

## WINDOWS



*The two-headed Greek turtle (Testudo Graeca) "Janus" is seen at the Museum of Natural History in Geneva, Switzerland, on Friday. Janus was born on September 3, 1997 in the Museum and is possibly the oldest two-headed turtle, as animals with this innate anomaly usually die young. Janus is the museum's mascot*

## UPSC ranker complains against fake Insta accounts

**Mumbai:** A 23-year-old former Miss India contestant who recently shot to fame after her success in the 2019 Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exam has filed a complaint with the Colaba police station in the city after it emerged that there were 20 fake Instagram accounts in her name. Aishwarya Sheoran, who had won several beauty pageants in the past, has never created any account on Instagram, say police. She has been living with her father in the Army Officer's Colony in Colaba since 2017. Col Ajaykumar Sheoran, her father, has been posted in Karimnagar. Aishwarya secured 93rd rank in the UPSC exams and was also finalist for Femina Miss India 2016.

## Saudi stops oil supply to Pakistan

**Islamabad:** Pakistan has not received the oil on deferred payments from Saudi Arabia since May as a deal signed between the two close allies for provision of USD 3.2 billion worth of the fuel under the arrangement expired two months ago. The USD 3.2 billion Saudi oil facility was part of the USD 6.2-billion Saudi Arabian package announced in November 2018 to ease Pakistan's external sector woes, the Express Tribune reported on Friday. The agreement expired in May and efforts are being made by the Finance Division to renew the facility, Petroleum Division spokesperson Sajid Qazi was quoted as saying by the paper. ▶ P3

## BUSINESS



## PHARMA BIZ SET FOR DECENT GROWTH

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# PM TO LAUNCH 'AGRI INFRA FUND' TODAY

PURNA SINGH

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a funding facility of Rs 1 lakh crore under the 'Agriculture Infrastructure Fund' on Sunday. Modi will also release the sixth instalment of Rs 17,000 crore to 8.5 crore farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana (PM-Kisan Yojana). Millions of farmers, cooperative societies and citizens across the country will witness this event. Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar will also grace the occasion.

The Union Cabinet has approved the Central Sector Scheme for funding facility under the 'Agricultural Infrastructure Fund'. The fund will catalyze the creation of 'post-harvest crop management infrastructure' and



'community agricultural assets' such as cold storage, collection centres, processing units, etc. These assets will enable farmers to get more value for their produce. In fact, these assets will enable farmers to store their produce and sell at higher prices, reduce wastage and increase processing and value addition.

Out of the 12 public sector banks, 11 banks have already signed MoUs with the Department of Agricultural Co-

operation and Farmers Welfare as part of the scheme.

To increase the viability or profitability of these projects, the beneficiaries will be given a three percent interest subsidy and a loan guarantee of up to two crore rupees. Beneficiaries of the scheme include farmers, PACS, marketing cooperatives, FPOs, SHGs, Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), multipurpose cooperatives, agri-entrepreneurs, startups, and public / private

partnership projects sponsored by a central / state agency or local body.

Under PM-Kisan Yojana launched on December 1, 2018, more than 9.9 crore farmers have been provided direct cash benefit of more than Rs 75,000 crore. This has enabled the farmers to meet their agricultural needs and provide necessary support to their families.

The launch and implementation of the PM-Kisan Yojana has taken place at an unprecedented pace, under which funds are transferred directly to the bank account of Aadhaar-certified beneficiaries. The scheme has also been instrumental in providing necessary support to farmers during the Covid-19 epidemic. In fact, around Rs 22,000 crore was released to help the farmers during the lockdown period.

## Disengagement process: India, China hold Maj Gen-level talks

**New Delhi:** Talks between senior army commanders of India and China were underway on Saturday to take forward the disengagement process along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) at a number of friction points including in Daulat Beg Oldi and Depsang in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the developments said. The Major General-level talks are being held at a border personnel meeting point in Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) area on the Chinese side of the LAC, they said.

The meeting comes a week after the two armies held the fifth round of Corps commander-level (Lt Gen) discussions in an effort to expedite the disengagement process. Continued on Page 6



## COMBATING COVID

## Centre asks States to test grocery shop workers



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal interacts with locals to hear out their problems during his visit to Gole Market, in New Delhi on Saturday

**New Delhi:** Expressing concern that grocery shops, vegetable and other vendors can be potential spreaders of coronavirus infection to a large number of people, the Union Health Ministry has advised states and Union Territories (UT) to take up testing of such people to ensure early detection of cases which can lead to reduction in mortality rate.

In a letter to States and UTs, Secretary in the Health Ministry, Rajesh

**Vendors can be potential virus spreaders: Health Ministry**

Bhushan, also stressed on the need for operationalising ambulance transport system with oxygen facility and quick response mechanism. He underlined that the refusal rate of ambulances must be monitored on a daily basis and brought down to zero.

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# Probe begins into Air India plane crash

**Black box recovered; toll rises to 18  
Centre announces ₹10 lakh relief**

**New Delhi:** The black box of the ill-fated Air India Express flight that could throw light on how it overshot the runway here and crashed has been recovered while the toll in the mishap rose to 18 on Saturday with a passenger succumbing to injuries, officials said.

Hours after the AIE flight with 190 people on board overshot the table-top runway at the airport here while landing in heavy rains and fell into a valley 35 feet below and broke into two portions on Friday night, investigations into the cause of the mishap are underway with top officials of the airlines and aviation regulator DGCA rushing here. As authorities launched investigations into the crash that also left scores injured, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri also arrived here to take stock of the situation and implementation of the relief measures.

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Security personnel stand guard near the mangled remains of the ill-fated Air India Express flight at Karipur in Kozhikode on Saturday

**AI flight touched down 1,000 metres away from runway**

**Kozhikode:** The Air India Express plane, carrying 190 people from Dubai, on Friday touched down near a taxiway that is around 1,000 metres from the beginning of the runway at the Kozhikode airport before breaking up into two pieces, according to AAI. The pilot of the ill-fated flight — IX-1344 — could not sight the runway in the first landing attempt due to heavy rains. Continued on Page 6

## 2 disasters in 48 hrs hit Kerala badly

**Kozhikode:** Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan who arrived here with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and a few of his cabinet colleagues on Saturday, expressed deep sadness at the tragedy after visiting the injured at the Medical

College hospital. "In the past 48 hours, Kerala has seen two tragedies and this has affected the state very badly. I got a call from the President who has conveyed his deep condolences," said Khan. It was on Thursday night that a landslide near

Munnar in Idukki district left 23 people dead. Around 50 people residing in four tea estate lines are missing after a portion of a huge hill came down on them. And on Friday night an Air India Express flight from Dubai skidded off the runway at

Kozhikode airport and fell into a 35 feet deep gorge, leaving 18 dead and several others injured. Vijayan said Prime Minister Narendra Modi called him soon after learning about the accident. Both Khan and Vijayan also inspected the accident site.

## Centre steps in to rein in Telugu Titans



HANS NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi:** The Union Government seems have taken a serious note of the attitude of the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on the issue of construction of alleged illegal projects on Krishna and Godavari rivers without seeking required permissions from the central authorities.

Union Minister for Jal Shakti Ganendra Singh Shekhawat shot off a strong letter to the two Chief Ministers -- K Chandrashekar Rao and YS Jagan Mohan Reddy -- instructing them to put on hold all the ongoing controversial project works and also stop official process for the proposed new projects being taken up by the two States and wait for the outcome of the Apex Council meeting. Shekhawat pointed out to the

■ **Jal Shakti Ministry wants AP, TS to put hold on all water projects**

■ **AP, TS told to submit status report on projects by Aug 20**

■ **Congress, BJP allege that KCR was having secret pact with Jagan**

Chief Ministers that coordination was lacking between the two CMs in this regard.

The Union Minister had asked the Telangana and AP governments to prepare a detailed report on the status of projects, against which the two States raised objections, before August 20 so that the meeting could be convened any time after that.

Though the council was to meet on August 5, it was postponed on the request of both the Chief Ministers. The issue has also gained political importance as the opposition parties, Congress and BJP have been alleging that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao was having some secret understanding with his AP counterpart and there would be no point if the council meets once the AP government finalises the tenders.

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# 2,200 years old inscription found in Manjira Valley in TS

T P VENU

**Hyderabad:** A team comprising M A Srinivasan, researcher on Buddhist History and consultant Buddhavanam Project, Y Bhanu Murthy, Chief Caretaker, Department of Heritage, Telangana and B Shankar Reddy, surveyor and archeological explorer discovered a label inscription (minor inscription) comprising of five letters in Brahmi script and Prakrit language in Maltummeda village in Nagreddypet



mandal of Kamareddy district on August 6, 2020. This inscription dates back to 2nd century BC written in

Ashokan Brahmi script. Munirathnam Reddy, eminent epigraphist who is the Director, Epigraphy, Ar-



chaeological Survey of India said, "This becomes the earliest inscription in Telangana found till date." The

inscription 'Mādhavacharṇaḍa' (can be pronounced as 'Madhavachamda', presently pre-

sumed as the name of a person. The inscription is located on a big boulder on a small hillock on the south east side of the village around 500 meters away from Manjira river.

This finding gains prominence as it strengthens the historicity of sites like Bodhan, Kondapur which are on Manjeera-Godavari valley through which the genesis and growth of Satavahana empire can be traced said Munirathnam Reddy.

The inscription is older than the ones found in

Kotilingala, Mukkatrapeta, Dhulikatta and other Satavahana sites. Basing on the period this dates back to early Satavahana phase in Telangana. M A Srinivasan, says, "This finding should encourage researchers to search for more evidence of historical past in Manjeera Valley. Though through this inscription we cannot conclude much regarding to religious aspect or any other of those times, it definitely points out to the habitation and civilisation in that area."

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## Srisaillam, N Sagar get copious inflows

- **Water level in Srisaillam has reached 848 ft on Saturday as against the Full Reservoir Level of 885 ft**
- **Nagarjunasagar has 557.6 feet water level by Saturday as against FRL of 590 feet**



MD AMEEN

**Vijayawada:** With release of water from Almati dam and heavy rains taking place in the upstream of Krishna catchment area, important reservoirs in Andhra Pradesh have been receiving huge inflows for the past few days.

Water level in Srisaillam reservoir on Krishna river reached 848 feet by Saturday as against the Full Reservoir Level (FRL) of 885 feet.

The inflows were 38,224 cusecs and the outflows were 46,159 cusecs. The gross storage capacity of Srisaillam reservoir is 215 tmc ft and so far the reservoir has 75.8 tmc ft water.

Another major reservoir in the state the Nagarjunasagar has 557.6 feet water level by Saturday against the Full Reservoir Level of 590 feet.

The reservoir is getting inflows of 38,904 cusecs and the outflows were 7258 feet.

The Nagarjunasagar's water storage capacity is 312.04 tmc ft and so far, it has 226.83 tmc ft by Saturday.

Srisaillam and Nagarjunasagar play very important role in irrigation and to supply of drinking water to lakhs of people.

According to irrigation de-

partment officials, Pulichintala project downstream of Nagarjunasagar has 140 feet of water on Saturday as against its FRL of 175 feet.

The total storage capacity of the project is 45.77 tmc ft and so far, it has 9.73 tmc ft water.

It is expected the water inflows will increase if the water discharge from Srisaillam is increased in the coming days. Pulichintala is getting inflows from the rains in western Krishna and Khammam districts of Telangana.

Karnataka has been releasing water from Almati dam since floodwater crossed 1,690 feet as against the FRL of 1,705 feet by Saturday.

Inflows into Almati dam were 1,51,598 cusecs and the outflows were 1,75,672 cusecs.

The water storage capacity of Almati is 129.72 tmc ft and nearly 100 tmc ft water is in the reservoir now.

Still, the Almati is receiving floodwater and releasing surplus downstream to reservoirs in Andhra Pradesh.

Small reservoirs like Jurala, Sunkesula and others in the state are getting adequate inflows and water levels reached to the full capacity by the end of the first week of August.

## Mortality rate low in State: Spl CS

- **Jawahar Reddy appeals to people to be on high alert and seek medical care soon after having suspected symptoms of Covid**
- **Govt has set up control rooms from village level to district level**
- **20,000 extra staff is being recruited for 138 Covid hospitals and 1,000 more ventilators have been put in place**

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Appealing to people to seek medical care at the earliest possible before the condition deteriorates, Special Chief Secretary of Health K S Jawahar Reddy said that the mortality rate in Andhra Pradesh is under control.

Addressing the media here on Saturday, Jawahar Reddy requested people to be on high alert, especially when they have symptoms like high fever, breathlessness, and oxygen saturation dropping below 94 per cent.



Chief Secretary for Health, Medical and Family Welfare, Dr K S Jawahar Reddy, addressing a press conference at R&B Building in Vijayawada on Saturday

He also appealed to people to contact 104 helpline or local ANM (auxiliary nurse midwife) or village or volunteer volunteer either to get shifted to a hospital or home isolation for treatment.

He said that the state government established control rooms from village level to the district level for the convenience of the

patients and also enabled telemedicine service through 14410 call centre.

With regard to the facilities at Covid hospitals, Jawahar Reddy said that 20,000 additional staff is being recruited to offer services in 138 Covid hospitals and 1,000 more ventilators have been made available.

## 29 employees of Annavaram temple test Covid positive

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Kakinada:** Twenty-nine employees working in Sri Veera Venkata Satyanarayana Swamy temple at Annavaram tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday.

Annaram Devasthanam executive officer Vendra Trinatha Rao said that 29 employees of the temple were found Covid positive. Ten 10 *vratas purohitas* and two ar-chakas were among those tested positive, he added.

The EO said darshan has been stopped at the temple from August 9 to August 14 for devotees in view of the prevalence of the pandemic in Annaram.

Consequently, the temple administration conducted the coronavirus tests for all the employees and priests.

The temple administration is trying to find out the reasons as to why the employees and priests tested positive.

After the lockdown ended, the temple administration resumed darshan for the devotees about one-and-a-half month ago.

Thermal screening was conducted on the devotees at the entrance and measures were taken to sanitise the queue lines and other areas in the temple as part of elaborate precautions to prevent spread of virus.

Trinatha Rao said the rituals in the temple would be carried out as usual by the priests individually without the presence of the devotees.

He made it clear that no devotee would be allowed till August 14.

## CAPITAL SHIFTING

# State govt moves SC to get HC stay vacated

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi:** The Andhra Pradesh government has filed a petition in the Supreme Court here on Saturday urging it to lift the stay order issued by the AP High Court on Decentralisation of Administration Bill and CRDA (Repeal) Bill.

It may be recalled that the farmers and the Amaravati Join Action Committee (JAC) against the shifting the capital have already filed caveats in the apex court.

The state government filed the stay vacation petition on Saturday following the High Court order a couple of days ago restoring *status quo* till August 14 and thus restraining the state government from implementing its trifurcation of the capital move.

After Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan cleared the Bills, the state government directed the director general of police to review the law and order in Visakhapatnam and also had planned to hold the Independence Day parade there.

Later, the Chief Secretary issued a GO ordering the administration to make arrangements to facilitate a parade at Vijayawada itself. The Opposition has mounted pressure on the government to withdraw the trifurcation plan of the capital and is making moves to challenge the same legally citing the expenditure already made on Amaravati during the previous regime.

Even the High Court sought to know the fund flow to the capital wondering what would happen to the taxpayers' money spent so far. The petitioners challenging the shifting of capital submitted to the High Court that around Rs 52,000 crore has been spent so far on Amaravati.

**The State prayed the apex court to lift the stay issued by Andhra Pradesh High Court on decentralisation of capital while ordering status quo till August 14**

## School syllabus to be cut by 30-40%

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** As schools are set to reopen on September 5, the state education department has now decided to condense the syllabus by 30-40 per cent. Education minister Audimulapu Suresh said that the redesign will be undertaken considering the number of working days that are available.

Speaking to a leading daily, Suresh said that as already 90 days out of 222 working days have passed, there would be no changes in the pattern of the exams or question paper format.

"We have given syllabus-related workbooks to government school students, and have launched Vidya Varadhi vehicles to conduct classes across the state. We understand that as per the government's decision, students in private schools have not been able to have online classes. As it is difficult for both teachers and students to complete the entire year's syllabus in just six months, we decided to condense the syllabus," Suresh said.

Although students of Classes 1-8 will not sit for exams and they will be assessed on their internal marks, students of Class 9 and 10 will have to appear for their exams. Saturdays will be "no school bag days" and these days will be used to relieve students from stress and anxiety by making them watch films or other activities.

# Ganesha idol-makers stare at bleak future

- **The artisans used to have crores of rupees of turnover every year but no customer this time**
- **The huge loans they availed from Grameen bank and other sources make them spend sleepless nights as survival till next season posing a big question**
- **They are looking at the govt for subsidy on interest and principal**

V PRADEEP KUMAR

**Tirupati:** About Rs 4 crore turnover per Ganesh Chaturthi season every year, flow of customers from four states, livelihood for 130 families, each season is worth their livelihood for the whole year. This is the life of Ganesh idol makers from a small colony in Mangalam on the outskirts of Tirupati.

But all their dreams have become history for now as they are left with Rs 1.30 crore businesses loans in Grameena bank, a huge sum of gold and other sundry loans, hundreds of semi-finished Ganesh idols with no buyers.

The Ganesh idol makers in Bommala colony near Tirupati, which is famous for conceptual and artistic idol-making are leading a miserable life this year. While the coronavirus pandemic has slowed down the development across various sectors, its impact seemed to have sounded the death knell for traditional

crafts and small businesses.

This Bommala colony, which used to be choc a block with customers ahead of the auspicious Ganesh Chaturthi festival, wears a deserted look.

An unending line of Ganeshas stare at an uncertain future along with its residents as the colonists rely only on this business.

By this time every year, they would receive huge amounts as advances to make various thematic Ganesh idols of various sizes reflecting contemporary social issues.

This time around, no idol has been sold so far with only less than a fortnight left for the grand festival. "A few customers have approached us and offered some advances. As there is an uncertainty over allowing idols on streets continues, we are not able to complete the idols since they need no objection certificate from police and other officials," said the president of the colony S Tirumala Prasad Babu.



An artisan S Lakshman with the half-completed Ganesha idols, narrates his woes at Bommala colony in Tirupati on Saturday.

**Hans Photo:** Kalakata Radhakrishna

Speaking to The Hans India, Prasad Babu said that following their practice, they started preparing idols of various sizes from February and continued till May after which the uncertainty set in forcing them to stop everything. Already, they invested huge amounts on buying materials and prepared several idols which will not be useful for next year. "None of us knew any other work except this. We do

not know how to lead the life till next season and clear the loans we took for this season," said another idol maker S Lakshman.

They used draw about 30 per cent of their customers locally while the remaining are from other districts and neighbouring states. None of them is coming now. They are looking at the government for some relief measures like reducing the rate of interest

at least by half on their loans in Grameena bank and 50 per cent subsidy on them with which can they survive till next season.

Interestingly, as they do not go anywhere and do any other work, the colony was so far free from Covid-19 infection though all their surrounding areas have reported several cases. They are not even allowing others to enter their colony.

## 28 CIs promoted as DSPs in State

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Mangalagiri:** Director general of police Gautam D Sawang issued orders promoting 28 circle inspectors throughout the state as deputy superintendents of police.

The DGP office informed on Saturday that the Police Establishment Board met here recently and after going through the records and service particulars, recommended the promotion of the 28 CIs as DSPs. The orders would be implemented with immediate effect. The DGP office said that the promoted officers should join in the promotion post within a period of 15 days from the date of the receipt of the orders of posting. The promoted CIs are Md Shareef, V V Appa Rao, G Seetharama Rao, S Raghavulu, N Kalidas, B Srinivas, J Siva Narayana Swamy, P Kanjakshan, Raghuvver Vishnu, V Subba Rji, B Janardhana Rao, T.V.V. Pratap Kumar, P Sarath Babu, Singuluri Venkateswara Rao, G Bali Reddy, T Ashok Vardhan, S Rambabu, Ch Ravi Kanth, Ch Srinivasa Rao, B Venkata Siva Reddy, T Dilip Kumar, P Srinivasulu, RG Jayasurya, SS Bhaskara Rao, KTTV Ramana Rao, T Venkateswarlu, V Giridhar and G Ravi Kumar.

# Man, his two daughters commit suicide

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Kadapa:** Family troubles drove a man and his two daughters to suicide in Prodduturu town.

Though the tragedy occurred on August 7, it came to light when bodies were found on Saturday.

The victims were identified as Danireddy Babu Reddy, 52, his daughters D Swetha, 25, Saipreethi, 22, residents of YMR colony in Prodduturu.

Some passersby noticed the bodies of father and two daughters separately at Venkataadri Ventures outside skirts of Prodduturu and rail track at Tippaluru-Ranipeta in Yerraguntla mandal. According to the Prodduturu



rural CI S Viswanath Reddy, the Babu Reddy had two daughters Swetha and Saipreethi. Last year, he performed marriage of his elder daughter Swetha with one R Suresh Kumar Reddy, son of Chandrabul

Reddy, of Tallampuram village in Prodduturu mandal.

After the marriage, Suresh Kumar Reddy began harassing his wife even for petty reasons and demanding more dowry.

Babu Reddy tried to pacify his son-in-law several times but in vain.

In this connection, late on Friday night, dejected over the agony of his elder daughter, Babu Reddy hanged himself from a tree at Venkataadri Ventures. Before resorting to the extreme step, he recorded a selfie video blaming his son-in-law for his suicide and sent it to one of his relatives Haranth Reddy.

On learning of their father's suicide, his two daughters too went to rail track at Tippaluru-Ranipeta area in Yerraguntla mandal and committed suicide by jumping under a train. Prodduturu rural police registered a case and are investigating.

## US IT firm to setup a centre at Vizag



HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Vijayawada:** The state government signed an MoU with the US-based The Boston Group (TBG) in the presence of Rathnakar Pandugayala, special representative to AP government for North America and Subu Kota, chairman, The Boston Group and People Prime Worldwide on Wednesday. The proposed firm is expected to create more than 250 jobs in the IT sector in the state.

A native of Vijayawada, Subu Kota is an Indian-American entrepreneur and philanthropist who has established nearly 50 companies in the last 50 years that he has lived in the USA. His broad experience ranges from IT consulting, e-Learning services to pharmaceuticals research and manufacturing.

Speaking on the occasion, Subu Kota said, "I am de-

lighted to sign this MoU today to strengthen our relationship with the AP government. Vizag has a huge potential for growth and is becoming one of the most attractive investment destinations in India. Collaborations like these are crucial at this time while the world is fighting a pandemic. This new centre will deploy its employees in R&D on learning platforms and leveraging advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Cyber Security and Human Resources. We believe there is immense potential in Tier-II cities like Visakhapatnam with the talent pool comprising of graduates and post graduate professionals."

Ravi Aleti, CEO of People Prime Worldwide (a subsidiary of The Boston Group) said, "Vizag is an upcoming city with its own advantages such as connectivity, cosmopolitan population, top educational institutes and universities, as well as medical and support services. We would work with state IT ministry in opening our office in SEZ zones in Vizag."

"Subu Kota supports the decision of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy of making Vizag an IT hub, which is home to many talented professionals from educational institutes all across the city", Rathnakar added. TBG has a presence in five countries and serves clients in a broad range of industries, including pharmaceutical, financial, insurance.

## Jagan ranks 3rd best CM in India

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has been ranked as the third best performing chief minister in India. According to India Today-Karvy Insights Mood of the Nation (MOTN) survey, Jagan scored 11 per cent votes.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath topped the list as the best performing chief minister for the third time in a row. He scored 24 per cent of the total votes.

After Yogi, it is Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal with 15 per cent votes and then AP CM. Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Rao secured the 9th position.

The MOTN poll was conducted between July 15 and July 27, 2020 by a Delhi-based market research agency. The survey was conducted in 97 Lok Sabha constituencies in 19 states, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Generally, the survey will be conducted in a face-to-face interview manner but this time, due to the coronavirus pandemic, a total of 12,021 interviews were conducted telephonically.

## BJP state chief meets Kanna

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Guntur:** BJP state president Somu Veerajulu met his predecessor Kanna Lakshminarayana at his residence at Kannavarithota here on Saturday. He discussed steps to be taken to strengthen the party in the state.

He took suggestions and advice from Lakshminarayana. Later, he had a lunch with him. BJP leaders said that it is a courtesy call.

It may be noted that after being appointed as state BJP president, Veerajulu has been meeting several leaders.

He met former Union minister K Chiranjeevi, Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan at his residence in Hyderabad city and discussed joint programmes.



# Kozhikode crash: Pending fine saves Kerala expatriate's life

**Dubai/Kozhikode (IANS):** T. Noufal considers himself extremely lucky to be alive and kicking, with his previous job too under his belt now. This comes a day after he was all despair after failing to board a flight back to native Kerala.

Little did the young man know on Friday afternoon that destiny had good things in store for him when he became sad and angry after an emigration official told him at the Dubai airport he will not be able to board the Air India Express flight to Kozhikode due to a pending fine.

The aircraft crashed on landing at the Kozhikode airport on Friday

evening, killing 18 persons on board.

"I was sad when I heard the officer say this to me. I did not know what to do; felt very bad. After failing to convince the officer, I returned from the airport and called up a relative to tell him that I was not coming," recalled Noufal, who had lost his job due to the coronavirus pandemic.

For a few hours thereafter, he was rolling in misery and cursing all and sundry for his 'misfortune'.

But later, when he heard the news about the crash and the tragedy, he thanked his stars for being alive.

"I had mixed emotions -- I was both sad and happy. Sad because of the tragedy and happy because I was not on the ill-fated aircraft. I do not know what all thoughts exactly went through my mind at that time," added Noufal.

And in another happy -- or lucky -- turn of events for him, he received a call from his Arab sponsor and later his company regarding his job.

"My sponsor said I can rejoin the job from which I was terminated. Soon after, I got a call from an HR Department official who asked me to rejoin," said Noufal.

Noufal recalled that relatives of

two women had asked him to help them till they met their waiting relative at the Kozhikode airport in case he boarded the flight.

"One was an elderly woman. I have been told that she suffered minor injuries and will be discharged from hospital later in the day. Another was a pregnant woman travelling with her young child. I am yet to hear anything about them," the expatriate said with a tinge of sadness.

Asked when he planned to return to his hometown, he said: "Now that I am joining back at my office, I have no plan to visit Kerala at the moment."



## IMA writes to PM as 196 docs succumb to Covid

**New Delhi (IANS):** Disturbed by incidences of doctors not receiving proper beds and treatments after getting infected with Covid-19, the Indian Medical Association has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday to draw his attention.

The association said that such incidents would create a demoralising effect on the healthcare community, who are also at the frontline of the corona war.

"Disturbing reports have appeared about doctors and their families not getting beds for admission and also lack of drugs in many cases. It is pertinent to draw your attention to the demoralising effect it will have on our healthcare community," the letter read.

The association demanded adequate care for doctors and their families. "We need his (PM) attention and indulgence because of the rising concerns of the safety of doctors during this Covid crisis. An increasing number of doctors are getting infected and losing lives due to Covid," said R.V. Asokan, secretary-general of IMA.

Besides, the association also demanded the extension of state-



sponsored medical and life insurance facilities for doctors in all sectors.

As per the IMA, 40 per cent of the doctors who succumbed to the pandemic are general practitioners who work in private sectors or independently. "It is pertinent to mention Covid does not differentiate between the Government and the private sector. Of all the fatalities we recorded, the substantial num-

ber of them are General Practitioners. A significant proportion of the population consults them for fever and related symptoms. They remain the first point of contact and care. They also happen to spend quality time in consultation and practising clinical medicine," Asokan said.

The data shared by the IMA revealed that 87 per cent of the doctors who died due to COVID were above 50 years of age. "A

huge chunk of them were already in vulnerable group. Yet, they did not deter from their duty to treat everyone despite facing the risk to their lives," Asokan added.

The IMA also said that the highest number of casualties was recorded from Tamil Nadu, where 43 doctors died due to the Coronavirus, followed by Maharashtra and Gujarat which recorded 23 deaths each.

### Union Minister Kailash tests +ve

**Jaipur:** Union Minister of State for Agriculture Kailash Choudhary has tested positive for coronavirus, he said in a tweet on Saturday.

He is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

"Following the test done last night after showing symptoms, the report for coronavirus has come out positive," Mr Choudhary tweeted. "All friends who came in contact with me in the last few days should keep distance from their family members and get themselves tested."

"There is fever with little breathing problem. I am taking treatment under the supervision of doctors in the hospital," he said in the tweet.

The minister, who was on a three-day visit to his parliamentary constituency Jaisalmer, had visited several places.



## 61,537 NEW CASES IN 24 HOURS

**New Delhi (IANS):** A total of 61,537 new coronavirus cases were reported in the last 24 hours in India, which took the overall caseload to 20,88,611, while the death toll increased to 42,518 with 933 fresh fatalities, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said on Saturday.

The number of active cases stood at 619,088, while 14,27,005 corona patients have recovered so far, including 48,900 discharged from various hospitals and quarantine centres in the past 24 hours, the Ministry said.

As many as 5,98,778 samples were tested for virus infection in the last 24 hours, taking the cumulative samples tested up to August 7 to 2,33,87,171.

So far, 1,396 operational laboratories are reporting to the Indian Council of Medical Research, including 936 government and

460 private labs. Out of 1,396 labs, real-time RT-PCR for COVID-19 is being carried out at 711 labs.

Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh have recorded the highest cases among all states. Maharashtra has 1,45,889 active cases, with 3,27,281 recovery cases. The state has reported 17,092 deaths so far.

Tamil Nadu has 52,759 active cases and 2,27,575 recoveries. As many as 4,690 patients have succumbed to the deadly virus so far in the southern state.

Andhra Pradesh has 84,654 active cases whereas 1,20,464 patients have recovered and another 1,842 lost their lives to the deadly virus. Karnataka has 77,694 active cases though 84,232 COVID-19 patients have recovered so far. A total of 2,998 patients have lost their lives.



### ABHISHEK BACHCHAN RECOVERS

**Mumbai:** Actor Abhishek Bachchan on Saturday said that he has tested negative for COVID-19.

Abhishek and his father, megastar Amitabh Bachchan were admitted to Nanavati hospital after they tested positive for COVID-19 on July 11.

The actor shared the news in a post on Twitter almost a week after his father was discharged from the hospital. "A promise is a promise! This afternoon I tested Covid-19 NEGATIVE!!! I told you guys I'd beat this."

"Thank you all for your prayers for me and my family. My eternal gratitude to the doctors and nursing staff at Nanavati hospital for all that they have done," Abhishek tweeted.

His wife, actor Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, 46, and eight-year-old daughter Aaradhya were discharged from the hospital on July 27 after testing negative for COVID-19.

## Saudi holds back oil to Pak after Qureshi's threat to split OIC

**Islamabad/New Delhi (IANS):** Saudi Arabia has halted the provision of oil on loan for Pakistan after the Imran Khan government threatened to split the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) over Kashmir.

Hit by a severe economic crisis, Pakistan has borrowed a \$6.2 billion loan from Saudi Arabia in 2018. The loan package included a provision under which Saudi Arabia granted Pakistan \$3.2 billion worth of oil, a year on deferred payments.

Pakistani media on Saturday said that the provision meant for Islamabad expired two months ago and has not been renewed by Riyadh. Instead, Islamabad has prematurely returned \$1 billion Saudi loan, four months ahead of repayment period, The Express Tribune said quoting sources and Sajid Qazi, the spokesperson of the Petroleum Division.

Recently Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi during a talk show on a news channel had threatened that if the OIC headed by Saudi Arabia did



not convene a foreign ministers' meeting on Kashmir, Prime Minister Imran Khan would hold it on his own with his allies among the Islamic countries. "If you cannot convene it, then I'll be compelled to ask Prime Minister Imran Khan to call a meeting of the Islamic countries that are ready to stand with us on the issue of Kashmir..." he had threatened on Ary news channel.

The OIC, the biggest bloc of Islamic countries in the world, has repeatedly declined Islamabad's several requests to hold a meeting on Indian Kashmir -- a region which Pakistan Army attempted to invade four times in the last seven decades and where it has been waging a proxy war against India for last three decades.

## K'taka takes crowdsourcing route to draw cycling maps in B'luru

**Bengaluru (IANS):** Karnataka's Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) has invited city cycling enthusiasts to mark the routes where they prefer cycling lanes, considering cycling picking up traction during Coronavirus and also for being a socially distanced personal transport option, an official said on Saturday.

"Bicycling has picked up traction in Bengaluru city during this Covid crisis. As a socially distanced personal transport option, it is by far the best option for distances that cannot be covered by walk," said a DULT official.

Initiating #Mapyourcyclingroute campaign, the department has asked cyclists to mark the routes on the map and DULT will put layers such as ward boundaries, transit stations, parks, lakes and schools.

GPS Visualiser, Mapunity Draw, Google Maps or any tracking tool like Strava, mapmyride can be used for marking the routes.

"We will keep this crowdsourcing effort open till August 14. If your area is not covered in



this cycling district it will open up as soon as the plans and budget for the Cycling District 1 is completed and submitted for implementation," he said.

DULT has been at the forefront of mobilising people to take up cycling as preferred mode of transport for the past six years, including organising an event called CycleDay.

## 16 worst-hit dists asked to ramp up testing

**New Delhi (IANS):** The Union Health Ministry advised 16 districts in four states reporting Covid mortality above the national and state's average to ramp up testing and ensure availability of ambulances with the target of zero refusal. It will reduce case confirmation percentage in the area, the ministry has said. The Ministry on Friday said that the higher number of Covid-19 mortality reported in these districts are a "cause of concern," as deaths due to the Coronavirus rose to 42,518 on Saturday. The 16 districts are Ahmedabad and Surat in Gujarat; Belagavi, Bengaluru urban, Kalaburagi and Udupi in Karnataka; Chennai, Kanchipuram, Ranipet, Theni, Thiruvallur, Tiruchirappalli, Tuticorin and Virudhunagar in Tamil Nadu; and Hyderabad and Medchal-Malkajgiri in Telangana. The Ministry also said that these districts account for 17 per cent of the total active cases. They are also reporting high number of fresh cases daily. The confirmation percentage of these districts are also relatively high as they are conducting low tests per million population, the ministry added.

## Solar-powered classrooms in 122 Karnataka schools

**Bengaluru (IANS):** State-run Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has set up solar-powered smart classrooms in 122 government schools across the backward Yadgir district in north Karnataka, an official said on Saturday.

"About 13,000 children studying in 122 government schools will benefit from smart classrooms, powered by solar power and equipped with hi-tech facilities," the city-based defence behemoth's official KS Ashok told IANS here.

Yadgir is about 560 km north of Bengaluru in the southern



state. Costing a total of Rs 3.8 crore, the smart classrooms offer visually attractive content to help students assimilate the information effectively. It also enables teachers to explain difficult concepts, thereby improve teaching and enhancing the academic performance.

"The smart-class facilities include a 50-inch LED television, central processing unit (CPU) with accessories, green board and LED lights charged with solar batteries," said Ashok.

The electronic equipment are stored in a cabinet after the classes

end. "The digital content covers English, Mathematics, Science and Social Science subjects for students of 8-10 classes as per the state syllabus," Ashok added.

The company is also installing hand-wash facilities costing Rs 1.02 crore in 100 state-run primary schools across the district to protect children and staff from coronavirus and maintain hygiene.

The novel initiative has been taken up in the state's backward region under the flagship programme to transform aspirational districts launched by the central government in 2018.



# Indian bureaucracy, a full-blown crisis



Your edit piece "Failing bureaucracy calls for PM's attention" (THI-August 8) is a thought-provoking and interesting article. Now a days there are any number of PILs filed in courts disputing the points on some of the policy matters of the government at centre as well as at states. This has been leading to delay in implementing the welfare schemes and raging wrath among public. Litigations pertaining to government decisions were not seen in such high proportions in the past.

The reason is owing to the alertness of the public in the wake of media which has been conducting debates with experts in the studio as and when any policy matter is announced. On the other hand, of late we have seen that the courts have been summoning top officials like CS and DGP etc. Especially in the Telugu states it is rampant. Where does the mistake lie? Whichever government is in power it is the bureaucrats who draft the guidelines based on the government instructions.

odd decisions of a state government decisions caught in the cross-hair of legal complexities and made its legal stand before the court of law with folded hands.

The political interference in the government has led to creating many invisible furrows in the bureaucracy. Further, the Babus are using the leaders as their shields to become more fattish in all fronts. This attitude of the seniors is alluring the new entrants towards venality. The politicians are also using them as their pawns in the power game and making the governance more turbid.

Today's governance has miserably failed to introduce hope in the common person due to its biased nature in all fronts. This edit also portrayed about the

filthy political language that flutters in the temples of democracy. It seems that we are in a pressing need to provide a one-year orientation for all the people representatives on the ethics of the houses. Further, it is essential to bring an electoral reform that minimum knowledge is essential on the constitution is compulsory for any people representative post.

This edit rightly called for the need of Prime Minister's attention to regulating the failing and the falling bureaucracy due to political trespass. This edit has its merit to be circulated among the Babus to remember these virtuous words "Work for a cause not for applause, live life to express not to impress".

**E Gajendra Nath Reddy,**  
Badvel

## CONTROLLING THE LEVERS OF POWER

The insightful article stresses the need for cardinal role to be played by bureaucracy to minimise confrontations between Executive and Judiciary. (Failing bureaucracy calls for PM's attention - THI, 8 August). Undeniably, the decisions of governments are becoming increasingly controversial where wastage of taxpayer's money and constitutional transgressions are taking place. It is worrisome that this has been happening despite the existence of bureaucracy which is talented and well trained.

It is a bitter reality that the present day political discourse is hijacked by selfish politicians in order to serve their political interests rather than people's interests. As such, politicians are prepared to go to any extent in pursuit of money and power leaving the common man in the lurch. The phenomenon of mushrooming turncoats, abusive language in legislative debates, using caste and religion for electoral gains and autonomous institutions dancing to the tunes of political power is contributing to the mockery of democracy.

It is not that our bureaucracy

is inefficient, dishonest and untalented. When the ruling class tries to tame and threaten bureaucrats to make them pliable and subservient to cater to its political needs, it will be very difficult for bureaucrats to act independently and with integrity. We saw certain luminous people such as Raghuram Rajan, Urjit Patel voluntarily demitting their office for being unable to bear the political harassment. It is an open secret that talented and honest IAS officers are given unimportant portfolios and pliant IAS officers are posted in crucial portfolios.

The political leadership at the helm should strive to establish a bureaucratic system where efficiency, integrity and knowledge rather than sycophancy and spinelessness are rewarded. There is no dearth of knowledge, integrity and talent in bureaucracy. What is needed is the political will to take the country forward by encouraging the bureaucrats who are equipped with right attributes such as integrity and efficiency.

**Narne Raveendra Babu,**  
Hyderabad

## PAST AND PRESENT

### Are our children not the real Covid-19 warriors?

**ANIL KUMAR PATNAIK**



Of course, the service provided by doctors, health workers, police personnel are unforgettable. The public will remain indebted for their help and services. They are warriors, who, leaving behind their families joined the forefront to fight against the pandemic. In whatever manner we eulogise them, it is insufficient. Still somewhere, there are unsung protagonists, who, by being at home, supporting the cause, enduring these devastating days.

When educational institutions were declared to remain off till further notice, the joy knew no bound for children. Because, off days are always been a bonanza for them. As the situations worsened and lockdown shifted, the onset of online classes to replace school at home set in motion. Online classwork, online assignments - even the most nincompoops too learned using a plethora of apps to attend the classes with conditions provided, sometimes the microphone off, sometimes the video off and mostly both.

Further extension of lockdown encroached the lion's share of the summer vacation. Due to this, vacation turned into staycation and children watched the sky, looked at the rain, smelt petrichor and improvised their happiness. Homemade foods provided a smile on their face and inadver-

tently they became matured helping in household chores.

Time passed, pages of the calendar changed, lockdown became unlocked, part shutdown continued. For obvious reasons re-opening of schools extended. The oncoming of peak academic session made everyone realise their roles. The commencement of online tests took the rein. Extracurricular activities which were a standstill became soulful now. Instrumental classes and its pending tests, football and cricket coaching through a conference, online NCC training - with the same target audience.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" is inaudible and became unheard. Because Jacks are the cynosure of online classes, coachings and training. They are motivated, persuaded, and sometimes inspired to stay safe, stay home, and above all keep learning. And to the contrary, they are fighting it out. Being motivated, getting persuaded and a bit inspired - by staying at home, remaining safe, and learning inevitably without being a dull boy. Our children, the real warriors.

## Re-orienting bureaucracy is imperative

This is with reference to the article "Failing bureaucracy calls for PM's attention". This is a thought provoking and interesting article. Now a days there are any number of PILs filed in courts disputing the points on some of the policy matters of the government at centre as well as at states. This has been leading to delay in implementing the welfare schemes and raging wrath among public. Litigations pertaining to government decisions were not seen in such high proportions in the past.

The reason is owing to the alertness

among the public in the wake of media which has been conducting debates with experts in the studio as and when any policy matter is announced. On the other hand, of late we have seen that the courts have been summoning top officials like CS and DGP etc. Especially in the Telugu states it is rampant. Where does the mistake lie? Whichever government is in power it is the bureaucrats who draft the guidelines based on the government instructions.

At least before the policy guidelines come into the public the bureaucrats must

think about the pros and cons of the affects of the policy on the constitutional point of view and also about any ill-effects on some section of the public. If possible it is better to keep the policy guidelines on public domain and invite opinions so that controversies are minimised. When the policy is drafted by the bureaucrats of one government ruled by one party how it becomes useless to the other government ruled by another party? It is simply the ego clashes and acquiring credit to the ruling party and at the same time mudslinging on the previous government. Recently one more

trend is seen whereby the services of retired bureaucrats and intellectuals are recalled. This has not been a success as they are becoming voice of political executive instead of being the think tank behind the policies of the government. This tendency has been consuming lot of court's time and stalling the developmental work.

Hence this calls for a review of the role and relationship between the administration and political executive. A serious thought is to be given to this issue and solution is to be found as early as possible.

**TSN Rao, Bhimavaram**

## The fate of 60-lakh employees under EPS- 95 scheme

Consequent upon the new economic reforms brought into force by P.V. Narasimha Rao government in early nineties, some of the economically, technically and commercially unviable Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) were shut down and the workforce was discharged from service on Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS).

In respect of The Fertiliser Corporation of India Limited situated in various parts of the country, one in Ramagundam in Telangana state was closed in March 1999 and the employees were relieved of their service in 2002 and the terminal benefits were paid of 1987 wages by denying to effect two wage revisions due in 1992 and 1997.

CPSUs such as HMT, IDPL, have different dates of closure and their retrial benefits are different but very meagre. There are more than sixty lakh employees covered under Employees' Pension Scheme-1995 (EPS-95). The FCIL employees are getting a fixed static pension of plus or minus one thousand rupees since 2002. This is the actual story.

All the CPSU Retirees' Associations in the country covered under EPS-95 have made numerous appeals, conducting dharnas, meeting all the concerned changing central ministers in all the governments since 2002 and getting assurances for upward revision of pension. Several committee reports, court verdicts supported the cause of employees which were defied conveniently.

More than one and half decades of retirees' efforts resulted in fiasco. Most of them have turned septuagenarians and are ailing and also meeting the inevitable end.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance is gaining admirable resurgence with his bold and dynamic decisions.

He is earnestly appealed to bestow EPS-95 pensioners by fixing a minimum pension at Rs. 7,500 p.m. taking into account government's revised base salary of Rs.15,000 with linkage to dearness allowance as applicable to Central Government pensioners without institution of further committees or investigations.

**Dr NSR Murthy, Secunderabad**  
94900 56843

The pandemic shouldn't pave the way for exploitation of students by the commercial interests of private schools. (Parents up in arms against pvt schools for subjecting students to stress - THI, 8 August). The conduct of online classes in violation of Union HRD Ministry guidelines may not only play havoc with the health of students but also burn the pockets of parents. It seems the pan-

## Don't victimise the children

demic has become handy for private hospitals and private schools to resort to unethical practices to make big financial gains to the detriment of patients and students.

There is an urgent need to stop these unethical practices by putting in place the mechanism that is capable of checking all

malpractices going on in the areas of education and healthcare. At a time when people are in distress with loss of jobs and dwindling incomes, the greed of corporate hospitals and corporate schools shouldn't lead to people being caught in debt trap.

When there is no approved treatment for Covid-19 and when

the efficacy of online teaching is debatable, the murky business being carried out by private hospitals and private schools is devastating the lives of the middle class and the poor. The governments should plunge in to action immediately and take necessary steps to save the people from being looted further in the name of education and healthcare.

**Thumati Anuradha,**  
Hyderabad

## There is a dire need of more doctors, nurses and paramedical personnel



lack of Oxygen supply. The situation is like that sometimes the Hospitals had to take the support of Police fir the O2 supplier to be fall in line.

Although Corporate Hospitals (for that matter any other Hospital) ready to upgrade their number of beds for the treatment of corona patients exclusively, their efforts are seriously being hampered by less availability of Ventilators and Oxygen supply.

Another valuable suggestion received was all the Hospitals till the pandemic is finished to be made as ICU type of wards with full upgradation of infrastructure and Oxygen & Ventilators supply. This suggestion may be costliest and finance cost to met out this may be a stumbling block in this regard.

To meet the pandemic situation the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi announced in one of his 'Man ki baat' that he will ensure at least one Medical College in each District of the Country. There are about 740 Districts in the Country. Accordingly 75 Colleges have been approved and sanctioned by Central Govt to start. The same rate of speedy

sanctions and approvals should accorded even to the Nursing Colleges and Colleges/Institutes of Lab Technician Courses.

Two days back a bus depot in Bangalore has been converted into 200-bedded Hospital. On Saturday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister inaugurated a new 400-bedded dedicated Covid hospital in NOIDA. Likewise in the previous months Railways and some other Departments like Tourism started/converted their working places as dedicated Covid wards. But whether there are qualified Doctors, Nurses and Technicians to run/ manage / maintain all these newly started dedicated hospitals???

During my visits to the Corporate Hospitals the CEOs/MDs expressed their anguish since the required number of Doctors, Nurses and Paramedical staff is not readily available. Already their number (with proper training / skills) is less. As rubbing salt on injury all these migrated nurses and technicians from other States had gone back to their native places. Now the existing Doctors and Nurses demanding double the salary / payment packages be-

fore the pandemic.

In order to cope up the situation the Hospitals temporarily may utilise the services of AYUSH Doctors (Ayurvedic, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathic) who were also recognised as proper Doctors as per Desi Medical system. However the main treatment and medication should be held under the supervision of MBBS / MD Doctors. The non Clinical faculty Doctors who are normally not so active, their services can also be co-opted in the covid wards apart from their Lab & Teaching functions.

Similarly BDS/ MDS Doctors could be involved in wards as they knew administering injection and other medical treatments as good as MD / MBBS Doctors. B.Pharm / M.Pharm holders are also allowed to work in covid wards just to manage routine activities under the prompt and proper supervision of Allopathic Doctors.

Another severe issue crippling the services to Corona patients is less number of Nurses and Lab/ other Technicians. Hitherto the Govt is conducting only Staff Nurse Courses. In fact the present situation demands more ANMs (Auxiliary Nursing and Midwifery) and GNM's (General Nursing and Midwifery). There is an urgent need to start one ANM training centre in each Assembly Constituency/Block. The services of these Nurses can be utilised locally then and there itself. After 10 th Standard Nursing Course can be started as part of Vocational Education for two years.

The added advantage of ANM/

GNM is that the poor people normally the lower sections of the Indian Society attracts to this kind of courses as they can settle in some hospital locally at their Town / Village (migratory/movement tendencies are less for these sections). This is witnessed in many small clinics & Nursing Homes at Constituency/Block/ Mandal level.

The same is applicable for medical/Lab Technicians Courses also. However instead of training these people for only one Course they can be trained in multiple techniques. So that whenever the necessity arises they can be utilized in any section. For instance one technician can be trained and well equipped with as Respiratory Technician / ICU Assistant / Emergency Ward assistant / TMT Technician/ etc. As per the demand and necessity they can be posted in different wards.

Last but not the least as of now there is only one ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) in each Village. They can be appointed even per each Hamlets and specially for SC & ST Colonies also exclusively. As these ASHAs are immediate link between the Patient and PHC/UHC, increase any number of these workers will improve the health conditions in the Rural Areas / Urban Slums.

In Pune, one prominent private Corporate Hospital has been training the Auto rickshaw / Taxi Drivers for emergency response for few days. They are being trained for what to do if their passenger shows any sudden emergency respiratory / cardiac ailments before he/ She could reach to the hospital. Each driver is given a certificate of 'Arogya Dhoot'. Such commendable practices may be adapted by govt / municipal hospitals also throughout the Country.

*(The author is Joint Commissioner of Income Tax, Pune City)*



# PM Modi and a historic education reform

K KRISHNA SAAGAR RAO

In contemporary times we live in, it's education which directly impacts the socio-economic position of an individual, a society and a nation. Nations which have not prioritised education, have lost out on massive economic opportunities and ended up in painful social unrest and economic suffering. India, being the second most populated nation cannot afford to make the mistake of under prioritising education.

PM Narendra Modi with his vision for 'New India' has unveiled a 'New Education Policy' and this is an essential reform which was long due.

For over 70 years, India has been making only peripheral changes in its educational system without having to envision the need for massive overhaul. Leadership of a nation is about guiding it towards glory, through empowerment of its citizens. A nation with a literacy rate of 74 per cent, certainly requires pushing forward a larger agenda of 100 per cent literacy in the near term. 100 per cent education should be the next national agenda for a decade or two.

Education is the most economically efficient empowerment initiative for a nation. Every other form of social empowerment requires large fund availability. It also entails possibility of wastage, leakage and above all no guaranteed results.

The New Education Policy has clearly highlighted the priorities of this government. PM Modi has delivered an essential reform which BJP was demanding every government for over six decades. BJP strongly believes, it's the education which shapes the national values, protects spirit of nationalism and enables nation building. Education singularly impacts socio-economic activity of a nation through rise in employment and productivity. **These are some of the key drivers of the New Education Policy:**

## SINGLE REGULATOR

Multiple regulatory agencies have succeeded in lowering the education standards for decades with regulatory

overlaps, policy paralysis, execution delays, corruption and lack of enterprise spirit.

Single regulator will bring much needed breather for educational institutions to operate with more agility, free from regulatory hassles and project delays. It will also enable market orientation to the entire education system, instead of an oppressive regime breathing heavy over administration of institutions.

## MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

There has been a lot of confusion and debate over what is an effective medium of instruction in India for

a strong enabler of self-worth, belongingness, regional identity and impacts regional pride.

Directing the medium of instruction to be of the regional language or mother tongue until 5th standard in school education is a path breaking reform, which protects the national heritage and culture.

## INTER-DISCIPLINARY ENABLER

The New Education Policy provides portability of curricular credits throughout the higher education timeline, which empowers students with enormous choice of subject combinations, and ease of moving in and out of

curricular and non-curricular competencies, knowledge and skills.

This reform is a life saver for many young people, as it reduces the unfair advantage few students hold over many, with just memory capability and not necessarily a knowledge edge. The new system also encourages students to get out of their academic silos and acquire more social and vocational skills right from their school education timeline.

## VOCATIONAL SKILL FOCUS

While education must enable knowledge, it should also ensure employment. Education without employment will be an overrated and resource pilfered exercise, especially in a nation of 1.3 billion, where over 12 per cent live in poverty.

PM Modi and his government has initiated 'Make in India' agenda to transform India into a self-reliant nation, which can produce what it consumes, and not depend on imports for its domestic consumption of goods and services. However, without an educated, skilled manpower availability, 'Make in India' initiative cannot be fueled to fulfil this grand national ambition.

Prioritising vocational skills from the school education timeline, enables the focus on learning 'skills-to-earn-a-living', and ensures millions of economically and socially backward communities to be empowered in a generation or two. This initiative can alleviate millions of poor, from the unwarranted pain of poverty.

There are many such reformatory initiatives in the new education policy. Each of the new initiatives is necessarily relevant to face and overcome the challenges faced by India.

India's 'New Education Policy' is a path breaking, essential reform. If implemented well, it has the power to transform India into a truly self-reliant nation, without unemployment and poverty.

*(The author is the chief spokesperson of BJP Telangana State / an organisational strategist and a global leadership coach)*

# Pursue Your Passion: A major potential outcome of NEP 2020

DR PRADEEP KUMAR SINHA

A national goal of every nation is to ensure that majority of its citizens perform to the best of their capabilities in their professional career, so that the overall national output peaks and the nation prospers as a result of this. An important element to achieve this goal is to ensure that maximum number of citizens pursue their passion as their profession, no matter in which profession they are. When a person works for something he/she is passionate about, he/she performs the job with utmost sincerity and dedication, contributing with his/her highest efficiency.

Unfortunately, it has been observed that in the current Indian education system, most students pursue their higher (college) education and subsequently their professional career in an area which was not of their choice. It was the choice of their parents, relatives, friends, etc. As a result, majority of the students end up pursuing their higher studies and subsequently their professional career in an area which they do not enjoy working and become a mediocre for the rest of their life. This drastically effects national output.

The recently announced National Education Policy (NEP 2020) attempts to address this issue. The following two features of NEP 2020 will help more students pursue their passion as their profession:

- Multiple entry and exit from a graduation course. For any graduation course, if a student completes only one year he/she gets a certificate, gets a diploma on completion of two years, and a degree on completion of full

four years. Hence, after joining and pursuing a graduation course for some time, if a student discovers that this is not what he/she will like to do for the rest of life, he/she can quit the course in-between to change to a different discipline of his/her liking that he/she later discovers due to the increased maturity with age. The fear of losing the already invested years with zero output (no certificate or diploma) in the current education system, makes the students and their parents worried, due to which they unwillingly complete the course and get locked into a profession in which their performance is only average or below average.

- Availability of vocational courses from 6th std. onwards and allowing students to choose various types of courses (finance, law, music, performing arts, etc.) in addition to their main stream (such as science stream) courses from VIII to XI std. will give a chance to the students and their parents to know early enough their likes/dislikes (strengths/weaknesses). Based on this, they can make a more informed choice of their graduation course in their strengths/likes area, leading to more students pursuing their professional career in their passion areas.

The ability to create more satisfied professionals and happier individuals in the long run, because they work in their passion areas, is one of the strongest aspects of NEP 2020.

*(The author is Vice-Chancellor and Director, IIIT-Naya Raipur)*



decades. With half-baked understanding of India's demography, geography, history and cultural heritage, this debate led by Communists with the help of Congress has led Indian education system to disrespect and disown Indian languages and promote of English as a core medium of instruction.

The enslaved colonial mindset, disguised as elitists and pragmatists have succeeded so far, driving the narrative of 'Employability' as the reason for English medium instruction for all. Some states in India have even adopted this mindless and prejudiced advocacy.

India is a multi-lingual, multi-regional and multi-cultural heterogeneous nation. The 22 recognized languages of India represent the respective region's cultural heritage, dating back to centuries. A language is

educational phases for prioritizing their personal and professional needs.

Allowing inter-disciplinary shifts through the higher education timeline of a student, also allows back tracking on individual subject priorities or making progressive changes to one's education profile, as they go up the higher education ladder. It also allows students to choose multiple specializations from subjects of their choice even at the top of their educational pursuit like a PHD program.

## NEW GRADING SYSTEM

Moving away from memorised learning and ranking through academic marks, the new education policy drives a powerful change through a grading system, which evaluates and grades students through a full spectrum of

# Rahul Gandhi has no right to say 'NO'

CHALLA VAMSHI CHAND REDDY

It is time for the reminiscence of the historical fact that the Gandhis belong to the family of instinctive nationalists that dedicated and sacrificed their lives for the nation. Before I begin to expound on this, I would like to recall and reflect upon a few parental instincts. Isn't it universally acknowledged that every parent strives to pass down wealth, happiness, and a burden-free future to generations ahead so that their children can live a peaceful life with minimal worries in this challenging and ever-changing world?

In this self-absorbed and self-centred world would any parent, under any circumstances, want his child to shoulder the great responsibility of taking care of millions of lives at the cost of the child's own life and expose him to a humongous risk, sharp criticism and humiliation that can affect one's well-being, both physical and mental? A salute to all such brave and courageous parents and families who have always indulged themselves and encouraged their children to continue to take up this career that is incredibly uncertain and life-threatening at times.

Rahul Gandhi belongs to a family that shares one such unique life history and he is a lineal descendant of such establishment that has never set out to rule but only to serve. His great grandfather, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru spent nine years in jail during the freedom struggle and devoted his life for our country unto death. His grandmother, Indira Gandhi and his father, Rajiv Gandhi have sacrificed their lives for the nation.

Particularly, his mother, Sonia Gandhi, who was devastated with her husband's untimely and brutal death had to step into politics reluctantly only on the compulsion of the Congress workers and in the interest of the century-old Congress party. Her valour, austerity and purity of her will, even in the face of those extremely difficult times, is always inspiring. They have all put people's well-being and safety much ahead of theirs and fought day in and day out for safeguarding the interests of our nation. They always went by people's decisions and accepted public mandate with utmost humility. The entire family felt at every moment to be servants of the society and never had any room for complacency. Having inherited such great qualities, Rahul Gandhi too has been a great leader in grooming and guiding millions of Congress workers to date. He is born into an establishment that is meant to act upon people's say, for the party's and nation's good.

India today is under tremendous communal tension and our economic system is going intolerably out of gear. In almost insoluble situations like this, Rahul Gandhi is standing tall and fighting against divisive politics, Godse ideology, inequities of society. Particularly noteworthy are his plans and policies to eradicate poverty, reduce unemployment, empower youth and women, ensure social justice, improve foreign relations, uplift the caste oppressed.

The very thought of sacrificing even a small job opportunity or promotion at workplace could sound dreadful to most of us, imagine

what it takes to decline the opportunity of becoming the Prime Minister of India. That is what Rahul Gandhi did. Power came to him on a platter but he always chose people over power.

In 2019 he led a very aggressive election campaign, travelled the length and breadth of India, addressed election rallies, participated in road shows and held hundreds of meetings with party workers and supporters but still assumed himself accountable for the defeat in elections and immediately stepped down from the President chair.

Bear in mind, it was during his tenure as the President-Indian National Congress, Congress had come back to power in both Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Unlike the other leaders, he gave the credit of victory to congress workers and took entire responsibility of the defeat.

Isn't it evident that he does not want to pur-

as the President-Indian National Congress, more than ever. But his blatant disregard for our opinion and demand, despite great insistence on him to take back the reins of the party, is quite disheartening and dispiriting. It is his fundamental responsibility to uphold our conviction and act accordingly.

What else would a party and its staunch followers ask for, except a charismatic leader with proven ability, like him. He sure is one of the very few leaders in the political history of India who has a unique ideology and belief that for progressive politics, contribution from both senior and young leaders is equally important. I can recall his valuable words, from many of my NSUI and Youth Congress training sessions, that the experiences of senior leaders coupled with the energies of the tech savvy young leaders will help in effectively determining and directing the course of action.



sue the presidential run, for that matter any post. However, it is still enigmatic that a leader like him, with a deep political insight and understanding of the current affairs and human relations, does not intend to understand the anguish of millions of Congress soldiers who are ready to shed their sweat and blood for the party at his behest.

With utmost respect for his leadership and admiration for his emphasis on the participation of every congressman, irrespective of their cadre, in decision making, we consider it our duty to question Rahul ji with utter frankness and without diplomatic adornment. How can he not think of reconsidering our demand and step up the President chair? Can he chose to abstain from executing people's will, which is against his genetic virtue?

Today when the Congress party and the workers are going astray without proper guidance and able leadership, Congressmen strongly feel the need of having him step back

We confide in his leadership skills, and strongly believe that he alone can amalgamate these experiences and energies, channelise adequately, and put them into action to bring back the lost glory of Congress party. His never-failing kindness and an intuitive understanding of people's affairs has always inspired many youngsters like me to enter politics and serve our nation selflessly. A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way to his followers. And that one leader who can invariably create an atmosphere of happy co-operation in our party and amongst workers is Rahul Gandhi.

With great respect and heartfelt gratitude, I have expressed my views and opinion with all the seriousness and honesty at my command and I trust Rahul Gandhi will accept this matter of pressing concern in the same spirit.

*(The author is ex-MLA and Secretary-AICC)*



# 'Cricketainment' will be back once again

YAJURVINDRA SINGH

The postponement of the T20 World Cup gave BCCI the opportunity to conduct their most popular 'cricketainment' tournament -- the Indian Premier League (IPL). Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has made it impossible to stage cricket's premium show in India. The BCCI have, therefore, opted to hold it in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with the blessing of the Emirates Cricket Board.

The IPL is much more than just cricket entertainment when Indian cricket and cricketers are concerned. The financial gains that the BCCI derives from it is what keeps Indian cricket blossoming at home and also makes the BCCI into a powerful cricket body internationally. It brings in the stability that the BCCI requires to keep it as the top cricketing body in the world.

For the international and domestic cricketers, IPL is a wonderful opportunity to earn a living. The established ones require it to save for their future, whereas, for the youngsters it helps them get their life in order. This is very important in a cricketer's life as with the advent of professionalism that has crept into cricket, the chance of skilling oneself in any other profession has become extremely difficult. The IPL is just in its 13th year and it has already become one of the prime sporting events on the world sports map. The cricket starved fans will finally see their heroes back on the cricket field. The IPL will be just the entertainment they were looking for, especially as the coronavirus has subjected everyone to keep indoors.

The mushrooming of the fantasy league gaming sites, wherein, the options of selecting ones team of players through a wager has made T20 cricket even more interesting to watch. This has brought an interest to many people who through these sites can bet and maybe claim a big win in return. Gambling is one of the foremost reasons for the success of the shorter format of the game, as with a definite result and with plenty of permutations and combinations to choose from, especially in the T20 version, the opportunities to try out one's luck are plenty.

The BCCI, on the other hand, has an enormous task in organising the IPL in the UAE. The league was played on two occasions outside Indian shores with a full-fledged version in South Africa in 2008 and a few of the initial matches in the UAE in 2012. But on both these occasions nothing more than the facilities to host the game were necessary.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic has made the situation entirely different with the IPL teams and the support staff cocooned in a bio-secure bubble. This, therefore, will be a completely different ball game not only for the players but also for the administrators. Although England did manage to successfully organise three Test matches against the West Indies recently, however, for the BCCI to do so with eight participating teams, will definitely be a huge challenge.

One does not see a major change as regards cricket being played on the ground. However, the important ingredient missing will be the screams and shouts of the spectators and from the die-hard local fans.

The IPL 2020 will need to get its unique identity as to the way in which it will be projected to the fans and followers. The entertainment would have to have a touch of innovative creation. One is, therefore, looking forward as to how Star Sports, the IPL sponsors and the franchises will create their own bubble of not only keeping their loyal fans alive but also keeping them active if their team is not faring well.

The digital world has progressed by leaps and bounds and creating visuals, virtual images and an atmosphere of imaginary spectators and noise, one feels, could be something one may see in this year's IPL.

Unfortunately, players will not be available for get-togethers and live events and sponsors will need to find ways by which to interact with them through chat shows and interactive virtual sessions.

T20 has always been a format that has shown itself to be very popular. Some of the leagues held by a few of the Indian cricket state associations have proven to be successful even without well-known international players. Therefore, one does not see any issues regarding millions of viewers watching the games on television or on their mobiles. It is how they will be entertained, kept involved and interested that will be the challenge for the providers.

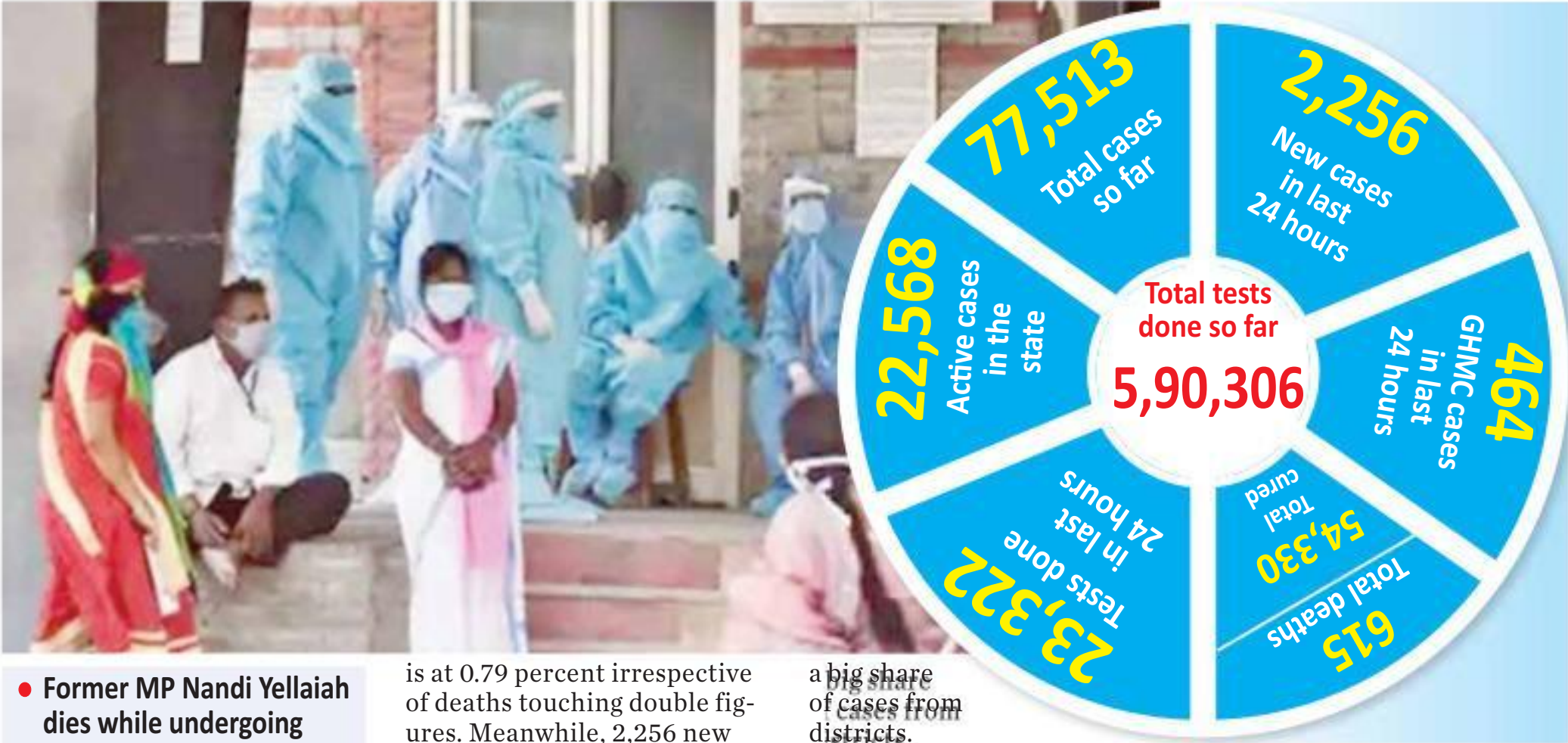
Rajasthan Royals will be a side that will be followed closely as they have the master batsman Steve Smith, the world's best all-round cricketer Ben Stokes and the new sensational fast bowler Jofra Archer. However, all eyes will be on Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the man who has for over a decade captured the hearts of every Indian cricket lover. Dhoni, the master craftsman again on the cricket field will be a sight to savor, a cricketer who has been the epitome of cricketainment.

*(Yajurvindra Singh is a former Test cricketer. Views expressed are personal)*



# TS reports 14 deaths, 2,256 new Covid cases

Dreaded virus continues to haunt ruling TRS politicians



● **Former MP Nandi Yellaiah dies while undergoing treatment for coronavirus**  
● **Minister Malla Reddy and Musi Development Corporation chairman D Sudheer Reddy test positive for Covid**

**HANS NEWS SERVICE**  
**Hyderabad:** Although fatality rate of Telangana is low in Telangana when compared to other States, 14 Covid patients have died in the last 24 hours. The fatality rate of the state

is at 0.79 percent irrespective of deaths touching double figures. Meanwhile, 2,256 new cases were detected even 23,322 tests were done across the State on Friday. In the cases break-up, GHMC's count fell below 500 after some weeks giving an indication that infections are slightly on the decline in the State capital. However, districts continue to report a rise of infections. Warangal Urban (187 cases), Ranga Reddy (181 cases), Karimnagar (101 cases), Jogulamba Gadwal (95 cases), Sangareddy (92), Peddapalli (84 cases) contributed

a big share of cases from districts.

Former MP Nandi Yellaiah died while undergoing treatment for coronavirus at NIMS, Panjagutta. Minister Malla Reddy and Musi Development Corporation

chairman D Sudheer Reddy have been found to be infected with the virus. Both are being treated in home isolation.

Number of patients in home isolation: 15,830			
Beds status in govt hospitals		Beds status in pvt hospitals	
Total beds: 8,436		Total beds: 6,823	
Occupied: 2,542		Occupied: 4,196	
Vacant beds: 5,894		Vacant beds: 2,627	

## Centre steps in to rein in Telugu Titans

*Continued from P1*  
This was denied by the TS ministers who said that the intention of the Chief Minister could not be questioned as the Telangana Government had even knocked the doors of the Supreme Court in this regard. In this backdrop, the letter from Shekhawat assumes importance. The Union Minister said that the Apex Council was ready to convene a meeting and would finalise the dates once the two States send their consent. Telangana Irrigation officials said that the government was ready with its arguments to counter the stand of the Andhra Pradesh Government and would explain in detail how the proposed lift irrigation project would adversely affect the interests of Telangana. They said it would be better if the Centre could give a clear agenda for the meeting. The agenda note that was sent for the August 5 meeting which was postponed was not clear. Finalisation of working manual of KRMB and GRMB and the shifting of KRMB office to Vijayawada was also included in the meeting agenda. These issues would have to be resolved at board level only, they said. The main agenda of the Apex Council meeting to be attended both state Chief Ministers who should focus on sorting out the disputes between the two States. The TS government wanted the Union ministry to finalise the meeting agenda to sort out the disputes over the projects between the two States. The officials also pointed out that the Apex Council is trying to intervene in the water sharing issue between the States. The Tribunal is the only authorised body to resolve water sharing issue and not the Apex Council, officials said. Officials recalled that Telangana government has lodged a complaint with the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) against AP for taking up Sangameswara/ Rayalaseema lift scheme at Srisailem project and enhance the Pothireddypadu water drawing capacity to 80,000 cusecs from the present 40,000 cusecs. AP too has complained against Telangana taking up projects on the Godavari river.

## Govt moved SC to stop R'seema projects: TRS

- Will produce SC order before Apex Committee meeting, says Ministers
- The Centre could have intervened through the Water Dispute Act but it did nothing
- The Congress leaders did nothing when the capacity of Pothireddypadu was increased twice during their rule are talking now, says Minister Srinivas Goud

**HANS NEWS SERVICE**

**Hyderabad:** TRS leaders on Saturday said that the State government had approached the Supreme Court because the Andhra Pradesh government was not accepting the mandate of the Union government. The government wants to bring the orders of the Supreme Court in the meeting of the Apex Com-



Excise Minister V Srinivas Goud along with TRS leaders addressing a press conference in Hyderabad on Saturday

mittee. Addressing a press conference here, TRS leaders including Minister V Srinivas Goud, government Whip G Balaraj, MLAs C Laxma Reddy, A Venkateshwar Reddy lashed out at the Congress leaders for questioning the TRS government's steps on Pothireddypadu. The Congress leaders did

nothing when the capacity of Pothireddypadu was increased twice during their rule are talking now, said Srinivas Goud. He said that they had filed a case in Supreme Court to stop the Rayalaseema projects and there was no mention of Karnataka or Maharashtra States. He clarified that the government is moving forward on the

## Covid-19 curve will bend by Sept-end, says top Health babu

- Virus cases will decline by the end of Aug in GHMC
- Health dept trying to counsel private hospitals over complaints of overcharging



**HANS NEWS SERVICE**  
**Hyderabad:** The Health department had come out with an observation on corona containment and control in the State. It is predicting cases and virus impact to decrease in GHMC limits by the end of August and in districts by the end of September. Addressing the media here on Saturday, Director of Public Health Dr G Srinivas Rao said that new infections are on the decline in GHMC for the last 25 days. He pointed out that cases shooting up and then maintaining a stable curve to ultimately reduce over a period of time is a common trend seen in densely populated urban areas and so does in the state capital region. He pointed out that it's almost five months since coronavirus entered Telangana. Dr Srinivas Rao stated that the Health department has made available costly medicines including Remdisivir, FabiFlu for treatment

of patients in government hospitals even in districts. He pointed out that Dexamethasone was working as a magical drug and its usage has given great results. Patients administered the dose have recovered and come back to normal condition, he said. The Health director said that HCQ which was being given to mild symptomatic patients as part of home isolation kits was also delivering good results. He said that they are increasing oxygen beds in all state hospitals by doubling the present number from 5,000 to nearly 10,000 in a few days' time. Director of Medical Education Dr Ramesh Reddy stated that plasma therapy has to be done at the right time before the patient's health condition turns critically ill. Also, all covid positive individuals cannot be considered for plasma donation as presence of antibodies is less in asymptomatic positive patients. Further, DME said that Remdisivir should not be tried on infected cases having no symptoms. He also stated that positive patients from districts need not come to Hyderabad for treatment as all government hospitals in districts have been equipped with corona treatment facilities. **1,039 complaints received so far** Meanwhile, the Health department has stated that they so far received 1039 complaints on excesses by private hospitals offering corona treatment. Of them 130 are related to bills while 16 are insurance related, Health Director Dr Srinivas Rao said. He said they have formed a four-member committee to look into the complaints. "Our intention is not to close down private hospitals in the name of action. We are counselling them at present," he said.

## IPE invites applications for PG diploma

**HANS NEWS SERVICE**

**Hyderabad:** Institute of Public Enterprise invites applications for the PGDM programmes class of 2020. The last date for receiving filled in applications in the first phase is extended to August 16. IPE offers the following programs: Post Graduate Diploma in Management General, PGDM-Banking, Insurance and Financial Services, PGDM-Marketing Management, PGDM-International Business, PGDM-Human Resource Management, Executive PGDM Applicants in their final year graduation with CAT/ MAT/ XAT/ CMAT/ ATMA/ GMAT, scores can visit [www.ipeindia.org](http://www.ipeindia.org) for online applications. Students who graduated in 2019 or earlier can apply online directly. For further details contact 93919 32129 / 99495 07969.

## AI flight touched down 1,000 metres away from runway

*Continued from P1*  
The Kozhikode airport in Kerala has a table-top runway and is operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). Generally, table-top runways are constructed on a hilly or an elevated terrain. An AAI spokesperson said that runway 28 was in use and in the first landing attempt, the pilot could not sight the runway and requested for runway 10. Citing information from the Air Traffic Controller (ATC), the spokesperson said the aircraft touched down near taxiway 'C', which is approximately 1,000 metres from the beginning of runway 10. The total length of the runway is 2,700 metres. The spokesperson also said that it was raining over the airfield and reported visibility at the time of landing was 2,000 metres.

## CENTRE ASKS STATES TO TEST GROCERY SHOP WORKERS

*Continued from P1*  
With the COVID-19 pandemic now spreading to newer areas in the country, Bhushan said there are likely to be scattered cases, cluster of cases or large outbreaks in districts and that the primary aim is to control outbreaks, especially in new locations. "The focus at the same time should be to save lives at all cost," he said. "While we have so far done better than many other countries in this respect, our aim should be to further reduce mortality and ensure that it does not cross the 1% mark," Bhushan said in the letter, addressed to Additional Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries and Secretaries (Health). He pointed out that early detection of cases through aggressive testing, prompt isolation or admission in a healthcare facility and ensuring proper clinical management are major components of mortality reduction. "Early detection of cases is the most crucial el-

ement to ensure that the case fatality is reduced. It helps in terms of not only identifying the case before it may become critical but also supports in terms of checking the spread of infection," he said in the letter. Bhushan stressed on enhanced surveillance for influenza-like illness (ILI)/severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) as their symptoms are mostly the same as COVID. Once a positive case is identified, a prompt contact-tracing should be undertaken and at least 80% of the contacts must be identified and quarantined within 72 hours, he said. Normally, a person would have an average of 30 contacts for a period of tracking of two days before the symptom onset, Bhushan said. "There can be potential hotspots for spread of infection like industrial clusters with closed work environment, people coming from high prevalence areas, other high-density areas such as slums, prisons, old age homes, etc," he said.

## 2,200 years old inscription found in Manjira Valley in TS

*Continued from P1*  
Maltummeda village has a centuries-old history dating back to pre-historic times. Rock paintings and cave shelters in the same village have been found which precedes the inscription. The village has temple of medieval period which is renovated in recent times and a stepwell, which is aesthetically built. This means this village has a continuous history of habitation since Stone Age (Neolithic age), says the team.

## DISENGAGEMENT PROCESS: INDIA, CHINA HOLD MAJ GEN-LEVEL TALKS

*Continued from P1*  
At the military talks, the Indian side has been insisting on complete disengagement of Chinese troops at the earliest, and immediate restoration of status quo ante in all areas of eastern Ladakh prior to May 5 when the standoff began following a clash between the two armies in Pangong Tso. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has pulled back from Galwan Valley and certain other friction points but the withdrawal of its troops has not moved forward from the Finger areas in Pangong Tso, Gogra and Depsang as demanded by India, according to sources. India has been insisting that China must withdraw its forces from areas between Finger Four and Eight. The mountain spurs in the area are referred to as Fingers. The formal process of disengagement of troops began on July 6, a day after a nearly two-hour telephonic conversation between National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on ways to bring down tensions in the area. Both sides held several rounds of Major General-level talks in May and June before the level of negotiations was upgraded to the level of Corps commanders. The people familiar with the developments said Saturday's talks will primarily focus on the disengagement process in Daulat Beg Oldi and Depsang areas. Considering the situation on the ground, the Indian Army and the IAF have decided to maintain a very high-level of operational readiness in all areas along the LAC in Ladakh, North Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh till a "satisfactory" resolution to the border row with China is arrived at, sources said.

## TS ready to implement Centre's NEP

*Continued from P1*  
Against this backdrop, the meetings will be convened with intellectuals, academicians and prominent people from different fields like industry, civil society, NGOs, teachers and officials. The main focus of the meetings will be how to make the NEP 2020 beneficial and what changes need to be incorporated while implementing it in the State. TSCHS sources said the NEP proposes a slew of measures for greater flexibility which are beneficial for the students. At the same time, it also proposes a lot of changes in the administration of the school, intermediate, degree and university administration. Besides, funding and regulatory patterns. A comprehensive report will be prepared based on the deliberations and opinions expressed during the meetings by different stakeholders. The report will be sent to KCR, as it will help in firming up the State government's views on each of the components of the NEP and to present the same before the Centre.

*Continued from P1*  
"Digital Flight Data Recorder (DFDR) and Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) of the ill-fated aircraft have been retrieved. AAIB (Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau) is conducting investigations," Puri tweeted. The minister said he would hold consultations "with senior civil aviation officials & professionals", adding reasons for the mishap were being investigated. An official of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the DFDR and CVR are with the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau and will be sent to Delhi for

further investigation. Puri announced Rs 10 lakh interim relief for each of the deceased, Rs 2 lakh for the seriously injured and Rs 50,000 for those who suffered minor injuries. Malappuram District Collector K Gopalakrishnan said one more passenger succumbed to injuries, taking the toll in a major civil aviation mishap in Kerala to 18. Barring one, all those who had perished in the accident have been identified, he said. The condition of 16 passengers among 149 admitted to various hospitals was serious, he added.

Amid the tragedy, coronavirus scare too surfaced with samples of one of the passengers who died in the mishap testing positive for the pathogen with state Health Minister K K Shailaja asking all those engaged in the rescue operations to go on self-quarantine as a precautionary measure and get themselves tested. Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan, who arrived here in Kozhikode from New Delhi was briefed by the officials of Air India and Airport Authority of India (AAI) on the accident that claimed the lives of both the pilots.

The Air India Express said four crew members of the flight were safe, while the Employees Union of the low-cost air carrier, said they were under treatment at the hospital here for injuries suffered in the mishap. It also said three relief flights had been arranged to assist passengers and their family members affected in the accident that brought back memories of the crash of Air India Express flight IX 812 on May 22, 2010 at Mangaluru International Airport. The flight from Dubai had overshot the runway and plunged down the cliff into a wooded valley, killing 158 people.



## COVID-19 IMPACT

## Credit enhancement NBFC plan comes back

The government proposes to give the go-ahead for a new credit enhancement non-banking finance company (NBFC) that will act as a guarantor for lower-rated bonds issued by infrastructure companies to help them raise funds at competitive rates.

A credit enhancement structure or a company helps in lifting the ratings of a specific project or a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) executing that project, making it easier for them to mobilise funds from the market at attractive rates.

The need for credit enhancement has become acute during the Covid-19 pandemic as infrastructure companies are under stress and need necessary support to enhance the ratings of their projects and ensure adequate liquidity required for fresh investments.

Government sources said that though the operation of a Credit Guarantee Enhancement Corporation has been revised in view of similar operations being currently offered by a few government agencies, a dedicated structure plan has not been junked and the Centre will go ahead with a new NBFC after further discussions and at an appropriate time.

It is expected that the credit enhancement structure would take shape as planned earlier, wherein infrastructure financing firm India Infrastructure Finance Co Ltd (IIFCL) in a joint venture with the National Housing Bank (NHB) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) would set up a SPV known as 'National Infrastructure Credit Enhancement Ltd' or NICE.

Last year, the government provided seed capital of Rs 500 crore to operationalise the SPV but ever since the project has been delayed over further reviews by an inter-ministerial committee.

Sources said now is the right time for the new entity to come into being as it will help several infrastructure projects to take off which otherwise are stuck due to liquidity issues.

In its 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'



package, the government has already introduced a 100 per cent Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for MSMEs to ensure adequate liquidity to the segment hit hard by the Covid-19 outbreak. Also, a partial guarantee for stressed MSMEs has been provided for.

However, infrastructure projects entailing large investments will gain a lot from a dedicated credit enhancement entity. The SPV will ensure that the Rs 100 lakh crore investment required in infrastructure over the next five years materialises.

Presenting her maiden Budget last year, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that a credit guarantee enhancement corporation, for which regulations have been notified by the RBI, will be set up in 2019-20. However, it got delayed and may be considered this year. As per the blueprint of the proposed corporation finalised by the government earlier, the IIFCL will hold 22.5 per cent stake in the new NBFC while the NHB and Nabard could pick up to a 10 per cent stake each.

The NICE will set up a fund to attract infrastructure investments by insurance and pension funds to provide credit enhancement to infrastructure companies. However, its main job will be to act as a guarantor for lower-rated bonds issued by infrastructure companies. This would help these bonds to bolster their ratings.

As per the Reserve Bank of India estimates, more than 85 per cent of corporate bond issuance in India is by borrowers with ratings of 'A' and above. The credit enhancement set-up will help bring even lower-rated borrowers into the bond market.

## Pharma biz set for decent growth

Demand growth, new launches will drive upswing in FY21; Covid impact minimal

The domestic pharma industry is expected to grow at a 4-6 per cent in FY21 owing to Covid impact. Further, through FY2020-2023, the industry's CAGR is expected to be in the range of 8-11 per cent on the back of healthy demand from the domestic market given increasing spend on healthcare along with improving access, rating agency ICRA has said.

In its analysis of the pharma industry in India, the rating agency said that along with demand growth in India, moderation in pricing pressure for US market, new launches and market share gains for existing products and consolidation benefits will drive growth for the industry over the medium term.

Several Indian pharma companies (Aurobindo, Dr Reddy, Glenmark) have acquired US ANDA (abbreviated new drug application) portfolios which will aid growth going forward. The growth in FY21 is expected to be supported by 1.88 per cent WPI linked price hike for domestic NLEM (National List of Essential Medicines) portfolio. The prospect for current year comes on the backdrop of the Indian pharmaceutical industry's stable growth of eight per cent during FY20 led by rebound in domestic growth in Q2FY20 to 14.2 per cent (Q1 FY20 at 4.8 per cent) supported by seasonal factors and stable growth in chronic therapies. Based on the trends, ICRA Vice President and Co-Head Gaurav Jain said, "The global demand scenario is largely expected to remain stable for Indian pharmaceutical industry owing to inelastic nature of prescription drugs though some impact on volume growth will be felt owing to lockdown (lesser OPDs/elective surgeries) and lower economic growth. The impact of lower demand will be felt more in less developed countries which are additionally negatively impacted owing to low crude oil prices."

As per ICRA research, post onset of Covid-19, manufacturing activity has gradually arrived in China with shipments/air cargo starting in India for APIs, Intermediates and KSMs (Key Starting Materials). This has led to production continuation for Indian players though the capacity utilization across plants is yet to reach pre-Covid-19 levels. The lower capacity utilization is largely contributed by restricted movement of personnel and availability of non-critical raw material



(e.g. packaging material) during the lockdown period in India. Indian players hold 2-4 months of inventory (raw material & finished goods) and similar levels in distribution channel (finished goods) which will largely suffice demand in the near term till situation normalizes.

The outbreak of the Coronavirus in China and the consequent lockdown in parts of China had earlier resulted in a shut-down of production units in China. The domestic pharmaceutical industry is highly dependent on imports, with more than 60 per cent of its active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) requirement being imported, and in some, specific APIs like cephalosporins, azithromycin and penicillin, the dependence is as high as 80-90 per cent. Of the total imports of APIs and intermediates into India, China accounts for 65-70 per cent.

The recent introduction of Rs 10,000 crore bulk drugs park and production linked incentives for API manufacturers by the Government of India will lead to reduced dependence for the domestic formulators on imports from China and augurs well in the long run to manage supply disruptions, the agency said.

As for the growth and profitability, the same would however be constrained by regulatory interventions such as price controls, compulsory genericisation for domestic market

The incentive scheme covers 53 APIs which are critical from import dependence on China with few API/KSM being entirely imported. As for the growth and profitability, the same would however be constrained by regulatory interventions such as price controls, compulsory genericisation for domestic market.

For the US market, faster generic approvals and continued regulatory overhang with respect to manufacturing quality deficiencies highlighted during USFDA audits remains key concern.

The pace of ANDA approvals has more than doubled over the FY2014-2019 period leading to higher competitive intensity. The pace of official action post USFDA audit has also increased during the FY-2019 period with 16 warning letters compared to seven in FY18.

The margins have remained flat in FY20 at 20.3 per cent for ICRA sample of 14 leading companies led by cost cutting

The prospect for current year comes on the backdrop of the Indian pharmaceutical industry's stable growth of eight per cent during FY20 led by rebound in domestic growth in Q2FY20 to 14.2 per cent (Q1 FY-20 at 4.8 per cent) supported by seasonal factors and stable growth in chronic therapies

measures including R&D optimisation efforts by Indian Players. Though margins remain healthy, pricing pressures for the US base generics business (albeit moderating); lack of limited competition products and manufacturing quality issues will continue to put margin pressure. Higher share of domestic business and operational efficiencies will provide overall cushion to margins.

Unlike in the past, when several Indian pharma companies ramped up their R&D spend, targeting pipeline of specialty drugs, niche molecules and complex therapies, this time around companies are optimising their R&D spend owing to above mentioned factors. Also, with competitive pressures expected to sustain in the near to medium term, companies are exiting product development of easy to manufacture, simple generics with multiple players and focusing on complex generics and specialty products. According to ICRA, Indian companies are unlikely to significantly modify current spend on R&D development which will support their long-term growth prospects. With R&D optimization efforts underway to counter US pricing pressure, the aggregate R&D spend is expected to be maintain at current levels of 6.5-7.5 per cent compared to earlier 8-9 per cent for sample companies. This will be despite requirements arising from expanding presence in complex therapy segment such as injectables, inhalers, dermatology, controlled-release substances and even biosimilars. (IANS)

Mukesh Ambani, world's 4<sup>th</sup> richest person now

Mukesh Ambani has surged past Europe's wealthiest man, making him the world's fourth-richest person.

Reliance Industries Ltd.'s chairman is now worth \$80.6 billion, after amassing \$22 billion this year, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. That gives him a bigger wealth pile than France's Bernard Arnault, whose LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE has suffered from customers curbing high-end fashion purchases faster than the company can cut costs. India's richest person has already surpassed some of the biggest tycoons in recent weeks -- a list that includes Silicon Valley titans such as Elon Musk and Alphabet Inc. co-founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page, as well as the so-called Oracle of Omaha himself, Warren Buffett.

## Facebook founder Mark worth \$100 bn post the launch of Reels

The personal wealth of Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg has touched \$100 billion after the social network launched a TikTok rival called Instagram Reels this week.

With the launch of the short-video making app, Facebook stock rose by more than 6 per cent (Zuckerberg holds a 13 per cent stake in the social networking giant).

With this rise, Zuckerberg has joined Amazon Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos and Microsoft's Bill Gates in the exclusive 'Centibillionaire Club', reports the BBC.

Zuckerberg plans to donate 99 per cent of his Facebook shares over his lifetime through the charitable foundation he set up with his wife Priscilla Chan.

Amid uncertainties surrounding TikTok's business in the US, Facebook has introduced Instagram Reels that will allow people to create and



Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg

discover short, entertaining videos. With Reels, one can record and edit 15-second multi-clip videos with audio, effects and new creative tools.

Reels can be recorded in a series of clips - one at a time, all at once, or using video uploads from your gallery.

Instagram Reels was first introduced in Brazil last year as a pilot. The test was later expanded to several markets including Germany, France

and most recently, India. Instagram announced the extension of the testing of Reels to India in July, barely a week after India announced the ban of 59 Chinese apps including TikTok.

TikTok on Friday threatened legal action against an executive order that US President Donald Trump issued, prohibiting the China-based company from doing business with the US firms after 45 days.

TikTok said it was 'shocked' by the recent executive order, which it said 'was issued without any due process'.

Trump issued the order prohibiting any person in the US from doing transactions with the short video-sharing platform's Chinese owner, ByteDance.

While both Beijing and ByteDance have rejected the allegations, Microsoft is now pursuing talks to acquire TikTok's US business.

## Global AI revenues to reach \$156 bn

Worldwide revenues for the Artificial Intelligence (AI) market, including software, hardware, and services, are expected to total \$156.5 billion in 2020, a growth of 12.3 per cent over the previous year, according to a new forecast by International Data Corporation (IDC).

While this year's growth is somewhat slower than previous years due to the economic impact of Covid-19, investment in AI will recover quickly, said the IDC 'Worldwide Semiannual Artificial Intelligence Tracker'.

Worldwide AI market revenue revenues are likely to surpass \$300 billion in 2024 with a five-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.1 per cent.

Software is the largest AI technology group delivering roughly 80 per cent of all AI revenue. Most of the software revenue comes from AI applications - \$120.4 billion in 2020 - with AI Software Platforms delivering the remainder. "AI applications continue to be at the

The top five companies in terms of market share - IBM, Accenture, Deloitte, Infosys, and Cognizant -- captured roughly one third of the worldwide AI services market in 2019



forefront of digital transformation (DX) initiatives, driving both innovation and improvement to business operations," Ritu Jyoti, programme Vice President, Artificial Intelligence Research at IDC, said in a statement.

Customer relationship management (CRM) AI applications and enterprise relationship management (ERM) AI Applications are the two largest segments with 20 per cent and 17 per cent share of the AI applications market.

Other key segments include AI

for content workflow and management applications, production applications, and collaborative applications. In terms of vendor share, Adobe had the top spot for AI-centric CRM applications while Microsoft was No.1 in AI non-centric CRM Applications.

Meanwhile, in ERM AI applications, Ceridian and Intuit take the top spots in AI-centric and AI non-centric types, respectively, IDC said. As for the rest of the AI applications market, IBM is in first position under AI-centric type while Microsoft

occupies the top spot under AI non-centric type.

The second largest AI category is services, which IDC forecasts will reach \$18.4 billion in 2020, an increase of 13 per cent year over year. Within the AI services market, AI IT services accounts for nearly 80 per cent of the category's revenue with AI Business Services delivering the rest.

The top five companies in terms of market share - IBM, Accenture, Deloitte, Infosys, and Cognizant -- captured roughly one third of the worldwide AI services market in 2019. IDC expects AI hardware (server and storage combined) revenues to reach \$13.4 billion in 2020, representing 10.3 per cent year-over-year growth.

In terms of vendor share, the top three companies in AI Server are Dell, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, and Inspur, IDC said. In the AI Storage market, Dell Technologies, NetApp and Hewlett Packard Enterprise hold the top three positions, it added.

QUIZ NO.  
135

## HANS BIZ QUIZ

Theme: 'The Gold Rush'

- All else being equal, gold consumer demand for jewellery, bars and gold coins is seen to rise with income levels. For every one percent increase in income per capita, by how much percent the gold demand increases?  
a) 0.10% b) 0.50% c) 1% d) 2.25%
- The annual data for the last three decades revealed that gold jewellery, bars and gold coins prices deter gold purchases. How will a one percent increase in gold prices affect gold demand over the long-term?  
a) Gold demand falls by 0.5%  
b) Gold demand increases by 4%  
c) Demand for gold declines by 2%  
d) Demand for gold grows by 1%
- Gold is primarily imported into India. Which of the below is incorrect concerning the impact of the rupee-dollar equation on gold rates in India?  
a) Gold prices appreciate in rupee terms if the rupee weakens against the dollar  
b) Depreciating rupee will not dent the demand for gold in the country  
c) The rupee-dollar exchange rate does not have an impact on gold rates denominated in dollars  
d) Falling dollar increases the value for gold across the globe
- When inflation rises, the purchasing power falls and reduces the value of money. In times of inflation, gold becomes a tool to hedge against inflationary conditions as people incline to hold currency in the form of gold. Which of the below is incorrect concerning the correlation of gold to other asset classes?  
a) The average correlation of gold to government and corporate bonds, equities and REITs ranges from 10% to 30%  
b) Gold exhibits a high correlation with other commodities  
c) An inverse relationship can develop between gold and falling equity market  
d) The change in home prices compared to the change in the gold prices does not have a direct correlation
- Gold is an exceptionally effective portfolio diversifier due to its low or negative correlation with all major asset classes. Gold prices have risen 278% over the past 15 years. How much did the Dow Jones Industrial Average increase over the past 15 years?  
a) 465% b) 390% c) 245% d) 170%

6. Gold prices scaled the new peak and hovering at record highs and expected to reach around Rs 65,000 per 10 grams in India in the next 12 months while hitting \$2,500 an ounce in the international markets. How much % of returns did the RBI issued sovereign gold bonds gain since August 2019?  
a) 32% b) 49% c) 65% d) 103%

7. Gold prices mostly tend to gain when interest rates are low, good monsoons and weakening dollar. How much % of returns did the glittering yellow metal deliver in the past one month?  
a) 3% b) 6% c) 12% d) 17%

8. Rural demand plays the most important role in the demand for gold in the country, as the demand for gold also depends primarily on monsoons. What is rural India's gold annual consumption out of the country's total annual consumption of 850 tonnes of gold?  
a) 80% b) 60% c) 45% d) 35%

9. Almost no marriages took place during the March-July wedding season due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The jewellery exports hit historic low on unprecedented lockdown, massive cash crunch and low consumer gold demand. What historic low did it touch?  
a) \$22 million b) \$12 million  
c) \$7 million d) \$2 million



- Gold tends to gain and rule the roost as a safe haven for the investors when political and economic uncertainties are high. What was the investment demand from physical coins and bars and gold ETFs in the 2008 Recession compared to 2007?  
a) Doubled b) Tripled c) Decrease by half d) No change

The Hans Biz Quiz has been compiled by **Sunil Dhavala**, CEO, The Third Umpire Media. He had held senior management roles at Bertelsmann, NGC, Fox Broadcasting, Star TV and others. He is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

KEY

1C 2A 3B 4B 5D 6C 7C 8B 9D 10A



# Subrata was everywhere against Australia in 2011: Cahill

**New Delhi (IANS):** Everton legend Tim Cahill has lauded Subrata Paul's work ethic and commitment which he believes enabled India's veteran goalkeeper to stay at the top of his game all throughout.

In a live chat with AIFF TV featuring Paul, Cahill sent in a message from Australia saying: "Off the park, one of the best things about him is his commitment and professionalism. In the game, he is second to none."

"The title 'Spiderman' that he got in the game against us and obviously all the games that he played in 2011 Asian Cup was because he was on the top of his game because of his work ethic. I was lucky enough to have played with him in Jamshedpur. He was always working tirelessly, before and after training, always," Cahill said.

"For all the youngsters, I think he is a great example. I remember the game so vividly. He was everywhere. In the end, we shared a chat and we still talk about the game when we are together," Cahill's message read.

Subrata described Cahill as a down-to-earth person, who takes care of everyone in and around the team.

"Tim's dedication is incredible.



But what makes him great is that he is such a down-to-earth guy. He'll make you feel like you've been friends with him for 15 years. When he was with us at Jamshedpur FC, he used to take care of everyone from the senior boys, to the junior boys, the kitman, and all others," Paul said.

Before they played for Jamshedpur FC in the Indian Super League (ISL), Paul and Cahill had met each other when India faced Australia in their opening game of the 2011 AFC Asian Cup in Qatar. Although the Socceroos won that match 4-0 (and Cahill scored a brace), it was Paul who earned international acclaim after that game, for the stunning saves that he had pulled off.

On meeting Paul for the first time in seven years after the

game, Cahill instantly recognised the man who had guarded India's citadel and delivered a performance only to be nicknamed 'Spiderman' by the international media.

"Seven years after that game he came to Jamshedpur to play in the ISL. When he joined the camp and we met each other and shook hands, Tim said to me, 'I remember you, mate.' I was really lucky to have played alongside him," said Paul.

Aussie goalkeeper Schwarzer, who was at that time playing for Premier League side Fulham, was so captivated by Paul's performance that he walked up to the Indian dressing room after the game and asked the latter to swap shirts with him.

"We had lost the match. But

later he came into our dressing room. I was taken aback when he wanted to swap shirts. Generally, I don't swap shirts because I hold the national team jersey in high esteem. But when a global star like him came up to swap shirts, I was on cloud nine," Paul said in the live chat.

That simple gesture by Schwarzer, who later went on to play for clubs like Chelsea and Leicester, inspired then young Paul.

"We (India and Australia) were staying at the same hotel. So before the next game against Bahrain, I went up to him and got his jersey autographed as well. I was really motivated by his gesture. I took a picture with him too, and I have that picture at home in my room," Paul said.



ENG vs PAK 1ST TEST, DAY 4 AT LUNCH

## Sibley, Root steady in chase of 277

**Manchester (IANS):** England opener Dom Sibley and captain Joe Root dug deep and played watchful cricket as the hosts reached 55/1 at Lunch on Day 4 of the first Test, chasing a target of 277 for victory against Pakistan at Old Trafford on Saturday.

At Lunch, Sibley was batting on 26 while Root was on 18. England still need 222 runs to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Resuming on 137/8, Pakistan leg-spinner Yasir Shah top-scored with a breezy 33 off 24 balls to take the team to 169, more importantly setting Eng-

land a challenging target on not-so-easy batting conditions.

For the hosts, Stuart Broad was the pick of the bowlers with 3/37 with Chris Woakes and Ben Stokes taking two wickets each. England were brilliant with the ball and did not let Pakistan batters settle as they fought their way back into the Test match after being in the dumps.

Chasing 277, England lost Rory Burns early as the left-hander was trapped in front by seamer Mohammad Abbas for 10 runs.

Sibley and Root then played cautiously as the likes of teenager Naseem Shah asked a lot of ques-

tions with a probing length and speed.

Yasir also bowled well and got the ball to turn close to Lunch but Sibley and Root did well to stave off the danger.

In the first essay, Pakistan put up 336 riding Shan Masood's 156 and Babar Azam's 69. England could only manage 219 in reply, failing to counter Pakistan's bowling with Yasir picking up four wickets. Pakistan managed just 169 in the second essay.

**Brief Scores:** Pakistan: 326 and 169 (Yasir Shah 33; Stuart Broad 3/37); England: 219 & 55/1 (Dom Sibley 26 batting, Joe Root 18 batting).

## Shouldn't have done it: Akhtar regrets bowling beamer to Dhoni

**New Delhi (IANS):** Former Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar has said that he shouldn't have bowled a beamer to Indian wicket-keeper-batsman MS Dhoni during the 2006 Faisalabad Test.



Akhtar said that it was the first time he had done so on purpose and he apologised to the former Indian captain after that.

"It was the first time in my life I had bowled a beamer purposely. I shouldn't have done it. I regretted it a lot. He was playing so well and the wickets were so slow.

However fast I was bowling, he kept on hitting. I think I got frustrated."

Dhoni had scored his first-ever Test century in what was a run feast of a match that ended in a draw. He scored 148 off

153 balls to help India overhaul Pakistan's first innings total of 588 with India scoring 603. Pakistan however came back strongly and scored 490 and after India spent a short amount of time on the crease in their second innings, the two teams shook hands.

## Wolves to play with depleted squad if they qualify for Champions League

**London (IANS):** Wolverhampton Wanderers have reached a settlement with UEFA wherein they will have to play with a depleted squad if they qualify for Europe next season for breaching the European football governing body's Financial Fair Play rules.

According to a statement by UEFA sent to British media, Wolves will play with 23 players in their European squad next season instead of 25 if they qualify for the Champions League.

"The settlement agreement covers the sporting seasons 2020-21 and 2021-22," UEFA said in the statement according to Sky Sports. "Wolverhampton Wanderers undertakes to report a maximum break-even deficit of 30 million euros in the financial year ending in 2020 and to finally reach, in the 2021-22 season, an aggregate break-even results for the financial years ending in 2019, 2020 and 2021 within the acceptable deviation.

"Wolverhampton Wanderers FC accepts that, for the season 2020-21, it may only include a



maximum of 23 players in its List A for the participation in UEFA competitions, instead of the maximum of 25 players."

Additionally, Wolves will also have to accept a fine of 200,000 Euros which can increase to 400,000 Euros depending on the club's compliance with the break-even target. The restriction on the

squad will continue for the 2021/22 season "unless the club fulfils all financial measures agreed with the CFCB Investigatory Chamber."

Wolves need to win the Europa League this season in order to qualify for the Champions League with Arsenal winning the FA Cup.

## We are here to try and win Champions League: Guardiola

**Manchester (IANS):** Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola has set his sights on winning the Champions League after his team made the quarter-finals with a 2-1 victory over 13-time winners Real on Friday, going through 4-2 on aggregate.

"We are here to try and win the Champions League. It is one step, if we think that is enough we will show how small we are. If you want to win you have to beat the big clubs," Guardiola told BT Sport.

"It is important, we beat [Real] twice. Zinedine Zidane never lost knockout games. You see the calm and personality they play with, they are good."

On the game, Guardiola added: "We created a lot of chances and scored two goals with mistakes from them. We tried to convince them to go, go and attack but it is not easy against this team."

He then said in his press con-



ference as quoted by Sky Sports: "This competition punishes you, we know that from our own experiences. Jesus was the man of the two games for us, he set up the first and scored the second. We more than deserve to be in the next stage."

"I just spoke with the scouting department (about Lyon) and they told me to be alert. We have eight days to prepare for it. We will enjoy it and then after we will think about Lyon," he said.

## COVID-19 positive hockey players doing fine: Coach Reid

**New Delhi (IANS):** The five hockey players who tested positive for COVID-19 at the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) centre in Bengaluru are being attended to by the centre's in-house doctor in addition to a doctor from the state government, SAI said on Saturday. Additionally, SAI said that it has "got on board expert doctors from Manipal Hospital."

SAI had earlier announced that five players from the men's hockey team, including captain Manpreet Singh, had tested positive for COVID-19 upon arrival at the centre for the hockey national camp. SAI had said that the men's and women's teams were to assemble at the centre for the camp on August 4.

"The vitals of the players like temperature, oxygen levels have been monitored and all five players have been found to be mild symptomatic cases," Dr. Avinash HR, who has been deputed by the state government and diagnosed the players on Saturday, said in a SAI statement.

"Except for one the other four players did not have fever. They are doing fine and we have put them on immunity boosters and other support medicines."



## My eyes fixed firmly on Women's World Cup trophy: Mithali Raj

**New Delhi (IANS):** Veteran India batter Mithali Raj has said that she is "definitely looking" at the ICC Women's World Cup, which has been postponed to 2022 and has added that her eyes are firmly fixed on the trophy.

On Friday, the International Cricket Council decided to postpone the World Cup, originally slated to be held in New Zealand in 2021, until February-March 2022 because of the impact the coronavirus pandemic.

"Whilst this is never great news to wake up to. I can understand the reasons why given the lack of cricket in some countries. I just hope those players who were planning to retire after the World Cup can hold on for one year...right Mithali Raj, Jhulan Goswami and Rachael Haynes," cricketer-turned-commentator Lisa Shalkekar tweeted following ICC's decision to postpone

Women's World Cup.

To this, Mithali replied: "Oh absolutely, my eyes are fixed firmly on the trophy. With all niggles recovered, mind and body fresh and stronger than before, I am definitely looking at World Cup 2022."

Mithali had led the Indian eves to the final of the showpiece event in 2017 where they had to face a heart-wrenching defeat against England in the summit clash at the iconic Lord's.

The right-handed batswoman, one of India's most successful female cricketer, has so far scored 6888 runs in 209 ODIs, 663 runs in 10 Tests and 2364 runs in 89 T20Is.

The 37-year-old has already retired from T20 cricket and now aspires to win India their maiden World Cup for which she will now have to wait at least until 2022.

## Juve sack coach Sarri after Champions League exit

**Turin (IANS):** Juventus on Saturday sacked head coach Maurizio Sarri after he failed to guide the Italian champions to the quarter-finals of the Champions League, losing to Lyon in the last-16 stage. "Juventus Football Club announces that Maurizio Sarri has been relieved of his post as coach of the First Team," a statement on the club's official website said. "The club would like to thank the coach for having written a new page in Juventus' history with the victory of the ninth-consecutive championship, the culmination of a personal journey that led him to climb all the divisions of Italian football," it added. The former Chelsea and Napoli coach took charge of Juventus in June last year and had put pen to paper on a three-year contract at the time. Sarri guided the side, which has superstar footballer Cristiano Ronaldo in their ranks, to a ninth consecutive Serie A title last month. Previously, Sarri had said he does not believe that his future with the Italian champions rests upon the result of Friday's Champions League Round of 16 second-leg match against Lyon.



## Eyeing int'l return, Shakib Al Hasan to start training in Sept

**Dhaka (IANS):** Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will return to training at the BKSP facility in Savar from next month as he eyes his return to international cricket. The left-handed all-rounder was banned from all forms of the game for two years for breaching Anti-corruption Code of the International Cricket Council (ICC), one year of that suspended, in October 2019. He can finally return to the game in October 29 this year. Shakib, who is currently in the United States with his family, plans to be in Dhaka at the end of August to get himself ready with a full-fledged training camp at his alma mater. "Shakib will come to the BKSP next month where he will have coaches and trainers available," his mentor Nazmul Abedeen told ESPNcricinfo. "We are functional as the coaches are all residing within the campus, so we can work with him well. Shakib will have everything at his disposal," he added. The 33-year-old has so far played 56 Tests, 206 ODIs and 76 T20Is for Bangladesh in which he has scored 3862, 6323 and 1567 runs respectively. Besides, he has also picked up 210, 260 and 92 wickets respectively in the three formats.

## Chahal announces engagement to Dhanashree Verma

**New Delhi (IANS):** India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal on Saturday announced his engagement with choreographer and YouTube personality Dhanashree Verma. The latter also announced the news on social media. "We said 'Yes' along with our families #rokaceremony," said Chahal in his caption to a picture of the couple from the ceremony on his social media handles. His Indian teammate KL Rahul was one of the first to congratulate him. "Congratulations to both of you," said Rahul in the comments section of Chahal's Instagram post. Indian Premier League (IPL) side Chennai Super Kings also congratulated the wrist spinner on the occasion with a cheeky message.



## National cycling camp to begin from August 14 in New Delhi

**New Delhi (IANS):** The national camp for cycling will start from August 14 at the Indira Gandhi National Stadium in the national capital, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Saturday. This comes after announcements of resumption of national camps for hockey and badminton this month.

A team of 11 athletes, four coaches and 16 support staff have already reported to the camp and are undergoing mandatory quarantine, said SAI. "As a proactive, mandatory step SAI has administered the COVID-19 test to all participants, including athletes, coaches, support staff (sporting and non-sporting such as housekeeping, cooks etc) on arrival. The test reports confirm that all of them are COVID-19 negative," it said.

"As a further precautionary measure all athletes, coaches and support staff will be given the test before the start of the camp to ensure that everyone attending the on-field training from August 14 and interacting with athletes, including the athletes themselves, are COVID-19 free. "The quarantine zone where athletes, coaches and support staff are housed has been earmarked as the Green Zone and no outsider is being allowed to access the zone or interact with the team in order to ensure complete sanitisation.