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KTR as CM gives BJP the jitters

Rama Rao at helm could force BJP to redesign line of attack on TRS

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Amidst the growing clamour in the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) and now seemingly inevitable rise of party supremo K. Chandrashekra Rao's son and minister, K.T. Rama Rao as next Chief Minister, the Opposition parties, in particular the challenger BJP, seem to be ill at ease over any change of guard at the helm of state affairs.

The game plan of the Opposition for the next Assembly polls, particularly that of the BJP, drawn over the past several months, was finalised keep-

ing Chandrasekhar Rao as the prime target, which will go awry if Rama Rao takes charge. For one, he may prove to be a contrasting kind of administrator to his father and current Chief Minister on several criteria. In fact, as CMs, they could prove to be as different chalk and cheese, which will push the BJP back to the drawing board.

For starters, the suave Rama Rao, brimming with youthful dynamism, is expected to completely transform the image of the TRS government, which will make moot the repeated opposition accusations till now, and force a change

in narrative. "KTR will be ubiquitously present wherever the action is. This will render irrelevant the big charge of the Opposition that KCR was restricting himself to either Pragati Bhavan, the CM's official residence, or his farmhouse," a senior TRS leader said, who is in the forefront of "make KTR CM" campaign.

Much to the surprise of his own partymen, state BJP president Bandi Sanjay has been repeatedly professing imminent doom for the TRS government.

■ Page 2: TRS leaders don't see any revolt against KTR

IREDDY SRINIVAS
REDDY | DC

HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

With changes imminent in the political scenario, an interesting feature emerges for the three main political parties in Telangana state: it is time for the generation next to lead their respective parties for the battle royale.

If the TRS supremo K.

Chandrashekhar Rao does indeed anoint son and minister K.T. Rama Rao as Chief Minister, the young leader will lead his party to fight the 2023 elections. He is already in control of the party as its working president and did lead the charge in the recent GHMC polls.

■ Page 2: Cong is the only missing block in youth politics

Ahead of Modi, Didi show, WB min quits

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, JAN. 22

A day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's brief Kolkata visit, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee received yet another blow as one more rebel Trinamul Congress minister, Rajib Banerjee, quit her government, fuelling speculations of his defection to the BJP.

Within hours of Rajib Banerjee's move, the TMC expelled his loyalist and the daughter of former ICC chief Jagmohan Dalmiya, Baishali Dalmiya from the party, accusing her of "anti-party activities".

He has become the third TMC heavyweight minis-

ter in a row to leave Mamata Banerjee's Cabinet in less than two months.

Modi and Banerjee are all set to share the stage here in what is supposed to be their last official public appearance before the Assembly elections are announced. They will celebrate Parakram Diwas marking freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's 125th birth anniversary. They have separate events for the day too.

The PM's visit has been dubbed by the Trinamul as a political stunt to reach out to the people of Bengal ahead of the polls.

■ Full report on Page 7

CENTRE TO TALK ONLY IF FARMERS OKAY LAW FREEZE

SANJAY KAW | DC
NEW DELHI, JAN. 22

The government's negotiations with the protesting farmers' unions hit a roadblock on Friday as the farmer leaders once again stuck to their demands for repeal of the three agriculture laws and a legal guarantee for MSP, even as the Centre asked them to reconsider its proposal for putting the laws on hold for 12 to 18 months.

Unlike the last 10 rounds of talks, at Friday's meeting the two sides could not even reach a decision on the next date as the government also hardened its position saying it is ready to meet once the unions agree to discuss the suspension proposal.

On Thursday, the government offered to put on hold the three laws and set up a joint committee to find solutions. After internal consultations, the farmers' unions decided to reject the offer and stick to their two major demands.

■ Full report on Page 7

AFTER 23 YEARS, CONG TO ELECT ITS PRESIDENT

● The Congress will have an elected president by June 2021, with the party's CWC on Friday approving holding the internal election after the assembly polls.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 7

UPSC WON'T MAKE GOOD LOST YEAR FOR ASPIRANTS

● The Centre told the SC that it does not favour granting an extra opportunity to those who lost their last attempt due to pandemic.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 7

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IN BRIEF
'DRUNK' BIKER KILLED IN ROAD MISHAP, 2 HURT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

A 21-year-old, alleged to be driving drunk, was killed and two pillion riders, who were also drunk, sustained injuries following a road mishap at Shamirpet on Friday evening. According to the police, B. Mahesh, 21, was riding the bike with V. Rajesh and D. Sreenu on the pillion seat. "Mahesh lost control of the bike and rammed it into a roadside tree. The trio sustained injuries and Mahesh succumbed on the spot. They were drunk and did not have helmets on," police said.

Rajesh had a blood alcohol count (BAC) of 86 and Sreenu 31, said the police, adding that the blood samples of the victim, Mahesh, were sent to a laboratory to ascertain his inebriation.

BIKER WITH 408 B.A.C. GETS 13 DAYS IN JAIL

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Thirteen persons were sentenced to jail for terms ranging from a day to 13 days on Thursday for drunk driving. They had been booked by the Cyberabad police. Penalties were also levied against these motorists.

The person sentenced to 13 days, the longest sentence handed out on Thursday, was caught riding a bike and had the highest blood alcohol count (BAC) of 408 mg, against the permitted 30 mg in 100 ml of blood, police said.

Of the 13 sent to jail, nine were motorcyclists and most of them had high BAC readings. Officials said driving licences of all these were being sent to the RTA for suspension.

Interestingly, the court, apart from sending drunk drivers to jail, also imposed hefty penalties on them. These drunk drivers paid fines totalling ₹7,22,300, police said. Forty-three driving licence cases were disposed of, with a total fine of ₹1.28 lakh.

Tenth, Inter exams in May likely, dates soon

None will be barred from exams for lack of attendance

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Amid speculations of the schedule, state education department officials told *Deccan Chronicle* that the SSC and Intermediate exams are likely to be held in May, though the dates are yet finalised. The CBSE has scheduled its board exams from May 4 to June 10, with results expected by July 15.

A senior official said

● A SENIOR official said that the education department has submitted its proposal to the government, keeping in view the schedule for JEE Mains from April 27-30. A final decision in this regard will be taken next week by the education minister.

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schedule for JEE Mains from April 27-30. A final decision in this regard will be taken next week by the education minister.

However, the official said that SSC and Intermediate exams will begin simultaneously.

Another official said that in this academic year, no student will be stopped from appearing in the examination for want of attendance.

Meanwhile, education

minister Sabitha Indra Reddy said in Khammam that the government was committed to completing the process of exams for Class 10 by the end of May.

They are in the process of finalising a plan pertaining to the completion of the academic year for all the classes, including conducting examinations and preparing results, the education minister further said.

HC seeks Centre's reply on Dharani portal issue

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

The Telangana High Court on Friday sought to know what the Union Cabinet Sub-Committee has done on the issue of registration of non-agricultural lands through the Dharani portal.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice B. Vijay sen Reddy was dealing with a batch of seven petitions (two PILs and five writ petitions) that challenged the registration of lands through the Dharani Portal and insistence on furnishing personal details, the Aadhar number of the property owners and their family members, all these to be uploaded on Dharani.

CJ Hima Kohli, during the course of adjudication, made it clear that numerous petitions on same issue will not be entertained. Hence, the court disposed of five writ petitions out of the batch of eight, and kept

two PILs aside for further adjudication. Advocate-General B.S. Prasad informed the court that the issue raised by petitioners before the court is under examination before the government and registration of non-agricultural lands has been taken up as per the old practice.

"The issues raised by the petitioners were under consideration of a Cabinet Sub-Committee studying issues of registration of non-agricultural lands," the AG said and sought time to get further instructions on this issue from the government.

Considering the AG's request, the court adjourned the case to June 21.

However, the court has extended the interim orders that had restrained the government from insisting on furnishing personal details of non-agricultural property owners and uploading of such details on Dharani portal.

The court refused to issue any order on another issue related to operation of Telangana Rights in Land and Pattadar Pass Book Act-2020, in which the petitioner argued that the act was not applicable to the lands falling in the 5th Schedule areas of Telangana state.

Vasudha Nagrak, counsel for petitioner, told the court there were chances of transfer of land to non-tribals following implementation of the new act. She said that for two months, the government had not been responding to a request to issue restrain orders to stop operation of the act in tribal areas.

However, since the petitioner failed to bring to the notice of the court even one single instance of violation of registrations in tribal areas till now, the court said it was not inclined to issue directions.

Meanwhile, the bench directed the Union government to file counter on the contentions raised in the PIL.

Leaders don't see revolt against KTR

From Page 1

According to Sanjay, the TRS government would fall rather quickly after Rama Rao's coronation. "(Bandi) Sanjay should have instead tried to project a public narrative that change of guard in the TRS is immaterial to the BJP's fortunes because it is set to bring down political stalwart KCR itself, so how would KTR matter," a BJP leader argued.

The TRS camp, for its part, is partly elated and partly confused about the revival of talk of Chandrashekhar Rao stepping down to facilitate his

son's elevation. The political scuttlebutt amongst several senior leaders is that a change could happen anytime after the completion of Chandrashekhar Rao's dream project and legacy, Yadadri, the creation of a temple city at what was formerly Yadagirigutta.

TRS leaders are upbeat because Rama Rao has already built a brand for himself, particularly among urban voters, and will undoubtedly tour the state extensively to connect with rural masses soon after his elevation. "Ram Anna is extremely articulate and multi-lingual. He can

charm a variety of audiences with his macaroni capabilities, and can act as a bridge between India and Bharat, or Hyderabad and rest of Telangana," said an MLA, adding that Rama Rao was expected to be more accessible and rejuvenate the party morale and fighting spirit. TRS leaders also do not see any cause célèbre or anticipate any trouble or rebellion from grassroots leader and minister T. Harish Rao during this transition for a plethora of political reasons. "What will he get in the BJP that he has not received in the TRS? He would stick to Bangaru Telangana."

TRS and continue to work for the party and government, unless an attempt was made to marginalise him completely, which won't be the case," he said. "Contrary to the perception of the opposition, Ram Anna and Harish Anna enjoy a good working relationship," the MLA added.

Meanwhile, the BJP is hoping that Rama Rao does not become CM also because he can largely ward off anti-incumbency and seek a renewed mandate on the narrative that he needs a little more than three years to create a Bangaru Telangana.

Congress is only missing piece in block to make TS politics younger

From Page 1

While the former was a highlight and a highpoint of his career so far, the latter must have given him a good sense of the kind of fight to expect from the Opposition, in particular from the BJP.

The dominant national party, the Bharatiya Janata Party has appointed an aggressive young leader, Karimangar MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar, as president of its state unit. This has shown immediate results and a successful narrative has been set that the BJP has replaced the Congress as the principal opposition.

The BJP has further consolidated the perception that there is a strong anti-incumbency against the TRS, in particular against the Kalvakuntla family and in favour of the saffron party which as the unifying fulcrum of such an anti-TRS force will form government.

In particular after Sanjay took over the mantle of leadership of his dormant if not moribund party, he surprised everyone by leading it to victory in the Dubbik Assembly bypoll. It also delivered a stunning performance and became the second largest party in the GHMC, and pushed the TRS into a corner over the

election of the Mayor by denying it the simple majority in the municipal council.

The BJP's top leadership was highly impressed by the turnaround in the party's fortunes led by Sanjay's aggressive attacks on the TRS government. The central leadership backed him strongly, including putting up a roster of top notch speakers for the GHMC campaign. It is, therefore, moot to even discuss under whose leadership the BJP will fight the state polls, in which it hopes to dismantle the TRS.

Incidentally, the MIM has been led by a youthful leader for a long time, Asaduddin Owaisi, who has emerged as a national leader especially since 2014, where he is increasingly being seen as someone who has expanded his party and increasingly become the most important voice and representative of Muslims across the country.

The final piece on the board is the shrinking national party and the instrumental force in creation of separate Telangana – the Congress. The principal Opposition party when last Assembly poll results came out, the Congress is vacillating on the leader who will replace Uttam

Kumar Reddy at its Telangana unit chief.

However, after several rounds of consultation under high public glare, it looks like the two most enthusiastic aspirants and Lok Sabha MPs – A. Revanth Reddy and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy – have been ruled out as PCC president by the high command.

In the process, the general secretary in-charge Manickam Tagore was reportedly admonished by party president Sonia Gandhi for bungling the exercise and for not having been above board and strictly neutral in the process. He was purportedly seen as biased and favouring Revanth Reddy, for which he was given an earful by the supremo.

With the ruling out of several other leaders, old and young, from Mallu Vikarmarka Bhatti to Ponnam Prabhakar to Sridhar Babu, the race is now largely limited to two seniors without ruling out a dark horse – MLC Jeevan Reddy and Marri Shashidhar Reddy.

Between the two, while the former has age and health working against him, besides the fact that he was formerly in the Telugu Desam,

Shashidhar Reddy, with a clean image, strong intellectual prowess and strategic sense, has an edge.

Either way, whoever the leader, the new PCC president will complete the local quad — along with Rama Rao, Bandi Sanjay and Owaisi as the other three.

With new leaders at the helm, a more aggressive brand of politics will play out, with greater stakes. A generational change is surely underway.

Chandrashekhar Rao belonged to a different league, being more contemporary with the likes of N. Chandrababu Naidu and late Y.S. Rajashekhar Reddy.

As of today, Rama Rao has crossed 44 years of age while Sanjay is 49. Owaisi is 51 years, his younger brother and leader of MIM in state Assembly Akbaruddin Owaisi is just a year younger.

Had MPs Revanth Reddy or Komatireddy been in the race, they would have been in the pack at 51 and 56 years respectively, but current favourite Jeevan Reddy and Shashidhar Reddy are in their sixties. But once Indian National Congress appoints Rahul Gandhi as its president, as is expected, he will, at 51, make it a fight to remember of generation next of politics.



Urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao interacts with medical personnel after inaugurating a mini diagnostics hub at the urban community healthcare centre in Rajeevnagar, Sriramnagar, on Friday.

— R. PAVAN

NURSES CLEAR EXAM IN 2018, AWAIT JOBS

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Scores of nurses, who had qualified in the recruitment examination for government hospitals conducted by TSPSC, were detained by the police when they staged a sit-in at the office of Director, Public Health and Family Welfare in Sultan Bazaar on Friday.

They were asking why the list of selected candidates was not released though the merit list was declared in November last and the committee to look into the issue was given two weeks.

The arrested nurses were taken to the Sultan Bazaar, Amberpet and Afzalgunj police stations and released later.

A delegation of nurses was allowed to meet the director and submit a representation seeking early recruitment considering that TSPSC had conducted the test in March 2018.

In all 21,000 aspirants appeared for the test for 3,311 posts. The merit list was declared on November 7 last year, but it was opposed by nurses working in private hospitals as only outsourced nurses from government hospitals were given weightage.

The government constituted a committee to look into the matter and resolve the issue within two weeks.

K. Dharani Reddy, who is among the eligible candidates, asked, "It has been over two months and the committee is yet to make any headway. We toiled during the pandemic by risking our lives to treat Covid patient."

Free testing facilities at 8 new diagnostic labs

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

soon in the city, he said.

Each mini diagnostic hub offers free ECG, USG and digital X-ray among other services. With doctors increasingly relying on diagnostic services and tests, the government decided to augment healthcare in the city with these mini-hubs, according to an official.

Rajendar, after inaugurating one of the hubs at Lalapet, said the government which began providing healthcare through basti dawakhana in the city with these mini-hubs, each of the mini-hubs will serve a set of

soon in the city, he said.

Eight diagnostic hubs, aimed at providing a range of free medical tests, were inaugurated in the city on Friday. Health minister Etala Rajendar, speaking to reporters after the event, said the functioning and performance and usefulness of the new centres will be studied and if they were found to be delivering similar services will be opened across the state.

Another eight such mini-hubs will also be set up

2 more start-ups selected for IIIT-H's accelerator

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Machstatz offers smart devices along with connectivity, communication, software analytics, dashboarding and reporting in order to provide a complete solution to its customers.

Through IIIT-H, the start-ups will get strategy, business and research mentorship during the six-month accelerator programme. The CIE also funds to the tune of ₹15 lakh to help the start-ups widen their business.

With the additional support and funding from IIIT Hyderabad, these start-ups aim to scale up and expand their customer base, and reach out to global markets.

Machstatz provides end-to-end solutions in the industrial internet of things. They use artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms to provide predictive and process analytics solutions to manufacturing industries. Their solutions are being implemented in manufacturing industries as they increase production efficiency, reduce downtime of industrial machines and eliminate defects in real time.

Start-up Corner
by improving the accuracy and efficiency in triaging skin condition.

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eSkinDoctor focuses on dermatology and is using artificial intelligence (AI) and deep learning algorithms to address the gap in availability of doctors

WEATHER

Max: 32°C
Min: 17°C
RH: 81%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Misty morning. Max/Min
temp. 32/18 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+11,354)	(+112)
1,06,36,056	1,53,140

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+214)	(+2)
TS: 2,92,835	1,586
(+137)	(+4)

AP: 8,86,694	7,146
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CASES AROUND THE WORLD

9,83,53,744	DEATHS
21,06,818	COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

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coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttarayana
Tithi: Pushya Shuddha Dasami till

8.53 pm
Star: Krittika till 9.29 pm

Varjyanam: 8.04 am to 9.51 am

Durmuhuram: 6.53 am to 8.22 am

Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

HIJRI CALENDAR

Jamadi- ul- Akhir 9,1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.46 am

Zohar: 12.36 pm

Asar: 4.30 pm

Maghrab: 6.12 pm

Isha: 7.23 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.05 AM

SUNSET TODAY 6.49 PM

MOONSET 1.08 AM

MOONRISE 12.55 PM

COUNTER POINT



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IN BRIEF

SBI donates ₹25L to Sainik Welfare

Hyderabad: To commemorate Armed Forces Flag Day, State Bank of India, Hyderabad circle, headed by Chief General Manager

Om Prakash Mishra, on Friday handed over a cheque of ₹25,19,800 favouring 'Sainik Welfare Telangana' to Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan. This was done as a part of its efforts to fulfill banks philanthropic responsibilities.

MLA KAUSAR ASSESSES ISSUES IN GOLCONDA VISIT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Karwan MLA Kausar Mohiuddin visited the Golconda fort area along with GHMC officials and took stock of the civic problems. He said GHMC zonal commissioner P. Pravinya had assured him that civic works worth ₹3 crore will be sanctioned on priority as identified by him.

The MLA visited Shah Hatim Nagar, Katora Houz, Salehnagar, Kancha, Baghda Colony, Akbarpura, Harijan Basti, Afsar Khan Colony Moti Darwaza, Dhanakota, Nadeem Colony and Neeraja Colony. Later he held a review meeting with the officials. Mohiuddin urged the zonal commissioner to speed up the ongoing works of box-type drains which cover Hakeempet, Bakthawarguda, Al-Hasnat Colony, Nizam Colony and Tolichowki. He pointed out the areas where CC and BT roads need to be laid after they were damaged during the recent floods. He emphasised on early starting of the works of beautification of Katora Houz and Hakeempet kunta.

Ready for Republic Day



Police personnel rehearse for the Republic Day celebrations at the Public Garden in Hyderabad on Friday. The celebrations are likely to be low-key due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Metro chief's fake FB profile created

NAVEEN KUMAR I DC
HYDERABAD JAN 22

N.V.S. Reddy, managing director of Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited, lodged a complaint with the cybercrimes police on Friday after people started receiving messages asking for help from his fake Facebook profile. The messages sought 'urgent help'. He approached the police after people called him up on receiving the posts.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Reddy said, "Since my social circle knows that I am not very active on Facebook, and it has been over a few weeks that I have not opened my account, they sensed the scam and started calling me." He said that the fake profile appeared to have been created earlier in the day.

The cybercrime police advised the Metro Rail MD to lock his Facebook profile, which he did. "Interestingly, I received calls from my industrialist friends in the morning stating that their

accounts had been mirrored and not to trust if anyone asks for money," he added.

According to the police, the cyber criminals had earlier created fake FB accounts in the name of police officials to loot innocent citizens.

This surfaced in September 2020, leading to the arrest of a gang from Rajastan in October.

Police said the gang had created fake FB accounts in the name of 28 police officers of Telangana state, 24 of Andhra Pradesh, 13 of Tamil Nadu including 11 additional director-general rank officers, five police officers of Himachal Pradesh, one each from Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Jharkhand, Odisha, three from Uttarakhand and seven from Uttar Pradesh.

The scamsters post a message via the fake FB page on the official's name, purport an emergency and seek money. They take down the fake account within hours.

NITI AAYOG TEAM CALLS ON KCR REGARDING TS' WELFARE SCHEMES

Hyderabad, Jan. 22: A Niti Aayog team, lead by vice-chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, met Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao at Pragathi Bhavan on Friday. They discussed with the Chief Minister various issues pertaining to development and welfare schemes which are being implemented by the state government.

The Niti Aayog team included advisers Avinash Mishra and Dr Namratha Singh Panwar and research officer Dr Kama Raju. State Planning Commission vice-chairman Boyini Vinod Kumar; minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy and officials attended the meeting.

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TRIO TRIES TO STEAL PIO'S LAND WITH FAKE PAPERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

The Hayathnagar police arrested three men for creating fake land documents of a property at Bagh Hayathnagar.

The accused, Telkallapally Nagaraju, 31, Reddy Laxmi Narsimha Reddy, 58, and Abdul Gaffar, 50, colluded with three others to get the registration done. Narsimha Reddy and the gang cheated the plot owner Aluri Venkata Lakshmi Narsimha Rao.

Narsimha Rao he had gone to the US in 2001 and was staying there. "Upon noticing that nobody was claiming it for the past few years, the gang hatched a plan to grab the property and obtained photo-stat copies of the documents. They posed as owners and used their connections in the real estate business for other formalities," said the police.

Technically the TRS does not even require the support of 31 ex-officio numbers and the election would solely depend on quorum. Though MIM has 10, BJP 3 and Congress one as ex-officio members, it would be irrelevant.

The TRS bagged 56 divisions, while BJP secured 48 and the MIM won in 44 divisions in the elections that were held on December 1 after a high-octane campaign.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Act, 1955 (Act II of 1956) and Rule 3 of Telangana Municipal Corporations (Conduct of Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor) Rules, 2005, the State Election Commissioner, hereby, directs the Election Authority & Commissioner, GHMC, Hyderabad to authorize one of the district collectors having jurisdiction over any area comprised in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation to conduct election to the offices of Mayor and

Commissioner.

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Commissioner.

Commissioner.</p

SHORT TAKES

MLC NOMINATIONS SPARK STIR IN CONG MEET

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

The finalisation of nominees for the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates Legislative Council constituency generated a lot of heat during a meeting of the Congress here on Friday.

AICC in-charge Manick Tagore along with TPCC chief Uttam Kumar Reddy and other key leaders held a meeting at Gandhi Bhavan.

Several leaders from the three districts objected to the senior leaders who are sending mediators to Telangana Jana Samiti chief Prof. Kodandaram for taking support of Congress in the upcoming MLC elections. They demanded that the Congress should field its own candidate. They opposed giving support to Prof. Kodandaram and Cheruku Sudhakar.

Ramreddy Dhamodhar Reddy wondered why the meeting was being held when one section had spread news that names were finalised.

Former PCC chief Ponnala Lakshmaiah said that they should prefer youth and those who are loyal to the party since long.

Tagore stated the leaders had finalised the candidates and AICC president Sonia Gandhi will take the final call from the short list. Tagore instructed the party leaders to form booth committees for Warangal and Khammam municipal elections.

GULZAR OPENS HYD LITERARY FEST 2021

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

The Hyderabad Literary Festival 2021 got off to a start on Friday evening with poet Gulzar inaugurating the three-day event. Unlike in the past where the festival was physical, this year's edition of the HLF is being held online on account of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Gulzar said he had wondered if HLF would be held or postponed because of the current conditions. Being present physically would have been a different experience, going around Hyderabad, looking at the bangle stores, enjoying the biryani of Hyderabad, and then relishing the joy of Deccani language, he said, adding that there was an urge to be present at the festival and he was glad to be taking part in it, even if online.

Gulzar said that even when the festival returns to its physical celebration in future, the organizers should make use of the digital medium. A real litfest would be one where poets, writers, and storytellers from all corners of the country can take part and present their works in their own languages. They should meet each other; see each other and hear each other because poetry in every language, carries a music of its own, he said.

GULZAR SAID that even when the festival returns to its physical celebration in future, the organizers should make use of the digital medium.



Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy, national president OBC Morcha Dr K. Laxman and BJP corporator Sunita Prakashgoud visit Nagamaiahkunta slum in Musheerabad during the 'BJP Basti' meeting on Friday.

—By Arrangement

Home loans for flood-hit: Kishan

Inhabitants of the slum should avoid throwing waste in nala, advises minister

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy said on Friday that all those who are eligible under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana would be given loans depending on their income and location.

The minister was participating in the 'BJP Basti' meeting along with OBC Morcha national president Dr K. Laxman at Nagamaiahkunta in Musheerabad constituency. He said he visited the basti every time there was a flood, and this time he came in to offer homes to the people homes under the PMAY.

He promised new patta to those who lost them in the floods and appealed to all residents to support the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. He advised the inhabitants to avoid throwing waste in the nala as this would clog it and flood the area in times of rain.

The minister said the Coronavirus threat still loomed and proper safety steps should continue. Those who get vaccinated too should continue with the previous alert levels for more time. Scientists worked hard for a year to make the vaccine, and of the four companies doing this, two are from India.

OB C Morcha leader Dr Laxman said the high tension power line was the main problem for this basti and he was fighting for remedial measures for the past 30 years. Kishan Reddy would now be adopting the Basti, he said, and recalled that he developed the area as an MLA in recent years.

He expressed happiness that the housing problem will also be solved soon with the initiatives from Kishan Reddy. He praised the Centre for giving low-interest loans to those who want to build their own houses while "our state government took no interest."

Union min. reviews power plant in TS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

KISHAN REDDY asked NTPC authorities to efficiently utilise the coal being extracted by the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) while implementing the project. He sought details of contracts that have so far been signed with regard to coal linkages.

He was also briefed about tasks that NTPC had taken up as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities across the Telangana state.

Later, during a review meeting with Hyderabad district collector Sweta Mohanty, Kishan Reddy inquired about details of houses being allotted to the poor. He suggested that estimates for construction of schools be prepared by utilising CSR funds of various corporate bodies in the state.

Further, the MoS inquired about details of Covid vaccine being administered in Hyderabad city. Officials briefed him about the problems in 'Covin' software. Following this, Kishan Reddy spoke to Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan over phone to know about the issue. At the time, the central minister was informed about a special camp that will be organised soon for vaccinating the elderly and disabled.

Later, along with GHMC commissioner Lokesh Kumar, Kishan Reddy reviewed construction of the Amberpet flyover with officials of National Highways Authority of India. The minister instructed officials to start works on Amberpet flyover immediately.

Bandi: KCR deceiving own MLAs

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, JAN. 22

In a bid to keep his MLAs from migrating, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao is trying to hoodwink his own party by projecting that there was an understanding with the BJP. But the BJP will never ally with the TRS, BJP state president Bandi Sanjay said here on Friday.

Speaking to media persons, he said that Chandrashekhar Rao was trying to protect his government from falling at any cost. He had started the drama of making his son K.T. Rama Rao as the Chief Minister.

However, Sanjay said, "an atom bomb would explode" if that takes place.

Chandrashekhar Rao's recent visit to the Kaleshwaram project had nothing to do with the state's irrigation projects but was solely meant to offer penance at the confluence of the Godavari, Pranhita and the Saraswathi rivers



BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar addresses the media in Warangal on Friday.

—By Arrangement

before making Rama Rao the Chief Minister, Sanjay said. He said the Chief Minister had finally opened his eyes to implement the reservation for the economically weaker sections (EWS) among the upper castes, which was first proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said that people belonging to the forward castes were meted out injustice with the TRS government failing to implement the quota for them so far.

On other issues, Sanjay said, "It's unfortunate to see the state government dragging the implementation of the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) to the employees."

He accused the Chief Minister of widening

Jeevan: CM unable to run admin

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Senior Congress leader and MLC T. Jeevan Reddy on Friday said that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao was running out of steam and unable to run the administration and was therefore keen on making K.T. Rama Rao the

next Chief Minister. Addressing a press conference, Jeevan Reddy said that Chandrashekhar Rao was contemplating the transition because of age issues.

Reddy slammed Chandrashekhar Rao for his flip-flop on the new agricultural laws and Ayushman Bharat. He said

implementation of the reservation for economically weaker sections among the upper castes had been delayed by two years and results of the recent elections could be the reason for implementing it now. The Congress leader said even 10 per cent of tribal reservations were not being implemented.

JEEVAN REDDY said implementation of the reservation for economically weaker sections among the upper castes had been delayed by two years and results of the recent elections could be the reason for implementing it now.

Industrialists contribute for Ram Mandir

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Aparna Construction contributed ₹2 crore and Reddy's Labs ₹1 crore through the Chinna Jeeyar Swamy for the construction of the temple. The industrialists handed over the cheques to RSS central secretary Suresh Bhayyaji Joshi at the Muchintil ashram.

A.P. Jithender Reddy, BJP senior leader and former MP also donated ₹1 crore for the Ram mandir construction.

MLA apologises for comments

DC CORRESPONDENT
JAGTIAL, JAN. 22

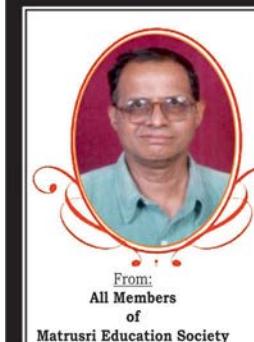
TRS MLA Kalvakuntla Vidyasagar Rao of Korutla denied that he had made any remarks insulting Lord Rama. "I am ready to collect donations for the Ram mandir at Ayodhya" if I am given a receipt book by the Ram Janmabhumi Trust," the ruling party legislator clarified on Friday.

Incidentally, at a meeting held in a private function hall on occasion of launching the second phase of sheep distribution scheme, Vidyasagar Rao had urged people not to donate money for construction of the Ram mandir. The appeal was made in the presence of ministers Talasani Srinivas Yadav and Koppula Eshwar on Thursday.

The comments led to a storm in political circles of Karimnagar district, whose Lok Sabha member is Bandi Sanjay Kumar, the state chief of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

BJP leaders immediately took out protest rallies, staged dharnas and burnt effigies of the ruling party legislator and demanded that he forthwith apologise for his comments. TRS and BJP activists even clashed with each other in Metpally and Korutla towns. Following these protests, the Korutla MLA spoke to media persons and declared.

The ruling party legislator said he is ready to apologise for his statement but under the condition that BJP leaders cease using the name of Lord Rama for gaining political mileage. "They should involve all sections of people in collecting donations for the Ayodhya Temple irrespective of political parties. God belongs to everyone. I will also collect donations and will go to Ayodhya to have darshan of Lord Sri Rama," the ruling party legislator declared.



In loving memory of
Dr. K.V. RAMESHWAR RAO
(D.O.B.: 10.09.1945 D.O.E.: 23.01.2021)
Our Former Joint Secretary & Treasurer

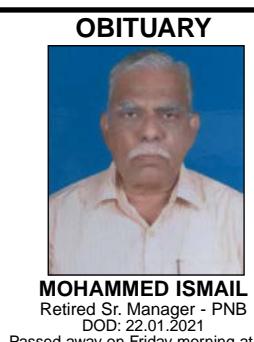
It is now Ten years... Your memories of strong leadership and hard work continue to guide and inspire us.
From:
All Members
of
Matrusri Education Society



34th ANNIVERSARY IN FOND MEMORY OF
E.G. KRISHNA MURTHY
KRISHNA ENGINEERING WORKSHOP
*"Then your radiant presence was the guiding spirit.
Now your peaceful memory is a source of perennial inspiration"*
Inserted by:
E.J. SATYA MURTHY & Family
E.CHAITANYA MURTHY & Family



KARMANDRAM
Smt. T.D. MALATHI
(Correspondent Balaji High School, Malkajgiri)
W/o Late Sri T.D. DATTA THRIYAN
Left for heavenly abode on 14-1-2021.
Nadappu Ceremony will be held on Saturday, 23-1-2021 from 6 pm onwards at Residence, Karmandram on 24-1-2021 at 7.30 am.
Inserted by: Family Members.
Mob: 8897262353



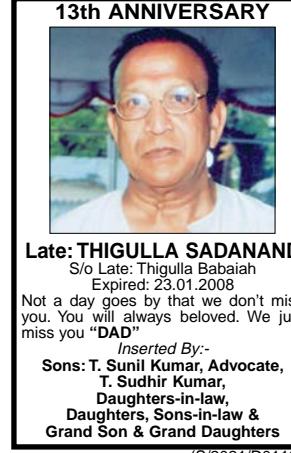
OBITUARY
MOHAMMED ISMAIL
Retired Sr. Manager - PNB
DOB: 22.01.2021
Passed away on Friday morning at his residence at Padmarao Nagar, Secd. B.
Surrounded by his loved ones.
Last Committal prayer on Sunday at 5 PM at Padmarao Nagar.
For further details contact 7731001982 / 6309270635



10th DAY CEREMONY
SRI. BONTHA YELLAPPA
Late: Andalamma (Wife)
DOB: 01-07-1959 DOD: 15-01-2021
May His Soul Rest In Peace
Sons: Bontha Mahender Babu - Saraswathi
Bontha Hari Babu - Swethadevi
Daughters: P. Renuka Devi - P. Mahesh
D. Devika - D. Venkateswamy, K. Jayasri - K. Narasingh
Children, Grand Children & Relatives
Venue: 24-01-2021 at H. No. 8-269/19/47/A, Indira Nagar, Road No. 2, Banjara Hills. Ph: 93315557



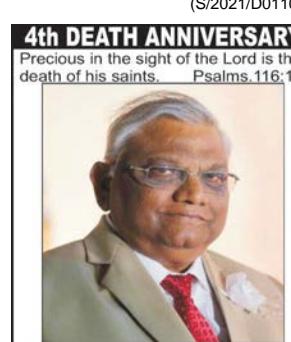
4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
DASARI KRISHNA RAO
Retd. BSO (GE Golconda)
D.O.B.: 23.01.2021
We will miss your presence around us.
You will always live in hearts & minds of the family you left behind.
Inserted By: FAMILY MEMBERS



13th ANNIVERSARY
Late: THIGULLA SADANAND
S/o Late Thigulla Babu
Expired: 23.01.2008
Not a day goes by that we don't miss you. You will always be loved. We just miss you "DAD".
Inserted By:
S. Sudha Kumar - Advocate,
T. Sudha Kumar - Daughters-in-Law,
Daughters, Sons-in-Law &
Grand Son & Grand Daughters



In Remembrance
Mrs. MAVIS GOVIND
(W/o. Late C.S. Govind)
Retd. Nurse, E.S.I Hospital, Sanathnagar
DOB: 20.03.1934 DOD: 23.05.2019
Son-Daughter-In-Law
Grand Children
9985756962, 9849727770



4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Psalms 116:15
Late: REBBA ASHOK KUMAR
(Retd. O.U. Employee)
S/o. Late. Reba Yesurathnam
DOB: 26-12-1949 DOD: 23-1-2017
"You shall remain in our hearts forever"
Inserted By:
Wife, Sons, Daughters-in-Law &
Grand Daughter



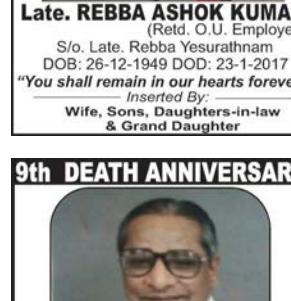
11th day ceremony

13th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

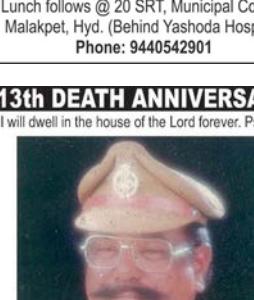
I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Ps. 23:6

In loving memory of

10th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



Mr. C. JAGANNATHA RAO
Former Deputy CM. Of AP
Chairman Nutan Vidya Samiti & New Science College D.O.D. 23-01-2012
May His Soul Rest in Peace



13th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Ps. 23:6

In Ever Loving Memory Of

10th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



Blessed are the dead who die in the LORD... Their works follow them! Rev. 14:13

In Ever Loving Memory Of

W/o. Late. S. Satyanandam

DOB: 19-06-1933 DOD: 23-1-2011

*Inserted by:
Sons, Daughters-in-law, Grand Children & Great Grand Children*

Cong slams Eflu for ignoring OBC quota

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

AICC spokesperson Dr Sravan Dasoju on Friday took potshots at English and Foreign Languages University (Eflu) and other institutions, which have been deliberately violating OBC reservation system in recruitment of faculty rendering injustice to the other backward classes (OBCs).

Sravan lamented that despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself belonging to OBC, it is unfortunate that the Central Universities were making a mockery of constitutional rights.

IN BRIEF

Constable held for cheating woman

Hyderabad: A City Armed Reserve constable was arrested by the Rachakonda police for cheating a woman and leaving her pregnant.

The accused, Avulagadda Abhilash Kumar Yadav, 32, was booked him for cheating and rape. According to the police, Abhilash Kumar had professed love to the victim and sexually exploited her.

"When she became pregnant, he threatened her and got her to abort the child by giving her some pills. We arrested Abhilash after booking him for cheating and rape. He was sent to judicial remand on Thursday," the Rachakonda police said.

Youth harasses minor girl, held

Hyderabad: The SR Nagar police arrested Sai, 20, a BTech final year student from Motinagar, SR Nagar, for harassing a minor girl after she rejected his advances. Police said Sai had been stalking and harassing the victim, an intermediate student, who is from the same neighbourhood, over the past few months. "Even after she rejected him, Sai allegedly continued to pressure her. Unable to bear the harassment, the girl informed her parents who had already warned Sai but in vain. When he continued to stalk and harass her, the victim approached the cops," said the police.

Seven car sellers arrested for fraud

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad central crime station (CCS) police arrested a seven-member gang from Bharatpur of Rajasthan on Friday for cheating a youngster from the city after promising to sell a car at a low price. The victim, an employee from Karwan, came across their advertisement on Facebook while searching for cars sold online. Attracted by the low price, he called the contact number which was answered by an unidentified man who pretended to be a CRPF inspector posted at the Shamshabad airport. "The victim was told that a nominal amount needs to be paid to test-drive the car, which the latter did through an e-wallet. A few days later, he got another call asking him to pay ₹2 lakh more as advance. He paid that too," police said.

Fewer health staff turn up for vaccine

Out of 28,433, 12,944 took vaccine shots on day-6

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Telangana state on Friday, the second day running, recorded very few medical personnel and health care staff working in government hospitals turning up to receive their first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.

Even though the vaccination target for the day was cut to 28,433 individuals, only 12,944 turned up to get their vaccine shots, representing only 45.5 per cent of the targeted shots for Friday.

On Thursday, 27,682 beneficiaries, a shade over half of the targeted 48,447, received the vaccination jabs.

While some of the problems in terms of the low vaccination rate, officials said, was due to problems with the CoWIN website where details of the beneficiaries have to be updated, there appears to be a lot of reluctance among healthcare

PRIVATE HOSPITAL HEALTHCARE STAFF TO GET COVID-19 VACCINE FROM JANUARY 25

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

The state health department announced that starting Monday, January 25, doctors, healthcare and support staff in private hospitals will begin receiving Covid-19 vaccinations.

The announcement comes along with an expected to roll-out of Covaxin, with each vial containing 20 doses.

workers to get the shots.

According to a senior official of the health department, big teaching hospitals saw low turnouts.

When compared to the rest of the country, Telangana state is among the four states that have crossed the one lakh mark in total vaccinations since the drive was launched on January 16.

The other states to hit this

Covid-19 vaccine developed and manufactured by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech, next week along with the doses of Covishield, which was being administered since January 16, the first day of the Covid-19 vaccination drive.

The state has so far received 8,448 vials of Covaxin, with each vial containing 20 doses.

mark are Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Odisha.

As on Friday in Telangana state, a total of 1,10,248 individuals had received the vaccine representing 64 per cent of the intended beneficiaries. No serious adverse events were reported on Friday in the state and there were only five cases of mild reactions among the vaccine takers.

The other states to hit this

13,000 receive 2nd dose of Covaxin in Phase-3 trials

DC CORRESPONDENT WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI / HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

A total of 267 cases of adverse effects from immunisation (AEFI) were reported till Friday evening as over 2.28 lakh beneficiaries were given the Covid-19 vaccine on the seventh day of the nationwide drive.

Till now over 12.72 lakh persons, mainly healthcare and frontline workers, have taken the first dose of the vaccine.

Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have so far vaccinated over one lakh beneficiaries each.

On Friday, a healthcare worker died in Gurugram following vaccination but the city's Chief Medical Officer denied the death was linked to the vaccine. "She had been administered the vaccine on January 16. Her family reported her sudden death at her home today, but there is nothing yet to suggest and link with the vaccination. However, we have sent her viscera for investi-

gation and details will be known once the report comes," CMO Gurugram Dr Virender Yadav said.

The cumulative number of Covid-19 cases till now are over 1.06 crore with 1.53 lakh deaths. In the last one day, 14,545 fresh cases and 163 deaths were reported. So far 145 persons have been detected with the new mutated variant of the UK virus.

Meanwhile, Bharat Biotech published peer-reviewed data for phase 1 clinical trial of its Covaxin, in the reputed science magazine The Lancet. The study said trials have shown that Covaxin induced binding and neutralising antibody responds against the Coronavirus. Several doctors have expressed apprehension over the use of Covaxin in the absence of its safety and efficacy record since it is still undergoing trials.

The vaccine is undergoing Phase 3 clinical trials during which 13,000 volunteers have been successfully administered the second dose of the vaccine. Covaxin has been

approved by the union government for emergency use under clinical trial mode.

BBV152 induced binding and neutralising antibody responses, and with the inclusion of the Algel-IMDG adjuvant, this is the first inactivated SARS-CoV-2 vaccine that has been reported to induce a Th1-biased response," the authors of the article that include ICMR chief Dr Balram Bhargava, AIIMS Delhi Director Dr Randeep Gulher and Bharat Biotech CMD Dr Krishan Ella.

"We report the interim findings from the phase 1 clinical trial of BBV152, a whole-virion inactivated SARS-CoV-2 vaccine. The vaccine was well tolerated in all dose groups with no vaccine-related serious adverse events. Both humoral and cell-mediated responses were observed in the recipients of the Algel-IMDG-based vaccines. The most common adverse event was pain at the injection site, followed by headache, fatigue, and fever," the authors wrote.

STATE REPORTS 214 NEW COVID-19 CASES, 2 DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Telangana's Covid-19 caseload rose to 2,92,835 with 214 fresh cases reported until 8 pm on Thursday. The toll rose to 1,582 with the death of two more patients, according to the state's health department bulletin on Friday of the infection, translating to a fatality rate of 0.54 per cent.

Thirty-eight cases were recorded in the GHMC area, followed by 14 each in Medchal-Malkajgiri, Ranga Reddy and Karimnagar districts.

The bulletin said 351 people had recovered from the infection between Wednesday and Thursday, pushing the total number of recoveries to 2,87,468.

GOVT STAFF HELD OVER BRIBERY

Hyderabad: Junior assistant S.K. Rabani at the assistant commissioner of labour office at Bhadradi Kothagudem was nabbed by the ACB after he was caught accepting a bribe of ₹15,000 from a man on Friday. The complainant was Kothapalli Rajitha who wanted to get the insurance amount sanctioned following the death of her husband.

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Friday demanded adequate compensation to families of agricultural labourers who were killed and injured in a road accident at Devarakonda.

Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with ex-ZP chairman Balu Naik, and DCC president Shankar Naik, visited Devarakonda hospital and paid their respects to the victims. The TPCC chief gave ₹4 lakh assistance to the families of the victims on behalf of the Congress. Speaking to mediapersons later, he demanded that the state government pay ₹20 lakh ex-gratia to each to the families of those killed in the accident.

He said adequate compensation should be paid to those injured besides ensuring free treatment. Reddy demanded that the state government take immediate measures to



TPCC chief N. Uttam Kumar Reddy at the Devarakonda hospital on Friday to pay respects to the victims who were killed in a road accident.

— P. ANIL KUMAR

ensure road safety. He said that there was a huge rise in other roads, especially those connecting rural areas.

The TPCC chief demanded that the government take immediate steps to plough and increase frequency of RTC buses in the rural areas so that people would be discouraged from driving on such risky roads. He demanded setting up of well-equipped trauma centres, especially in accident-prone zones.

Akhila Priya gets bail in kidnap case

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

Former AP minister Bhuma Akhila Priya, who was arrested by the Hyderabad police in connection with a kidnap case in Bowenpally, was granted bail by a local court in Secunderabad on Friday.

The court granted bail on two sureties of ₹10,000 each. Akhila Priya, a Telugu Desam leader, was arrested on January 6 and

was remanded in judicial custody at the Central Prison in Chanchalguda. She is expected to be released on bail from prison on Saturday.

The Hyderabadi police, in their counter to the bail petition, told the court that if she is released Akhila Priya using her political background could influence victims of the Bowenpally kidnap case and tamper with evidence apart from using muscle

Priya's father. Though Praveen Rao had paid a huge sum, Subba Reddy and Akhila Priya allegedly began harassing him for more money as the market value of the land shot up. As Praveen and his brothers were not willing to give more money or a share in the land, the former minister and her husband allegedly hatched a conspiracy to threaten them by kidnapping.

Covid vaccine awareness drive begins today

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

A week-long awareness campaign on Covid-19 and the ongoing vaccination programme will be launched in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Simultaneously, the campaign, involving publicity vehicles, will be launched in Ranga Reddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Sangareddy, Siddipet, Nizamabad, Warangal, Urban, and Karimnagar districts.

These districts, along with Hyderabad city, have had the most cases since the first Covid-19 patient was discovered in the city on March 2, 2020.

The campaign vehicles will be flagged off by Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy as part of an effort by the Union ministry of information and broadcast.

Rddy as part of an

effort by the Union

ministry of information and broadcast.

Reddy as part of an

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Fauci says he feels liberated with Biden

Washington, Jan. 22: In his first White House briefing as President Joe Biden's top advisor on Covid-19, Anthony Fauci said it was "liberating" that he could focus on science without fear of repercussion now that Donald Trump had left office.

The top infectious disease scientist was briefing

reporters on Thursday on the state of the US outbreak that has claimed more than 40,000 lives.

Asked to compare his experience under the previous administration to the new one, the 80-year-old responded a little coyly at first, saying he wasn't sure he could "extrapolate" based on first impres-

sions. "But one of the things that was very clear as recently as about 15 minutes ago, when I was with the president, is that one of the things that we're going to do is to be completely transparent, open and honest.

If things go wrong, not point fingers but to correct them and to make everything

we do be based on science and evidence."

Toward the end of Thursday's briefing, Fauci was asked by another reporter to expand on his "jokes" about the differences in the management styles between the two leaders.

"I was very serious about it, I wasn't joking," he

said, laughing. "Obviously I don't want to be going back over history, but it was very clear that there were things that were said, be it regarding things like hydroxychloroquine and other things like that — that really was uncomfortable because they were not based on scientific fact." —AFP

CINEMA

ALLARI NARESH GOLDEN COMEDY FROM TODAY



TARAKARAMA 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00PM

ARJUN 70-KUKATPALLY
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM

MEGHA 70MM-6.15, 9.15PM

PRASANTH 70MM-SEC'BAD
11.00, 6.00PM(2 SHOWS)

OAMB
10.45, 11.00, 1.45, 4.15, 7.15,
7.35, 10.00, 10.25PM

Sivaganga-11.15, 6.15PM
Gpr-10.40, 1.30, 4.20, 7.10, 10.00

Radhika-10.50, 1.40, 4.30, 7.20, 10.00PM

Mcube-10.50, 1.40, 4.45, 7.20, 10.10PM

Cinesquare-10.40, 1.25, 4.20, 7.10, 10.00PM

Chinthal
11.15, 6.15 10.40, 1.35,
4.30, 7.25, 10.20

Prasad Multiplex
11.30, 2.00, 7.45, 10.15PM

Laxmikala Cinepride
11.30, 2.45, 6.15, 9.45PM

MJR Square-Narapally
10.55, 1.45, 4.35, 7.25, 10.20PM

PVR
Central-1.30, 4.15, 7.00, 9.45PM

Forum-11.30, 2.15, 5.00, 7.45, 10.30PM

Inorbit-11.15, 2.00, 4.45, 7.30, 10.15PM

Icon-1.00pm, 3.45, 6.30, 9.15PM

Galleria-11.15, 2.00, 4.45, 7.30, 10.15PM

Irrummanil-12.45, 3.30, 6.15, 9.00PM

Musarambagh-12.45, 3.30, 6.15, 9.00PM

RK-02.45, 5.30, 8.15PM

INOX
GVK-12.45, 4:40, 7:45, 10:40PM

MP-10:40, 4:30, 10:30PM

GSM-11:00, 3:30, 7:15, 10:40PM

CCPL-12.00, 3.10, 6.20, 9.30PM

SUDHA-12.00, 3.10, 6.20, 9.30PM

DLS-12.30, 3.40, 6.50, 10.00PM

MANTRA-12.30, 6.35, 9.45PM

PLATINUM
10.00, 4.00,
7.00PM 1.15, 4.00, 6.45,
9.30PM

L.B.NAGAR
11.00AM, 1.45PM, 7.40PM, 10.25PM

MIRAJ
SHALINI-10.30, 4.30, 7.30, 10.30PM

BALANAGAR-11.00, 1.10, 7.20, 10.20

CHANDANAGAR-04.15, 7.15, 10.15PM

**10.45, 1.30,
7.25, 10.20PM**

AARADHANA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

TALLURI 70MM
11.00, 2.00PM

SENSATION
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

MAHALAXMI
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SAIPOOJA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

BR HITECH
11.00, 2.00PM

SUPER70MM
11.00, 2.00PM

LAXMIKALAMANDIR
11.30, 2.30PM

SRIDEVI R.C.PURAM
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SRIDEVI CH.GUDA
11.00, 2.00PM

SAMPOORNA
11.15, 2.15PM

AMBA70MM
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

SAIRANGA
6.00 & 9.00PM

BHUJANGA70
11.00, 6.00PM

SIVARANJANI
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

RK35-ABIDS
6.00, 9.00PM

SIVASAKTHI70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

ASIAN MUKUND
11.00, 6.00PM

GLOBAL GLOBAL CINEMAS RELEASE



We believe in WHO: Kamala

VP Harris says WHO vital to control virus, building back better global health

Washington, Jan. 22:

The Biden administration believes that the WHO is vital to controlling the spread of Covid-19 and building back better global health and pandemic preparedness, Vice President Kamala Harris has told WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, a day after the US rejoined the UN health agency.

The US rejoined the World Health Organisation (WHO) on Wednesday in one of the first official orders of the Joe Biden presidency, reversing a key foreign policy decision his predecessor Donald Trump took last year after accusing the UN health agency of incompetence and bowing to Chinese pressure over the Coronavirus pandemic.

In April last year, as the Coronavirus pandemic was spreading across the globe,

Trump cut off US funding to the WHO, saying it was "virtually controlled by China."

The vice president and the director-general also discussed the resumption of the United States' role in

the global public health

and humanitarian response to the Covid-19 pandemic," it said.

Harris also stressed on the Biden-Harris administration's strong support for efforts to strengthen the global Covid-19 response, mitigate its secondary impacts, including on women and girls, and advance global health security to prevent the next outbreak from becoming an epidemic or pandemic.

She emphasised the importance of making the US safer through global cooperation, the White House said. Ghebreyesus thanked Harris for the call and congratulated her and Biden on their inauguration.

Both the director-general and the vice president reiterated that they look forward to meeting in person. Earlier in the day, Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious-disease expert, while addressing the WHO executive board meeting said the US will cease the drawdown of its staff seconded to the agency.

Beijing launches drive for testing 2mn in 48 hours

Wuhan, Jan. 22:

Glow-in-the-dark rabbit ears, pulsating beats, and a flexible attitude to masks: nightlife in China's Wuhan is back with a vengeance almost a year after a lockdown brought life to a standstill in the city of 11 million.

As the rest of the world continues to grapple with lockdowns and soaring infections, young people in the city, once the epicentre of the novel Coronavirus, are enjoying their hard-earned freedom.

In Super Monkey — a huge nightclub in the city centre — there is no dress code or VIP list.

What is obligatory,

at least to get through

the door, is a mask

and a temperature

check — any higher

than 37.3 degrees

Celsius and bouncers

can turn prospective

partygoers away.

Inside, where clubbers let loose on the

dancefloor amid the

deafening sound of

techno and a blinding

laser show, the rules

are not always so

strictly followed.

While masks are ob-

ligatory at the door,

DJs and partygoers

take them off to chat

with friends, dance,

or smoke. Many are

just happy to find

themselves out on the

town after last year's

gruelling quarantine,

imposed to battle what

was then a mysteri-

ous new virus.

—AFP

times in freezing temperatures, with social media users on Friday saying queues for tests were "unending" as residents braved the winter chill to get swabbed.

"I queued for three hours and finally got tested," one user said on China's Twitter-like Weibo platform.

The Xicheng district government said in a social media notice Friday that some of the confirmed cases had been into the area and there was an "increased risk" of infections.

Dongcheng district also put out a notice to say tests would be organised in batches over Friday and Saturday for both residents and workers.

A partial lockdown is already in place in the city's southern Daxing district, where five

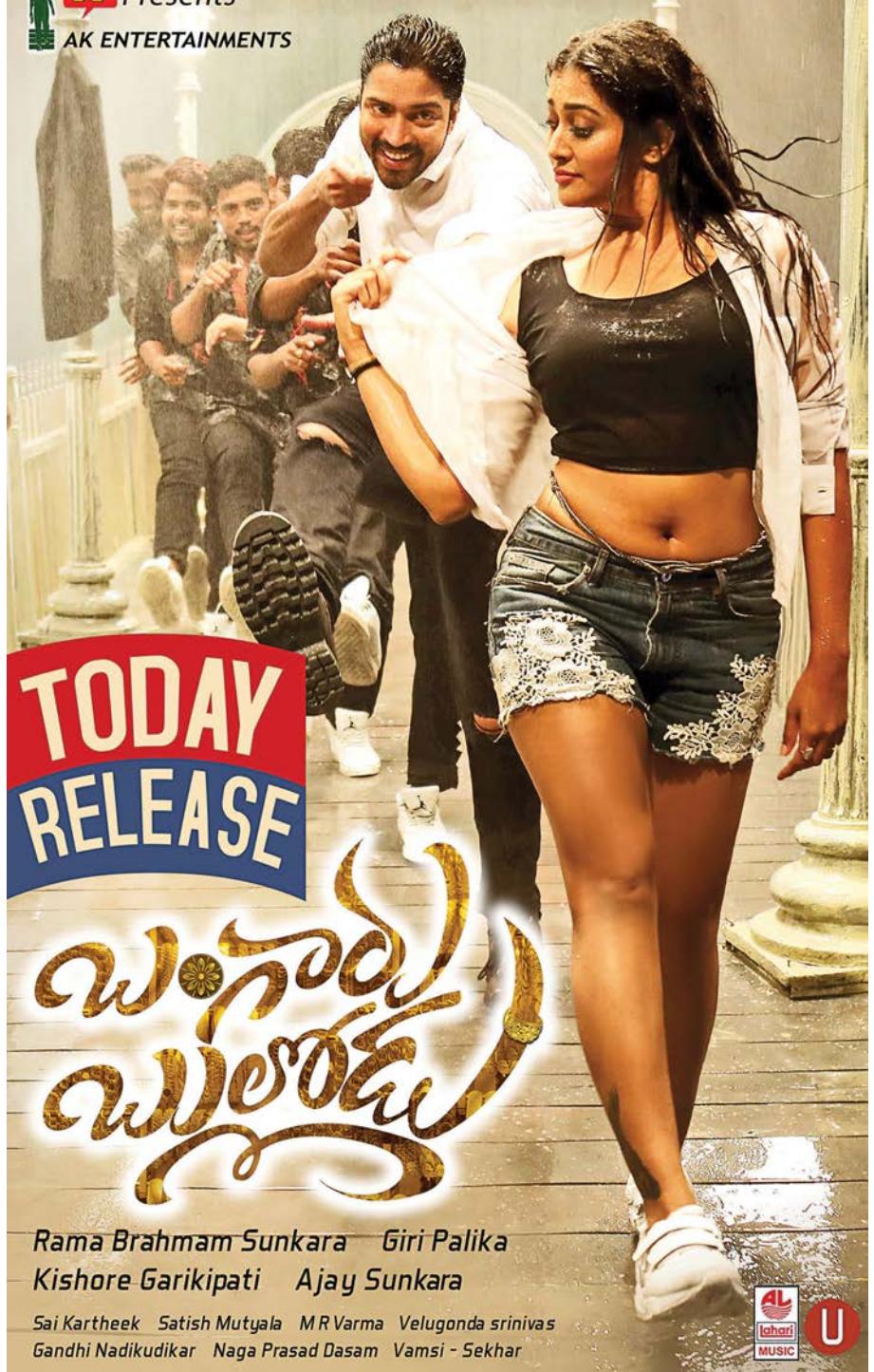
neighbourhoods have been ordered to remain indoors and all 1.6 million residents have been told not to leave the city.

Beijing's rush to test comes as China faces its highest number of cases in nearly a year, after Coronavirus was first detected in the central city of Wuhan in late 2019. Officials have said that some of the cases detected in Beijing are linked to a variant of the deadly pathogen that was first found in the UK and is believed to be more transmissible.

Locals have complained about long wait

times in freezing temperatures, with social media users on Friday saying queues for tests were "unending" as residents braved the winter chill to get swabbed.

Von der Leyen said the commission will make precise recommendations to member states in the coming days. Some 4



Rama Brahmam Sunkara Giri Palika
Kishore Garikapati Ajay Sunkara

Sai Kartheek Satish Mutyala MR Varma Velugonda Srinivas
Gandhi Nadikudikar Naga Prasad Dasam Vamsi - Sekhar

2nd Week	
	BOXOFFICE MASTER
DEVI 70MM 11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00pm	
SHIVAPARVATHY 70MM 11.30am, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45pm	
EESHWAR - Kothapet 11.00am, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
SANGEETA - R.C Puram 11.00am, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
PRASAD MULTIPLEX - Khairtabad 10.30am, 4.30, 10.45pm <small>TAMIL : 4.30pm</small>	
AMB - Gachibowli - 1.25, 3.55, 7.10pm	
TIVOLI - Sec-bad - 1.30pm, 4.15, 10.20pm	
FORUM MALL - Kukatpally I 10.50am, 12.00, 3.55, 7.10, 9.45, 10.45pm	
CENTRAL MALL - Punjagutta 12.00pm, 3.35, 7.10, 10.45pm	
GALLERIA MALL - Punjagutta 11.00am, 2.35, 6.10, 9.45, 10.45pm	
INORBIT MALL - Cyberbad 11.00am, 12.20, 2.35, 6.10, 9.45pm	
MOOSARAMBAGH 12.00pm, 3.35, 7.10, 10.45pm	
IRRUM MANZIL 11.30am, 3.05, 6.40, 10.15pm	
ICON MALL - Hitech City 11.30am, 3.05, 6.40, 10.15pm	
RK - Banjara - 4.40pm, 11.00pm	
MJR SQUARE MALL - Narrapally 1.20pm, 4.20, 7.20, 10.30pm	
CINEPLANET - Komppaly 1.20pm, 7.25, 10.10pm	
CINESQUARE - Uppal 1.25pm, 7.15, 10.30pm	
LAXMIKALA - Mosapet 11.30am, 6.25	
GPR MALL - Kukatpally 4.10, 10.10pm	
M CUBE MALL - Attapur 1.10, 7.20pm	
RADHIKA - Kapra - 4.20pm, 7.40pm	
SHIVA - Dilshuknagar - 6.00pm	
SHA - Chintal - 6.00pm	
GVK MALL - Banjara <small>TAMIL</small> 10.20am, 2.00, 6.00, 10.00pm	
GSM MALL - Miyapur <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30, 2.00, 6.00, 8.30, 10.00pm	
MP MALL - Kachiguda <small>TAMIL</small> 10.50am, 1.40, 6.05, 10.00pm	
MANTRA - Attapur <small>TAMIL</small> 2.10pm, 6.10, 10.10pm	
DSL MALL - Uppal <small>TAMIL</small> 2.20pm, 6.10, 10.10pm	
SUDHA - Shalibanda <small>TAMIL</small> 2.15pm, 6.30, 9.20pm	
CCPL - Malkajgiri <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 6.30, 9.50pm	
Balangar - 11.00am, 2.45, 5.30, 10.45pm	
Chandanagar - 11.45am, 3.30, 6.45pm	
S2 - Mallapur - 11.45, 3.20, 6.55, 10.30pm	
PLATINUM - Mallapur <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 12.30, 4.00, 7.00, 10.00pm	
BVK - Mallapur - 1.40pm, 4.30, 10.45pm	
TALLURI - Ecil X Road - 11.00am, 9.00pm	
Ameerpet - 10.00, 1.00, 3.50, 7.20, 10.40pm	
RANGA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00am & 9.00pm	
PRASHANT 70 <small>TAMIL</small> 2.00pm & 9.00pm	
VIMAL 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15	
VIJETHA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15	
GOKUL 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 2.15pm & 9.00pm	
VENKATARAMANA <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15am & 1.15pm	
SRIKRISHNA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15am & 1.15pm	
SENSATION INSOMNIA <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15am & 1.15pm	
NARTAKI 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30	
RAMAKRISHNA 35 <small>TAMIL</small> 6.00pm & 9.30pm	
SRIDEVI <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15	
SRIDEVI CHANDANAGAR <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15	
SRERAMANA <small>TAMIL</small> 5.45pm & 9.00pm	
VYAJANTI 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
SV CINESQUARE <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
KRISHNAGARAM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00pm	
JYOTHI IDABLIM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
SANTOSHIBPATNAM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
MAHESWARI 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm	
TALLURI 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15, 2.00, 6.15, 9.00pm	
VENKATESWARA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> GUMMADI DHALA	



3rd WEEK	
KRACK	SANKRANTI WINNER
SAPTAGIRI 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM	
BRAMARAMBA 70MM-KUKATPALLY 11.30, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45PM	
RAJADHANI COMP-11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15	
MANJU 70MM- 11.00,6.00,9.00PM	
OAMB 10.45,1.10,4.20, 6.50,10.10PM	11.00,11.45,2.00,5.00 7.45,8.00,11.00PM
10.30,1.35,4.20, 7.25,10.10PM	11.30,2.45,6.30, 9.45PM
TIVOLI 10.40,1.40,4.40, 7.20,10.45PM	10.45,1.35,4.30, 7.20,10.15PM
10.00,1.10,4.20,7.30, 10.40PM	NARAPALLY-10.30, 1.20,4.25,7.35,10.30PM
PVR INBORIT-10.10,2.10,1.50,4.30,5.00,7.40,10.50PM ICON-12.00,1.35,3.10,4.50,6.20,9.30PM FORUM-10.00,10.30,11.00,1.10,1.40,4.20,4.50,5.50,7.30 IRRUMMANZIL-1.00,3.10,4.10,6.20,7.20,8.00,9.30,10.00 MUSARAMBAGH-1.30,3.10,4.50,6.20,7.40,9.30,10.50PM GALLERIA-10.20,11.15,1.30,3.0,4.40,6.00,7.50,8.30,9.20	
RADHIKA-10.40,1.40,7.35,10.40PM GPR-10.15,1.15,7.30,10.45PM UPPAL-10.45,1.20,4.35,7.50,10.20PM MCUBE-10.15,1.20,4.20,7.05,10.20PM	
MIRAJ CINEMAS CHANDANAGAR-12.30,3.45,7.50,10.15,10.30PM BALANAGAR-10.10,1.20,4.35,7.50,9.20,11.00PM SHALINI-10.40,1.50,4.00,5.00,8.10,10.00,11.20PM	
GVK-10.30,11.30,2.05,3.05,5.40,6.40,9.15,10.15 GSM-10.00,11.00,12.35,1.30,2.35,4.00,5.00,6.10,7.25,8.30	
CCPL-10.30,12.00,3.05,3.35,5.40,7.10,10.45PM RADHAKRISHNA 70MM SUDHA-11.00,12.00,3.20,6.00 MANTRA-10.30,12.00,2.05,3.35,5.40,7.10,10.45PM DSL-10.30,12.00,2.05,3.35,5.40,7.10,10.45PM	
INTRA VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHICOMPLEX 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
ANJALI 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
SVC EESHWAR <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
GOKUL 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.45,2.45,6.45,9.45PM	
SREERAMANAcom <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00 & 2.00PM	
VIJETHA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
SAIRANGA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00PM	
SRLATHARCPURAM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
SAMPOORNA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 6.00 & 9.00PM	
SUPER 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
AARADHANA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
METRO 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30,2.30,6.30,9.30PM	
LAXMI SHAMSHABAD <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30,2.30,6.00,9.00PM	
KRISHNAGARAM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.30,2.30,6.00,9.00PM	
JYOTHI IDABLIM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
SANTOSHIBPATNAM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
VYAJANTI 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	
SRINIVASA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15,2.15,6.15,9.15	
SENSATION SUN <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00	
SAIRAM 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15,2.15,6.15,9.15	
RANGA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 2.00, 6.00PM	
SUSHMA 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.15,2.15,6.15,9.15	
GANESH 70MM <small>TAMIL</small> 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00	



Math honour for Indian



Washington, Jan. 22: Nikhil Srivastava, a young Indian mathematician, has been named winner of the prestigious 2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize along with two others for solving long-standing questions on the Kadison-Singer problem, a decades-old problem that asks whether unique information can be gleaned from a system in which only some of the features can be observed or measured, according to the Yale news.

Srivastava from the University of California, Berkeley, Adam Marcus, the Ecole polytechnique federale de Lausanne (EPFL) and Daniel Alan Spielman from Yale University will receive the 2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize, the National Academy of Sciences said in the statement.

The prize consists of a medal and \$1,00,000. Srivastava, Marcus and

Spielman solved long-standing questions on the Kadison-Singer problem and on Ramanujan graphs, and in the process uncovered a deep new connection between linear algebra, geometry of polynomials, and graph theory that has inspired the next generation of theoretical comput-

er scientists, it said.

They published new constructions of Ramanujan graphs, that describe sparse, but highly-connected networks, and a solution to what is known as the Kadison-Singer problem, a decades-old problem that asks whether unique information can be gleaned from a system in which only some of the features can be observed or measured, according to the Yale news.

Srivastava is currently Associate Professor of Mathematics at the University of California. Their groundbreaking papers on the questions, both published in 2015, solved problems that mathematicians had been working on for several decades,

Sciences said. "Their proofs provided new tools to address numerous other problems, which have been embraced by other computer scientists seeking to apply the geometry of polynomials to solve discrete optimisation problems," the academy said.

The Michael and Sheila Held Prize is presented annually and honours outstanding, innovative, creative, and influential research in the areas of combinatorial and discrete optimisation, or related parts of computer science, such as the design and analysis of algorithms and complexity theory. The prize was established in 2017 by the bequest of Michael And Sheila Held.

— PTI

Russia agrees to extend nuke deal

Prez Biden had proposed a five-year extension of the New START treaty

Moscow, Jan. 22:

Aides of jailed Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny faced possible fines and prison time on Friday as police vowed to crack down on opposition protests this weekend.

His allies are planning to hold demonstrations on Saturday in dozens of cities in support of the Kremlin critic, who was arrested and jailed on his return to Russia following a near-fatal poisoning with a nerve agent.

"Attempts to hold unsanctioned public events, as well as any provocative actions on the part of their participants, will be regarded as a threat to public order and immediately suppressed," Moscow police said on Friday.

— AFP

depend on the specifics of the offer.

"We can only welcome the political will to extend this document," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, but warned that "everything depends on the details of this proposal".

The comments from President Vladimir Putin's spokesman came a day after the White House said Washington would work towards a five-year extension.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said efforts to find an agreement were all the more pertinent when "the relationship with Russia is adversarial as it is".

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	48,878.54
Nifty 50	14,371.90
S&P 500*	3,841.19
Dollar (₹)	72.97
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.67
Euro (₹)	88.79
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,861 ▲263
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	55.64
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.939
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.094 -0.013

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Indian Bank Q3 profit more than doubles to ₹514 cr

Indian Bank more than doubled its profit at Rs 514.28 crore in the third quarter against Rs 247.16 crore in the year-ago period. Total income was Rs 11,421.34 crore, up from Rs 6,505.62 crore. The bank's gross NPAs as a percentage of assets rose to 9.04 per cent from 7.20 per cent. The percentage of net NPA was lower at 2.35 per cent as against 3.50 per cent. The bank had made provision of Rs 2,314.35 crore.

Tata Motors raises prices by up to ₹20,000



Tata Motors said it has raised prices of its passenger vehicle (PV) range by up to Rs 20,000 to offset rising input costs and semiconductors. The company joins others like Maruti Suzuki and Mahindra & Mahindra, which have also hiked their vehicles' prices. "Rising input costs and material costs of steel, precious metals and semiconductors have compelled the company to pass on the part of the cost to customers," it said.

GMR Philippines JV executes terminal contract

A joint venture of GMR Airports handed over new terminal building at Clark international airport to the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), Philippines. The 40,000-square metre terminal building at the airport, which is situated between Angeles and Mabalacat cities, was constructed within 24 months by the joint venture of GMR Airports and Megawide Construction Corporation, GMR said.

Ducati launches Scrambler bike range at ₹7.99 L

Italian luxury motorcycle brand Ducati launched the all-new Scrambler bikes in India with the range starting at Rs 7.99 lakh for the Scrambler Icon Dark and going all the way up to Rs 10.99 lakh for the new 1100 Dark Pro at pan-India showroom. With this update all three models, namely, Ducati Scrambler Icon, Ducati Scrambler Icon Dark, and the Ducati Scrambler 1100 Dark Pro are now BS6 norms compliant.

■ Telecom & retail bring 51% earnings Reliance's Q3 net rises 12%



New Delhi, Jan. 22: Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd on Friday reported a better-than-expected 12 per cent rise in December quarter net profit on improving oil-to-chemical business, strong continued momentum in retail and a steady telecom unit Jio.

Consolidated net profit in October-December stood at Rs 13,101 crore, compared to Rs 11,640 crore net earning in the same period a year back, the company said in a statement.

While oil-to-chemical, or O2C, business improved quarter-on-quarter, it was lower than year-ago earnings but this was more than made good by a spurt in consumer-facing businesses of telecom and retail, which now contribute to 51 per cent of earnings as compared to 37 per cent a year back.

About 56 per cent of the pre-tax profit (Ebitda) of Rs 8,483 comes from Jio and Reliance Retail.

Net income was further aided by a 20 per cent year-on-year decline in finance expenses due to cash coming in the digital unit, Jio Platforms and Reliance Retail from Google/financial investors, respectively. Revenue was down 18.6 per cent at Rs 137,829 crore.

Jio, the telecom arm, posted a 15.5 per cent quarter-on-quarter rise in net profit to Rs 3,489 crore as it added over 25 million subscribers and per user income rose to Rs 151 per month. It had 410.8 million

subscribers at the end of December.

The average revenue per user (ARPU) compared with Rs 145 per month in the previous quarter.

A sharp recovery in fashion and lifestyle businesses helping retail get back to pre-Covid level inflow of Rs 220,231 crore helped it turn into a net cash surplus company.

Gross debt fell to Rs 257,413 crore as of December-end when compared to Rs 336,294 crore as of March 2020, while cash at hand rose to Rs 220,524 crore from Rs 175,259 crore. Net debt stood at a negative (-) Rs 2,954 crore.

Commenting on the results, Mukesh Ambani, chairman and managing director, said: "We have delivered strong operational results during the quarter with a robust revival in O2C and retail segments, and a steady growth in our digital services business."

Reliance said it along with its partner BP has started production from the R Cluster, an ultra-deep-water gas field in block KG D6. —PTI

Jio Platforms Ltd—the unit that holds telecom and digital businesses, and Reliance Retail in violation of the regulator's interim directions.

The bank has also been directed to transfer Rs 158.68 crore along with 7 per cent interest per annum into an escrow account till the issue of settlement of clients' securities is reconciled.

The Sebi had found that HDFC Bank on October 14, 2019 invoked the pledge of securities to the extent of Rs 158.68 crore and thereafter, sold most of the securities and appropriated the sale proceeds towards the outstanding under the various credit facilities advanced by the bank to BRH.

The private sector lender had granted credit facilities to BRH and BRH Commodities aggregating to Rs 191.16 crore and Rs 26.61 crore, respectively. —PTI

Sensex drops below 49K on profit taking

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, JAN. 22

The market is speculating about a Covid Tax in the Union Budget.

Global cues were also not favourable. A slowdown in eurozone business activity accelerated in January, making a new recession almost certain as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to batter the economy.

"A double-dip recession for the eurozone economy is looking increasingly inevitable as tighter Covid-19 restrictions took a further toll on businesses in January," said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at IHS Markit, said.

Bajaj Auto and Tata Motors were the biggest gainers in Nifty-50 this week, with up-move of 14 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively.

"We are seeing some kind of profit booking at higher levels as the Sensex touched the psychological mark of 50,000 this week. The persisting rise in (Covid-19) cases has intensified restrictions in parts of Europe, UK and Hong Kong which is impacting global markets," said Rsumik Oza, head of Fundamental Research, Kotak Securities.

IL&FS ADDRESSES ₹32,000-CRORE GROUP DEBT

Mumbai, Jan. 22: Debt-laden Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services group's (IL&FS) board on Friday said it has addressed Rs 32,000 crore of the group's overall debt so far.

The board, led by veteran banker Uday Kotak, retained its target of addressing a debt of over Rs 56,000 crore by 2021-22, of an overall debt of over Rs 99,000 crore (as of October 2018).

"The aggregate debt of Rs 32,000 addressed comprises about Rs 21,600 crore of debt addressed basis cash balances," the group said in a release.

It said nearly Rs 10,300 crore more of net recovery is expected from other resolution and restructuring applications. —PTI

INDIGO PAINTS IPO SUBSCRIBED OVER 117 TIMES



RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, JAN. 22

Indigo Paints IPO subscription stood at more than 117 times on the final day of the public bidding process.

As per the last update, the public offer was subscribed 189.57 times by the qualified institutional buyers, 263.05 times by non-institutional or high net worth investors and 15.93 times by retail individual investors.

Indigo Paints' Rs 1,170 crore public issue was priced at Rs 1,488 to Rs 1,494 per equity share of Rs 10 face value.

Sequoia Capital-backed Indigo Paints raised Rs 348 crore from 25 anchor investors on January 19.

The Pune-based firm manufactures a range of decorative paints and has an extensive distribution network across India.

A living wage is defined as the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet his or her basic needs and is higher than the normal wage



one, he added.

"We believe the actions we are committing will make Unilever a better, stronger business; ready for the huge societal changes we are experiencing today—changes that will only accelerate.

Without a healthy society, there cannot be a healthy business," Jope said.

A living wage is defined as the minimum income

for every

HDFC Bank shares slip after Sebi slaps ₹1 cr fine

New Delhi, Jan. 22: Shares of HDFC Bank on Friday fell over 2 per cent after Sebi imposed a penalty of Rs 1 crore for invoking securities pledged by stock broker BRH Wealth Kreators in violation of the regulator's interim directions.

On the BSE, shares of the private lender ended at Rs 1,443.65 apiece, falling 2.05 per cent over the previous close. Intraday, it had hit a low of Rs 1,440.7.

On Thursday, Sebi imposed a penalty of Rs 1 crore on HDFC Bank for invoking securities pledged by BRH Wealth Kreators in violation of the regulator's interim directions.

The bank has also been directed to transfer Rs 158.68 crore along with 7 per cent interest per annum into an escrow account till the issue of settlement of clients' securities is reconciled.

The Sebi had found that HDFC Bank on October 14, 2019 invoked the pledge of securities to the extent of Rs 158.68 crore and thereafter, sold most of the securities and appropriated the sale proceeds towards the outstanding under the various credit facilities advanced by the bank to BRH.

The private sector lender had granted credit facilities to BRH and BRH Commodities aggregating to Rs 191.16 crore and Rs 26.61 crore, respectively. —PTI

No let up seen in iron ore exports

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JAN. 22

Amidst the border stand-off, China has been buying up iron ore from India, pushing up local prices that has thrown user industries, especially micro, small and medium-sized industries, into an existential crisis. While China's imports of Indian iron ore nearly doubled in 2020, ore prices have more than doubled in India since June, leading to a steep rise in steel prices.

Steel producers have been lobbying for a six-month ban on iron ore exports to cool prices.

Despite a production shortage, iron ore exports have shot up by 62 per cent and are expected to touch a new peak in FY21.

As per data from the Ministry of Commerce, iron ore and pellet exports rose 66 per cent in volume terms between April and October. At 33.4 million tonnes till October, it is already close to last fiscal's exports of 36.6 million tonnes. The current run rate, iron ore and pellet exports could surpass the FY12 peak of 47.2 million tonnes.

The exports have been triggered by a rally in seaborne iron ore prices by 45 per cent since April. China has been the largest buyer of Indian iron ore. The exports to China rose 88 per cent to 44.8 million tonnes in calendar year 2020.

At the same time India has been facing a production shortage. Icra estimates domestic iron ore deficit to be 55 million tonnes in FY21. Of the 18 auctioned blocks, which had contributed 53 per cent to Odisha's overall iron ore production in FY20, only seven have started production, leading to the shortage. Ore supply shortage is likely to persist in the near term until new miners ramp-up production.

The shortage of ore has



JSW STEEL NET JUMPS MANIFOLD

New Delhi, Jan. 22: JSW Steel on Friday reported a manifold jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 2,669 crore for the December 2020 quarter.

The steel-maker had clocked a net profit of Rs 187 crore in the year-ago quarter.

Its total consolidated income during October-December 2020 rose to Rs 22,006 crore, compared

with Rs 18,182 crore in the year-ago period.

The company's total consolidated expenses stood at Rs 18,120 crore, higher as against Rs 17,719 crore a year ago.

On a standalone basis, the firm registered a net profit of Rs 2,629 crore, against Rs 691 crore in the year-ago quarter. Its standalone income was at Rs 19,408 crore, compared with Rs 15,902

seen prices rallying by 140 per cent in Odisha since June-end and the prices have rallied 100 per cent in Chhattisgarh as well.

The rising iron ore prices combined with shortage saw steel prices going up by 55 per cent to Rs 58,000 a tonne in January against the year-ago month. This has affected the downstream industries. The rising steel prices coupled with the pandemic impact on global trade saw engineering exports fall 13.24 per cent for the April-November period.

CRYPTOS WON'T WORK AS ACTUAL CURRENCIES: UBS



MARK CRANFIELD
JAN. 22

Cryptocurrencies may never be able to work as actual currencies, according to UBS Global Wealth Management.

The "fundamental flaw" inherent in cryptocurrencies is that supply can't be reduced when demand is stalling in most cases, Paul Donovan, chief economist at UBS GWM, said in a video this week. That means they can't be considered currencies, he said.

According to the official, such a move will help in bringing in the best international practices in the field of CSR and capacity building. —PTI

"People are unlikely to want to use something as a currency if they've got absolutely no certainty about what they can buy with that tomorrow," Donovan said in the video.

Cryptocurrency futures are listed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange alongside contracts for most major currencies, but the difference in daily trading volumes suggest that some investors haven't yet embraced the crypto as a fully fledged currency. Amid the 11 per cent price plunge for Bitcoin on Thursday transactions for the January futures were just above 13,000, while there were around six times as many for Japanese yen futures.

— Bloomberg

Climate change, social inequality seen as biggest global threat

Unilever for living wage across value chain

A living wage is defined as the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet his or her basic needs and is higher than the normal wage



one, he added.

"We believe the actions we are committing will make Unilever a better, stronger business; ready for the huge societal changes we are experiencing today—changes that will only accelerate.

Without a healthy society, there cannot be a healthy business," Jope said.

A living wage is defined as the minimum income

necessary for a worker to meet his or her basic needs and is higher than the normal wage. It allows workers to participate fully in their communities and help them break the cycle of poverty.

Under living wage, people can afford a decent standard of living, covering a family's basic needs—food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transportation, clothing; and includes a provision for unexpected events.

"Our ambition is to improve living standards for low-paid workers worldwide. We will therefore ensure everyone who directly provides

SHORT TAKES

Trials for cross country meet

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad District Athletics Association is conducting district cross country selection trials-cum-meet for boys and girls in the Under 16, 18, 20, men and women's sections at the Nizam College ground at 6.30 am on Monday. The Hyderabad district team for the 7th Telangana State Cross Country Championship to be held at Yadadri, Bhongiri, on January 31 will be picked at the meet.

Following are the categories: Men: 10km, Women: 10km, U-20 boys: 8km, U-20 girls: 6km, U-18 boys: 6km, U-18 girls: 4km, U-16 boys: 2km, U-16 girls: 2km. Athletes should report K. M. Chisty at the venue.

MEDCAL SELECTIONS ALSO ON MONDAY

The Medcal District Athletics Association is also conducting selection trials on Monday, at MLR Institute of Technology in Dindigul from 8 am onwards to pick the district team in the following categories: Men: 10km, Women: 10km, U-20 boys: 8km, U-20 girls: 6km, U-18 boys: 6km, U-18 girls: 4km, U-16 boys: 2km, U-16 girls: 2km. Athletes should report to Rajasekhar (9849612733) or Y. Sivasankar (9493980144).

Women's hockey side hold Chile

Santiago: A resilient Indian junior women's hockey team came from behind twice to hold Chile senior side to a 2-2 draw in its fourth match of the tour here. Deepika (40th minute) and Gagandeep Kaur (55th) led India's fight back after Chile had taken the lead twice through goals from Mariana del Jesus Lagos (21st) and Fernanda Villagrán (51st) at the Prince of Wales Country Club. With three wins from as many games in the tour, the Indian team started the match brightly as they tried to penetrate Chile's defence, but could not find a clear opportunity inside the first 15 minutes. Chile, on the other hand, relied on counter attacks with their tactic paying off in the second quarter.

It was in the 21st minute that Chile's Mariana del Jesus Lagos found herself with enough time and space in front of the Indian goal to get her shot and give her side the lead in the match. India were quick to fight back and tried to take control the proceedings but came up against some resolute defending from the hosts who maintained their one goal advantage at half time.

— PTI

LeBron reigns as Lakers stop Bucks

Los Angeles: LeBron James scored a season-high 34 points as the Los Angeles Lakers won their eighth straight road game with a 113-105 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Thursday.

The victory opened a seven-game road trip for the NBA champion Lakers, who are hoping this is the beginning of another run of victories. They had a five-game winning streak snapped in their most recent outing, a 113-115 loss to Golden State. James made a key three pointer and capped his night with an emphatic double clutch slam dunk as the Lakers improved to a NBA best 12-4 on the season after Thursday's gritty performance at the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope had 23 points and Davis finished with 18 points and nine rebounds in the win. Caldwell-Pope sank seven-of-10 threes as the Lakers went 19-of-37 from Elsewhere. R.J. Barrett recorded a career best with 28 points, and the New York Knicks used a 40-point first quarter to build a lead they relinquished only momentarily in a 119-104 victory over the Golden State Warriors. Stephen Curry scored 30 points for the Warriors. — AFP

Live on TV

BADMINTON
Thailand Open: Semifinal matches from 9.30 am on Star Sports 2 HD, 3

CRICKET
Big Bash League: Melbourne Renegades vs Brisbane Heat from 10.35 am; Melbourne Stars vs Perth Scorchers from 1.45 pm on Sony Six, HD

FOOTBALL
Indian Super League: Kerala Blasters vs Goa from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3
Italian League: Roma vs Spezia from 7.30 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD
English Premier League: Aston Villa vs Newcastle from 1.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 1



Ashley Barnes (right) of Burnley shoots from an offside position during the English Premier League match against Liverpool at Anfield in Liverpool on Thursday. Burnley carved out a 1-0 victory.

— AFP

Burnley ace Reds

Ashley halts Liverpool's unbeaten home run

Liverpool, Jan. 22: Jürgen Klopp took responsibility for the sudden collapse of Liverpool's Premier League title defence after their 68-game unbeaten run in the Premier League at Anfield came to a stunning end in a 1-0 defeat by Burnley on Thursday.

The Claretts began the game just one place above the relegation zone, but gave their chances of beating the drop a huge boost when Ashley Barnes was tripped by Alisson Becker seven minutes from time and then beat the Brazilian from the penalty spot. Klopp's men

have now failed to win in five consecutive league games to slip to fourth in the table, six points behind Red Devils.

Liverpool had not tasted a league defeat at Anfield since April 2017.

Since then the Reds have ended a 30-year wait to win a league title, but their chances of repeating that feat are fading rapidly after a disastrous run over the past month.

"We lost the game, which I think is pretty impossible to lose, but we did it," said Klopp.

"That is my fault because it is my job so that the boys have the right

feelings, like they have the right amount of confidence, like they have the right amount of confidence.

— JÜRGEN KLOPP
Liverpool manager

late. Despite having 72 efforts on goal, the Reds have now failed to score in four consecutive league games.

Klopp reacted to Liverpool's longest Premier League goal drought for 16 years by dropping Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino to the bench.

But Divock Origi underlined why the champions

feelings, like they have the right amount of confidence, he added.

The champions have been disrupted by a host of defensive injuries, but it has been scoring goals that has cost Liverpool

number of important goals in big games for Liverpool, most notably netting twice in a 4-0 Champions League semi-final win over Barcelona two seasons ago. But Origi has scored just one league goal since December 2019.

Salah and Firmino were introduced to partner Mane early in the second half, but Burnley held out despite Reds pressure.

Pope saved brilliantly from Salah at his near post before Firmino showed why he has struggled for goals all season by slicing horribly wide from Andy Robertson's inviting cut-back.

— AFP

Barca toil hard to pip Cornellà

Madrid, Jan. 22: Barcelona needed extra-time goals from Ousmane Dembele and Martin Braithwaite to end the cup run of third-division side Cornellà and reach the Copa del Rey last 16 with a 2-0 win on Thursday.

Barca missed two penalties, Miralem Pjanic and then Dembele both guilty from the spot, but Dembele made amends by scoring early in extra time, before Luis Suárez saw the La Liga leaders come from behind to win 2-1 at Ipurua.

Dimitrovic drove an early spot-kick past fellow goalkeeper Jan Oblak, only for Suárez to inspire the comeback, his second also a penalty which he earned himself and then converted in the 89th minute.

Another late victory for Atletico means they pull seven points clear of second-placed Real Madrid, and 10 ahead of third-placed Barcelona. — AFP

ATLETICO DOWN EIBAR

Eibar goalkeeper Marko Dmitrovic scored a penalty against Atletico Madrid on Thursday but a brace from Luis Suárez saw the La Liga leaders come from behind to win 2-1 at Ipurua.

With Messi suspended, a rotated line-up laboured to victory after a third consecutive extra-time in eight days.

Pjanic missed the first penalty in the 39th minute after Ronald Araújo went down under a high foot from Albert Estelles, Cornellà's goalkeeper Ramon Juan diving low to his right. Cornellà, who beat Atletico Madrid in the

previous round, saw their resistance last only two minutes into extra time as the power of Dembele's shot from distance was too much for the keeper, who could only divert the ball in off the crossbar.



Antoine Griezmann (left) of Barcelona vies for the ball with Cornellà's Agus Medina during their Spanish Copa del Rey Round of 32 match at the Nou Municipal stadium in Cornellà, Spain, on Thursday. Barca won 2-0.

— AP

Pratheek, Titas, Amit are best performers

Nayeem, Manish, Dheeraj, Anurag and Pranav too do well in cricket league; Charan falls on 98

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

A. Pratheek Reddy scored a century in the Hyderabad Cricket Association's A-1 division league while a host of performers punched big in the second tier of the competition in matches played at various grounds on Friday.

Pratheek hit 116 in 89 balls with the help of nine fours and a six to guide Sporting XI to 301 for 9 in the second innings but could not save his side from going down to EMCC in a three-day match.

In the A-2 division two-day games, G. Titas of Venus Cybertech came out on top. The fast bowler snared seven wickets while conceding 52 runs but, like Pratheek, could not prevent his side from being beaten as Cheerful Chums scampered through with just one wicket in hand.

In another match, Amit Kumar ran through the Sunshine line-up to return with figures of 6 for 17 to bowl Eklavya to a 127-run victory.

Mohammed Nayeemuddin was the next best on show. The Vijaypuri Willowmen bowler took 5 for 14 to choke Hyderabad Cricket Academy by 158 runs.

D. Manish too shone with the ball. The leg-spinner took 5 for 54 as Ours beat HUCC by 190 runs.



G. Titas



Amit Kumar



D. Manish



Hussain Ali



Ram Pranav

Points: EMCC 6, Sporting O.

A-2 DIVISION (TWO-DAY)

Day-3:

Sporting XI 189 in 51.0 overs & 301/9 in

40 overs (Rakesh Yadav 71, A. Pratheek

Reddy 116 — 89b, 9x4, 1x6) lost to EMCC

277 in 87.3 overs & 221/6 in 36.2 overs

(Aman Rao P 43, B. Anirudh 36, Mohul

Bhowmick 48 n.o., G. Lokesh 45 n.o.).

New ball bowler Hussain Ali of

National CC also took 5/54 in his side's

thumping nine-wicket win over Crown

CC.

The match between National and

Crown had a handful of performers.

Even as National's Hussain took a five-

for-one down batsman Anurag Pandey

hit 110 in 153 balls with the help of 17

fours and a six to guide Crown to 228.

Chasing, National got off to a rousing

start with openers Ram Pranav and

Charan in full flow. Pranav hit an

unbeaten 102 in 159 balls that included

15 boundaries. However, his opening

partner Charan was unfortunate to

miss the coveted three-figure mark by

two runs as he fell leg before wicket on

98 after hitting 18 fours in his 152-ball

knock.

G. Dheeraj of Rakesh XI hit 139

which included 32 boundaries but

could not help his side from going

down to HBCC by six runs.

Brief scores:

A-1 DIVISION (THREE-DAY)

Group-A

Sporting XI 189 in 51.0 overs & 301/9 in

40 overs (Rakesh Yadav 71, A. Pratheek

Reddy 116 — 89b, 9x4, 1x6) lost to EMCC

277 in 87.3 overs & 221/6 in 36.2 overs

(Aman Rao P 43, B. Anirudh 36, Mohul

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Chasing, National got off to a rousing

start with openers Ram Pranav and

Charan in full flow. Pranav hit an

unbeaten 102 in 159 balls that included

15 boundaries. However, his opening

SHORT TAKES

Vaccination may jeopardise Oly

Tokyo: Japan is publicly adamant that it will stage its postponed Olympics this summer. But to pull it off, many believe the vaccination of its 127 million citizens for the coronavirus is key. It's an immense undertaking in the best of circumstances and complicated now by an overly cautious decision-making process, bureaucratic roadblocks and a public that has long been deeply wary of vaccines. Japan hopes to start Covid-19 vaccinations in late February, but uncertainty is growing that a nation ranked among the world's lowest in vaccine confidence can pull off the massive, \$14 billion project in time for the games in July, casting doubt on whether the Tokyo Olympics can happen. Japan has secured vaccines for all its citizens, and then some, after striking deals with three foreign pharmaceutical makers Pfizer Inc., AstraZeneca and Moderna Inc. — AP

Spanish player tests +ve in Oz

Melbourne: A Spanish tennis player ranked in the top 70 who was forced to quarantine in her hotel room after potentially being exposed to the coronavirus on an Australian Open charter flight says she tested positive for Covid-19. Paula Badosa wrote on Thursday on Twitter that she received her test result for the illness caused by the coronavirus on the seventh day of her hard quarantine. "I have some bad news. Today I received a positive Covid-19 test result. I'm feeling unwell and have some symptoms, but I'll try to recover as soon as possible listening to the doctors," Badosa said. — AP

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MIXED FEELING

Big gun Sindhu exits but mixed pair Satwik-Ashwin enters semis

Bangkok, Jan. 22: Error-prone P. V. Sindhu suffered a demoralising defeat in the quarterfinals while Sameer Verma's gallant fight too ended in agony at the Thailand Open here on Friday.

However, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy claimed twin wins in mixed and men's doubles quarterfinals along with Ashwini Ponnappa and Chirag Shetty to keep India's flag fluttering at the badminton World Tour Super 1000 tournament here.

Sindhu looked a pale shadow of the player who had won the world championship gold in 2019 as she committed too many unforced errors to go down 13-21, 9-21 against home favourite Ratchanok Inthanon.

"I made a lot of unforced errors and I think that I gave away easy points. I didn't play my best today. It wasn't my day," a crest-fallen Sindhu said.

In men's singles, Sameer's giant-killing run also came to an end after he squandered a match point to go down 13-21, 21-19, 20-22 to world no. 3 Anders Antonsen of Denmark in a quarterfinal contest.

With the defeat of Sindhu and Sameer, Indian challenge in singles competition ended in the tournament.

The doubles players, however, gave fans something to cheer as Satwik and Ashwini upstaged world no. 6 pair of Peng Soon Chan and Liu Ying Goh of Malaysia 18-21, 24-22, 22-20 after toiling hard for one hour and 15 minutes.

"We have played them three times. We have won twice and lost once. We were confident. We knew our main strength would be our attack. They were



India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (right) goes for a shot next to teammate Ashwini Ponnappa during their mixed doubles quarterfinal match against Indonesia's Chan Peng Soon and Goh Liu Ying at the Thailand Open badminton tournament in Bangkok on Friday.

— Badminton Association of Thailand / AFP

● **Olympic silver medallist P. V. Sindhu was a pale shadow of herself and was outclassed by Malaysia's World No. 92 Kisona Selva-duray 21-10, 21-12 in the women's singles second round of the Thailand Open.**

● **The Indian men's doubles and mixed doubles pairs are in the semifinal of a Super Series. The mixed doubles pair has gone into the last 4 for the first time. The men's pair are on course to defend their win from last year.**

under pressure. We kept fighting. We had our chances and never messed up," Satwik said.

Later in the day, Satwik and Chirag saw off another Malaysian pair of Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi 21-18, 24-22 in 37 minutes.

The Indian men's doubles and mixed doubles pairs are in the semifinal of a Super Series. The mixed doubles pair has

very first time and the men's doubles are on course to defend their sensational win from last year.

Earlier, Sindhu looked awfully out of form as she was all at sea against Ratchanok, a former world champion.

"Some of my lifts were going out and going out of control. I was hitting with so much power sometimes. I should have con-

trolled things a lot more. If I had won the first game, I think things would have been comparatively different," she said.

MARIN BREEZES INTO SEMIFINALS

Spanish fifth seed and former world number one Carolina Marin sailed through to the semi-finals, beating Turkey's Neslihan Yigit 21-6, 21-15.

Marin is aiming for

back-to-back titles in this week's tournament — the second of three consecutive events in Bangkok that culminate in next week's World Tour Finals.

She came out on top last week against top-seeded Tai Tzu-ying, and continued her winning streak on Friday — despite Yigit holding a brief lead in the second set.

World No. 6 Marin will be facing off in the semi-finals against South Korean An Se-young, a formidable teenager who was awarded "Most Promising Player" in 2019.

They already duelled in last week's tournament, with the more experienced Marin winning 21-18, 21-16.

— Agencies

Deepak storms out, suspended

Vadodara, Jan. 22: The Baroda Cricket Association (BCA) has suspended senior player Deepak Hooda, who had stormed out of the camp before the start of Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy for this domestic season for "indiscipline" and "bringing disrespect to the game."

Hooda had walked out of the team on the eve of domestic T20 tournament after a spat with captain Krunal Pandya. He had alleged "misbehaviour" on the part of Pandya.

"He (Hooda) has been suspended for this season for indiscipline and bringing disrespect to the BCA and the game. Without informing the team and the BCA, he left the team and the (bio) bubble," BCA secretary Ajit Lele told PTI on Friday.

The decision to suspend Hooda was taken during the Apex Council meeting of the BCA which was held on Thursday evening.

Hooda, who was initially appointed as Baroda's vice-captain for Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, had stormed out of the bio-bubble on January 9. He had alleged "misbehaviour" on the part of Pandya in an e-mail sent to BCA.

"At this moment, I am demoralised, depressed and under pressure," Hooda, who has played 46 first-class matches, wrote



From last some days, my team captain Mr Krunal Pandya is using abusing language to me in front of my teammates and also other State teams.

— DEEPAK HOODA
justifies leaving Baroda camp at the T20 tourney

in the e-mail.

"As from last some days, my team captain Mr Krunal Pandya is using abusing language to me in front of my teammates and also other state teams who have come for participation at Reliance Stadium Vadodara."

Following Hooda's letter, the BCA had sought the manager's report. — PTI

INDIA-ENG CHENNAI TESTS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Chennai, Jan. 22: The first two Tests of the upcoming India-England series will be played at the MA Chidambaram Stadium behind closed doors, a top official from Tamil Nadu Cricket Association said on Friday. According to the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association secretary R. S. Ramasaamy, the two Tests (from February 5 to 9 and 13 to 17 respectively) would be played without spectators as per a BCCI directive, considering the prevailing Covid-19 situation.

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