

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
RAJAHMUNDRY | THURSDAY | 13 AUGUST 2020



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**Rajapaksa family dominates Lanka Cabinet**



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## WEATHER

**Max:** 28.0°C  
**Min:** 24.0°C  
**RH:** 71%  
**Rainfall:** 4.3 mm  
**Forecast:** Possible Light Rain and Humid.  
Max/Min temp. 28/24 °C

## COVID-19 CUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+69,712)	(+945)
23,94,738	47,130

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,897)	(+9)
<b>TS: 84,544</b>	<b>654</b>
(+9,597)	(+93)
<b>AP: 2,54,146</b>	<b>2,296</b>

### CASES AROUND THE WORLD

**2,06,45,578**

**DEATHS**  
**7,48,581**

**COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES**  
**213**

worldometers.info/coronavirus

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana  
**Titthi:** Shravana Bahula Navami till 12.54 pm  
**Star:** Rohini till 5.21 am (Friday)  
**Variyam:** 8.42 pm to 10.26 pm  
**Durmuhurtam:** 10.15 pm to 11.05 pm; 3.18 pm to 4.08 pm  
**Rahukalam:** 1.30 pm To 3 pm  
**HJRI CALENDAR**  
**Zulhijja** 22,1441 AH  
**PRAYERS (ROYAL MOSQUE)**  
**Fajar:** 5.15 am  
**Zohar:** 1.30 pm  
**Asar:** 5.00 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.38 pm  
**Isha:** 8.30 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY 6.29 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.46 AM**  
**MOONSET TOMORROW 2.25 AM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 2.25 PM**

## COUNTER POINT



Those are all free phones from BSNL for MPs!

## IN BRIEF

### IAF objects to online movie

**New Delhi:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) has written a letter to the Censor Board objecting to its “undue negative” portrayal in the movie *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl*, said a senior official. The movie was released on streaming platform Netflix on Wednesday. According to the official, the letter mentions “concerns related to the movie’s portrayal of gender bias as an institutional work culture” at the Indian Air Force. The movie is based on the life of IAF officer Gunjan Saxena who became the first woman pilot to take part in the 1999 Kargil war.

### Transparent tax platform on anvil

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday will launch a platform ‘Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest’, which, he said will strengthen efforts of “reforming and simplifying our tax system”. At 11 am on Thursday, Mr Modi said he will unveil the next phase of direct tax reforms aimed at easing compliance and rewarding honest taxpayers as the government looks to rebuild the pandemic-hit economy.

### US ELECTIONS

## Biden picks Harris as his running mate

### First woman of colour to get major party ticket

**Washington, Aug. 12:** Democratic US Presidential candidate Joe Biden has picked Senator Kamala Devi Harris as his running mate to woo the Black voters and the influential Indian diaspora who could play a key role in his bid to defeat Donald Trump in the presidential election.

By naming the 55-year-old lawyer and moderate Democratic politician from California as his vice presidential candidate in the November 3 election, Biden made history by selecting the first Black woman to compete on a major party’s presidential ticket. Harris, whose father is from Jamaica and mother an Indian, is currently the Senator from California. The 77-year-old former vice-president, made the announce-



● Joe Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris would make a first appearance together at a fund-raising event in Delaware

ment in a text message to his supporters on Tuesday, ending days of suspense. It came about a week ahead of his virtual Democratic National Convention that would

formally nominate Biden as the party’s candidate for the presidential election, challenging incumbent President Trump, a Republican. “Joe Biden here. I’ve chosen Kamala Harris as my running mate. Together, with you, we’re going to beat Trump. Add your name to welcome her to the team,” Biden said in his message. Biden said Harris will be the best partner for him to finally get the country back on track. He described her as “a fearless fighter” and “one of the country’s finest public servants”.

Harris later tweeted that Biden “can unify the American people because he’s spent his life fighting for us. And as president, he’ll build an America that lives up to our ideals.” —PTI

## CM rolls out YSR Cheyutha for 23 lakh women in state

### DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12

Chief Minister Y.S. Jaganmohan Reddy on Wednesday launched another welfare scheme ‘YSR Cheyutha’, which will benefit 23 lakh women, aged between 45 and 60 years, belonging to SC, ST, BC and minorities. Each woman in this category will get an annual financial benefit of ₹18,750 for four years to aid them in their economic empowerment. Over the four years, each woman will get a total of ₹75,000. The financial burden on the budget would be ₹4,687 crore.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that he received complaints from women during his padayatra about the lack of government schemes aimed at them.

“It is a good fortune for him to launch YSR Cheyutha scheme to benefit such a large number of women in the state. It opens up opportunities for women to take up entrepreneurship as per their convenience. We have assured in our manifesto that we will come to the rescue of such women by providing them a financial incentive and it has become a reality today with the launch of the scheme and the amount credited directly into their bank accounts,” Mr Reddy said.

## State’s house sites distribution put off

### DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12

The much-awaited distribution of house sites to people belonging to weaker sections, which was scheduled to be held on August 15, has been deferred again. Source said the distribution may take place on October 2 to mark Gandhi Jayanthi.

The state government blamed the delay on cases filed in court alleging irregularities in land

acquisition by the ruling party leader.

The government had initially planned to distribute house sites on Ugadi. However, it was deferred to Ambedkar’s birth anniversary. Later, it was again postponed to former chief minister united AP Y.S. Rajasehkar Reddy’s birth anniversary on July 8. When it did not materialise on July 8, it was postponed to August 15. Now it has been shifted to October 2.

He said, “The beneficiaries are having freedom on how they intend to spend the money.”

If anyone wants to invest money in productive purposes, the Chief Minister said village volunteers will come to their house and get their consent and the government will provide them with a business model to pursue economic empowerment.”

The CM said that the state government had signed MoUs with ITC, Proctor and Gamble, HUL, Amul and Reliance and also banks. This partnership could help women to start small or medium business units.

He said that Amul Cooperative will help the women in setting up dairy industrial units while Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty and Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas would also coordinate in helping women to set up units.

Despite facing financial constraints, Mr Reddy said the state government was committed to empowering the women economically.

Unlike earlier practice, the Chief Minister said those women who were in last lap of the age group would get YSR Pension Kanika.

### BLACK MARKET

## Doctors convince patient to pay three times more for the drug Remdesivir gets sold for ₹1L in black

### DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12

With antiviral drug remdesivir emerging as a life-saving drug for some critically-ill Covid-19 patients, the price of the drug has skyrocketed to ₹1 lakh for a set of six vials in some hospitals in Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and other parts in AP.

The demand for remdesivir has increased after some critically ill patients have seen a good recovery after they were administered this drug.

In an attempt to cash in on the demand, a section of private doctors have started sourcing the drug — which was facing shortage — from their sources and

● Some people are learnt to be purchasing remdesivir injections even at a high cost and storing them in their refrigerators

● People are advised to complain to the Drugs Control Administration at WhatsApp number 08632330909 and also through email ID: dca-grams@ap.gov.in

have been charging the patients Rs 1 lakh as against the actual price of Rs 32,400.

Sources said the private doctors are convincing the patients to pay more than its label price by saying that the drug is not available. The price in the hospital invoice, however, will be as per the MRP to avoid action by law enforcing authorities.

In some cases, the family

members of the patients themselves are demanding the doctors use Remdesivir to help save their family member’s life.

In state-run hospitals and government-permitted private hospitals, however, the government is supplying the drug at free of cost based on the requirement as data of all patients and their health condition is available online.

If the allotted quota of

remdesivir vials gets exhausted, especially in government permitted private hospitals, doctors advise family members to source the drug themselves if their family member is critically ill. In such cases also, the family members have to buy the drug in the black market by paying an exorbitant price.

Officials, however, claim that they are keeping a close tab on supply and demand of emergency drugs, including remdesivir, on a daily basis and claim that 4,000 to 4,200 sets of six vials of remdesivir injection are arriving in the state per day against the actual consumption of 3,000 to 3,200 per day in the state.

In addition to two pharma companies who are manufacturing and supplying the injection, they said a few more companies would be producing the drug to avoid any short supply in the state.

Drugs Control administration assistant director (Vijayawada) K. Raja Bhanu said, “We appeal to the people to alert us in case of any grievances regarding quality, availability and prices of medicines so that we can initiate necessary action against the culprits. We are also keeping a close tab on the availability and prices of medicines to avoid any diversion to the black market and sell them at a high price.”

## E Godavari health officials cash in on Covid patients

### SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12

The Covid-19 worries notwithstanding, several people are trying to earn a fast buck on its name, including government officials, especially in East Godavari district.

The state government has been encouraging Covid-19 positive people with relatively less viral load to go for home quarantine provided they have a separate room attached with a washroom.

Towards this, it has started distribution of ‘Covid-Home Quarantine Kit’ comprising a pulse oximeter, first-aid medicines, sanitiser, hypochlorite 5% solution, liquid soap, surgical masks, tissues, disposable gloves,

● Though all medicines and other materials in the kit are being supplied by the government, district officials are selling locally made rexine kit bags at 10 times higher price

disposable bags and others to patients recommended for home quarantine by health authorities.

Though all medicines and other materials in the kit are being supplied by the state government, district health authorities are procuring kit bags made of rexine locally and are charging ₹1,200-₹1,300 for each bag, though it costs about ₹150-₹200.

Health authorities distributed such kit bags to nearly 1,000 patients. Subsequently, with many

people opting for home quarantine, pulse oximeters are not being given to patients and kit bags are replaced with polythene covers.

However, the district health authorities have come up with bills towards procurement of the Covid-home quarantine kits for nearly ₹34 lakh.

Health personnel privy to such development in the department say that even if 1,000 kit bags were distributed with each one costing ₹200, the total cost of procurement would be just ₹2 lakh and not ₹34 lakh.

Health personnel appealed to the district administration to order an inquiry into the excessive billing and punish the culprits for cheating gullible Covid-hit people.

### VINAY MADHAVA GOWDA | DC with agency inputs Bengaluru, Aug. 12

At least three people were killed after police opened fire to quell a mob that went on a rampage at Kadugondanahalli area in Bengaluru North, irked over a Facebook post allegedly put out by a Congress MLA’s relative.

“Three people have died (in police firing),” Bengaluru police commissioner Kamal Pant said.

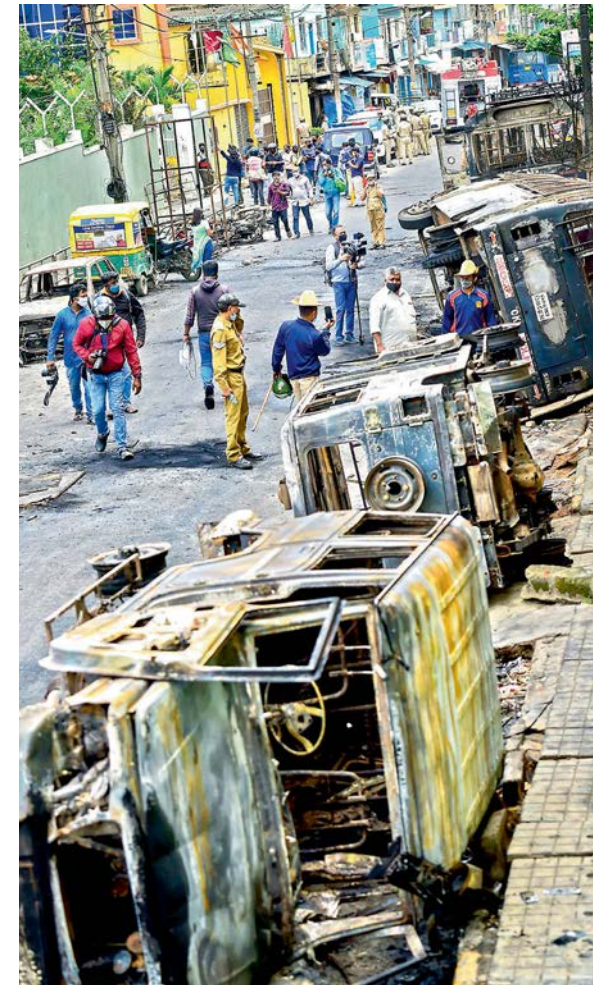
Further, 110 people have been arrested in connection with the incident at Pulakeshi Nagar here.

Scores of persons, including around 50 policemen, were injured in the violence that erupted on Tuesday night and continued till the wee hours of Wednesday, apparently prompted by the ‘communally sensitive’ online post.

The Congress MLA’s home and a police station were among those targeted by the angry mob, prompting the government to issue a stern warning that rioting and law and order issues will not be tolerated. Mr Pant said Naveen, who allegedly posted the Facebook post was arrested and appealed for peace.

Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa said the “attack on the residence of MLA Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy and the DJ Halli police station and riot are condemnable.”

“Already given directions to initiate stringent



Charred remains of vehicles vandalised by a mob over a social media post, allegedly by a relative of a Congress MLA, in Bengaluru, on Wednesday.

— PTI

action against the criminals (and) the government has initiated all the measures to contain violence,” he said. The attack on

chief, he added.

On Tuesday night, irked by the post, hundreds of people went on a rampage and set DJ Halli police station on fire.

They torched many police and private vehicles, smashed the belongings of MLA Murthy and those of his sister. An ATM was smashed into pieces. To disperse the mob, police resorted to lathi charge, lobbed tear gas shells and later opened fire, killing three people.

One of the victims has been identified as Yasin Pasha. The victim’s father Afzal told reporters that his son was ‘innocent.’

“My son operated a meat shop in the area and had gone for dinner when the police opened fire and he died. He is innocent and was not involved in any arson,” he said.

He claimed that some outsiders, who came in hordes and damaged property, were responsible for the violence.

Meanwhile, curfew has been imposed in the affected areas in and around DJ Halli and KG Halli.

Legislator Murthy

appealed against violence. “I appeal to my Muslim brethren that we should not resort to violence for the fault committed by some miscreants. There is no need to fight. We all are brothers. We will get the person punished as per law. We will also be with you. I appeal to the Muslim friends to be calm,” he said in a video message last night.

## POLICE TRIES TO TRACE OUT FIRE MISHAP ACCUSED

### DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12

The state police are on the lookout for Ramesh Hospitals MD Dr P. Ramesh Babu and Swarna Palace hotel owner Srinivasa Rao, who are evading arrest.

Assistant commissioner of police N. Surya Chandra Rao said on Wednesday that they had formed special teams to nab them and added that they were also keeping tab on their family members.

Mr Rao said that they were trying to zero in on both the accused based on the call logs of their mobile phones. Several cases were booked against the duo after a fire mishap claimed lives of 10 patients at the hotel recently.

## Rickshaw used to shift Covid+ body

### DC CORRESPONDENT GUNTUR, AUG. 12

Ignoring the established protocol of handling dead bodies of Covid-19 patients, a patient’s body was shifted on a rickshaw from a government hospital at Bapatla in Guntur district on Wednesday.

According to hospital officials, a patient was brought to the hospital with the issue of chest discomfort. The patient, however, died within 15 minutes after he was given first-aid by a doctor.

After the death of the patient, the hospital staff conducted a coronavirus test on the body, which turned out to be positive.

The hospital staff informed the attendants that the deceased patient was infected with Covid-19 disease. When the attendants of the deceased patient wished to shift the body in a vehicle arranged by them, hospital staff gave two PPE kits for their protection.

The picture of relatives transporting the Covid-19 infected person’s body in a rickshaw went viral on the Internet.

AP Assembly Speaker K. Raghupathi expressed his displeasure over the way the body was shifted from the hospital. BJP leader S. Vishuvardhan Reddy expressed his anguish about the incident.



## IN BRIEF

**3 IPS officers transferred**

**Vijayawada:** The state government transferred three senior IPS officers and gave them postings in new positions in the state on Tuesday. Kasireddy V.R.N. Reddy, director general, vigilance and enforcement and ex-officio principal secretary to government, general administration (V&E) department is transferred and posted as additional director general of police, intelligence. He is placed in full additional charge of his previous position until further orders. Rajiv Kumar Meena, commissioner of police, Visakhapatnam City is transferred and directed to report to the police headquarters at Mangalagiri for further posting. Manish Kumar Sinha, inspector general of police, intelligence is transferred and posted as commissioner of police, Visakhapatnam City.

**'Pay ₹10L to kin of Covid victims'**

**Nellore:** Former minister and TD senior leader Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy has said the state should own up responsibility for death of Covid patients in government hospitals and pay ₹10 lakh as compensation to the families of the deceased. When the government paid a compensation of ₹1 crore to the kin of those who died in LG Polymers mishap and ₹50 lakh to the Swarna Palace fire mishap victims, why not to families Covid victims, he asked. Speaking to media persons here on Wednesday, he blamed the state government for Coronavirus cases rapidly rising to 2.80 lakh in

**Ex-minister's last rites held**

**Kadapa:** The funeral of former minister Dr SA Khalil Basha was held at the Kadapa Yakub Saab Masjid with state honour. Basha died of ill health on Tuesday. His body, which was brought to Kadapa from Hyderabad on Wednesday morning, was kept at his home till noon to allow his relatives pay their last respects. Later, Khalil Basha's body was shifted to Yakub Saab Masjid. Deputy Chief Minister S.B. Amjad Bhasha, Kadapa sub-collector Pridvitej, Kadapa tahsildar Baredy Shivaram Reddy, police and revenue officials, his family members, relatives, public representatives, politicians and fans were among those who attended the funeral.

**Charges against youth withdrawn**

**Vijayawada:** State government has decided to withdraw the prosecution against the accused Muslim youth in old Guntur police station. The state government issued GO RT No. 776 dated 12-08-2020 and directed the director general of police to issue instructions to the assistant public prosecutors/station house officers concerned to file a petition u/s 321 of CrPc, 1973.

**YSRC SUSPENDS PRASAD REDDY OVER LAND GRAB**

**K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 12**

The YSRC disciplinary committee on Wednesday sacked its senior leader of north coastal Andhra and former chairman of AP Technology Services Koyya Prasad Reddy from the party on the charges of land grabbing.

The committee which received several complaints against Prasad Reddy announced his suspension after due enquiry.

An official statement to this effect was released by the party stating that Prasad Reddy, who hailed from Visakhapatnam, was suspended from the party immediately.

Prasad Reddy allegedly misused the names of YSRC general secretary and Rajya Sabha member V.Vijaya Sai Reddy and Visakhapatnam collector in settling land deals in the port city.

The party central office gave a strict warning to all the party leaders against indulging in land dealings and grabbing by misusing the names of the party, parliament members and senior leaders.

**Getting ready for I-Day**

Policemen conduct rehearsals with face shields at IGMC stadium ahead of Independence Day celebrations in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

— C. NARAYANA RAO

**Covid bio-waste disposal poses challenge to AP govt**

**In Vizag, 2 private agencies collect waste from hospitals, quarantine centres**

**V.K.L. GAYATRI | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 12**

The disposal of bio-waste in Covid hospitals such as PPE kits, face masks and hand gloves has become a big task to the administration. Though there are no specific guidelines for the disposal of the Covid-19 bio-waste, the administration is incinerating it at a very high temperature.

Not only waste from the hospitals but also the materials used by positive

patients in quarantine centres and home isolation are posing a huge challenge to officials.

The number of quarantine centres and Covid-19 hospitals, Covid Care Centres is increasing across the state. The number of patients is also increasing every day so is the biomedical waste.

In Visakhapatnam, the administration has entrusted the task to two private agencies, one of which collects waste from

According to the experts, the deadly virus will not survive for more than five hours in bodies of victims and on the surface of bio-waste. However, there are no confirmed reports on this.

the hospitals and another from the quarantine centres.

Maridi Bio-Waste Management collects bio-waste from the hospitals and safely disposes it, said

Dr K.L.S.G. Sastry, chief medical officer of Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation.

According to the experts, the deadly virus will not survive for more than five hours in bodies of victims and on the surface of bio-waste. However, there are no confirmed reports on this.

"However, we are packing the bodies in bags for safe disposal. The relatives can attend the final rituals without any fear of

getting infected with the virus. There are no confirmed reports that the deadly virus is spread from used PPE kits, face masks and hand gloves," said Mr Sashty.

Maridi is collecting and disposing of the Covid-19 waste on a daily basis to ensure that there is no pile up. Covid-19 special officer of North Andhra region and principal of Andhra Medical College, Dr P.V. Sudhakar told *Deccan Chronicle*.

**Industrialist Palem Srikanth succumbs to Coronavirus**

**NAGESWARA RAO BALLEDA | DC KADAPA, AUG. 12**

Palem Srikanth Reddy, 57, an industrialist and politician from Kadapa district succumbed to Coronavirus in Hyderabad on Wednesday after a month-long battle. Srikanth Reddy who contested on Telugu Desam ticket in Kadapa parliament election in 2009 lost to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, who was



fielded by the Congress.

He was managing director of Palred group and son of retired chief justice of Andhra Pradesh (undivided) High Court

Palem Chenna Keshava Reddy. Hailing from Tatimakulapalle of Veerapunayunipalem mandal, Srikanth Reddy was a graduate in industrial engineering from Regional Engineering College, Trichy. Later, he did MS from Stanford University, USA. His brother Palem Mallikarjuna Reddy and other family members rushed to Hyderabad after hearing the news his death.

**CPM SAYS GOVT SHOULD REIN IN PVT HOSPITALS**

**DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 12**

The CPM has urged the government to strictly implement GO No 77 and 78 and cut down Covid treatment costs in corporate hospitals.

State president of CITU Ch. Narasinga Rao said Covid was spreading fast, but both the central and state governments failed utterly to control it. Though in Andhra Pradesh more number of tests are being conducted, the government failed to provide proper treatment facility. "Taking this as advantage the corporate hospitals are charging patients exorbitant fees without caring for rules or laws," he said.

He said the government issued GOs 77 and 78 on July 8 fixing ₹ 3,250 per day for each patient and ₹10,388 for critical patients requiring ventilator. "But majority of corporate hospitals are charging a whopping ₹50,000 per day per bed," he alleged.

"What is the use of Aarogya scheme," he argued.

**Navayuga front runner for Rayalaseema LI contract**

**D. SIVA RAMI REDDY | DC KURNOOL, AUG. 12**

Navayuga Infra and Max Infra appear to be the front runners for the ₹3,278-crore Rayalaseema lift scheme.

The scrutiny of bids started on Wednesday for irrigation scheme including the reverse bidding scheduled to be completed by August 19 while E-auc-

tion is scheduled on August 17. The project is expected to be completed in two and half years.

On the first day Navayuga and Max Infra, SMPL bid documents were scrutinised, said a water resource department official.

He said the lowest bid would be taken as a benchmark for reverse tendering scheduled on August

17 and the successful bidder would be announced on August 19.

It may be recalled that the contract with Navayuga Infra for execution of Polavaram project was terminated by the Jagan government because the family which owns it is related to media baron Ramoji Rao, who is seen as biased against the YSR family.

**HEALTH | MATTERS**

**Authorities have suggested that sale of liquid hand sanitisers be banned**

**Experts for use of gel sanitisers to curb deaths**

**SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12**

Given the widespread abuse of liquid hand sanitisers resulting in death of at least 19 persons in Andhra Pradesh, experts have suggested that the state government encourage sale of only gel hand sanitiser. They have also recommended that the gel be made highly viscous, unpalatable and insoluble in water. This would discourage people from drinking hand sanitisers and losing their lives.

Since the onset of Covid-19 pandemic, the state government has been promoting usage of hand sanitisers in a big way. Its intention is that people would use it to sanitise their hands, which would cut down the possibility of them contracting Coronavirus. But a section of people, especially in Prakasam and Kadapa districts, are consuming hand sanitisers in place of liquor and dying as a result.

Local villagers say thousands are used to drinking country-made liquor as it

Drug control administration authorities suggest that if gel hand sanitiser is made with absolute ethyl alcohol, fatalities may be avoided even in case of its abuse.

is much cheaper than the IMFL available at government outlets. Following raids by excise and police personnel, ID liquor is unavailable. Even the government liquor outlets are closed in containment zones. That is the reason why people started consuming liquid hand sani-

tisers, as they have high alcohol content. Moreover, a 100-ml liquid sanitiser bottle costs only Rs. 50.

Another aspect is that the Union ministry of health and family welfare has issued a notification on July 27 declaring that sale of hand sanitisers is exempt from requirement of a licence under provisions of Chapter IV of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. The intention behind this is good, so that hand sanitisers are available to people for protecting themselves from Covid-19. However, this exemption

**Will set up a flour mill: Beneficiary**

**DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 12**

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy interacted with some beneficiaries of YSR Cheyutha scheme, which he launched on Wednesday.

One of the beneficiaries P. Vijayamma from Dibbapalem village of Anakapalle mandal told the CM that she would set up a flour mill. Expressing her happiness over getting Cheyutha aid of ₹18,750, she said that she had already benefited from Sthree Nidhi Sagham and also received ₹1,000 cash during the Covid-19 lockdown.

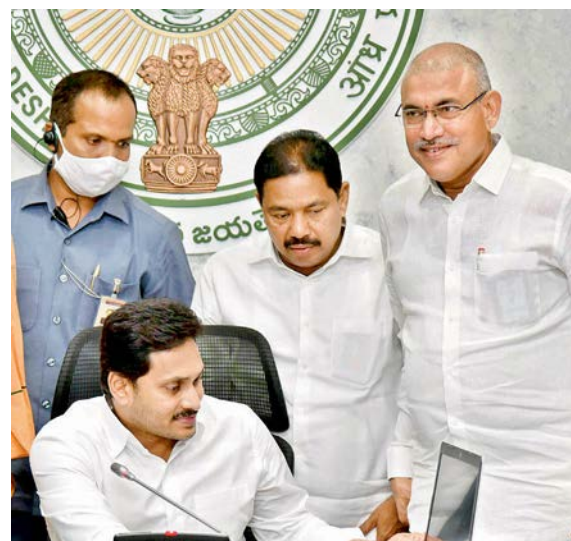
Participating in the video conference with the CM, collector V. Vinay Chand said that 1,44,476 BC women, 18,739 SCs, 27,210 STs and 4,289 women from minorities received Cheyutha benefit in the district.

**₹325CR GIVEN TO BENEFICIARIES IN CHITTOOR DIST**

**DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, AUG. 12**

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday transferred ₹325.26 crore to the bank accounts of 1,73,475 women beneficiaries under YSR Cheyutha scheme in the Chittoor district.

Of the total women beneficiaries in the district, 51,243 are SCs, 7,952 STs, 94,251 BCs, 19,647 Muslims and 382 Christian minorities. Of the total disbursed amount, ₹96.08 crore went to SC women beneficiaries, STs received Rs 14.91 crore, BCs ₹176.72 crore, minorities got ₹36.83 crore.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy releases funds to SC, ST, BC, Minority women under YSR Cheyutha scheme at the camp office on Wednesday.

**₹204 cr for Kadapa beneficiaries**

**DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, AUG. 12**

Deputy CM Amjad Basha said YSR Cheyutha scheme would bring light into millions of homes in the state.

After participating in the Chief Minister's video conference, Mr Basha, MLA Ravindranath Reddy and district collector Chevuri Harikiran jointly released a mega cheque for ₹204.33 crore sanctioned to 1,08,974 benefici-

aries in the district under YSR Cheyutha scheme.

The deputy CM said Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy improved the economic condition of the people of the state in many ways in his first year in office. Mr Harikiran said the government gave a one-month for those who missed the benefit, to apply.

"Such eligible people should submit applications through volunteers at local secretariats," he said.

**3 cops booked for illegal detention**

**DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 12**

Three police personnel including an inspector, a head constable and a constable attached to central crime station at Guntur police station were booked on charges of illegal detention of three men at the police station from October 14 to 31, 2019 by the CBI on Tuesday.

They were identified as N. Venkata Rao, inspector; Sambasiva Rao, head constable and Veeranjanyulu, constable, CCS, Guntur police station and other unknown officers of the same police station.

Three women identified

as N. Sunitha, R. Naga Lakshmi and T. Vijaya Lakshmi filed writ petitions (17099 and 17122 of 2019) alleging that their husbands were illegally detained at the police station and were forced to disclose their own involvement and their associates in cricket betting.

The CBI during its preliminary inquiry found that the police officials were involved in cognisable offences under Sections 120-B read with Section 344 and 348 of IPC.

The victims were identified as Nala Balu Adinarayana, R. Srinivasa Rao and T. Srinivasa Rao.



Similarly, Krishna Vamsi, son of B.V.V.S. Murthy, who runs Sri Venkateswra Educational Institutions at Etcherla, came to Lions Club Blood Band and donated his plasma in the presence of the Club chairman P. Jagan Mohan Rao. The collector said he called both the youths on phone and congratulated them.

Prisoners' relatives visits to jail have also been cancelled since March 23 in view of the Corona outbreak. So far, no one was allowed to visit. Prison staff must also wear masks, wash

With regard to cumulative cases of infection, East Godavari takes the lead with 35,642, followed by 30,233 in Kurnool, 26,478 in Anantapur, 23,818 in Guntur, 21,586 in Visakhapatnam, 20,476 in West Godavari, 19,569 in

Among new deaths of Covid-19 infected patients, Guntur recorded 13, followed by 11 in Prakasam, 10 each in Chittoor and Nellore, nine in Srikakulam, seven each in Anantapur and Kadapa, six in Visakhapatnam and five each in East

Steps have been taken to ensure that doctors, nurses, sanitation staff and supervisors are always available on a shift basis. He said the Corona death rate in the state was very low and no one needs to fear.

He said he had resolved several issues of farmers after directly interacting with them and rice millers also cooperated by offering bank guarantees like never before. They have also increased the custom milling of rice, Dr Vinod Kumar added.

Prakasam district SP Siddharth Kaushal deputed Ongole DSP K.V.V.N.V. Prasad to collect and examine CC footage of Ongole town and to collect the details of missing woman besides female children born in the district during the last one year. The idea worked and the police identified the deceased as Srilakshmi, her daughter Vaishnavi from Addanki and culprit Koteswara Rao.

The output from 32 CC Cameras installed at Covid wards in the Government General Hospital, Nellore, has been fed to the monitors of the District Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC) at Nellore for round-the-clock monitoring by a team from Wednesday. The team will alert the medical officers concerned if they notice any deterioration in the health condition of the patients.

District collector K.V.N.

"Though government had fixed a standard tariff for Covid treatment, the packages vary in the name of special facilities in all the ten private hospitals in the city. The cost of treatment varies for cases categorised as mild, moderate and critical. Almost all the private hospitals are levying charges anywhere between ₹15,000 to ₹75,000 per day", a senior health official said.

It was found that almost six out of the ten hospitals were charging exorbitant rates for Covid-19 treatment in the name of packages and facilities.



# IndianOil



Marketing Division

Telangana & Andhra Pradesh State Office

## NOTICE FOR APPOINTMENT OF SERVO STOCKIST

NIT No./Name of the Appointment		Application Period	
NIT No. – IOC/TAPSO/GSS/01  Appointment of Grameen Servo Stockist (GSS) in the following location :		Application document published and download starts on <b>13.08.2020 (11:00 hrs onwards.)</b>  Last Date of physical application form submission : <b>14.09.2020 (upto 16:00 hrs)</b>	

Sl. No.	Location	Revenue District	State	Area of Operation (Territory)
1	Anakapalli	Visakhapatnam	Andhra Pradesh	Part of Vizag District as mentioned in NIT
2	Nandyal	Kurnool	Andhra Pradesh	Part of Kurnool District as mentioned in NIT
3	Narasaraopet	Guntur	Andhra Pradesh	Part of Guntur & Prakasam Districts as mentioned in NIT

Contact Persons:

1. Asst. Manager (L-RS)	9490493872 / 9087876440	prasadnbv@indianoil.in
2. Manager (L-RS)	9490493874	gundavenin@indianoil.in

Interested applicants can download the application form and guidelines from <https://spandan.indianoil.co.in/BPSP/HomePage.jsp>. Filled application form with all necessary documents as mentioned in the NIT/application form must be submitted at the address as mentioned in the NIT on or before the closing date and time. Corrigendum, if any shall also be published in the same website.

# HAR EK KAAM DESH KE NAAM



**SHORT TAKES**  
**60,963 FRESH CASES, RECOVERY RATE 70%**

**New Delhi, Aug. 12:** India's Covid-19 tally went past 23 lakh on Wednesday with a single day increase of 60,963 cases, while the recoveries surged to 16,39,599 pushing the recovery rate to 70.38 per cent, according to data by the Union Health Ministry.

The total Coronavirus cases in the country have mounted to 23,29,638, while the death toll climbed to 46,091 with 834 new fatalities being reported in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The case fatality rate has declined to 1.98 per cent.

There are 6,43,948 active cases of coronavirus in the country at present which comprise 27.64 per cent of the total caseload.

India had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 2,60,15,297 samples have been tested up to August 11 with 7,33,449 samples being tested on Tuesday.

Of the 834 new deaths reported, 256 are from Maharashtra, 118 from Tamil Nadu, 87 from Andhra Pradesh, 86 from Karnataka, 56 from Uttar Pradesh, 49 from West Bengal, 32 from Punjab, 23 from Gujarat, 18 from Madhya Pradesh, 16 from Bihar, 12 from Jammu and Kashmir and 11 each from Haryana and Rajasthan, the data showed.

Ten fatalities have been reported from Odisha, nine from Telangana, eight from Delhi, six from Goa, five each from Chhattisgarh and Kerala, four each from Assam and Jharkhand, two each from Puducherry and Uttarakhand while Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh and Manipur have registered one fatality each.

Of the total 46,091 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 18,306, followed by 5,159 in Tamil Nadu, 4,139 in Delhi, 3,398 in Karnataka, 2,695 in Gujarat, 2,203 in Andhra Pradesh, 2,176 in Uttar Pradesh, 2,149 in West Bengal and 1,033 in Madhya Pradesh, according to the Union health ministry data.

**JD(U) LEADER SHOT DEAD IN BIHAR**

**Madhepura, Aug. 12:** A 50-year-old JD(U) leader was shot dead in Bihar's Madhepura district, police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place around 8 pm on Tuesday, when Ashok Yadav, JD(U)'s Gamhariya block president, was standing near a shop in his Jogbani village, Madhepura Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Washi Ahmad said.

Two persons, who came on a motorcycle, opened fire at him from a close range and fled from the spot, he said.

Yadav was rushed to the Supaul Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him brought dead. His body has been sent to the Madhepura Sadar Hospital for post-mortem.

The two men, who fired at him, are yet to be identified, the police officer said, adding that search operations are on to arrest them.

Asked about the motive behind the killing, the SDPO said it is difficult to say anything as of now as police are investigating the matter.

**INDIA-BHUTAN BORDER TRADE VIA WB HALTED**

**Alipurduar (WB), Aug. 12:** Trade across the India-Bhutan border through Jaigaon in West Bengal's Alipurduar district was suspended after a lockdown was imposed to curb the rise in Covid-19 cases in the Himalayan kingdom, an official said on Wednesday.

The border gates between India's Jaigaon and Bhutan's Phuentsholing were closed after the total lockdown came into force in the neighbouring country on Tuesday, an Alipurduar district official said.

"Border trade through Jaigaon has stopped completely," he said.

Even though three districts of West Bengal — Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri and Kalimpong — share a border with Bhutan, the major chunk of trade with the Himalayan kingdom takes place through the Jaigaon-Phuentsholing section.

Jaigaon serves as a major gateway for Bhutan to the rest of India through Siliguri that lies around 150 km west of the border town.

# Riot-hit areas resemble war zone

Charred vehicles, shards of glass from broken windows, stones lie strewn over deserted roads

**Bengaluru, Aug. 12:** Areas under Pulakesh-inagar assembly constituency here resembled a war zone on Wednesday, hours after an unruly mob went on a rampage torching vehicles, irked over a 'communally sensitive' social media post allegedly by put up by a relative of a Congress MLA.

Charred vehicles, shards of glass from broken windows, stones and bricks lie strewn over the deserted roads of the violence-affected localities.

Earlier, three people were killed in police firing and scores of others wounded, including at least 50 policemen in the violence and arson that erupted in the city on Tuesday night and continued till the wee hours of Wednesday.

Property of Congress legislator Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy and his family members were targeted after a 'communally sensitive' social media post uploaded online by one of his relatives enraged a section of people.

"We were not at home when all this happened," Jayanthi, the MLA's sister said weeping inconsolably. "The only solace is that my brother and his family are safe," she said.

The violent crowd set on fire police vehicles and barged into DJ Halli police station on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and damaged the property.

Police have arrested about 110 people on charges of rioting.

Terming the violence in the city as a 'well-planned act,' Karnataka Revenue Minister R. Ashoka on Wednesday said the 'traitors,' who perpetrated the riots would be dealt with an iron hand and steps would be taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur.

Speaking to reporters after meeting Murthy at Vidhana Soudha here, Ashoka said, "The manner in which the riots were perpetrated shows that it was a well-planned act and was intended to spread to other parts of the city. These are traitors and we will subdue them."

The Minister said the lawmaker's house was completely damaged and belongings including, sarees and jewels were



Residents gather outside the residence of a Congress MLA in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

**The manner in which the riots were perpetrated shows that it was a well-planned act and was intended to spread to other parts of the city. These are traitors and we will subdue them**

—R. ASHOKA, Karnataka Revenue Minister

looted while the rest was set on fire.

"It is clear from the intensity of vandalism that the intention was to attack and finish off Srinivasa Murthy."

It has to be investigated whether any anti-social elements from within the state and outside were involved," Ashoka said.

Claiming that the violence was planned to terrorise the people of Bengaluru, Ashoka said government will send across a strong message so that no one would ever

dare to take law into their hands again.

He also said he met the Chief Minister and apprised him of the ground situation.

The Minister added that steps would be taken to rein in anti-social elements as vandalism was carried out in a manner that communities were identified to target them.

"Whether Popular Front or SDPI is behind it, we will not bother. These people must be arrested. We will hunt them wherever they are holed up,"



Locals help move burnt vehicles at Devar Jeevana Halli in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

— SATISH B.

## BJP accuses Congress of not being 'vocal' against rioters in Bengaluru

**New Delhi, Aug. 12:** The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in Karnataka on Wednesday accused the Congress of not being "vocal" against rioters who attacked a legislator of the Opposition party in Bengaluru, saying "appeasement" seemed to be its official policy.

The BJP also said Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa must make the rioters pay heavily for destruction of properties.

"Shameful n disgusting! Karnataka Congress is silent on yesterday's vandalism in Bengaluru. Pseudos are also not vocal against this riot! Freedom from fear of riots is what B'luru needs now. Sri B.S.

Yediyurappa must make rioters pay heavily for destruction of properties. #SaveBengaluru," BJP general secretary P. Muralidhar Rao tweeted.

Rao is the BJP's in-charge for Karnataka affairs.

BJP general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh alleged that the Congress was maintaining "dead silence".

He noted that rioters had attacked the house of Congress MLA Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy, a Dalit.

"Total support for right to riot. For them appeasement is the only official party policy," he said.

"After 14 hours

Karnataka Congress wakes up to blame Naveen for Facebook post & police for delay in taking action. One straight question. Does your party support riots like this? Why Congress hesitates to condemn riots by minority groups? #CongressSupportsRiots," he said in a tweet. (sic)

Karnataka Congress leader Dinesh Gundu Rao hit back at Santhosh, accusing him of using the incident to gain political mileage. His statement is a crude attempt to communalise the issue & divide on caste lines, Rao said, calling it "pathetic and deplorable".

"That's what BJP & RSS do best, play politics over/with dead bodies," he alleged.

Responding to his swipe, Santhosh tweeted, "At least acknowledge that your own Dalit MLA's house was ransacked. Police station was destroyed. Why Why Why so much of appeasement, fear when your own MLA is targeted? Be simple & straight Sir."

Opposition Congress and JD(S) in Karnataka have extended complete support to the state government in establishing peace in violence-hit parts of the city and demanded immediate action against culprits.

— PTI

Ashoka said.

Addressing the media after meeting the minister, Murthy said he wanted the government to provide him protection.

"We were not at home when nearly 3,000 people

with petrol bombs, clubs, came and burnt the vehicles, damaged our house. I need protection from the government after this incident," a visibly shaken MLA said.

He said for the past 25

years he has been living with the Muslim brethren but never faced such a problem.

He demanded a CBI or CID inquiry into the matter to bring out the facts. Asked about his relative

Naveen, whose alleged social media post sparked violence, Murthy said, "Naveen is not my relative. For the past 10 years we have not been in touch with him."

— PTI

## Sushant's kin sends legal notice to Raut

## Sharad Pawar says Parth is 'immature'

**DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, AUG. 12**

Calling Ajit Pawar's son Parth "immature", NCP president Sharad Pawar on Wednesday said he gives "absolutely no importance to his grand-nephew's recent demand for a CBI probe into the case of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death."

The NCP chief also said that he has full faith in Maharashtra and Mumbai police. However, he would not oppose if someone still wants the central agencies to probe the case.

Parth Pawar, who lost last year's Lok Sabha election from Maaval seat in Maharashtra, demanded that the case be handed over to the CBI.

On July 27, Parth met state home minister Anil Deshmukh demanding

that the case of Rajput's death be handed over to the CBI or a Special Investigation Team (SIT) be formed with forensic experts to probe the case.

"We attach absolutely no importance to what my grand-nephew says. He is immature. I have clearly said that I have 100 per cent trust in the Maharashtra police and Mumbai police but if someone still wants a CBI probe into it, then there is no reason to oppose that too," the NCP chief told reporters here after a meeting with Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut at YB Chavan Centre in South Mumbai.

He was asked about the demand for a CBI probe in the case being made against some people, including by his grand-nephew Parth.

**Patna, Aug. 12:** A Bihar MLA and close relative of Sushant Singh Rajput sent a legal notice to Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Wednesday, threatening action over a piece written by him in the party mouth-piece about the deceased actor's strained relations with his father, his lawyer said.

In his column for *Saamana* a few days ago, Raut had alleged that the actor, whose death is being probed by the CBI, was not on good terms with his own family and had strained relations with his father after his second marriage.

"Sanjay Raut is an honorable member of Parliament and a responsible spokesman of the party. My client Neeraj Kumar Bablu has contended that he should apologise within 48 hours for his baseless comments. If he does so, we will proceed no further. If he does not, we will seek legal remedy, Anish Jha," the BJP MLA's counsel, said here.

Bablu, who is a cousin of Rajput, had rubbished the

allegation that the actor's septuagenarian father, Krishna Kishore Singh, had tied the knot again after the death of his wife in 2002.

Singh had lodged an FIR at a police station in Patna last month, nearly 40 days after his son was found hanging from the ceiling at his Bandra residence.

In the FIR, Singh had accused actress Rhea Chakraborty and her family members of abetting his son's suicide besides cheating him financially.

Chakraborty has, since, been slapped with a money laundering case by the Enforcement Directorate.

Her petition, questioning the Bihar police's jurisdiction in the matter and seeking transfer of the case from Patna to Mumbai is pending before the Supreme Court.

The matter was taken over by the CBI following a recommendation by the Nitish Kumar government at the request of Rajput's father.

While the Bihar police

had swung into action after registering an FIR on July 25, the development was received with indignation by the Uddhav Thackeray government in Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, NCP leader Majeed Memon on Wednesday said actor Sushant Singh Rajput was not as famous during his lifetime as he is after death, a remark which did not go down well with his party which quickly distanced itself from it.

The NCP said it was Memon's personal opinion and not of the party. Memon, who is a former Rajya Sabha member and a prominent lawyer, also said the media space that the late actor is occupying nowadays is perhaps more than India's Prime Minister and US President.

As reactions came in on the social media following his post, Memon said his comments do not insult the late actor in any way. Rajput, 34, was found hanging at his apartment in Bandra area in Mumbai on June 14.

— PTI

## FORGET AND FORGIVE, GEHLOT TELLS UPSET MLAS

**Jaisalmer/Jaipur, Aug. 12:** Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday said resentment among the Congress MLAs is natural after the return of dissident legislators to the party-fold but asked them to forgive, forget and move on.

But with just two days to go before the Assembly session, the party is taking no chances, deciding to keep them together at a resort in the state capital.

The MLAs in the Gehlot camp were on Wednesday flown back to Jaipur from Jaisalmer, where they were together at another hotel.

They were taken straight from the airport to the Fairmont hotel on the outskirts of the city, where they had stayed before being moved to Jaisalmer. The MLAs mostly from the Congress and some allies are expected to remain there till the Assembly meets on August 14.

The Congress crisis in Rajasthan appears to have ended with the intervention of the top leadership of Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra who met rebel leader Sachin Pilot earlier this week.

Pilot had openly rebelled against Gehlot last month along with 18 other Congress MLAs. He was then sacked as deputy chief minister and the party's Rajasthan chief.

— PTI

## IAF protests its negative portrayal in Gunjan Saxena

**PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, AUG. 12**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has protested that the movie *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl* starring Janhvi Kapoor portrays the work culture in the Air Force in a "negative light" and being discriminatory towards women officers.

The movie is inspired by Flight Lieutenant Gunjan Saxena, India's first female Air Force officer to fly in a combat zone during the Kargil war. The

movie is right now being streamed on Netflix.

The IAF has written to Dharma Productions, Netflix and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). "The IAF as a service has always ensured that the organisation is gender neutral and has always provided an equal opportunity to both male and women personnel," said the IAF in a letter to the CBFC.

Sources said that the letter mentions that as per initial understanding,

Dharma Productions had agreed to represent Air Force with authenticity and make all efforts to ensure that the film helps to inspire the next generation of IAF officers.

It said that certain scenes and dialogues in the movie and its trailer, which were forwarded to the IAF for viewing have been found to portray the IAF in an undue negative light. "In the aim to glorify the screen character of Ex-Fit Lt Gunjan Saxena, Dharma Productions pre-

sented some situations that are misleading and portray an inappropriate work culture, especially against women in the IAF," said the letter.

It said that the production house was informed about the objectionable portion in the movie and was advised to delete or modify them.

"However, the production house has not deleted the scenes but had proposed a media plan in the run up to the release and inserting a disclaimer in

the movie," it said.

The IAF said that it considers that a mere media plan and disclaimer would not be adequate to prevent the presentation of incorrect facts about the IAF.

Last month, the defence ministry had written to the CBFC, Information Technology ministry and ministry of Information and Broadcasting to advise production houses to obtain "no objection" certificate from ministry of defence before the telecast of any film, documen-

tary, web series on the Indian army theme.

Defence ministry in a letter to the CBFC said that producers may also be advised to ensure that any incident which distorts the image of the defence forces or hurts their sentiments may be prevented.

"It has been brought to the notice of this ministry that some production houses making films on Army theme are using content which is distorting the image of the Army," the letter said.



## IN BRIEF

**170 perish in Yemen floods**

**Sanaa:** Flash floods triggered by torrential rains have killed at least 172 people across Yemen over the past month, damaging homes and Unesco-listed world heritage sites, officials said. The destruction has dealt a new blow to a country already in the grips of what the United Nations describes as the world's worst humanitarian crisis after years of war between a Saudi-backed government and Iran-allied rebels. In the mainly government-held province of Maarib east of the capital, 19 children were among 30 people killed by the floods, a government official said.

**South Sudan clash: 127 die**

**Juba:** Clashes between soldiers and civilians during a disarmament exercise in the South Sudanese town of Tonj left 127 dead, the army spokesman said Wednesday. Major General Lul Ruai Koang said that the fighting erupted on Saturday as security forces carried out an operation to disarm civilians in the area which has seen deadly inter-communal clashes. More than six years after a civil war broke out in the country, and many communities are flush with weapons, which they keep for protection or defence against cattle raids. The violence in Tonj began after armed youths got into a disagreement with soldiers. An initial confrontation was brought under control, but according to Koang the youths mobilised others for an attack on the army position.

**Fight on: HK tycoon to staff**

**Hong Kong:** Hong Kong pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai on Wednesday told his reporters to "fight on" after his dramatic arrest, as China widens its crackdown against critics in the semi-autonomous city. The clampdown has gathered pace since Beijing imposed a sweeping security law on the international business hub in June, with opposition politicians disqualified and activists arrested for social media posts. Lai was among 10 people detained under the new law on Monday as around 200 police officers searched the newsroom of his Apple Daily tabloid, which is unapologetically critical of Beijing. The 71-year-old was cheered by staff and handed a bouquet on Wednesday as he returned to the newsroom following a late-night release on bail after 40 hours in custody. "Fight on! Let's fight on," Lai said. "We have the support of the Hong Kong people."

**RAJAPAKSAS DOMINATE NEW CABINET**

**Colombo, Aug. 12:** Sri Lanka's new Cabinet, including four members of the powerful Rajapaksa family, took oath on Wednesday with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa retaining the key defence ministry while the finance portfolio went to newly elected Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa after their party won a landslide victory in parliamentary elections last week. President Gotabaya administered the oath of office to the 28-member Cabinet which is two less than the 30 allowed by the Constitution. He also appointed 40 state ministers. The swearing-in ceremony was held in the central town of Kandy.

President Gotabaya retained the ministry of defence while his elder brother PM Mahinda has been assigned finance, urban development and Buddhist affairs ministries.

Mahinda's elder son, Namal Rajapaksa has been named the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports — a first time Cabinet position since he entered parliament in 2010.

The eldest brother of the president, Chamal Rajapaksa was named irrigation minister in addition to being the state minister of internal security. His son, Shasheendra Rajapaksa has also been given a state ministry. One of the main features in the Cabinet is that while veteran politician Dinesh Gunawardena has been re-named the foreign minister, a new state ministry of regional cooperation affiliated to the foreign ministry has been created.

Significantly, former president Maithripala Sirisena has been overlooked for a Cabinet ministry despite his overwhelming win in the elections. Gotabaya also appointed his lawyer as justice minister. Ali Sabry appeared for Gotabaya when he faced court cases related to corruption.

# US health chief sceptical of Russia's virus vaccine claim

**Important to provide safe, effective vaccine, not a race to be first: Alex Azar**

**Taipei, Aug. 12:** Washington's health chief on Wednesday expressed scepticism about Russia's claim of developing the world's first safe Coronavirus vaccine, pointing to the lack of data from its initial trials.

Moscow said Tuesday its vaccine offered "sustainable immunity" against the virus, but Western scientists have previously raised concerns about the development speed of Russian treatments, suggesting researchers were cutting corners. US Health Secretary Alex Azar echoed those concerns Wednesday as he wrapped up a three-day visit to Taiwan.

"It's important that we provide safe, effective vaccines and that the data be transparent... This is not a race to be first," he told reporters during a conference call.

"I should note that two of the six US vaccines that we've invested in entered the phase three clinical trials weeks ago that the Russian vaccine is now only beginning," he added.

"The data from the initial trials in Russia have not been disclosed, it's not transparent." Russian President Vladimir Putin said the vaccine was safe, and that one of his daughters had received a dose.

The vaccine has been named "Sputnik", after the world's first artificial satellite that helped the Soviet Union take the lead in the Cold War space race in 1957.

Governments are under huge pressure to find a vaccine against the coronavirus, which has killed more than 700,000 people worldwide and eviscerated the global economy since it first emerged in central China late last year. The United States is the worst-hit country, with nearly 5.1 million infections and more than 174,000 deaths.

President Donald Trump is facing a tough fight to get re-elected in November, trailing rival Joe Biden in the polls as anger mounts over his administration's response to the pandemic. Azar said he was confident a vaccine would



Policemen talk to residents who were rounded up for violating quarantine protocols in Quezon city, Philippines on Wednesday. The residents were recorded and given lectures on community quarantine protocols before they were released as the capital and outlying provinces undergo another lockdown due to rising Covid-19 cases. — AP

be available for Americans. "We believe that it is highly credible that we will have in the high tens of millions of doses of gold-standard, safe and effective vaccine by the end of this year, and many hundreds of millions of doses as we go into the beginning of next year," he said.

So far, Washington has handed out at least \$9.4 billion to seven vaccine developers and signed manufacturing contracts with five of them to provide 700 million doses.

Azar's Taiwan trip — the highest-level US visit since Washington switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing in 1979 — was billed as an opportunity to learn from the island's success in containing the virus.

Taiwan has reported fewer than 500 infections and just seven Covid-19 deaths.

— AFP

## Don declares 6th vaccine contract

**Washington, Aug. 12:** President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced a \$1.5 billion contract with US biotech company Moderna for 100 million doses of an eventual Coronavirus vaccine, the sixth such deal reached since May.

"I'm pleased to announce that we have reached an agreement with Moderna to manufacture and deliver 100 million doses of their Coronavirus vaccine candidate," Trump said at a White House news conference. "The federal government will own these vaccine doses, we're buying them."

"We're on track to rapidly produce 100 million doses as soon as the vaccine is approved, and up to 500 million shortly thereafter, so we'll have 600 million doses," he added.

Moderna, in partnership with the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), is conducting Phase 3 clinical trials of a vaccine candidate and manufacturing of vaccine doses will take place while the trials are underway.

The vaccine, called mRNA-1273, is being developed by Moderna and the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), which is led by Dr Anthony Fauci.

Fauci has said researchers are unlikely to know the efficacy of the vaccine before the end of the year at the earliest.

— AFP

## MAN DIES OF BUBONIC PLAGUE IN MONGOLIA

**Ulaanbaatar, Aug. 12:** Bubonic plague has killed a man in western Mongolia, the country's health ministry said Wednesday, the latest in a handful of cases to emerge there and in neighbouring China this year.

At least one person dies of the plague every year in the landlocked Asian country, where the rare bacterial disease is usually spread by fleas clinging to the hair of the marmots native to the region.

The government has responded with campaigns to discourage people from eating the large rodents.

Officials said a man died on Tuesday night in the latest case, which is still to be confirmed by laboratory tests.

More than 70 people in close contact with the 42-year-old, who had bought two dead marmots before he fell ill, will now be tested and undergo quarantine. It comes weeks after a 15-year-old boy also succumbed to the disease in a neighbouring province.

Health officials in China have reported two deaths from its side of the border this month — one from bubonic plague, and another caused by the pharyngeal plague.

— AFP

## Duterte: Will be Russia vaccine 'guinea pig'

**Manila, Aug. 12:** Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte will be a guinea pig for a controversial Russian Coronavirus vaccine, his spokesman said on Wednesday, as the Southeast Asian nation emerged as a frontrunner for overseas clinical trials.

Moscow says it has developed the world's first vaccine offering "sustainable immunity" against the

virus and is in the final stage of tests involving 2,000 people.

However, Western scientists have previously raised concerns about the speed of development of Russian vaccines, suggesting researchers might be cutting corners.

But despite the scepticism, Manila has accepted Russia's offer to participate in clinical trials, vac-

ine supply and production of the drug, and Philippine health authorities said they are meeting the Russian drug developer Gamaleya on Wednesday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said the drug was safe and that one of his own daughters had received the inoculation, dubbed "Sputnik V" after the pioneering 1950s Soviet satellite.

Duterte has also expressed "huge trust" in Russia's efforts to stop the contagion. "I believe the vaccine that you have produced is really good for humanity," Duterte said, praising Putin. "I will be the first one to be experimented on," he said on Monday.

Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque said that the president was not joking.

— AFP

## Taiwan visit: China warns US against playing with fire

**Taipei, Aug. 12:** China warned Washington not to "play with fire" on Wednesday as a US delegation wrapped up a historic trip to the self-ruled island of Taiwan. Beijing has been infuriated by the highest-profile visit in decades to Taiwan, which it sees as part of its territory, as US-China relations plunge to a record low over a range of issues from trade to

military and the Coronavirus pandemic.

Health chief Alex Azar finished a three-day visit to Taiwan, during which he criticised China's handling of the pandemic and visited the shrine of a former Taiwan president hated by the Communist Party leadership.

Beijing slammed the visit Wednesday and said it "firmly opposes official

exchanges between the US and Taiwan under any pretext". "On issues involving China's core interests, some people in the US must not harbour illusions, those who play with fire will get burned," said foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian at a regular press briefing.

Beijing insists that Taiwan is part of "one China".

— AFP



Hassan Rouhani

## US arms ban push will fail, hopes Iran

**Tehran, Aug. 12:** Iran's President has expressed "great hopes" Wednesday that a US bid to extend an arms embargo on his country will fail, warning of consequences if the UN Security Council backs it. Rouhani's remarks came after Iran's ambassador to the United Nations said the US would have to redraft its proposed resolution on the issue after being "rebuffed" by Security Council members.

The ban on selling weapons to Iran is set to be progressively eased from October under the terms of Resolution 2231, which blessed the Iran nuclear deal that world powers agreed in July 2015.

But a UN embargo on materials and technology that Iran could use for its ballistic missile program

is to remain in place until 2023. The European Union has said it will continue to enforce its own embargo against Iran after the lifting of the first UN embargo.

Under the accord officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran committed to limiting its nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

The JCPOA has been on life-support since the US withdrew from it and reimposed unilateral sanctions in 2018.

Iran has since taken small but escalatory steps away from compliance with the agreement as it presses for the sanctions relief it was promised.

"We have great hopes that America will fail," Rouhani said.

— AFP

## Pak passes law to put more curbs on banned outfits

SHAFAQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUG. 12

Pakistan's National Assembly passed with a majority vote amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 to put more restrictions on banned outfits as the country continues to take measures to curb terror financing and money laundering.

The new law imposes a restriction on giving loans or financial assistance to people affiliated with banned outfits. Banks have been barred from issuing credit cards to banned people, and their wealth, properties and assets can be seized without notice. Weapon licences issued earlier will be revoked and weapons with old licences will be confiscated. Anyone carrying such arms will be punished and no new licences will be issued to them.

The government has also decided to impose a fine of Rs50 million on people involved in terror activities. Pakistan seeks to get onto the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)'s White List from its Grey List.

The FATF will be deciding Pakistan's fate in October and it depends on whether it can comply with a list of measures it had given to curb terror financing and money laundering in the country.

The global watchdog for illicit financial activities had put Pakistan on its Grey List in June 2018 because of weaknesses in the country's Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT) laws.

The Grey List refers to countries or jurisdictions under increased monitoring because of strategic AML and CFT deficiencies. After being placed on the Grey List, Pakistan had developed an action plan with the FATF to address those deficiencies, but fell short of the targets.

Law Minister Farogh Naseem said it was a historic day that the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) related legislation is being carried out today with consensus in the larger interest of the country.

He said: "Whitening the economy and checking terror financing is important to take the country forward on the path of development. It is also our aim to simplify the legislation and ensure protection of fundamental rights of the people."

## Protests smaller on 3rd night in Belarus

**Minsk, Aug. 12:** Authorities in Belarus said Wednesday that post-election protests were getting smaller, after police violently put down a third night of demonstrations.

Protesters gathered in Minsk and other cities on Tuesday night to contest strongman President Alexander Lukashenko's disputed victory in Sunday's election, after main challenger Svetlana Tikhonovskaya left the country for Lithuania.

With significant parts of central Minsk blocked off by riot police, they were unable to gather in large crowds as on previous

## PAK FM TERMS NAB OFFICE CLASH A DRAMA

**Islamabad, Aug. 12:** Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Wednesday termed the clash outside National Accountability Bureau (NAB) office on Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) vice president Maryam Nawaz's appearance as a drama.

Speaking in the National Assembly, the minister asked about the presence of stones in the car: "I don't want to disturb the assembly decorum by discussing yesterday's scuffle between police and PML-N workers," he added. He said that including name of PML-N lawmaker Rana Tanveer Hussain in FIR without reason was not right as he was in the session and has no hand in the clash.

The reaction came day after a clash erupted between outraged PML-N workers and police as Maryam Nawaz reached the NAB office in a case pertaining to illegal transfer of 180 acres of land in Raiwind.

## BRIBE: PUNJAB CM APPEARS BEFORE NAB

**Islamabad, Aug. 12:** Pakistan Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar appeared before the National Accountability Bureau Lahore on Wednesday to answer questions on illegally awarding a liquor licence to a hotel.

He allegedly received a Rs 50 million bribe to force the Excise and Taxation Department to violate the law. "I will go in and defend myself on my own," Buzdar said before the appearance. "Whatever happens according to the law will happen."

The CM did not want party leaders or provincial cabinet members accompanying him to the NAB office. He chose to travel without government protocol when he left Chief Minister House.

Mr Buzdar's hearing comes a day after PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz was set to appear before the NAB to respond to a case of alleged illegal transfer of government land.

nights and smaller protests erupted in various parts of the city.

"The number of protesters was smaller last night, as was the number of cities where protests took place," interior ministry spokeswoman Olga Chemodanova said.

The ministry said more than 1,000 people had been detained after protests Tuesday night.

Protesters and witnesses said riot police used indiscriminate force against those who did gather, firing stun grenades and rubber bullets in Minsk suburbs.

— AFP

● Britain's Queen Elizabeth II has approved awarding the Victoria Cross to sailor Edward "Teddy" Sheean, Australia's Governor-General David Hurley. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Sheean, who was just 18 when he died, sacrificed his life for his shipmates during World War II.

him the recognition they believe he deserves. He was given a lower award after his death, but two inquiries in recent years

**Kin spent decades trying to get the recognition for Sheean****MILITARY | HONOUR**

## Oz sailor feted 77 yrs after saving crew

**Wellington, Aug. 12:** An Australian war hero will be awarded the nation's top military honor more than 77 years after he was killed while saving some of his shipmates.

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II has approved awarding the Victoria Cross to sailor Edward "Teddy" Sheean, Australia's Governor-General David Hurley announced Wednesday.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Sheean, who was just 18 when he died, sacrificed his life for his shipmates during World War II.

"After the order was

given for the crew of the HMAS Armidale to abandon ship, Japanese aircraft strafed the Australian sailors who were overboard," Morrison said in a statement. "Sheean then turned back, made for the gun, strapped himself in, and returned fire to the Japanese. He fought to the very end."

A week after the ship was sunk near East Timor in December 1942, 49 crew members were rescued, Morrison said. Many of them owed their lives to the actions of Sheean. Sheean's family have spent decades trying to get



# DECCAN Chronicle

13 AUGUST 2020

## PM ‘mantra’ old hat, should fund state fights

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the nation what he called a new mantra to defeat the Coronavirus: testing, tracing, isolation and treatment. The Prime Minister also said if the 10 states that account for 82 per cent of the number of Covid patients are able to contain it, then India will win the war against the pandemic. He has asked the Chief Ministers of West Bengal, Gujarat, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Punjab to step up testing. It is welcome that the Prime Minister is seen to be taking an active interest in the war against the virus but the mantra he has given is by no means new. This formula — to test all the people who could have been in contact with infected people, trace all their contacts and isolate or quarantine them, and treat all those who have been infected — has long been employed successfully across the world. Several Indian states have aggressively pursued this path and have been able to contain the virus. Even Delhi, once considered the Corona capital, and Dharavi, the slum in Mumbai, have employed this mantra successfully. The World Health Organisation has been talking of increased number of tests from the very start of the campaign against the virus. The PM’s advice comes at a time when India’s daily caseload has crossed 60,000; of late, we are ahead of even the United States and Brazil on this count. At present, India with over 23 lakh infections is at the third position in the list of the worst affected nations. With a doubling rate of 22.7 days, India is projected to overtake Brazil in a couple of weeks. The only silver lining is case fatality rate of 2.1 per cent, which is lower than the global average of 3.75 per cent. However, the number of deaths has shown an alarming trend with the figure touching 1,000 on some days. India’s number of tests per million of population is low compared with other severely affected nations: 18,300 per million against 1,99,803 of the US and 62,200 of Brazil. India’s test positivity rate is higher than these two countries, too. An early rollout of the mantra across the country when it was under lockdown would have stopped India from coming to such a pass. However, it is always better late than never.

Apart from the new mantra, what the states who are in the frontline of the “war” want is money. Most states are now exhausted in terms of their financial and human resources. The increasing cost of the Corona fight and the decreasing economic activity stare them in their faces. The suggestion of Tamil Nadu chief minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami that the PM-Cares fund meet at least half of the testing cost merits the Centre’s serious consideration. The government must also drop its reported move to renege on its statutory obligation to offset the shortfall in GST collection. It must open its coffers and help the states instead so that India emerges a winner as Mr Modi suggested.

## Educating courts, citizens

All fair-minded Indian citizens have occasion to be grateful to the judiciary today — it has done its job well of reading the law right and settling all ambiguities — whether intentional or wishful — concerning the landmark 2005 amendment to the 1956 Hindu Succession Act. Clearcut in nature, the amendment had nevertheless seen several challenges involving its interpretation — especially with respect to whether the karta or head of the family was alive on the date it had been passed — in the present case, the Court settled seven special leave petitions alongside the main matter involving siblings Vineeta and Rakesh Sharma’s share of family property. The Hindu Succession Act lays down a uniform system of inheritance that applies to persons governed by Hinduism’s Mitakshara (northern India) Dayabhaga (West Bengal, Assam), Murumakkattayam, Aliyasantana and Nambudri (southern India) laws. The amendment expands women’s rights within this law. According to its Section 6, which, the Court pointed out, applies retroactively, rather than retrospectively, daughters are equal coparceners in a Hindu undivided family property irrespective of their date of birth or, alternatively, the date of death of the father, provided there has been no partition or devolution of the property in question before December 20, 2004. This judgment thus ensures that a woman can no longer be denied her share on the ground that she is born prior to the enactment of the law on September 9, 2005, or that her father was not alive on that date. The judgment is a reminder of another progressive judgement in the same context — on December 22, 2015, the Delhi High Court ruled that the eldest female member of a Hindu undivided family can be its karta. However, another critical issue still lies open regarding this very law. It is to do with the daughter’s progeny and lineal descendants. Do they have the same rights as the son’s descendants? Section 15 of the law pertains to the circumstances of a woman dying intestate. It does not give her parental and marital heirs equal rights of inheritance to her property, scrutinising it and returning it to its originator and his heirs, as if she has added no value to it on her part. A reform, thereby, is the need of the hour.

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Subhani



# Make India stronger in order to take on China



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray  
Reflections

As Australia draws closer to the US in the name of national security and pursues trade diversification, it risks alienating China, its largest trading partner by far with a crucial role in its economic recovery.” Australia could be replaced by India in that sentence from a recent article in Hong Kong’s *South China Morning Post* newspaper by Yuan Jiang, a Chinese Ph.D. student at Australia’s Queensland University of Technology. In neither case is there a lucid articulation of why precisely China is feared.

Some of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent actions might suggest he would like to ban all business with China but lacks the confidence to do so. Restrictions on investment from neighbouring countries — as if Pakistan would put money into India or Nepal has any to do so — are too thinly veiled to fool anyone. Exhorting Indian businessmen to take advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic to lure foreign investors away from China annoys Beijing while ignoring the reasons (weak infrastructure, poor work ethic, bureaucratic stranglehold and all-pervasive corruption) why investors shunned India in the first place.

At the same time, Mr Modi glosses over China’s territorial incursions in Ladakh for reasons that may not be very creditable. Some of his critics suggest that China alone welcomed him when Britain and the United States refused him visas because they disapproved of his attitude to Muslims as the chief minister of Gujarat. As the Congress’ Ahmed Patel remarked,

Mr Modi has paid nine official visits to China whereas no other Indian Prime Minister has gone there more than twice.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was even more cutting, and pointing to Mr Modi’s obsession with the gigantic statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, he added: “It will be the world’s tallest statue but it will be ‘Made in China’, like our shoes and shirts.” It was an unkind cut for two reasons. First, like Shelley’s Ozymandias, Mr Modi hankers to impress future generations with massive creations. Second, much to the embarrassment of all thinking Indians, the fetish has led him straight into China’s embrace. Only China’s Jiangxi Toqine Metal Crafts Corporation, allegedly the world’s largest foundry, could produce the 7,000 or so bronze plates and panels that the \$430-million, 600-ft figure needed.

The dependence is evident in other more vital spheres. As China’s *Global Times*, a daily tabloid published under the Chinese Communist Party’s auspices, noted smugly: “India’s rapid progress in catching up with China when it comes to attracting foreign investment shows its potential to become a global economic powerhouse, but whether India will be the next China in terms of economic growth depends on many factors, and how much help and investment it gets from China may be one of the first and foremost.”

The patronising tone is easily explained: leaving aside the 1962 border war, although both countries have roughly the same population, India’s GDP is only \$2.5 trillion, compared with China’s \$12.2

**Although both countries have roughly the same population, India’s GDP is only \$2.5 trillion, compared with China’s \$12.2 trillion**

trillion. High mobile penetration among 1.3 billion Indians owes much to Chinese Internet platforms, which know from their domestic experience how to translate demographic dividends into consumption power to attract more foreign investment. Among Chinese Internet companies active in India, Alibaba recently invested \$45 million in India’s e-commerce platform Paytm.

As the former Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, has always reiterated, the Asian ecosystem has ample space for India and China both to grow together. There are enough consumers and sources of raw material and investment capital for two burgeoning economies. There are also signs that the Indian tortoise may not be crawling too far behind the Chinese hare.

While foreign corporate launches, mergers and acquisitions in China amounted to nearly \$41.6 billion last year, India did not do too badly, with \$40.6 billion in foreign direct investment. Walmart’s \$16 billion stake in Flipkart meant a 64 per cent year-on-year jump. Moreover, India’s \$79 billion remittances from abroad exceeded the \$67 billion that the overseas Chinese sent back. As a result, while India’s GDP grew 8.2 per cent in the second quarter, China’s economy grew 6.7 per cent.

However, one of the most important of the several factors that stand in the way of India’s robust growth is the obsession with spectacle instead of development. Mr Modi

squanders money on architectural extravaganzas like the Ayodhya temple to Ram that is now being built, reinventing Delhi and gigantic statuary instead of investing in liveable housing, potable water and a creaky healthcare system that is incapable of coping with Covid-19. China, meanwhile, never ceases to advertise itself as the only one among the world’s top five healthcare markets with double digit growth.

Another yardstick is that while India is inordinately proud of its nine Nobel laureates, their success is really happenstance. China’s eight prize-winners are the products of the solid primary and secondary school system that has been built up throughout the country.

Standing up to China sounds undeniably patriotic. But we must know the threat in order to repulse it. If the goal had been conquest, China would not have walked away after Bomdila in 1962. If it was economic domination, the Chinese would not have wanted to invest in infrastructure (highways, railways, ports and airports) as well as manufacturing to reduce India’s trade deficit and realise Mr Modi’s “Make in India” dream.

Of course, the Chinese have a strategy and the purpose is to help China, not India. But the way to counter that is not empty bombast and blowing hot and cold, but to build up India’s own economic strength, bargain hard over trade terms to increase India’s exports, and to cooperate in economic and development projects that help both countries.

Like Australia, India too cannot contain China in the South China Sea. It would only diminish itself by becoming another Tibet, Xinjiang or now Hong Kong in America’s anti-China armoury.

*The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author*

## LETTERS

### FIRE SAFETY

It is pivotal that fire safety is given top priority across the country. The recent fire mishap at a Covid-19 care hotel in Vijayawada paints a gloomy picture of fire safety installations in major buildings. It’s unacceptable that a mandatory fire safety equipment are not in working condition in most mishaps (*Commercial complex lack fire safety, DC, Aug. 12*). A proper check by fire and safety wing when issuing NoCs and regular inspections would bring better result than investigating after loss of life and property.

Vikas Kumar  
Visakhapatnam

### BJP CONFUSED IN AP

BJP national general secretary V. Ram Madhav’s ambitious goal to capture power in AP in 2024 seems an uphill task even with the help of its ally Jana Sena (*Ram Madhav: Strive to come to power in 2024, DC, Aug. 12*). They have failed to satisfy AP people on many fronts. Their leaders are making senseless statements never gave any strong assurance for the development of AP.

Bommadevara.Sitapati Rao  
Vijayawada

Email your letters to [info@deccanmail.com](mailto:info@deccanmail.com), [editor@deccanmail.com](mailto:editor@deccanmail.com). You can also send them to Editor, Deccan Chronicle, 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad-500 003.

### Sino-Pak attack on India not ruled out

NEW DELHI, Aug. 12

The possibility of Pakistan attacking India with the help of China “cannot be ruled out” Defence Minister Jagvivan Ram said in a written answer in the Lok Sabha today.

Mr. Abdul Ghani Dar’s question was: “Whether there is a possibility

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

the help and active support of China in this year or in the coming years.” Replying to another question, Mr Jagvivan Ram said that the Government was aware of Chinese activities in the Chumbi valley having a military significance, but “there is no confirmation of the reported construction of an air strip”.

Saeed Naqvi  
Wide Angle



“Mut ranja kar kisi ko, ke apne to aeteqaad, Jee dhaaye ke jo kaaba banaya to kya kiya?”

— Mir Taqi Mir  
We will lose Turkey, if Istanbul is lost.” This statement by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan returned to plague him when his Justice and Development Party lost Ankara, Istanbul and five major cities in 2019’s local elections. This may be one reason why he swiftly transformed the Hagia Sophia museum into a mosque on July 24.

From the Bosphorus, the Istanbul skyline is exactly like picture postcards, a skillful contrast of domes and minarets, slim as thermometers. The brooding Ayasofya Museum stands apart. The greatest Byzantine cathedral, built at the edge of Europe in 537, was designed to dominate the panorama of the Marmara Sea and the Asian mainland beyond.

The first Arab probe of Sindh by Mohammad bin Qasim was in 711 AD, exactly the date when Tariq Ibne Ziad crossed over from Morocco to set up station at what he called Jabal al Tariq, or the Rock of Tariq, which the British renamed Gibraltar in 1704 after the famous Spanish-British naval engagements, including the “Spanish Armada”.

Before the Iberian Peninsula turned into a cauldron of intra-European conflict, 800 years of Muslim rule was somewhat unevenly spread across Spain. To flavour this phase of history, one has to read Maria Rosa Menocal’s masterly *Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain*. The title itself tells the story. It is astonishing that in the past three decades of gruelling Islamophobia, not one of our liberals has referred to phases in history when robust multiculturalism thrived under Muslim rule. After Reconquista in 1492 by Christians, the Inquisition was much harsher on the Jews who found refuge in Morocco and later in the Ottoman Empire.

The glory of the greatest Eastern Orthodox Cathedral came under partial eclipse when the Roman Catholic Church occupied it for six decades. But it was Sultan Mehmet’s establishment of the Ottoman Empire in 1453 that caused the cathedral to face a predictable total eclipse. It was then transformed into a mosque.

From the debris of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, Mustafa Kemal Pasha “Ataturk” resurrected what is modern Turkey. He was determined to take his country from “backwardness” into “modernism”.

In other words, he turned his back on “Muslim traditionalism” and dreamt of a secular Turkey, custom made for Europe. He replaced the Arabian alphabet with the Roman script in the Turkish language. He banned the “fez” cap, brought the practice of Islam under a department of religious affairs under the Prime Minister, and so on. Little wonder the texture of life in Istanbul and Ankara was more European than Islamic, rather like North Tehran under the Shah of Iran. But what was the ingredient that made Turkey’s secularism comparatively more durable? It was the Turkish Army, which became the guarantor of the republic’s secularism. Ataturk divined, and quite rightly too, that Hagia Sophia mosque would be an eyesore for Europe, in perpetuity. With one executive order in 1934, it was reinvented as a museum of Byzantine history.

It was Western callousness that, in the ultimate analyses, made Turkey’s secular edifice vulnerable. Western, mostly American, and Israeli hostility to Arab socialism (Egypt), Ba’athism (Iraq, Syria) and Libya’s cradle-to-grave welfare system (details of the Afghan tumult are only slightly different) promoted Islamism on an unspeakable scale.

The details of Turkey’s upheaval

must be explained. With the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, Serbian and Croatian nationalisms turned upon Bosnian Muslims with vicious brutality. Srebrenica is only one chapter in that shoddy history. Briefings by Gen Sir Michael Rose, the UN military commander, were laden with more gruesome detail by the day, particularly in the four-year siege of Sarajevo. The Balkans, the turf for continuous conflict throughout history between the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian Empires, became an open killing field when Belgrade couldn’t hold Yugoslavia together. The helplessness of Bosnian Muslims was unbelievable. Europe’s reason for not intervening rang hollow. Its intervention, it was said, would cause individual countries to take sides in a conflict where World War II adversaries Serbia and Croatia were fighting each other over the Bosnian spoils.

A Europe sucked into the Bosnian war carried the risk of undermining the very purpose for which the EU was forged: to avoid conflict between member states. This was sophistry, said Salman Rushdie. Reverse the religious affiliations of the combatants, and European troops would be in Bosnia within a day.

Mornings, evenings and afternoons, Turks watched the brutalisa-

tion of Bosnia and Sarajevo, both an evocative part of Turkish historical memory. A powerful anti-West Islamist party, Refah, or Welfare, took shape and spread like prairie fire. Necmettin Erbakan, founder of Refah, became Prime Minister. Citing the secular Constitution, the Army swiftly dethroned the “Islamist” Prime Minister.

Erbakan’s protégés Abdullah Gul and Recep Tayyip Erdogan dismantled “Refah” and reappeared in a secular garb as leaders of AK, or Justice and Development Party. As evidence of their secular credentials, they kept alive their EU membership application, despite European callousness. In fact, French President Giscard d’Estaing virtually slapped Turkey across its face, saying: “European civilisation is Christian civilisation.” After his mishandling of Syria, misreading of Europe, the US and Russia, his popularity in serious question, Mr Erdogan has fallen back on the oldest trick in the politician’s book: religious extremism. “Look”, he will address Islamists, “like Mehmet, the conqueror, I have restored for your supplications a great mosque.”

*The writer is a senior journalist and commentator*



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,369.63	-0.10
Nifty 50	11,308.40	-0.12
S&P 500*	3,381.80	1.44
Dollar (₹)	74.83	-0.06
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.64	0.21
Euro (₹)	87.89	0.15
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,946	1,228 2.31
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	45.13	0.63
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.884	-0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.678	0.020

Mphasis gets US patent for its AI system

Mphasis said it has recently been granted a US patent for its artificial intelligence system for tracking, managing and analysing data from unstructured data sources. "The patented system enables enterprises to draw actionable insights at real-time from enterprise data sources such as e-mails, call centre transcripts, insurance policy documents, broker submissions, bank statements and customer complaints among others," it said.

23 firms attend meet on running private trains



As many as 23 firms, including Bombardier, Alstom, Siemens and GMR, have shown interest in running private trains and attended a pre-application meeting on Wednesday as a first step, the Railways said. Other attendees included BEML, IRCTC, BHEL, CAF, Medha Group, Sterlite, Bharat Forge, JKB Infrastructure and Titagarh Wagons, it said. The Railways has invited 12 Request for Qualifications.

Fuel demand declines by 11.7% in July

India's fuel demand is beginning to flatline after showing signs of returning to life, as consumption dipped 11.7 per cent in July, official data showed. Fuel consumption, a barometer of economic activity, had slumped by over 45 per cent in April as the nationwide lockdown halted most vehicular traffic and shut industries. However, with easing of lockdown restrictions, the demand picked up in May and June.

Ford brings in top-end Freestyle SUV at ₹7.69 lakh

Ford expanded its Freestyle model lineup with a top-of-the-line Freestyle Flair compact SUV variant at an introductory price of Rs 7.69 lakh for petrol variant and Rs 8.79 lakh at Delhi showroom for the diesel to cash in on the festive season. The petrol engine in the new Ford Freestyle Flair is a 3-cylinder, 1.2-litre, TiVCT unit delivering 96PS of maximum power and 120Nm of peak torque.



■ Say imports will hit viability of gardens Tea growers oppose move to reduce duty

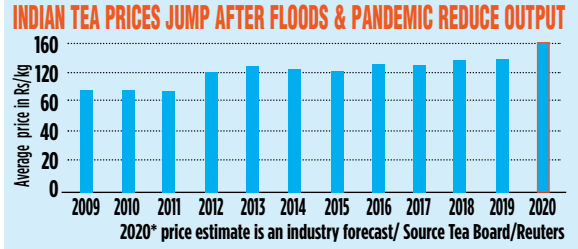
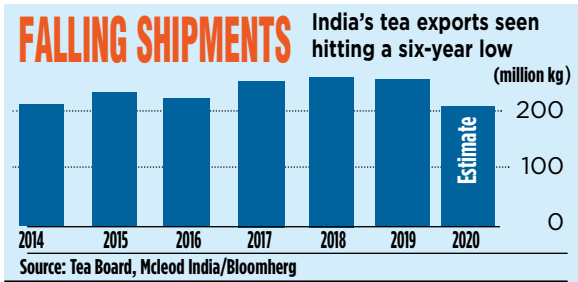
SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Amidst reports of traders seeking duty-free import of tea, growers across the country have opposed it and warned the government that any such move will destabilise the sector. The Consultative Committee of Plantation Associations (CCPA), the apex body of tea associations in India, urged the government not to reduce import duty on tea "as any move in that direction will disturb the equilibrium of the industry".

"A duty reduction will lead to erosion of domestic prices and subsequently affect the economic viability of the tea gardens and livelihood of lakhs of people," CCPA chairman Vivek Goenka said in a letter to commerce minister Piyush Goyal. The United Planters Association of South India (Upasi) too has maintained that it will be counter-productive for the tea growing sector. According to Upasi president A. R. Nagappan, the industry employs 2.12 lakh growers and 11.65 lakh workers, of which more than 70 per cent are women.

The tea growers have made such requests following reports that tea traders and packing companies had asked the government to allow duty-free imports after tea prices touched new highs in the recent auctions.

After eight years of price stagnation, average tea



prices in the country's auctions have risen by 40-60 per cent during the April-June period due to strong buyer demand and a huge shortfall.

According to the Indian Tea Association, the country has already registered a 120-140 million kg shortfall in production. Heavy rains and the absence of tea pickers due to the lockdowns had hammered production and sent tea prices spiraling to records.

In contrast, tea prices in Kenya and Vietnam have fallen due to increased production and traders are planning to import from these countries. Tea imports currently attract duty of 100 per cent. However, under the Free Trade Agreement, tea can be imported from Nepal without duty and from Sri

Lanka at a concessional duty of 7.5 per cent.

CCPA says reduction in import duty will see cheap tea flooding the market and it will have disastrous effects on prices. It also wanted tea imported into the country to be checked for the prescribed FSSAI quality norms and compliances.

According to Nagappan, the price increase in the last few auctions does not substantiate the duty reduction argument as the price increase for the period January to June in South India was lower by 9.4 per cent.

Further, India produces tea in surplus and exports around 18-20 per cent of its production. A disruption in the tea industry will also deprive export revenues to the country.

UK plunges into deep recession, 'hard times'

ADITI KHANNA LONDON, AUG. 12

The UK economy plunged into a deep recession as it shrank 20.4 per cent between April and June at the height of the coronavirus lockdown, according to new figures released on Wednesday.

Reacting to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) data, UK chancellor Rishi Sunak admitted that it indicated that the hard times he had warned about are here and that many more jobs will be lost.

"I've said before that hard times were ahead, and today's figures confirm that hard times are here," Sunak told 'Sky News'.

"Hundreds of thousands of people have already lost their jobs, and sadly in the coming months many more will. But while there are difficult choices to be made ahead, we will get through this, and I can assure people that nobody will be left without hope or opportunity," he said.

It marks the first time in 11 years that the UK has tipped into a recession, which is defined by two consecutive three-month periods of falling GDP. The latest GDP figures showed that it fell by 20.4 per cent between April to June, following a drop of 2.2 per cent between January to March. —PTI

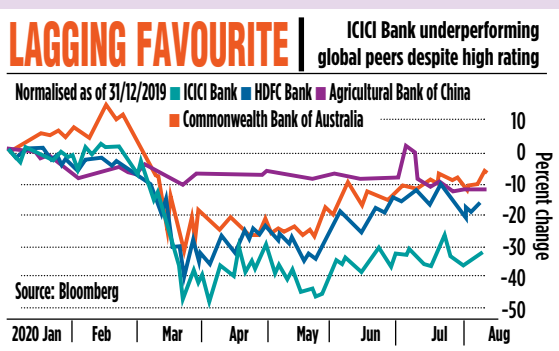
ICICI Bank: Stock favoured by world's analysts lags behind

NUPUR ACHARYA AUG. 12

ICICI Bank Ltd is the world's highest rated banking stock, but its performance hasn't exactly been stellar.

The \$32-billion lender has 56 buy recommendations, and its consensus rating of 4.95 on a scale of 5 is the highest among the 50 largest banks globally, data compiled by Bloomberg show. But its share price is down 32 per cent this year, ranking it in the bottom four of that same group.

Coronavirus lockdowns and low interest rates have taken a toll on global financial stocks, and Indian banks are still reeling from a crisis among the nation's smaller shadow lenders. Even so, attractive valuations... should stand ICICI Bank's shares in good stead, said Sanjiv Bhasin, executive vice president at IIFL Securities Ltd. "The valuation of ICICI Bank gives a lot of comfort as it has



been an underperformer," Bhasin said.

The second-largest public lender is trading at about 1.9 times book value, cheaper than the NSE Nifty Bank Index's 2.7 times. Its earnings have held up, with a 36 per cent rise in net income for the June quarter, helped by the sale of stakes in its insurance subsidiaries.

While the bank reported higher provisions against bad loans due to the pandemic, it plans to raise as much as Rs 15,000 crore through a share sale to institutions to boost its

balance sheet. A number of peers have undertaken such financial buffer building this year, and passive flow is seen helping to support ICICI Bank's stock.

"Funds that track the MSCI, FTSE, Nifty 50 and Sensex indexes will need to buy around 40.8 million shares (10 per cent of the share issued in the qualified institutional placement) over the next couple of weeks and the stock could be supported," Brian Freitas, an analyst for Smartkarma, wrote in a note. —Bloomberg

DGFT amends policy on Advance Authorisation

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 12

After the Delhi High Court ruled against DGFT issuing public notice last year withdrawing Advance Authorisation for export of gold jewellery, medallions and coins, the foreign trade authority has amended the Foreign Trade Policy and re-issued the notification. The DGFT on August 10 issued a notification disal-

lowing advance authorisation scheme where the export item is gold medallions and coins, gold jewellery and articles manufactured by fully mechanised process.

The DGFT had issued a public notice on the same matter on September 26, 2019. However, M. D. Overseas, an exporter of gold jewellery and medallions, had filed a petition with the Delhi High Court

challenging the withdrawal of the scheme.

As per DGFT rules, Advance Authorisation is issued to allow duty-free import of inputs which are physically incorporated in the export product. The rules allow DGFT to exclude any product.

The Delhi High Court in May 2020 ruled that the public notice issued was beyond DGFT's power jurisdiction and authority.

HC notice to Guj. over factories ordinance

Ahmedabad, Aug. 12: The Gujarat High Court on Tuesday issued a notice to the state government on a petition challenging the Factories (Gujarat Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, calling it "violative" of the basic human rights of factory workers.

The ordinance, promulgated last month, seeks to withdraw protections given to factory workers with regards to their health, safety, hygienic working conditions and working hours, said the petition filed by the Gujarat Mazdoor Sabha (GMS).

A division bench of Justices R. M. Chhaya and L.J. Vora issued notice to the state government returnable on September 3.

The GMS said the amendment (through the ordinance) to the Factories Act, 1948, by the state government seeks to "withdraw all sorts of protections given to the workers employed to the extent of

40 in the power-aided factories, and 20 in the factories running without the aid of power."

As per the ordinance, such industrial units stand excluded from the definition of factory under the Act and safeguards provided to workers under the legislation shall not be applicable to them, the petition said. There are a large number of such factories in Gujarat, it said.

Section 106B of the ordinance authorises the government to make any or all offences under the Act "compoundable," making it "toothless," and making employer "immune to penal actions for violating provisions in respect of workers' health and hygiene, safety, hazardous processes, welfare, working hours," it said.

"Ultimately, workmen employed in the factory would be forced labour which is prohibited under Article 23 of the Constitution," it said. —PTI

Foxconn: China's days as world's factory are over

DEB WU AUG. 12

A key supplier to Apple Inc and a dozen other tech giants plans to split its supply chain between the Chinese market and the US, declaring that China's time as factory to the world is finished because of the trade war.

Hon Hai Precision Industry Co chairman Young Liu said it's gradually adding more capacity outside of China, the main base of production for gadgets from iPhones to Dell desktops and Nintendo Switches. The proportion outside the country is now at 30 per cent, up from 25 per cent last June.

That ratio will rise as the company—known also as Foxconn—moves more manufacturing to Southeast Asia and other regions to avoid escalating tariffs on Chinese-made

goods headed to US markets. "No matter if it's India, Southeast Asia or the Americas, there will be a manufacturing ecosystem in each," Liu said, adding that while China will still play a key role in Foxconn's manufacturing empire, the country's "days as the world's factory are done."

The Taiwanese company reported better-than-expected net income of NT\$22.9 billion (\$778 million) for the quarter ended in June, boosted by increased demand for iPads and MacBooks.

Foxconn has been shaking up its traditionally China-focused operations. Hon Hai is among Apple assembly partners that plan to expand operations in India, potentially helping the iPhone maker grow its presence in the country of 1.3 billion and shift some of the US company's supply chain out-

side of China as ties between Washington and Beijing fray.

Chinese rivals are also posing a growing challenge. Local electronics titan Luxshare Precision Industry Co is poised to become the first Chinese homegrown iPhone assembler after sealing a deal in July to buy an Apple handset production plant from Wistron Corp. While Hon Hai will keep assembly orders for premium iPhones, Luxshare will eat into the business for mid-to-entry-level Apple handsets, Fubon Securities analyst Arthur Liao wrote in a July 23 note.

Foxconn will work on its component business to maintain tech leadership and it also benefits from its long-term relationship with Apple, Liu said in response to analysts' questions about Foxconn's competitive strategy. —Bloomberg

Things you're doing wrong when buying stocks on your own

EDWARD ROBINSON AUG. 12

Lena Birse is a stay-at-home mom who loves buying tech stocks during market crashes. Jay Smith is a former pro gamer who switched from cryptocurrencies to blue chips. Heloise Greeff is a data scientist who uses machine learning to analyse trading patterns. And Mik Mullins is a retired hotel executive who's betting the market is about to plunge.

These four amateur traders use different approaches but have one thing in common: They're killing it in one of the wildest markets in memory, with returns ranging from 20 to 60 per cent this year.

While many institutional investors bailed out of the market in the early stages of the pandemic, retail investors have piled in and pocketed big gains, especially in surging tech stocks. The US digital brokerage Robinhood signed up 3 million new users in the first five months of the year, giving it 13 million total customers.

But playing the market is fraught with risks. To learn

how to avoid pitfalls, Bloomberg News picked the brains of these four top performers on eToro, a digital trading platform regulated by the UK's Financial Conduct Authority. E\*Trade lets people copy the trades of investors with proven track records, like this quartet.

They all believe newcomers make mistakes by not investing for the long term and by not diversifying their portfolios with at least 30 well-researched names. Here are the other mistakes they spotted.

**Jumping In Without Testing Out Trading Strategies:** When Heloise Greeff decided to plunge into the stock market in 2016, she did what any good scientist does—she experimented. Greeff used a "demo account" on eToro to execute simulated trades with \$100,000 of fake money. She discovered straight away that trying to time the market and trade in and out of positions everyday was a bad idea.

Greeff loves looking for patterns in oceans of market data. When the S&P 500 Index and other benchmarks were hitting all-time highs late last year, the



data was sending her a powerful signal: It was time to retreat. "I am a conservative trader so I liquidated 60 per cent of the positions in my portfolio, and while I missed the highs of January, I had peace of mind," she says. Since then, Greeff has waded back in. She's up around 20 per cent this year.

**Chasing Hyped Stocks Instead of Doing Research:** After dropping out of school at age 14, Jay Smith sought glory on the virtual playing fields of eSports. He became smitten with Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, as well as solar

energy stocks. When the digital coin bubble popped in 2018, Smith's portfolio fell almost 54 per cent and he learned a painful lesson in the dangers of hype.

These days, the 32-year-old's bets are a far less racy mix: Chipmaker AMD and Microsoft, and this year he started buying shares in Home Depot and Lowe's, the home improvement giants. He does his homework on companies. "I spend a large amount of time reading product user manuals and watching launch events on YouTube. A solar company I followed recently held a training day

online, so I watched to see how they install their equipment." He's up about 50 per cent this year.

**Making Big Bets Instead of Starting Small:** A few years ago, after Lena Birse and her husband sold their heating business in Bristol, they decided to invest the windfall in stocks. Birse balked at paying fees to a money manager. She started small, buying modest stakes in household names, such as the UK retailer Tesco. Eventually, she grew confident enough to switch to high-octane stocks.

The mother of two teenagers splurged on a beachfront dream house on the Mediterranean and a London flat.

**Investing Money You Need in Five Years:** Mik Mullins says he felt like a blind, drunk monkey stumbling in the dark when he started investing in the early 2000s. Eventually, Mullins, a British expat in Singapore, found his footing by getting in early on companies that were disrupting global industries, like Facebook and Zillow. In 2012, he retired at the age of 42

from his profession as a hotel marketing consultant to tend his portfolio. And he advised friends to follow one primary rule: Never invest money that you're going to need for big-ticket items such as a house or college tuition. Mullins is a true believer in investing for the long term. He doesn't even like to look at his portfolio more than once a week.

**Obsessively Checking Your Portfolio:** It can be tempting to keep looking at the daily swings in your stocks' prices, but if you do this every day, it spurs panicky trades and losses.

Over time, Birse said she built a tolerance for risk. After the pandemic hit, she resisted the urge to panic. Instead, she bided her time and prepared to add to her positions in longtime "winners" like Shopify, the Canadian e-commerce firm that's skyrocketed 148 per cent this year.

"I used to turn off the computer during selloffs," says Birse, 50. "But then I wanted to be more active, more aggressive, so in March I stole my nerves, waited three weeks, and then it was time to go shopping. It felt like the sale of the century."





## SHORT TAKES

## Russia pays fine to escape ban

**Moscow:** Russia paid \$6.3 million to World Athletics on Wednesday to escape expulsion from track and field's world governing body.

The federation, known as RusAF had a Saturday deadline to pay a \$5 million fine and \$1.3 million in costs to World Athletics. That followed the alleged use of forged medical documents to give an athlete an alibi for being unavailable for drug testing. RusAF was threatened with expulsion after it missed an initial July 1 deadline to pay.

"World Athletics can confirm it has today received the funds to settle RusAF's two outstanding payments," World Athletics said in a statement.

The Russian Sports Ministry put up the funds after RusAF said it couldn't pay. The ministry said on Wednesday that it gave RusAF "a one-time subsidy for developing the sport, including clearing the debt to World Athletics," but didn't specify how much money has been transferred to the Russian sporting organisation.

— AP

## Serena, Simona are stretched

**Los Angeles:** A rusty Serena Williams made a winning return from her six-month Coronavirus hiatus on Tuesday, defeating lowly ranked Bernarda Pera in three sets to advance to the second round of the WTA Top Seed Open tournament in Kentucky.

Williams, who before Tuesday had not played a competitive game since a Fed Cup appearance in February, was forced to come from behind to defeat world number 60 Pera 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 in two hours and 15 minutes at the Top Seed Tennis Club in Lexington.

Meanwhile, top-seeded Simona Halep had to fight hard to advance to the second round of the Prague Open in beating unseeded Polana Herczeg 6-1, 1-6, 7-6 (3) on Tuesday.

It was the first competitive match for Halep since she won the Dubai Championships in February for her 20th career WTA title. Before the Wimbledon champion recovered from a foot injury she sustained in Dubai, the Coronavirus pandemic forced a five-month break. — Agencies

## CWG Village to be a multi-site affair

**Birmingham:** The Covid-19 pandemic has forced the organisers of the 2022 Commonwealth Games to opt for a multi-site athletes village instead of building single accommodation facility for players and officials.

According to the Games organisers, the athletes and team officials will now be housed in three campus villages at The University of Birmingham, The University of Warwick, and The NEC Hotel Campus. The 500 million pound village was being constructed on the former Birmingham City University site in Perry Barr and was set to provide accommodation to 6,500 athletes and team officials.

However, the organisers scrapped the idea after sensing that it could not be delivered on time. The new campus model will see 1,600 athletes and officials housed at the NEC Hotel Campus, 1,900 at The University of Warwick, and the principal village with 2,800 at The University of Birmingham.

— PTI

## RIDERS BRACE FOR AUSTRIAN GP IN RAIN

**Spielberg, Austria:** Forecasts are predicting a wet and wild Austrian Grand Prix at the Red Bull Ring as Alex Marquez and Stefan Bradl look to launch a rejuvenated challenge.

The MotoGP World Championship arrives in Austria for the first of two races at the Red Bull Ring hot off the back of the Czech GP. It proved to be a trying weekend for the Repsol Honda Team, but both riders are ready to put the weekend behind them and focus on adapting their respective Repsol Honda RC213V machines to the Austrian circuit.

— Agencies

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## COVID HITS IPL

## Rajasthan Royals fielding coach tests positive

**New Delhi, Aug. 12:** Rajasthan Royals' fielding coach Dishant Yagnik has tested positive for Covid-19, the IPL team announced on Wednesday, making it the first such case among the league franchises ahead of their departure next week to this year's tournament venue, the UAE.

The 13th edition of Indian Premier League is set to take place in the UAE from September 19 to November 10. The event was moved out of India due to Covid-19 cases.

"Rajasthan Royals would like to inform that their fielding coach Dishant Yagnik has tested positive for Covid-19," the franchise said in a statement.

"The test was undertaken keeping in mind that the team members need to assemble in Mumbai next week for their flight to the UAE. The franchise implemented an extra test for all players, support staff and management travelling to the UAE in addition to the two tests recommended by BCCI," the statement added.

This is the first case among the IPL contingent. Yagnik is currently in his hometown Udaipur and has been advised to get admitted to a hospital for the mandatory 14-day quarantine.

After the completion of the two-week quarantine, Yagnik will be undergoing two tests as per the BCCI's Covid protocols and will be allowed back into the team only after his reports return negative.

After his arrival in UAE, Yagnik will have to stay in self-isolation for the next six days and will also undergo three more Covid-19 tests.

— PTI



Dishant Yagnik, fielding coach of the Rajasthan Royals, in this file photo.

## FRESH BID FOR SPONSORS

**New Delhi, Aug. 12:** Education technology company Unacademy, which is already one of IPL's sponsors, is eyeing the league's title sponsorship rights now and is set to submit its bid to replace Chinese mobile phone company Vivo this season.

A BCCI official confirmed that Unacademy has picked up the bid papers but refrained from making any comments beyond that. "I can confirm that Unacademy has shown interest and picked the bid papers. I have heard they will be submitting a bid and are pretty serious. So Patanjali if they bid, will have competition," the senior official said.

The BCCI is now looking at a lesser value — between ₹300 to ₹350 crore — for a period of four months and 13 days.

— PTI

## CSK want MSD to play till 2022

**New Delhi, Aug. 12:** Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Vishwanathan feels their talisman Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who has not played any competitive cricket since last year's World Cup semifinal, will be part of the franchise in 2021 and 2022 IPLs.

The 39-year-old Dhoni is set for a return to competitive cricket in the upcoming IPL, to be played in the UAE from September 19 to November 10.

"We can expect MS Dhoni to be part of both (IPL 2020 and 2021) and probably for even the next year 2022," Vishwanathan was quoted as saying by an Indian news media outlet.

"I am getting updates through the media only, saying he has been training in Jharkhand in indoor nets. But we don't have to worry about the skipper, boss. We don't worry about him at all."

"He knows his responsibilities and he will take care of himself and the team," he added.

N. Srinivasan, the vice-chairman and managing director of India Cements, owners of the CSK franchise, in January said that Dhoni would be retained by the team for the 2021 IPL mega-auction.

Speculations were rife about Dhoni's future since the 2019 World Cup as he failed to get a central BCCI contract.

— PTI

## DADDY'S ARMY READY FOR IPL, SAYS BALAJI

**Chennai, Aug. 12:** The presence of many players who are deep into their 30s is a boon and not bane for Chennai Super Kings as they head into the 13th IPL after the long Coronavirus-forced break, the team's bowling coach L Balaji said on Wednesday.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, 39, is getting ready to lead the three-time winners in the upcoming edition of IPL, scheduled to be held in the UAE from September 19 to November 10.

Asked if the senior players would find it difficult to get back into the groove, Balaji responded in the negative.

"I don't think it's going to be that difficult, because all your life you have played this sport. So many years of understanding will come in handy to get back to your best," Balaji said.

"Experience will definitely be important. It has been proven in big tournaments like IPL."

Besides the skipper, the franchise, among others, has in its ranks veterans such as Shane Watson and Dwayne Bravo.

— PTI



Lucas Ocampos (centre) of Sevilla celebrates after scoring against Wolverhampton Wanderers during their UEFA Europa League quarterfinal at the MSV Arena in Duisburg on Wednesday. Sevilla won 1-0.

— AFP

## EUROPA | LEAGUE

## Shakhtar bump Basel, in semis

**Gelsenkirchen (Germany), Aug. 12:** Shakhtar Donetsk routed Basel 4-1 to set up a Europa League semifinal against Inter Milan.

Four Brazilians scored for the Ukrainian side before Ricky van Wolfswinkel netted a consolation goal for the Swiss side.

Junior Moraes put Shakhtar ahead in the second minute by steering in a header from Marlos' corner. It was the Brazilian-born Ukraine forward's 25th goal across all competitions, coming after he scored two against Wolfsburg in the second leg of their rescheduled Round-of-16 tie last week.

Taison grabbed Shakhtar's second with a deflected shot after a fine flowing team move in the 22nd.

Raoul Petretta produced a clearance to deny Moraes from the rebound.

Alan Patrick's penalty in the 75th effectively sealed the Ukrainian side's place in the semifinals.

Shakhtar will play Inter

in Dsseldorf on August 17. The final takes place in Cologne four days later.

## SEVILLA HUNT DOWN WOLVES TO MAKE LAST-4

A late header from Lucas Ocampos gave Sevilla a 1-0 win over Wolverhampton and a place in the Europa League semifinals.

After Raul Jimenez missed an early penalty for Wolves, Sevilla increasingly took control of the game. The five-time Europa League champion had seemingly endless set pieces around the Wolves penalty area and finally broke through when Ocampos headed in Eder Banega's cross following a corner in the 88th minute.

Wolves forward Adama Traore earlier showed extraordinary pace in his 53rd club game of the season to sprint in behind the Sevilla defense, only for Diego Carlos to cut him down with a tackle from behind for the penalty.

Jimenez's spot-kick was barely off-center and pushed away by Yassine Bounou.

— Agencies

## England out of Stokes for second Test vs Pak

**Southampton, Aug. 12:** England may have won the series opener against Pakistan but the absence of Ben Stokes leaves them with arguably the bigger selection headache going into Thursday's second Test at Southampton.

Pakistan were much the better side for much of last week's first Test at Old Trafford and, despite a second-innings collapse, were still favourites to win when they reduced England to 117-5 in pursuit of a target of 277.

But a sixth-wicket partnership of 139 between Chris Woakes (84 not out) and Jos Buttler (75) turned the tide as England went 1-0 up in a three-match series on Saturday.

Since England won with more than a day to spare in Manchester, it has been announced that star allrounder Stokes will miss the rest of the series as a result of travelling to New Zealand to be with his ill father.

A quad injury meant that the end of England's

## Live on TV

## SECOND TEST

England vs Pakistan  
from 3.30 pm on Sony SIX

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUARTERFINAL

Lepizig vs Atletico Madrid  
from 12.30 am (Friday)  
on Sony Ten 2

● Hosts are left with a selection headache with star allrounder Ben Stokes out of the Southampton Test.

● Stokes has left for New Zealand to be with his ailing father and will miss the remainder of the series.

2-1 series win over the West Indies last month — a campaign that marked international cricket's return from the Coronavirus lockdown — and the first Test against Pakistan saw vice-captain Stokes effectively deployed as a specialist batsman by skipper Joe Root.

Stokes, however, still took two important wickets on the third evening against Pakistan.

The obvious move for England would be to recall batsman Zak Crawley, who has missed out on the last two

matches while an extra bowler has been deployed because of Stokes' injury problems.

Buttler underlined his skill in a run-chase last week but the wicketkeeper, by his own admission, had a poor match with the gloves. England do have the option to recall Ben Foakes, widely regarded as a better keeper, and play Buttler as a specialist batsman.

England are in the middle of a sequence of six Tests in seven weeks, a gruelling schedule that has seen them adopt a policy of rotating their quicks.

— AFP

## ATM hope to be on the money

**Madrid, Aug. 12:** Atletico Madrid's triumph over Liverpool in March was a throwback to a more celebrated past under Diego Simeone but five months on and the Champions League offers them a very real opportunity in the present.

Knocking out the holders at Anfield may prove to be the first glimpse of a new era under Simeone, where the likes of Joao Felix, Marcos Llorente, Jose Gimenez and Jan Oblak push Atletico to challenge for major honours again.

Or it could be a last hurrah for the Simeone project, which some believe will never again scale the heights of their incredible Spanish league title win in 2014 or their runs to the Champions League finals in 2014 and 2016.

Either way, few believed Llorente's two goals in extra-time would be the start of something even more surprising, namely Simeone lifting the cup in May.

Certainly nobody anticipated football shutting down completely the following week, as nervousness turned to indignation about Atletico fans travelling to Anfield, before matches behind closed doors became matches postponed indefinitely.

And yet when football



Lyon's Memphis Depay controls the ball during a training session at the Groupama Stadium Training Centre in Decines-Charpieu, near Lyon, on Wednesday, eve of their UEFA Champions League quarterfinal match against Manchester City.

— AFP

returned in June, Atletico were transformed. They went unbeaten in the 11 games after the resumption, to dispel concerns they could miss out on La

Liga's four.

They won seven matches and drew four; one of them against Barcelona at Camp Nou, which helped Real Madrid clinch the title.



D. J. Wilson of the Milwaukee Bucks goes for a basket during their NBA game against the Washington Wizards in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Wednesday. The Bucks won 126-113.

— AP

## Portland edge past Mavericks

**Orlando, Aug. 12:** Damian Lillard exploded for 61 points on Tuesday as the Portland Trail Blazers roared towards a place in the NBA playoffs with a thrilling 134-131 win over the Dallas Mavericks.

Lillard — who had scored 51 points in a victory against the Philadelphia 76ers on Sunday — once again led from the front for Portland, who are now within touching distance of a postseason berth.

The Blazers talisman nailed a clutch three-pointer in the closing stages to level the score at 130-130 and then provided the assist that saw Portland take a 132-130 lead with just

under a minute remaining.

The win vaulted Portland above the Memphis Grizzlies into the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference standings with 34 wins and 39 defeats.

The eighth — and ninth — placed teams in the West will advance to an elimination game this weekend to determine who claims the final postseason berth from the conference.

Lillard's 61-point effort made him only the second player in NBA history to score 60 points or more in three games during a single season, putting him alongside Wilt Chamberlain.

— AFP