

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

VISAKHAPATNAM | FRIDAY | 7 AUGUST 2020

WEATHER

Max: 30.8°C
Min: 26.4°C
RH: 77%
Rainfall: Trace
Forecast: Drizzle.
Max/Min temp.
30/26°C

COVID-19 C

CASES (+53,701)
DEATHS (+913)
19,59,822 40,732

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,012) (+13)
TS: 70,958 576

(+10,128) (+77)
AP: 1,86,461 1,681

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

1,88,33,253

DEATHS
707,136

COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES
213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

COVID-19 C

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ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Shravana Bahula Chaturthi till 2.07 am (Saturday)
Star: Purvabhadra till 1.34 pm
Varjyam: 12.14 am to 2 am (Saturday)
Durmuhurtam: 8.33 am to 9.23 am; 12.47 pm to 1.38 pm
Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon
HIJRI CALENDAR
Zulhijja 16,141 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.50 am
Zohar: 1.30 pm
Asar: 4.45 pm
Maghrib: 6.15 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6:28 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5:37 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 9:09 PM
MOONSET TODAY 8:33 AM

COUNTER POINT

Not medical reports, we have to check their bank statements before starting treatment!

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Not medical reports, we have to check their bank statements before starting treatment!

IN BRIEF

105-yr-old shows how to fight virus

Kurnool: At a time when youngsters are dreading the very word Coronavirus, here is a 105-year-old woman who set a classic example of a true-blue warrior while conquering Covid-19 at the Covid Hospital here. She had comorbidities like blood pressure and blood glucose impairment, said G Narendranath Reddy, KGGH Superintendent. She fought valiantly and showed exemplary determination to beat the odds and survive, he said.

1 killed in boiler blast at Nandyal

Kurnool: One person died and two others were injured in a boiler blast at SPY Reddy Agro Industries in Nandyal. The accident occurred in a captive power plant within the factory when maintenance works were being carried out on Wednesday. The worker succumbed at Government General Hospital on Thursday. A spokesman said it was preparing for an NGT visit and was engaged in hydraulic stress testing of the boiler and its parts.

■ **Page 3: Anaparthi MLA tests positive for Covid-19**
■ **Page 3: Tirumala priest infected by Corona succumbs**



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CBI registers case to probe Sushant's death



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Don's FB post of kids immune to Covid deleted

SPORTS | 6

Sara surges into Palermo quarters



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Defence ministry pulls out Chinese incursion report

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, AUG. 6

The defence ministry on Thursday pulled down a document from its website which had for the first time officially acknowledged that Chinese troops had “transgressed” in at least three places in Ladakh and that the situation in the area due to “aggression by China” is “sensitive” with the stand-off likely to be “prolonged”. There was no official word on why the document, which was uploaded on Tuesday, was removed after two days.

This comes when the fourth and fifth round of Corps Commanders talks between India and China seem to have been unable to achieve a breakthrough on further disengagement in Pangong Tso and other friction areas. The government is yet to come out with a formal statement on the outcome of the fifth meeting. China has refused to move its troops out of the Fingers area in Pangong Tso and the Depsang-Daulat Beg Oldi

● **CHINA REFUSED** to move its troops out of the Fingers area in Pangong Tso and the Depsang-Daulat Beg Oldi sector.

The defence ministry document had said that Chinese aggression had been increasing along the Line of Actual Control and more particularly in Galwan Valley since May 5. “The Chinese side transgressed in the areas of Kugrang Nala, Gogra and north bank of Pangong Tso lake on 17-18 May, 2020,” it said.

While engagement and dialogue at the military and diplomatic level is continuing, “the present standoff is likely to be prolonged,” it said. “The situation in Eastern Ladakh arising from unilateral aggression by China continues to be sensitive and requires close monitoring and prompt action based on evolving situation,” it added.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi continued with his attack on Modi government over its handling of

situation with China in Ladakh sector. “Denying China is in our territory and removing documents from websites won’t change the facts,” tweeted Mr Gandhi.

According to sources, China has built up its forces not only in Ladakh but all along the LAC. Army Chief Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane is on a two day visit to Tezpur-based 4 Corps to review the security situation along the China border in North-East.

The Chinese are occupying the Finger 5 area in the Pangong Tso and are still continuing to hold the ridges in the Finger 4 area. During the initial phase of disengagement, Chinese troops had vacated the banks of the lake in Finger 4 on July 9 and returned to Finger 5. Chinese troops still have to vacate the area between Finger 5 and Finger 8, which India claims is its territory. Satellite images have shown huge build-up by Chinese at Pangong Tso with permanent structures.

RBI lets people to restructure loans, ends moratorium

FALAKNAAZ SYED | FC MUMBAI, AUG. 6

Even as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) disappointed borrowers by not extending the loan moratorium, it has announced a one-time restructuring of loans taken by individuals, corporates and small businesses.

In his Monetary Policy statement on Thursday, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said, “The disruptions caused by Covid-19 have led to heightened financial stress for borrowers across the board... Accordingly, it has been decided to provide a window to enable lenders to implement a resolution plan with respect to eligible corporate exposures as well as personal loans.”

According to RBI, personal loans mean credit facility extended to individuals, which include consumer credit, education loan, loans given for

creation or enhancement of immovable assets (housing loans) and loans given for investment in financial assets such as shares, debentures.

The resolution of personal loans will be available only to those borrowers who were repaying their loans regularly as on March 1. Eligible borrowers’ accounts will continue to be classified as standard till the date of invocation of resolution under this framework.

The borrowers should choose this option before December 31, 2020 and the resolution must be implemented within 90 days.

“The resolution plans may inter alia include re-scheduling of payments, conversion of any interest accrued, or to be accrued, into another credit facility, or, granting of moratorium, based on an assessment of income of the borrower, subject to a maximum of two years.”

BJP sarpanch shot, cadre quitting party

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, AUG. 6

The killing of a village head associated with the BJP in southern Kulgam by suspected militants on Thursday triggered a new wave of resignations by party activists across the Kashmir Valley.

Over half a dozen BJP workers took to social media platforms to say they were dissociating from the party. Some even sought forgiveness from the militants. The police said at about 9.30 am militants shot and critically wounded BJP sarpanch Sajad Ahmad Qanday in Vesoo village of Qazigund area in Kulgam. “He was evacuated to Anantnag’s Government Medical College Hospital, but succumbed,” the police said.

The medical superintendent, Dr Muhammad Iqbal Sofi, said Khanday was brought dead to the hospital.

The police said the slain sarpanch feared a threat to his life and was given

MANOJ SINHA IS J&K’S NEW LT. GOVERNOR

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR, AUG. 6

The Centre appointed former minister of state for railways Manoj Sinha as Jammu and Kashmir’s new lieutenant-governor, replacing G.C. Murmu. This is believed to have been done to send a clear signal that it wants to restart the J&K political process. Sinha reached Srinagar on Thursday by a state plane and is likely to be administered the oath of office on Friday.

accommodation in a “secure camp” for Kashmiri Pandit migrants at Vesoo, “but today he went to his (native) house without informing the police”.



Relatives grieve for their loved ones who were killed in a fire at the Shrey Hospital in Ahmedabad, outside the mortuary of the Civil Hospital.

8 Covid patients killed in fire inside Gujarat hospital ICU

Ahmedabad, Aug. 6: Eight Coronavirus patients died in a fire inside the ICU ward of the privately run Shrey Hospital in Navrangpur, Ahmedabad, at 3 am on Thursday. A hospital para-medical staff member was injured. The ICU is located on the top floor of the four-storey hospital building.

“41 other Covid-19 patients who were in the general ward on the lower floors were rescued and shifted to another hospi-

tal,” said Rajiv Kumar Gupta, an IAS officer.

Shrey Hospital was sealed for investigation, said Gupta, who has been deputed in Ahmedabad as an officer on special duty. Preliminary investigation showed that the fire was caused by a short circuit, he said.

Municipal commissioner Mukesh Kumar said, “We have learned that an electric short circuit led to a blast. The blaze spread in the ward within minutes.”

According to Chirag

Patel, an attendant who saved the lives of three elderly patients, there were 11 patients on the fourth floor when the fire broke out.

Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel said that another attendant received 25 to 30 per cent burns injuries while trying to save the patients.

Additional commissioner of police R.V. Asari told reporters that Bharat Mahant, a trustee of the hospital, was being questioned. —PTI

SAFETY | IGNORED

Vizag lacks an emergency plan

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 6

Failure to update the mandatory “off-site emergency plan” is said to be one of the prime reasons for a series of industrial mishaps in the state, especially in Visakhapatnam.

As per the norms of Manufacture, Storage and Import of Hazardous Chemicals (MSIHC) Rules of 1989, every district in the state must have an off-site emergency plan with details of the hazardous industries present in the district, storage capacity of hazardous chemicals like styrene or ammonia, names of personnel handling storage of such substances, their contact numbers,

Port city has suffered a series of accidents

● **THOUGH AP** State Disaster Management Authority has collected details of all hazardous industrial units and carried out simulations at Guntur in 2018, there has been no further follow and updating of data.

● **UNION MINISTRY** of Environment and Forests and Petroleum, and Explosives Safety Organisation have a major role to play in ensuring industrial safety.

possible chances of major accidents and their on-site and off-site imp-acts, and details of rescue and relief measures to be taken up.

Every district is to have a ‘District Crisis Group’ with collector as its chairperson while deputy chief inspector of factories will be the member convener, the other members being district-level officials from stakeholder departments like APPCB, fire, boilers, industries, revenue and

others. Though it is mandatory for the DCG to meet once in three months or at least once in a calendar year to take stock of developments in dealing with hazardous industries, such meetings hardly take place, with concerned officials preoccupied with their day-to-day activities. In case of Visakhapatnam, its “off-site emergency plan” was updated in 2007. In the last 13 years, several new hazardous

11, showing an average rise of 4.5 per cent a day.

Compared to India, the Coronavirus cases have doubled globally in 41 days — from 95 lakh cases on June 26 to 1.9 crore on August 6. The number of Covid-19 patients increased at the rate of 2.43 per cent in this period. On Wednesday, 2,71,325 cases were recorded globally. Of this, India’s contribution was 56,626 or 20 per cent.

The spread of infection, however, appears to have slowed down in most parts of the world. The top three countries in terms of caseload — the United States, Brazil and India — are contributing 61 per cent of new cases, while the rest of 210 countries or territories reporting the rest.

The saving grace is the falling death rate. Data available on worldometers.info shows that the death rate is gradually declining in spite of a steady rise in infections.

In the first phase when

the Covid-19 disease hit China, the death rate was at 41 per cent. The recoveries improved and death rate declined after China imposed a strict lockdown and controlled the spread.

The global death rate rose to 21 per cent when the Covid-19 pandemic reached the shores of an unprepared Europe. Relatively better understanding of the disease and treatment protocols brought down the death rate to 5.52 per cent. The global recovery rate is over 94 per cent.

As per official numbers, the death rate in India is one of the lowest at 2.09 per cent — occupying 108th place in a list that ranks countries for Coronavirus cases in descending order.

Countries like Yemen, France, the UK, Italy, Belgium, Hungary, the Netherlands, Mexico, which bore brunt of the deadly disease in the initial days had reported over 10 per cent death rate.

Centre washes its hands off capital

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 6

Union Home Ministry has informed the High Court here on Thursday that the capital city of Andhra Pradesh is to be decided by the state government and the Centre has no role in it.

In a case between the petitioner Potluri Srinivasa Rao and respondents, Union of India and others, filed in 2018, Under-Secretary in the Union Home Ministry Lalita T. Hedao filed a counter affidavit in the AP High Court.

The counter affidavit mentioned that under Section 6 of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, the Union Government had constituted an expert committee on March 28, 2014 under the chairmanship of K.C. Sivaramakrishnan to study alternatives for a new capital for the state of Andhra Pradesh.

The panel submitted its report on August 30 of the same year, which was sent to AP government two days later on September 1. The affidavit mentioned that the state government issued an order dated April 23, 2015 notifying the capital city to be named as ‘Amaravati’. It further said that, ‘The capital city of a State is decided by the

● **THE COUNTER** affidavit mentioned that under Section 6 of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, the Union Government had constituted an expert committee on March 28, 2014 under the chairmanship of K.C. Sivaramakrishnan to study alternatives for a new capital for the state of Andhra Pradesh.

respective state government. Central government has no role in it.”

The affidavit also mentioned that the AP government through Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020 which was published in the state gazette notification on 31/07/2020, has provided that there shall be three seats of governance in the state and they are to be called as capitals. Accordingly, Amaravati Metropolitan Region Development Area to be called as ‘Legislative Capital’, Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Area to be called as ‘Executive Capital’ and Kurnool Urban Development Area to be called as ‘Judicial Capital.’

■ **Page 3: Affidavit says 100% central funding**

COLLEGES SET TO REOPEN FROM OCTOBER 15

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 6

After a near-seven months gap, colleges across the State will reopen on October 15.

Announcing this, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy also stated that all Common Entrance Tests (CETs) would be conducted in September.

At a review meeting on higher education policy in the State, at Tadepalli on Thursday, he said that recruitment of assistant professors in universities to fill vacant posts would also commence shortly.

■ **Page 3: Human errors behind recent mishaps**

■ **Page 3: CM wants to boost enrollment ratio**

DECCAN Chronicle

7 AUGUST 2020

Did PM just discredit India's freedom fight?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has exhorted his fellow citizens to treat August 5 on a par with August 15, India's Independence Day. The call, made after conducting the *bhoomi puja* of the Ram temple at Ayodhya on Wednesday, August 5, defies logic and negates history. Ram's devotees, Mr Modi included, have every right to be joyous when their lord, venerated as *Maryada Purushottam*, or the epitome of honour, gets a proper abode; none has a reason to quarrel with them either. But drawing an impossible parallel with Indian Independence movement and the one for the temple has its risks. For one, the freedom movement was a unifier in itself — Indians of all hues, irrespective of their religion, caste, language, sex, race and region were part of it. Countless people willingly sacrificed their lives for the cause, or suffered in silence, or became martyrs or spent their lives in villages changing their faces. It was a movement to not only liberate this nation from the yoke of foreign rule but also an attempt to unshackle itself from the very many forms of bondages that stopped its citizens from living their lives to the full. And the best product of the movement was the Constitution of India — which promised every Indian citizen justice.

Equally incomprehensible is the silence or subservience of the opposition, save of the Left, to the politicisation of an essentially religious ceremony. None seems to have an issue with the Prime Minister, accompanied by the chief minister of a state, laying the foundation stone of a place of worship of one religion.

struction of the temple. Mr Modi's call for seeing the temple as a symbol of India's unity would have better acceptance had he mentioned those innocent victims and begged their pardon. Perhaps, it would have been a true tribute to Lord Ram.

Equally incomprehensible is the silence or subservience of the opposition, save of the Left, to the politicisation of an essentially religious ceremony. None seems to have an issue with the Prime Minister, accompanied by the chief minister of a state, laying the foundation stone of a place of worship of one religion. The Congress, as it has always been on the issue, is a confused lot, speaking in many voices. The Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party expressed no opinion, nor the DMK of Tamil Nadu. Kerala's CPI(M) chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan, however, made two points. One, India's secularist ideals would not have suffered this jolt had the Congress chosen to hold on to them. Two, our agenda must be to contain Covid-19 which has already affected 19 lakh people, and then bring succour to the people the pandemic has reduced to penury. That's some semblance of political sanity and sagacity, if you will.

In Beirut, avoidable tragedy

A devastating instance of sheer human incompetence led to the ripping apart of a swath of the Lebanese capital Beirut, destroying its port and two giant grain silos, killing at least 135 people, besides injuring 5,000 and leaving three lakh people homeless while affecting the lives of 7.5 lakh citizens and causing an estimated \$3 billion in damage. Had the leaders of the judicial or executive branches of the tiny West Asian nation been able to sort out the storage of 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate, confiscated from a financially distressed Russian cargo ship, rather than leave it lying in a port hangar for close to seven years, an explosion powerful enough to record 3.3 on the Richter scale and reverberate miles away in Cyprus would not have taken place.

It might have suited the leaders of Lebanon to have been in a position to blame it on saboteurs, terrorists, aggressors or conquerors, of whom the country, once proud of its label of 'Switzerland of the East', has seen aplenty in its history. It appears, prima facie, that an innocent enough spark from a welding torch set off stored fireworks, which in turn ignited the chemical that would have been far more useful as a base for fertiliser for a country that virtually imports all its food needs. A government, already in debt to the tune of 165 per cent of GDP, has so far offered a piffling \$66 million as relief even as it keeps its port officials under home arrest.

The scale of indecisiveness and lack of clarity on what to do with a chemical that has at least half the explosive power of TNT is risible. The human tragedy caused by such apathy, particularly when it comes to handling the complexity of man's ingenuity in making substances that can blow mankind to pieces, is shockingly revealing of the fecklessness of politicians who aspire for power but have little understanding of their responsibilities in safeguarding people. To them, investment in human safety seems the least priority.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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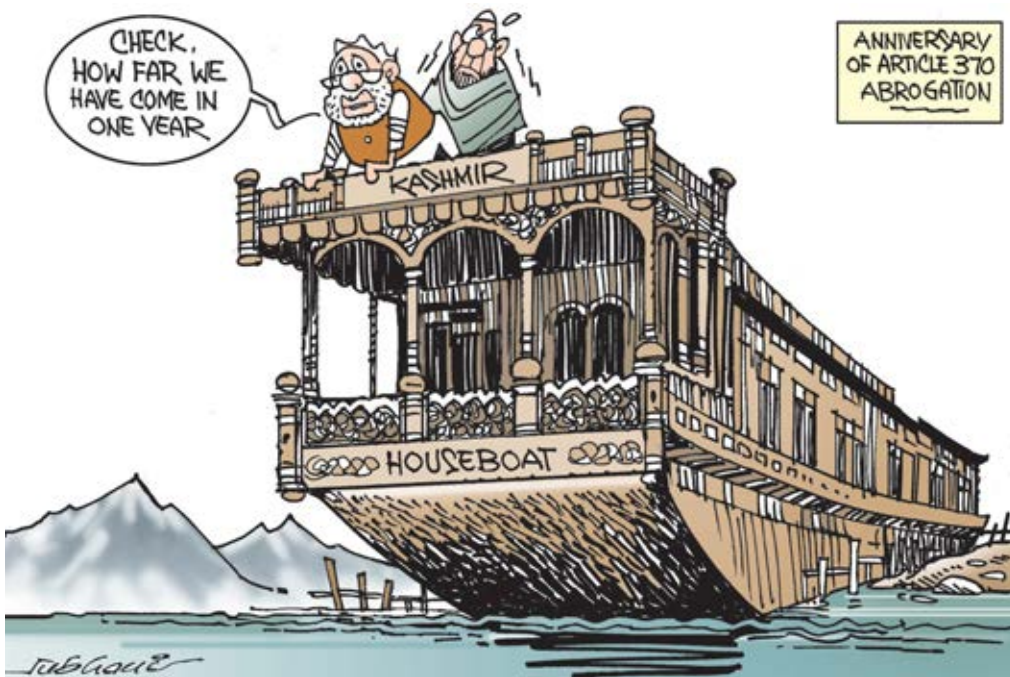
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Subhani



Pandemic on rise: More questions than answers



Patralekha Chatterjee

Dev 360

Is the coronavirus seeping into every faultline in this country? The honest answer is: We don't know.

Six months into the pandemic, there are more questions than answers about the virus. No one really knows how many Indians have been infected by the new coronavirus, nor how many have died. Perhaps we will never know because so many are asymptomatic and there are cracks in our death registration systems.

This week, a young copywriter told me that his father had died of Covid-19 but the family had managed to persuade the hospital authorities into changing the cause of death into something else because they wished the body to be cremated traditionally.

Meanwhile, India's official Covid-19 tally has crossed the 19-lakh mark; and the death toll is close to 40,000. Currently, India has the largest number of confirmed Covid-19 cases in Asia and the third highest number of confirmed cases in the world, after the United States and Brazil.

There are masses of data swirling around.

According to government data, a cumulative total of 2,14,84,402 samples had been tested till August 4. At 2.10 per cent, India's Covid-19 case fatality rate since the first lockdown is low compared to the global average; 50 per cent of deaths have happened in the age group of 60 and above; 37 per cent deaths belong to the 45-60 age group; 11 per cent deaths belong to the 26-44 years age group; while 68 per cent of people who died were men and 32 per cent were women.

The government says 28 states/Union territories show a Covid positivity rate below 10 per cent, and this indicates that the testing strategy

is on the right track.

But the numbers we have don't tell the whole story.

Dr Hemant Shewade, a Bengaluru-based community medicine expert tracking the discourse around Covid-19 data in India points out that nationally, only 86 per cent deaths are captured by the civil registration system and only 22 per cent are medically certified for cause of death.

The Medical Certification of Cause of Death is not enforced in every state with equal efficiency. So far, it has been implemented only in certain hospitals and mostly in urban areas. This can give a very skewed picture even now, when there is a parallel system of Covid-19 death reporting (which are compiled by the district administration and shared with the state government and then with the Centre).

"There is a high possibility of the official Covid death figures coming from Covid-designated hospitals where only confirmed Covid cases, those suspected of having Covid and who reach the Covid hospital in an extreme condition are factored in," says Dr Shewade.

Not all states are equally equipped in terms of health and diagnostic infrastructure and human resources. Where testing is very low, and where medical certification of cause of death is low, it is likely that there will be a gross under-estimation of Covid-19 deaths. For example, Bihar, which has a population of over 120 million, has the lowest testing rate in the country, a mere four tests per 1,000 persons. This means a large number of cases may be going undetected.

There are other gaps in the data which impede our ability to understand the pandemic's trajectory. The data on Covid-19 tests in India doesn't make clear the distinc-

tion between the number of samples being tested and the number of people tested. There is also no official disaggregated data for every state on the RT-PCR tests (gold standard of coronavirus testing) and rapid antigen tests, says Dr Mohak Gupta, now part of the iCART Covid-19 research team and creator of www.coviddtoday.in, an open source project tracking India's state-wise progress against the Covid-19 epidemic.

Only a few states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Delhi share this information publicly but there are no updated national figures. We don't know how many among those who have antigen tests go for a follow-up RT-PCR test and what the results are. We also don't have statewide gender-disaggregated data on Covid deaths in any official portal nor the breakup between deaths in rural areas and those in urban areas. Dr Gupta points out that there is scant contact tracing data so we don't have a granular picture of how and where the virus is spreading, and stresses the need for real-time hospitalisation data and influenza-like illness (ILI) surveillance data in the public domain.

Then there is fear, which prevents insiders from coming forward to tell the truth.

"Unfortunately, there is no law in force that encourages potential whistleblowers in the public sector to bring complaints of corruption and wrongdoing to the attention of the competent authorities. Nor is there any mechanism to protect a whistleblower from reprisals for pointing the finger at wrongdoing. An available recourse is to make complaints to the lokayuktas. Hardly any parent law of such bodies empowers them to protect whistle-

blowers. The only remaining option is to move the courts directly, which few would want to do given the length of time it takes to get a conviction," says Venkatesh Nayak, programme head of the Access to Information Programme of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. As for whistleblowing in the private sector, the extremely limited provisions in the 2013 Companies Act or the Limited Liability Partnerships Act don't inspire much confidence in potential whistleblowers, says Mr Nayak.

There is also no mention of whistleblower provisions in the laws governing societies and trusts, which are of colonial vintage. "It comes as no surprise that doctors and nurses working in entities regulated by any of these laws continue to suffer in silence or at the most make complaints through official channels at considerable risk to themselves and their careers. The only remaining option is to go on mass strike, as is now happening in Zimbabwe. However, the government will clamp down on such legitimate protests by invoking the Essential Services Maintenance Act or draconian provisions of the Disaster Management Act," he adds.

Successive governments have pushed the six-year-old Whistleblowers Protection Act under the carpet without bringing it into force despite repeated reminders from civil society and the media.

Telling the truth has never been easy. However, there are those who persist. As Mr Nayak points out, despite the restrictions imposed by the Covid-related lockdowns, citizens are using the Right to Information Act to demand details of action by governments to tackle the epidemic. But delays and refusals are common as are attacks on RTI activists.

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com.

LETTERS

WHITHER CONGRESS?

It seems that the grand old party has lost its voice amidst the chants of Jai Shri Ram. The BJP has every right to celebrate the ground-breaking ceremony of Ram temple construction in Ayodhya, as it's there in their election manifesto. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expectedly lost no time in owning the success. He even stretched imagination to that far that he compared the struggle for temple construction with the struggle for Independence. The fumbling of the Congress is quite evident here. Instead of keeping mum, it has joined forces with the BJP helplessly.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao
Vizianagaram

PM Narendra Modi launched the works for the construction of Ram temple by launching the ground-breaking ceremony in Ayodhya, an historic occasion for which every Indian must be proud to be part of. But to make India Ram Rajya every one must live the social and ethical ideals of Lord Rama i.e., equal justice, brotherhood and unity.

Kottala Venkataramudu
Anantapur

SCHOOL REOPENING

AP is enthusiastic in reopening schools, but schools future depends on the Covid-19 pandemic which is ravaging the state as also the country. The government's utmost duty must be to contain its spread than reopening schools or any other centres or institutes.

D. Ravikumar
Visakhapatnam

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Govt. rapped for not getting Soviet maps corrected

NEW DELHI, August 6

The Rajya Sabha today witnessed noisy scenes followed by a walk-out by members belonging to Opposition Congress, Swatantra the Jana Sangh and the Praja Socialist Parties.

It was in protest against the Government's failure to check what they described as "Soviet Union's continued cartographic aggression on India."

Drawing attention to the recent edition of the great Soviet Encyclopedia containing a political map of Asia showing large chunks of Indian territory as Chinese, the members charged that the Soviet Union has been printing such maps.

Dilip Cherian



Dilli Ka Babu

Officer sent to PMO won laurels in TN

Any appointment in the all-powerful Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is viewed with great interest. So, when P. Amudha, who is a 1994 batch IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, was appointed to the PMO as joint secretary, on a lateral shift basis, for the remainder of her five-year central deputation period, observers are speculating about her talent that can meet the high standards of the PMO. Before this appointment, Amudha was serving as a professor at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie. Interestingly, minutes after the news of her appointment emerged Tamil Nadu chief minister E. Palaniswami congratulated the IAS officer in a tweet and said that she had earned the goodwill of the state government as well as the

affection of the people through her honesty and efficiency. Amudha has earned her reputation as an effective field officer and ability to take swift decisions. Her peers recall her work during the Chennai floods in 2015 when she was special officer for monsoon relief in the state. It's these qualities that may have impressed the PMO to reel her in for what could be the most rewarding and challenging assignments for an IAS officer.

WHO WILL BE NEW RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR?

A search committee headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba will interview candidates for the post of deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India on August 7, according to sources. This was meant to be held on July 23 but was put off without any explanation. The post

had fallen vacant after senior-most deputy governor N.S. Vishwanathan demitted office three months before the end of his tenure in March due to health reasons.

Besides Gauba, the committee includes RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, financial services secretary Debasish Panda and two independent members.

The selected name from the interview will be sent to the appointments committee of the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister for final approval. Sources say that the panel has shortlisted eight candidates for the posts.

The RBI Act mandates that the central bank should have four deputy governors — two from within the ranks, one commercial banker and another an economist to head the monetary policy depart-

ment. At present, the RBI has three deputy governors — B.P. Kanungo, M.K. Jain and Michael Debabrata Patra.

HALT OR GO TO J&K CADRE CHANGE?

The Centre stopped inducting new officers in the J&K cadre of the All India Services after the re-categorisation of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union territories, J&K and Ladakh, in August last year. The process was recently reinitiated, but sources say, it has been put on hold again after receiving feedback from officers that it would lead to confusion.

The J&K cadre of IAS, IPS and IOFS officers was to be merged into the AGMUT cadre. However, according to the regulations, officers already serving in the J&K cadre at the time would continue in

the existing cadre. The cadre controlling authority for AGMUT is the ministry of home affairs while the other cadres are controlled by the department of personnel and training (DoPT).

Apparently, some officers approached the Centre saying that two officers of the same batch would end up under different controlling authorities which would lead to "confusion" and "create differences" between the officers. Seeing the resistance from the babus, the Centre has decided, for now, not to proceed with the proposed cadre merger. Some officers believe that any key decision on the merger will likely happen only after August 15.

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