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Vaccine effectiveness estimates against hospitalisation due to Delta and Alpha variants over 14 days post second dose was estimated to be 96 per cent and 95 per cent respectively for Pfizer BioNTech-Comirnaty and 92 per cent and 86 per cent respectively, for AstraZeneca-Vaxzevria. Single dose effectiveness against hospitalisation over 21 days after immunisation remained high for Pfizer BioNTech-Comirnaty at 94 per cent against Delta and 83 per cent against Alpha.



# Womenia

TWEET PATROL

**SONNALLI SEYGALL**  
**@SONNALLISEYGALL**

Take me on a Road trip & I'm a happy girl #roadtrip #mountainlife #adventuretravel #TravelWithSonnalli



## Ladies, here's why you should start your day with chocolate

While eating milk chocolate every day may sound like a recipe for weight gain, starting the day with a concentrated amount of chocolate may help the body burn fat and decrease blood sugar levels, finds a study.

Researchers from the Brigham collaborated with investigators at the University of Murcia in Spain, examined the effects of eating milk chocolate in morning hours on a small group of postmenopausal women.

The study published in The FASEB Journal showed that morning or night time chocolate intake did not lead to weight gain. On the contrary, eating chocolate in the morning or in the evening showed to influence hunger and appetite, microbiota composition, and sleep.

A high intake of chocolate during the morning hours can also help to burn fat and reduce blood glucose levels and evening or night intake of chocolate altered next-morning resting and exercise metabolism.

"Our findings highlight that not only 'what' but also 'when' we eat can impact physiological mechanisms involved in the regulation of body weight," said Frank A.J.L. Scheer, Neuroscientist from the Department of Medicine and Neurology, Brigham and Women's Hospital.

"Our volunteers did not gain weight despite increasing caloric intake. Our results show that chocolate reduces ad libitum energy intake, consistent with the observed reduction in hunger, appetite and the desire for sweets shown in previous studies," said Marta Garaulet, also from the hospital.

For the study, the team conducted a randomised, controlled, cross-over trial of 19 postmenopausal women who consumed either 100g of chocolate in the morning (within one hour after waking time) or at night (within one hour before bedtime). They compared weight gain and many other measures to no chocolate intake.



Shahnaz Hussain

After the long hot summer, monsoon season refreshes us, makes us feel alive, and brings relief from the scorching heat of the summer season.

While we all love rains, increased levels of humidity during the monsoon make it difficult to manage your hair. Frizz, dandruff, and dull hair are a major concern in this monsoon season. Hair trouble becomes more frequent during the rainy season especially if you're dealing with dandruff.

There might be a number of solutions to eliminate dandruff, but did you know that using Neem is one of the most effective remedies one could try. Neem is a very important part of ayurvedic medicine and is being used for ages. It is used to treat health issues, skin and hair problems.

Over centuries Neem has been highly valued in India for its healing and purifying prop-

erties and is probably the most widely used among plant products. It was used as a preventive in epidemics and was also used to treat bronchial ailments, asthma, jaundice and various digestive problems. It is also commonly used in homes for skin and hair problems like prickly heat, boils, rashes, dandruff, itching scalp and many more.

The characteristic bitter-sweet aroma of Neem is due to its organic (natural) sulphur compounds, which have been found to have powerful and versatile healing actions, especially when applied on the skin and scalp. In fact, I would say that Neem is Nature's Antibiotic. It has powerful antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal and antiseptic properties. It is also a powerful antioxidant, which reverses the damage caused by free radicals, leading to degeneration of the human body and the immune system. Neem not only cures, but protects, soothes and purifies. Its cooling and soothing action has been invaluable in skin and scalp problems, including dandruff and hair loss.

As far as the hair is concerned, due to its sulphur compounds and its versatile healing actions, Neem extracts and oil



it, when it is hot. Do not boil the leaves, but cover them and let them stand in the water overnight. The next day, strain the water and use it to wash the

vents scalp infections. During humid weather, people with oily skins suffer from increased oiliness of the scalp, which can lead to sticky dandruff or rashy conditions of the scalp. Sweat deposits remain on

**Hair trouble becomes more frequent during the rainy season especially if you're dealing with dandruff; Neem is one of the most effective remedies one could try**

hair. In fact, the water can also be poured as a last rinse after shampoo. In cases of boils and eruptions on the scalp, neem leaf infusion will help. In cases of dandruff and itching of the scalp, neem leaf infusions are very helpful. Use the infusion as the last rinse, after washing the hair. Neem leaves can also be used to treat fungal infections of the scalp. A paste of the neem leaves may be applied to the scalp.

Neem can also be used with oil for head massage. First heat about 200 gms of pure coconut or oil. Take a handful of Neem leaves and add them to the oil. Let it stand in the oil for about ten days, allowing it to remain in the sun during this time. Then strain the leaves and keep the oil for use. This is a preventive treatment for rashes, itching, and other scalp conditions, including dandruff. It relieves itching and pre-

the skin, leading to rashy conditions. Soak in hot water overnight. The next day make a paste of the Neem leaves and apply to the scalp. Wash off after 20 minutes. For dandruff, add a few drops of lemon juice to Neem leaf infusion and apply on the scalp. Part the hair in sections and apply. Wash it off after 20 minutes. This also helps to reduce the oiliness of the scalp.

The hair actually attracts more grime and pollutants from the environment. These pollutants must be removed regularly and Neem is ideal, as it not only helps the elimination of toxins but restores the normal balance of the scalp. That is why Neem is an important ingredient in hair oils, hair cleansers, hair rinses, and hair tonics. The curative, preventive, and protective properties of Neem have prompted cosmetic companies to develop a Neem range of skin and hair care products, based on Ayurveda.

## NEWS ROUNDUP

# OTT is creating fantastic content, says Pranutan

YASHIKA MATHUR

Actress Pranutan, who made her Bollywood debut in 2019 with "Notebook", is awaiting the release of her next film "Helmet" opposite Aparshakti Khurana. While theatres are still non-functional, OTT platforms have taken the onus to provide entertainment. The young actress is in awe of the content being generated on the digital platforms.

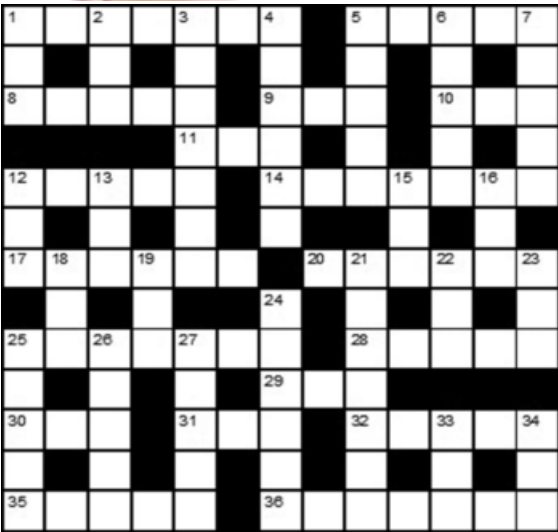
"I think the medium doesn't matter and the fact should only matter is honing your skills as an actor. I don't think we should get too caught up in our comfort zones. The kind of response audience is giving to OTT is amazing," says Pranutan.

Grand-daughter of the late legend Nutan, and daughter of actor Mohnish Bahl, the budding actress says that finds many shows exciting and inspiring.

"It's inspiring to

watch such stories and such actors. Throughout 'The Family Man', I couldn't get my eyes off. My opinion about OTT is that they are creating fantastic content. I am an absolute fan of so many shows, 'The Family Man 1 and 2', 'Paatal Lok', 'Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story' and many of them," she says. The actress features in the music video of Palak Muchhal's new song "Lag raha hai dil deewana", which launched on Wednesday. The track aims at taking the audience back to their college days, says the actress.

"It's very sweet song and will take you back to your college days. It has a lot of innocence and I had a great time shooting in Chandigarh University," she says. Pranutan knows music videos have emerged as a quickfix mode for young actors to get an exposure, especially amidst lockdown when cinemas are shut. "If you act in any medium, it doesn't matter which one is it. You are just portraying your talent. Every time I come in front of the camera, that is my playground and it is my learning space. It doesn't matter what I am doing as long as I am getting better at my talent," says Pranutan.



**CROSSWORD**

**Across**  
1 Steadfast (7)  
5 Alias of Gordon Sumner (5)  
8 Follower of major Indian religion (5)  
9 Automobile (3)  
10 Run a tab (3)  
11 Greek letter (3)  
12 Become liable (5)  
14 Relieve parents (4-3)  
17 Ring-shaped coral islands (6)  
20 Take as read (6)  
25 Upstart (7)  
29 Centre of solar system (3)  
30 Some promos (3)  
31 Speed meas. (3)  
32 It's a fact (5)  
35 Cleopatra's country (5)  
36 Breast-bone (7)  
**Down**  
1 Librarian's admonition (3)  
2 Barley beard (3)  
3 Not aligned (7)  
4 Priam's wife (6)  
5 Scour (5)  
6 Actor Jeremy (5)  
7 Formal visitor (5)  
12 Lyricist Gershwin (3)  
13 Dove sound (3)  
15 Affirmative (3)  
16 A distinctive doctrine, school or practice (3)  
18 A beverage (3)  
19 Monetary unit of Bulgaria (3)  
21 Cheat (7)  
22 Small guitar (3)  
23 Kind of newt (3)  
24 Shoves or thrusts (6)  
25 Facet (5)  
26 Hazardous (5)  
27 Ant (5)  
33 Decimal base (3)  
34 Silent (3)

**SUDOKU**

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

**SOLUTION TO JUNE 24**

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

## Strawberry Parfait Day



Strawberry Parfait Day, dedicated to that delicious treat that is so welcome during the hot summer months, and craved even in the face of the biting cold of winter by the true connoisseur. The exotic sounding name brings to mind the quaint little street-side cafes of Paris, where the treat so many of us are familiar with found its origin. It's name describes the treat to a tee, Parfait means, simply, "Perfect". But a perfect what? The word parfait has actually been used to describe quite a number of different things, and not all of them are delicious layered deserts.

Such was the dedication to making this the perfect treat, that special glasses were designed solely for the purpose of showing off the artistically layered designs made during the treats creation. Parfaits can include any combination of ingredients, from creams and fruits, nuts, liquor, even gelatin or granola. They've crossed the line from being merely a dessert food, to being deemed appropriate for any time of day, with just a twist on exactly what's included.

What of the strawberry I hear you say? I do distinctly remember hearing something about strawberries that were intended to go with this parfait. Right you are! The strawberry as we know it today, that delicious, fragrant red fruit with the jaunty green cap, was first developed in Brittany, France, during the 1750's. It might be thought that the French were dedicating their time solely to the perfection of this divine treat! Prior to this the fruit had a long and respectable history throughout the world, but it was in France that it became.

So how can these two things be combined to create the perfect parfait? Depending on whether you desire it to be part of your breakfast selection, or a decadent dessert to cap off the day, a strawberry parfait can be created in a number of delicious and enticing ways.

We'll start with the best of breakfast treats, a parfait assembled using yogurt, granola, and of course the bright red treat that is the strawberry! Obviously in order to put this treat together you're going to need Yogurt, but not just any yogurt will do! Remember, this is supposed to be the 'perfect' breakfast treat. When selecting a yogurt for a breakfast parfait, stick to the thicker bodied yogurts, like greek yogurt.

While still being healthy these yogurts stay truer to the spirit of the parfait by being smooth and luxurious. Combine this with an almond vanilla granola mixture, and a handful of sliced strawberries. If you're feeling particularly decadent, take the strawberries and coat them with sugar in a bowl. Left for a few minutes, they'll develop their own delicious sauce. Then you need merely create layers of these ingredients, preferably in a clear container. One delicious breakfast Strawberry parfait.

But dessert is truly where this treat comes into its own, the strawberry parfait is meant to be a rich decadent dive into indulgence, and our next combination will make sure it's just that. When designing the perfect dessert parfait, it needs to start with a parfait glass.





# FIR against 3 pvt firms for not paying farmers after paddy procurement

BAREILLY

AN FIR has been lodged against three private firms, deployed by the Uttar Pradesh government for paddy procurement, for not making payment to farmers for their purchase.

The government procures wheat and paddy through its various departments as well as non-government systems. Around 15 firms in Bareilly district were registered for paddy procurement, the Regional Marketing Officer of the food department, Gyan Chand

Verma, who lodged the FIR, said on Thursday. Adarsh Agro Producer Company of Nawabganj, Shubh Kirti Producer Company Limited of Bareilly and Pilibhit Farmer Producer Company of Jehanabad were permitted by the district magistrate to purchase paddy on November 6 last year.

A lot of paddy was procured from October 2020 to January 15, 2021, and the registered companies gradually made payments to the farmers. But 109 farmers were found to have Rs 117 lakh pending with these companies for the last



five months, Verma said. The farmers had complained to the administration about non-receipt of their payment and the marketing branch of the Food Department also took note of it, he said.

An FIR was lodged in Nawabganj police station against Jagdish

Saran Gangwar, Harish Gangwar and Prem Kumar, the secretaries of Adarsh Agro Producer Company, Shubh Kirti Producer Company Limited and Pilibhit Farmer Producer Company respectively under section 406 (criminal breach of trust) of IPC. The re-

gional marketing officer of Nawabganj said despite written warnings and multiple notices, these three companies did not make payment to farmers even after five months. The farmers are being exploited financially and mentally. Therefore, an FIR has been lodged against the three firms to ensure due payment to the farmers, Verma said.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra urged the Uttar Pradesh government to ensure maximum procurement of wheat from farmers, saying if

steps were not taken for it the produce would be ruined due to rain.

The Congress general secretary said that in Uttar Pradesh, the last date for wheat procurement has passed and the government procurement of wheat from many farmers has not been done. "If 'buying wheat from the last farmer' was not a 'jumla' (rhetoric), then the BJP government should ensure maximum purchase by extending the date of wheat procurement," Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi. Otherwise the wheat of the farmers will be ru-

ined due to the rain, she added. Gandhi on Monday had written to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to flag the problems being faced by wheat farmers in selling their produce and demanded that the government should guarantee wheat procurement. In her letter to Adityanath, the Congress general secretary had said that there should be a guarantee on procurement of wheat from farmers at procurement centres till July 15. The procurement was scheduled to carry on till June 15.

## Two Indians held captive by Saudi employer return home

KOTA

TWO Indian workers, who alleged that they were held captive by their employer in Yanbu city of Saudi Arabia for months after their work agreement expired, returned to Rajasthan on Thursday.

The two were handed over tickets to Jaipur on Tuesday evening, Congress' Bundi district vice president Charmesh Sharma told media after receiving them at the airport. Gaffar Mohammed (49) of Bundi district and Vishram Jatav (46) of Bharatpur district had gone to Saudi Arabia over three years ago on a work agreement, which expired in November 2020.

The two alleged that they were held captive in an abandoned quarter without adequate food, despite an assurance by authorities that they would be allowed to return home by April-end. Earlier, Sharma had said that the two labourers "somehow managed to survive on leftovers given to them by other labourers out of pity".

"We have never thought of return to homeland. We were subjected to severe inhuman treatment...kept under tin shades during day time without electricity in around 50 degrees Celsius," Mohammed told PTI upon his return to homeland. In February this year, the two victims uploaded a video on social media and pleaded for help, said Sharma. The issue was brought to the notice of the central government, he added.

On March 20, Sharma lodged a complaint with Ministry of External Affairs and also wrote to the PMO and the President's office, urging to ensure a safe return of the two. According to Sharma, the Indian embassy in Riyadh swung into action after reports of their captivity came out in the media few days ago.



## PRISONERS IN RAJ TO BE ALLOTTED BARRACKS ON ALPHABETIC ORDER

JAIPUR

To curb corruption and ensure transparency, the Rajasthan Jail Department has decided to allot barracks to prisoners in alphabetic order of their names in central jails.

Earlier, prisoners were lodged in barracks or exchanged in barracks at the discretion of the jailer or jail superintendent. Director General, Prisons Rajeev Dasot on Thursday issued the guidelines, saying that the initiative will bring fairness and transparency in arrangements.

He said local jail authorities used to decide about the allotment of barracks to the prisoners and there used to be complaints of arbitrariness by jail authorities. "There was also the possibility of corruption. To resolve these problems, directions have been issued to jail officials to allot barracks to the prisoners on alphabetical basis.

All the jail in-charge officers have been instructed to send the prisoners to the barracks on the basis of the alphabet of their name," he said. Dasot said the new arrangement will eliminate the possibility of discrimination and corruption. He said instructions have also been issued that prisoners from rival gangs should not be kept together so that there is no gang-war in jails. There are 10 central jails including one special central jail in Rajasthan.



## U'khand CM house being prepared for third wave

DEHRADUN

UTTARAKHAND Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat on Thursday said he is preparing his official residence for the treatment of coronavirus patients during the third wave. "There is no lack of preparedness to tackle the third wave. There are more Covid dedicated hospitals now. Two 500-bed hospitals each were developed with the help of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Rishikesh and Haldwani in addition to the existing ones," he told

reporters here.

Rawat said district magistrates (DMs) have been asked to keep one or two hotels ready to be converted into Covid care centres if the need arises. "We will do anything to deal effectively with the third wave. I am also preparing the CM residence to accommodate Covid patients during the third wave," he stated. The CM said no one had imagined that the second wave of the pandemic would be so strong. "But we rose to the challenge and ramped up facilities across the state. I went to the Covid care cen-

tres and hospitals in all 13 districts of the state to examine the status of facilities and know about the problems faced by patients," he said.

The Uttarakhand High Court had on Wednesday reprimanded the state government for its alleged lack of preparedness in view of the third wave. "Will the state government wake from its slumber when our children start dying in the third wave?" a division bench of the high court comprising Chief Justice RS Chauhan and Justice Alok Kumar Verma had asked.

## Make RPI ally in 2022 polls in UP, Punjab: Athawale

NEW DELHI

UNION minister Ramdas Athawale has requested the BJP to make his Republican Party of India (Athawale) an ally in the upcoming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Manipur, Goa and Uttarakhand.

In a letter to BJP president J P Nadda, Athawale said the BJP should expand the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to keep smaller parties together and that the RPI (Athawale) wishes to work as an ally of the BJP in the Assembly elections scheduled for 2022.

Noting that people across the country know that the RPI (Athawale) is an integral part of the NDA, Athawale said in Uttar Pradesh the party can help in cutting votes of the Bahujan Samaj Party as the two parties share a common Dalit support base. "My



personal request to you is that if RPI (Athawale) is made an ally of Bharatiya Janata Party in Uttar Pradesh, then it will help in cutting the votes of BSP.... If 8-10 seats are given to RPI by BJP, then BJP will get indirect benefit too," the Union Minister of State of Social Justice & Empowerment said.

"Therefore, I request you to give some seats to RPI (Athawale) by providing an opportunity to work

as an ally in the upcoming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Manipur, Goa and Uttarakhand. It is my personal request to you to give some seats to RPI (Athawale)," he wrote. The terms of the legislative assemblies of Manipur, Goa, Punjab and Uttarakhand are coming to an end in March 2022, while the term of the Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly is scheduled to end in May.

## UP records 32 more deaths, 229 new cases

LUCKNOW

THE COVID-19 death toll in Uttar Pradesh rose to 22,368 on Thursday with 32 more fatalities, while 229 new cases pushed the infection tally to 17,05,012, an official said.

"In the past 24 hours, 229 fresh cases were reported in the state while 308 people recovered from the infection and have been discharged, taking the overall recoveries to 16,79,092," Additional Chief Secretary, Health, Amit Mohan Prasad told reporters.

The count of active COVID-19 cases stands at 3,552, he said, adding that the recovery rate currently is 98.5 per cent. Of the 3,552 active cases, 2,149 are in home isolation, he said. In the past 24 hours, over 2.38 lakh samples were tested, while more than 5.62 crore tests have been conducted so far in the state, the officer said. Elaborating about the ongoing vaccination drive, Prasad said the target of one crore inoculations was fixed for the month of June.

## Cong MLA hits out independent legislator for calling Pilot outsider

JAIPUR

RAJASTHAN MLA and Sachin Pilot loyalist Indraj Meena termed the former deputy chief minister a "heavyweight leader" as he slammed independent legislator Ramkesh Meena for calling Pilot an outsider. Ramkesh Meena, who belongs to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's camp, had on Tuesday called Pilot an outsider in Rajasthan. The opposition BJP too attacked the Gehlot camp over Ramkesh Meena's remark and asked if Pilot was an outsider, then what about Congress president Sonia Gandhi and former prime minister Manmohan Singh who were not born in India. Indraj Meena said the people of Rajasthan and the country love Pilot.

"He is a heavyweight leader, so it is the law of nature that the weak gang up against the strong," he said. BJP MLA and deputy leader of opposition Rajendra Rathore said Ramkesh Meena is close to the chief minister and what he said about Pilot is actually what is going in Gehlot's mind. Rathore said one of Congress' most influential leader and Rajya Sabha MP from Rajasthan K C Venugopal too is an outsider as he is from Kerala.

## 1.6 L readers in Voices Online



THE Voices Online is a digital platform created during the pandemic times to help and engage students across the world in creative and meaningful activities has more than one lakh sixty thousand readers now.

The website realised the difficulties and challenges faced by students in India who are aspiring to start their career after graduating from colleges and universities during the pandemic times.

A new online career guidance discussion session was launched on June 20, 2021, where industry experts and students are brought together to discuss how in pandemic times students can prepare themselves better to start their career successfully. The first episode was for students graduating from law colleges.

Ruhail Choudhury founder of the voices online and an acclaimed corporate lawyer mentioned that on the supply side, the number of students completing their education remains same while the jobs available in market has significantly reduced and moreover many employees are losing jobs too, therefore competition will be much tougher than before.

The event was moderated by Professor Deborshi Barat, Editor of the voices online. Advocate Mohith Reddy from Hyderabad, Advocate Parimal Prasad from Mumbai and Advocate Aamar Zaki from Kolkata also shared their valuable suggestions to the students. Students from top law colleges and business schools participated in the event.

## 'Yatri' App activated

FEATURES of 'Yatri' App available in first phase was activated during the review meeting on safety and punctuality held by Alok Kansal, General Manager, Central Railway at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Mumbai.

Principal Heads of Departments and other Divisional Railway Managers were present through weblink. Shri Shalabh Goel, Divi-



sional Railway Manager, Mumbai Division gave a presentation of the "Yatri" app developed at zero cost as a part of non-fare revenue.

Kansal appreciated the efforts of the Mumbai Division in developing this app for the benefit of passengers and announced a cash award of Rs.5000/- for this initiative.

The app is now available on Android Playstore and iOS App Store.

## Has declined govt job offer to son: Cong MLA after row

CHANDIGARH

UNDER fire from some party colleagues and the Opposition, Congress MLA Fatehjang Singh Bajwa on Thursday broke his silence, saying he has declined the government job offer for his son.

The Punjab cabinet last week had approved a proposal to appoint Bajwa's son Arjun Partap Singh Bajwa as an inspector in the Punjab Police and Ludhiana MLA Rakesh Pandey's son Bhisham Pandey as a naib tehsildar in the Revenue Department on

the "compassionate" grounds. Apart from the Opposition, several Congress leaders, including state party president Sunil Jakhar, had questioned the government decision.

Five ministers-Sukhjinder Randhawa, Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Razia Sultana, Charanjit Singh Channi and Sukhbinder Sarkaria--had also opposed the move in a cabinet meeting.

The Qadian legislator said his son Arjun Partap Singh Bajwa has set a "precedent" by giving up the job offer and slammed the Opposition and his

party colleagues for criticising the government decision. Talking to the media on Thursday, Bajwa said after the kind of "petty" politics was played over the issue, his family decided not to accept this job offer.

He said before the cabinet meeting that was held last week, he had requested Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh to withdraw the agenda of job offer as he did not want it for his son. The MLA said he was also aware that some of the party colleagues had planned to object to the job offer in the cabinet meeting, ap-

parently referring to the five ministers.

Bajwa said he gave a letter on giving up the job offer to Amarinder Singh, who showed it to the three-member committee formed to end factionalism in the state unit. "Arjun has set a precedent by giving up the job offer," said Bajwa while asking Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Sukhbinder Sarkaria and Sunil Jakhar to follow the same precedent. He said Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa's son is the Gurdaspur zila parishad chairman, Sarkaria's nephew is the chairman of the Am-

ritsar zila parishad and Jakhar's nephew is the chief of the Punjab State Farmers' Commission.

He said Jakhar had even written to Congress president Sonia Gandhi about the job offer and had even called him up on this issue. When asked why the CM brought the agenda in the cabinet meeting when he had already declined the job offer, Bajwa said it was only Amarinder Singh who could reply. Bajwa also slammed Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal for criticising the state government's decision.





## Remembering the Emergency era

DEMOCRACY is not just a political system, but also a value. Hence, continuous awareness towards it is necessary. That is why it is important to remember such things that hurt democracy so that the country can move in the right direction. No democracy loving Indian can forget the night of June 25, 1975 when the entire country was transformed into a prison and there was an attempt to suppress the opposing voices. Eminent leaders of the country including Jayaprakash Narayan were lodged in jails. Even the judiciary could not escape its clutches.

The media was gagged. When the Emergency was imposed from midnight, internal disturbance was cited as the reason. After this move the Constitution was amended on July 22, 1975 by the 38th Amendment that took away the right to judicial review of the same.

Again, two months later the 39th Amendment was brought in, according to which, the country could not investigate the election of a person appointed as the Prime Minister. After the 49th and 41st Amendments, the Constitution was amended by the 42nd Amendment which had the most controversial provisions giving preference to the directive principles of State policy over fundamental rights. This deprived every one of the very essence of democracy.

Just as a hungry man alone realises the value of food, every freedom loving Indian realised the value of democracy in the country perhaps then. The 1977 elections were unique in every sense. People just queued to vote not against any individual or a party. They voted for democracy. It's history now. But... did we safeguard our interests post-Emergency? Obviously not. The power to or-

der a state of Emergency has remained on the statute book. What was corrected were only the grounds for invocation of Article 352 by substituting the words "armed rebellion" for "internal disturbance", which was cited as a ground for proclaiming emergency on June 25th, 1975.

The other grounds available for invoking Article 352 namely threat to the security of India by war or external aggression remain. Moreover, the existence of a "grave emergency" is based on subjective satisfaction. The western Indian borders have always been at risk of invasion by the perpetually unfriendly Pakistan. Now, even eastern borders are at risk due to unwarranted belligerence of China and Nepal. This can be argued to be a sufficient excuse for invoking a state of Emergency and turning constitutional governance on

its head in India. The experiences of emergency in 1975 which led to the arbitrary arrest of thousands of opposition leaders, censorship, suppression of political dissent and destruction of democratic values should have been sufficient for Indian political establishment to address more seriously Article 352 and its allied provisions Article 353 and 359.

However, we failed to act from the valuable lessons learnt by not responding with adequate changes. The 44th amendment made a half-hearted attempt at changes that really offer no guarantee of repeating the Emergency and authoritarian regime in India. The Emergency remains a half learnt lesson for India. The lessons of Emergency tell us that we need to be alert to the moves that go against the grain of democracy even now. Today too we face stifling of dissent at every step. Fundamental rights continue to be trampled. Free voices are disliked and called seditious. Unless a course correction follows we may descend into further chaos.



## Need for more researchers in India to combat creativity crisis

P C CHHABRA



THE sudden outbreak of Covid-19 has posed a burden to the worldwide economy which has impacted the people's lives and especially the healthcare system. The current scenario has showcased the problem and challenges in our invention process. Desperate time demands desperate solutions and it is one of the strong drivers of innovation and creativity among organisations and individuals. Time is a luxury to innovate at the time of crises that we are facing now and it has shown that it is not necessary to always invest so much time for innovating new things, but creativity can never always depend on these kinds of situations. This situation shows that the people of India also possess great innovative and creative ideas.

Former President A.P.J Abdul Kalam once said "When children are encouraged to express themselves and take a risk in creating art they develop a sense of innovation that will help produce the kind of people that society needs to take it forward".

Children in India formally get introduced to Science and Maths around the age of 6 or 7 and soon it becomes the benchmark to the IQ. Today Indian students are running in a rat race, where science is no more fun as it is more to do with test marks and score in Olympiads. In high schools, the focus of students shift to learn outside the school classrooms and it is not labs or practical classes but the tuition centres where they spend most of their time.

We teach our children to embrace smart learning, to learn only what is important for the college entrance exam. On college campuses, students become part of a placement rat race where they want to grab a secure desk job and their future and innovation are shaped and limited by the excel sheet and PPTs. How will India innovate when we are not ready to take the risk? We want a safe and secure job and not want to get into research?

There is something wrong with the way we learn science in India; it is the same home for eminent physicist like Dr. C V Raman. India we studied about was a front runner in Science and now it is lacking innovation. India has a new policy that aims at encouraging innovation. The Science technology and Innovations Policy (STIP) 2020, Make in India, Atma Nirbhar Bharat but they all rely on Innovation.

As India cherishes its glorious past, the country cannot forget the grim reality. A country with one of the largest generating countries of Engineers and Scientists, it is also a sad reality that we are lacking in the Innovation Index. China has clearly overtaken India in filing patents, Australia has just 2% of the population of India but still it files more patents than India. Even countries such as Brazil and South Africa are ahead of India in the Global Innovation Index (GII).

Today's India focuses more on rote learning over research because:

We don't have conducive environment for innovation: We are more focused on scoring more in our test and Olympiads because that is what we have learned from a very young age. We are not ready to take any kind of risk and invest more time in Innovation. We don't have proper and fully equipped labs where the students can learn from their trial and error method rather than just using the methods we know. We don't have proper faculty members who can encourage them for innovation rather than for scoring more in test papers or Olympiads.

We don't have enough researchers: India is performing better in terms of publishing science and engineering journals but is lacking when it comes to innovation and filing of patents because we don't want to take any risk and everyone wants to have a secured desk job. We are lacking in Innovation because we don't have enough researchers who want to do something new or are willing to take any kind of risk and explore different possibilities. There aren't enough resources for research: We don't have enough fully equipped labs or sometimes we lack not because we don't have talent but because we don't have resources to back that talent. To overcome the innovation and creative crises, we need to focus more on teaching students not just to get a job but to increase their interest in creating and innovating.

(The author is Executive Director, Sanskriti University)

KURT IVESON

MINERALS such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and copper are key ingredients required to make EVs. As the report noted, EVs use double the amount of copper than conventional vehicles. EVs also require considerable amounts of lithium, cobalt and graphite that are hardly required at all for conventional vehicles.

This week, the New South Wales government announced almost A\$500 million towards boosting the uptake of electric vehicles. In its new electric vehicle strategy, the government will waive stamp duty for cars under \$78,000, develop more charging infrastructure, offer rebates to 25,000 drivers, and more.

Given the transport sector is Australia's second-largest polluter, it's a good thing Australian governments are starting to plan for a transition to electric vehicles (EV).

But transitioning from cities full of petrol-guzzling vehicles to cities full of electric ones won't address all of the environmental and social problems associated with car dependence and mass manufacturing.

So, let's look at these problems in more detail, and why public transport really is the best way forward.

Mounting disadvantage and health issues

EVs do have environmental advantages over conventional vehicles. In particular, they generate less carbon emissions during their lifetime. Of course, much of the emissions reductions will depend on how much electricity comes from renewable sources.

But carbon emissions are only one of the many problems associated with the dominance of private cars as a form of mobility in cities.

Let's start with a few of the social issues. This includes the huge amount of space devoted to car driving and parking in our neighbourhoods. This can crowd out other forms of land use, including other more sustainable

forms of mobility such as walking and cycling.

There are the financial and mental health costs of congestion, as well, with Australian city workers spending, on average, 66 minutes getting to and from work each day. Injuries and fatalities on roads are also increasing, and inactivity and isolation associated with driving can impact our physical health.

Car-dependent cities also contribute to disadvantage for people who don't have access to cars, and uneven financial vulnerability associated with the high costs of car ownership and use.

Indeed, some of these problems could be made worse — for instance, subsidies for EVs could end up favouring wealthier people who can afford new cars.

Mining for resources

A mass global uptake of EVs will generate major environmental problems, too. Most concerning of these is the use of finite mineral resources required for their construction, and the environmental and labour conditions of their extraction.

This was recently highlighted in a recent report by the International Energy Agency. As the agency's executive director Fatih Birol said, there's a looming mismatch between the world's strengthened climate ambitions and the availability of critical minerals that are essential to realising those ambitions.

Minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and copper are key ingredients required to make EVs. As the report noted, EVs use double the amount of copper than conventional vehicles. EVs also require considerable amounts of lithium, cobalt and graphite that are hardly required at all for conventional vehicles. And it expects demand for lithium to grow 40-fold between 2020 and 2040, driven by EV production to meet climate targets.

There is considerable discussion of Australia's natural advantage as a supplier of some of these minerals, as we have large reserves of lithium and rare-earth metals beneath parts of the continent.



A mass global uptake of EVs will generate major environmental problems, too. Most concerning of these is the use of finite mineral resources required for their construction, and the environmental and labour conditions of their extraction. This was recently highlighted in a recent report by the International Energy Agency. As the agency's executive director Fatih Birol said, there's a looming mismatch between the world's strengthened climate ambitions and the availability of critical minerals that are essential to realising those ambitions

But before governments and mining bodies rush to exploit these reserves, they need to ensure much more is done to avoid the injustices perpetrated against Traditional Owners and their lands and heritage. The recent appalling destruction at Juukan Gorge by Rio Tinto's iron ore operation is just one example of this.

Mining also has its own environmental problems, such as land clearing and associated biodiversity loss, the pollution and contaminants it produces, and intensive water use.

The conditions of extracting these critical minerals in other parts of the world are dire. There's the oppressive working conditions in cobalt mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the conflict over Indigenous rights in Chile's lithium mining areas, and environmental destruction associated with mining rare earth minerals in China.

Broadening ideas about transport

To focus on these problems is not to suggest the new policies on electric vehicles are unimportant, or that they don't stand to have some positive environmental impact.

The point is private EVs are not a solution to the combined challenges of reducing our ur-

ban environmental footprints and making better cities for all, and that they have their own problems.

Instead, we should develop a good mass public transport system with extensive and frequent coverage. Alongside urban development with a more even distribution of jobs, services and opportunities, investing in better public transport could reduce car dependence in our cities.

This would have a range of environmental and social benefits: making more space available for people instead of machines, extending the benefits of mobility to people who can't or don't drive, and reducing demand for finite minerals.

Even fossil-fuelled public transport has fewer emissions than conventional car travel. Data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows the most fuel-efficient buses and trains generate less than half the carbon emissions per passenger kilometre of fuel-efficient cars. Of course, public transport powered by renewables will be even better.

But as things stand, we are far from having such a city. The benefits of good public transport and public services are unevenly distributed across our cities.

In Sydney, for example, there

time period are struggling through worse health conditions, both physically and mentally, than many of us sitting at home.

Every day, doctors are blamed for astronomical medical bills, even though their employers are typically the ones setting those prices. Doctors and nurses are yelled at and spoken down to on a regular basis, frequently held accountable for situations they don't have the power to control.

It's so easy to forget that a physician doesn't represent his entire hospital and that they're not the ones divvying up resources, hiking up medical prices, or making most of the decisions. No, the nurses and physicians are just front-line soldiers in the war against disease. They're not free to do as they please and they're not out to get you.

This situation, this disease, is no one's fault. No one woke up one day and decided, "Man, it sure would be fun to just ruin human society. I think I'll catch a

horrible life-threatening disease." Not one person out there, patient or physician or politician, had any power over all of this happening. But we can retain our human decency. We have the choice to do so.

A doctor can cure a thousand people, then lose one patient because of human error. Doctors aren't machines and when they're fighting to save this many people, even the most talented humans in the world will still only be human. So they lose one patient.

Then what happens? First, the media latches onto it, sensationalizes it, downplays every positive effort that person has ever made. None of the lives that get saved show up in the media. Newscasters don't want to interview the survivors, the people who would offer kind words of encouragement to the people who suffered and struggled and fought to save them. No. The cases that go well don't end up in the news, because it's not interesting enough. It won't get ratings.

So instead, the one loss out of a thousand, a loss that will haunt their nightmares forever already, a loss that they had to carefully

explain to an anxious family, a loss that hits the physician like a truck, is broadcast on national news stations. These doctors, already suffering, are under the constant threat of libel and slander because our insufferably irresponsible media outlets think it's funny to kick people at their lowest point.

Is it funny? Is it acceptable to tell someone who's trying his hardest that one mistake makes him a failure, a monster, and a fraud? Can you look the man who saved your child in the eyes and tell him that you're not impressed?

This seems like the perfect time to take a step back and ask ourselves if we're still human right now. It's easy to just gulp down everything the media forcibly shoves down your throat and believe that someone's out to get you. That's the only thing they want to talk about, after all.

But you were given free will. You have the power to investigate everything you hear. You should be able to decide for yourself whether or not the doctors of the world are worthy of your respect. Not because I said so or because the media said so. You're a human being, so what do you think?

To be clear, I don't think anyone's mistreating the physicians of our country on purpose. The people who demand them to be available 24/7 aren't malicious. They're scared. We're all scared right now and that's normal. Still, as human beings we have a responsibility to rise above that fear and above what we're told.

I say all this because they're scared too, these doctors. They're sleep-deprived, malnourished, and scared. They know that they're not living the healthiest lifestyle right now, but they're choosing to go to work every single day and fight for the lives of others. This isn't just a job to them. This is a calling that they heard and answered. I'm only asking that we, as a society, remember to respect their efforts.

I have decided to write to you because through your media it is certain that some of the people may get sense and become understandable about what is running on a doctors' mind. I hope that the general population will recognise Doctors' sincere efforts and sacrifice.

(The writer is pursuing Ph.D. in Sociology from University of Hyderabad)

## Doctors: Villains or victims?



K PAVANI SREE

IT'S no secret that doctors are more sorely needed now, during this pandemic, than any other time in modern memory.

That's not the point this article will focus on, though. How often do you consider the health and well-being of those doctors who are fighting Covid in the trenches?

Sure, we all want them to be healthy and well, of course, but do we do a good job of expressing our support? Honestly, I think the answer is a little difficult to hear. In general, doctors in this



# Hyd automen throw physical distancing norm to the wind

- Lockdowns have drastically affected livelihood of auto drivers, says Telangana Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union
- Union demands for govt assistance or relief

MEGHNA NATH  
HYDERABAD

LACK of proper unlock guidelines enforced by the State government has resulted in all sectors neglecting the Covid norms. Autorickshaw drivers in the city are giving social distancing norms a go-by.

Almost all autos are found not following the necessary social distancing norms of travelling with 2-3 passengers, more particularly in share-autos. A few are not sanitising the vehicles after each ride. Said T Anil, a private school teacher of Bowenpally: "Despite a fear of the virus spreading, the share autos are seen carrying more than four-five passengers at a time. Also, many times, while travelling I have requested auto drivers to wear masks and only to take two passengers at a time. I have seen



auto drivers waiting till their autos get full quota of passengers."

Bakash Kumar of Tarnaka observed that the auto-rickshaws are plying in the City without complying with Covid precautions--like no social distancing among passengers. "Amidst the possible third-wave warning and the State government's decision to re-open educational institutions from July 1, many students

travel in autos, it is high time the government issues an order that not more than two passengers travel in an auto and also proper travelling guidelines".

Mohammad Asif, general secretary, Telangana Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union maintained that "the lockdowns have drastically affected the livelihood of auto drivers. As still people are not opting to travel in autos and also

a driver's income has reduced, they are forced to carry more passengers unable to bear the rising expenses.

He stated that many drivers were sanitising their vehicles only twice a day. "We have many times requested the State government to announce some relief and assistance to drivers as the pandemic has affected them," Asif added.

## BIE asked to cancel recent appointment of principals

- Objection to non-issue of notification
- Telangana Gazetted Officers Association's Inter Vidya Forum urges secretary to fill all cadre posts

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana Gazetted Officers Association's Inter Vidya Forum on Thursday urged the Board of Intermediate Education (BIE) to cancel the recent appointment of some principals, on duty bases. The appointments were done by the secretary without issuing notification.

Forum leaders A Venkateshwarlu, V Praveen Kumar and Mohd. Ismail in a statement said that if the posts were notified a wide range of talents could have been attracted. This would result in the selection of the best. They feared that without a notification vested interests could exert pressure to hand pick their cronies.

The leaders said, "Another glaring discrepancy" observed in the appointments was ignoring junior lecturers, who also have a stake in strengthening the board and protect its reputation". The statement wanted all cadres to be appointed by issuing a general notification, with due process of filtration.

# Ready to resign on Krishna waters: TRS MLA

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE TRS Nagarkurnool legislator, Marri Janardhan Reddy, on Thursday claimed that the party MLAs were ready to resign for the cause of the Krishna waters.

The ruling party leaders continued to attack the Andhra Pradesh government on irrigation projects in Rayalaseema and former CM YS Rajasekhara Reddy at a press conference here on Thursday.

While R&B Minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy said that people of Hyderabad will not get even drinking water if the size of Pothireddypadu is increased, Janardhan Reddy asserted that they were ready to resign for the Krishna waters.

Prashanth Reddy stated that



the Krishna River Management Board had directed the AP government to stop the project. "The AP government issued a GO in May 2020 for increasing the size of Pothireddypadu. The Telangana government wrote to the board on May 11. The leaders who are speaking on this should know this before targeting me," said Prashanth Reddy. He alleged that the Congress party leaders were mute spectators when the

capacity was increased from 11,000 cusecs to 44,000 cusecs.

The TRS leader questioned why the BJP leaders were not speaking when their AP counterparts were indulging in criticism. Reddy reiterated that he was sticking to his comments on former CM YSR. "It is because of TRS, YSR could become Chief Minister. To defeat TDP, the Congress came for alliance with TRS," he recalled.

Janardhan Reddy cautioned AP CM YS Jaganmohan Reddy, stating that "KCR is like a lion. It is not good for Jagan to have conflicts with him.

Another MLA Balaraju alleged that the BJP was creating conflicts between States. He ruled out any link between irrigation projects and Huzurabad byelection.

## Azad appointed Spl Officer of Brahmangari Matham

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Endowments Department appointed Joint Commissioner Chandrasekhar Azad as the special officer of the Veerabrahmendra Swamy Matham in order to appoint a Peethadhipati as the successor

He will facilitate the selection of new Peethadhipati

of the Matham. Minister for Endowments Velampalli Srinivas instructed the Dharmika Parishat to take a decision on successor Peethadhipati of the Matham. Joint Commissioner Chandrasekhar Azad would facilitate the selection of

Peethadhipati process smoothly. In this respect, he was instructed to organise a meeting with various Peethadhipatis to discuss the appointment of Peethadhipati and complete the process as early as possible.

# Efforts on to resume tourism activities in AP: Minister

- The pandemic has caused a loss of about Rs 150 cr to tourism dept during the last one-and-half years, says Tourism Minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao
- Points out that AP has abundant potential to emerge as a world-class tourism hub
- Says he will visit Papikondalu in the first week of July and advise officers on the precautionary measures to be taken before starting boating operations

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

SALE of foreign liquor in all AP Tourism bars and restaurants for foreign tourists is a part of tourism promotion but not to encourage liquor sale in the State, said Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao, Minister for Tourism, Culture & Youth Advancement during a meeting held on Thursday at the Berm Park followed by a visit to Bhavani Island in Vijayawada.

The meeting was organised by Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation to unveil the resume of tourism



Tourism Minister M Srinivasa Rao and Endowments Minister Vellampalli Srinivasa Rao restarting boating operations on River Krishna at the Berm Park at Bhavanipuram in Vijayawada on Thursday

operations in the State and to discuss various aspects on tourism boat activities at Papikondalu Boating facility.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said the State government has taken several steps to develop and promote tourism sector in the State but due to coronavirus, for the past one and half year tourism sector across the globe was drastically affected. The department had incurred a loss of about Rs 150 crore. The State is blessed with bounty of tourism re-

sources to develop and promote the State as a world class tourism hub. Further he said, resuming of tourism operations and activities in all locations across the State envisaging a positive gesture for tourism. Referring to Papikondalu Boating activity, he said he will visit the location during the first week of July and instruct tourism officers to ensure precautionary measures before starting boating operations. The government has set up 9 boating control rooms at

different locations. A manager from Revenue Department, liaison officer from Water Resource Department and system operator from Tourism have been appointed to monitor boat operations.

APTDC has prepared the list of precautionary measures to be taken during boating on River Krishna & Godavari.

As of now there are 300 boats operating on rivers Krishna & Godavari. Out of these, 52 boats are being operated by AP Tourism.

# Get ready to face any situation, KTR tells GHMC officials

- Asks officials to take up nala-capping; to expedite fencing work
- Directs them to ensure no spread of seasonal diseases

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

WITH heavy rains lashing the City in a short span of time during the last few years, Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao on Thursday directed the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) officials to get ready to face any situation.



KTR asked officials to coordinate with different wings of GHMC and move forward with a perfect action plan. He asked officials to take up nala-capping or fencing work to be speeded up, as already administrative sanctions were given.

The minister inquired about the progress in nala-capping work in different areas of GHMC. He said the strategic

nala development programme (SNDP) would be strengthened further. Rao asked the Mayor and commissioner to supervise the nala work.

The minister asked officials to take all precautions at places where roads have been dug up, with suitable directions to work agencies. He also directed them to ensure there is no spread of seasonal diseases. "For this the Health and Sanitation departments should work in coordination. Give more emphasis to sanitation programmes. Take up fogging, anti-larval programmes", he told the Entomology wing.

## Applications invited for fire & safety courses

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE National Centre for Fire & Safety Engineering has invited applications for admission in to fire & safety, health & industrial safety courses. They include organising sub-fire officer, fire technology & industrial safety, occupational health safety & environment, health sanitary inspector. Those who passed Intermediate, degree, diploma and engineering courses are eligible to apply. After successfully completing the fire & safety courses, candidates will get job opportunities in oil and gas industry, mining, plantation and erection, thermal power stations, construction, airports, MNCs both in the country and abroad. July 15 is the last date for filing applications online, www.nct-india.com. For more information interested may call 97014-96748.

## Farmers dump grain on road

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
IBRAHIMPATNAM

FARMERS staged a protest in Ibrahimpatnam by dumping the grain on the road and blocking the road with tractors on Thursday. Farmers were outraged by the government's severe delay in purchasing the crop and staged a protest.

The farmers said that we brought our crops in tractors and lorries but the district co-operative and marketing department has been delaying the purchases. They said that earlier the district collector informed us that the government had delayed the delivery of the sacks for months in order to procure the paddy, but even after the sacks arrived the authorities are troubling us. Farmers also alleged that millers are cheating even at the time of purchase as they are deducting 6 to 10 kg of grain in just forty kilos in the name of quality. They also said the millers informed them that they received instructions from the district collector to deduct 6 to 10 of grain. Later, the farmers demanded that the issue be resolved immediately. Police raided farmers sitting on the road and cleared the traffic jam.

Farmers Venkat Reddy, Sathaiah, Padma, Srinivas and others were also present

# Proposed 33-storeyed hospital in Warangal

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

EVEN as the government is proposing to construct a 33-storeyed super specialty hospital in Warangal, experts in the medical field say that it is not construction, but maintenance will be a big challenge.

Experts said on Thursday that given the present circumstances of lack of availability of space, going for high-rise buildings was a good move. However, such structures should have all modern equipment for fire-fighting, elevators, fire escapes. There should be caution while selecting a plan for the building, they opined.

Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH), Hyderabad, director GVS Murthy said "multi-storeyed buildings are the new norm. Many hospitals in the US are around 40 storeys tall because by going vertical, construc-

- Maintenance will be a big challenge: experts
- Only concern will be treatment of bio-medical waste & fire safety

tion costs will decrease compared to going horizontal because foundations would have to be laid. In case of vertical mode, more storeys can be added on one foundation."

However, he pointed out that there are some challenges with high rise buildings. "There should not be open spaces. Anybody can jump from top in suicide attempts. This will be in the case of psychiatric patients and persons with depression, specially in the Mental Health department," said Murthy. "Generally, in super specialty hospitals half of the space is occupied by diagnostic wing and 20 per cent is used for administration."

Some experts favoured adequate safety mechanisms in place for high-rise buildings. "There should be a good number of lifts, fire escapes. You can't depend upon only one lift. There should be at least eight lifts, fighting equipment. Regular check-ups should be taken up following strict protocols. I don't know how strict the protocols will be in the government hospitals, said Murthy.

Indian Medical Association (IMA) Hyderabad president Dr JA Jayalal said that there should be a separate fire safety lift (secondary level) apart from the regular sprinklers. "There will be no problem if there are good lifts. In super-specialty hospitals the top floors are used for surgical, administrative offices and lower floors for patient wards. The only concern would be treatment of bio-medical waste and fire safety."

# TTD EO takes oath as specified authority chairman

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUMALA

FOLLOWING the government setting up the Specified Authority for TTD, Executive Officer Dr KS Jawahar Reddy and Additional EO AV Dharma Reddy have taken oath as Chairman and Convenor respectively of the Specified Authority in Tirumala temple on Thursday.

The Additional EO first administered oath to EO as Specified Authority Chairman at Bangaru Vakili in front of the Lord and later he took oath as Convenor.

After the oath taking, both participated in the Jyestabhishekam held at Sampangi Prakaram in the shrine. At Ranganayakula Mandapam both the Specified Authority Chairman and Convenor were rendered Vedaseervachanam by pundits. Theertha Prasadam were also presented to them.

Speaking to media outside the temple, Dr KS Jawahar Reddy said, with the blessings of Swamyvaru last year he was appointed as TTD EO and now the Government of Andhra Pradesh has given him the opportunity to serve as Chairman of Specified Authority also. While Additional EO was made Convenor.

He said the previous Board has taken many developmental programmes for the welfare of the pilgrim public. Some were completed while some are under progress. We will definitely look towards the completion of these works before the new Board is constituted especially with a special focus on the propagation of Hindu Sanatana Dharma, he added.



TTD EO Dr K S Jawahar Reddy and Additional EO AV Dharma Reddy after taking oath as Chairman and Convenor respectively of the Specified Authority at Tirumala temple on Thursday



# ISRO spy case: CBI files FIR against ex-Kerala cops

**The case surfaced in 1994 when Nambinarayanan was arrested on charges of espionage**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The CBI on Thursday registered an FIR in the infamous ISRO spy case in the Thiruvananthapuram Chief Judicial Magistrates court against 18 people, including two top former Kerala police officers.

The charges that have been listed against the ex-officers include conspiracy and fabrication of documents.

Things changed for the main victim S. Nambinarayanan, then a top ISRO scientist, after numerous long drawn court battles when the Supreme Court last year appointed a three-member committee headed by retired judge Justice D.K. Jain to probe if there was a conspiracy among then police officials

to falsely implicate Nambinarayanan.

The apex court which went through the report ordered the CBI to conduct a new probe.

Based on this directive, the CBI in April this year began the probe and on Thursday filed the FIR which implicates former Kerala DGP Siby Mathews who led the Kerala Police probe.

The list of accused includes former Gujarat DGP and then IB Deputy Director R.B. Sreekumar besides other police officials which includes S. Vijayan, Thampi S. Durgadutt, K.K. Joshua, who were all from the local police, which first registered the case.

The ISRO spy case surfaced in 1994 when Nambinarayanan was arrested on charges of espionage along with another senior official of ISRO, two Maldivian women and a businessman.



S Nambinarayanan

The CBI cleared him in 1995 and since then he has been fighting a legal battle against Siby Mathews, Vijayan and Joshua who probed the case and falsely implicated Nambinarayanan.

Siby Mathews took VRS, months before he was to have superannuated and became the Chief Information Officer of Kerala and has since retired from the post, is now settled in the state capital.

Incidentally the case emerged amid a factional feud in the Congress party between then CM K. Karunakaran's faction and the A.K. Antony faction that was at its zenith and Karunakaran had to quit office in 1995 after it was found that he was shielding his close aide and senior police officer Raman Srivastava who later became the state police chief and after retirement, he till recently was the advisor

to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Nambinarayanan by now has received compensation of Rs 1.90 crore from various agencies including the Kerala government which last year handed him Rs 1.30 crore and later an award of Rs 50 lakh as directed by the Supreme Court in 2018 and another Rs 10 lakh as directed by the National Human Rights Commission. The compensation was because he had to suffer wrongful imprisonment, malicious prosecution and humiliation.

In 2019, Nambinarayanan was awarded the Padma Bhushan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whenever he visits the state for political rallies, often refers to the travails faced by Nambinarayanan and how the BJP treated him with respect and consideration.

## WINDOWS

### Kerala's 1st photo journalist dies

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Veteran still photographer and film-maker Sivan died on Thursday. He was 89. Noted film-makers Sangeeth Sivan, Santhosh Sivan and Sanjeev Sivan are his sons. "It's with great sadness that I share with you all d tragic news that my father, Mr. Sivan, breathed his last today," Sangeeth Sivan, his son and noted film director, posted on Facebook. Sivan was the first press photographer in Kerala. He was also the still photographer of the classic Malayalam movie 'Chemmeen' which was released in 1965. Sivan directed 'Abhayam' in 1991, which bagged the national film award for the Best Children's film. 'Abhayam', 'Yagam', 'Mohangal', 'Kilivaathil, Keshu', 'Oru Yathra' are among his notable works.

### Malayalam actress 'clears' Bihar exam

PATNA: The Bihar Education Department continues to figure in controversies, now with Malayalam actress Anupama Parmeshwaran shown qualifying in the State Teacher Eligibility Test (STET).

In results published by STET, the certificate of Anupama Parmeshwaran went viral on social media, though it has only her photo while the name of the candidate is of a male person - Rishikesh Kumar, son of Ripusudan Prasad, and the date of birth is given as July 20, 1991.

'Anupama' has achieved 77.7 out of 150 in maths paper 1, and 95.4 in maths paper 2. Highlighting the latest example, Leader of Opposition in Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, attacked the state government and the STET.

"After Sunny Leone topped in the junior engineer examination, Malayalam actress Anupama Parmeswaran passed the STET examination. Nitish Ji (Chief Minister Nitish Kumar) is involved in examination and recruitment scams and destroying the future of youths in the state. He takes a decade to complete the recruitment process of one job and it happens with scam and irregularities," Tejashwi claimed.

# Doctor's 2-yr-old daughter gets trial jab

**Stop fooling us as we know the reality: Uttarakhand High Court slams Covid readiness**

KANPUR / NEW DELHI / MUMBAI

In a major development, a two-year-and-8-month-old girl has been administered the Covid vaccine in Kanpur Dehat during the ongoing trial of Bharat Biotech's Covaxin on children.

The girl is the daughter of a doctor in Kanpur Dehat.

The spokesperson of the Prakhar hospital, where the girl was vaccinated, said on Thursday that around five children, including three girls and two boys, in the age group of 2-6 years were given the vaccine at the hospital in Kanpur.

The children were kept under observation for two hours before they were allowed to go home, said the spokesperson. A safety profile of the children, who have been vaccinated, will be prepared.

In May, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had granted permission to Bharat Biotech to commence phase 2-3 trials of Covaxin on children as young as two.

The Uttarakhand High Court reprimanded the state government for the manner, in which it was preparing to deal with the third wave and asked it to gear up for the Delta Plus variant.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice RS Chauhan and Justice Alok Kumar Verma hearing a PIL related to the Uttarakhand government's handling of Covid-19, reprimanding Health Secretary Amit Negi and said that "you cannot leave the children to die, your arrangements are insufficient".

"Stop fooling us as we know the reality. Don't tell the Chief Justice that there is Ram Rajya in Uttarakhand and that we live in heaven," the high court said.

More than 2,000 people have fallen victim to fake vaccination camps in Mumbai so far, the Maharashtra government told the Bombay high court on Thursday.

The state government's counsel, chief public prosecutor Deepak Thakare told the court that at least nine fake camps had been held in the city till now, and four separate FIRs registered in this connection.

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences here is imparting special training to its nursing staff and creating a separate 100-bed Covid ward for children in view of the possibility of the third wave of coronavirus. "With experts warning that the third wave may affect children more than others, we are leaving nothing to chance," AIIMS Director Ravi Kant said.



Locals gather at Palm Beach Road as they protest against the naming of Navi Mumbai International Airport on Thursday. Only a few are wearing mask

## 2053 Mumbaiites fell victim to fake vaccine drives

### AIIMS, Rishikesh gears up for third wave

#### Village heads to help check Covid

LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has written to all the 'gram pradhans' (village heads) requesting them to intensify preventive measures in view of a possible third Covid-19 wave.

Adityanath has made a four-point appeal, saying, "We have to save people's lives as well as their livelihoods."

The Chief Minister has written that Uttar Pradesh has been able to control the second wave of Covid and he has called upon the village heads to ensure proper surveillance through the 'surveillance committees' in timely identification and isolation of Covid patients to curb further spread of the virus.

#### Covid testing scam: HC grants protection

DEHRADUN: The Uttarakhand High Court has granted protection to executives of Max Corporate Services from arbitrary arrest in connection with the alleged fake Covid testing scam during the Haridwar Kumbh Mela and asked the agency to join the investigation.

Justice N S Dhanik on Wednesday granted protection to the accused from arbitrary arrest in the scam after the Delhi-based agency's partner Mallika Pant went to the court on behalf of the agency challenging the FIR against it, the petitioner's counsel Kartikey Hari Gupta said. However, the court asked the agency to cooperate in the investigation and appear before the investigation officer in the case on Friday, he said.

#### Cops molested while checking mask

AMROHA : A man on a motorcycle, who was stopped for not wearing a mask, allegedly misbehaved with two women police constables and also tore up the uniform of one of them in a busy market in Amroha district.

The women constables, attached to the anti-Romeo squad -- formed in every district to check harassment of women, were conducting a routine checking drive when they were attacked.

No one came forward to help the two women during the scuffle. Later, the two constables managed to overpower the accused, Mohammad Zaid, who lives in Pakki Sarai area of the district. A 10-year-old child was also with him at the time of the incident on Wednesday.

### 9-year-old girl beats post Covid complication in 12 days

NEW DELHI: Having unknowingly contracted coronavirus, nine-year-old Divyanshi defeated the deadly disease within 12 days despite her critical fight with the serious life threatening post-Covid Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) complication.

Thanks to a dedicated team of doctors in Noida's a Fortis hospital who successfully treated Divyanshi-- a resident of Noida and lucky among 25 MIS-C patients who have been treated at the healthcare facility so far with a 100 per cent success rate. The girl was admitted on June 6 and discharged from hospital on June 18.

She was admitted to the hospital with a history of high fever, abdominal pain, loose motions, dehydration and falling SpO2 (also known as oxygen saturation), Fortis said in a statement, adding that she was in a very critical condition and was diagnosed to have MIS-C. MIS-C is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs.

Children with MIS-C may have a fever and various symptoms, including abdominal (gut) pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, neck pain, rash, bloodshot eyes, or feeling extra tired. However, many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes Covid-19 or had been around someone with Covid-19. At the time of her admission in the hospital, the girl's parents were not aware that she had contracted Covid in the past. Ashutosh Sinha, Additional Director (Paediatrics), Fortis Hospital Noida, said: "The child was in extremely critical condition when she reached the hospital. We highly suspected MIS-C which is usually a post Covid complication, but the parents shared that there was no history of Covid. We knew we had to act fast, and we immediately sent her blood samples to our labs (along with an antibody test)."

### Sedition charges: Ayesha let off by Lakshadweep police

LAKSHADWEEP : Filmmaker Ayesha Sulthana, facing allegations of sedition in Lakshadweep, was let off by the Lakshadweep police on Thursday

after interrogation. Sulthana was interrogated by the Kavaratti police on Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday in connection with the case registered on the basis of a complaint filed by a BJP leader in the Islands.

Emerging from the police station, Kavaratti, after nearly a three-hour long interrogation, Sulthana said, "Everything is over. I am told that I can go back to Kochi. I will reach Kochi tomorrow or a day after." The allegation is that the filmmaker, while participating in a debate telecast by a Malayalam news channel on June 7, had said the Centre used biological weapons against the people of Lakshadweep.



## Twitter India MD gets relief from HC

BENGALURU/GHAZIABAD: In a relief to Twitter India head Manish Maheshwari, the Karnataka High Court on Thursday restrained Ghaziabad police,

which has summoned him in connection with a probe related to the assault of an elderly Muslim man there, from initiating coercive action against him. The single bench of Justice G Narendar said the police can examine Maheshwari through virtual mode. "If the police desire to examine the petitioner (Manish Maheshwari), they may do so through virtual mode," the court said. "If the matter requires consideration, we list it on June 29. In the meanwhile restraining the respondents from initiating any coercive action against the petitioner," the court maintained.

Appearing on behalf of Maheshwari, advocate C V Nagesh said someone had posted a video on the Twit-

ter platform alleging that a Muslim was forced to chant 'Jai Sri Ram' and 'Vande Mataram'. When he refused, his beard was cut. Subsequently a notice under section 161 of the CrPC was issued to Maheshwari by email and responding to it, he said he would be ready to appear virtually. Soon the police issued a notice under section 41(A) asking him to appear in person within 24 hours to travel from Bengaluru to Ghaziabad, which was not possible for Maheshwari, Nagesh told the court. The court maintained that the petitioner is an employee of Twitter Communication India Private Lim-

ited handling marketing and sales and not a member of board of directors to be responsible for uploading of the alleged video based on which the FIR was registered.



### Nothing was gained from Pawar's Oppn meet: Sena

MUMBAI: Taking a swipe at the high-profile political meeting at Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar's Delhi residence, Shiv Sena

mouthpiece Saamana on Thursday said that nothing was gained from the meeting corresponding to the hype media had given it. The Shiv Sena had given the meeting a miss which was convened by Pawar reportedly to form a united opposition front against the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government. "A meeting of a group of opposition parties called 'Rashtra Manch' was held at the residence of Sharad Pawar at his 6 Janpath residence in Delhi. Nothing was gained from the meeting in correspondence with the hype media had given it," read the editorial. It added that some people joined the meeting only for the sake of BJP's and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's opposition.



# Pak red-faced as Doval proposes action against Lashkar, Jaish

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, who attended a meeting of top security officials from member nations of the Shanghai Corporation Organisation (SCO) in Dushanbe on Wednesday, proposed an action plan against Pakistan-based terrorist organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeT) as part of SCO framework.

During the SCO meet, National Security Advisors of member countries pledged cooperation in the joint fight against international terrorism, extremism and separatism.

Doval strongly condemned "terrorism in all forms and manifestations" and said that perpetrators of terrorism, including cross-border terror attacks, should be expeditiously brought to justice.

He said there is a need to monitor new technologies used by terrorists, including drones for smuggling of weapons and misuse of dark web, artificial intelligence, blockchain and social media. He added that there is a need for full Implementation of UN resolutions and targeted sanctions against UN designated terrorist individuals and entities.

He also emphasised on the adoption of international standards to counter terror-financing, including an MOU between SCO and Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Though India became SCO Member in 2017, Doval said, it has physical, spiritual, cultural and philosophical inter-linkages for centuries with countries that now make up SCO.

There is a need to preserve gains made in last



two decades in Afghanistan and give top priority to welfare of its people, he said. India fully supports the SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan, which should be more active, he added.

He also said that greater connectivity, including through initiatives like Chahbahar, INSTC, Regional Air Corridors and Ashgabat Agreement, always leads to economic gains and building trust, however, connectivity must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Pakistani National Security Advisor Moeed Yusuf and Afghan NSA Hamdullah Mohib were among the participants at the in-person meeting that is discussing key regional security issues, including the evolving situation in Afghanistan.

The SCO, seen as a counterweight to NATO, is an eight-member economic and security bloc

and has emerged as one of the largest trans-regional international organisations. India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017. SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the Presidents of Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS), which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.

India was made an observer at the SCO in 2005 and has generally participated in the ministerial-level meetings of the grouping which focus mainly on security and economic cooperation in the Eurasian region.



## TODAY'S QUOTE

### Centre, States to jointly work on maritime sector

“The states should see the proposed ‘Indian Port Bill’ as a ‘development issue’ rather than a political issue. This bill will facilitate optimum utilisation and management of the coastline by the Centre and maritime states. Both the Centre and state governments will jointly work on the development of the maritime sector including several non-functional ports

— **Mansukh Mandaviya**, Union Minister



## OTT

### Disney+Hotstar to hire 250 people

Content streaming platform Disney+Hotstar on Thursday said it will recruit about 250 people in the country across different levels and verticals to drive its next phase of rapid growth and transformation as it looks to compete more aggressively against rivals like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video

## FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	75.14	South	
Euro	89.65	African Rand	5.52
UAE Dirham	20.6	Hong Kong Dollar	10.03
Thai Baht	2.47	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.84	New Zealand Dollar	52.99
Australian Dollar	56.89	Saudi Riyal	21.76
Canadian Dollar	61.1	Swedish Krona	9.28
Swiss Franc	81.69	Singapore Dollar	56.14

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## BIZ BRIEFS

### Udaan, Captain Harvest in pact

Udaan has announced a major initiative in the unorganised bulk staples market in partnership with Captain Harvest brand. As part of this partnership, Captain Harvest range of quality and affordable bulk staples including atta, maida, wheat, rice, pulses, etc., will be available exclusively on the Udaan platform. This national level intervention is aimed at solving the problem of inconsistency in product quality, availability, affordability and weight compliance. Vivek Gupta, head (food business), Udaan, said: “One of the biggest challenges faced by the Kirana stores today is the availability of quality and affordable products in the unorganised bulk staples market. This initiative will also help the farmers and small millers of our country enjoy the benefits of e-Commerce scale, which is in line with our mission of empowering small businesses of Bharat leveraging technology.”

### SBI unveils new product

The State Bank of India has launched the Aarogyaam Healthcare Business Loan. This new product provides entire healthcare ecosystem such as hospitals, nursing homes, diagnostic centres, pathology labs, manufacturers, suppliers, importers, logistic firms engaged in critical healthcare supply to avail of loans upto Rs100 crore (as per the geographic location) repayable in 10 years. They can either avail as term loan to support expansion or modernization or as working capital facilities such as cash credit, bank guarantee and letter of credit. Dinesh Khara, Chairman, SBI, said: “Our Healthcare system has been providing uninterrupted and phenomenal support over the last year to the country amidst the pandemic.”

### FTCCI releases report on pulses

The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) has submitted a report on pulses opportunities and way forward. Report prepared by FTCCI Research Team headed by T Sujatha, Dy CEO, FTCCI. The main objective of the report is to develop policy recommendations to enhance the production, consumption, and processing of pulses in Telangana State. The issue with India is that it is more vegetarian than any other society in the world and pulses are also the most economic source of protein for Indians. S Niranjan Reddy, Telangana Minister for Agriculture, Co-operation and Marketing, said: “We thank FTCCI for preparing the Pulses Report. As recommended in the report, Govt will take initiative to encourage farmers.”

### IHCL delivers 1mn meals

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) has announced that it had crossed the milestone of over one million meals delivered by its culinary platform Qmin to healthcare providers battling the fierce second wave of the pandemic. The outreach of the initiative has been expanded to cover 38 hospitals in 12 cities across 10 States. Gaurav Pokhriyal, senior vice-president, global head (human resources), IHCL, said: “Guided by our culture of Tajness and keeping community at the heart of everything, we stand in solidarity with the nation in the battle against Covid. This opportunity allowed us to play a small role in nurturing and nourishing those who have kept us safe during these times. We remain grateful to all our Covid warriors, the medical fraternity.”

## RIL unveils ₹75k-crore mega plan in clean energy space

# Ambani sets eyes on green energy



## Oil-to-retail-to-telecom conglomerate to generate 100GW solar power by 2030

### MUMBAI

RELIANCE Industries Ltd (RIL) on Thursday announced a Rs 75,000-crore investment in new energy business over the next three years as the operator of the world's largest oil refinery pivots towards a greener and cleaner version. Reliance will build solar manufacturing units, a battery factory for energy storage, a fuel cell-making plant and an electrolyser unit to produce green hydrogen as a part of the business, Chairman Mukesh Ambani said at the company's annual general meeting with shareholders on Thursday.

It will also set up 100 gigawatts (GW) of solar power generation capacity by 2030 and invest in setting up a carbon fibre plant. The company, which earns about 60 per cent of revenue from its hydrocarbon-fuelled energy operations, had last year set a target of becoming a net-zero carbon company by 2035 - a shorter time frame compared to the 2050 cutoff self-imposed by many of its global peers, including BP Plc and Royal Dutch Shell Plc.

This comes as energy giants around the world come under pressure to move towards a low-carbon future to help improve the environ-

### BRIDGING GREEN ENERGY DIVIDE

- RIL to invest Rs 60,000 cr to build integrated solar photovoltaic factory, battery making unit, a fuel cell-making plant and an electrolyzer unit to produce green hydrogen
- Additional Rs 15,000-cr investment will be in the value chain,



partnerships and future technologies, including upstream and downstream industries

- Plans a carbon fibre plant
- Aims to be net-zero carbon company by 2035
- Raised Rs 3.25-lakh cr capital through equity sale in Jio Platform and retail, rights issue, asset monetisation

“All our products will proudly proclaim: Made in India, by India, for India and for the world!” Also, Reliance is evolving a vision for new materials and green chemicals

— **Mukesh Ambani**, Chairman, RIL

ment. Last year, “I had announced our 15-year commitment to become net carbon zero by 2035. Today I am happy to present to you our ambitious strategy and roadmap for implementing this vision,” Ambani, 64, said.

“The age of fossil fuels, which powered economic growth globally for nearly three centuries, cannot continue much longer.” The three-year plan includes building ‘four

Giga factories’. “Over the next three years, we will invest over Rs 60,000 crore in these initiatives,” he said. “Reliance will thus create and offer a fully integrated, end-to-end renewable energy ecosystem.”

The integrated solar photovoltaic Giga factory will create solar energy. It will use raw silica to make high-efficiency solar cells. “Reliance will establish and enable at least 100 GW of solar energy by 2030. A significant

part of this will come from rooftop solar and decentralised solar installations in villages,” he said. To store energy, thus generated, the firm will set up a factory to make advanced energy storage batteries. Besides electricity, Reliance also intends to produce green hydrogen that can be used as fuel in automobiles. It will set up a fuel cell factory that will use oxygen from the air and hydrogen to generate electricity.

### Fitch rates RIL above Indian govt

NEW DELHI: FITCH Ratings has upgraded Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) rating to ‘BBB’, one notch above India's sovereign rating, as the company benefits from cash flow generation across diversified business segments and continuation of deleveraging.

In a statement, Fitch said it has upgraded RIL's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating (IDR) to ‘BBB’, from ‘BBB-’, with a negative outlook. At the same time, the agency has affirmed RIL's long-term local-currency IDR at ‘BBB+’ with a stable outlook.

## SIS among best companies to work for

### HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

SECURITY and Intelligence Services (SIS) Ltd, has been ranked 31st amongst best companies to work in India by the Great Place to Work (GPTW).

Serving over 19,000 sites across 670 districts in the country, the frontline workers of SIS continued to support critical infrastructure especially healthcare facilities in the country. With a workforce of 2.3 lakh employees, the company has been extending support to over 400 healthcare facilities with security, hygiene, and sanitization frontline staff. SIS instituting welfare measures for its employees and their people with industry standards. “As India's largest essential services provider, we have strived not only to stand by our customers but also to look



after our employees who have played the part of true Covid warriors. This recognition inspires us to continue to put people first and aspire to relentlessly become the best employer of all time,” said Rituraj Sinha, Group Managing Director, SIS. The company has also pledged over Rs 10 crore to a Covid welfare fund to assist and provide employees with a safety net during the second wave of the pandemic as these essential workers continue to assist customers in locations including high-risk sites such as hospitals, path labs, quarantine centres, among other segments.

## Reliance Retail to create 10 lakh jobs

### NEW DELHI

RELIANCE Industries' (RIL) retailing arm Reliance Retail would grow at least three times in the next 3 to 5 years, Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani said on Thursday.

It continues to be among the fastest-growing retailers globally and the company aims to be among the top ten retailers of the world, Ambani said at RIL's annual general meeting with shareholders. In the next three years, Reliance Retail will create employment opportunities for over ten lakh people and enable the livelihoods for many more, he added. Reliance Retail will continue

to acquire businesses to heighten its offering, sharpen omnichannel capabilities, and drive operating efficiencies, as it has recently acquired digital platforms as Netmeds, Urban Ladder and Zivame, Ambani said.

The company has plans to onboard over one crore merchant partners over the next three years on its e-Commerce venture JioMart

its store footprint multi-fold this year, with co-located delivery hubs in the next few years. “I am confident that Reliance Retail is on a hyper-growth trajectory to grow at least 3X in the next 3 to 5 years,” Ambani said. Despite a challenging year, Reliance Retail had revenues of Rs 1,53,818 crore

and an EBITDA (pre-tax profit) of Rs 9,842 crore in FY21. “We are by far the leader in each category—grocery, electronics and apparel,” Ambani said. Reliance Retail would further invest in our research, design and product development capabilities along with strengthening its sourcing ecosystem and supply chain infrastructure to maximise efficiencies, he added.

“An automated, modular, reliable and scalable warehousing and logistics ecosystem will enable us to deliver products anywhere across the country in the shortest possible time,” he said. In the pandemic impacted FY21, Reliance Retail added 1,500 new stores, which is among the largest retail expansion undertaken by any retailer during this period. Reliance Retail has a total store count of 12,711. “We continue to maintain and strengthen our leadership position. Today, one in every eight Indians shops with Reliance Retail,” Ambani said.

## ...to conclude \$15-bn deal with Aramco this year

**Mumbai:** Saudi Aramco chairman and head of the Kingdom's cash-rich wealth fund PIF Yasir Othman Al-Rumayyan will join the board of Reliance Industries Ltd as a precursor to a \$15-billion deal that is now expected to conclude this year. RIL chairman and Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani told shareholders that a deal to sell a 20 per cent stake in the company's oil-to-chemical unit to Saudi Aramco was expected to conclude this year. Harvard educated Al-Rumayyan, 51, will replace Yogendra P Trivedi, 92, who has expressed a desire to retire, Ambani said. “Despite several challenges due to Covid-19, we have made substantial progress in the past in our discussions (with Saudi Aramco),” he said. “I expect our partnership to be formalised in an expeditious manner during this year.”

## Key indices rally on robust buying in IT stocks

MUMBAI: Equity indices regained footing on Thursday after a day's pause as robust buying in IT counters more than made up for a fall in market major Reliance Industries (RIL).

A rebounding rupee and positive global cues further bolstered sentiment, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 392.92 points or 0.75 per cent higher at 52,699. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty surged 103.50 points or 0.66 per cent to 15,790.45. Technology shares led the rally, a day after the government liberalised guidelines for voice-based BPOs to cement India's position as a preferred global outsourcing hub. Infosys topped the Sensex gainers' chart with a leap of 3.75 per cent, followed by TCS, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, Asian Paints, L&T and Nestle India. On the other hand, Reliance Industries was the top drag on the index, slumping 2.35 per cent, after its Chairman Mukesh Ambani announced massive capex plans in green energy and other sectors at its annual general meeting.

## S&P cuts India's FY22 growth forecast to 9.5%

### Says 2nd wave of Covid results in sharp contraction in economic activity

### NEW DELHI

S&P Global Ratings on Thursday cut India's growth forecast for the current fiscal to 9.5 per cent, from 11 per cent earlier, and warned of risk to the outlook from further waves of Covid pandemic.

The agency lowered the growth outlook saying that a severe second Covid-19 outbreak in April and May led to lockdowns imposed by states and sharp contraction in economic activity. “We forecast growth of 9.5 per cent this fiscal year from our March forecast of 11 per cent,” S&P said. Stating that permanent damage to private and public sector balance sheets will constrain growth over the next couple of years, it projected India's growth at 7.8 per cent in the next fiscal ending March 31, 2023. “Further pandemic waves are a risk to the outlook given that only about 15 per cent of the



population has received at least one vaccine dose so far, although vaccine supplies are expected to ramp up,” S&P said.

Indian economy contracted by 7.3 per cent in fiscal 2020-21 as the country battled the first wave of Covid, as against a four per cent growth in 2019-20. GDP growth in the current fiscal was estimated to be in double digits initially, but a severe second wave of pandemic has led to various agencies cut growth projections. Earlier this month, RBI too cut India's growth forecast to 9.5 per cent for this fiscal, from 10.5 per cent estimated earlier.

It said manufacturing and exports were less severely affected compared with 2020, but services were acutely disrupted. Consumption indicators such as vehicle sales fell sharply in May 2021 and consumer confidence remains downbeat. “The economy has turned a corner now. New Covid-19 cases have been falling consistently and mobility is recovering. We expect this recovery to be less steep compared with the bounce in late 2020 and early 2021,” it said.

S&P said households are running down saving buffers to support consumption and a desire to rebuild saving could hold back spending even as the economy reopens. “Monetary and fiscal policies will remain accommodative but new stimulus will not be forthcoming,” it added. S&P said RBI has no room to cut interest rates with inflation above 6 per cent the upper end of the central bank target range.

## Sri Chaitanya enters edtech segment

### Unveils Infinity Learn, earmarks \$50 mn investment

### HYDERABAD

EDUCATIONAL services firm Sri Chaitanya group on Thursday announced its foray into the education technology space with Infinity Learn, earmarking \$50 million (about Rs 370 crore) investment for the new venture.

Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions founder and Chairman B S Rao said the institute has been mentoring students since last 35 years and given the present situation of Covid-19 pandemic, it is the right time to venture into the edtech space. “We are entering the edtech segment with decades of experience of delivering knowledge which is not just limited to textbooks. Entire USD 50 million investment that we are making in Infinity Learn is from our internal funds. We have aggressive plans and aim to be a top player in the segment,” Rao said.

Infinity Learn offers students free mock tests so that they can

assess themselves and then work further to enhance their knowledge. “We have hired 100 people for Infinity Learn which includes industry professionals and technical people for building content. We are also partnering with external agencies where we feel we can acquire content without compromising on quality. Though we have come late into the edtech space, we are coming with experience of content that can be of help for students. We will be looking for acquisitions to build up our capacities,” Sri Chaitanya co-founder Sushma Boppana said.

She further said Infinity Learn should be able to catch up with established players in the edtech segment in 6-12 months. “We will keep adding new features every month. In six months, we will be ready for CBSE students to prepare for board examinations,” Boppana said.



# India fail to crack the Black Caps code again in ICC tournaments

SOUTHAMPTON

INDIA against New Zealand in International Cricket Council (ICC) tournaments in the last few years are like Roger Federer against Rafael Nadal on clay courts of the French Open, never finding a way to win. On Wednesday, the Kiwis inflicted the sixth successive defeat on India in ICC tournaments by winning the World Test Championship final.

The last time India managed to beat New Zealand was back in the 2003 50-over World Cup under Sourav Ganguly when left-arm pace bowler Zaheer Khan took four wickets as India skittled out the Kiwis for 146 and won by seven wickets in Centurion. Since then, it has been all New Zealand as they have scored wins over India in T20 World Cup, 50-over World Cup as well as the World Test Championship matches.

Here is a look at where India have lost to New Zealand over the last 13-plus years in ICC tournaments:

## 2007 World T20, league match, Johannesburg:

The Kiwis scored 190 batting first with Brendon McCullum scoring 45 (31 balls) and Craig McMillan hitting 44 (off 23 balls). In response, India finished 10 runs short of the target at 180/9



in 20 overs. Left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori picked up four wickets for 20 runs to put in a man-of-the-match performance.

## 2016 T20 World Cup Super-10 match, Nagpur:

Indians bowled tightly to restrict New Zealand to 126/7 in 20 overs on a pitch that helped spinners. Corey Anderson, with 34 off 42 balls, and Luke Ronchi (21 off 11) were the only noteworthy contributors for New Zealand. However, the visitors'

spin trio Nathan McCullum, Mitchell Santner and Ish Sodhi shared nine wickets to skittle out India for 79. The Kiwis won by 47 runs.

## 2019 50-over World Cup semi-final:

One of the most disappointing losses for India. Having topped the league table with 15 points, the Virat Kohli-led team was favourite to win the tie played over two days due to inclement weather. Thanks to skipper

Kane Williamson (67 off 95) and Ross Taylor (74 off 90), the Kiwis made 239. India's batting, however, fell apart when they batted on the second day (reserve day), losing the first three wickets for five runs. Despite Ravindra Jadeja's 77 off 59 balls, India were all out for 221 and ended 18 runs short.

## WTC two-Test series in New Zealand, 2020:

India lost the first Test in Wellington by 10 wickets. Bat-

ting first, they folded for 165 in 68.1 overs as Tim Southee and Kyle Jamieson picked up four wickets each. The Kiwis made 348 with the help of 89 from skipper Kane Williamson. The 183-run lead proved too much for India as they lost seven wickets in the second innings before they could clear the lead.

India lost the second Test in Christchurch by seven wickets. Even though they put up a better first innings score (242) this time and took a seven-run lead thanks to Mohammed Shami's four-wicket and Jasprit Bumrah's three-wicket hauls, they were crushed in the match. The batting crumbled for 124 in the second innings against the pace of Tim Southee (3/36) and Trent Boult (4/28). The 132-run target proved to be a cakewalk for the Kiwis.

## WTC final, Southampton 2021:

The most recent match that ended on Wednesday looked like it would end in a draw. However, New Zealand's four-pronged pace attack turned the tide in their team's favour, dismissing India for a paltry 170 after they had resumed the sixth - reserve - day's play at 64/2. The small target of 139 proved to be a cakewalk as both Ross Taylor and Kane Williamson shared an unbeaten 96-run partnership for the third wicket to take their team home.

## Williamson finally takes Kiwis to pinnacle of Crowe's dream

SOUTHAMPTON

KANE Williamson, considered the greatest New Zealand batsman after the late Martin Crowe, fulfilled a dream of the former Kiwis batsman by leading his team to the ICC World Test Championship title win.

Ahead of the 2015, 50-over World Cup final, an ailing Crowe desperately wanted to see a New Zealand team win an ICC tournament. Barring the ICC knockouts title in 2000, the cupboard of Kiwis was dry with Crowe himself missing out on the 1992 World Cup as captain as his side lost a close semi-final.

New Zealand lost a one-sided final to Australia in 2015. A year later, Crowe passed away. New Zealand reached the final of 50-over World Cup again, in 2019, but lost again on boundary count, this time to England.

Williamson, the then skipper, remained unfazed and refused to criticise the rule. "It is a very special occasion and a fantastic feeling," said Williamson in the post-match press conference.

"We have been involved in a couple of finals previously, and I suppose the first one (2015) was one-sided, the second one (2019) was pretty interesting, and this feeling is a bit different to those, which is great. I know the guys will celebrate that," added Williamson.

The 30-year-old, considered among the four best batsmen of this era, was relieved to be on the right side of the result, which they weren't in the last two 50-over World Cups.

"2019 was a great occasion and a brilliant game of cricket as well. But obviously, it's a slightly different feeling, being on the right side of the result for us, and also a part of a great game of cricket and a great occasion, the first official World Test Championship. This is a really good feeling," he said. India were the favourites ahead of the final, having won more overseas series and having been more seriously tested than New Zealand through the course of WTC. Blackcaps' series victories had come only on home soil. That apart, India were full of stars, riding on the high of having beaten Australia in Australia.

"I think for us, we know we don't always have the stars, and we use our bits and pieces to stay in games and be competitive," said Williamson.

"I think we saw that in this match. I think we saw a lot of heart, a lot of commitment. What's important to our group is our commitment to our style of cricket. And we had to, we know how strong this Indian side is in all conditions. We've seen it for a long time.

"It's the pinnacle, isn't it, being involved in the final.. For us it's a very proud moment in our history and a proud moment, just as a team really, to stick to what we do well and come away with the win, which is a really great feeling," he added.

## Ashwin ends WTC 2019-21 cycle as leading wicket-taker

SOUTHAMPTON

PREMIER India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin finished the 2019-21 World Test Championship cycle as the leading wicket-taker with 71 scalps to his credit.

The 34-year-old Tamil Nadu off-spinner achieved the feat during the World Test Championship final against New Zealand, which was his

14th Test in this cycle of WTC. His 71st victim was New Zealand opener Devon Conway.

Ashwin picked up two wickets each in the first (2/28) and second innings (2/17) in the final. The Kane Williamson-led New Zealand won the first WTC after defeating India by eight wickets.

Ashwin ended up with four five-wicket hauls in the WTC with seven for 145 being his best in an innings.

He also scored 324 runs with a century to boot.

Australian pacer Pat Cummins with 70 wickets to his name from 14 Tests finished second on the list, while English speedster Stuart Broad finished third on the list with 69 scalps from 17 Tests. Then it was New Zealand pacer Tim Southee and Australian spinner Nathan Lyon, who both had 56 wickets each to their names in this cycle. (PTI)

## NZ bowlers consistent over long period of time: Kohli

SOUTHAMPTON

INDIAN skipper Virat Kohli called New Zealand a structured side which has extremely fit bowlers who bowl consistently over a long period of time. The New Zealand bowling attack has been successful in dismissing Indian batting for under 200 on four occasions in the last six innings.

"They're a very effective side. We've seen that over the years. They're a very structured side and they like to play their cricket in certain manner. As I said, you need to find ways to disrupt that," said Kohli in the press conference after the match.



Kohli said fitness and consistency allows New Zealand bowlers to bowl long spells in the same areas which often leads to breakthroughs.

Kohli himself was a victim of that consistency and so were Cheteshwar

Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane, who all fell in the first session on the sixth day.

"If you don't put their bowlers under pressure, then they have the fitness and consistency to bowl long spells and keep bowling all day in the same areas and trouble you, and the more momentum you give them, then invariably they get the breakthroughs they want," added Kohli.

The 32-year-old India's No. 4 in batting line-up praised tall and lanky pace bowler Kyle Jamieson who picked him in both the innings. Jamieson got him LBW with one that came in during the first innings and then had him caught behind in the second innings. (IANS)

## EURO 2020 CHAMPIONSHIPS

## Spain put 5 past Slovakia, book last-16 berth

### Unbeaten Sweden top Group E after defeaing Poland 3-2

SEVILLE (SPAIN)

SPAIN produced their best performance of the group stages to qualify for the last-16 of the European Championships with an impressive 5-0 win over Slovakia.

The Spanish showed the determination to carry on after missing their second penalty of the tournament and completely dominated a disappointing Slovakian side for the full 90 minutes on Wednesday, reports Xinhua news agency. Spain coach Luis Enrique made four changes to the side that disappointed against Poland, with Cesar Azpilicueta, Sergio Busquets, Pablo Sarabia and Eric Garcia coming into the side. Dani Olmo, Rodri, Pau Torres and Manuel Llorente were dropped.

All four enjoyed good games, with Busquets controlling the midfield and Sarabia outstanding in attack. Meanwhile, Unbeaten Sweden topped Group E after beating Poland on a brace from Emil Forsberg and a goal from Victor Claesson at the Saint Petersburg Stadium. Poland needed a win for qualification, but the Poles caught the worst possible start into the game as Forsberg's left-footed effort into the far post corner made it 1-0 with 83 seconds played on Wednesday, reports Xinhua.

## Portugal tie France, both reach knockouts

BUDAPEST

FRANCE and defending champions Portugal both qualified for the round-of-16 at the Euro 2020 after they played out a 2-2 draw in a thrilling match that saw three penalties given and scored. Before the game, the Euro 2016 winners only needed to avoid defeat to advance. Portugal would have finished on top had they won, and Germany lost. For France, they had secured a spot in the round-of-16 before the game, reports Xinhua. Kylian Mbappe almost put the 2018 World Cup winners France ahead in the 16th minute with a low shot, after collecting Paul Pogba's accurate through ball, but the talented French player's attempt was denied by Portugal goalkeeper Rui Patricio. The first of the spot-kicks came when Hugo Lloris raced off his line to punch a cross clear but caught Danilo first. The penalty was given, and Cristiano Ronaldo converted from the spot. Karim Benzema levelled for France with a penalty before the half break, after it was adjudged that Nelson Semedo had halted an off-the-ball run of Kylian Mbappe in the box.



## ICC shifts two World Cup Europe qualifiers from Scotland to Spain

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Thursday shifted the women's T20 World Cup Europe Qualifier and the U19 men's World Cup Europe Qualifier from Scotland to Spain due to COVID-19 restrictions at the original venue. The first event to be relocated from Scotland to Spain is the Europe Qualifier to the 2023 women's T20 World Cup in South Africa. The Qualifier, which is two steps away from the World Cup, with unchanged dates of August 26-30, will see France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scotland and Turkey all competing at La Manga. France and Turkey will be taking part in an ICC women's event for the first time ever. The 2022 U19 men's World Cup Europe Qualifier is also being relocated from Scotland to Spain and will now take place between September 19 to 25 at La Manga. Ireland, Jersey, the Netherlands and Scotland will compete for one World Cup spot. (PTI)

## Sania and Mattek-Sands crash out of Viking International Eastbourne

EASTBOURNE (UK): Indian tennis star Sania Mirza and her doubles partner Bethanie Mattek-Sands lost their first round match in straight sets at the Viking International Eastbourne here. The unseeded Indo-American pair lost 3-6 4-6 to the Christina Mchale and Sabrina Santamaria of USA in a match that lasted one hour 18 minutes late on Wednesday night. The 34-year-old winner of six Grand Slams in doubles will pair up with Mattek-Sands in the women's doubles event of Wimbledon, starting on June 28. (PTI)

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