. We are most humbled to receive this recognition which further resolves us to take more eco-friendly initiatives making it an essential component of our business, Panicker added. Some of the initiatives at GHIAL to improve the air quality at the airport - fixed electrical ground power, solar powered baggage freight loader, single engine taxiing of aircraft resulting in saving of ATF.

Microsoft to showcase next gen Windows on June 24

NEW DELHI

MICROSOFT has revealed that it will showcase the next generation of Windows operating system on June 24. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and chief product officer Panos Panay will present the new Windows experience reads a media invite.

During the just-concluded Build developer conference, Nadella provided an insight on "the next generation of Windows". "Soon we will share one of the most significant updates to Windows of the past decade to unlock greater economic opportunity for developers and creators. I've been self-hosting it over the past several months, and I'm incredibly excited about the next generation of Windows," the Microsoft CEO had said during his keynote address on May 25. "Our promise to you is this: we will create more opportunity for every Windows developer today and welcome every creator who is looking for the most innovative, new, open platform to build and distribute and monetise applications. We look forward to sharing more very soon," he added.

BoM, Central Bank to go private way

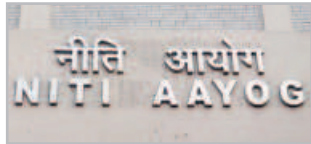
NITI Aayog has submitted privatisation list

NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog has submitted the names of two Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and one public sector general insurer, which can be sold off under the government's new privatisation policy, to the core group of Secretaries on Disinvestment. Sources said that the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), and the Department of Financial Services (DFS) will examine the names suggested by NITI Aayog and finalise the list of possible candidates in the financial sector for privatisation this year.

People in the know also said that Bank of Maharashtra and Central Bank are the top two candidates that has been favoured for privatisation, though the Indian Overseas Bank has also found favour for the exercise either this year or possibly later.

Further, according to sources, United India Insurance may be chosen candidate for privatisation among the three general insurers, given its relative better solvency ratio. However, financial sector



experts also contend that Oriental Insurance, with the least solvency ratio among the three, may be favoured as it does not have overseas operations and inviting a private investor may be easier for it. The government had earlier indicated that banks under prompt corrective action (PCA) framework or weaker banks would be kept out of privatisation as it would be difficult to find buyers for them. This would have left three PSBs - Indian Overseas Bank, Central Bank and UCO Bank out of the government's disinvestment plan.

But they could be brought out of PCA as there are visible signs of improvement in some of the key parameters such as profitability and asset quality (in net NPA terms as they have stepped up provisioning) in the last 3-4 quarters. This could allow them to be considered for privatisation.

Innovent Tech launches GoKea

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD-BASED startup Innovent Tech has launched GoKea app that solves the logistics and delivery issues of customers by customising delivery solutions based on the client's requirement. For most restaurants and enterprises, lack of logistics services is a major difficulty in delivering, sending, and receiving of food, groceries and other items.

The features of the app include a platform for promoting deliveries for B2B and B2C customers across India.

Technology at GoKea solves deeper problems in the express logistics domain, across food, grocery, pharmacy, and e-commerce segments.

It helps deliver shipments across categories, ensuring cost optimisation and a superior and consistent user experience. To begin with, GoKea will operate in South India for its clients Haldiram, Swiggy, Zomato, Shadowfax, Apollo Pharmacy, Fitness Bowl, QMart, Hukam, Boozie, amongst others and has plans to immediately recruit 2,000 riders in Hyderabad alone.

Mukesh Ambani takes no pay in FY21

NEW DELHI

RICHEST Indian Mukesh Ambani drew no salary from his flagship firm Reliance Industries Ltd in the fiscal year ended March 31 as he voluntarily gave up remuneration in light of the pandemic hitting the business and the economy.

In its latest annual report, Reliance said Ambani's remuneration for financial year 2020-21 was "nil." In the previous fiscal year, he drew a Rs 15 crore salary from the company - the same as in the previous 11 years. Ambani has kept salary, perquisites, allowances and commission together at Rs 15 crore since 2008-09, foregoing over Rs 24 crore per annum. "In light of the Covid-19 outbreak in India, which has exacted a huge toll on the societal, economic and industrial health of the nation, Mukesh D Ambani, the Chairman and Managing Director, has voluntarily decided to forego his salary," the company had said in June last year. Remuneration of his cousins Nikhil and Hital Meswani re-



mained unchanged at Rs 24 crore but this time it included Rs 17.28 crore commission.

Executive Directors PMS Prasad and Pawan Kumar Kapil saw their remuneration go up after they got performance-linked incentives for two years. While Prasad drew Rs 11.99 crore in 2020-21, up from Rs 11.15 crore in the previous year, Kapil got Rs 4.24 crore as against Rs 4.04 crore in 2019-20. The payment of Prasad and Kapil included "performance-linked incentives for FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21,"

RIL M-cap crosses ₹14 L cr

NEW DELHI: Shares of Reliance Industries Ltd extended its rally for the seventh consecutive day on Thursday and its market valuation crossed the Rs 14 lakh crore mark.

The market heavyweight stock has jumped 12.45 per cent in seven trading sessions. Following the upbeat sentiment, the company's market valuation has reached Rs 14,00,541.47 crore on Thursday at the BSE. Shares of the company closed at Rs 2,209.25, a gain of 0.36 per cent on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 2.21 per cent to Rs 2,250. On the NSE, it gained 0.30 per cent to close at Rs 2,208. In traded volume terms, 7.60 lakh shares were traded at the BSE and 1.10 crore units at the NSE during the day.

After record fundraising and debt prepayments, Reliance Industries now has a strong balance sheet with high liquidity that will support growth plans for its three hyper-growth engines - telecom arm Jio, retail and oil-to-chemicals business, firm's Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani said.

the annual report said. Ambani's wife Nita, a non-executive director on the company's board, earned Rs 8 lakh sitting fee and another Rs 1.65 crore commission for the year.

Apart from Ambani, the RIL board has Meswani brothers, Prasad and Kapil as wholetime directors. Besides Nita Ambani, other non-executive directors in-

clude Yogendra P Trivedi, Dipak C Jain, Raghunath A Mashekar, Adil Zainulbhai, Raminder Singh Gujral, Shumeet Banerji, former SBI chairperson Arundhati Bhat-tacharya and former CVC K V Chowdary. All independent directors got a Rs 1.65 crore commission for the year besides a sitting fee of up to Rs 36 lakh.



Seven Seas distributes Covid prevention pills

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

CITY-BASED Seven Seas Entertainment along with Shreyas Media and ATM Homeo Clinic on Thursday distributed homeopathic medicines that could improve body immunity to beat Covid-19, to the employees of Income Tax Department in the city free of cost. The homeopathic medicine has been developed by Dr Mohan Lal Shayana, a renowned homeopathic doctor, is capable of improving the immunity of body and helping it fight deadly coronavirus.

L Maruti Shanker, Managing Director, Seven Seas Entertainment, and G Srinivas, MD, Shreyas Media, handed over the free medicines to Ramana Rao, president, AP & Telangana, Income Tax Employees Union, and Krishna Kumar, Income Tax Officer of Director General (Investigation). "The Covid-19 pandemic is spreading very fast in both the Telugu States. In this backdrop, using homeopathic medicine that prevents Covid by boosting immunity, is the need of the hour," said Maruti Shanker.

India likely to send 190-strong contingent to Olympics: Batra

NEW DELHI

THE Indian contingent for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics is expected to be around 190, including over 100 athletes, IOA president Narinder Batra said on Thursday as Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju unveiled the official kits for the country's participants.

So far, 100 athletes have qualified for the Tokyo Games, including 56 men and 44 women. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) expects another 25 to 35 to make the cut for the Games, which open on July 23. "...we are estimating to touch 125 to 135 (qualified athletes) by the next two to three weeks when the qualification process is over," Batra said during the online ceremony which also marked 50 days to the Games.

"This means the Indian contingent, including officials and support staff, is likely to be around 190," he added. The number of officials cannot be more than one-third of the athlete group as per the Sports Ministry rules. The ministry can, however, allow additional officials at no cost to the government.

Batra also reiterated that India's medal haul can touch the double-digit mark in Tokyo, which will be an unprecedented achievement. India's best medal haul came in the 2012 London Olympics, where the country snared six medals, including two silver and four bronze.

The IOA chief said that all the athletes who have qualified for the Olympics have received the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine except for a few who have recently contracted the virus. He requested Rijiju to ensure that all the Indian athletes are fully vaccinated before they head to Tokyo. "The IOC will issue a Playbook (latest version) this month but there will be only minor changes (from earlier version). We have to follow all the health and safety protocols in view of the pandemic."

Unveiling the official kits of the Indian contingent, Rijiju said the whole country is behind the athletes. "Olympics is the platform where the best in the world will compete. I hope our athletes will make their best effort and make the country proud by winning medals," he said.

"Today, the Prime Minister took a review of the country's preparation for the Olympics and assured the participating athletes that the entire country is behind them," he added. He said his ministry has provided all kinds of support -- financial and logistical -- to the athletes amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The official kits are sponsored by Li Ning while the official ceremonial kits are sponsored by Raymonds. "We could have organised a big event to mark the occasion but for this pan-



A medal tray that will be used during the victory ceremonies at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games is displayed during its 'unveiling event' at the Ariake Arena, in Tokyo on Thursday

BENGALURU

TWO Indian hockey umpires who will officiate at the upcoming Olympic Games are getting ready for the assignment by carrying out varied fitness training, including the yo-yo test.

RaghuPrasad RV and Javed Shaikh are among a panel of 14 umpires who have been picked to officiate at the Olympics, scheduled to be staged from July 23 to August 8.

"I am currently doing my fitness training at home in Bengaluru. I attend online fitness classes every morning. I basically carry out strength and conditioning exercises, which strengthens my mobility and agility skills," said RaghuPrasad, who has umpired at Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and World Cups.

"We are doing briefing sessions with the FIH for the Tokyo Olympics as well. We are shown clips from previous matches, and we discuss an umpire's decision-making for certain scenarios such as penalty corners, video umpiring and so on," he said.

demic," the minister lamented. IOA Secretary General Rajiv Mehta said that four sets of official kits will be given to each athlete and more than 100 kits have been kept aside as contingency.

"We have received the health protocols the athletes have to follow. There will be double testing of athletes before departure. All these things,

Two Indian hockey umpires training hard for Tokyo games



Shaikh, who has also officiated at the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games, and the World Cup, said the fitness schedule includes yo-yo tests.

"We have been giving FIH fitness tests every two-three months in the last one and a half years. Fitness tests include a yo-yo test and repeated sprint ability (RS) test. We have to record our tests on video and send it to the FIH umpires managers, who grade us according to our performance," he said. (IANS)

we will work out with the chef-de-mission and his deputy," Mehta said.

Six Olympic-bound athletes, including Neeraj Chopra, Bajrang Punia, Ravi Dahiya, Sumit Malik and Seema Bisla, were present. Chef de Mission of the Indian contingent B P Baishya and his deputy Prem Chand Verma were also present. (PTI)

Vidit qualifies for chess World Cup



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qualified for the FIDE chess World Cup 2021, to be held in Sochi, Russia from July 10 on the basis of his rating.

With this, Grandmaster Gujrathi becomes the fourth Indian man to qualify for the upcoming World Cup, a press release said on Thursday.

The Nashik-based player joins Grandmasters P Harikrishna, Aravindh Chidambaram and P

Iniyas as the Indian men to have qualified for the World Cup.

Meanwhile, Koneru Humpy, D Harika, Bhakti Kulkarni, R Vaishali and Padmini Rout have qualified for the women's event at the World Cup. This will be Gujrathi's third World Cup appearance, having previously featured in 2017 and 2019.

The Indian said he is confident of putting up a nice show in the tournament. "Really happy to be a part of the WC squad. Playing for India is always a proud moment and especially the World Cup which is the most prestigious event across any sport," Gujrathi was quoted as saying.

"I am confident of putting up a nice show and will surely try to give my best in each and every game I play. Eagerly looking forward to the event as this is going to be my first Over the Board (OTB) event since February 2020," he added.

He is presently ranked 23rd in the World. The FIDE World Cup 2021 will be a Classical event with standard time control. Iniyas had recently won the AICF online qualifying event to book a berth in the World Cup. (PTI)

Shastri's support motivated Siraj to stay back in Aus after father's death

NEW DELHI

INDIA pacer Mohammed Siraj has revealed that words of encouragement from head coach Ravi Shastri during the team's tour of Australia made him change his mind about returning home after his father's death.

"Tu Test match khel, dekh tereko 5 wickets milega. Tere Daddy ka dua tera saath hoga" (You play the Test match. You will get 5 wickets as your father's blessings are with you)," was what Shastri told him before the second Test in Melbourne, according to the

speedster. Siraj received the news of his father's death on November 20, less than a month before the blockbuster four-match Test series was set to begin in Adelaide. He was indecisive until Shastri intervened and motivated him.

The 27-year-old Siraj bagged five wickets for 77 runs on his Test debut at the hallowed Melbourne Cricket Ground. "Match ke baad Ravi sir ne bahut khus hokar bola, tujhe bola tha na 5 wickets milega (Ravi sir said after the match that I told that you will be getting five wickets). I became very confident after my coaches encouraged me in such a way," Siraj told ABP news.

Not just Shastri but the entire team management was supportive of Siraj, who plays under skipper Virat Kohli in IPL franchise Royal Challengers Bangalore.

"Virat Bhai is always there. When I couldn't perform well in the IPL two years back, he showed faith in my ability. He retained me in RCB and I am grateful for this," said Siraj.

"When I lost my father during the Australia tour, both Ravi sir and bowling coach Bharat Arun sir were so supportive." He grabbed a five-wicket innings haul in Australia's second innings in the fourth and final Test in Brisbane as India won the match for a historic 2-1 series triumph.

Siraj is currently in England with the Indian team for the World Test Championship final against New Zealand and a five-match series against hosts England. The Hyderabad speedster has so far captured 16 wickets in five Tests and three wickets in three T20 Internationals. (PTI)



I am working to acquire new technique, skills for Olympics: Sindhu

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S top badminton star P V Sindhu says she is working to acquire new skills and techniques to surprise her rivals, who are at the same level with distinct playing styles, at the Tokyo Olympics.

The Rio Olympics silver medallist and world champion feels the coronavirus pandemic-induced break has given her the much-needed time to rectify mistakes in her game and add something new to her repertoire. Her nemesis and reigning champion, Carolina Marin, will not be there due to a knee injury, but Sindhu knows the field still remains tough.

"In women's circuit the players in top-10 are of same standard. You can't take it easy, if one player is not there," Sindhu, the world number seven, said in a virtual interaction, organised by the Sports Authority of India (SAI).

"There is Tai Tzu Ying, Ratchanok Intanon, (Nozomi) Okuhara and (Akane) Yamaguchi. They are all good players. You can't say, it will be easy if one player is missing. I can't relax and need to be focussed and give my best," the 25-year-old said.

Sindhu had lost the 2016 Olympics final and 2017 World Championship summit clash to Marin. "There are a couple of tricky players like Ratchanok, she is very skilful. We have to look after them. 'For me, it's a very good time to improve my technique and skill. I have improved. It's good that I have got so much time. Usually we don't get time to rectify mistakes or learn new skills."



"It takes time. So this was the time and I am using it. I hope, in the Olympics, there will be some new techniques and skills." Sindhu said she and others have to watch out for the Chinese players as well since they have been missing from the circuit for some time.

"They have not played for a long time. We have not seen them. Chen Yu (Fei) and He Bing Jiao, the left hander, her skills are good. In Olympics, it's completely different, the game, the pressure. You can't expect easy (rivals)."

Asked about her own strong points that may give her advantage over others, Sindhu said her game is always about relentless attacks. "Attack is my strong point. The rivals know my game so I am working on my defence as well. I am tall, so my attack is good. I have to be prepared for all strokes, for everything," she said.

The Hyderabad-based training at the Gachibowli Stadium is ideal preparation for the Games since the facility is huge and gives her the feel of stadiums where big-ticket events like the Olympics are held. "We might not know each other's game now because we have not played for the last two months. I have been playing at Gachibowli after the Thailand Open and it has been really helpful because it is international standard.

"When you play in a big stadium, you have to make sure you control the shuttle and drift which is very very important. When you go abroad, shuttles drift, there's is AC and shuttle might (travel) fast. So when you have the facilities why not use them," she said. (PTI)

Indian men, women cricket teams land in England

LONDON

THE Indian men's cricket team arrived here on Thursday for the upcoming World Test Championship final against New Zealand and the subsequent Test series versus hosts England.

The men's team was accompanied by the women's side which is touring England for three ODIs and as many T20s besides the one-off Test, starting in Bristol on June 16.

"Touchdown," top-order batsman KL Rahul tweeted with a picture of the chartered flight in the background, confirming their safe arrival in London.

Both the teams will now travel to Southampton, where they will complete their mandatory quarantine.

Upon completion of the quarantine period and subsequent COVID-19 test, the Virat Kohli-led men's team will take on New Zealand in the maiden WTC final starting here from June 18.

Following the WTC final, the men's team will face England in a five-match Test series starting August 4 in Nottingham. India are travelling with an extended 20-member squad for WTC final and subsequent series against England keeping the COVID-19 pandemic in mind. The women's team's tour ends on July 15. (PTI)

Bopanna-Skugor enters 3rd round at French Open

PARIS

VETERAN Indian tennis player Rohan Bopanna and his Croatian partner Franko Skugor advanced to the pre-quarterfinals of the French Open with a straight set win over Americans Frances Tiafo and Nicholas Monroe here on Thursday.

The unseeded Bopanna and Skugor prevailed over their rivals 6-4 7-5 in the second round match that lasted one hour and 20 minutes.

The 41-year-old Bopanna, ranked 40 in the world, is not defending any points this year at the Roland Garros. He needs to earn points since this is his last chance to improve his ranking.

The rankings on June 10 will be considered for entry into the Tokyo Olympics. Divij Sharan, though, lost his chance by losing his first round match.

The combined rankings of Bopanna and Sharan will be taken into account for entries. A low ranking will scuttle their chances. As of now only Sania Mirza is assured of a place in the women's doubles draw. She will most likely pair with Ankita Raina. (PTI)

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