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HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | 30 MARCH 2021

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WEATHER

Max: 40°C
Min: 23°C
RH: 21%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Max/Min temp.
39/23°C

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Uttaraayan
Tithi: Phalguni Bahula Vidiya till 5.28 pm
Star: Chitta till 12.21 pm
Varjyam: 5.21 pm to 6.46 pm
Durmuhurtaam: 8.42 am to 9.30 am; 11.09 pm to 11.56 pm
RahuKalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm
Hijri CALENDAR
Sha'bān 16,1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajr: 5.12 am
Zohar: 12.31 pm
Asar: 4.41 pm
Magrib: 6.34 pm
Isha: 7.42 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.28 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.12 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 7.13 PM
MOONSET TODAY 6.39 PM

COUNTER POINT



Sure win! Our party colours are dominating Holi celebrations in all poll-bound states!

SHORT TAKES

Suez reopens, megaship freed

Suez, Egypt: The MV *Ever Given* was refloated and the Suez Canal reopened to traffic, sparking relief almost a week after the huge container ship got stuck and blocked a major artery for global trade. Tugboat crews sounded their foghorns in celebration after the megaship was fully dislodged from the sandy banks. Oil prices eased on the news. Before the ship was dislodged, the tallowbacks reached 425 vessels.

Full report on Page 11

INSIDE

CITY... PAGE 3
Govt likely to reopen schools next week

POLLUTION WATCH

High contamination found 40 metres below river

Musi water unfit even for agri

MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 28

Water of Musi river is unfit even for irrigation, said researchers from Osmania University's Centre of Exploration Geophysics who made a recent study of the water quality.

The researchers tested groundwater samples in the 60 km stretch of the river from Peerzadiguda on the city outskirts to Valigonda, where the Musi meets River Krishna.

TRS picks Nomula's son to fight N'sagar bypoll

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29



P. RAVI KUMAR IS BJP NOMINEE

The BJP nominated Dr P. Ravi Kumar, a former government surgeon, for the Nagarjunasagar bypoll.

REPORT ON PAGE 4

Though several senior leaders from the Backward Classes and the Reddy community vied for the ticket, Rao preferred Bhagat in line with the party's policy of giving the ticket to a family member of the deceased MLAs in the byelection, analysing caste equations in the constituency and considering Narasimhaiah's work and the goodwill he had earned. Bhagat will file his papers on Tuesday, the last day for filing for nominations. The TRS chief held a meeting with Nalgonda party leaders at Telangana Bhavan before announcing the candidature of Bhagat.

Senior leaders Tera Chinnappa Reddy and

M.C. Koti Reddy, the two serious contenders for the ticket, avoided criticism that the party dumps family members of those who die in harness. It should be noted that Solipeta Sujatha, wife of deceased legislator Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy, was given a ticket for the Dubbalk byelection.

The party boss reportedly assured re-nomination as MLC for Chinappa Reddy and nominating Koti Reddy whenever a vacancy arises in the Legislative Council, following reports that the BJP was trying to lure them into its fold if the TRS denied them a ticket.

Though there was strong demand from certain quarters in the party to give the ticket to a 'local BC leader' this time, and Opposition to nominating Narasimhaiah's family member, terming them as 'non locals' as they hail from Nakrekal mandal,

TS tries to damp heatwave effect

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH I DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

As the temperature continues to rise across the state, the TS Development Planning Society (TSDPS) on Monday unveiled the heatwave action plan for the season.

This plan details guidelines on the steps to be taken by the state and district administrations for minimising the impact of heatwaves. Its primary objective is to ensure that there are no fatalities among sections of the population which are most at risk during a heatwave, and reduce heat-related illnesses.

The revenue and disaster management department will coordinate the heatwave preparedness and mitigation activities, the action plan said. State-level consultations are organised with line departments and collectors.

Weather data would be collected from the 1,044 automated weather stations (AWS) of the TSDPS located across the state on an hourly

basis to make possible real-time analysis and three-day forecast of heatwaves.

According to the NCP sources, Mr Pawar started feeling pain in his abdomen on Sunday evening and he was taken to the Breach Candy Hospital.

"Our party president Sharad Pawar *sahib* was feeling a little uneasy due to a pain in his abdomen last evening and was therefore taken to Breach Candy Hospital for a check up. Upon diagnosis it came to light that he has a problem in his Gall Bladder," NCP leader Nawab Malik tweeted.

"He is on blood-thinning medication which is now being stopped due to this issue. He will be admitted to the hospital on March 31 and an endoscopy and surgery will be conducted," he further added.

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DRINKING TOO much water at night leads to constant break in sleep cycles as they have to get up when the bladder is full.

EXPERTS URGE that following the sleep time table of going to bed early, listening to music, reading a book and relaxing before retiring for the day will induce good sleep.

Women, who are suffering from thyroid, diabetes, hypertension and other co-morbid conditions, cannot tolerate air-conditioners, which further compromises their sleep patterns.

Experts urge that following the sleep time table of going to bed early, listening to music, reading a book and relaxing before retiring for the day will induce good sleep.

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FROM AP

COP SAVES LIFE OF MAN STABBED 13 TIMES

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, MARCH 29

Showing presence of mind, a duty-conscious special party constable, who was in plain clothes, saved a person who was being grievously stabbed near Erranela Kottala under Three Town police station limits in Anantapur late Sunday night.

The victim suffered at least 13 stab wounds before the constable could intervene.

The special party constable Shafiuulla, who was on duty for Yadiki Brahmotsavalu celebrations, was on his way to his house.

Apparently, two locals Sheikshavali and Hazivali were quarrelling over repayment of a hand loan of ₹1000 at a desert place between Erranela Kottala and Rajiv Colony. The quarrel took a violent turn when Sheikshavali attacked Hazivali with a sharp knife and injured him. On noticing the tiff, Shafiuulla rushed to the spot and caught the accused.

The constable further alerted the Three Town police and a sub-inspector Rambhoopal rushed there. They shifted the victim to Kurnool hospital.

The accused has been detained and a case was registered based on complaint by the victim's family members.

Anantapur SP Satya Esubabu appreciated Shafiuulla and the Three Town police for saving a person's life.

FOUR DROWN IN NORTH ANDHRA ON HOLI

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, MARCH 29

Despite a second wave Covid threat, people came out of their homes in hordes to celebrate Holi on Monday. But the festival ended in a tragedy when three youngsters drowned at sea at Kalingapatnam Beach in Srikakulam district and one youth at waterfalls in Jami in Vizianagaram district.

In Visakhapatnam city, thousands of youngsters were seen on the beach road, main thoroughfares on fancy bikes double and triple riding and wishing people on the way. Traffic police closed RK beach from Park Hotel junction to NTR statue to prevent people from swimming in the beach. The five-kilometre stretch was deserted till 6 pm. But the revellers swam at Coast Battery, Tenneti Park, Sagaranagar, Rushkonda and Bhimili.

Much of the activity was seen in apartments, townships and gated communities. People never wore masks or used sanitisers. They were jostling all along the day rubbing colours on each other.

In Srikakulam, a group of eight persons—all hailing from Uttar Pradesh, went to swim in the sea at Kalingapatnam under Gara mandal of Srikakulam and of them three drowned.

They were identified as Sandeep, Ajiz and Chotu. Local police and the group came to the beach for a splash after celebrating the festival. Though they refused to allow the youngsters to the beach as it was dangerous, the youngsters entered the beach by another route by evading the police.

While two were caught in a strong current which took them deep inside the sea, another youngster jumped into the water to rescue them. He too was dragged inside.



People drenched in colours during Holi celebrations at Begum Bazaar. They added bhaang to their celebrations as well. — P. SURENDRA



Students of Osmania University Arts College celebrate Holi, in Hyderabad on Monday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Holi sans revelry due to pandemic

No hotels, resorts, game zones held events as per government orders

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL I DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

Health dept lauds low-key festivals

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

Low-key celebrations marked this year's Festival of Colours here as was the case last year too in view of the sway of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Mostly children but youths and others too played with colours in residential colonies. Though gated communities arranged DJ music for the Holi celebrations this year, only children took part. Those who played took precautions and mostly used eco-friendly colours.

The mood was not upbeat. People of all ages used to splash colours over their bodies in a spirit of revelry. As educational institutes were closed for long, this did not give a chance for students to plan the Holi celebrations.

The government had advised hotels, resorts and game zones not to hold any event this time too. Salesmen who erected canopies during the festival to sell colours failed to have much sales and so with the sweetmeat shops too.

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Nandu Lal, resident of Shaikpet who lives in a joint family of 40 members of north Indian origin, said, "This is a big festival for us. Relatives visit us to play with colours on this. But, this time, since the Covid cases are on the rise, we decided to avoid the cele-

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Mallipeddi Rohith Gupta said, "I have a big band of friends. Around 50 of us visited all the known families and friends on bikes but restrained from playing Holi because of coronavirus."

Mukesh of Balaji Sweets at Begum Bazaar said, "Khowa-Puri is the Holi special. This year, sales were lesser than the last year's. Coronavirus played a spoilsport last years and this year too."

Narsingh, among those who put up a canopy during this season to sell colours for Holi, said, "People opted more for dry colours and the demand was for eco-friendly colours. Sales were very low, as most people avoided playing Holi this year."

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IN BRIEF

Activist: Develop temples for Adivasi

Hyderabad: Coordinator of Adivasi sects Chunchu Ramakrishna has demanded that the state government constitute an Adivasi Dharmika Parishad to develop temples of deities belonging to tribal communities in Telangana. He pointed out that there are several tribal pilgrim centres in the state apart from Medaram. Constituting an Adivasi Dharmika Parishad to take care of temples belonging to tribal deities is need of the hour to strengthen Adivasi culture and traditions, Ramakrishna maintained. He recounted that there are several famous Adivasi temples in the state including Korivi Veeranna in Mahaboobabad, Mallur-Laxminarasimha Swamy temple, Sarapaka, Mothegadda Veeranna and Irappa Bhadrappa, Yellandu, Kota Maisamma and Paloncha Peddamma Thalli.

PROMOTE CRICKET FOR DISABLED, AIMIM TELLS GOVT**DC CORRESPONDENT**
KARIMNAGAR, MARCH 29

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul-Muslimeen on Monday demanded that the government encourage the disabled cricket team like regular teams and support disabled players so that they can get name and fame for the state. The demand was made at an event where the AIMIM felicitated Mohammad Farooq, captain of the Telangana cricket team of the disabled. Syed Gulam Ahmed Hussain, MIM Karimnagar party unit president, handed over to Farooq cheque for ₹10,000. Farooq had led the Telangana team to the runner-up spot in the national-level cricket tournament organised by Divyang Cricket Control Board of India at Alwar in Rajasthan.

The MIM leader said even though there was no support from the state government for Farooq, a native of Karimnagar, the captain of cricket team for disabled brought name and fame for Telangana. He demanded that at least now, the government must announce rewards for players of the cricket team for disabled.

Gulam Ahmed Hussain assured that he will take up the issue to notice of AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi and vice-chairman of State Planning Commission B. Vinod Kumar.

MIM leaders Shaker Al Nahid and Ayub Bhajamal were among those present at the function.

BREAKTHROUGH IN AP TEMPLE THEFT PROBE**DC CORRESPONDENT**
VISAKHAPATNAM, MARCH 29

The crime wing of the Visakhapatnam police on Monday achieved a breakthrough in the theft case at the famous Karaka Chettu Polamamba temple with the arrest of three persons. The three have been taken to Vijayawada for recovery of the stolen gold and silver ornaments apart from cash, sources said.

In the theft, four kg silver, 35 tolas gold ornaments; in addition to cash of the temple had been stolen.

Post their investigations, police had shown pictures of three persons to temple staff. The staff recalled that they had seen them during Annadanam a week before the crime. Some said they had seen the three sanitising their hands before lunch.

According to police, these three were the very people who came to Polamamba temple a few hours before the theft on March 21. They had requested for permission from the watchman to sleep on temple premises. When the watchman refused, they left on their motorcycles.

The three were arrested after the temple staff identified them. Post their interrogation, they have been taken to Vijayawada to recover the ornaments and cash.

CID authorities have met Vizag police commissioner of police to seek permission to interrogate those arrested. He sleuths want to know whether or not the same group had been involved in decapitation of Lord Rama's idol at Ramaswamy temple in Ramateertham.

On the day, leaders of 14 villages around Polamamba temple had demanded that the gold and silver stolen must be recovered within a week.

TRS face at Nagarjunasagar

TRS president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao gives the B-Forn for the Nagarjunasagar bypoll to Nomula Bhagat, son of late MLA Nomula Narasimhaiah, after a meeting in Hyderabad on Monday.

CS submits report on govt vacancies to KCR**DC CORRESPONDENT**
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar has submitted a report to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao on vacancies in government departments for taking up recruitment drives.

The CM is to review the schedule for issuing the job notifications in a day or two. The first job notification is expected to be issued soon after polling for the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency byelection on April 17.

Official sources said over 55,000 vacancies have

been identified to be filled, with the most vacancies in the police department. The report was compiled by the Chief Secretary after obtaining data from secretaries of all government departments.

A significant number of vacancies were also identified in education, medical and health, revenue, municipal administration, agriculture and irrigation departments.

It may be recalled that the Chief Minister had announced in the ongoing Budget session of the Legislative Assembly that the government would fill up over 50,000 vacancies soon.

Official sources said highest number of vacancies of over 20,000 existed in the police department pertaining to constables and sub-inspectors.

A significant number of vacancies were also identified in education, medical and health, revenue, municipal administration, agriculture and irrigation departments.

It may be recalled that the Chief Minister had announced in the ongoing Budget session of the Legislative Assembly that the government would fill up over 50,000 vacancies soon.

Muslim board tries to end dowry, posh marriages**ATHER MOIN I DC**
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Saturday announced that several youths took a pledge to have their nikah (marriage) solemnised in a simple manner. The board made a plea to the faithful to avoid elaborate wedding ceremonies, during a 10-day campaign against pomp and avoidable customs.

The social reforms committee of AIMPLB has launched the campaign to make marriages simple and easy so that the burden on families will be less. The campaign also exhorted people against demanding dowry as also committing oppressive acts on daughters and daughters-in-law.

The party appointed

coordinators for mandals and major villages. Party leaders including Sankineni Venkateswar Rao and Chada Suresh Reddy will coordinate the campaign effort.

Concerned over the

growing extravagance in wedding ceremonies, the AIMPLB has asked the ulema, clerics and qazis to refrain from participating in wedding ceremonies where dowry system is practiced, so as to curb this social evil.

As a part of the campaign, preachers in their Juma sermons emphasized the importance of solemnizing weddings in the true spirit of Sharia. They urged the faithful to avoid unnecessary customs and rituals associated with weddings, as these caused a financial burden on both families.

Youths particularly college students took pledges to solemnize their nikah in the masjid in a simple manner and promised they would not seek dowry from brides. They would participate in nikah ceremonies but abstain from dinner and arrange

simple valima dinner. They also took a pledge to pay the dower (payment of an amount at the time of the wedding to the bride).

Chief organiser of the women's wing of AIMPLB Dr Asma Zahra said the response of the community was tremendous and the new generation has realised that seeking dowry is a wrong action and extravagant marriages must be avoided. Participation in marriages where dowry figures should be avoided.

She said dowry has taken deep roots in society. Due to lack of Islamic teachings, many wives are suffering from harassment at the hands of their husband and in-laws. Rich and poor, educated and illiterate continue to demand cash, furniture, vehicles and feast from the bride's parents.

BJP fields a doc, gives new angle to bypoll**Candidate from ST community, party looks for dividends****IREDDY SRINIVAS****REDDY I DC****HYDERABAD, MARCH 29**

Dr P. Ravi Kumar

state party unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar had with key leaders.

Dr Kumar will file his nomination papers on Tuesday, the last day, at the Nidadamoor returning office in the presence of senior leaders.

Senior leaders told Deccan Chronicle that the decision would yield dividends to the party in the future as well. They stated

that the ST community has more than 35,000 votes and is the deciding factor in any election.

They said that the Congress would have benefited if the BJP had also nominated a candidate from the Yadava community as the TRS had done.

Earlier, K. Niveditha Reddy and Anjaiah Yadav were seen as the front runners. But most senior leaders opted for Dr Kumar. In fact, Niveditha Reddy had gone ahead and filed her nomination papers.

In 2018, Niveditha Reddy had got 2,675 votes in the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency and lost her deposit. Anjaiah Yadav had contested on a TD ticket and secured

27,858 votes to stand third.

The BJP has fielded several leaders as star campaigners for the byelection: Bandi Sanjay, party vice-president D.K. Aruna, Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy, OBC Morcha president Dr K. Lakshman, MLAs T. Raja Singh and M. Raghuandan Rao, MP Dharmapuri Arvind, party leaders Indrasena Reddy, P. Muralidhar Rao, Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy and N. Ramchander Rao.

The party appointed coordinators for mandals and major villages. Party leaders including Sankineni Venkateswar Rao and Chada Suresh Reddy will coordinate the campaign effort.

KCR, KTR will lead TRS fight to retain N'sagar**DC CORRESPONDENT****HYDERABAD, MARCH 29**

TRS president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao told his partymen that multiple surveys commissioned by him in the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency, where a byelection is due on April 17, reported that the party would retain this seat with a bumper majority.

Rao was speaking with party leaders from Nalgonda district at Telangana Bhavan on

Monday ahead of issuing the B-form to Nomula Bhagat to contest bypoll.

Rao shared the details of survey reports with the leaders and made suggestions with regard to the political and campaign strategy to be adopted for the polls.

He told them that he will

take part in the campaign, saying that party lost the Dubbak Assembly bypoll as he had ignored campaigning then. He said that TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao will also take part in the campaign, unlike at Dubbak.

The TRS president asked party leaders and cadre to show the same spirit of working unitedly in Nagarjunasagar that was shown in the recent Legislative Council elections in which TRS won both the graduates seats against all expectations.

Barrage work on Penganga delayed 2 yrs**PILLALAMARI SRINIVASI DC****ADILABAD, MARCH 29**

Farmers in the region are concerned over the delay in completion of works of the Korata-Chanaka barrage being constructed on River Penganga on the state's border.

A fire incident saw a labourer burnt alive at the construction site of the lift irrigation works linked to the Korata-Chanaka barrage at Tamasi-Ki village in Bheempur mandal on Sunday.

This apart, the construction works of the barrage are going on at snail's pace. As per its schedule, the barrage should have been completed two years ago.

Forest minister Allola Indrakaran Reddy visited the barrage site on December 25, 2019, and inquired about the work. His brother Muralidhar Reddy is the contractor for the project.

be provided to nearly 50,000 acres in the Adilabad Assembly constituency.

Two labourers at the Korata-Chanaka barrage works died and two engineers were seriously injured when iron rope snapped while they were working in Jainad mandal in the district in July 2019.

The project was meant to give water to Bheempur, Adilabad, and Jainad mandals in the district. The project with a storage capacity of 0.85 tmc ft (thousand million cubic feet) of water was taken up at a cost of ₹350 crore, but the cost escalated to ₹500 crore.

The project has 23 pillars and 22 gates. The flooding of the river hit the construction works of the Korata-Chanaka barrage repeatedly during the rainy season.

Bhagat: KCR's welfare schemes will ensure win**DC CORRESPONDENT****HYDERABAD, MARCH 29**

Nomula Bhagat, nominated the TRS candidate for the Nagarjunasagar Assembly byelections on Tuesday, thanked party president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao for reposing faith in him by announcing his candidature. He said that Chandrashekhar Rao always gave importance to his father, the late Nomula Narasimhaiah, since 2014 had ensured the victory of his father in

2018 and the same will help him emerge victorious.

He said there are over 1.50 lakh beneficiaries of TRS government's welfare schemes in Nagarjunasagar constituency and exuded confidence that they all would back his candidature particularly because they were aware of his father's good work.

He said he will step up campaigning after filing his nomination papers on Tuesday.

Adilabad MLA Jogi Ramana kept saying the works will be completed soon and water for irrigation would

be provided to nearly 50,000 acres in the Adilabad Assembly constituency.

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SAVE FORESTS**Prof: Govt should take up measures to curb forest fires****Chenchus' kin seek more ex gratia****DURGA PRASAD****SUNKU I DC****HYDERABAD, MARCH 29**

Family members of three Chenchu tribals, who succumbed to burns in a fire accident in Nallamala forest, are demanding more ex gratia.

Civil rights activists have demanded compensation and supply of groceries to the families of the victims, who were sole bread-winners.

The livelihood of Chenchu tribals depends

were shifted to the Mahabubnagar Government Hospital but as five of them were in critical condition they were shifted to Osmania General Hospital. The three who succumbed, included N. Lingiah, 36, M. Lingiah, 40, and K. Eliah.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle Ch Bayanna, brother-in-law of Lingiah, said, "He leaves behind three daughters, aged 16, 12 and 5 years and two sons aged 14 and 8 years. Now

the family does even have groceries. Although the government gave ₹1 lakh as ex gratia, most of it has been used for the funeral."

Meanwhile, the situation of the survivors is equally pathetic. Bayana said, "The doctor has said that they are developing infection in the burnt area."

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, Prof. Gaddam Lakshman, president, State Civil Liberties Committee, said, "None of the public representa-

tives visited the families. The government should act swiftly and take up measures to curb forest fires and provide better medical facilities to all the injured."

He further demanded ₹50 lakh to the family of each of the deceased and ₹20 lakh to the injured persons.

Although tribal welfare minister Satyavathi Rathod sanctioned ₹1 lakh to all the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 to the injured, their kin said it was not sufficient.

14th ANNIVERSARY**Mrs. YAMUNA BAI (Alias BABY)****W/o Late V.C. SHANMUGAM FAMILY MEMBERS.****Ph: 27710326****(S/2021/D01376)****I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies John 11:25****Remembered by:**

SHORT TAKES

IIT NUZVID
GIRL STUDENT
ENDS LIFEDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, MARCH 29

A 20-year-old girl studying at IIT in Nuzvid committed suicide at about 1 pm in Krishna district on Monday.

According to the police, M. Madhuri, hailing from Kakinada in East Godavari district, hanged herself to death with her chunni from the ceiling fan in her hostel room. The police are yet to establish the motive behind the suicide.

A case was booked under Section 174 CrPC dealing with suspicious death and an investigation is underway.

HYDERABAD MAN
MISSING IN
JAMPANNA VAGUDC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGA, MARCH 29

A Hyderabad-based devotee went missing in the Jampanna stream at the Medaram shrine in Tadvi in Mulugu district on Monday.

He has been identified as Jupalli Rajashekhar Yadav, 26, from Malkajgiri in Hyderabad. He along with his family visited the Sammakka-Saralamma temple in Medaram and was taking a holy bath in the Jampanna vagu when he slipped and fell off the check dam. Tadvi sub-inspector Ch Venkateswar Rao said a search is on for the man.

MURDERER-COUPLE
RELEASED FROM
MENTAL CAREDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, MARCH 29

The couple from Madanapalle in Chittoor district, V. Purushottam Naidu and his wife Padmaja, who have been accused of killing their daughters, have been discharged from the Government Hospital for Mental Care (GHMC) in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

The duo will be shifted to the Madanapalle sub-jail.

Purushottam Naidu and Padmaja used dumbbells and a trident to kill their two young daughters — Alekhya, 27, and Divya Sai, 22, on January 24 this year at their house in Madanapalle. The double murder had sent shock waves in entire Andhra Pradesh. As investigators found that the couple had not been in good mental health, the two accused had been shifted to GHMC, Vizag, on February 3 for treatment. Doctors at the mental institute say the couple has responded well to treatment and recovered. They are in remorse for committing the murder of their daughters.

A police team including sub-inspector and five police constables from Madanapalle have come to Vizag city and took Purushottam Naidu and Padmaja into their custody. They will be taken to Madanapalle by road.

DISPUTE CLAIMS
LIFE OF CLASS X
STUDENTDC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, MARCH 29

A 14-year-old boy, Singu Siva, studying Class X, lost his life due to a dispute at a road-side *pakoda* pushcart at Veeravaram village in Kirlampudi mandal of East Godavari district Sunday night.

One Kovvuri Veerababu hit the pushcart with his car and beat Siva to death.

According to Kirlampudi police, Singu Yesu runs a *pakoda* centre with his push-cart and his son Siva used to help him in the evenings. Veerababu reportedly consumed liquor and had a quarrel with Yesu. Veerababu drove a car and hit the pushcart. He attacked Siva with an iron rod and injured both Yesu and Siva. They were rushed to the Government General Hospital at Kakinada, where Siva succumbed. Kirlampudi police registered case.

Meanwhile, Veeravaram is a politically surcharged village as it is the native place of former Kakinada MP Thota Venkata Narasimham, former MLAs Thota Subba Rao and Thota Venkatachalam.

The police, led by Peddapuram DSP Aritakula Srinivasa Rao, set up a police camp in the village. Srinivasa Rao warned of stringent action against the accused. However, relatives of the victims demanded that the government pay a compensation of ₹1 crore.

The ugly side of Hyderabad



A garbage pile along the Jumerat Bazaar main road in Hyderabad poses a unhygienic sight, on Monday. No wonder Hyderabad had fared poor in the rankings of Ease of Living Index and Municipal Performance given by the Union ministry of housing and urban affairs, as part of its Smart Cities project.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Cases double but percentage remains constant in state

BALU PULIPAKA I DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

The daily Covid-19 bulletin issued by the state government continues to throw up statistical conundrums that are flummoxing even seasoned epidemiologists. The data presented every day by the government in the bulletins also shows that for every new positive Covid-19 case found over the past week, a large number of primary contacts are being tested.

However, surprisingly, the percentage of primary and secondary contacts has remained constant, at 44 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. Even more worrisome is the fact that irrespective of the number of daily tests, the number of positive cases has doubled between March 22 and March 28. While one out of every 165 persons tested positive for Covid-19 on March 22 (68,171 tests, 412 new cases), on March 28, these numbers stood at 33,930 tests with 403 positive cases, at the rate of one out of every 84 people tested turning up positive for the disease.

This is not the first time that data released on Covid-19 cases has been found to be statistically impossible. Consistencies in the data related to age groups of Covid-19 victims, or those who have died after contracting the disease but are classified as dying from comorbidities and not from Covid-19 infection, have remained the same for months.

The latest to join this category of statistical consistency primary and secondary contacts being tested every day. For instance, on March 22, the health department said, that 68,171 tests were performed. It also said that 29,995 primary, and 8,180 secondary contacts were among those tested on the day, representing 44 per cent and 12 per cent of the day's total tests respectively.

Dr Ranga Reddy Burri, founder trustee of the Infection Control Academy of India, said, "The numbers do not look correct."

Other epidemiologists that *Deccan Chronicle* also said they were surprised

DATE	TESTS	PRIMARY*	SECONDARY*	CONTACTS**
March 22	68,171	29,995(44%)	8,180 (12%)	72
March 23	70,280	30,923(44%)	8,433 (12%)	71
March 24	56,464	24,844(44%)	6,775(12%)	50
March 25	57,548	25,321(44%)	6,905(12%)	48
March 26	58,029	25,532(44%)	6,963(12%)	52
March 27	57,942	25,494(44%)	6,953(12%)	47
March 28	33,930	14,929(44%)	4,071(12%)	37

* Tests done. Percentage of total tests for each category in parenthesis.

** Number of primary contacts per positive case.

— Data from TS health department's Covid-19 bulletins

30 CASES BOOKED FOR NOT WEARING MASKS AS COPS SWING INTO ACTION

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

The city police has started booking cases against persons who were not wearing masks in public spaces, after the state government made wearing the protective gear mandatory last week.

Police forces are stepping up vigil against those violating the orders and roaming around without wearing masks.

In the East Zone of Hyderabad, around 20-30 cases were booked on Monday, officials revealed.

9,997 GET VACCINATED ON MONDAY,
2 MINISTERS, KAVITHA TAKES 1ST DOSEDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

A total of 9,967 persons got vaccinated against Covid-19 on Sunday at 121 centres in the state — 5,916 senior citizens, 3,944 from 45-59 age group with comorbidities, 84 healthcare workers and 18 frontline workers.

which remained rock steady at 44 and 12 per cent.

Dr Ranga Reddy Burri, founder trustee of the Infection Control Academy of India, said, "The numbers do not look correct."

Other epidemiologists that *Deccan Chronicle* also said they were surprised

Instructions were issued to SHOs from the city police officials to initiate action against persons not wearing masks. Similarly, traffic police will book cases for violation after taking photographs of the violators.

Violations will be checked from the command and control centre of the police as well.

Similarly, the Rachakonda and the Cyberabad commissioners have issued instructions to different wings including the law and order and traffic police to register cases against violators.

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DECCAN Chronicle

30 MARCH 2021

Team India's triple triumph in tough times

In sporting parlance it is said that "when the going gets tough, the tough get going." Team India did that and perhaps more in the toughest of times when a more transmissible but probably less virulent form of the Coronavirus is rampaging across India. Staying in a bubble for months on end seemed to harden the cricketers even more as the team stood the test across formats and hemispheres against the two most competitive opponents to win all but one series of the six they played against, Australia away and England at home. The manner in which they came back to stand up and be counted each time they were floored added to the narrative of team performance in the face of odds.

The heartwarming feature of the serial triumphs was the sight of new players stepping up to the big stage and performing straightaway without fear of failure — Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav, Krunal Pandya and Prasidh Krishna in white ball cricket and Washington Sundar in Tests — to name just a few who impressed. A conveyor belt of talent with guts and gumption seemed to supply match winners in all formats. And when T. Natarajan

delivered the climactic over, he nailed it six times with yorkers to stifle England's brave chase revived by an inspired Sam Curran. Ranked first in Tests and second behind England in T20s and ODIs seemed to reflect Team India's abilities accurately in the ladder of merits and Kohli's men raised their game in time to seal a triple triumph.

The impression that Team India was playing a somewhat old-fashioned game in building a platform into the middle overs to set it up for bashing the ball with uninhibited aggression in the "death" overs was dispelled when the big hitters got more space early on in the decider. The aggressive displays of

Rishabh Pant and the Pandya brothers were illustrative of a team prepared to change its strategy to suit the times in which the ruling philosophy is that the cricket ball, of any colour, is there to be hit. To be able to live up to this definition of modern cricket while displaying the suppleness of wrist at the batting crease and tactical nous through variations pace with the ball is what marks this team as the one with the most potential to shine on in world cricket.

The average fan's jingoistic support of Team India may occasionally lead to excesses as in the national team being written up and talked up in the media. The equalising of ODI scores through the striking genius of Jason Roy, Jonny Bairstow and Ben Stokes demonstrated how explosive batting can be grippingly entertaining even when India's bowlers were being taken to the cleaners.

To go in without a single specialist spinner in the decider was Team India's tactical answer and this threw light on the depth of talent available now in fast bowling in a country once reputed only for the curving and twisting web of spin by slow bowlers. The cricket of the national team, often seen as a bellwether of national aspirations, has now risen to reflect the need for resilience in challenging times. A brave new team has also been seen to adapt well to shine and offer hope in the worst of Coronavirus times.

Find a just NRC solution

The mess created by the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam does not seem to settle, what with the Union government rejecting the state government's latest demand for additional resources for completing the project. The Centre has pointed out that the state government has not even started issuing the rejection slips to those who have been excluded from the list of citizens and demanded that the exercise be completed on a 'mission mode'.

The Assam NRC, mandated by the Assam Accord of 1985, monitored by the Supreme Court and published on August 31, 2019 had excluded more than 19 lakh people who made about 6 per cent of the total population of the state.

The BJP-led state government has already made it clear that it will not accept the register in its present form as a lot of people it considers eligible to be included in it have been left out. It has also called for a re-verification of 30 per cent of names from areas bordering Bangladesh alleging that the entire exercise was rigged with doubtful exclusions and inclusions.

Those who have failed to find their names in the register should be issued a rejection slip assigning the reason why they have been left out so that they can approach the Foreigners Tribunal and present their case.

With little movement in the process, the lives of those 19 lakh people have been in limbo ever since the register was published as they are out of the list but cannot seek legal remedy.

It's nobody's case that people who are not eligible for citizenship should be granted it; but the process to determine whether a resident is a citizen or not has to be precise, time-bound, transparent and definite.

The Assam NRC process qualifies for anything but these. The government must find a speedy, just and transparent solution to the vexed issue instead of allowing it to linger on.

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I wrote a book that was published a few months ago. The problem with writing books in India, especially non-fiction and related to history, is that not many people read such books. The quality of the book and the fame of the author is not important for the most part. The print run, meaning the number of copies of such books printed, is limited to a few thousand. Usually that print run lasts for years and it is not uncommon to see books that were published years ago still on the shelves.

I wrote a book translating the Urdu non-fiction writing of Saadat Hasan Manto in 2014. Manto is a very famous name in literature, but even that book is still in its first print run. The new book is called *Our Hindu Rashtra*, and it examines where India stands today with respect to its constitutional promise of being a secular and democratic state.

We are a democracy if you consider democracy simply to be free and fair elections. The rest of the world does not. In the Freedom House

rankings, which recently demoted India to "partly free", only 40 per cent weightage was given to the political rights of citizens, where full marks were given to India for free and fair elections. It was on civil liberties and fundamental rights that India scored so badly that the good work done by free elections was negated.

My book examines this same, process but over a longer time frame. The book is called *Our Hindu Rashtra* because in my opinion we have already become one. No constitutional or other major change is required for India to continue doing what it has been doing since 2014. In Pakistan, the exclusion of minorities has been done by law, and in India it has been done by practice. That is the only difference between the two nations. We have become as much of a religious state as Pakistan and this is a fact.

Pakistan has no Hindu chief minister in its four provinces and India has no Muslim chief minister in its 28 states. Of India's ruling party's 303 Lok Sabha members, there is no

Muslim, and in 15 Indian states there is no Muslim minister. In 10 other states there is only one, who is usually given the minority affairs portfolio. Laws that specifically gave rights to religious minorities, such as propagation and occupation, have been undone by India. The various, deviously named "freedom of religion" laws that Indian states have passed actually take freedom away from us. The bans on cattle slaughter go against the right to occupation, which is a fundamental right only in name.

As a nation we do not have a problem with these things and this is why they are not political issue (only some columnists keep whining about them all the time). This is why I say we are already a Hindu Rashtra structurally.

The other thing is that this marginalising of India's minorities and the writing of laws and policies that inconvenience them appears to be a very large part of why Indians vote the way they do. India is an economy that is in its fourth year of slow-

ing in terms of GDP growth. But there is not much media around this fact. India is the only economy in South Asia to be in recession, but we don't seem concerned by this either or it would be an election issue and a subject for the media. Similarly, unemployment, which is at historic highs and has been since 2017, is not apparently as important as laws that stop women from marrying outside their religion, or who is allowed to enter temples and such things.

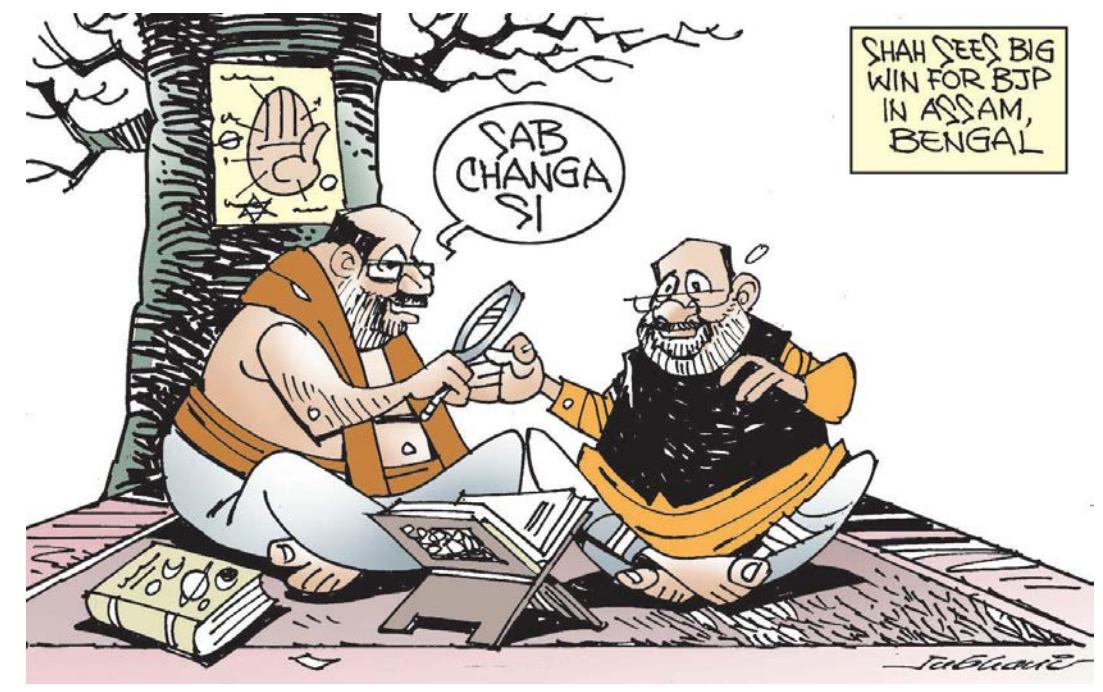
We are told we are being led by a nationalist party but we are also informed that the situation in Ladakh is no different today than it was last year. The fact that newspaper reports have claimed that about 1,000 sq km of land that we could patrol earlier we cannot today has not led to any questioning of the idea that this is a nationalist government. Its nationalist credentials have been established and bolstered by the actions it has taken against its own citizens, including the minorities, and not externally. This is the other reason I believe

that we are already living in a form of Hindu Rashtra.

The question is what comes after this. My view is that it will be more of the same. It appears that many Indians are not primarily voting on the basis of issues like the economy and their own well-being as measured by data provided by the government. They seem to be as concerned and perhaps more concerned about other things, especially those that have to do with the harassment of India's minorities. Much of the media has joined them in this and avoids issues like jobs and economic decline even if a leader of Rahul Gandhi's stature raises them. This is quite remarkable in a nation that is democratic and gets offended by the world saying that it is headed in the wrong way. But every fact on the ground shows that we are, in fact, headed in the wrong way and that there is no mechanism we appear to have to correct our course.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

Subhani



NRIs a 'master race'? It's not they who are special


 Mohan Guruswamy

I am sitting in a roomful of white people and NRIs bleached white by their green cards and PIO cards. They have made quite an art of telling us what's wrong with our country. True, much is. But I don't buy their story (that's also the RSS story) that Indians are God's chosen people.

How we fare in India or anywhere depends on the socio-economic ecosystem. We have all kinds of NRIs. The British NRI usually has a brown collar lowbrow job or is a small trader. Some are NHS doctors. The American NRI is often a highly paid, qualified professional. But despite the differences, they have one thing in common. They think they are a special people who have earned the right to lecture us. They must thank us we've kept India a free country with the patience to listen to them.

I recently received an email on the lines of: "We're flourishing in the US and Britain. But those who stay in India are pulled down by an outrageous system that fails to reward merit or talent, fails to allow people, businesses to grow... Once Indians go to white-ruled countries, they soar and conquer summits once occupied only by whites." There is an essential truth in this.

Typically, such self-laudatory messages, which list people like Indira Nooyi, Sunder Pichai, Satya Nadella and others who are lauded on their fleeting visits to India, don't mention S. Chandrasekhar, Hargobind Khurana, V. Ramakrishnan and Amartya Sen, all Nobel laureates who have brought India much honour.

Other nationalities too do well in America.

George Soros is Hungarian. Steve Jobs was the son of Lebanese immigrants. Then there is Barack Obama, son of a Luo tribesman from Kenya, arguably the best POTUS in recent times. Now we also have Kamala Harris, a heart-beat away from the US presidency. Boris Johnson is the grandson of a Turk and Ireland's Leo Varadkar is the son of a Mumbai doctor married to an Irishwoman. People of Chinese origin have won the Nobel eight times. US scientists of Japanese origin have won five science Nobels. Even Pakistan has a couple of Nobels. It's not just Indians who are special. What is special are the societies and systems that allow talent and genius to flourish.

This success of some Indians overseas has led to a certain NRI mentality that makes them believe they have answers to all our myriad problems just because they have done "well" overseas. They forget they are not as special as the societies that give them a better shake in life. They think they are successful as they have realised a Western lifestyle and Western incomes. Our political and bureaucratic leaders too seem to be considerably impressed by these "achievements" and the annual fests hosted by the government to laud our NRIs is typical of this mentality. We don't seem to realise that NRIs and PIOs can't do much and actually do very little to benefit India. They have few investments in India and our investment in them is still far greater.

Most of the MNC FDI in India is by resident Indians who round trip illegally ferreted out wealth from foreign havens. The biggest investment some NRIs just ₹450 crore, or about

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\$73 million, and Isro succeeded in its very first attempt. There is one thing that gives the NRI a leg up.

The educated NRI, some of them, are mostly better educated. The Western university system, particularly the American, is the foundation of their collective superiority and achievement. The emphasis on self-learning and research makes them special. I would even say that an average US state university offers a better quality of education than our elite institutions like IITs and IIMs, and the *koi hai* colleges of our big cities. The quality of faculty, libraries and research facilities are far superior. What makes our elite institutions elite is the quality of the student population. They are winnowed from millions by the world's most ruthlessly competitive system. Even the beneficiaries of reservation are better than the general average. Rightly, we take the foreign educated a bit more seriously.

Some of them forget India adds a dozen billion-dollar companies each year and at last count we had over 250 of them. Indians head almost all of them. An Indian today is the head and major owner of the world's second biggest mobile telephony company here in India.

Some of them forget India adds a dozen billion-dollar companies each year and at last count we had over 250 of them. Indians head almost all of them. An Indian today is the head and major owner of the world's second biggest mobile telephony company here in India.

Indians can do well and do well in India. They send up rockets to the moon and Mars, perform heart transplants, design satellites, splice genes, write code and so many things considered at the edge of the new frontiers of technology. And they can do this far more frugally than anyone else. The Mars orbiter cost us just ₹450 crore, or about

There's a lot that is wrong with India. We can and should be doing much better. Nevertheless, India's per capita GDP has grown six times over in the past two decades. It has grown annually at about seven per cent since 2000. Its GDP in PPP terms is the third largest in the world, and many Western financial institutions, like Citibank and Standard Chartered Bank, forecast it to be the world's largest by 2050. That's just thirty years from now.

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

LETTERS

HYDERABAD CRICKET

Mohd Azharuddin must be allowed to complete his tenure as he was elected constitutionally (*Azhar, Ayub fight at HCA meet, March 29*). After a long time, Hyderabad cricket league matches are being publicised. It seems like the matches are meticulously organised. Hyderabad cricketers are hardly being represented at the national level. The past glory may be back and I hope budding cricketers may come up in future with Azhar's guidance.

P. Jithender
Hyderabad

COLOSSAL WASTE

For a long time, governments have not been able to resolve an important problem plaguing the most iconic place in the twin cities (*New bid to clean Hussainsagar, DC, March 29*). A huge sum of money has been wasted and more is in the pipeline to be wasted. There is no foolproof system to ensure that the money was worth spending.

Deepesh Surana
Secunderabad

CCTV CAMERAS

I am glad that read 358 CCTVs are being installed in Hyderabad with community support (*Hyderabad gets 358 more CCTV cameras, DC, March 28*). However, it is important that they work always. CCTVs installed in East Marredpally a few years ago are not functioning for the last one year. Many representations to the concerned SHO have not evoked any response.

Chandrasekhar
Secunderabad

3 lakhs killed in Bangla Desh

NEW DELHI, March 29

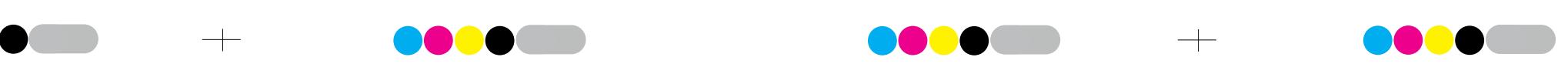
In a desperate attempt to recapture some of the territories liberated by Bangla Desh freedom-fighters in four days of fighting, the Pakistan Army today drew in paratroopers for the first time, even as casualties rose to an estimated 30,000 people killed, mostly unarmed civilians.

The armed forces continued indiscriminate bombings and held out threats of more aerial action to terrorise the followers of Bangla Desh Sheikh Mujibur Rehman into submissions. Troops were landed by helicopters in Dacca.

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 Aakar Patel

India headed in wrong direction: Is it too late to correct course?



SHORT TAKES

BJP NAMES CANDIDATE FOR U'KHAND BYPOLL

Dehradun, March 29: The BJP on Monday named Mahesh Jeena as its candidate for the Salt Assembly constituency in Almora district of Uttarakhand, where a bypoll is scheduled to be held on April 17.

The bypoll to the seat was necessitated after the untimely death of MLA Surendra Singh Jeena due to Covid-19 in November last year.

Mahesh Jeena is the elder brother of Surendra Singh Jeena, who enjoyed the reputation of being an energetic and farsighted leader dedicated to the development of his constituency.

By fielding Mahesh Jeena from the seat, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) hopes to reap the advantage of his late brother's good work in his constituency and the sympathy factor.

Mahesh Jeena will file his nomination on Tuesday, the last date for the filing of nominations for the bypoll, state BJP media in-charge Manveer Singh Chauhan said.

According to the voters' list prepared in January, there are 95,241 voters in the Salt Assembly constituency - 48,682 men and 46,559 women.

NO TO CAA IF DMK VOTED TO POWER, SAYS STALIN

Jolarpet (TN), March 29: DMK president M.K. Stalin on Monday promised that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act will not be allowed in Tamil Nadu if his party was voted to power in the April 6 Assembly elections and slammed the ruling AIADMK for 'supporting' the BJP in Parliament on the issue.

Had the AIADMK and lone PMK member in the Rajya Sabha voted against the Bill, CAA would not have seen the light of day and the two parties should be blamed for the 'plight' of minorities all over the country, he said.

Protests had broken out against the contentious Act earlier in various parts of the country, including in Shaheen Bagh in Delhi.

Addressing an election meeting here, Stalin charged the ruling AIADMK with "enacting a drama" on the matter ahead of the polls and recalled that his party had earlier staged protests against the CAA and also launched a massive signature campaign against it.

"I assure. We are going to come to power; there is no doubt about that. So after we come to power, we will not allow this CAA (to be implemented) in Tamil Nadu. This is an assurance given by Stalin," he said. The DMK shared an "umbilical chord" with minorities and will always back them, Stalin added. He also recalled that his party had opposed the bill in Parliament.

WOMAN COP SUSPENDED FOR MISCONDUCT

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 29

A lady police inspector in Odisha was on Monday suspended after she allegedly made a pregnant woman walk for three kilometers. The cop made the woman walk for not wearing a helmet while riding pillion on a bike. Mayurbhanj superintendent of police (SP) Smit P. Parmar suspended inspector of Sarat police station Reena Baxala for gross misconduct and dereliction of duty.

As per reports, one Bikram Biruli of Matkami Sahi under Sarat police limits was on Sunday morning riding a motorcycle with his wife Gurubari Biruli, who is eight months pregnant, to a hospital in Udaipur for regular health check. The police officer Baxala allegedly stopped him during patrolling around three kilometres away from Sarat Police Station and fined him since his wife, who was riding pillion on the motorbike, was not wearing a helmet.

Bikram, as per reports, said he would pay the penalty online as he did not have cash on him but Baxala forced him to pay offline. When he could not pay up the fine amount, Baxala allegedly took him to the police station in a van while Gurubari was left stranded on the road.

When her husband did not turn up for a couple of hours, a helpless Gurubari had to walk for about three kilometres under scorching sun to reach the police station to know the whereabouts of Bikram.

— PTI

Festival of colours

People play with dry colors during Holi festival in Nadia district of West Bengal on Monday, as Coronavirus cases spike across the country. A large number of people, most of them without masks, gathered on a road in Mahim area of Mumbai also on Monday morning and celebrated Holi while dancing to loud music, in violation of the guidelines.

— PTI

Shuvendu pushing BJP men dressed as cops, says Didi

CM slams Shah for his attack over the death of a BJP worker's mother

RAJIB CHOWDHURY | DC KOLKATA, MARCH 29

A day before Union home minister Amit Shah's mega campaign rally in Nandigram, the hot seat of the West Bengal Assembly election, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accused her nemesis Shuvendu Adhikari of flooding the constituency with BJP cadres, dressed in police uniform, to intimidate the voters the way he did it with the CPI(M) cadres for the 14 villagers' killings during her fierce movement against forcible land acquisition in 2007 during the Left rule.

The Trinamool Congress supremo made the startling revelation, which however, boomerangs on her only since Shuvendu was in her party then, after leading an eight-km-long roadshow in wheelchair on the narrow country roads in Nandigram amid a sweltering heat on Monday.

Targeting Shuvendu, Banerjee told a TMC rally in Thakurchak of Nandigram, "The CPI(M) implicated all, who had participated in the land movement, in cases but spared this Gaddar Babu (a man of betrayal). Why did they? Because he was not present there. He did not take part in the movement also. He instead called in the CPI(M) and the police. It was however not the cops but the CPI(M) cadres, dressed in police uniform and wearing slippers, who had opened fire then."

She wondered, "Except me, who were else with you then? The father-son duo was not in sight for the first 10-15 days. They came to the picture later. By then everything became normal."

Banerjee then alleged, "Same thing is happening this time also. I have information that the BJP cadres have been dressed up in police uniforms which were bought from the market. They have opened fire then."

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GRAND RELEASING THIS WEEK

FROM THE MAKERS OF APS & వ్యాపారం



DEVI 70MM

RTC X ROADS

ENJOY 4K LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS SOUND SYSTEM

BRAMARAMBA 70MM

KUKATPALLY

RAJADHANI COMPLEX

DILSHUKNAGAR

LAXMIKALACINEPRIDE

AMB CINEMAS GACHIBOWLI

PRASAD'S Multiplex

TALLURI COMPLEX-ECIL X ROADS

Radhika-Kapra

MCUBE-Attapur

Cinesquare-Uppal

GPR-Kukatpally

Sivaganga-Dilshuknagar



Central-Panjautta

Inorbit-Madhapur

Galleria-Panjautta

RK-Banjara Hills-Irrummanzil

Icon-Madhapur/Musarambagh

Forum-Kukatpally/Preston Prime

GVK MALL-Banjara Hills

MP MALL-Kachiguda

GSM-Madinaguda



Cinépolis - CCPL-Malkajigiri

DSL-Uppal/Mantra-Attapur

MIRAJ CINEMAS - SHALINI/SHIVANI CHANDANAGAR | BALANAGAR

BIG Cinemas - over mater!

ASIAN CINEPLEX - MAHALAXMI COMPLEX

INTRA VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI COMPLEX-KACHIGUDA

INTRA RAMAKRISHNA 70MM-ABIDS

SUSHMA 70MM

VANASTALIPURAM

SRINIVASA 70MM

UPPAL

SRIDEVI 70MM

R.C.PURAM

VIMAL 70MM

BALANAGAR

SIVASAKTHI 70MM

KAPRA

AARDHANA 70MM

TARNAKA

YAKUTHMAHAL

YAKUTHPURA

KARTHIKEYA EXHIBITORS RELEASE

FAMILY BLOCKBUSTER



SHANTI 70MM

11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00pm

SUDARSHAN 35MM

11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15pm

SVC CINEMAS

MAHALAXMI, 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

EESHWAR, 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SANGEETHA, 11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00

SRI LAXMI, 12.00, 3.00, 7.00, 10.00

MEGHA 70MM

11.15am, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15pm

VISWANATH 70MM

11.45am, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45pm

BRAMARAMBA 70MM

11.30am, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45pm

VENKATARAMANA RAMAKRISHNA 35

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.15, 2.30, 6.00, 9.15

SRI RAMULU 70

11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

TALLURI THEATRE LAXMIKALA

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.30

MANJU 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

RANGA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SRI KRISHNA 70

11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

SENSATION SUNSHINE SREERAMANA

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SAMPOORNA 70

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SAI RANGA 70MM AMBA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

ALANKAR 70MM VIJETHA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

BR HITECH SUPER 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SRI PREMA 70 VIMAL 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SRI SAI POOJA VLS SRIDEVI 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15

ASIAN SWAPNA SHIVRANJANI

11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

JYOTHI 70MM BOLARM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

VENKATESHWARA GANESH 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15

VENKATASAI SHARADA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

JAGDAMBA 70 MAHESHWARI

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

PLATINUM KARTHIKEYA EXHIBITORS RELEASE

NOW SHOWING

SUPER HIT

ASIAN MUKUND SV CINESQUARE

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SANTOSH 70 (ABIDS)

11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.30 11.30 & 2.30

ANJALI 70MM KUMAR 70MM

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SWAPNA 70

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.30 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

BHUJANGA 70 LAXMI (Shamshabad)

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15

PRIYA 70MM MAHALAXMI 70

11.30am & 2.30pm 11.00am & 2.00pm

PRASADS : 2.30pm, 5.15, 8.00pm

AMB - 10.55, 1.50, 4.30, 7.30, 10.30pm

PRASAD MULTIPLEX - 8.45am, 10.00, 11.15, 2.15, 5.15, 8.15, 10.45pm

AMB - 10.30am, 1.20, 4.20, 7.00, 7.30, 10.10pm

TIVOLI CINEMAS - 11.00, 4.45, 7.40, 10.00pm

PVR

CENTRAL - 10.50, 1.00, 7.10, 10.20 I

FORUM - 10.00, 1.10, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40 I

MOOSARAMBAGH - 1.10, 4.20, 6.05, 9.15 I

IRRUM MANZIL - 1.05, 3.40, 6.50, 10.01 I

GALLERIA - 10.10, 2.10, 4.30, 7.40, 10.50 I

INORBIT - 1.00, 4.10, 7.20, 10.30 I

ICON - 12.15, 6.55, 10.05pm I

PRESTON - 1.10, 7.20 I RK - 1.35, 7.30

GPR - 1.20, 7.15 I

M CUBE - 1.30, 4.30, 7.30 I

CINEPLANET - 1.35, 4.30, 7.30, 10.30 I

RADHIKA - 1.40, 1.30, 4.30, 7.15 I

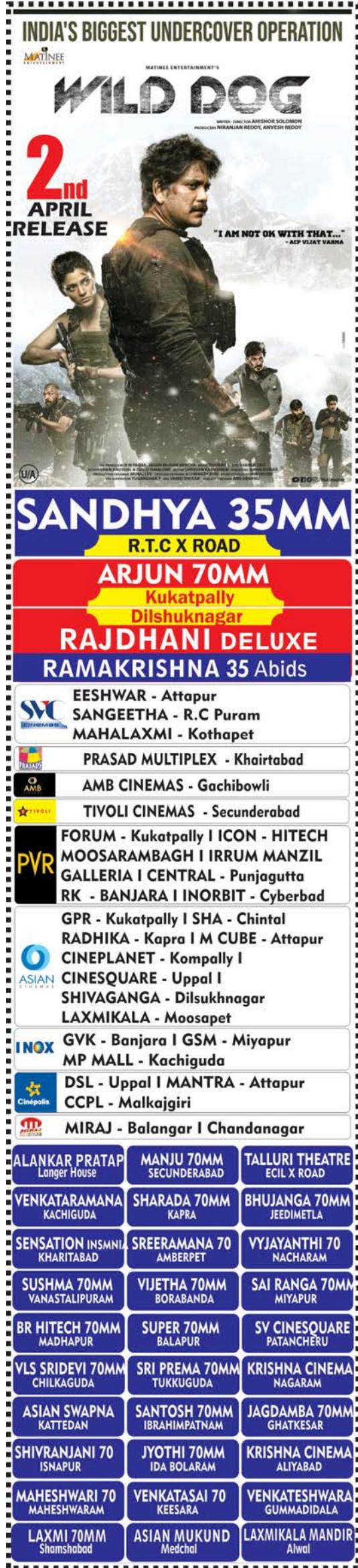
MJR - 1.35, 7.30, 10.20 I

CINESQUARE - 10.35, 1.30, 4.30, 7.25, 10.20

GSM MALL - 12.10, 3.40, 7.10, 10.40 I

GVK - 10.40, 2.00, 7.00, 10.10 I

MP MALL - 1.10, 7.00, 10.10 I



SRESHTH MOVIES
RAJKUMAR AKELLA
PRESENTS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY NITHIIN



SUDHAKAR REDDY NIKITHA REDDY MERLAPAKA GANDHI
MAHATI SWARA SAGAR J YUVRAJ SR SHEKHAR SAHI SURESH
SHEIK DAWOOD MURALI VAMSI-SEKHAR

ADITYA MUSIC

WORLD

pg|9

DECCAN CHRONICLE | HYDERABAD |
TUESDAY | 30 MARCH 2021

China happy over Pak-India interactions

Beijing to work with Islamabad, inject energy into regional peace

Beijing, March 29: China said on Monday that it was "happy" over the recent "active interactions" between Pakistan and India, indicating that it would like to work with Islamabad to inject "more positive energy" into regional peace, stability and development. The militaries of India and Pakistan announced on Feb. 25 that they have agreed to strictly observe all agreements on ceasefire along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir and other sectors. Weeks later, both Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan and powerful Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa made peace overtures towards New Delhi saying it was time for the two neighbours to "bury the past and move forward".

We are happy about the active interactions between Pakistan and India," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here in response to a question.

"We would like to work with Pakistan to inject more positive energy into regional peace and stability as well as development," he said. Zhao was responding to a question on

China expresses warm congratulations on the 82nd Pakistan Day. We believe that Pakistani Government and people will make further progress on national building and revitalisation.

— ZHAO LIJIAN
Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman

Pakistan President Arif Alvi's remark that China is his country's "closest and friendliest friend during his speech at the Pakistan Day parade on March 25. While welcoming Alvi's remark, Zhao also referred to the recent rapprochement between India and Pakistan to dial down the tensions between the two countries.

China expresses warm congratulations on the 82nd Pakistan Day. We believe that Pakistani Government and people will make further progress on national building and revitalisation, he said, adding that Beijing highly appreciates President Alvi's remarks. "China also values the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries," he said.

— PTI

Risks time in solitary confinement: Navalny

Moscow, March 29: Jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny said Monday he had received nearly a dozen warnings for his behaviour since being imprisoned last month and risks time in solitary confinement.

President Vladimir Putin's most prominent critic is serving a two-and-a-half-year sentence on old embezzlement charges Navalny says are politically motivated.

His allies and rights activists say his penal colony is one of Russia's worst and have raised concerns about his health.

Navalny, 44, said that in the past four weeks he had received 10 formal reprimands from prison authorities, including six from guards at his current prison in the town of Pokrov outside the Russian capital.

"If you receive two reprimands you can go to a punishment cell and that's unpleasant, conditions there are close to torture," he said in a post on Instagram.

He said prison officials were currently considering more warnings against him.

His transgressions include getting up before the allotted time, refusing to watch an "idiotic" video lecture and suggesting to the head of his prison unit to "have coffee" instead of doing exercises.

Navalny said last week he was suffering from severe back pain and numbness in his legs and complained medical staff had neglected to properly treat him.

Since being transferred to Penal Colony No. 2 in Pokrov, Navalny has also issued several light-hearted statements likening his prison routine to that of a stormtrooper in the Star Wars films.

On Monday, he joked that the soundtrack to his prison stay was "Bad Guy", a hit by American pop singer Billie Eilish.

Navalny was arrested on his return to Russia in mid-January from Germany, where he spent months recovering from a near-fatal nerve agent poisoning in August that he blamed on the Kremlin.

— AFP

Obama's Kenyan 'granny' dies at 99



Sarah Obama

Nairobi, March 29: Sarah Obama, the matriarch of former US President Barack Obama's Kenyan family has died, relatives and officials confirmed Monday. She was at least 99 years old. Mama Sarah, as the step-grandmother of the former US president was fondly called, promoted education for girls and orphans in her rural Kogelo village. She passed away around 4 a.m. local time while being treated at the Jamamogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral hospital in Kisumu, Kenya's third-largest city in the country's west, according to her daughter Marsat Onyango. "She died this morning. We are devastated," Onyango told *The Associated Press* on a phone call.

"Mama was sick with normal diseases she did not die of Covid-19," a family spokesman Sheik Musa Ismail said, adding that she had tested negative for the disease. He said she had been ill for a week before being taken to the hospital. President Barack Obama has sent his condolences to his family, he said.

"My family and I are mourning the loss of our beloved grandmother. Sarah Ogwel Onyango Obama, affectionately known to many as 'Mama Sarah' but known to us as 'Dani' or 'Granny,' the former president posted on Twitter, with a photo of the young Obama with his grandmother.

"We will miss her dearly, but we'll celebrate her life and remember her long and remarkable life." She will be buried Tuesday before midday and the funeral will be held under Islamic rites. "The passing away of Mama Sarah is a big blow to our nation. We've lost a strong, virtuous woman, a matriarch who held together the Obama family and was an icon of family values," President Uhuru Kenyatta

said. She will be remembered for her work to promote education to empower orphans, Kisumu Governor Anyang Nyong'o said while offering his condolences to the people of Kogelo village for losing a matriarch. "She was a philanthropist who mobilised funds to pay school fees for the orphans," he said.

Sarah Obama, was the second wife of President Obama's grandfather and helped raise his father, Barack Obama, Sr.

The family is part of Kenya's Luo ethnic group. President Obama often showed affection toward her and referred to her as "Granny" in his memoir, "Dreams From My Father."

He described meeting her during his 1988 trip to his father's homeland and their initial awkwardness as they struggled to communicate which developed into a warm bond. She attended his first inauguration as president in 2009.

Later, Obama spoke about his grandmother again in his Sep. 2014 speech to the UN General Assembly.

For decades, Sarah Obama has helped orphans, raising some in her home.

— AP

SHORT TAKES
**RAINS, FLOODING
IN TENNESSEE:
FOUR DEAD**

Nashville (US), March 29: Heavy rains across Tennessee flooded homes and roads, prompting officials to rescue dozens of people from houses, apartments and vehicles. Authorities said four bodies were found Sunday in the flood's aftermath. A flash flood emergency was declared overnight by the National Weather Service in Nashville for the city, as well as Brentwood, Franklin and Mt. Juliet.

Major flash flooding is occurring with numerous roads, interstates, and homes flooded with water rescues ongoing.

**SYRIAN FORCES
RAID I.S. CAMP,
ARREST NINE**

Beirut, March 29: Thousands of Kurdish-led forces, with assistance from the US-led coalition, have launched a military operation at a sprawling camp in northeast Syria, in a new effort to identify and arrest Islamic State militants and tamp down escalating killings and violence in the camp.

The security sweep at the al-Hol camp will continue over time and is being conducted with "indirect" intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support provided by the coalition, US officials said Sunday.

The Kurdish-led forces said they have nearly 5,000 fighters participating in the operation and on Sunday they arrested nine people, including an Iraqi IS member who worked in recruitment.

**TEMPLE IN
RAWALPINDI
ATTACKED**

Islamabad, March 29: An over 100-year-old Hindu temple undergoing renovation in Pakistan's garrison city of Rawalpindi has been attacked by a group of unidentified people, according to a complaint registered by the police.

The incident occurred at Purana Qila area of the city on Saturday when 10 to 15 people stormed the temple at about 7.30 pm and damaged the main door and another door at the upper storey as well as the staircase.

Dawn reported that the security officer of the Evacuee Trust Property Board, Northern Zone, Syed Raza Abbas Zaidi, lodged an FIR at Banni police station of Rawalpindi, saying that the construction and renovation work on the temple had been going on for the last one month.

**VIDEO OF FLOYD
ARREST MAY
APPEAR AT TRIAL**

Minneapolis, March 29: A former Minneapolis police officer goes on trial on Monday in George Floyd's death, and jurors may not wait long to see parts of the bystander video that caught Derek Chauvin's knee on Floyd's neck, sparking waves of outrage and activism across the US and beyond.

Prosecutors have not said when they will play the video, but legal experts expect it to be early — maybe even in the prosecution's opening statement — as they seek to remind jurors of what is at the heart of their case. "If you're a prosecutor you want to start off strong. You want to frame the argument — and nothing frames the argument in this case as much as that video," said Jeffrey Cramer, a former federal prosecutor and managing director of Berkeley Research Group in Chicago.

Floyd was declared dead after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck for about nine minutes. He held his position even as Floyd's "I can't breathe" cries faded and he went limp as he was handcuffed and lying on his stomach. Chauvin is charged with unintentional second-degree murder, third-degree murder and manslaughter.

Almost all of the jurors selected during more than two weeks of questioning said they had seen at least parts of the video, and several acknowledged it gave them at least a somewhat negative view of Chauvin. But they said they could set that aside.

The trial is expected to last about four weeks at the courthouse in downtown Minneapolis, which has been fortified with concrete barriers, fencing, and barbed and razor wire. Leaders are determined to prevent a repeat of riots that followed Floyd's death, and National Guard troops have already been mobilised.



This handout from the Karen Information Center taken and released to AFP on Monday shows burning ruins in Day Bu No village in eastern Myanmar's Karen state, following an air strike after the Karen National Union (KNU), a Karen ethnic armed group, seized a military base. — AFP

Thousands flee into Thailand following Myanmar air strikes

Japan, Indonesia denounce crackdown on protesters

Tokyo, March 29: Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi denounced Myanmar's escalating crackdown on civilian protesters in Myanmar and welcomed efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to respond to it, his ministry said in a statement.

Motegi and Indonesian

ness in regional seas. Motegi "strongly criticised" the growing military crackdown on pro-democracy protests in talks Monday with his Indonesian counterpart, who is visiting Tokyo for security discussions focusing on China's growing assertive-

Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, who have discussed the Myanmar situation twice by phone since the Feb. 1 military coup in that country, agreed Monday to cooperate closely to improve the situation there, the ministry said.

— AP

have already fled into Thailand, Prayut said. "We have prepared some places, but we don't want to talk about the preparation of refugee centers at the moment. We won't go that far." About 2,500 people have crossed the Salween River into northern Thailand's Mae Hong Son

province, according to Burma Free Rangers. An estimated 10,000 people are believed to be displaced in Myanmar's northern Karen state, the agency said. Video shot Sunday shows a group of villagers, including many young children, resting in a forest clearing inside Myanm-

ar after fleeing their homes. They carried their possessions in bundles and baskets. The bombings may have been retaliation against the Karen National Liberation Army for having attacked and captured a Myanmar government military outpost on Saturday morning. — AP

**ALASKA COPTER
CRASH KILLS
RICHEST CZECH**

Anchorage (US), March 29: A contracted helicopter carrying guides and guests from a lodge on a heli-skiing trip in Alaska's backcountry crashed, killing the pilot and four others, including the Czech Republic's richest man.

The only other person onboard was in serious condition but stable on Sunday at an Anchorage hospital, Alaska State Troopers said. The five killed in the Saturday accident were identified as Petr Kellner, 56, and Benjamin Larochaix, 50, both of the Czech Republic; Gregory Harms, 52, of Colorado; and two Alaskans, Sean McMannion, 38, of Girdwood, and the pilot, Zachary Russell, 33, of Anchorage, troopers said Sunday.

In September, Jaishankar made a stopover in Tehran while on his way to Russia to attend a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation and reviewed regional developments with Zarif.

The five passengers included three guests and two guides from Tordrillo Mountain Lodge, said company spokesperson Mary Ann Pruitt. Kellner was a businessman with a net worth over \$17 billion, according to the Forbes 2020 list of the world's richest people. Kellner owned a 98.93% stake in the PPF Group.

— AP

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said no meeting has been "finalised or requested" so far with his Iranian counterpart S Jaishankar on the sidelines of the Heart of Asia conference on Tuesday at Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe, according to a media report on Monday.

The participation of both the ministers at the conference has sparked speculation of a possible meeting between the two leaders amidst recent peace overtures from the

Pakistan Army. Qureshi on Sunday told *The Dawn* newspaper that no meeting (between him and Jaishankar) has been finalised or requested.

When asked about media speculation that India and Pakistan have been quietly negotiating for the full resumption of diplomatic relations, Qureshi said, No such decision yet.

Jaishankar last week also did not give a specific reply to questions on whether he will meet Qureshi on the sidelines of the conference. — PTI

ond shipment of equipment to Chabahar port. In January, India had supplied a consignment of two mobile harbour cranes to the Chabahar port, having a total contract value of over USD 25 million.

On Monday, Jaishankar also met Turkish Foreign

Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu on the sidelines of the Heart of Asia conference here.

"Our discussions focused on Afghanistan-related developments and our bilateral relations. Jaishankar tweeted after meeting his Turkish counterpart. — PTI

Evacuations after Java refinery fire

Jakarta, March 29: More than 900 people from a nearby village were evacuated after a massive fire broke out early Monday at the Pertamina Balongan Refinery in Indonesia's West Java province, officials said.

About 20 people were injured, including refinery workers and several villagers who suffered burns while passing through the area, the local disaster mitigation agency said. Nicke Widayati, chief executive officer of

state-owned oil and gas corporation Pertamina, said firefighters were still battling the blaze and attempting to cool down the area to prevent it from spreading. The cause of the fire was still being investigated, he said at a news conference.

Pertamina officials said there was lightning and heavy rain at the time the fire broke out. Satellite images from Planet Labs Inc showed a massive plume of black smoke rising from the refinery. — AP

The 60,000-square-metre

(646,000-square-foot) venue has gathered perhaps the finest collection of modern Chinese art in the world. It will not be shown at the opening of a prestigious new museum in Hong Kong, an official said on Monday.

Newly built on Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour, the M+ Museum aims to rival Western contemporary heavyweights such as London's Tate Modern and New York's Museum of Modern Art.

Henry Tang, the government official in charge of

WHO report gives little new insight

Covid spread from bat to animal to human

Beijing, March 29: A joint WHO-China study on the origins of Covid-19 says that transmission of the virus from bats to humans through another animal is the most likely scenario and that a lab leak is "extremely unlikely," according to a draft copy obtained by *The Associated Press*.

The findings offer little new insight into how the virus first emerged and leave many questions unanswered, though that was as expected. But the report does provide more detail on the reasoning behind the researchers' conclusions. The team proposed further research in every area except the lab leak hypothesis. The report, which is expected to be made public Tuesday, is being closely watched since discovering the origins of the virus could help scientists prevent future pandemics — but it's also extremely sensitive since China bristles at any suggestion that it is to blame for the current one.

Repeated delays in the report's release have raised questions about whether the Chinese side was trying to skew its conclusions. "We've got real concerns about the methodology and the process that went into that report, including that fact that the government in Beijing has helped to write it," Blinken said in an interview to CNN on Sunday.

The report is based largely on a visit by a WHO team of international

experts to Wuhan, the Chinese city where Covid-19 was first detected, from mid-Jan. to mid-Feb. In the draft obtained by the AP, the researchers listed four scenarios in order of likelihood for the emergence of the coronavirus named SARS-CoV-2.

Topping the list was

transmission from bats through another animal, which they said was likely to very likely. They evaluated direct spread from bats to humans as likely,

and said that spread through "cold-chain" food products was possible but not likely.

— AP

Happy Monday: England embarks on easing curbs

MERKEL BLAMES 'PERFECTIONISM' FOR VIRUS WOES

Berlin, March 29: German Chancellor Angela Merkel has blamed her country's difficulties during the Coronavirus pandemic — from the slow vaccine rollout to the back-and-forth over lockdown rules — on "a tendency toward perfectionism" and called for greater flexibility to tackle the latest surge in cases.

In a lengthy television interview with public broadcaster ARD late Sunday, Merkel acknowledged that mistakes were made by her government, including on plans for an Easter lockdown. The long-time leader also expressed frustration over the actions of some of Germany's state governors, including members of her own party, who have resisted tougher restrictions they had previously agreed to.

beaches and mountain spots on Saturday, after the authorities lifted travel restrictions that have been in place since December. Many aspects of England's lockdown remain in place with the British government stressing that it's taking a cautious approach to lifting the restrictions.

— AP

NEWLY BUILT Venue has finest collection of modern Chinese art in the world

HK museum: No Tiananmen photo

Hong Kong, March 29: A picture of Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei flipping a middle finger in Tiananmen Square will not be shown at the opening of a prestigious new museum in Hong Kong, an official said on Monday.

Newly built on Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour, the M+ Museum aims to rival Western contemporary heavyweights such as London's Tate Modern and New York's Museum of Modern Art.

Henry Tang, the government official in charge of

the cultural park where the museum is located, confirmed on Monday that no artwork deemed to breach the law will be displayed.

"If there are any works that the national security department thinks... (have) violated the law, we will act according to the law," he told reporters.

Tang said he welcomed the police's new national security unit.

Earlier this month, a group of pro-Beijing politicians accused M+ of

breaking the new security law and "spreading hatred against the country".

"We have never planned for that photograph to be included in the opening exhibition, so there is no question that we have retracted it or we have succumbed to pressures and have changed it," he told reporters.

M+ director Suhanya Raffel told the media earlier this month there would be "no problem" showing works by dissident artists like Ai.

— AFP

quick BITES

INDICATORS %

Sensex	49,008.50	--
Nifty 50	14,507.30	--
S&P 500*	3,975.65	--
Dollar (\$)	72.75	0.34
Pound Sterling (£)	100.28	0.28
Euro (€)	85.67	0.20
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	44,081 ▲147	0.33
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	64.69	4.42
IN 10-Yr bond yield*	6.123	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.641	0.027

* As of 8:30 PM IST

CSIR-IICT in deal with industry to develop tech

In an attempt to create a public-private partnership in the scientific field, premier Indian research institute CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT) on Monday has signed a joint collaborative agreement with biotech companies to develop new technologies for biotherapeutics and vaccines to support indigenous and affordable health care solutions for humans and animals.

Ascendas India to buy 1.65 mn sq ft in Bengaluru



Ascendas India Trust (a-iTrust) will acquire 1.65 million sq ft area at an IT park in Bengaluru for an estimated deal value of ₹1,441 crore, according to a statement. Ascendas Property Fund Trustee Pte Ltd has entered into a forward purchase agreement with Gardencity Realty to acquire two buildings in an IT Park with a total net leasable area of up to 1.65 million sq ft located at Hebbal, Bengaluru.

Biocon ties up with Libbs Farma for generic drugs

Biotechnology major Biocon on Monday said its subsidiary has joined hands with Libbs Farmaceutica to launch generic drugs in Brazil. Biocon Pharma has tied up with Brazil-based Libbs Farmaceutica to introduce generic formulations in the Latin American country. This partnership, which marks the entry of Biocon's generic formulations into Brazil, builds upon a successful association with Libbs, which began in 2017 to launch Trastuzumab.

Govt gets EoIs for privatisation of Neelachal Ispat

The government has received multiple expressions of interest from bidders for privatisation of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL), DIPAM secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said. The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) had in January invited preliminary bids for strategic sale of NINL, which is a joint venture of Central and Odisha PSUs. The last date for bid submission was March 29.

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Rupee unscathed in Covid year

Indian currency appreciates 4% in FY21 despite virus-induced headwinds

Mumbai, March 29: The Indian rupee has logged over four per cent gain so far this fiscal, as sustained foreign fund inflows and the RBI's deft policy manoeuvring ensured a strong year for the Indian currency despite headwinds on the economic front, according to experts.

The local unit is likely to average around 73.50-74 in the financial year 2021-22, as despite a vaccine, the coronavirus hysteria still persists and may continue to grapple the foreign exchange market, experts said.

The financial year 2020-21 has been a roller-coaster ride for the rupee due to Covid-19. The pandemic-induced massive sell-off in the equity market led the rupee breach record

● Experts said sustained foreign fund inflows into India's listed stocks ensured a strong year for the Indian currency.

● For the current financial year, foreign investors have poured in \$35.22 billion, the biggest inflows after 2014-15.

● India has attracted the highest-ever foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows at \$67.54 billion during the first nine months of the financial year 2020-21.

low of 76.90. However, the optimism over vaccines, easing of lockdown restrictions, infusion of stimulus by governments and central banks all over the world enthused investors with a general sense of optimism, and the rupee vaulted back to the 72 zone.

HDFC Securities deputy

head (retail research) Devashr Vakil said, "Despite headwinds on the economic front and larger-than-anticipated fiscal deficit, the RBI's deft manoeuvring ensured lower yields for the G-secs and substantial accretion to forex (foreign exchange) reserves this year."

He added that the rupee

is up by 4 per cent against the US dollar for FY21 despite having much higher interest rates and inflation than the US.

Experts said sustained foreign fund inflows into India's listed stocks ensured a strong year for the Indian currency.

For the current financial year, foreign investors have poured in \$35.22 billion, the biggest inflows after 2014-15. India has attracted the highest-ever foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows at \$67.54 billion during the first nine months of the financial year 2020-21.

Reliance Securities Senior Research Analyst Sriram Iyer, "The rupee movements were not surprising as Indian central bank took steps to stem

the depreciation bias of the currency through monetary policy and intervening in the forex markets."

The rupee was also supported amid huge inflows into the domestic equity markets, he added.

Rising COVID-19 cases in India and across the world is a major cause of concern for the rupee. But, along with that, the factor that will dictate the trend of the rupee is taper tantrum, experts said.

"The Federal Reserve interest rate hike and US tax hike are the major challenges. In our view, Fed won't hike rates this year but it will indicate a slow and steady tapering of asset purchases before the end of the year," Gupta said.

OTT time cut as normalcy is back in India

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, MARCH 29

With normalcy returning, the time spent by users on OTT platforms has dropped below lockdown levels in February 2021. However, subscriptions of OTT platforms remain higher by 35 per cent compared to April 2020 levels.

The user time spent on OTT platforms have dropped in February compared to April levels. In April 2020, the time spent on platforms stood at 200 billion minutes and this had gone up to a high of 239 billion minutes in October 2020.

a complete shift to online streaming. With users not willing to step out of their houses, production houses of mainstream movies and OTT platforms started releasing new content online while producing more originals.

This saw the subscriber base going up from 23 million in April 2020 to 31 million in February 2021, a growth of 35 per cent. As a result, subscription revenues grew 42 per cent from \$49 million to \$68 million during the period.

Among the reasons that accelerated the shift to OTT platforms, the number of new launches increased and several new platforms like Hotstar+ Disney, Voot Select and multiple regional SVoD platforms like HoiChoi, SunNXT were launched.

Rise in smart TV users and online users too helped the growth. The telecom industry and broadband players have begun promoting OTT platforms with bundling plans.

VISA TO ALLOW CUSTOMERS TO PAY USING CRYPTO COINS



Mumbai, March 29: Visa Inc said on Monday that it will allow the use of the cryptocurrency USD Coin to settle transactions on its payment network, the latest sign of growing acceptance of digital currencies by the mainstream financial industry.

Visa has launched the pilot program with payment and crypto platform Crypto.com and plans to offer the option to more partners later this year, it said.

The USD Coin (USDC) is a stablecoin cryptocurrency whose value is pegged directly to the US dollar.

Visa's move comes as major finance firms including BNY Mellon, BlackRock Inc and Mastercard Inc have embraced some digital coins, sparking predictions that cryptocurrencies will become a regular part of investment portfolios.

Tesla Inc boss Elon Musk said last week that customers can buy its electric vehicles with bitcoin, marking a significant step forward for the cryptocurrency's use in commerce. "We see increasing demand from consumers across the world to be able to access, hold and use digital currencies and we're seeing demand from our clients to be able to build products that provide that access for consumers," Guy Shepherd, head of crypto at Visa, said.

Traditionally, if a customer chooses to use a Crypto.com Visa card to pay for a coffee, the digital currency held in a cryptocurrency wallet needs to be converted into traditional money. The cryptocurrency wallet will deposit fiat currency in a bank account, to be paid to Visa at the end of the day.

Risks of depopulation loom large on world

TYLER COWEN

How worried should we be about global depopulation? Some East Asian countries have fertility rates near or even below 1.0, while much of the core population of Europe is shrinking. In the US, fertility rates have fallen below replacement rates, hitting a historic low of 1.7 in 2019, and will likely fall even further in 2020 in part due to Covid. Many of the world's poorer countries are seeing their birth rates plunge at unprecedented rates. By the year 2100, according to one projection, world population growth will be practically zero.

If you think the world is overpopulated and has

serious environmental problems, you might welcome this news. But as my colleague Robin Hanson has pointed out, dwindling populations create their own inexorable logic. If the Japanese population shrinks by half, to 65 million or so, what's to stop it from declining to 30 million? Or 20 million?

There is some evidence that shrinking populations are bad for the global economy.

● If you think the world is overpopulated and has serious environmental problems, you might welcome this news.

● There is some evidence that shrinking populations are bad for the global economy.

both economically and otherwise.

One possibility is that a shrinking population itself will bring self-reversing mechanisms. For instance, a Japanese population half its current size would make Japan an emptier place, presumably lowering land prices. Some families would find

it easier to afford a larger apartment in central Tokyo and perhaps decide to have more children.

But that mechanism seems more likely to reduce population decline than to reverse it. Living space is only one of many factors behind decisions about family size. And as population declines, the stock of houses and apartments will decline too, so in the longer run the amount of space per family may not increase by very much.

Population trends depend on how permanent are the causes of fertility decline. In many cases women prefer to pursue careers, or to start having children later, and that means lower birth

rates. This same logic would apply in a much less populous Japan.

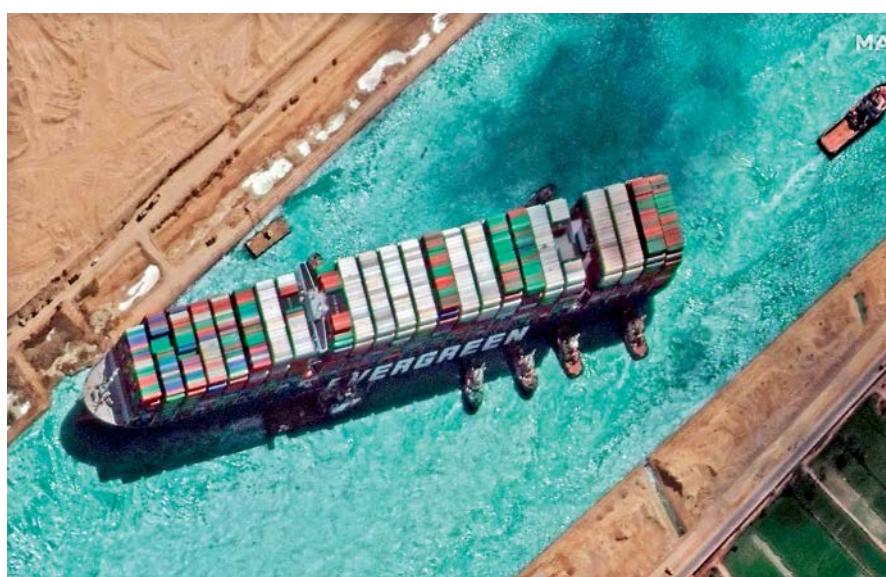
Another factor in declining fertility, especially in the US, is single parenthood. If a potential mother is facing a fertility decision without another full-time parent on the scene, she is more likely to choose to have fewer children.

As population falls, single-parent families become less common? It is hard to see why. Whether the issue is a lack of marriageable men, unstable family norms or women who prefer to go it alone, there is no particular reason to think those factors will disappear in an era of population decline.

If anything, the impetus toward smaller family

— Bloomberg

Stranded giant ship refloated, Suez opens up



This satellite imagery shows a close up overview of the MV Ever Given container ship and tugboats in the Suez Canal on Monday.

ration with the Suez Canal Authority, successfully refloated the *Ever Given*, thereby making free passage through the Suez Canal possible again."

Buffeted by a sandstorm, the *Ever Given* had crashed into a bank of a single-lane stretch of the canal, about 6 kilometres (3.7 miles) north of the southern entrance, near the city of Suez. That created a massive traffic jam that held up \$9 billion a

day in global trade and strained supply chains already burdened by the coronavirus pandemic.

At least 367 vessels, carrying everything from crude oil to cattle, are backed up as they wait to traverse the canal. Dozens of others have taken the long, alternate route around the Cape of Good Hope at Africa's southern tip — a 5,000-km detour that costs ships hundreds of thousands of dollars in fuel and other costs.

Egypt, which considers the canal a source of national pride and crucial revenue, already has lost over \$95 million in tolls, according to the data firm Refinitiv. Even as salvage work continued, President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi, who for days was silent about the crisis, praised Monday's events. "Egyptians have succeeded in ending the crisis," he wrote on Facebook, "despite the massive technical complexity."

— AP

the current backlog of vessels, it could take six days or more for the complete queue to pass," it said.

Switzerland's MSC, the world's number 2 line, said the situation was "going to result in one of the biggest disruptions to global trade in recent years". "Unfortunately, even when the canal re-opens for the huge backlog of ships waiting at anchor, this will lead to a surge in arrivals at certain ports and we may experience fresh congestion problems," Caroline Bucourt, Senior Vice President with MSC said in a statement.

"Even when the canal gets reopened, the ripple effects on global capacity and equipment are significant," the world's largest container shipping company Maersk said in a customer advisory.

Maersk has three vessels stuck in the canal and another 29 waiting to enter, it said, adding that it had so far rerouted 15 vessels to sail south of Africa instead. "Assessing

the second quarter of 2021 being more disrupted than the first three months, and perhaps even more challenging than it was at the end of last year."

Container shipping companies have been struggling for months with disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic that led to wider logistical bottlenecks.

— Reuters

SHORT TAKES

Thisara hits six sixes in an over

Colombo: Allrounder Thisara Perera became the first Sri Lankan to hit six sixes in an over in any form of professional cricket during a domestic tournament near here.

The 31-year-old achieved the feat during his unbeaten 13-ball 52 while captaining Sri Lanka Army in a group match against Bloomfield Cricket and Athletic Club in the Major Clubs Limited Over List 'A' tournament at the Army Ground in Panadgoda town on Sunday. His knock, which had eight sixes in it, was also the second-fastest half-century by a Sri Lankan in List 'A' cricket, after former Sri Lanka all-rounder Kusal Jayawardene.

Weeraratne's 12-ball fifty in 2005. Perera came in to bat at No. 5 with 20 balls remaining in their innings that was truncated to 41-overs-a-side. Part-time off-spinner Dilhan Cooray was the bowler at the receiving end of Perera's onslaught.

Perera is the ninth cricketer in the world to have achieved this feat in professional cricket, after Garfield Sobers, Ravi Shastri, Herschelle Gibbs, Yuvraj Singh, Ross Whiteley, Hazratullah Zazai, Leo Carter and recently Kieron Pollard. — PTI

Medvedev limps into fourth round

Miami: Top-seeded Daniil Medvedev hobbled into the fourth round of the Miami Open on Sunday, defying crippling leg cramps to beat Australian Alexei Popyrin 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (7/9), 6-4. World No. 2 Medvedev, increasingly hampered as the third set wore on in the heat and humidity of South Florida, nevertheless mustered the only service break of the third set on the way to a dramatic victory over 86th-ranked Popyrin.

"It's probably one of the sweetest victories in my career, because I was cramping like hell in the third set," Medvedev said on court as he limped in circles seeking relief.

Medvedev had certainly appeared to be cruising to the finish line when he seized a 5-2 lead in the second set. Popyrin held serve for 5-3, but since Medvedev hadn't faced a break point in the match another hold seemed a mere formality. Instead, Medvedev was shockingly broken at love in a game that featured a double fault and three superb forehand winners from Popyrin. — AFP

Partial refunds for overseas Oly fans

Tokyo: Many fans living outside Japan who bought tickets for the Tokyo Olympics from brokers known as Authorised Ticket Resellers will not get full refunds. And they may have a long wait to get any refunds at all.

The question of refunds came into play a week ago when local organisers and the Japanese government decided to bar most fans from abroad because of the pandemic.

There are dozens of Authorised Tickets Resellers. They are typically appointed by national Olympic committees and are allowed to charge a 20 per cent handling fee on tickets. For \$2,000 worth of tickets, for instance, the reseller can charge \$2,400. CoSport, the ATR for the United States and other territories and countries, said in a letter over the weekend to ticket holders that it would not refund the handling fee. It said it would refund the face value of the ticket and the shipping fees.

— AP

Lakers eke out magical victory

Los Angeles: Dennis Schroder scored 24 points Sunday as the injury-depleted Los Angeles Lakers held on late for a much-needed 96-93 NBA victory over the Orlando Magic.

Lakers won their second straight game after dropping four in a row since superstar LeBron James suffered a high right ankle sprain, joining star big man Anthony Davis on the sidelines. Kyle Kuzma added 21 points for the Lakers, who rallied from five points down with 7:19 remaining in the fourth quarter against the second-worst team in the Eastern Conference. — AFP

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ON THE BUBBLE

Kohli warns players 'cooked' in bubble life ahead of IPL

Pune, March 29: Virat Kohli says cricketers are suffering after months of bio-secure "bubble" life during the coronavirus pandemic as they head into the high-stress environment of the Indian Premier League.

Kohli, one of the game's most disciplined captains, raised his concerns after his India side edged England by seven runs in a thrilling decider to clinch the one-day series 2-1 in Pune on Sunday.

Players from both the sides moved on immediately to join their squads for the world's richest franchise Twenty20 tournament, which starts on April 9, and all will have to go through restrictions again in the IPL "bubble".

"Scheduling needs to be looked at in future, because playing in 'bubbles' for so long, two to three months, is going to be very, very difficult going forward," Kohli said.

"You can't expect everyone to be at the same level of mental strength. Some times you do get cooked and you do feel like a bit of a change. I am sure things will be discussed and will change in the future as well. But a different tournament, it brings fresh challenges heading into the IPL," he added.

Most international players have been restricted to staying inside bio-secure "bubbles" since August, with only small breaks.

From September until January, India's players went through similar quarantine and isolation regimes in the delayed 2020 IPL in the UAE and their tour of Australia before having a short break ahead of the home England series which comprised four Tests, five Twenty20 matches and three ODIs.

Virat also said he was surprised that Shardul Thakur was not adjudged man-of-the-match for the third and final ODI against England and Bhuvneshwar Kumar missed the man-of-the-series honours despite strong performances.

Sam Curran was handed the man-of-the-match award for his heroic 83-ball 95 not out in a lost cause. — PTI



Delhi Capitals' Sam Billings (from left), Rishabh Pant and Tom Curran pose after reaching the team hotel in Mumbai on Monday ahead of the upcoming edition of Indian Premier League. — Twitter

IPL players arrive in Mumbai

Mumbai, March 29: Members of the Delhi Capitals squad, including India star Rishabh Pant, senior off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, allrounder Axar Patel as well as head coach Ricky Ponting on Monday assembled at their team hotel here ahead of the upcoming edition of the IPL.

The group also included West Indian batsman Shimron Hetmyer, England players Sam Billings, Chris Woakes

and Tom Curran, as well as bowling coach James Hopes.

Both Ashwin and Axar had an incredible outing in the recent Test series against England at home, accounting for most of the visiting wickets with their guile.

With regular skipper Shreyas Iyer ruled out of the entire IPL due to the shoulder injury he sustained against England in the limited overs series recently, these players will be required to be at the

their best when the event starts.

The players will be in quarantine for one week. The franchise issued images of the players arriving at the team hotel.

The Delhi Capitals will take on Chennai Super Kings in their first match of the IPL 2021 season, at the Wankhede Stadium, on April 10.

India limited overs vice-captain Rohit Sharma, all-rounder Hardik Pandya, his brother Krunal and Suryakumar Yadav on

Monday joined the Mumbai Indians squad here ahead of the upcoming Indian Premier League, starting on April 9. The franchise posted a video of its skipper Rohit arriving in Mumbai on its official Twitter handle.

Earlier in the day, Hardik, Krunal and Suryakumar had linked up with the MI squad.

While Krunal made his ODI debut in the series, Suryakumar failed to make the playing XI in all three matches. — PTI

Sunny smiles, chokes in tribute to hero Jaisimha

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 29

Batting legend Sunil Gavaskar paid glowing tributes to his cricketing hero and Hyderabad's shining star M. L. Jaisimha here on Monday.

The former Indian captain started off fluently, choking along the way before choking while delivering the inaugural M. L. Jaisimha Lecture at the M. L. Jaisimha Sports Foundation, which aims to provide free coaching to talented underprivileged cricketers in Telangana.

"Jai was my hero," Gavaskar said, adding "It is not only a great privilege but a huge honour to speak about him."

"I first saw him in a black and white photograph of the Indian team back in 1959 and got to see him in person when he came to the boundary line to fetch a ball while the Indian team was practising at the Cricket Club of India's Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai. 'Don't worry, don't worry boys, I'll take that' he told me and my friend Milind Rego as we were eager to hand the ball to him," Gavaskar said.

"I was bowled over when he achieved the rare distinction of batting on all five days of a Test match, against Australia in Kolkata, the following year. Always wanted to emulate his feat, and to suit my superstition, would carry five new things to wear on each day of a Test," he said amid laughter.

Speaking about Jai's steel, Gavaskar said: "Sent in as a replacement for B. S. Chandrasekhar, he took several connecting flights to Brisbane on the 1967-68 tour and beat jet lag to score 74 and 101 to get India close to winning the Test against Australia."

Gavaskar also recollected his over-the-moon moment at being on the same team as his hero, during his debut tour of the West Indies in 1971. "We were involved in a couple of 50-plus partnerships too while batting together. How many people get



Sunil Gavaskar (centre) poses with late M. L. Jaisimha's family members — wife Ms Jayanthi Jaisimha (second from right), son Vidyuth (second from left), daughter-in-law Ritika (right) — and Jayesh Ranjan (left), Principal Secretary of Information Technology and president of Telangana Olympic Association, before delivering the inaugural M. L. Jaisimha lecture in Secunderabad on Monday. — DC

an opportunity to do that with their heroes? I was fortunate in my debut series itself," he beamed.

"And off the field, I have gained incredible experience talking to Jai not only about cricket, but life in general."

Gavaskar attributed Jai's fade to being pushed up the batting order. "He was averaging 50-plus in the middle order when he was asked to open the batting, that's when things began to get a bit up and down for him," he said, adding, "Jai has actually opened the batting as well as bowling for India, in 13 Tests."

However, "Jai was an all-rounder who had 431 first class wickets (which included 13 five-fors and three 10-in-a-match) too. He could bowl medium-pace, off-spin, just about everything."

Gavaskar said he sees a bit of

Jai in former Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Arsene Wenger, former manager of the Arsenal football club in England. "Everytime I see Dhoni, something about Jai comes to me, good looks of course. And he was born on July 7, the day Jai passed away."

Gavaskar's deep affection for his hero is evident when he reveals: "Every 3rd of March when I wake up, I say 'Happy Birthday Jai.' Every 7th of July (Jaisimha's death anniversary), when I wake up, I just don't want to get out of bed..."

The Little Master choked while speaking about Jai's last days and also recalled his final meeting in 1999. "I had come down here and met him at his home when he was very sick... spoke to him, he did not open his eyes but I could feel his hand pressing against mine... he was sedated. While I was on my way back home got the news that my hero is no more," he said.

He picked out Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi as the best. "No Indian cricketer will have charisma of Tiger Pataudi. Jai was another and they were such good friends."

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"We know you are with us. Shower Indian cricket with your blessings Jai so that it will be the tremendous force that it has been over the years," Gavaskar said looking up.



Above: Sunil Gavaskar meets former Hyderabad cricket administrator P. R. Man Singh (left), who was manager of the Indian cricket team that won the 1983 World Cup, at the inaugural M. L. Jaisimha lecture in Secunderabad on Monday.

Below: Former chairman of BCCI's junior selection committee V. Chamundeswaranath (right) presents Sunil Gavaskar a painting of his portrait from the recent Ahmedabad Test match where BCCI felicitated him on the 50th anniversary of his Test debut.



Harry on a high as England win

Tirana (Albania), March 29: Gareth Southgate admitted England have room for improvement after Harry Kane ended his six-game goal drought to inspire a 2-0 win against Albania in Sunday's World Cup qualifier.

Southgate's side struggled to break down the well-organised underdogs until the Tottenham striker netted late in the first half in Tirana.

It was the England captain's first international goal since he scored against Kosovo 500 days ago in November 2019.

Kane now has 33 goals in 52 England appearances.

Kane also set up Mason Mount's second half goal as England made it two successive Group I victories on the road to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

OLMO RESCUES SPAIN

Dani Olmo's injury-time strike saved Spain in a 2-1 win against Georgia on Sunday, while France also rebounded from an opening draw in World Cup qualifying by beating Kazakhstan.

Spain fell behind to a goal from Khvicha Kvaratskhelia just before half-time.

Ferran Torres of Manchester City levelled in the 56th minute with his fifth goal from just six starts. Spain's second-half pressure finally paid off in injury time.

Elsewhere, Italy kept

their World Cup qualifying campaign on track with a hard-fought 2-0 Group 'C' win over Bulgaria who fell to their second consecutive defeat in Sofia on Sunday.

SERGE STARS FOR GERMANY

A first-half goal by Serge Gnabry was enough to seal a tight 1-0 away win for Germany against Romania in their World Cup qualifier.

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SWISS WIN DELAYED GAME

Kick-off in Switzerland's home game against Lithuania in St. Gallen was delayed by 15 minutes on Sunday because one of the goals was too big. When played started, Xherdan Shaqiri scored after just two minutes as the hosts on 0-0.

Meanwhile, Scotland rescued a 1-1 draw against Israel in Tel Aviv.

— Agencies

Mabkhout hat-trick hands India 0-6 rout

Dubai, March 29: India suffered an embarrassing 0-6 rout at the hands of formidable United Arab Emirates — their heaviest defeat against the Gulf side — in the second international football friendly here on Monday.

Such was their performance that Igor Stimac's side did not even get a single shot on target in one of the most forgettable encounters in recent times.

Striker Ali Mabkhout scored hat-trick with goals in the 12th, 32nd and 60th minutes while Khalid Ibrahim (64th) and Fabio Lima (71st and 84th) added the other three.

— PTI

