

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | 24 FEBRUARY 2021

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## WEATHER

Max: 33°C  
Min: 18.4°C  
RH: 71%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.  
Mist or haze likely.  
Max/Min temp. 32/18 °C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES  
(+13,550) 1,10,29,326  
DEATHS (+103) 1,56,598

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

NA*	NA*
TS: 2,97,712	1,625
(+70)	(+1)
AP: 8,89,409	7,168

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

DEATHS	11,24,33,431
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES	219

worldometers.info/coronavirus  
\* TS stopped daily updates

## ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttarayana  
Tithi: Magha Shuddha Dwadasi till 5.59 pm  
Star: Punarvasu till 1.11 pm  
Varjyam: 9.11 pm to 10.47 pm  
Durmuhratam: 12.06 pm to 12.52 pm  
Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

## HIJRI CALENDAR

Rajab 11,144 AH

## PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.39 am

Zohar: 12.40 pm

Asar: 4.43 pm

Maghrib: 6.27 pm

Isha: 7.35 pm

## SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.37 AM

## SUNSET TODAY 6.20 PM

## MOONSET 3.18 AM

## MOONRISE 2.36 PM

## COUNTER POINT



Mantri? He is always touring poll-bound states!

## INSIDE

CITY... PAGE 3  
72 fly abroad with fake Aadhaars

## HASTY STEP

State to release data of Covid cases weekly, experts criticise move

## TS stops daily Covid case updates

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The Telangana government will no longer release daily Covid-19 caseload data and information on district-wise new cases as also the number of people dying from Covid-19 in the state.

“Henceforth, instead, a weekly bulletin will be released,” the state director of public health Dr G Srinivasa Rao announced here on Tuesday.

As on Sunday, Telangana has a total of 1,27,712 Covid-19 cases and there were alto-

gether 1,625 deaths due to the disease. The GHMC area including Hyderabad city had the highest daily cases in the state, 24, out of the 114 new cases recorded on Sunday.

There are no major changes in Covid-19 behaviour or cases in Telangana, the official said, justifying the stoppage of daily Covid bulletin. “We have realised that instead of dedicating exclusive human resources and many man hours into generating the Covid-19 data on a daily basis, this manpower can be used in the

ongoing vaccination drive,” Dr Rao said.

“In case of any significant development,” the media will be informed, he said.

The decision to do away with the daily Covid-19 bulletins has left public health policy experts confused.

“Data collection is a daily process of disease surveillance. Even if the government believes that it has gotten rid of Covid-19 in the state, the data should be made public to help people make appropriate choices,” an infection diseases control expert said.

ster K. Chandrashekhar Rao that the AP government had started making markings to dig a canal on the right side of the RDS.

Official sources in the irrigation department said that Rao discussed the issue with officials on Tuesday and directed them to lodge a complaint with the Krishna River Management Board, the Central Water Commiss-

ion and the Apex Council of the Union ministry of Jal Shakti against the AP government and ensure that Andhra Pradesh suspends these works.

Though TS is supposed to get 16 tmc ft of water through the RDS, it is getting less than five tmc ft currently due to leakages.

■ Page 2: Farmers worry about AP's parallel project

on a spike in coronavirus cases in the country, a meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Tuesday to review the pandemic situation.

Union health ministry officials, meanwhile, have said that two mutated variant of SARS-CoV-2 — N440K and E484Q — have been detected in Maharashtra and Kerala but there is no direct relation between the recent surge in Covid-19 cases in these states and some others with the mutant virus strains.

Maharashtra and Kerala account for 75 per cent of total active Covid-19 cases in the country.

■ Full report on Page 7

### PMO CONDUCTS REVIEW MEETING ON SUDDEN SPIKE IN CORONAVIRUS CASES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 23

Amid a spike in coronavirus cases in the country, a meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Tuesday to review the pandemic situation.

Union health ministry officials, meanwhile, have said that two mutated variant of SARS-CoV-2 — N440K

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Page 2: Parents question state's about-turn in policy

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Page 2: Farmers worry about AP's parallel project

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FOR NEXT DAY EDITION BOOKING CLOSES AT 6.30 P.M.

## Exam time



Students enter the digital examination centre to write their JEE papers at Moula Ali on Tuesday. While candidates aspiring to pursue BArch, BPlanning programmes appeared for the exam on Tuesday, the ones aspiring to take admission in BE/BTech courses will take the test from Wednesday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

# Tests -ve, but signs akin to Covid puzzle doctors

RT-PCR test cannot detect virus if mutant strain is present

**KANIZA GARARI | DC**  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

More than 10,000 people have tested negative for Covid-19 in the last 15 days here, but these patients have similar symptoms, requiring intensive care and ventilation support, stated medical experts here.

RT-PCR tests are negative but the diagnostic kits cannot test the virus if the S, R and RBD mutations are present," they said.

These mutations are deletions or substitutions in the genes of the virus. Two types of mutations were detected in Maharashtra and Kerala. Epidemiologists have reported to the central health ministry that so far they are confined to the two states only.

What is the reason for the tests showing negative even as patients have symptoms of chill, muscle ache, blood in sputum and low oxygen levels? Is the quality of the diagnostic kit a challenge? Or is there a mutation that is being

missed?

A senior infectious disease doctor in a private hospital said, "RT-PCR is negative but the severity of symptoms indicates that it is Covid-19. The virus is expected to mutate and there could be a local mutation, which has to be identified. Patients are often admitted with severe symptoms."

Hospitals state that intensive care units and Covid-19 wards are full.

Another explained, "We are seeing many patients testing positive in diagnosis but their response to medicines is slow. They are taking time to recover. Why is that happening, we do not know."

Hospitals in the city have a collaboration with the National Institute of Virology in Pune, to where samples are sent. To send a sample, there is a set criteria and the patient's symptoms must merit that. During last year, there was aggressive collection of samples. Now it has reduced as the cases

are declining."

These new patients who are responding slowly to medicines are a concern but sending their samples to NIV is

**SHORT TAKES**  
**TANISHQ OFFERS ZERO LOSS GOLD EXCHANGE POLICY**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

Tanishq, the popular jewellery brand, said it was offering a 'zero loss gold exchange policy' for customers in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state. These states, the company said, see half of all gold purchases made through gold exchange. Tanishq's offer, the company said comes as a boon for customers who are looking to upgrade to new designs and refresh their jewellery assortment.

The company is offering 100 per cent valuation on exchange of 22 karat gold jewellery from any jeweller. The offer in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state, is for a limited time period.

The exchange at Tanishq stores take place in front of the customer as the purity of gold is ascertained by non-destructive method using the state-of-the-art Karatmeter. The product is first cleaned in an ultrasonic machine and then it is melted in front of the customer. The final purity is measured in Karatmeter up to two decimal points. The selling and buying gold rate at Tanishq is the same and hence the customer gets the best exchange value for their old gold, the company said.

Speaking about the gold exchange policy, Srikrishna Myneni, Regional Business Manager, South, Tanishq, said, "Customers expect jewellers to be very transparent when it comes to exchanging of old gold. One can easily upgrade to Tanishq's new and exciting collections and get a fair valuation for their old gold. Customers who have exchanged with us are completely delighted with our transparency and valuation methods of exchange."

**FCI LAUDS COPS FOR RESTORING STOLEN PROPERTY**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

An employee of the Food Corporation of India thanked and appreciated the Police Commissioner of Rachakonda, Mahesh Bhagwat, for swiftly arresting the interstate property offenders and recovering stolen material worth ₹25 lakh.

B. Swayam Prabha, an employee of the Food Corporation of India, met the Police Commissioner and thanked him on Tuesday. She expressed her gratitude to the Nacharam police and the Central Crime Station police for their efforts in solving the case.

It was in December last year that Swayam Prabha's house at Habsiguda in Nacharam was burgled by a three-member gang that stole cash, diamond and gold ornaments.

The sleuths of CCS Malkajgiri along with Nacharam Police of Rachakonda arrested Mohd Sabdar, 25 and Mohd Ayub, 58, at the pot market in Secunderabad and recovered stolen loot worth ₹26 lakh from them.

"They used to roam around residential areas to target and burgle houses. They confessed to committing offences in three places and were placed under arrest in due time," police said.

**IT WAS** in December last year that Swayam Prabha's house at Habsiguda in Nacharam was burgled by a three-member gang that stole cash, diamond and gold ornaments.

**FAKE PASSPORT** 2 cops among 8 held for giving illegal papers to B'deshis

# 72 fly abroad with fake Aadhaars

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The Cyberabad Police has sent a note to the Foreigners' Regional Registration Office (FRRO) for issue of Lookout Notices against 72 persons who fraudulently procured fake Aadhaar cards and passports and went abroad. Some police officials were also involved in the fraud.

"We are coordinating with the UIDAI authority for cancellation of these 72 Aadhaar cards. We are also alerting the district collectors and SPs of various districts in West Bengal about these persons," said the Cyberabad police commis-

# HC tells Wakf Board to clarify on Hafeezpet land

Separate petitions have been filed challenging Board's gazette

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

Telangana High Court on Tuesday asked Telangana Wakf Board to clarify its stand on 47 acres of land in survey number 80 of Hafeezpet village, which came into limelight following alleged kidnap of Katikaneni Praveen Rao and his brother by former AP minister Bhuma Akhila Priya and her henchmen.

Praveen Rao claimed that he, along with others, had obtained the land under a registered settlement deed. But the proceedings dated 16-06-2020 of Telangana State Wakf Board addressed to sub-registrar, Moosapet, Ranga Reddy district, claimed that the property belongs to the Wakf Board. The board asked the sub-registrar not to entertain any transactions, such as sale, purchase, mortgage or transfer, of the said property. Aggrieved over this, Praveen Rao and others have approached the High Court seeking suspension of the proceedings.

The Division Bench comprising Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao and

## HC seeks Board's pending response

**Hyderabad:** Three parties have been claiming the 484 acres land in this survey number. Rights over around 141 acres are being claimed by Wakf Board. The remaining land is being claimed by the state government stating that it belongs to Kurnishshah Paigah and subject to CS 14 (civil suits filed by Dildarnunisa Begum and others) for partition of the estate of late Nawab Khurshed Jah Paigah, where the land in Hafeezpet village measures about acres 1333-00 guntas.

Justice T. Vinod Kumar adjourned the case to Wednesday, giving Wakf Board the last chance to support its contention that the land belongs to the board.

Kumar, Pardhasarathi (also known as Goldstone Prasad), and others have filed separate petitions before the High Court challenging the gazette issued by Wakf

Board, notifying that the said lands belong to it.

Abu Akram, counsel for the Wakf Board, submitted to the court that the dargah of Hazrat Salar-E-Auliya (RH) has an attached wakf land measuring acres 140-00 guntas in survey number 80 of Hafeezpet village. The Wakfnama was originally created by Munearunnisa Begum, daughter of Nawab

Mohd. Hafeezuddin Khan Bahadur Zafar Jung Shams-ud-Dowla Shams-ul-Mulk, which was executed by her on 01-01-1955. With that, Wakf Board issued Munthkhadab on 13-12-2013 under section 36 of the Wakf Act 1995 in the statutory Telangana Book of Endowments.

The petitioners have, however, contended that there is no signature on Wakfnama by Munearunnisa Begum. The Wakf Board, however, maintains that due to some injuries to her, she was unable to sign the Wakfnama.

Following this, the High Court posed a series of questions to Wakf Board as to how it came to know that she was the owner of said property in survey number 80 and why the board did not register the lands till 2013, when she had been given the Wakfnama in 1955.

The court also asked if anybody gave Wakfnama of any property like Charminar, Golkonda, and other buildings, whether the Wakf Board would automatically register the property without examining authenticity of the documents.

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## Cancer patient duped of ₹2L, clergy booked

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

**MOHAMMED JALEEL** Uddin Qadeer requested that the ₹2 lakhs he gave be returned but Maulana Ali Quadri did not give the money back.

₹14.5 lakhs from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to cover the expenses. "He had

approached Ali Quadri who he came to know is well acquainted with Hyderabad Parliamentarian Asaduddin Owaisi. He then contacted Quadri and met him at his brother-in-law's house behind Azam Hospital in Hussain Alam.

According to the Banjara Hills police, they received a complaint from Mohammed Jaleel Uddin Qadeer Siddiqui, who said that he had gone through colon cancer surgery and needed

son Bilal including the hospital's estimation form, Aadhaar card, passport copy, and cancer reports. On November 26, 2020 Mohammed Jaleel was asked to send him one more set of all the documents which was promptly sent again," police said, adding that Jaleel never saw the money.

He requested that the ₹2 lakhs he gave be returned but Maulana Ali Quadri did not give the money back. Hence, he requested the police to take necessary action against Maulana Ali Quadri as per law.

Based on the complaint the police booked a case under Section 420 IPC under the zero FIR and transferred the case to Charminar police station for further investigation.

## Ex-cashier booked for forging invoices

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The ex-cashier of a jewellery store in Somajiguda was booked by the Panjagutta police for forging invoices and stealing gold ornaments weighing 90.345 gm, with a value of ₹4.64 lakh, from the place over the course of a few months. The crime came to light when the owners conducted an internal audit.

The case was booked

**THE CASE** was booked against Lukka Srinivasa Rao, who was working as a cashier at Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Somajiguda, said the police.

against Lukka Srinivasa Rao, who was working as a cashier at Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Somajiguda, said the police.

A complaint was received

from the management of Malabar Royal Designs Hyderabad Pvt. Ltd, represented by its showroom head Shareej, 36, wherein he stated that Lukka Srinivasa Rao, has committed falsification of accounts and forged false invoices by deceptively misappropriating gold ornaments weighing 90.345 grams having a value of ₹46,400 from the company and has stolen the gold ornaments.

"Srinivasa Rao had committed the said acts with an intention to cause loss to the company and unlawful gain to him. The victim's company came to know about the acts of the accused pursuant to an internal audit conducted in the complainant company on Sunday. We have booked a cheating case and started an investigation. Efforts are on to trace and nab the man," said the police.

## BioAsia'21 reviews vaccine challenges

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The virtual BioAsia 2021 conference discussed in detail the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, apart from innovations and medical technologies used in discovering different vaccines for fighting the virus. 31,450 people participated in the virtual conference from world over.

The meeting underlined the need for collaboration between different countries for timely delivery of the vaccine throughout the globe. Participants expressed concern at the evolving variants of SARS-CoV-2 and dwelt on questions whether the vaccines will be effective against the emerging new strains.

The BioAsia meet hoped normalcy will be restored sooner, with more and more people getting vaccinated the world over.

Principal secretary (Industries) Jayesh Ranjan said: "About 60 eminent speakers have during the past two days elaborated on the way forward to emerge out of the current challenges in the pandemic."

**JUSTICE RAO** directed the Registry to tag the old writ with the new one and adjourned the case to March 23.

### HIGH COURT ASKS FOR COUNTER AFFIDAVITS IN KAMALAKAR'S CASE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The Telangana High Court on Tuesday directed the respondents including Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar and State Wakf Board to file counter-affidavits in a case filed by Gangula Kamalakar, minister for civil supplies and BC welfare.

Justice P. Naveen Rao heard the writ petition filed by the Minister seeking a direction to the District Collector, Karimnagar, to remove his 15 acres from the prohibitory list and to the Wakf Board to denotify his land from its Gazette.

During the course of hearing Minister's counsel Jandhyala Ravishankar drew the attention of the court to a pending case filed by the Minister in 2014 on the same issue. Justice Rao directed the Registry to tag the old writ with the new one and adjourned the case to March 23.

**JUSTICE RAO** directed the Registry to tag the old writ with the new one and adjourned the case to March 23.

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## SHORT TAKES

## FOUNDATION FOR SECRETARIAT MOSQUE PUT OFF

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

State government has postponed laying of the foundation stone for re-constructing the mosque in premises of old secretariat complex. The stone was scheduled to be laid on Friday, but has been put off owing to Model Code of Conduct in place because of MLC polls.

Home minister Mahmood Ali, however, reiterated that the state government will establish the new masjid at the same place it stood when the entire secretariat complex was demolished to establish a new one. A new date for laying the foundation will be announced after MLC elections in consultation with religious scholars.

The minister said a Hindu temple and a church will also be constructed within the secretariat complex for convenience of employees as well as visitors coming to the secretariat. "Our Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao respects all religions," he added.

## MANUU V-C INAUGURATES WEB WORKSHOP

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) vice chancellor Prof. S. M. Rahmatullah has advised students to avoid differentiating between religious and modern education. He was addressing the inaugural session of an online workshop on Employability Skills.

Prof. Rahmatullah underlined that application of modern techniques is essential if a society is to develop. These will also enable students to find employment faster. All modern techniques and tools of learning must be explored, he stated.

Students' welfare dean Prof. Alim Ashraf briefed participants about aims and objectives of the workshop. Students' welfare joint dean Mohammed Abdul Sami Siddiqui is the convenor of the workshop. Mohammad Samiuddin introduced the Quran Foundation, Hyderabad. Resource person of the first technical session Abdul Raheem dwelt on the skills required to face interviews and took a number of questions from students.

## BJYM PROTESTS AGAINST KERALA GOVT

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The Telangana unit of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) on Tuesday protested against the brutal lathicharge, teargas and water cannons against BJYM activists outside the Kerala secretariat. Led by BJYM state vice-president P.M. Sai, BJYM and ABVP activists lending support to their Kerala counterparts held protest at the CPM office at RTC crossroads. Addressing the media, the BJYM leader said that along with ABVP activists, they were protesting against the Pinarayi Vijayan government, which has refused to extend tenure of rank list of candidates selected by the Kerala State Public Service Commission.

He said that rank list holders have been on a protest for the last two weeks to draw the attention of the LDF government in Kerala, which has refused to accede to their demands.

He alleged that the CPM was illegally regularising hundreds of party cadres, working as temporary employees in many government departments and State PSUs. Mr. Sai said that BJYM will not allow a backdoor entry for CPM cadre when meritorious candidates are waiting for jobs. He warned the CPM not to test the patience of the youth.

## Dejected Congress leaders stream into 'buoyant' BJP

**BJP to speed up its recruitment drive of leaders from other parties**

**IREDY SRINIVAS REDDY IDC**  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

While more Congress leaders are increasingly given to insecurity over their future, the Bharatiya Janata Party is having a field day in its recruitment drive, given the growing perception that the saffron party can alone challenge and defeat the TRS in the state. Several congress senior leaders, including former ministers and MPs, are already in a queue to join the BJP, whose fortunes are on a clear ascendency since the Dubbakk bypoll.

In the last one week, two important leaders of Congress joined the BJP. Medchal district president and former MLA Kuna Srisailam Goud and Adilabad district

leader, who contested from Kagaznagar Palvai Harish Kumar joined the BJP in presence of Telangana BJP party affairs in-charge Tarun Chugh.

The BJP welcomed these leaders from the Congress as it has been since Dubbaka and GHMC elections.

With the graduate MLC election process ongoing, the BJP has decided to catalyse this attrition and speed up its recruitment drive of leaders from other parties. The BJP is currently focused on Congress, its principal opponent at the national level. If BJP succeeds in demoralising the Congress in the state, it anyway becomes the de facto challenger for the TRS for the next assembly election.

With several former mi-

nisters and MPs having already joined BJP, and more in queue, the BJP can now afford to get selective and is focusing on leaders with a good public image.

BJP national vice-president DK Aruna has invited several leaders, including a former deputy chief minister, a former minister and a spokesperson of Congress to quit and join the saffron party.

The former deputy chief minister reportedly wants a guarantee of the Zabeerabad Lok Sabha ticket while the former minister is seeking a surety for his past assembly segment.

BJP senior leaders shared that former MLA of Medchal Kichennagari Laxma Reddy and former Member of Parliament Konda Vishnu

Eswar Reddy also are in touch with the BJP party but both leaders are asking for the Chevella Lok Sabha seat. The discussion is going on inside the party on how to handle such contenders with similar claims. The BJP is likely to give importance for Dalit leaders, a community which has got neglected in the Congress and is angry with the TRS for not fulfilling various promises.

Rumours are abound in Congress that its Hyderabad MP candidate and Nampally in-charge Feroz Khan is likely to join the BJP. Sources say that party president Bandi Sanjay Kumar interacted with Feroz Khan twice and asked him to join the BJP.

From the districts, Adilabad former MP Ramesh Rathod and Nirmal

former MLA Yeleti Maheswar Reddy are likely to join BJP in a few days. Both leaders are from Congress and had contested in the last elections.

Congress party Mahila wing president Nerella Sharada is also likely to leave the Congress due to group rivalries. Mruthunjayam, a former Congress leader who recently joined the BJP, is reportedly in touch with Nerella Sharada and is trying to woo her into the BJP.

A former TRS MP from erstwhile Nalgonda district is also seeking to join the BJP due to the party not giving any importance to him, after he lost the Lok Sabha elections. If he leaves, the constituency-level and second-level leaders are likely to go along with him into the BJP.

## GHMC OFFICIAL HELD FOR TAKING BRIBE

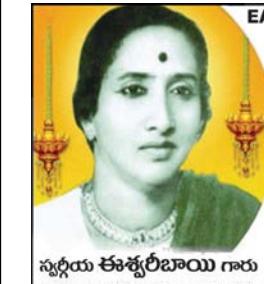
**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

Officials of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) have caught superintendent of Circle 10, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), red-handed when he demanded and accepting a bribe of ₹5,000 for processing a file.

Superintendent Vadthy

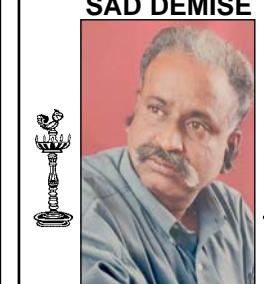
Phool Singh was caught after ACB laid a trap at the Falaknuma office of the GHMC. Phool Singh demanded the bribe from complainant Kranthi Kumar of Moosarambagh for issuing a cheque of ₹20,000 towards funeral charges of Kumar's mother.

The bribe money was recovered from the superintendent, who has been produced before the special court.

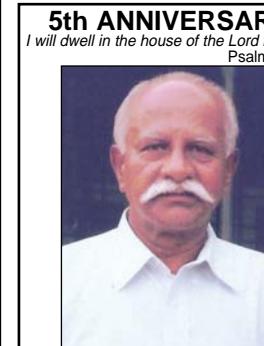


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**OBITUARY**  
I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.  
**SAD DEMISE**  
A.D. DEVENDER (Munna)  
S/o Late Sri A.S. Dayaker DOB: 20-10-1957 DOD: 23-02-2021 Funeral on Wednesday 24-02-2021 at Bansilalpet Cremation Ground Ph: 8897040143/ 9948737616 From: BELOVED FAMILY (S/2021/D01273)



**5th ANNIVERSARY**  
I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever Psalms 23:6  
**RUDRAPATY HITHAVACHANA CHARI**  
DOB: 21-02-1945 Slept in the Lord: Feb. 24, 2016 With all our love WIFE, SONS & LOVED ONES



**100TH BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE OF Late Sri SOUDAMALLA GEORGE**  
'Those who are righteous will be long remembered' (Ps 112:6)

**Sri S. GEORGE Smt. RATHNAM GEORGE**  
24-02-1921 Remembered by CHILDREN, GRAND CHILDREN AND GREAT GRAND CHILDREN



**1st Death Anniversary**  
The memory of the righteous is blessed - Prov. 10:7  
**Mrs. Bitla Christumani**  
DOB: 14-03-1942 DOD: 24-02-2020 From Sunrise to Sunset every moment would have been more wonderful if you were with us. Your Memory is stored in our hearts & Minds. Inserted by: Sons, Daughters-in-law & Grand Children. Ph.: 7680890011

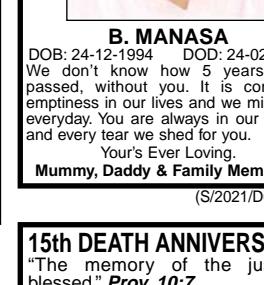
**FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY IN LOVING MEMORY WE MISS YOU**  
**Mr. D. J. DOSHI**  
DOB: 21-11-1932 DOD: 24-02-2020 Dear Dad & Dear Baba. We remember you with pride and gratitude. We pay our tributes with reverence. We miss your love and guidance. Your presence remains with us at all times like a blessing. Bless us from heaven above.  
Remembered by: KISHORE, POONAM, DEVKI & AKSHAY (B/2021/D00131)



**5th Death Anniversary**

K. VIJAY ANAND

DOB: 21-08-1971 DOD: 06-02-2020 The pain of losing you is immeasurable we know the biggest star in the sky that is shining the most is you. God has you in his arms we have you in our hearts. On Sunday From All Your Loving Family Members. (S/2021/D01264)



**5th ANNIVERSARY IN FOND REMEMBRANCE OF**

**B. MANASA**

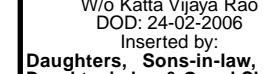
DOB: 24-12-1994 DOD: 24-02-2016 We don't know how 5 years have passed, without you. It is complete emptiness in life. We miss you everyday. You are always in our hearts and every tear we shed for you. Your Ever Loving Mummy, Daddy & Family Members. (S/2021/D01246)



**15th DEATH ANNIVERSARY**  
"The memory of the just is blessed." Prov. 10:7

**Late Mrs. KATTA SATYAVATHI**  
Who slept in the Lord on 16 February 2021. Memorial Service will be held on Wednesday, 24 February at 11 a.m. at Centenary Methodist Telugu Church Nampally.

Inserted by: Daughters, Sons-in-law, Son, Daughter-in-law & Grand Children (S/2021/D01270)



**27th ANNIVERSARY**

**Late Sri.DOSAPATI TULSI RAM**

29-12-1927 • 24-02-1994 Inserted by: FAMILY MEMBERS (S/2021/D01266)

## Take fight against communal BJP, corrupt TRS: Uttam

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

that the responsibility of Youth Congress has increased due to the special circumstances prevailing in the country, especially in Telangana.

He said that neither the BJP government at the Centre nor the TRS in Telangana were doing anything for the youth. In fact, youth are being discouraged from taking up higher education by scrapping or downsizing scholarships and other relevant schemes.

He said that the previous Congress Government had implemented a fee reimbursement scheme, along with scholarships, to encourage youth to pursue higher education without hurdles. In contrast, the TRS government has ruined the careers of lakhs of youths by not implementing fee reimbursement schemes. He said lakhs of students were being deprived of scholarship for the last many years.

Similarly, he said that the Central government has drastically cut down the TPCC chief said

said that unemployment in Telangana was so bad, where 11-member TSPSC has nine vacancies.

Rddy asked Youth Congress activists to organise interactive programmes with youth to identify and understand their problems and take up the fight against unemployment in Telangana on a big scale. He also asked Youth Congress members to play an active role in MLC election campaign to ensure victory of Congress candidates Ramulu Naik and G. Chinna Reddy.

He said he was confident that under the youthful leadership of Shiva Sena Reddy, Youth Congress would lead successful agitations against "communal" BJP and "corrupt TRS".

The meeting was addressed by MLA Seethakka, TPCC working president Ponnambalam Prabhakar, former MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, former MLA Ram Mohan and other leaders.

## Vote for Cong in MLC polls: Sanjeeva

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

unemployment, inequality and poverty that need to be tackled immediately.

He appealed to the graduates of the state to vote for the Congress for its socialist, democratic

and progressive values in the MLC elections in graduates constituencies being held on March 14.

The Congress has fielded Dr G. Chinna Reddy from the Nalgonda-Warangal-Khammam graduates constituency.

Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy-Mahabubnagar graduates constituency while Ramulu Naik is contesting from Nalgonda-Warangal-Khammam graduates constituency.

● **THE TPCC chief said that the responsibility of Youth Congress has increased due to the special circumstances prevailing in the country, especially in Telangana.**

He said that neither the BJP government at the Centre nor the TRS in Telangana were doing anything for the youth. In fact, youth are being discouraged from taking up higher education by scrapping or downsizing scholarships and other relevant schemes.

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Similarly, he said that the Central government has drastically cut down the TPCC chief said

not be solved and nobody would be ready to even discuss your problems unless your elected representatives occupy the seats in Parliament or the assemblies. Developmental initiatives ignored habitations where Muslims and other deprived communities lived. Our children have been deprived of qualitative education facilities because they are poor."

Owaisi alleged that the Congress party has all along exploited the Mus-

## SURPRISE WIN

**Owaisi says party will emerge as new political force**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The AIMIM has surprised political circles with a set of significant wins in the Gujarat municipal elections. The Hyderabad-based party secured seven seats — 4 wards in Jamnagar and three in Maktampur, the results declared on Tuesday showed.

The All India Majlis Ittehad ul Muslimine has entered the election fray in Gujarat in alliance with the

## MIM wins 7 seats in Guj civic polls

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

Bharatiya Tribal Party of Chhotubhai Vasava. The BJP swept the polls while the AAP came second, edging out the Congress.

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi was enthused at the success of his party in the civic polls. He was quick to claim that the AIMIM will emerge as a new political force in Gujarat by drawing in the "deprived communities".

Addressing an election meeting in Modasa in Gujarat, Owaisi said that dur-

ing the last 65 years, Muslims were made political slaves and forced to bear the burden of upholding secularism. At the same time, he said, they were refrained from having their due share in power. Though Muslims were asked to promote secularism, fact remained that not a single Muslim was elected from Gujarat during the last 35 years, he said.

Owaisi alleged that the Congress party has all along exploited the Mus-

## SHORT TAKES

## BRITISH DEPUTY COMMISSION HAILS ENERGY SCHEMES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

The British Deputy High Commissions of Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad jointly organised the first South India Energy Conclave on Tuesday bringing together corporates, industry experts and senior government officials from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.

The event was organised to celebrate the leadership of south Indian states in scaling up clean energy, committing to climate action and understanding the opportunities and challenges around climate action to prepare for a successful COP26 summit later this year.

British Deputy High Commissioner to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Andrew Fleming, said, "it is highly commendable that businesses in India are increasingly aligning with Paris climate goals by getting more proactive in deploying low-carbon initiatives."

Srikanth Nagulapalli IAS, Principal Secretary – Energy, Government of Andhra Pradesh and Sandeep Kumar Sultania IAS, Principal Secretary – Energy, Government of Telangana participated in a panel discussion on clean energy transition. They outlined the measures and commitments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana respectively in promoting clean energy in their states.

**THE EVENT** was organised to celebrate the leadership of south Indian states in scaling up clean energy, committing to climate action and understanding the opportunities and challenges around climate action to prepare for a successful COP26 summit later this year.

# AP returns SEZ land to farmers

Farmers refer CM Jagan as a 'saviour'

VADREVU SRINIVAS | DC  
KAKINADA, FEB. 23

● **SAMITHI LEADER**  
Bavisetti Narayana Swamy alias Pedakapu said the announcement has come on the auspicious "Bhishma Ekadasi" day. "People of the area will be worshipping Jagan as a saviour," he stated.

Jagan Mohan Reddy and Thondangi mandal in East Godavari district.

During his padayatra when he was the opposition leader, Jagan had visited the KSEZ area and promised to sort out the issue. "The Chief Minister has fulfilled his promise and proved his credibility," said KSEZ Vyathireka Porata Samithi convener Chinta

Suryanarayana Murthy. He thanked Kakinada MP Vanga Gita, Tuni MLA Dadisetti Raja, Pithapuram MLA Pendem Dorababu and others who fully supported farmers on the issue. Samithi leader Bavisetti Narayana Swamy alias Pedakapu said the announcement has come on the auspicious "Bhishma Ekadasi" day. "People of the area will be worshipping Jagan as a saviour," he stated.

## Give equal power to women in Parliament, urges Naidu

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

Vice-president M. Venkaiah Naidu releases postage stamp of Eashwari Bai on Tuesday. — DC

Vice-president M. Venkaiah Naidu on Tuesday Naidu called for ending low representation to women in Parliament and legislatures and called upon all political parties to reach a consensus on providing reservation to them.

Speaking after releasing a commemorative postage stamp on former MLA, educationist, and social reformer J. Eashwari Bai at a special ceremony here, Naidu said though the 17th Lok Sabha has the highest number of 78 women members, they account

only for 14 per cent of the total number.

Naidu, recalling Eashwari Bai's services, said she was the voice of the people as an opposi-

## LACTATION KIOSK SET UP AT SEC'BAD STATION

SANJAY SAMUEL  
PAULI DC  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

South Central Railway (SCR) has set up a lactation kiosk at the Secunderabad Railway Station for convenience of nursing mothers.

Secunderabad divisional railway manager (DRM) Abhay Kumar Gupta, along with members of Rotary Club of Hyderabad, inaugurated the baby feeding kiosk on platform No. 10, which is the busiest at the station.

Cubicles at the kiosk provide nursing mothers privacy for breast-feeding their kids.

The DRM also inaugurated a Pochampally weavers handloom stall on platform number 1. The stall will not only promote the handloom sector but also save time for shoppers seeking handloom products. This initiative will enhance business opportunities for small traders as well.

Abhay Kumar Gupta said, "Railways is always in the forefront of providing amenities and facilities for rail users. Setting up lactation kiosks is one such initiative". He maintained that maternal and childcare is one of the focus areas of passenger amenities. "Railways are planning to set up more such kiosks at important railway stations across Hyderabad and Vijayawada divisions," he added.

● **THE DRM** also inaugurated a Pochampally weavers handloom stall on platform number 1. The stall will not only promote the handloom sector but also save time for shoppers seeking handloom products.

# Lorry driver arrested for culpable homicide

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23

said the police. "As usual, the couple was heading home after work on foot at around 11:45 pm when they met with the accident near Shivalayam," said the police.

The driver of the lorry, bearing the number TS 08 UE 0346, was identified as K. Narsimha, 59, was caught by the Alwal Police and his BAC was noted to be 165mg/100 ml.

Naramisha was driving the lorry in a reckless manner at a high speed under the influence of alcohol at a curve where

the couple were walking. He lost control and toppled the vehicle on to the left side on the road and crashed on the couple, killing them on the spot.

"Based on the confessional statement of the accused driver, it was revealed that he has been regularly consuming alcohol and the same was known to the owner of the vehicle, Mallesh. As he was negligent, he is being named as the second accused in the case," added the police.

## Centre to unveil app for passports

SAMPAT G.  
SAMRITAN | DC  
VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 23

pass certificate, PAN Card and any other proof of residence like driving licence, and show them to the passport authorities on their DigiLocker app for verification.

As DigiLocker-issued documents are at par with original documents as per IT Act, 2000, the authorities will only download such documents on the app, verify them and issue the clearance for issue or renewal of passport.

Of late, several Class X educational boards are issuing soft copies of pass certificates to the students so that they can show a soft copy of their Class X pass certificate for verification at passport offices.

Once the passport authorities issue new passport or renew the old one, those who got it can upload the soft copy on DigiLocker, similar to online storage of other documents, and keep it ready for verification on their mobile app and avoid carrying the hard copy.

## AP TO PASS RESOLUTION AGAINST RINL PRIVATISATION

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB. 23

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet on Tuesday decided to pass a resolution in the state Assembly against privatisation of the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. The resolution will be introduced in the budget session of the Assembly after the municipal elections.

Minister for transport and information, Perni Venkataramaiah Nani said in his media briefing after the cabinet meeting that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy visited Visakhapatnam and held lengthy discussions with trade union representatives and mass organisations on the privatisation move.

Jagan told them that he had already written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to explore alternatives.



# Gunupati Harischandra Reddy

Chairman

GreenPark Hotels and Resorts Pvt Ltd

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# DECCAN Chronicle

24 FEBRUARY 2021

## Puducherry: Democracy on backfoot, hold polls on time

The V. Narayanasamy-led Congress government lost a trust vote in Puducherry paving the way for an alternative mode of governance till the elections in April-May. Those wishing to bring down an elected government have succeeded in their efforts at demolishing democratic functioning backed by the will of the people as reflected from free and fair polls. The southern Union Territory is just another regime which in being brought down fulfills the "Congress mukti" aims of the national ruling party. The indecent hurry shown in dismantling the regime even at the cost of sacrificing a faithful "lieutenant" in Kiran Bedi has been linked to the Prime Minister's visit to Puducherry on February 25 to inaugurate a renovated landmark. The machinations were complete once the Speaker was convinced into falling line with a Supreme Court order investing three nominated MLAs with the vote on such matters as the Budget and trust vote.

The Puducherry imbroglio follows the classic pattern of destabilisation of regimes not owing allegiance to the ruling dispensation at the Centre. It began with Arunachal Pradesh and swept through Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh and is another milestone for the BJP as it sought more footholds in the south while denying the Congress any share in power in a vast region.

An emaciated Congress had not been politically smart enough to nominate three MLAs to the UT in time and now suffers the fate of ruling only in Punjab, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, besides backing the Shiva Sena and NCP government in Maharashtra. The laidback manner of political operations in the grand old party played into the hands of a manoeuvring BJP, so brazen in its use of the office of governors and lieutenant governors in throttling the functioning of governments.

The Puducherry question should help bring the focus back to whether nominated members of Parliament and legislatures can be allowed to vote. The Speaker's decision to abide by a Supreme Court judgment may have helped avert an awkward confrontation with the higher judiciary. Whether this only places a crown on the supremacy of the judiciary in present-day India is moot and needs a lot more debating on the delineation of powers among three pillars in a democracy. The Puducherry Speaker's action can be questioned as to due procedure not followed in the trust vote though the chief minister and his alliance MLAs walking out before the confidence motion may only have helped him arrive at his own conclusion within the sweeping ambit of a Speaker's power in the House.

The hunger for power driving toppling games is as old as the hills in India and may have evolved from ancient palace intrigues. This does not absolve those who continue to bring down governments through the clever strategy of resignations when anti-defection laws are in place. This is not a good advertisement for a democracy that mandates honouring of popular verdicts in a modern setting. It remains to be seen if Puducherry is in for a spell of President's Rule but the aim should be to give an immediate opportunity for the people to vote again and it is incumbent on the forces that be to support the case for elections to be held in Puducherry as slated.

## Judiciary's late intervention

The order of Bombay high court on Monday granting bail to poet Varavara Rao, an accused under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in the Bhima-Koregaon violence case, is a welcome intervention by the judiciary to stop state agencies from using stringent special laws to keep citizens behind bars as undertrials forever. Given his age and health condition, "sending him back to Taloja central prison would amount to endangering his life, thereby violating his fundamental right under Article 21", the court held, and said it could not be a "mute spectator" as Mr Rao's health deteriorated in government facilities.

While granting him bail, the court also widened the scope of the writ jurisdiction of the high court under Article 226 of the Constitution to invoke Article 21 on the right to life and offer relief to people who face the stringent sections in special laws, which make it difficult even for the courts to grant relief.

In a similar case earlier this month, the Supreme Court held that statutory restrictions should not stop constitutional courts from granting bail on grounds of violation of Part III of the Constitution. It had also asked the constitutional courts to consider the inordinate delay in the start of the trial while considering bail petitions. "Such an approach would safeguard against the possibility of provisions like Section 43-D (5) of UAPA being used as the sole metric for denial of bail or for wholesale breach of constitutional right to speedy trial," it said.

These two orders together send a message to the law enforcement and investigating agencies that they have to use their professional excellence to get people convicted of crimes and keep them in jail instead of using provisions in special laws to do so. The courts' resolute interventions also offer a ray of hope to hundreds of undertrial prisoners languishing in our jails due to the delay in the legal system.

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Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu

## 'Takeover' of Gymkhana Club strikes fear in Lutyens' Delhi

The capital's Gymkhana Club, the 107-year-old watering hole favoured by the high and mighty of currently beleaguered Lutyens' Delhi, is back in the news. With its seemingly endless saga of mismanagement and irregularities, the Club has been in the limelight a lot, unfortunately.

The present crisis has emerged after the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) dissolved the Club's governing council and appointed M.M. Juneja, director general of the ministry of corporate affairs, as "administrator" to oversee the club's functioning even as the legal case continues. Among Mr Juneja's first actions after his appointment sent a notice to all members to clear pending dues amounting to Rs 1.2 crores!

This is the first time in the Club's history that an administrator has been appointed to run its affairs. Mr Juneja has been given the mandate to introduce "the best practices that can bring the club to the

21st-century norms".

The current imbroglio dates back four years when the ministry of corporate affairs decided to open an inquiry into the Club's management after the growing number of complaints and court cases against the Club. The petition was filed early last year at the NCLAT in which the ministry sought to take over the Club's management. It seems to have got its way, for now. Other clubs in Lutyens' Delhi are trembling now that serious action has begun. Any guesses about who's next? DKB is listening to your chatter, so send it in...

**ED ON AN EXPANSION SPREE**  
As it seeks to become nimble as well as to strengthen its reach due to growing responsibilities, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) is on an expansion spree. This requires more officers for new zonal and sub-zonal offices.

The agency, a part of the revenue department of the Union finance ministry, is responsible for enfor-

cing economic laws and fighting economic crime. But with a wider jurisdiction now with new responsibilities under the FEMA, PMLA and FEO acts, it will need to expand its footprint.

According to sources, the expansion will involve a considerable restructuring of its cadre strength. At present, ED has a sanctioned strength of 2,064 posts including five special directors and 27 joint directors. Since there is a shortage of officers for even the sanctioned posts, there is a greater urgency for selecting more officers to fill existing vacancies as well as for the new offices. Apparently, there is a move to create new posts of additional/joint directors and deputy directors for the new zonal and sub-zonal offices.

Recently, ED promoted 10 assistant directors as deputy directors of enforcement. They include P. Radhakrishnan, P. Vinod Kumar, P. Nandini, Rajesh Kumar, M. Nair, Shubhendu Parthi, Dipesh Mondal, Benjamin S.N. Chattair, Pad-

ma, V.G. Thomas and Krishna Jain. The agency has also recently opened two new zonal offices in Bhopal and Gurugram and raised the status of sub-zonal offices in Raipur and Bhubaneswar to zonal offices. It has also opened several sub-zonal offices across the country.

### BIHAR EX-DGP'S POLITICAL CAREER STILL AT START LINE

The political ambitions of the high-profile former DGP of Bihar Gupteshwar Pandey have been thwarted, yet again.

Though Mr Pandey waited patiently for his hoped-for induction into the NDA government, chief minister Nitish Kumar has instead appointed another former IPS officer, Sunil Kumar, as a cabinet minister in the state with the excise and prohibition portfolio, barely a few months after his retirement.

Mr Pandey shot into the headline with his comments during the furore over actor Sushant Singh's suicide. Even as the controversy

raged, Mr Pandey took voluntary retirement and joined the Janata Dal (United) Party hoping to get a party ticket. However, the ticket went to the BJP candidate under the seat-sharing agreement within the NDA.

This denied, many were certain that Mr Pandey would be inducted into the Nitish Cabinet sooner than later. But Sunil Kumar has pipped him to that. Neither has Mr Pandey been made an MLC either.

Curious, this was Mr Pandey's second attempt at a career in politics. In 2009, he had taken voluntary retirement in the hope of getting a BJP ticket, which he was denied. Luckily for him, Nitish Kumar allowed him to withdraw his resignation from the IPS and subsequently even elevated him as state police chief.

Will Mr Pandey's patient wait fructify or has he run out of options? We'll wait and see.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@Twitter.com](http://dilipthecherian@Twitter.com)

Subhani



## Afghan challenges for India & Taliban factor

Anand K. Sahay

Far &amp; Near

In the Afghanistan context, the present juncture can be characterised as the twilight hour embedding the deepest uncertainty. India cannot but be greatly concerned as it has indicated interest in being invested over the long term. It has unmistakable strategic interests in a geopolitical (and geo-economic) area that marks the junction of South Asia, West Asia and Central Asia.

India's interest has lately been underlined in spite of the unsettling political and military situation in Afghanistan, which may well permit the return of the Taliban to the seat of power in Kabul. Indeed, India's commitment to the people of Afghanistan was restated when earlier this month it signed the \$300 million Shahtoot dam project that will provide clean drinking water to the once great city of Kabul, which has fallen on hard times in recent decades.

The Taliban, a strong politico-military outfit specialising in the terrorist method, are a special product of Pakistan, manufactured to permit Islamabad to have a long-term hold over Kabul. This is widely recognised. The Taliban leadership lives in Pakistan. Whether the Taliban will continue to be under Pakistan's thumb over the long haul is a matter for the future.

Pakistan influences Afghanistan in deep, malignant ways as it has a long border with that country. Pakistan's best friend, China, now militarily and economically very powerful, also has a border with Afghanistan. India, on the other hand, does not, and is thus disadvantaged by geography.

And yet, it must remain engaged with Afghanistan. Whether the Taliban's recapture

groups may strike deals with the Taliban.

All eyes are on the new US administration of President Joe Biden. Will he stick to the timetable of withdrawal of American forces envisaged by his predecessor? Or will he, as many have urged, adopt a conditions-based approach whereby the US forces will persevere with a withdrawal scheme that will be guided by conditions on the ground and not by an artificial timetable.

The Afghans, and the regional powers, are naturally watching the situation closely. Iran and Russia, which carry considerable weight in Afghanistan, would want the Americans to withdraw soonest, but not in a rush. They fear that a hasty US pullout will inexorably pave the path for a quick Taliban or Pakistan takeover as other leading political and armed factions (over which Iran and Russia have natural leverage) will be disadvantaged if the Taliban cut through militarily, pre-empting a political process.

Kabul has not had an ambassador in New Delhi for more than two years and it fell to this young diplomat to fill a big gap. It is this spirit that saw in the recent period the arrival in New Delhi of senior Afghan personalities such as Abdul Rashid Dostum and Ata Mohammad Noor and others although the Covid-19 pandemic inhibited travel. The building of a viable consensus among the top political figures of Afghanistan is crucial in the context of a post-US Afghanistan.

India enjoys the goodwill to be a catalyst. But will it play that part? Zamir Kabulov, the Russian President's special envoy for Afghanistan and a respected Kabul hand, is said to have noted wryly: "If India wants to come to the party, it must dance!"

## LETTERS

### OIL FROM IRAN

With a thaw in the US-Iran relations in the foreseeable future, India should grab the opportunity to buy crude oil from Iran which comes at a cheaper price than from Saudi Arabia. This move could bring down the ever-increasing petrol/diesel prices in the country. It could also explore possibilities of buying oil from Venezuela as the Biden's government may lift sanctions imposed on them too.

R.J. Janardhana Rao  
Hyderabad

### LAUGHTER RIOT

'Running on laughter' has given me a good laugh (DC, Feb. 23). After seeing how people are reacting due to increase in petrol price that has pinched every section of the people, a ground reality, I also prefer that cycling is the best in many ways.

D. Manoj Kumar  
Secunderabad

### CHECK DOG MENACE

There are several stray dogs wandering around the piled-up garbage in the lanes and bylanes of Nimboliadda, Kacheguda Station and Barkatpura. Despite complaints no action has been taken so far to clean garbage and to catch the stray dogs. I request Mayor Gadwal Vijayalaxmi and Dy Mayor Sripathi Reddy to take action immediately.

Om Vishal Raj  
Hyderabad

### 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

### Separation will be suicidal for Telangana: CM

HYDERABAD, February 23

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K. Brahmamana Reddy today warned that if the demand for separate Telangana was conceded, it might end up in violence and bloodshed as in West Bengal because of frustration among the people.

Addressing separately the meetings of Congress (R) Advocates' Forum and National Union of Students, he said the avenues and opportunities for employment would be far less in a small State than in a bigger one and consequently there would be greater frustration leading to unpleasant situations. The division of the State might lead to the demands for further division of the region. This course would not solve the problem, he added.

## SHORT TAKES

## U'KHAND: 136 MISSING PEOPLE 'PRESUMED DEAD'

Dehradun, Feb. 23: The Uttarakhand government has issued a notification authorising 136 people still missing after the flash flood in Chamoli district over two weeks ago to be declared "presumed dead".

Sixty-eight bodies have so far been recovered after the February 7 disaster. There is a tunnel in which around 35 people are suspected to have been trapped, but rescuers have not been able to reach it till now due to the sludge. Authorities say clearing the debris from the tunnel could take months.

A glacial lake was formed upstream of Tapovan over Rishiganga following the devastating flash flood which had demolished a 13.2 MW hydel project along the river besides causing extensive damage to the NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project along Dhauliganga.

Uttarakhand health secretary Amit Singh Negi said on Tuesday that the presumption of death can be made by officials in the affected district only in case of missing people who in all likelihood have died in the disaster but their bodies have not been found.

Normally the missing are declared dead only when they are not traced for seven years after the incident responsible for their disappearance but in case of an extraordinary occurrence like the one witnessed in Uttarakhand special provisions can be made, he said.

The move to declare those who continue to be missing in the flash flood as presumed dead has been initiated to expedite the process of distribution of compensation among the affected families, he said.

## SIX KILLED WHILE DISPOSING GELATIN STICKS IN K'TAKA

Bengaluru/Chikkaballapur, Feb. 23: Six people were killed when the gelatin sticks they were trying to dispose of clandestinely exploded accidentally at a stone quarry site in a village in Chikkaballapur early Tuesday, police said.

The government has ordered a CID probe into the blast. Police said preliminary investigation indicated use of petroleum gel and Ammonium Nitrate in the quarry that was operating clandestinely and was closed few days ago following raids.

The incident comes close on the heels of a similar blast at a quarry site in Yediyurappa's hometown of Shivamogga on January 22, which left six dead. Karnataka health minister K. Sudhakar, who represents the Chikkaballapur constituency, visited the spot and said the bodies of the victims were badly mutilated and scattered all over the place. Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted his condolences to the families of the victims of the blast.

"Pained by the loss of lives due to a mishap at Chikkaballapur in Karnataka. Condolences to the bereaved families. Praying that the injured recover quickly," he said.

Expressing shock over the incident, Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa said he has ordered a thorough investigation into the case and directed the officials to take stringent action against the guilty.

"A high-level investigation into the incident is underway and stringent action will be taken against the guilty," he added. "Whoever is involved in illegal activities, we will take merciless action," he said.

Karnataka home minister Basavaraj Bommai ordered a CID inquiry into the blast after visiting the spot.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee along with the daughter of TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee Azania Banerjee, at his residence in Kolkata on Tuesday. — PTI

## Didi visits kin to boost confidence before CBI grills nephew's wife

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, FEB. 23

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday morning met her MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee and his family apparently to boost their confidence minutes before the Central Bureau of Investigation reached their palatial residence in South Kolkata and questioned Abhishek's wife Rujira Banerjee Narula for her suspected links to overseas financial transactions in the coal smuggling case.

At around 11.30 am, a worried Trinamool Congress supremo, on her way to the state secretariat Nabanna in a convoy from her Harish Chatterjee Street residence in the vicinity, dropped at Shantiniketan on 188A Harish Mukherjee Road, which was already turned by the Kolkata Police personnel

● A 10-MEMBER CBI team including two legal officers and a female officer among others reached the same address within five minutes.

into a fortress, after learning that a CBI team would arrive at the same address anytime to quiz Narula.

Walking into the multi-storeyed apartment, Banerjee paid a surprise visit to Abhishek, his wife and others and also spoke to them. In less than ten minutes, she however walked out of the building with Abhishek's little daughter. Boarding her car, the CM left for Nabanna while her grand niece was taken inside.

A 10-member CBI team including two legal officers and a female officer among others from the anti corruption branch reached the same address within five minutes. They grilled Narula over the next one hour and a half

about her link to Anup Majhi alias Lala, the absconding kingpin of the coal smuggling case, who allegedly used to deposit around ₹36 lakh monthly to the Kasikorn Bank account at Bangkok in Thailand and another bank in London, according to sources.

The CBI also wanted to know from her about her job profile, foreign tours and its purpose, details of her bank accounts, whether she holds more than one passport and its purpose and if she is associated with any registered company, sources claimed.

After recording Narula's statement, the CBI investigators left.

In the afternoon sources close to the CM nephew claimed, "all questions were replied. All sort of cooperation was extended. The questioning session completed smoothly."

Slamming the CM for her visit to her nephew's house ahead of CBI's

arrival, BJP spokesperson Shameek Bhattacharya claimed, "Common people understand it well that the CBI does not enter someone's residence to unleash political vendetta. In such a situation, the CM's presence is unexpected. It was an attempt to create a mental pressure on the CBI. Had she refrained from paying the visit, it would have been better for her as the CM."

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh, however, alleged that the BJP has been trying to politicise the issue. "Abhishek has been on the forefront boldly. First he himself tweeted the CBI notice to his wife. Now Rujira also cooperated with the CBI. However, there are many others with allegations of corruption against them who are in the BJP. Still no action is taken against them. Rather those who are out of BJP, are being targeted unnecessarily," he said.

## ICMR: Strains not linked to surge in Covid cases

Punjab orders new restrictions on indoor, outdoor gatherings

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 23

Union health ministry officials have said that two mutated variant of SARS-CoV-2 — N440K and E484Q — have been detected in Maharashtra and Kerala but there is no direct relation between the recent surge in Covid-19 cases in these states and some others with the mutant virus strains.

Maharashtra and Kerala account for 75 per cent of total active Covid-19 cases in the country.

Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Gujarat are some other states that are also witnessing a surge in Kerala to Karnataka.

In a letter to Modi, the Chief Minister said that the people and vehicles from Kerala were being blocked at the interstate check posts along areas bordering Karnataka in the name of Covid restrictions. Even vehicles bringing in essential commodities were being blocked.

Besides, people have also been detected with the South African and Brazilian strains of SARS-CoV-2 in India apart from the mutated UK variant.

Director General of ICMR, Dr Balram Bhargava, said that these two virus strains — N440K and E484Q — have been detected in other countries too and are not specific to India.

Moreover, they have been found earlier in some states in India.

The E484Q strain was earlier detected in four sequences in Maharashtra as early as March and July 2020.

The N440K mutation has been reported on 13 different occasions between May and September 2020 in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Assam.

"The current upsurge in Maharashtra cannot be attributed to the currently discussed point mutations," Dr Bhargava said.

The spike in Coronavirus numbers in some states comes as 240 new strains of the virus have emerged across the country. Health ministry sources said that between 800 and 900 samples — from Maharashtra and Kerala — had been sent for genome sequencing in the past month. Samples for genome sequencing — to understand the complete genetics of the virus — have also been sought from Punjab and Bengaluru, where, in the past few days alone, two apartment complexes have been declared

## Kerala CM writes to PM over virus curbs

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB. 23

● CM SAID that the people and vehicles from Kerala were being blocked at the interstate check posts along areas bordering Karnataka in the name of Covid restrictions. Even vehicles bringing in essential commodities were being blocked.

travel. The workers took out processions towards the Talapady interstate border and blocked vehicles coming from Karnataka. They demanded that the restrictions which warrant mandatory Covid negative test reports for entering Karnataka should be lifted completely.

Though the Karnataka government had put the restrictions on hold for two days, political parties in Kasargod are demanding a complete roll back. The ensuing Assembly elections has also aggravated the situation.

With the BJP having a sizeable presence in areas in Kasargod bordering Karnataka, parties like the CPM, Congress and Muslim League have turned the Karnataka officials that if the restrictions continued it would adversely affect the party's electoral prospects in the coming polls.

It is learnt that the Kasargod district BJP president has conveyed to the Karnataka officials that if the restrictions continued it would adversely affect the party's electoral prospects in the coming polls.

contamination zones and sealed. So far genome sequencing of nearly 6,000 samples have been completed.

Amid a spike in Coronavirus cases, a meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Tuesday to review the pandemic situation.

Union home minister Amit Shah held a meeting and

directed multiple central agencies to monitor the situation on a daily basis in states where Covid-19 cases have started increasing again. India on Monday had 10,584 fresh cases and 78 deaths.

Meanwhile, the Punjab government on Tuesday ordered curbs on indoor and outdoor gatherings from March 1 and authorised Deputy

Commissioners to impose night curfew in Covid-19 hotspots in their districts, if needed.

The move comes amid a growing concern over an upswing in the number of Coronavirus cases in the state.

Chairing a virtual meeting to review the Coronavirus situation, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh ordered restrictions on gathering of people from March 1, with 100 people allowed indoors and 200 people allowed to gather outdoors, according to a government statement.

He also directed that wearing of face masks and social distancing norms be strictly enforced, with testing to be ramped to 30,000 a day, it said.

Health officials said presently 200 people were allowed to gather indoors and 500 people outdoors, while 20,000 to 22,000 tests are conducted every day.

Chief secretary Vinni Mahajan ruled out closure of government schools again and said the department is taking all steps to ensure the safety of students.

Amarinder Singh authorised deputy commissioners to impose night curfew in hotspots in their districts, if needed, with a micro-containment strategy to be adopted.

He also directed the police force to ensure strict enforcement of wearing masks.

There will be monitoring of adherence to Covid-19 norms at all restaurants and marriage palaces and the Department of Excise and Taxation will be the nodal agency for it.

The Chief Minister said a decision on reducing occupancy in cinema halls will be taken after March 1.

Private offices and restaurants shall be encouraged to display the last tests done for all employees, he added.

Punjab is among the five states that have been asked by the Centre to refocus on strict surveillance, containment and RT-PCR testing to check the growing number of cases. The other four states are Maharashtra, Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.



Narendra Modi

GUJ CIVIC POLLS:  
MODI TERMS  
RESULTS 'SPECIAL'

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WITH AGENCY INPUTS

NEW

DELHI/COLOMBO,  
FEB. 23

New Delhi, Feb. 23:

With the BJP set to retain power in six Gujarat municipal corporations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday termed the results "very special" and said that for a party serving a state for over two decades to record such a phenomenal win is noteworthy.

He said the results of municipal elections clearly show the unwavering faith people have in politics of development and good governance.

The BJP appeared on course to retain power in the six municipal corporations, winning 409 of the 474 seats where results were declared till evening.

"Thank you Gujarat! Results of municipal elections across the state clearly show the unwavering faith people have towards politics of development and good governance," Modi said in a series of tweets.

"Grateful to the people of the state for trusting BJP yet again. Always an honour to serve Gujarat," he said. Modi also hailed the efforts of Gujarat BJP workers who reached out to people with the party's vision for the state.

It is said the Parliament speech, due on February 24, was included in Khan's itinerary at the Pakistan government's request.

same. The aircraft reached Colombo from Islamabad on Tuesday evening and flew over the waters of India's Exclusive Economic Zone or in its vicinity on the flight path parallel to the peninsular Indian coastline, sources said.

Khan, who will hold wide-ranging talks with Sri Lankan leaders including President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and PM Mahinda Rajapaksa on issues like trade, defence and technology, is the first government head to visit Sri Lanka since the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is his first visit to Sri Lanka after assuming office in 2018. His last visit to Sri Lanka was in 1986 when he was the captain of Pakistan's cricket team during the acrimonious Test series where he accused the local umpires of bias.

Ahead of his visit, the Sri Lankan government cancelled Khan's planned speech to Parliament, citing the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is said the Parliament speech, due on February 24, was included in Khan's itinerary at the Pakistan government's request.

## STATE BANK OF INDIA

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[Under Rule 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of State Bank of India, the secured creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 12.03.2021, for recovery of Rs. 73,84,975.46/Rupees. Nine crores Seventy three lakhs Forty four thousand Nine hundred seventy five and paise forty six only plus interest from 18.08.2017 at the contractual rate and incidental charges, due to the secured creditor (State Bank of India) from Borrower Mis Triumph Wires Pvt. Ltd., H.No.2-137 to 154, Flat No. 306, 3rd Floor, Minerva Complex, Secunderabad - 500013, and Guarantor's (1) Shri. Hitesh R Jain, S/o Sri Ramesh O Jain, (2) Shri. Ramesh Kumar Oramal Jain, Both Address: H.No.2-3421, F.O.B-303, Sri Sai Residence, Gayend Bagh Colony, Nallagutta Minerva Complex, Secunderabad - 500003.

The reserve price will be Rs. 8,50,00,00/- (Rupees Eight Crores Fifty lakhs only) and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 85,00,00/- (Eighty Five lakhs only).

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

All that land with sheds bearing No 7 & 9, ad-measuring 3368 Sq.yds out of 17000 Sq.yds (with plinth area 19,933 Sq.yds) i.e. Shed No 7 area 9.35 Sq.Ft and Shed No 9 area 10,581 Sq.Ft, in Sy. No. 133, situated at Seetharampur, New Bowenpally, Secunderabad, Contonment, Telangana - 500011 covered by Registered Document No.3598/2014 dated 15.12.2014 & a rectification deed bearing document No.117/2015 dated 13.01.2015 registered at Joint Subregister, Hyderabad (RO) and bounded by: North: 05' 0" wide passage, South: 25' 0" wide road and vendors Property East: 10' 0" wide passage and Vendors Property: \*\* West: 03' 0" wide Passage and South: 10' 0" wide road and vendors Property.

Reserve Price: Rs. 8,50,00,00/-, EMD: Rs. 85,00,00/-, Auction Time: 01:00 P.M to 02.00 P.M

\*\*\*Note: The property is being auctioned on "as is where is, as is what is and whatever there is" basis. Description of the property is given as per the title deeds deposited with the bank. However, when the bank attempted sale, on earlier occasion, the immediate neighbor on the eastern side filed a writ petition claiming 25 feet road on the eastern side of the property, whereas, the documents deposited indicate only 10 feet passage.

The said writ Petition No. 4008/2020 before the Hon'ble High Court at Hyderabad was closed as infructuous in view of no sale. If the passage is declared as a 25 feet one, the extent of plot area would be reduced accordingly. Therefore, the intending bidders are advised to take note of the said dispute and only after examining the property in all respects, they may participate in the auction. The Bank shall not entertain any grievance or claim in respect of total extent of area, passage width and other issues and the bidders shall only be responsible for sorting out all the issues."

Date of E-Auction: 12.03.2021



COMING THIS 26TH

**SHANTI** 70MM NARAYANAGUDA (FULLY RENOVATED)**SANDHYA** 70MM RTC X ROADS**BRAMARAMBA** 70MM**ARJUN** 70MM **KONARK** 70MM**MUKTA** 35-ABIDS **RAMAKRISHNA** 35-ABIDS**VENIKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI**  
INDRA KACHIGUDA**LAXMIKALACINEPRIDE****AMB** AMB-GACHIBOWLI

Sivaganga | mcube mall

Gpr mall | Radhika

Cinesquare-Uppal

Forum mall | inorbit mall  
Icon | Galleria | Preston mall  
Central | Irrummanzil | RK plex  
MusarambaghINOX LIVE THE MOVIE  
Prasad's Multiplex Laxmikala Cinepride  
Cinépolis CcpI | Dsl | Sudha Mantra Mall  
Chandanagar | Geetha Dilshuknagar  
PLATINUM ASIAN CINEPLEX Mousapet  
TIVOLI EXTREME GEETHA FILM DISTRIBUTORS RELEASE**Vijetha** 70mm **Vyjayanthi** 70mm  
Borabanda Nacharam**Super** 70mm **BR Hitech** 70mm  
Balapur Madhapur Amba 70mm  
Mehdipatnam**Sreerama** Complex **Jyothi** 70mm  
Amarpet R.C.Puram**Sampoorna** 70mm **Rajyalaxmi** 70mm  
Vanastalipuram Uppal**Talluri** 70mm **METRO** 70mm  
Eci x roads Bahadurpura Alankar 70  
Lungerhouse**Bhujiang** **Kumar** 70mm **Sairanga** 70  
Jeedimetla Kachiguda Miyapur**Vimal** 70mm **VLS Sridevi** 70mm  
Balanagar Chilakalguda**Ramakrishna** 70mm **Sreeprema** 70mm  
Abids-1 Show only Tukkuguda**Krishna** 70mm **Sivaranjani** 70mm  
Aliyabed Isnapur**Jyothi** 70mm **Sivasakthi** 70mm  
IDA Bollaram Kapra**Mahalaxmi** 70mm **Sangeeth** 70mm  
Kothapeta R.C.Puram**Narthaki** 70mm **Sreeramulu** 70mm  
Alwal Moosapet**Yadagiri** 70 **Saipoja** 70 **Priya** 70mm  
Santosh nagar Sooraram Mallepally**Srinivasa** 70mm **Sensation** Complex  
Uppal Kairatabad**Krishna** 70mm **Santosh** 70mm  
Nagaram Ibrahimpatnam**Mukund** 70mm **Laxmi** 70mm  
Medchal Shamshabad**Manikanta** 70mm **Venkateswara** 70mm  
Chevella Gummadihdha

Karthikeya exhibitors release

# Former security officials to answer for Capitol attack

## Relationship with China is one of strong contest: WH

Washington, Feb. 23: Congress is set to hear from former US Capitol security officials for the first time about the massive law enforcement failures on Jan. 6, the day a violent mob laid siege to the building and interrupted the presidential electoral count.

Three of the four scheduled to testify Tuesday before two Senate committees resigned under pressure immediately after the deadly attack, including the former head of the Capitol Police. Much remains unknown about what happened before and during the assault, and lawmakers are expected to aggressively question the former officials about what went wrong.

How much did law enforcement agencies know about plans for violence that day, many of which were public?

— AP

Washington, Feb. 23: America's relationship with China is one of "strong competition" and the Biden administration will work in close coordination with partners and allies to make sure that it is coming from a position of strength, the White House has said, a day after Beijing urged the US to stop interfering in its internal affairs and lift trade sanctions.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki made the comments on Monday while responding to a question on a statement made by Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the China-US ties. Wang said that the US should stop "smearing" the ruling Communist Party of China

and its one-party political system, lift sanctions on trade and halt Washington's backing of "separatist forces" in Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong and Xinjiang. He also said that the Biden administration should "adjust" the hardline policy pursued by former President Donald Trump towards Beijing to check its growing influence.

At the White House briefing, Psaki said, "there is, of course, a review of our tariffs and the tariffs that were put in place. I don't have any update on that at this point in time." "We believe the relationship with China is one of strong competition. We want to come to that relationship from a position of strength.

"That means working in

close coordination with our partners and allies around the world: Europeans, other partners in the region, also with Democrats and Republicans in Congress. And it also means we want to do work at home, and focus on doing work at home, to make sure we are coming to this from a position of strength," Psaki said.

The relations between China and the US are at an all time low. The two countries are currently engaged in a bitter confrontation over various issues, including trade, the origins of the novel Coronavirus pandemic, the communist giant's aggressive military moves in the disputed South China Sea and human rights.

— PTI

## Sex assault: Jail for Queen's kin

London, Feb. 23: A relative of Queen Elizabeth II was on Tuesday sentenced to a 10-month prison term for sexually assaulting a woman at his ancestral home in Angus, Scotland. Earl of Strathmore Simon Bowes-Lyon, who is the son of a cousin of the 94-year-old British monarch, was found to have forced his way into the sleeping woman's room during an event he was hosting at Glamis Castle. The 34-year-old was sentenced at Dundee Sheriff Court after he had pleaded guilty.

"Wellbeing," said Sheriff Carmichael. Last month, Bowes-Lyon apologised for his actions after entering his guilty plea, saying he felt "greatly ashamed" for causing "such distress to a guest in my home". He said he had "drunk to excess" on the night of the assault, although he noted that this was "no excuse" for what transpired. "I did not think I was capable of behaving the way I did but have had to face up to it and take responsibility," he said outside the court.

"Over the last year this has involved seeking and receiving professional help as well as agreeing to plead guilty as quickly as possible. My apologies go, above all, to the woman concerned but I would also like to apologise to family, friends and colleagues for the distress I have caused them," he said.

— PTI

## Bomb plots: 9 women held

### NEPAL: HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REINSTATED

Kathmandu, Feb. 23: Nepal's Supreme Court on Tuesday reinstated the dissolved House of Representatives, in a major setback to embattled Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli who was preparing for snap polls amidst a tussle for power with his rivals in the ruling communist party.

bomb parts, including batteries, detonating cords, suspected explosive powder and oil, an iron pipe and nails, along with a grenade, cellphones, backpacks and a sketch of a suspected targeted bombing area.

The women were captured Friday in raids on houses in three towns in the predominantly Muslim province of Sulu, said Lt. Gen. Corleto Vinluan, Jr., who heads the military's Western Mindanao Command. The southern province is the stronghold of Abu Sayyaf, which is known for ransom kidnappings, beheadings and bombings. Troops also seized

— We are always ready to welcome those who wish to return to the folds of the law but if you will refuse to do so, we will surely hunt you down and prevent you from inflicting havoc in the communities," said Maj. Gen. William Gonzales, who heads government forces in Sulu. "May this serve as a clear message to the supporters and remaining members of the Abu Sayyaf," Gonzales said. — AP

## Biden: 5L toll heartbreak

### AFGHAN PEACE TALKS RESUME IN QATAR

Islamabad, Feb. 23: After more than a month of delays, escalating violence and a flurry of diplomatic activity, peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government have resumed in the Middle Eastern State of Qatar. Taliban spokesman Dr. Mohammad Naem tweeted on Monday night that talks had resumed.

There were no details other than the atmosphere was "cordial", a commitment that negotiations should continue and an announcement that the first item of business will be setting the agenda. When talks ended abruptly in January, both sides submitted their wish lists for agendas.

— AP

Washington, Feb. 23: The United States on Monday crossed a grim "heartbreaking milestone" in its fight against Covid-19 as the death toll due to the disease crossed 500,000, a staggering figure that is more than the combined American casualties during World War I, World War II and the Vietnam War.

"As a nation, we can't accept such a cruel fate. We've been fighting this pandemic for so long. We have to resist becoming numb to the sorrow. We have to resist viewing each life as a statistic or a blur or on the news," President Joe Biden said on Monday as he led the nation in mourning the dead.

Today we mark a truly grim, heartbreaking milestone — 500,000 dead," Biden said at a candle-lighting ceremony at the White House to mark the grim milestone. More than 28.1 million Americans have also been infected — another global record. He also participated in a moment of silence, standing by 500 lighted candles outside the White House, joined by first lady Jill Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and second gentleman Doug Emhoff.

— PTI

## Mars landing video out

Cape Canaveral (US), Feb. 23: Nasa has released the first high-quality video of a spacecraft landing on Mars, a three-minute trailer showing the enormous orange and white parachute hurtling open and the red dust kicking up as rocket engines lowered the rover to the surface.

The quality was so good — and the images so breathtaking — that members of the rover team said they felt like they were riding along.

"It gives me goosebumps every time I see it, just amazing," said Dave Gruel, head of the entry and descent camera team. The Perseverance rover landed last Thursday near an ancient river delta in Jezero Crater to search for signs of ancient microscopic life. After spending the weekend binge-watching the descent and landing video, the team at Jet

Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, shared the video at a news conference on Monday.

"These videos and these images are the stuff of our dreams," said Al Chen, who was in charge of the landing team. Six off-the-shelf cameras were devoted to entry, descent and landing, looking up and down from different perspectives. All but one camera worked. The lone microphone turned on for landing failed, but

Nasa got some snippets of sound after touchdown: The whirring of the rover's systems and wind gusts. Flight controllers were thrilled with the thousands of images beamed back — and also with the remarkably good condition of the rover. It will spend the next two years exploring the dry river delta and drilling into rocks that may

RELEASING ON 26th FEBRUARY



LAXMIKALA CINEPRIDE

TIVOLI EXTREME-SEC'BAD

AMB CINEMAS-GACHIBOWLI

Gvk mall | mp mall  
Gsm mall

Prasad's Multiplex Laxmikala Cinepride

ASIAN CINEMAS Sivaganga | mcube mall  
|Cinesquare-Uppal  
Gpr mall | Radhika

PVR CINEMAS Forum mall | inorbit mall  
Icon | Galleria | Preston mall  
Central | Irrummanzil | RK plex  
Musarambagh

INOX LIVE THE MOVIE Prasad's Multiplex  
Cinépolis CcpI | Dsl | Sudha Mantra Mall  
Chandanagar | Geetha Dilshuknagar  
PLATINUM ASIAN CINEPLEX Mousapet  
TIVOLI EXTREME GEETHA FILM DISTRIBUTORS RELEASE



PVR FORUM-2.10PM  
GALLERIA-4.40PM

PRASAD'S 2.45PM

INOX GSM-2.15PM  
MP MALL-1.00PM

PLATINUM 12.00 PM

AMB 4.35 PM

TIVOLI 4.50 PM

BIG Cinemas 4.25, 10.30 PM

GEETHA FILM DISTRIBUTORS RELEASE



#KSHARA

DEVI 70MM-RTC X ROADS  
(ENJOY 4K LASER & DOLBY)

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

RAJDHANI COMPLEX-DSNR

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

BRAMARAMBA 70-KUKATPALLY

11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15PM

OAMB 10.20, 11.05, 1.00, 7.35, 10.40

LAXMIKALA-11.15, 2.45, 6.15, 9.45

2.30, 5.15, 8.15, 11.00PM

INJARA VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI

11.15, 6.15PM

SIVAGANGA 2.15, 6.00PM

RGR-10.45, 1.30, 4.30, 10.25PM

CINESQUARE-10.25, 1.30, 4.40, 7.30, 10.00PM

MCUBE-10.50, 1.45, 4.40, 7.45PM

GVK-10:30, 3:45, 10:30PM

MP-10:25, 7:25, 10:50PM

GSM-12.25, 3.10, 3.50, 6.35, 7.15, 10.40

CCPL-10.30, 1.40, 7.40, 10.40PM

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**SHORT TAKES**  
**U.S. CURBS ON 2 MORE MYANMAR JUNTA LEADERS**

Washington, Feb. 23: The US on Monday announced sanctions against two more leaders of Myanmar's junta and warned of further action as hundreds of thousands defiantly rallied for the restoration of the nation's democracy. The US said it was blocking any US property and suspending the entry into the country of two members of the newly ruling State Administrative Council — General Maung Maung Kyaw, who commands the air force, and Lieutenant General Moe Myint Tun.

**ZUMA GRAFT TRIAL SET TO BEGIN IN MAY**

Johannesburg, Feb. 23: Former South African president Jacob Zuma's corruption trial is set to begin in May, more than 16 years after he was first implicated in the graft allegations. Zuma, South Africa's president from 2009 to 2018, is accused of receiving bribes from French arms manufacturer Thales. Both Zuma and Thales have refuted the charges, which include corruption, fraud, racketeering, and money laundering.

# FB to lift ban on Oz news

Firm to pay local media companies for content after deal on legislation

Sydney, Feb. 23: Facebook said Tuesday it will lift a contentious ban on Australian news and pay local media companies for content, after a last-gasp deal on pending landmark legislation. Australia's Treasurer Josh Frydenberg announced a face-saving compromise that will see Google and Facebook plunge tens of millions of dollars into the struggling local news sector.

In return the US digital firms will, for now, avoid being subjected to mandatory payments that could cost them vastly more and create what they see as an alarming global precedent.

Just hours after the compromise was unveiled, Facebook announced its first proposed deal with an Australian media company, Seven West, and was said to be pursuing commercial deals with other local news organisations.

The company is expected to use the content to launch a dedicated news product in Australia later this year. "As a result of these changes, we can now work to further our investment in public interest journalism, and restore news on

Facebook for Australians in the coming days," said Will Easton, managing director of Facebook Australia. The social media firm sparked global outrage last week by blacking out news for its Australian users in protest at the proposed legislation, and inadvertently blocking a series of non-news Facebook pages linked to everything from cancer charities to emergency response services.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison had angrily accused Facebook of making a decision to "unfriend" Australia. Google has already brokered deals worth millions of dollars with local media companies, including the two largest: Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and Nine Entertainment.

Commentators described the eleventh-hour amendments — which came as parliament looks set to pass the law this week — as "a reasonable compromise". "Everybody can walk away saying, well we got what we wanted," University of New South Wales business professor Rob Nicholls said.

Both companies now have an additional two months to reach further agreements that would stave off binding arbitration.

The social media firm sparked global outrage last week by blacking out news for its Australian users in protest at the proposed legislation, and inadvertently blocking a series of non-news Facebook pages linked to everything from cancer charities to emergency response services.

ments". "We now face the strange possibility that the news media mandatory code could be passed by parliament and it applies to precisely no one," said Marcus Strom, head of the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, a union.

"It will just sit in the Treasurer's (drawer) as a threat to misbehaving digital companies." Google was also keen to avoid creating a precedent that platforms should pay anyone for links, something that could make their flagship search engine unworkable.

Facebook — which is much less reliant on news content — had initially said being forced to pay for news was simply not worth it and shut down content. "There is no doubt that Australia has been a proxy battle for the world," said Frydenberg.

Critics of the law say it punishes innovative companies and amounts to a money grab by struggling but politically connected traditional media.

Thousands of journalism jobs and scores of news outlets have been lost in Australia alone over the past decade as the

sector watched advertising revenue flow to the digital players.

For every \$100 spent by Australian advertisers today, \$49 goes to Google and \$24 to Facebook, according to the country's competition watchdog.

Tech insiders see the legislation as driven, in particular, by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp, which dominates the local media landscape and has close ties with Australia's conservative government.

A new provision in the law gives Facebook and Google more discretion over who they do deals with, and what the sums involved would be.

"We have come to an agreement that will allow us to support the publishers we choose to, including small and local publishers," said Facebook vice president for global news partnerships Campbell Brown.

Facebook and Google could still face the prospect of having to replicate deals with media worldwide, as the European Union, Canada and other jurisdictions move to regulate the sec-

# National Spelling Bee to return in virtual format

Florida, Feb. 23: The Scripps National Spelling Bee will return this year in a mostly virtual format, with the in-person competition limited to a dozen finalists who will gather on an ESPN campus at Walt Disney World in Florida. Scripps announced Monday.

"We gave up on the idea of Bee Week early on because we knew we couldn't bring hundreds of people to one location safely," Carolyn Micheli, the bee's interim executive director, told The Associated Press ahead of the announcement.

"We came up with what I think is a pretty exciting and creative way of structuring the competition across several weeks that will be fun for the kids, build excitement, and I think it's a great way to cope with a difficult situation," she added.

The cancellation of last year's bee was a particularly cruel blow to eighth-graders who missed out on their final chance to compete after years of preparation. Top spellers routinely study obscure words, roots and language patterns for hours a day, sacrificing other activities and social life for a chance to become the national champion. Spellers are no longer eligible after they reach high school. —AP

# CINEMA

**DEVI 70MM**  
 (ENJOY 4 LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS)  
 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM  
**ARJUN 70-11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM**  
**MEGHA 70-11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15**  
**TARAKARAMA 2.15, 9.00PM**  
 OAMB AMB-10.30, 1.20, 7.15, 10.35PM  
**LAXMIKALA-11.15, 2.30, 6.30, 9.45**  
**PRASADS-10.15, 12.45, 8.30, 11.00**  
**ASIAN CINEMAS** Sivaganga-11.15, 9.30pm  
 Gpr-10.30, 1.50, 7.45PM  
 Radhika-10.30, 4.30, 10.10PM  
 Mcube-10.30, 4.30, 10.40PM  
 Cinesquare-10.30, 1.35, 4.20, 7.45, 10.10  
**INOX LIVE THE MOVIE** Gvk-10:10, 12:35, 7:20, 10:50PM  
 Mp-9:50, 4:10, 10:40PM  
 Gsm-1:00, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30PM  
**MIRAJ CINEMAS** Balanagar-11.30, 4.20, 10.30PM  
 Chandanagar-12.45, 7.00PM  
 Shalini Shivani-11.30, 4.20, 10.30PM  
 10.40, 4.50, 7.30PM  
**TIVOLI** 11.15, 4.15, 10.00PM  
**PLATINUM** 10.50, 1.15, 7.00, 11.10  
 10.20, 1.45, 7.40, 10.45PM  
**PVR** Forum-10.10, 1.15, 4.10, 7.05, 10.40PM  
 Inorbit-10.15, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30PM  
 Central-10.50, 1.45, 7.50, 10.35PM  
 RK-11.30, 8.10PM|Hitech-1.30, 4.00, 10.45PM  
 L&T-10.30, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30PM  
 Irrum Manzil-1.25, 6.50, 10.00PM  
 Moosarambagh-12.30, 6.20, 9.15PM  
 Prestone-1.30, 4.25, 9.45PM  
**MULTIPLEX BY HUL** 1.55, 7.50PM  
**AMEERPET** 4.25, 10.20PM  
**MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM**  
 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM  
**AARADHANA 70** VIMAL 70MM  
 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**VYJAYANTHI** 11.00, 9.00PM  
**SREERAMANA** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SAIPOOJA 70MM** 6.00 & 9.00PM  
**METRO 70MM** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SRIDEVICHGUDA** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**INDRAVENKATARAMA/PADMAVATHI** 11.30, 6.00PM  
**ANJALI 70** VIMAL 70MM TALLURI 70MM  
 2.00, 6.00PM 6.00, 9.00PM  
**SV CINESQUARE** 6.00, 9.00PM  
**SENSATION** 11.00, 2.00PM  
**SAMPOORN 70** BHUJANGA 70MM  
 6.00, 9.00PM  
**SIVASAKTHI 70** LAXMISHAMASHABD  
 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SIVARANJANI** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**LAXMIKALAMANDIR** 6.30, 9.30PM

**2nd WEEK**  
**SUDARSHAN 35MM** (ENJOY 4 LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS SOUND SYSTEM)  
 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM  
**OAMB** 10.55, 1.35, 1.50, 4.00, 4.45, 7.00, 7.40, 10.05, 10.35PM  
 11.45, 2.30, 5.15, 5.45, 8.00, 9.45PM  
**ASIAN CINEMAS** 11.30, 6.30  
**GVK** 10.50, 1.40, 4.35, 7.30, 10.25PM  
**RADHIKA** 10.40, 1.40, 4.40, 7.30, 10.20PM  
**SIVAGANGA** 11.00, 6.00, 9.00PM  
**MCUBE** 10.40, 1.35, 4.30, 7.25, 10.20PM  
**CINESQUARE** 10.45, 11.00, 1.40, 4.35, 7.35, 10.20, 10.35PM  
**PVR** FORUM-10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 2.25, 4.20, 5.05, 7.30, 8.00, 10.40, 11.00PM  
 MUSARAMBAGH-12.00, 3.10, 4.10, 6.20, 7.20, 10.30PM  
 GALLERIA-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 2.40, 4.40, 7.50, 10.00, 11.00PM | PRESTON-1.30, 4.40, 7.50, 11.00PM  
 ICON-12.00, 1.00, 4.10, 7.20, 10.30PM  
 CENTRAL-10.20, 11.10, 1.10, 1.30, 4.40, 7.50, 11.00PM  
 INORBIT-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 3.30, 5.40, 4.40, 7.00, 7.50, 11.00PM | RK-1.10, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 IRRUMMANZIL-12.00, 3.10, 6.20, 7.30, 9.30, 10.40PM  
**MULTIPLEX BY HUL** 1.00, 4.20, 7.45, 10.45PM  
**AMEERPET** 2.00, 9.00PM  
**MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM**  
 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM  
**AARADHANA 70** VIMAL 70MM  
 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15  
**VYJAYANTHI** 2.00 & 9.00PM  
**BR HITECH** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SV CINESQUARE** 2.00 & 9.00PM  
**INOX** GV-11:00, 1:15, 2:30, 6:00, 7:10, 9:30, 10:40PM  
 MP-11:00, 12:45, 2:50, 5:20, 7:15, 9:50PM  
 GSM-10:45, 11:30, 12:30, 13:00, 4:00, 6:30, 7:30, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00PM  
**Cinepolis** CCPL-10.00, 1.10, 4.05, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 SUDHA-10.00, 1.10, 4.05, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 MANTRA-10.00, 1.10, 3.30, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 DSL-11.30, 12.30, 13.00, 3.55, 6.30, 7.20, 10.45PM  
**MULTIPLEX BY HUL** 1.00, 4.20, 7.45, 10.45PM  
**AMEERPET** 10.45, 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.40PM  
**MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM**  
 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM  
**AARADHANA 70** VIMAL 70MM TALLURI 70MM  
 2.00, 6.00PM 6.00, 9.00PM  
**VYJAYANTHI** 11.00, 9.00PM  
**BR HITECH** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SV CINESQUARE** 2.00 & 9.00PM  
**INOX** GV-11:00, 1:15, 2:30, 6:00, 7:10, 9:30, 10:40PM  
 MP-11:00, 12:45, 2:50, 5:20, 7:15, 9:50PM  
 GSM-10:45, 11:30, 12:30, 13:00, 4:00, 6:30, 7:30, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00PM  
**Cinepolis** CCPL-10.00, 1.10, 4.05, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 SUDHA-10.00, 1.10, 4.05, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 MANTRA-10.00, 1.10, 3.30, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 DSL-11.30, 12.30, 13.00, 3.55, 6.30, 7.20, 10.45PM  
**MULTIPLEX BY HUL** 1.00, 4.20, 7.45, 10.45PM  
**AMEERPET** 10.45, 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.40PM  
**MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM**  
 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM  
**AARADHANA 70** VIMAL 70MM TALLURI 70MM  
 2.00, 6.00PM 6.00, 9.00PM  
**VYJAYANTHI** 11.00, 9.00PM  
**BR HITECH** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SV CINESQUARE** 2.00 & 9.00PM  
**INOX** GV-11:00, 1:15, 2:30, 6:00, 7:10, 9:30, 10:40PM  
 MP-11:00, 12:45, 2:50, 5:20, 7:15, 9:50PM  
 GSM-10:45, 11:30, 12:30, 13:00, 4:00, 6:30, 7:30, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00PM  
**Cinepolis** CCPL-10.00, 1.10, 4.05, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 SUDHA-10.00, 1.10, 4.05, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 MANTRA-10.00, 1.10, 3.30, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40PM  
 DSL-11.30, 12.30, 13.00, 3.55, 6.30, 7.20, 10.45PM  
**MULTIPLEX BY HUL** 1.00, 4.20, 7.45, 10.45PM  
**AMEERPET** 10.45, 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.40PM  
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**BR HITECH** 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SV CINESQUARE** 2.00 & 9.00PM  
**INOX** GV-11:00,

## quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	49,751.41
Nifty 50	14,707.80
S&P 500*	3,841.84
Dollar (₹)	72.44
Pound Sterling (₹)	101.73
Euro (₹)	88.05
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,372▲337
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	65.24
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.172
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.372
As of 8:30 PM IST	0.003

## Punjab & Sind Bk to allot ₹5,500 cr shares to govt

Punjab & Sind Bank will allot preferential shares to the government next month in lieu of Rs 5,500 crore capital infusion. An EGM of the shareholders is scheduled on March 25 in this respect, the bank said. In September, the government had approved a Rs 20,000 crore fund through Parliament for capital infusion into public sector banks. Of this, Rs 5,500 crore was approved to be infused into P&S.

## NTPC inks pact to buy Gail's 25% in Ratnagiri Gas



NTPC said it has signed a share purchase agreement to buy Gail's 25.51 per cent stake in Ratnagiri Gas and Power Pvt Ltd (RGPPPL), commonly known as Dabhol project. Once the transaction is complete, NTPC will have 86.49 per cent stake in RGPPPL. Earlier in January, NTPC had announced acquiring 35.47 per cent stake in RGPPPL from its lenders. Initially, NTPC and Gail had 25.51 per cent stake each in the Dabhol project.

## Sebi: Pre-expiry margins to curb -ve prices soon

The Sebi will put in place pre-expiry margins on cash settled contracts wherein the underlying commodities are deemed to be susceptible to possible near zero or negative prices—like that happened in crude oil futures last year. The decision, to be effective from April 1, is aimed at encouraging reduction of open interest as the contract approaches the expiry date. The margin will be applicable on some commodities under ARMF.

## Bajaj launches new Pulsar 180 priced at ₹1.08 L

Bajaj Auto has launched the new version of Pulsar 180 bike priced at Rs 1,07,904, ex-showroom Delhi. The 178.6 cc model gets sporty split seats, black alloy wheels, LED tail lamp, five-speed transmission gear box with telescopic anti-friction bush in the front suspension and a five-way adjustable nitrox shock absorber at the rear. Currently, 20 per cent of the sports biking segment is in the 180-200cc motorcycles.

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## ■ Separation could help revive stake sale to Aramco RIL to spinoff O2C unit with \$25 billion loan

DEBJIT CHAKRABORTY & ARCHANA CHAUDHARY FEB. 23

Reliance Industries Ltd has started carving out its new oil-to-chemicals (O2C) operation into an independent unit with a \$25 billion loan from the parent, as billionaire Mukesh Ambani steps up efforts to unlock the value of his businesses.

The wholly owned unit's assets will be funded by the interest-bearing loan, which will be an "efficient mechanism to upstream cash, including any potential capital receipts," in the unit, according to a presentation filed with the stock exchanges.

Oil-to-chemicals contributed more than 60 per cent in the last financial year to the group's revenue that's been lately pivoting toward consumer businesses such as technology and retail. Splitting the business will make it easier for Ambani to bring in investors and help expedite a proposed stake sale to Saudi Arabian Oil Co.

Creating the unit "facilitates participation by strategic and financial investors," Reliance said. It expects the separation to be completed by September. Approvals have been received from the markets regulator and stock exchanges, and the company will seek a nod from shareholders and creditors in the first quarter of FY22.

Ambani amassed more than \$27 billion last year from global investors, including Facebook Inc and Google through stake sales in his retail and digital ventures, turning Reliance net debt-free.

Reliance has floated separate units twice earlier for funding two refineries on the west coast. The entities were merged with the parent on the completion of the plants, which can together now process 1.4 million barrels of crude daily, making it the world's biggest refining complex.

Once the spin-off is completed, Reliance Industries will house only the upstream oil and gas exploration and production business, including the KG-D6 block, financial services, group treasury and the legacy textile businesses, and act as a holding company of the group.

The retail business is held in Reliance Retail Ventures and telecom and digital ventures are nested in Jio Platforms.

RIL holds 85.1 per cent of Reliance Retail and 67.3 per

### SLICING AND DICING VALUE

► RIL to house only upstream oil and gas E&P biz, including KG-D6 block, financial services, group treasury and legacy textile businesses

► Even though the O2C assets will move into a new arm, its debt will continue with RIL

► O2C unit houses Singapore and UK-based oil trading subsidiaries and Reliance Industries Uruguay Petroquimica SA.

► It also houses Reliance Ethane Pipeline Ltd that operates a pipeline between Dahej and Nagothane as well as a 74.9% stake RIL holds in the JV with Sibur

including Facebook Inc and Google through stake sales in his retail and digital ventures, turning Reliance net debt-free.

RIL will provide the \$25 billion loan to the O2C subsidiary at floating interest rate for 10 years. The subsidiary has about \$42 billion of assets (28 per cent of consolidated assets).

In August 2019, RIL had agreed to upstream Rs 1.08 lakh crore of Jio's debt to make its telecom venture debt-free, ahead of inducing strategic and financial investors like Facebook, Google and KKR.

As of December 2020, RIL's gross debt stood at Rs 2.57 lakh crore.

Even though the O2C assets will move into a new arm, its debt will continue to sit inside RIL.

The O2C unit also houses the firm's Singapore and the UK-based oil trading subsidiaries and marketing subsidiary, Reliance Industries Uruguay Petroquimica SA.

It also houses Reliance

cent of Jio Platforms. The rest it had sold to global investors for over Rs 2 lakh crore.

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**SHORT TAKES**


Yusuf Pathan plays in the nets during the launch of his academy in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

**Yusuf Pathan starts academy**

**Hyderabad:** Former India all-rounder Yusuf Pathan on Tuesday inaugurated the 26th centre of Cricket Academy of Pathans (CAP) here, with an aim to providing world-class coaching to budding cricketers of the city.

During the occasion, Yusuf interacted with the trainees and shared his experiences of playing cricket in Hyderabad. "The aim of Cricket Academy of Pathans is to provide world-class cricket coaching and the best-possible infrastructure to facilitate and help the budding cricketers of the country," said Yusuf, a Director of CAP.

Harmeet Vasdev, Managing Director of CAP, said they plan to launch the academy in another 25 cities by the end of the year.

CAP has partnered with PitchVision, a unique online training platform, to track the trainees' performance in real time as it automatically generates videos and statistical analysis to the extent of line, length, bounce, deviation, pace, etc., the release said.

**KBA, Patrick's hoopsters on top**

**Hyderabad:** Keystone Basketball Academy teams finished on top in the under 18 years boys category of the Zero Gravity 3x3 Basketball Tournament conducted by Keystone Basketball Academy, Hyderabad.

KBA cagers emerged winners with a clean slate winning all their games in the eight-team round robin format while KBA Thunders with five wins and two losses took the second spot.

In a two way tie, St Patrick's girls were declared winner as they, along with Srla, finished their engagements with three wins and a defeat. By virtue of defeating Srla in the last match, St Patrick's brought about a tie and took the top position.

The cohesion, teamwork and individual brilliance coupled with tactical strategy had KBA cagers roll over their opponents with consummate ease and hardly faced any challenge with their tall players Lakshman and Subhash controlling the board. Shooting guard Akhil Korupolu and Akhil Karjela were quick to grab any opportunity.



## Snehit settles for national bronze

Sathiyan breaks nine-time champion Sharath's stranglehold for gold

Panchkula, Feb. 23: G. Sathiyan ended his long wait for a national title with a convincing 4-2 win over nine-time champion Sharath Kamal in the 82nd National Table Tennis Championships here on Tuesday. Sathiyan prevailed 11-6, 11-7, 10-12, 7-11, 11-8, 11-5.

Hyderabad's SFR Snehit, who made a good run to the semifinals, was stopped by the eventual champion in the last four stage. Sathiyan sailed past Snehit in straight games at 13-11, 11-5, 11-9, 11-5.

Sathiyan had rued his missed chances against Sharath in the final at Cuttack a couple of years ago. That win had put Sharath, the current world No.32, on a high pedestal. On Tuesday, it was a different Sathiyan. So was Sharath, who was not at his usual self as he lost momentum in the fifth game of the men's singles final.

"Third time I was lucky, no more jinx. A huge burden off my shoulder, said Sathiyan. Before Cuttack, he had missed out at Pondicherry (2014) and Hyderabad (2015). The win on Tuesday also helped him carry home ₹2.50 lakh as prize money.

Taking a 2-0 lead,



SFR Snehit (centre) poses with his cheque and medal alongside coach Somnath Ghosh (right) and fitness coach Hirak Bagchi at Panchkula, Haryana, on Tuesday.

Sathiyan made his intentions loud and clear. But he knows his experienced opponent can change the flow of the match in a matter of minutes. And Sharath did strike, taking the next two games. But, as has been seen very often, Sharath had his

problems unable to land the ball. Converting those moments to his advantage, Sathiyan nailed it again and went 3-2 up.

As if on cue, Sathiyan kept his backhand blocks and forearm scorchers going, pushing Sharath on the backfoot as hard as

possible. Sharath allowed Sathiyan to take control of the match slowly but surely. It's equally important to give full credit to Sathiyan, the new champion, who punched his way up the ladder with a lot of hard work.

"In the end, it was a good

match, and he deserved to win," said the genial Sharath.

He attributed the loss to the lack of concentration in the fifth game after leading 8-6. Two crucial mistakes cost me dearly at that stage. But Sathiyan let me off the hook in the third to come back. These are part of the game. I am happy for him, he added.

With age catching up with Sharath, he is not yet giving up chasing his 10th title. "I will certainly come back strong and aim for it," he said. — PTI

**THE RESULTS**

■ **Final:** G. Sathiyan (PSPB) bt A. Sharath Kamal (PSPB) 11-6, 10-12, 7-11, 11-8, 11-5.

■ **Semifinals:** G. Sathiyan bt SFR Snehit (Telangana) 13-11, 11-5, 11-9, 11-5; A. Sharath Kamal bt Manav Thakkar (PSPB) 11-8, 5-11, 14-12, 11-9, 9-11, 17-15.

that all competitions will be conducted by taking necessary precautions for Covid-19 pandemic as per the guidelines issued by the National Rifle Association of India and Government of Telangana.

Wednesday's schedule has rifle events lined up with 102 in fray for 50 metres, 77 in 10m, 72 for 50m open site and 21 in 10m open site.

Pistol events — Centre Fire (52 participants), 25m (13), Standard Pistol (54), 50m (9) and 10m (92).

More than 1,000 participants from all over the State are expected to participate in 112 shooting disciplines between February 24 and March 7.

The organisers pledge

TSRTC TENDER NOTIFICATION	
No.W3/122(2)/2020-UPL, Dt.20.02.2021	
Sealed Tenders are invited from the eligible Manpower Agencies for providing	
1. E-30 Store Attendants at COS/UPL	
2. E-25 skilled persons for Sweeping, Cleaning, Gardening & Sanitary works at	
24/7 UPL	
3. E-7 (Unskilled + E-1 (Skilled) Manpower at ZWS Canteen, Uppal on Outsourcing basis.	
For full details of the Tender Notification, please visit our website. <a href="http://www.tsrtc.telangana.gov.in">www.tsrtc.telangana.gov.in</a>	
Sd/- Works Manager, DPR No.1499-PF/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21	

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU ARCHITECTURE AND FINE ARTS UNIVERSITY MASAB TANK, HYDERABAD-500 028	
P.G. SPOT ADMISSION NOTIFICATION - 2020	
(For admission into M.Tech (Planning) / M.Arch. (E.D.) / M.Arch (I.D.) Courses offered at JNAFAU School of Planning and Architecture on 27.02.2021 at 12.30 PM sharp at Seminar Hall, School of Planning and Architecture, JNAFAU University, Masab Tank, Hyderabad. Eligibility Criteria, vacancy position, Course Fee and other details are available in the website i.e. <a href="http://www.jnafau.ac.in">www.jnafau.ac.in</a> , contact 040-23319462.	
Date:23.02.2021 No.JNAFAU/Admissions/PG-Spot/2020-21 DPR No.1484-PPC/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21	
Sd/-Prof.M.Sitaramalakshmi, Co-ordinator, Admissions	

VIBHAS, FAISAL, JEETENDAR AND MAAZ IN SEMIS	
DC CORRESPONDENT	
HYDERABAD, FEB. 23	
Vibhas, Jeetendar, Mohammed Faisal and Syed Maaz Ali made the semifinals of the junior snooker at the Telangana State Ranking Snooker & Billiards Championship at the Telangana Cue Sports Association premises on Tuesday.	

Vibhas, Jeetendar, Mohammed Faisal and Syed Maaz Ali made the semifinals of the junior snooker at the Telangana State Ranking Snooker & Billiards Championship at the Telangana Cue Sports Association premises on Tuesday.

In the quarterfinals, Vibhas prevailed over P. Sai 39-53, 86-22, 40-56, 51, 73-21 while Jeetendar too scored a similar 3-2 (46-52, 72-36, 31-55, 43-39, 49-40) win over Saurav.

Md Faisal beat Md Bilal Khan over five frames 55-20, 26-33, 43-52, 56-15, 57-27) and Syed Maaz Ali beat Abdul Nadeem 26-70, 7-71, 65-47, 55-24, 78-16.

**THE RESULTS**

■ **Junior Snooker Quarterfinals:** Vibhas bt P. Sai 3-2 (39-53, 86-22, 40-56, 64-51, 73-21); Jeetendar bt Saurav 3-2 (46-52, 72-36, 31-55, 43-39, 49-40); Md Faisal bt Md Bilal Khan 3-2 (55-20, 26-33, 43-52, 56-15, 57-27); Syed Maaz Ali bt Abdul Nadeem 26-70, 7-71, 65-47, 55-24, 78-16.

**Second Round:** Md Faisal bt Srikant 2-0 (54-20, 56-20); P. Sai bt Bharath Choudary 2-0 (58-8, 59-9); Bilal Khan bt Majid Raj 2-0 (59-44, 66-44); Jeetendar bt Habeeb 2-1 (66-44, 41-20, 66-34); Md Abdul Nadeem bt Pratham Jain 2-0 (53-47, 47-29).

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**SHORT TAKES**  
**Bedi undergoes bypass surgery**

New Delhi: Legendary spinner Bishan Singh Bedi has undergone a bypass surgery at a city hospital a few days back after he complained of heart problems and he is recovering well.

The 74-year-old Bedi underwent the procedure 2-3 days back and he is expected to be discharged from the hospital soon, according to a close confidant of the former India captain. "As far as I know, he was having some heart issues and he underwent a bypass surgery 2-3 days back on the advice of the doctors," he said. "He is currently doing fine and recovering from the surgery and is expected to be discharged from the hospital soon," he added.

Bedi, a premier left-arm orthodox spinner in his playing days, represented India in 67 Tests and 10 ODIs between 1967 and 1979, scalping 266 and seven wickets respectively. — PTI

**Deepak in last 8 of Strandja meet**

New Delhi: Asian silver-medalist Deepak Kumar (52kg) advanced to the quarterfinals with a facile win as Indian boxers got off to a mixed start at the 72nd Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Deepak, also a 2019 India Open gold-medalist, defeated Kazakhstan's Olzhas Bainiyazov 5-0 in his opening bout to make the last-eight stage. Other winners on Monday included Naveen Kumar (91kg) among men and Jyoti (51kg) in the women's draw.

While Naveen defeated American Darius Fulghum in a close fight that ended 3-2 in his favour, Jyoti got the better of Ukraine's Tetiana Kob 4-1. India has sent a 12-member team for the prestigious event — seven men and five women.

**Shooters look to shine in Cairo WC**

Cairo: A 13-member Indian squad will seek medals in the Shotgun World Cup starting here on Wednesday as the International Shooting Sport Federation's marquee events return after a break of almost a year due to pandemic.

The eight-day competition is the year's first Shotgun World Cup stage, beginning with men's and women's skeet competitions on the opening day.

There will be 10 events in the competition. As many as 191 athletes from 33 countries have entered the fray and for the first time, the men's and women's team competitions will be held based on the new team event formats declared last year by the ISSF. The Cairo event will be the final chance to qualify for the Olympics. — PTI

# MOTERA W

India, England look to exploit 'unexplored' strip in pink ball conundrum

Ahmedabad, Feb. 23: A virgin Motera strip has become the big talking point as India captain Virat Kohli prepares the right pink ball questionnaire to trouble a spoilt-for-choice England in the day-night third Test starting here on Wednesday.

Ahmedabad as a cricketing venue has been witness to a lot of cricketing feats in Indian cricket — from Sunil Gavaskar's famous late cut to complete 10,000 runs in Tests to Kapil Dev's best bowling figures of 9 for 83 and also him eclipsing Richard Hadlee's then world record of highest wickets.

On Wednesday, Ishant Sharma joining Kapil as the second Indian pacer to play 100 Tests would add to the momentous occasion and Kohli scoring a hundred is just what the 55,000 odd spectators, who would be allowed in, might crave for.

The refurbished Sardar Patel Stadium looks colossal under lights but the first Test match in many years would mean that even the home team wouldn't expect a lot of advantage.

It would prefer a square turner to go 2-1 up in a high-stakes game but whether it actually gets one remains to be seen.

As senior opener Rohit Sharma was clear in team's choice of surface — a turner that helps Ravichandran Ashwin and Axar Patel just like Joe Root would have opted for a green top at the Headingley or the Old Trafford.

There are a few more questions that would demand answers.

How would the twilight period be for the batsmen as James Anderson feels that the ball swings more in that phase?

Will the extra lacquer on the 'SG Test Pink' make it difficult for the Ashwin-Axar combo which wreaked havoc on the Chepauk snake pit?

And with a 2:30 pm start, how much will the dew have a bearing during the final session? The ball would be difficult to grip at that point for slow bowlers and the pitch, despite grass being shaved off, might ease out with ball skidding off the surface. — PTI

Rishabh Pant practices during a net session at Motera in Ahmedabad on Tuesday. — BCCI



## LEACH READY FOR NEW ROLE IN THIRD TEST

Ahmedabad, Feb. 23: England's lead spinner Jack Leach says he is ready for a new role as the day/night pink ball Test against India looks set to bring the seamers back into the forefront after the tweakers' domination in the first two matches.

Leach is aware that with the pink ball, which tends to move around a lot more than the traditional red cherry, his role could change over the next few days. "We want to be adaptable, we feel like we've got all bases covered in our squad so I think it's going to be a fascinating Test match if the ball is moving around, and if so, it might be a slightly different role for me," Leach said.

"I've definitely thought about that — it'll be a different challenge and I'll be ready."

Both sides are wary of how the pink ball would behave under lights on a newly laid strip. Batting in the twilight phase has been one of the talking points going into the game.

On England's preparations, Leach said, "We had a good session under lights that started in that twilight period and while I don't have much experience of playing in these day-night games, I've heard that during twilight can be a tough time to bat." — PTI

## Spinners, pacers both in game: Virat

Ahmedabad, Feb. 23: A rank turner is being anticipated at Motera but India captain Virat Kohli expects pacers to have as big a role as spinners in the day-night third Test.

Kohli said he expects the pacers to be in the game till the ball is "nice and shiny".

"I don't think that is an accurate assessment (that bowl will not swing). The pink ball does tend to swing a lot more than the red ball. We experienced that when we played for

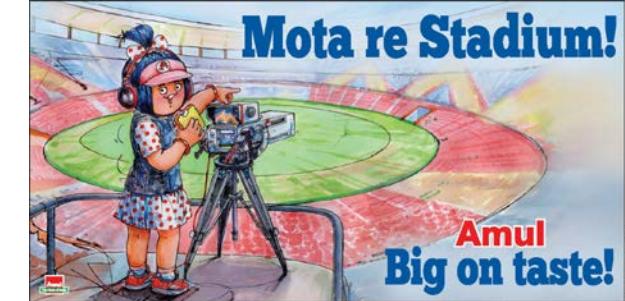
on the nature of the virgin track at the refurbished stadium.

Asked if the ball is unlikely to swing much in the third Test, Kohli said he expects the pacers to be in the game till the ball is "nice and shiny".

"...Not really bothered about what the strengths and weaknesses of the English team are. We have beaten them in their home as well, where the ball does way more and hold them out every time so we're not really both-

ered with that. It's just about playing well as a team," he said, adding, "And yeah, there are many, many weaknesses in the opposition side as well, if you are keen to exploit them. If it's a seamer friendly track for them it's for us as well.

And we probably have the best bowling attack in the world so we're not really bothered by what the ball might bring differently to the table." — PTI



## Iyer hits century in Mumbai win

Jaipur, Feb. 23: Mumbai rode on skipper Shreyas Iyer's unbeaten 103 to beat Maharashtra by six wickets in their Elite Group D game of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Tuesday.

This was Mumbai's second successive win after they had beaten Delhi in the first two matches.

Opting to bat first, Maharashtra posted 279/9 in 50 overs, with centurions from Yash Nahar (119) and Azim Kazi (104) despite experienced Mumbai pacer Dhawal Kulkarni (5/44) running through their top-order.

But it was Iyer, who anchored the Mumbai chase and saw them home in 47.2 overs.

Chasing 280, Mumbai openers Yashavali Jaiswal (40) and Prithvi Shaw (34) conjured 67 for the first wicket.

Iyer, who walked in at three, was in his elements and hammered nine boundaries and one six, in his unbroken knock and after Jaiswal perished, he found able partners in Suryakumar Yadav (29), Shivam Dube (47) as they played their roles to perfection. Dube took the game away from Maharashtra, with his hitting, smashing five fours and a six, and

### BRIEF SCORES

- Maharashtra 279/9 in 50 overs (Yash Nahar 119, Azim Kazi 104; Dhawal Kulkarni 5/44) lost to Mumbai 280/4 in 47.2 overs (Shreyas Iyer 103 not out, Shivam Dube 47; Satyajeet Bachhav 7/59) by six wickets.
- Delhi 354/4 in 50 overs (Nitish Rana 137, Dhruv Shorey 132; Sagar Trivedi 2/66) beat Pondicherry 175 in 39.3 overs (S. Suresh Kumar 42; Kulwant Khejroliya 4/32, Pradeep Sangwan 2/27) by 179 runs.
- Rajasthan 199 in 47.5 overs (Mahipal Lomror 67, Arjit Gupta 45; Rishi Dhawan 6/27) lost to Haryana 201/6 in 33.3 overs (Rishi Dhawan 73 not out; A Singh 2/46, Ravi Bisht 2/60) by four wickets.
- Bengal 253/9 in 50 overs (Sisiraz Ahmed 59) lost to Chandigarh 257/5 in 48.5 overs (Arslan Khan 68, Shivam Bhamori 71 not out, Manan Vohra 45).
- Services 274/7 in 50 overs (Ravi Chauhan 116, Pulkrit Narang 48 not out, Diwesh Pathania 42 not out) lost to Jammu & Kashmir 276/7 in 48 overs (Shubham Khajuria 84, Abdul Samad 63) by three wickets.
- Haryana 264 in 50 overs (Chaitanya Bisht 84; Chetan Sakaria 3/63) lost to Saurashtra 265/9 in 49.1 overs (Shell Patel 79, Arpit Vasavada 46) by one wicket.
- Manipur 148/9 in 50 overs (Jayanta Sagapam 32, Mayank Mishra 2/18) lost to Uttarakhand 152/3 in 23.1 overs (Jay Bista 71, Kamal Singh 41) by seven wickets.
- Manipur 148/9 in 50 overs (Jayanta Sagapam 32, Mayank Mishra 2/18) lost to Uttarakhand 152/3 in 23.1 overs (Jay Bista 71, Kamal Singh 41) by seven wickets.
- Meghalaya 319/7 in 50 overs (Punit Bist 76, R. Sanjay Yadav 73 not out) beat Sikkim 231/9 in 50 overs (Ashish Thapa 79, Robin Bist 59, Dipu Sangma 2/33).

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