



## Central Delhi rain deficient

NEW DELHI: Central Delhi has recorded just 8.5 mm rainfall this monsoon season so far and is the second-most rain-deficient district in the country, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data.June 1 to September 30 is officially considered the monsoon season in India. Central Delhi has received only 8.5 mm rainfall against the normal of 53.3 mm since June 1 -- a deficiency of 84 per cent. The rain deficit in Kistwar district of Jammu and Kashmir is the largest in the country. It has recorded 5 mm precipitation against the normal of 68.4 mm -- a shortfall of 93 per cent. In the national capital, East Delhi has received 19.2mm rainfall against the normal of 53.3mm -- a dearth of 64 per cent.

## Family of 6 commits suicide

YADGIRI: Shockwave spread across Shahapur taluka of Yadgir district where six members belonging to a family committed suicide by jumping into an open farm pond on Monday afternoon, said the police. Shahapur taluka is around 550 kms from Bengaluru, and is part of one of the most backward districts of the state, where migration of labourers is quite often reported. According to the police the deceased were identified as Bhimaraya Surapura, 45 and Shantamma, 36, while their children were - Sumitra, 13, Sidevi 12, Shivaraj, 9 and Lakshmi, 8.

## Partly cloudy sky in Delhi

NEW DELHI: It was a partly cloudy Monday morning in the national capital with the minimum temperature settling at 27.6 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department said. The maximum temperature is expected to touch 40 degrees Celsius, the weather office has forecast. The relative humidity was recorded at 65 per cent at 8.30 am. Even though the city may experience rain on July 2 and 3, the IMD has predicted that no favourable conditions are likely to develop for the further advance of the southwest monsoon into Delhi for the next seven days. "Prevailing meteorological conditions, large-scale atmospheric features and the forecast wind pattern by dynamical models suggest that no favourable conditions are likely to develop for further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Rajasthan.

# ALERT SOLDIERS THWART POSSIBLE ATTACK BY DRONES

JAMMU

A fresh attempt to attack a military installation with the help of drones was foiled by alert Army sentries at the Ratnuchak-Kaluchak station who fired at the unmanned aerial vehicles that flew away, an incident that came hours after an IAF station saw the first terror attack using quadcopters.

The first drone was spotted at around 11.45 pm on Sunday followed by another at 2.40 am over the military station, which was witness to a terror attack in 2002 in which 31 people were killed, in-

cluding 10 children. Officials on Monday said that alert Army troops fired nearly two dozen rounds to bring down the drones hovering over its brigade headquarters. "...two separate drone activities were spotted over Ratnuchak-Kaluchak military area by alert troops," Jammu-based Army PRO Lt Col Devender Anand said in a statement here.

He said a high alert was sounded immediately and Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs)



engaged the drones with firing. "Both the drones flew away. A major threat was thwarted by the alertness and proactive approach of troops," he said, adding the security forces are on high alert and the search operation is in progress.

The officials said the whole area outside the military station was cordoned off immediately and a massive search operation was going on when the last reports were received.

Nothing objectionable has

been found on the ground so far, the officials said. The latest incident comes hours after a drone, in a first-of-its kind strike, dropped two bombs at Indian Air Force (IAF) station here, causing minor injuries to two personnel.

The military station at Kaluchak has been on high alert ever since the 2002 attack. Thirty-one people, including three military personnel, 16 Army family members -- women and children -- and 11 civilians were killed in the attack. Forty eight people, including 13 Army personnel, 20 Army family members and 15 civilians were injured.

# Twitter map shows J&K, Ladakh outside India

NEW DELHI

Amid a stand-off with the Indian government over compliance with new IT rules, the Twitter website is displaying a wrong map of the country that shows Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh as separate country. The glaring distortion, which appears on the career section of Twitter website under the header "Tweep Life", has triggered a heavy backlash from netizens who are demanding strict action against the microblogging platform. This is not the first time that Twitter has misrepresented India's map. Earlier, it had shown Leh as part of China. A mail sent to Twitter on the issue did not elicit a response. The US digital giant has been engaged in a tussle with the Indian government over the new social media rules.

The government has confronted Twitter for deliberate defiance and failure to comply with the country's new IT rules, despite repeated reminders. Notably, the microblogging platform has lost its legal shield as an intermediary in India, becoming liable for users posting any unlawful content. On Monday, social media users slammed Twitter's gross misrepresentation of India's map, that appears on its career section.



The global map, showing Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh outside India, triggered angry responses from netizens who are demanding stringent action be initiated against the microblogging platform that has flouted rules on multiple occasions in the past. In October last year, Twitter came under heavy criticism and faced backlash after its geotagging feature displayed "Jammu & Kashmir, People's Republic of China" in a live broadcast from Leh's Hall of Fame, a war memorial for fallen

soldiers in the Union Territory of Ladakh. India has issued a stern warning to Twitter that time, making it clear that any disrespect of the country's sovereignty and integrity is totally unacceptable.

In November, government issued a notice to Twitter for showing Leh as part of Jammu and Kashmir instead of the Union Territory of Ladakh, as Centre lambasted the platform for disrespecting the territorial integrity of India by showing an incorrect map.

## HC refuses to stay new IT rules regulating digital news media

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court Monday refused to stay the new Information Technology rules which seek to regulate digital news media, saying it was not in agreement with the petitioners on passing such an order at this stage. Foundation for Independent Journalism, The Wire, Quint Digital Media Ltd and Pravda Media Foundation, parent company of Alt News, sought a stay on the Information technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, on the ground that a fresh notice

has been issued to them to comply with the rules or else coercive action will be taken.

A vacation bench of Justices C Hari Shankar and Subramoniam Prasad said the notice has been issued to them only for implementation of notification on which there was no stay.

"We are not in agreement with you. If you want we will pass a reasoned detailed order or if you want we can renotify it before the roster bench. You take instructions and let us know," the bench said.



J&K Lt Governor Manoj Sinha pays his obeisance at the Holy Cave Shrine of Amarnath. The annual yatra has been cancelled this year due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

## DELHI EXTENDS PERIOD OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES ACT

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has retrospectively extended the period of imposition of essential services maintenance Act against contractual employees engaged through outsourced agency in Centralised Accident & Trauma Services (CATS), till December 12.

According to a gazette notification dated June 24, the Haryana Essential Services Maintenance Act (HESMA) was imposed against them for a period of six months to "secure uninterrupted health services" necessary for the lives of the citizens of Delhi. The national capital has been among the cities, worst-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, whose first case was reported here in March 2020. "The said notification was valid up to 03.06.2021. And whereas, the Lt. Governor of the National Capital Territory of Delhi is further satisfied that to ensure life-saving essential services of ambulances uninterruptedly to the citizen of Delhi, it is necessary to extend HESMA for another period of six months.

## Man held from Punjab in Red Fort violence case

NEW DELHI

A man wanted in the Red Fort flag hoisting case was arrested from Punjab and sent to a three-day custody of Delhi Police by a court here on Monday. "Gurjot Singh was arrested from Amritsar in Punjab. A reward of Rs one lakh was declared for his arrest," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Sanjeev Kumar Yadav said. Singh, who was evading arrest for five months, was nabbed on Sunday by the Special Cell of Delhi Police.

He was produced before Metropolitan Magistrate Anurag Thakur who remanded him in police custody for three days and also allowed his counsel to meet him every day for half an hour. On January 26, protesting farmers had clashed with police during a

tractor rally against the three new central farm laws and stormed the Red Fort, hoisting religious flags on its domes and injuring scores of policemen. The court had recently taken cognisance of the charge sheet in the case and summoned all the accused on June 29. Actor-activist Deep Sidhu, who is accused of being the key conspirator of the violence, is currently out on bail. "After the incident, Singh spoke to the media where he disclosed his role in the incident of flag hoisting at the historic monument.

On that basis, he was wanted in the case and a reward of Rs one lakh was announced on his arrest," the DCP said. Thousands of farmers protesting against the Centre's new agr laws had clashed with the police during a tractor parade on January 26.

## FM unveils new recovery package

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday announced Rs 1.5 lakh crore of additional credit for small and medium businesses, more funds for the healthcare sector, loans to tourism agencies and guides, and waiver of visa fee for foreign tourists as part of a package to support the pandemic-hit economy.

Together with previously announced Rs 93,869 crore spending on providing free foodgrains to the poor till November and additional Rs 14,775 crore fertiliser subsidy, the stimulus package - mostly made up of government guarantee to banks and microfinance institutions for loans they extend to Covid-hit sectors - totalled up to Rs 6.29 lakh crore.

Addressing a press conference, Sitharaman said, "Economic relief measures are being announced today."

She provided Rs 23,220 crore of additional funding for setting up children and paediatric care/paediatric beds at hospitals to prepare healthcare infrastructure to deal with any emergency arising for Covid wave hitting children. To incentivize job creation, the government committed to paying the employer and employee's share to provident fund (PF) for all new recruitments done till March 2022. Previously, the government paid Rs 902 crore for 21.42 lakh beneficiaries of 79,577 establishments.

With the tourism sector being hit hard by the pandemic, she announced up to Rs 10 lakh loan to tourist agencies and Rs 1 lakh loan to tourist guides while waiver of visa fee for the first five lakh foreign tourists visiting India after travel restrictions ease.

Tourist visa fee waiver will cost the government Rs 100 crore.



Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight test a new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Balasore, Odisha

# Supreme Court allows pvt schools to levy development, annual fees

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Monday refused to stay the Delhi High Court order allowing private unaided schools to collect annual and development charges from students for the period after the lockdown ended in the national capital last year.

A bench comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Aniruddha Bose did not agree with the submission of the Directorate of Education (DoE) of Delhi government that it has the power to regulate the levy of fees by private unaided schools and the high court judgement permitting such a levy of annual and development charges be stayed. "We are not inclined

to grant you the stay," the bench told senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for Delhi government, vehemently seeking the stay of the judgement saying, "lakhs and lakhs of parents will be affected. Please don't shut us out". The top court, however, said although it was dismissing the appeal of the Delhi government, this would not come in the adjudication of its plea by a division bench of the high court as nothing on merits have been recorded by it. "Considering the fact that the division bench is hearing the matter on July 12. All the contentions remain open and can be raised before the division bench and the dismissal of the petition does not reflect upon merits of the case," the bench said. On May 31, a single judge bench of the



high court had quashed the office orders of April and August 2020 issued by DoE of the Delhi government forbidding and postponing collection of annual charges and development fees.

The Delhi government then filed the intra-court appeal before a division bench of the high court which on June 7 issued notices the plea but had refused to stay its single-judge order allowing private unaided schools to collect annual and development charges from students. Aggrieved by the refusal of stay, the DoE moved the top court saying that grave injustice would be done if the stay was not granted as the government had already allowed such institutions to keep collecting 100 per cent of tuition fees. At the outset, senior

advocates Shyam Divan and N K Kaul, appearing for bodies representing private schools, opposed the Delhi government's appeal. They said the single judge bench of the high court, on May 31, had taken note of an apex court's judgement in the 'Indian School, Jodhpur vs State of Rajasthan, in which it was held that the schools shall collect annual fees with a deduction of 15 per cent and had applied that in the instant case.

Singh said the apex court's judgement was not applicable in Delhi's context as it has been held in past that DoE is duly empowered to decide the issue of levy of fees and moreover, the private schools have been already been allowed to charge tuition fees.



# A MAN OF HONOUR



Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan being presented with a bust of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao during the birth centenary celebrations of the leader in Hyderabad on Monday

## Necklace Road renamed as PV Marg

Former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's statue was unveiled at the Necklace Road in Hyderabad on Monday on the occasion of his birth centenary. Installed by the Telangana State Cultural Department, the 26-feet bronze statue was unveiled by Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Naidu. The Governor also unveiled a plaque renaming the Necklace Road as PV Marg. The statue weighing two tonnes has come up at a cost of Rs 27 lakh near PV Gyan Bhoomi, the samadhi of Narasimha Rao at the Hussain Sagar lake. It is one of the seven bronze statues of PV planned to be installed as part of the centenary celebrations.



Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu paying tributes to former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao marking his birth centenary at Circuit House junction in Visakhapatnam on Monday

## Venkaiah Naidu recalls PV's economic reforms

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VISAKHAPATNAM

FORMER Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao was a legendary figure, who had pioneered economic reforms, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has said.

Paying tributes to the veteran Congress leader at Circuit House Junction in Visakhapatnam on Monday, the Vice President described PV as a multi-faceted personality, a phenomenal scholar, an astute administrator, a litterateur and multi-linguist, who had steered the country clear of the economic crisis through his art of consensual leadership and farsighted vision.

The Vice President mentioned that PV had initiated bold reforms which helped in accelerating the country's development over the past three decades. Further, he said, former Prime Minister AB Vajpayee had implemented the re-

forms started by Narasimha Rao in letter and spirit, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi has speeded up the reforms. "Reforms are the need of the hour and we must adopt the best practices," he added.

Giving credit to PV for ending the Licence Raj in the country, the Vice President said he was the architect of India's economic liberalisation. "Importantly, it was PV who facilitated India's entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO)," he pointed out.

The Vice President said the former PM had safeguarded the nation's interests effectively on the global stage, although he took over the leadership of the nation during trying times and in a difficult external strategic environment. Recalling that PV had great love for languages, Venkaiah Naidu said among his many works, PV translated the epic Telugu novel 'Veyi Padagalu' into Hindi titled as

'Sahasra Phan' and also published 'Abala Jeevitam', a Telugu translation of the famous Marathi Novel, 'Pan Lakshat Kon Ghetu'.

He said that PV had always vouched for imparting education in mother tongue in schools. "I too have always maintained that the medium of instruction should be in a child's mother tongue up to high school level," he reiterated.

Stating that PV had left an abiding legacy, the Vice President said that former President Abdul Kalam had called him a patriotic statesman who believed that the nation is bigger than the political system.

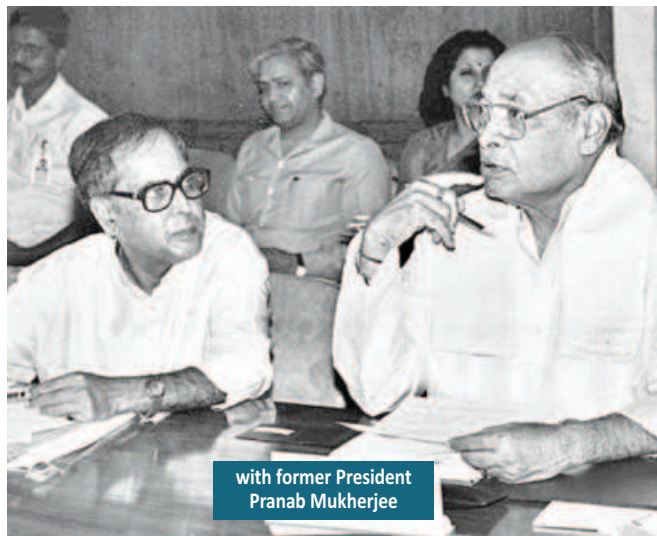
The Vice President said no nation would be able to move forward by forgetting its culture, heritage and the immense contribution of great leaders towards nation building. The lives and teachings of great men should be passed on to the younger generation, he noted.



PV with former PM Rajiv Gandhi



with former PM VP Singh



with former President Pranab Mukherjee

THE HANS INDIA

## Womenia

## Mithila Palkar talks about her beauty secrets

PUJA GUPTA

THE ACTRESS TOOK TO INSTAGRAM TO SHARE SOME TIPS FOR THIS CHANGE IN SEASON



As monsoon brings a much-needed respite from summer heat, the humidity does start to play on our skin, calling for a much-needed change in our skin care routine too. Multifaceted actress Mithila Palkar, who has always been adored by her fans for her glowing, make-up free skin has been owning her monsoon skincare rituals this season. She recently took to Instagram to share some awe-inspiring tips with her fans.

She said, "Being a Mumbaier, monsoons are my all-time favourite season - a time for enjoying hot pakoras with masala chai to the sound of the rain. But as the weather changes, so does my skin, making my skincare routine even more important." During the monsoons, a well-planned skincare regime with the right balance of skin-gredients is key.

Giving us glow-goals, she added, "For that inside-out glow, I exercise, stay hydrated through the day and eat a balanced diet with greens, nuts and fresh fruits too. I also avoid touching my skin as it can cause irritation and I always ensure I apply skincare products to a clean face with clean hands."

Mithila adds, "Got my hands on the Olay Power Duo and let me tell you, the results have been just amazing. I start with Luminous that easily absorbs into my skin, reduces dark spots and gives it a dewy glow. I follow it up with a hydrating light-weight matte-based moisturizer with SPF 30, niacinamide, hyaluronic acid & pentapeptides for a plump, nourished finish."

Mithila is also particular about her night-time skincare regime and shares a few tips she practices before bed. "To end my day, I use a Retinol-based moisturizer, wind down with my favorite book and ensure I get my 8 hours of sleep. Sharing how Retinol is her new favorite beauty sleep in a jar, she adds, "The Serum is something that I gravitate towards. It is lightweight in texture and leaves my skin looking plump & bouncy the next morning."

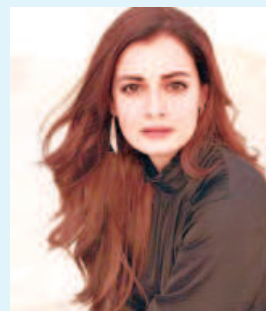
Ending on a sweet note, she shares, "These simple steps ensure my skin receives the right amount of nutrients and stays glowing, dewy, and refreshed all day long."

TWEET PATROL



DIA MIRZA  
@DEESPEAK

Tawny Coster just born ☐ #Butterflies in our Balcony. Despite the strong winds this fragile looking creature held on strong. And then spread her wings and took flight. What a wonderful sight! #ForNature #GenerationRestoration #MondayMotivation



## Why Vitamin C is your skincare's holy grail?

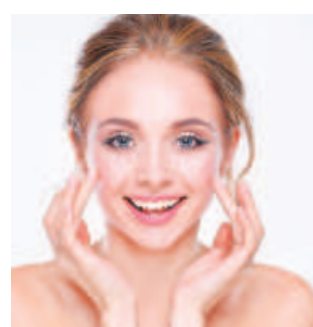
N. LOTHUNGBENI HUMTSOE

Whether you are a skincare fanatic or have just started your journey towards creating your own beauty regime, you would have come across a multiplicity of ingredients on skincare product labels that often leave you wondering what's a good fit for you. The most versatile yet tricky amongst those is Vitamin C.

Most people get a fair dose of this vitamin from the food, fruits, and vegetables they eat. It is a legendary supplement required to keep our immune system robust and fortify our bodies against diseases. It has also played a crucial part in our fight against COVID-19. With countless benefits internally, the vitamin has equal, if not more, dermatological advantages. Arushi Thapar, Senior Marketing Manager, Plum, PurePlay Skin Sciences Pvt Ltd, shares more on the new 'in' natural additive.

### C the advantage

Vitamin C is a potent antioxidant that can neutralize free radicals, but what does that mean for your skin? Vitamin C is known to be a difficult ingredient to develop and work with owing to its fragility and photosensitivity. With advancements in research, we know that the potent L-Ascorbic acid or also known as the most stable



form of Vitamin C which can effectively reduce dark spots, protect from sun damage & treat dull skin. With age and due to sun exposure, collagen synthesis in the skin decreases, leading to wrinkles- once again Vitamin C is the only antioxidant proven to stimulate the synthesis of collagen, minimize fine lines, scars, and wrinkles. Therefore, its important to understand the make of such a potent concoction with multifold benefits. Many skincare products on the market today, deep dive into the skincare science and highlight the vitamin C derivatives, which is an important part for consumers to understand and choose the right Vitamin C serum.

### Why Plum Mandarin & Vitamin C serum should be your holy grail

Make sure your Vitamin C serum checks these boxes before purchasing or using them. A greater absorption of skin is pos-

sible with the use of vitamin C in serum-based formulations. The concentration should be between 10-20% with the sweet spot at 15%- any higher nullifies the benefits and could damage your skin. Another important aspect to pay attention to is the pH value. Human skin tends to have a pH value between 4-5 hence, the serum should have a similar value to be effective. Other factors to consider while adding Vitamin C to your beauty shelf include packaging, colour, and smell.

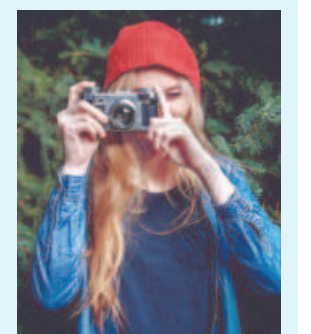
Once you have the ideal Vitamin C infused serum you can mix it up with your existing AM/PM regime- As a base alongside sunscreen is basic but an absolute must-have for glowing skin. It can also be used with Hyaluronic acid for hydration; combined with peptides making it a specialist for mature skin, or mixed with Vitamin E for ultimate nourishment for your skin! Ingredients such as niacinamide, chemical exfoliants, and retinol should not be applied together. Vitamin C with Niacinamide could be potent, with exfoliants causing destabilization, and combined with retinol becomes too much for the skin to handle at one time.

Now that you know all there is to know about Vitamin C, add one to your cart that suits your skin the best. Go ahead, #TheGlow for yourself.

## CAMERA DAY

The origin of Camera Day is unknown, but it is used as a reminder for us to remember the existence of the camera and its many benefits. After all, how many other mediums can capture people and places so beautifully? How many other mediums can evoke smiles of memories past, or reminders of events that have shaped our lives? The camera, in all of its many forms, is to be celebrated. This humble device has become a major part of our lives, and so, on Camera Day, snap some photos during your lunch hour, on your commute to work, or whenever a moment of inspiration strikes.

Of course, the way you take pictures probably won't be the way that people did it before the advent of digital photography and smart devices. Readers of a younger generation will be reaching for their smartphones to take photos of the world around them. And even if you are somebody who was well-versed in the wonderful world of 35mm film and zoom lenses, you might still find yourself reaching for your mobile device instead of that vintage camera from yesteryear. Still, no matter what type of device you use to take photos, do something this Camera Day. We all need to express ourselves creatively, so let your juices flow when you're out and about or pottering around in your home, and take some magical pics.





# HC upholds suspension of Jaipur Greater Municipality mayor

JAIPUR

THE Rajasthan High Court on Monday dismissed a petition filed by Sonya Gurjar challenging her suspension as the mayor of Jaipur Greater Municipality by the state government.

A bench of justices Pankaj Bhandari and C K Songara also upheld the constitutional validity of the provision of the Municipal Act that permits the State to suspend a mayor of a

municipal corporation. The department of local self-governance had issued orders on June 6 suspending Gurjar, and councilors Ajay Singh Chauhan, Paras Jain (all three from the BJP), and Shankar Sharma (independent) for allegedly manhandling and abusing the municipal commissioner.

"I shall be filing an SLP against the decision", said Gurjar, who had challenged her suspension as well the consti-

tutional validity of section 39 of the Act which empowers the State to suspend a Mayor. The high court held that a mayor can be suspended even "without giving a right of pre-audience". It said that the preliminary inquiry report submitted by the regional deputy director of the department was proper and the government acted as per the law.

The bench also observed that the state government has already taken a decision of



holding a judicial inquiry into the alleged allegation of misconduct by Gurjar and others, and directed that it be concluded within six months. The Congress government in the state had appointed Sheel Dhabai as interim Mayor of Jaipur Greater Municipal Corporation.

The alleged incident happened when the commissioner, Yagya Mitra Singh Deo, had gone to Gurjar's chamber for attending a meeting on a

matter related to the company engaged in door-to-door garbage collection. During the meeting, a heated argument broke out between the two and the commissioner, a civil servant, got up to leave midway. In the middle of this, the councilors allegedly manhandled and abused him. Condemning the action against the mayor and the councilors, BJP state president Satish Poonia had said the party "will fight for justice".



## Mild earthquake hits Pithoragarh

PITHORAGARH

AN earthquake of magnitude 3.7 jolted Pithoragarh and its adjoining areas in Uttarakhand on Monday, the District Disaster Management office said.

Mild tremors were felt in Pithoragarh, Kanda and Bageshwar at 12.19 pm, it said. The tremor had a depth of 10 km and its epicentre was in Pithoragarh district, the office said. There is no information yet of any damage caused by the quake, it said.

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday inaugurated three bridges on way to the Indo-China border in Dharchula sub-division of Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district.

Three bailey bridges were inaugurated virtually by the de-

fence minister from Delhi, Boarder Roads Organisation Chief Engineer MNV Prasad said. He said one bridge is on Tawaghat-Ghatia Bagar road near Tawaghat, another on Jaulgibi-Munsyari road at Kirkutiya and the third one on Munsyari-Bugdiyar-Milam road at Laspaa.

Built by the BRO, the bridges connect Indian mainland with the border security posts in this part of the Himalayan region, Prasad said. The bridges have a length of 140-180 metres, he said, adding that the BRO had to work in adverse conditions to construct the high-altitude bridges on time. The bridges will be of great convenience to both tourists and security forces, the BRO official said.

## Contractual employees of Punjab roadways go on 3-day strike



CHANDIGARH

CONTRACTUAL employees of the state-owned Punjab Roadways and Pepsu Road Transport Corporation went on three-day strike from Monday demanding regularization of their jobs.

Nearly 7,500 contractual employees participated in the three-day strike call. Agitating employees staged sit-in at bus stands in Punjab raising slogans against the state government.

The protesters said they did not allow plying of state-owned buses in the state, except for a few operated by regular employees. "We have been working on contract for the past 13-14 years. We are demanding that our services be regularised," said Punjab Roadways/Punbus Contract

Workers' Union president Resham Singh Gill. Gill said the contractual employees are also demanding a meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh for resolving their issues. Protesters said that before coming to power, Amarinder Singh had promised to regularize all contractual employees.

But nothing has been done in the last four and half years, they said. Gill said they will take out a protest march on Tuesday in Patiala, the hometown of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, to press the state government to accept their demands. Besides regularization of jobs, the protesters are also demanding that the fleet size of state-owned buses be increased and they should have equal pay for equal work.

CHANDIGARH

MEDICAL services were disrupted in government hospitals in Punjab on Monday after government doctors went on a day-long strike against the recommendation of the state's sixth pay commission delinking non-practising allowance from the basic pay. The government doctors observed strike for the second time within a week. Earlier, they had gone on strike on June 25. Medical services including outpatient department (OPD) services and elective surgeries, online consultations remained suspended in government hospitals. However, emergency services and Covid-related services continued.

Punjab Civil Medical Services Association state president Dr Gagandeep Singh said doctors were protesting against the Punjab's sixth pay commission which recommended delinking of NPA from the basic pay. Doc-



tors were also unhappy over the pay commission which recommended reduction in the NPA

from 25 per cent to 20 per cent. Singh said the strike call was also supported by the Punjab

State Veterinary Officers Association, Rural Medical Officers Association, Punjab Dental Med-

ical Officers Association and Punjab Ayurveda Officers Association. Protesting doctors said the sixth pay commission recommendation was not acceptable to them. Protesters at various places in Punjab shouted slogans against the state government. The Punjab government had announced that it will implement a majority of the recommendations of its sixth Pay Commission with effect from January 1, 2016, a move that will benefit over five lakh serving and retired employees. However, several associations of government employees have been protesting against the recommendations. They were objecting to the formula used in calculation of an increase in pay.

The state government employees last week had observed a pen-down strike. The Punjab government had set up an oversight committee of ministers to resolve grievances of the state government employees.

### FORCIBLE CONVERSION

## SC rejects plea seeking SIT probe

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking setting up of a special investigating team (SIT) to probe the alleged forcible conversion of Hindus in Haryana's Nuh district.

Sorry, the plea is dismissed, a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana told senior advocate Vikas Singh, who was appearing for the petitioners. Singh told the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy, that two of the petitioners had visited the area and met people there including the family of 21-year-old Nikita Tomar, who was shot dead outside her college in Ballabgarh in October last year.

"We do not think we can entertain this petition based on newspaper reports," the bench observed. One of the accused in the murder case identified as Tausif



was trying to force the student to marry him. In March this year, a fast-track court in Haryana's Faridabad had sentenced two men to life imprisonment for Tomar's murder.

The plea, filed in the apex court through advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, had alleged that life, personal liberty and religious rights of Hindus in the areas of Nuh are being "continuously eroded" by members of the minority community

who are in a "dominating position" there.

The petition, filed by a group of lawyers and a social worker based in Uttar Pradesh, had claimed that the state government, district administration and the police have failed to exercise their powers due to which the life and liberty of Hindus, particularly of women and Dalits, are in jeopardy and they are bound to lead "life under sword" of the dominant group there.

## 'New alliance faces no seat-sharing problem'

BALLIA

SUHELDEV Bhartiya Samaj Party, a former BJP's ally which has forged pre-poll alliance Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha of ten parties, including Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM, has asserted that the coalition faces no problem in seat sharing.

SBSP chief Om Prakash Rajbhar, a former minister in the Yogi Adityanath government, said he was ready to give 125 seats to his

coalition partner AIMIM against its chief Owaisi's demand of 100 seats. Reacting to Owaisi's claim that his All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen would contest on 100 seats, Rajbhar said he did not have any talks yet with Owaisi on seat sharing.

Talking to reporters at his residence in Rasra district on Sunday night, Rajbhar, however, said there was no problem on the seat-sharing in the new coalition. He also exuded confidence that Bhagidari

Sankalp Morcha will form the next government in Uttar Pradesh after the next assembly elections. In reply to a question, he said whoever wants to come to his front, whether the SP, BSP or the Congress, are welcome. Ruling out any chance of revival of his party's alliance with the BJP, he said the BJP is an enemy of Dalit and backward classes.

"These people are remembered by the BJP only during elections," he said.

## Boy, 10, accused of raping 3-year-old cousin

JAIPUR

THE family of a three-year-old girl has accused her 10-year-old cousin of raping her in Bhilwara district of Rajasthan, police said on Monday. The alleged incident occurred on Saturday following which the girl's grandmother lodged a case at the Baneda police station. She alleged that the girl was playing with her cousin "when he committed the crime", police said. A case under the Pro-

tection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was registered on Sunday. The medical examination of the girl has been conducted and the report is awaited, police said. Both the children were presented before the Child Welfare Committee and they were handed over to the family members, according to police.

They added that nothing conclusive can be said at the moment and the matter is being probed.

## BSP not to contest zila panchayat chairman polls

LUCKNOW

BSP president Mayawati on Monday said that her party has decided not to contest the zila panchayat chairman elections as it wants to channelise its energy on strengthening the organisation before the Uttar Pradesh assembly polls next year.

The BSP president asserted that the people of the state want her party to form the next government and said she will go to polls with the slogan "Uttar Pradesh ko bachana hai, bachana hai, sarvan ko bachana hai, bachana hai, BSP ko satta mein lana hai, zaroor lana hai" (We need to save Uttar Pradesh and save everyone and bring back BSP to power).

Instead of contesting the zila parishad chairman elections, the party has decided to concentrate on strengthening the party organisation and expand the base, Mayawati told newsmen. Zila panchayat chairman polls in the



state will be held on July 3.

"Once the BSP forms its government in the state, the majority of the zila panchayat chairman themselves will join the BSP as they cannot function without power. We have kept this fact in mind and so decided not to contest the election," she said. Alleging misuse of state machinery in the polls, she said the BJP was using the same tactics that were used by the earlier Samajwadi Party government.

## Send panel of eligible officers for appointment of next DGP: Vij

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA minister Anil Vij on Monday asked the state home department to send a panel of eligible officers to the UPSC for appointment of the state's next DGP in place of Manoj Yadava, who has sought premature repatriation to the Intelligence Bureau citing "career considerations and family requirements".

Vij, who is the state's Home Minister, said that Yadava's ap-

plication seeking that he be relieved has been accepted.

"The home department has been asked to send a panel of eligible officers to the Centre. Yadava, in the meanwhile, has been asked to continue till a new appointment is made," he told reporters in Ambala. As per the process, now the names of eligible officers will be sent to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to be considered for the post of the state's next police chief. Last week, Yadava

had sought premature repatriation to the Intelligence Bureau (IB) citing "career considerations and family requirements".

Yadava, a Haryana-cadre Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the 1988 batch, on Tuesday wrote to Haryana Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajeev Arora with a "request for premature repatriation to the Intelligence Bureau" and seeking that he be relieved. He was granted one-year extension by the Centre earlier this year amid

simmering differences over his tenure between Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Vij.

Khattar was keen on keeping Yadava as the state police chief while Vij was in favour of his replacement after his two-year term ended. Yadava was appointed the Director General of Police (DGP) of Haryana on February 21, 2019 for a two-year term.

The Khattar government had extended his tenure as DGP till further orders in January this

year. He had joined the Haryana government on deputation from the Intelligence Bureau, Union Ministry of Home Affairs, for a period of two years. Further, his tenure as DGP was extended beyond January 20, 2021, till further orders. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs vide an order dated March 2, 2021 had also conveyed the approval for extension of his deputation tenure for a period of one year beyond February 20, 2021 or till further orders whichever is earlier.





# Will our children lose the ability to learn?

School closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic has led to complete disconnect from education for the vast majority of children or inadequate alternatives like community based classes or poor options in the form of online education, including mobile phone-based learning. One complete academic year has elapsed in this manner, with almost no or little curricular learning in the current class.

But more alarming is the fact that the students are losing their foundational abilities. The report rightly suggests multiple strategies to be adopted with rigorous implementation to compensate for this overall loss of learning when schools reopen. This study, undertaken in January 2021 by the Azim Premji University reveals the extent and nature of the ‘forgetting/ regression’ kind of learning loss among children in public schools across primary classes because of school closure.

The study covered 16,067 children in 1137 public schools in 44 districts across five States. It focused on the assessment of four specific abilities each in language and mathematics, across classes II-VI. These four specific abilities for each grade were chosen because these are among the abilities for all

subsequent learning – across subjects – and so the loss of any one of these would have very serious consequences on all further learning. The approach was methodical and scientific.

An assessment of the learning levels of children when schools closed as well as their current status was necessary to understand any such regression. The former was best done through teachers who have been deeply engaged with their learners, and thus had a reliable assessment of children’s abilities, when schools closed in March 2020. Therefore, this baseline assessment of children’s learning levels, i.e. where they were assessed on specific abilities in language and mathematics when schools closed, was done based on a comprehensive analysis by the relevant teachers, aided by appropriate assessment tools.

These are referred to as specific abilities in the document. ‘End-line’ was the assessment of the same children’s proficiency on these very same abilities in January 2021, which was done by administering oral and written tests. Key findings suggest that 92 per cent of children on an average have lost at least one specific language ability from the pre-

vious year across all classes. Again 92 per cent of children in class 2, 89 per cent in class 3, 90 per cent in class 4, 95 per cent in class 5, and 93 per cent in class 6 have lost at least one specific ability from the previous year. About 82 per cent of children on an average have lost at least one specific mathematical ability from the previous year across all classes.

Situation is such that even identifying single and double digits is lost to them. If governments’ discriminatory policies had affected the poor and the marginalised all these years in various forms, neglect of the education sector is all set to affect the future of the kids from these sections deeply. The extent and nature of learning loss is serious enough to warrant action at all levels. Policy and processes to identify and address this loss are necessary as children return to schools.

Supplemental support, whether in the form of bridge courses, extended hours, community-based engagements and appropriate curricular materials to help children gain the foundational abilities when they return to school will be needed. Do the governments’ have time for all these?



## 10 Lakshadweep islands might go under water in next 30 yrs

THE study published in the current issue of international magazine Elsevier (Regional Studies in Marine Science), has been posted by the Department of Science and Technology on its website. It was conducted on the ten most vulnerable islands of the archipelago and shows that there will be 70 per cent to 80 per cent land loss in eight of the ten islands by 2035. The other two islands will also have a land loss close to 40 per cent.

A study conducted by ocean engineering scientists at IIT Kharagpur shows that 10 islands among the 36 islands of Lakshadweep archipelago might have more than 60 per cent land loss in the next 30 years because of the continuous and extreme rise of sea water level in the last 15 years.

Lakshadweep, a group of 36 islands, is known for its exotic and sun-kissed beaches and lush green landscape. The name Lakshadweep in Malayalam and Sanskrit means ‘a hundred thousand islands’. India’s smallest Union Territory, Lakshadweep is an archipelago consisting of 36 islands with an area of 32 sq km. It is a Uni-district Union Territory and comprises 12 atolls, three reefs, five submerged banks and 10 inhabited islands. The capital is Kavaratti and it is also the principal town.

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“The main problem in conducting the study was that there was neither any ‘Tide-Gauge’ or eWater level monitoring system’ in Lakshadweep and so we had to depend on the satellite data which was only available from 1993. We also used two best performing climate models - the GFDL Model of USA and Miroc - a Japanese model. With these two models and with the available data we were able to determine the rise of the sea water level in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal,” Prasad K. Bhaskaran, a faculty member of IIT-KGP’s Department of Ocean Engineering and Naval Architecture and the principal investigator of the project, told IANS over phone.

“While doing our research we realised that while it had been indicated that the sea level at the 36 islands would rise between .8 mm to 2m by the end of the century, in most islands it had already reached the .78 mm mark. We have projected 70 per cent to 80 per cent land loss in many islands by 2035. There are many small islands in the archipelago that will be reduced to a strip almost. The worst affected will be Chatlat island, where land loss will be over 82 per cent,” Bhaskaran said.

The study mentions that the rise is much higher in the Arabian Sea than the Bay of Bengal because the latter’s salinity is lower because of many fresh water rivers opening into it. Hence, Lakshadweep islands are at a great risk compared to India’s other archipelago, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

It also found that capital Kavaratti will be 70 per cent affected. Deep signs of damage have also been noticed at the islands’ lone airport in the southernmost tip of Agatti, which has started getting dangerously inundated.

“We have suggested that the government take up immediate coastline protection measures by creating artificial barriers and embankments, especially in the Bipra, Minicoy, Kalpeni, Kavaratti, Agatti, Kiltan, Chatlat, Kadmat and Amini islands, to save them from extinction. Since Androth has been projected to be the safest with only a 30 per cent loss to its landmass, the population can be moved there,” Bhaskaran said.

“But this is temporary because the structure can control the erosion of the coastline but it cannot control the rise of the sea level. Naturally the central government will have to think of a new coastal defensive system -- an innovative way to protect the islands from going under the sea,” he said, adding that many European countries and some places in the US have developed innovative coastline protection mechanisms and we can also take ideas from them.

The study has been conducted by Aysha Jennath, Athira Krishnan, Saikat Kumar Paul, Prasad K Bhaskaran, jointly from the Department of Architecture and Regional Planning and Department of Ocean Engineering and Naval Architecture, IIT Kharagpur, with support from the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India under the Climate Change Programme (CCP). (IANS)

## What’s it that makes people take a bet on you?

HERE’S a ground-breaking book that boldly claims that the key to success in business is not talent but the ability to persuade people to take a bet on potential.

Suneel Gupta, a visiting scholar at Harvard, contends in “Backable” (Hachette) that no one ever makes it alone and asks: What is it about certain people that makes us want to take a bet on them?

As it turns out, it’s not what you think. Backability is not driven by having the best experience, the finest pedigree or the most innovative ideas. In fact, many highly successful people are backed long before they are qualified. We tend to view these people as lucky. But the decision to back them is neither an accident nor a mistake, and rarely the result of good luck.

Drawing from his own business experience, countless interviews with some of tech’s biggest innovators and compelling case studies of classic success stories such as Howard Schultz and Elon Musk, Gupta breaks down the qualities of backable people.

“Backable” pulls back the curtain on the elusive X-factor that some people just seem to have and offers concrete tools like crafting the right pitch and scaling the vision for a project. Anyone from aspiring entrepreneurs to start-up stars can master these skills and jumpstart their next big idea.

Suneel Gupta was the co-founder and CEO of Rise, a mobile health company focused on preventative health, which he sold to One Medical in 2016. Fast Company ranked it the number 1 most innovative company in healthcare and he was named the ‘New Face of Innovation’ by the New York Stock Exchange. He then served as an Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Silicon Valley’s top venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins before moving from San Francisco to his hometown in Michigan to run for US Congress.

His work has been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Fortune and Vanity Fair. Website: suneelgupta.com. Twitter: @suneel.

Carlye Adler, who assisted with the book, is an award-winning journalist and four-time New York Times bestselling co-author-collaborator. She lives in Connecticut with her husband and two daughters. (IANS)

### CAN THERE BE AN IMPARTIAL PROBE AGAINST POLICE BY POLICE?

# CCTV could have prevented custodial murder



FOR the first time, the Telangana High Court asked Telangana Government why it has not installed CCTV cameras in police station, where an alleged custodial murder of Dalit woman took place recently. In a PUCIL’s PIL the High Court asked the police department why it had not installed CCTV cameras in the station despite a Supreme Court order to this effect.

It is reported that Mariamma, a cook in a house, was arrested along with her son Uday Kiran on the complaint of theft filed by the owner and later she died in lock-up of Addagudur police station in Yadadri-Bhongir district. There are strong allegations that the death was only due to continuous beating for four days at various places on her body.

It is worse than third degree torture. It could be a deliberate killing of a person, when she was in the control of the police. It may not correct to call it custodial death, it should be called custodial murder. Who did it is a matter to be probed. Rather one should say it should be probed on par with any other complaint of a person being beaten to death. The need is not the magisterial inquiry. This kind of inquiry will consume a lot of time and none can be assured of any concrete action within reasonable time.

A murder case has to be registered and a regular investigation to find out the culprits should be expedited. That is not happening. Still the police control the entire operation and a formal registration of criminal charge against also is becoming almost impossible. The rule of law is under a serious challenge since the inception of Constitution of India, as far as killings in police custody are concerned. The Supreme Court recently ordered installation of CCTV cameras in every place of custodial activity under the control of the police.

Supreme Court also directed to retain the camera footage for considerably longer time to facilitate the probe into the crimes in custody. But it appears no state or no police personnel have taken a serious note of this direction. It’s a tragedy that the Supreme Courts’ direction are going in vain in this Constitutionally governed nation.

Telangana district, Yadadri became the place for the custodial cruelty of the uniform force. This ghastly incident became controversial and sensational because the victim was a Dalit woman. On representation of the Congress leaders,

the Telangana, Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao has ordered an immediate inquiry and asked the Director General of Police to take stringent action against the police personnel responsible as per the law.

On the petition of Peoples Union of Civil Liberties, the Telangana High Court intervened and ordered a second post-mortem examination, if necessary, of the body of SC woman Mariamma, who died in police custody in Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri district on June 18. In a PIL, PUCIL sought a direction to the government to pay the kin of the victim Rs five crore as compensation and order judicial inquiry into the circumstances that led to her death. The petitioner alleged that Mariamma died due to torture by the police. After hearing the contentions from both the sides the court ordered a magisterial inquiry into her death and asked the magistrate to submit a report in a sealed envelope.

The police stated that Mariamma, who hailed from Khammam district, lost consciousness as she was being brought to Addagudur police station on June 18 for questioning in connection with a theft. The police said they immediately took her to Bhongir area hospital, where doctors had declared her brought dead. The police, after a departmental inquiry, placed Addagudur SI Mahesh, and constables Raheed and Janaiah under suspension. This narration shows a self-contradiction. If what they explained is true, it would have not necessitated any inquiry or suspension.

The CM asked the Director-General of Police (DGP) Mahender Reddy to take all steps to bring out the truth of the incident followed by stringent action if police was proved guilty. The Chief Minister KCR said: “We will not pardon such incidents. The government will not keep quiet if anyone does harm to Dalits. There will be swift action on the matter. There should not be any delay in inquiring about the culprits of lockup death and taking stern action against them. If need be, dismiss them from the service.”

Describing Mariamma’s death as very painful, the CM said that the government would never support such measures. Rao also mentioned that the Telangana government would support the children of the victim, and instructed Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar to ensure that Mariamma’s son Uday Kiran gets a government job, a house, and an ex-gratia of Rs 15 lakh, and that her two daughters are given a sum of Rs 10 lakh each.

The DGP was directed to visit Chintakaniki to find out the facts and details about the lockup death and to console the members of the victim’s family. The



CM called for a change in the attitude of the society towards the Dalits, saying: “There is a need for the society to change its attitude towards the Dalits. The attitude and behaviour of the police especially, towards the Dalits should be in favour of them and to support them... It is unfortunate that when the police machinery is making a qualitative change in maintaining the law-and-order situation, such an incident takes place,” he added.

Meanwhile, the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) has issued a notice to the Government of Telangana over the case of the death of Mariamma. The notice was issued on the orders of its Chairman Vijay Sampla. NCSC has also issued notice to District Collector and Superintendent of Police of Bhongir district, Chief Secretary of the State and Director General of Police Telangana asking them to submit a report within seven days about the facts and information on the action taken on the matter.

Whether it is magisterial inquiry or judicial probe, its value is not significant in criminal investigation and prosecution process. It will not result in framing of charges. The magisterial probe is like preliminary inquiry that might lead to decision to the road map of investigation. After the inquiry report is given, which if concluded that there was killing by torture involving the police, a regular FIR has to be booked and investigation to collect evidences should begin.

By the time the inquiry reports are filed, the incident loses its significance and memory of the people, society and government is too short. Or some other incidents dominate the scene and wrap up this incident.

There are serious issues involved in the mechanism to be adopted. Is it possible for the police to register a case of murder against their own colleagues? If they do it, is it possible to have an unbiased

probe into the murder, which the rule of law demands? It is complex and will rise very conflicting questions. Hence the prevention of custodial crimes by police is considered more important.

In this context the Supreme Court directed the Centre on December 2, 2020 to install CCTV cameras and recording equipment at the offices of investigating agencies, including the CBI, the ED and National Investigation Agency (NIA), which conduct interrogations and have the power of arrest.

A bench headed by Justice R F Nariman said that states and Union Territories (UTs) should ensure that CCTV cameras are installed at each and every police station, at all entry and exit points, main gate, lock-ups, corridors, lobby and reception as also areas outside the lock-up rooms so that no part is left uncovered.

The apex court had in 2018 ordered installation of CCTV cameras in police stations to check human rights abuses. It said further that the CCTV systems must be equipped with night vision and have audio as well as video footage and it shall be mandatory for the Centre, states and UTs to purchase such systems which allow storage of data for maximum period possible, at least one year.

It also directed state level and district level oversight committees with responsible officers to check these incidents.

“Whenever there is information of force being used at police stations resulting in serious injury and/or custodial deaths, it is necessary that persons be free to complain for a redressal of the same,” the SC said.

Every state and its police department should take this seriously and prevent the torture and torture caused deaths.

(The writer is Professor of Law, Bennett University and former Central Information Commissioner)

## LETTERS

### Regionalism is strong in south India

NARENDRA Puppala’s article, “South India to remain indifferent to national parties” (Hans India, Jun 28), is very informative. It is rightly observed that the prime reason for the regional parties to gain electoral power in southern states is that its top leadership is easily accessible to locals and need not depend on the ‘high command’ from far-off Dilli to deliver the goods.

The grand old national party, Congress, of late, in order to ward off a threat to the ‘Crown Prince’, is afraid to groom its regional youth cadre at top as was evident in the case of Jyotiraditya Scindia of Madhya Pradesh and Sachin Pilot of Rajasthan. As such no young political leader in Telugu states are finding greener pastures in Congress which is in shambles. Time and again serious attempts were made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to set the strong party base in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh but the regional cadre

failed to take-up the mantle successfully to garner the votes.

Once gaining power, the regional parties in South particularly, in Telangana tactfully held the pulse of the electorate and efficiently implemented the ‘development mantra’ to their satisfaction. One can therefore find the economic progress in South is far higher, in comparison with States beyond Vindhyas.

Govardhan R Jilla, Mumbai

### Dalit empowerment initiatives, welcome

TELANGANA State government decided to deposit Rs 10 lakh each in the bank accounts of below poverty line SC families as part of the Chief Minister Dalit empowerment programme in the state. These efforts made by the CM are most welcome and laudable towards empowerment of Dalit communities.

KCR said that, government was geared for the uplift of SCs in a phased manner and wanted a transparent programme without scope for lobbying in identification of beneficiaries. But it is very difficult to the officials to identify beneficiaries.



Beneficiary selection should be transparent and eligible. Almost all political parties welcomed government decision towards empowerment of Dalit communities in the state. Initially government has decided that, hundred families are going to benefit each and every constituency. However, 11,900 families are benefitted 119 Assembly constituencies in the state. It is to directly benefit the beneficiary through Direct Benefit Transfer system to their accounts. It is welcome move but has raised some doubts on government decision. How government would extend entire State in the near future because huge amount government deposit in the SC family account. Any way it should be extended to

the entire State and all SC families until their upliftment to equal to the other communities. So results depend upon implementation of scheme.

A Bruhathi, Hanamkonda

### Put an end to freebies

PROPOS letters on AP Govt’s honorarium to Pastors, Priests et al (THI, June 27/28), I do wonder that the present govt will surely go bankrupt one day by freebies from all quarters from caste wise, category wise, religious wise and what not. The monthly assistance to pastors is paltry and it is to some a square meal at least once a day but to some lurking riches is ridiculous and so a study on real economic strata have been done and selectively made beneficiary list.

Even old age pension has its drawbacks among beneficiaries. Honestly speaking, the ex-CM Chandrababu Naidu ventured at the end of his tenure to help the unemployed youth and they’re the best deserving.

Dr. T Ramadas, Visakhapatnam

thehansreader@gmail.com



## ‘Confer Bharat Ratna on PV’



TS Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and CM K C R pose with other dignitaries after the unveiling of the statue of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao at Necklace Road in Hyderabad on Monday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana government reiterated its request to the Union government to confer the highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna, on former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao. On its part, the Telangana government paid a befitting tribute to the ‘Telugu Bidda’ on Monday marking the concluding ceremony of the birth centenary celebrations of PV by unveiling a 26-feet statue near PV Gana Bhoomi and rechristening the name of the Necklace Road as PV Marg. It also announced setting up of a Vidya Peetham (Chair) in Kakatiya University in his name. The state government has also announced that it would establish a P V Memorial and Museum at Gana Bhoomi. The statue was unveiled by Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan. She later released a set of eight books, including four penned by the former Prime Minister. The Governor began her speech in chaste Telugu and recalled the yeomen services rendered by PV to the nation in various capacities as a minister in undivided Andhra Pradesh, as chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, Union minister, Congress president and as prime minister.

She said that PV was a great statesman and known for recognising the talent of individuals whether he was in Congress or in the Opposi-

sition. During his premiership, PV had deputed Vajpayee as leader of the Indian delegation to the special session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva where a Pakistan-sponsored resolution to censure India on its record of human rights in Jammu & Kashmir was successfully thwarted. Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao said that PV made his mark by introducing reforms in every sector. During his stint as PM, PV brought into force a slew of economic reforms which helped India overcome financial crisis and ensured foreign direct investment for the speedy development of the country.

As Human Resources Development minister in the Union government, PV had set up Gurukulas and Navodaya Schools which helped in providing a platform to pursue high standard studies for the poor, KCR said. Asserting the need to follow the ideologies of the multi-faceted personality in the India political system, the Chief Minister recalled how PV’s land reforms had set a benchmark in the land administration for many states across the country. He said PV had set an example by donating 800 acres of the land owned by his family during the land reforms.

KCR also mentioned PV’s political grit in running the Congress-led minority government despite facing political disturbances from the Opposition.

# AP eases lockdown curbs

## Now 9 pm-6am lockdown in 8 districts

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

THE State government has decided to further relax lockdown restrictions in eight districts of the state from July 1. According to the decision, there will be no relaxation in the existing lockdown curbs in Krishna, Prakasam, Chittoor, West and East Godavari districts.

The lockdown would be in force between 2 pm and 6 am. In the remaining eight districts, the lockdown would be eased, and it would be only from 9 pm to 6 am.

A decision to this effect was taken at the review meeting held by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Monday. During the meeting, the Chief Minister said Paediatric telemedical services should be available 24 hours through 104 tollfree number in the wake of Covid third wave fears and added that 150 paediatricians should be available for



teleservices and they should be trained through best institutions like AIIMS.

He said Joint Collectors should be involved in monitoring 104 services. He directed the officials to strengthen the mechanism to ensure that beds were allotted to the needy. He further said that 104 services should also work as referral point for Aarogyasri like Village Clinics and PHCs. The CM said that two PHCs were setup in each mandal and two

## TS invokes education act, directs schools not to increase fee

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA State Education Department (TSED) on Monday asked all the schools in Telangana affiliated to State Board, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) and other International Boards not to increase any kind of fees during the academic year 2021-22. A government order issued late on Monday evening has directed all the schools further change only tuition fee on monthly basis till further orders.

## AP govt plans I-Day fete at Vizag this year?

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

REPORTS of the AP government planning to hold Independence Day celebrations at Visakhapatnam this year trigger speculations that the government might shift the executive capital to the port city in August.

It may be noted here that though the state government wanted to make Visakhapatnam as the executive capital, the decision was kept on hold in view of legal hurdles. Till the matter is settled in the court of law, the government might not officially shift the capital to Visakhapatnam, but some departments may start functioning from there after the Independence Day celebrations.

Officially, it is said that holding Independence Day celebrations in different parts of the state is not a new practice. The previous government had also celebrated the Independence Day at various places. But selecting Visakhapatnam for the celebrations gains importance in the wake of the recent statements made by the leader of YSRC Parliamentary Party leader Vijayasai Reddy and the Minister for MAUD Botsa Satyanarayana



that soon Vizag would become the executive capital. Vijayasai Reddy has been frequently giving the details of the ongoing developmental works in Visakhapatnam city, including the Bhimili beach corridor and connectivity to upcoming Bhogapuram international airport. Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy during his recent Delhi visit is learnt to have discussed with Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the three-capital issue, including the shifting of the High Court to Kurnool.

After the Chief Minister’s Delhi visit, the speculation on shifting of the capital gained momentum. It may be noted here that the Chief Minister during a recent review meeting stressed on the need for developing Visakhapatnam as an IT hub and directed the officials to make efforts to attract a greater number of IT companies to improve employment opportunities to youth.

# ICMR Covid test certificates trouble int’l travellers

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

PEOPLE wishing to go abroad for various reasons have been facing a tough situation with the ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) generated Covid test certificate. The two-page certificate gives the details of person’s name, age, address, mobile number, etc., but nowhere one can find the test method. As RT-PCR is being considered as the gold standard test for detecting Covid, the negative report has become necessary through this test to go abroad.

Though there are other forms of tests like TrueNat, rapid antigen tests among others, RT-PCR test result are considered authentic despite occasional false results. When a person is tested negative in other tests and still has symptoms, RT-PCR test result is taken as final. However, a positive result in other forms of testing is considered as positive only. As the RT-PCR test known as Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction is taken as the most acceptable method across the globe, many countries are insisting for a RT-PCR negative report from people to enter their jurisdictions.

Those going abroad are being asked for the RT-PCR negative certificate by the officials at airports and have been facing problems as nowhere the name RT-PCR is mentioned in the ICMR certificate even though



- While many nations seek RT-PCR negative certificate, it’s not being mentioned in the certificate
- Private labs are issuing certificates clearly stating testing method as RT-PCR

- There is a demand for mentioning of test method in certificate as the number of foreign travellers is growing

the same test is conducted. Sometime back, an elected representative’s family was learnt to have faced such a problem at Dubai airport.

Several others have also experienced the problem in the US. Knowing this, some others have been urging the authorities at Ruia hospital to mention that the test was conducted under RT-PCR method to avoid further problems. Some others have been going to private laboratories where the certificate is being given with the name of RT-PCR.

However, an international traveller commented that some officials are expressing doubts over the certificates given by private laboratories. To avoid such problems, there is a need

to issue a uniform report either in government labs or private labs with ICMR’s authorisation details and mentioning invariably the method of testing like RT-PCR.

As the number of international travellers is increasing irrespective of age groups, there is an urgent need to focus on this basic problem. It may be noted that around 1,000 people got vaccinated under the abroad-going category in Chittoor district while the number is even more in other districts. Keeping this large number of people in view, the officials have to take this to the notice of ICMR to see that the problem is addressed at the earliest to avoid any technical complications.

# BJP slams YSRCP govt failures

- Party State chief Veerraju says people are vexed with the misrule of Jagan Mohan Reddy
- Demands fulfilment of its promises on jobs to youth
- Denounces failures in containing Covid, lack of help to farmers and corruption

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

BJP state president Somu Veerraju came down heavily on the YSRCP government alleging that it had failed on all fronts and was misleading people with false propaganda on welfare schemes.

He presided over the state party executive meeting held at the state party office here on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, Veerraju said the government had failed in housing scheme, construction of irrigation projects, containing the Covid pandemic, among others. He alleged that people are un-



BJP state president Somu Veerraju addresses the party state executive meet in Vijayawada on Monday. Party State former president Kanna Lakshminarayana and others are seen

(Hans photo: Ch Venkata Mastan)

happy with the rampant corruption going on in the state. “This government has failed to fulfil its promise on recruitment to jobs. There is no effort to fill the 2.50 lakh vacant posts in various government departments. Unemployed youth are in distress over lack of jobs. BJP Yuva Morcha has staged protests two times demanding the government fill the posts but there is no response,” he said. Accusing the Jagan Mohan Reddy government of leaving farmers to their fate, the state BJP

chief said not a single irrigation project has been completed in the two years of YSRCP rule. He said the government is not paying money to the farmers in the stipulated time after procuring crops.

He said though the Central government is extending help to the state for setting up of industries, but the Jagan government has failed to make use of it.

Veerraju alleged that the state government could not contain Covid in spite of adequate alerts given by the Central government

on the second wave of Covid. It has not create infrastructure facilities to tackle the situation but claiming credit for the medicine, vaccines and other equipment supplied by the Union government, he added. He appealed to the party leaders and cadres to highlight the anti-peoples policies of the state government while called for efforts to strengthen the party organisation at grassroots level. “Development has plummeted in the state under the YSRCP rule. BJP is the only alternative.

Party activists should explain the policies, schemes and programmes of the BJP government at the Centre to the people and the development the country has achieved under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last seven years,” he said.

AP party affairs co-incharge Sunil Deodhar, MLCs P V Madhav, V Narayana Rao, party state former president Kanna Lakshminarayana, general secretary S Vishnuvardhan Reddy and others attended the executive body meeting. The party passed resolution to fight the misrule of the YSRCP government in the state.

## Row over power generation at Srisaillam project

### AP complains against power generation by TS Genco

HYDERABAD: Fresh controversy has erupted between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh over the maintenance of Srisaillam project and utilisation of Krishna waters for power generation.

The Andhra Pradesh government complained to the Krishna River Management Board that Telangana Genco was generating power from June 2 and this “unnecessary drawal of water from the Srisaillam project would deplete the water level of the reservoir and would prove to be detrimental to Andhra Pradesh as the state would be deprived of water for drinking and irrigation purposes.”

It further complained that the TS government was utilising the water without the permission of the KRMB. Following this, the Jal Shakti ministry on June 16 asked Telangana Genco to stop generation of power by drawing

water from Srisaillam. However, on Monday the Telangana Genco decided to continue power generation and also utilise 100 per cent installed capacity of hydel power which is around 2,500 MW to meet the growing energy needs of the state.

Officials said that the state Cabinet had recently approved the proposal to generate power up to 100 per cent installed capacity to meet the growing energy needs mainly to run the pumphouses set up at the Kaleshwaram project to lift water from river Godavari and fill the reservoirs during the rainy season.

Telangana has been permitted to generate power when the reservoirs received good inflows. “There is no need to halt the power generation as the T state was utilising water as per the allocations only,” a senior official said.

## Bank advances grow by 9.92% in TS

### State-Level Bankers’ Committee launches ACP for FY 2021-22

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE State-Level Bankers’ Committee (SLBC) convened its 29th quarterly meeting on Monday to review the performance of the banks for the quarter ended March 2021 along with launching of annual credit plan (ACP) for 2021-22. The meeting was held in the Secretariat, BRKR Bhavan. The meeting was attended by T Harish Rao, Finance Minister, B B Patil, MP (Zaheerabad), Om Prakash Mishra, Dy. Managing Director, SBI and president, SLBC, K Ramakrishna Rao, Principal Secretary (Finance).

Sandeep Sultania, Secretary (PR & RD), Ronald Rose, Secretary (Finance), A K Dogra, Director, DFS, Union Ministry of Finance, K Nikhila, Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India, Y K Rao, Chief General Manager, NABARD, controllers of banks in the State and various heads of State departments, an official release said.

Mishra presented the performance of the banks in Telan-



gana up to March 2021 and highlights of ACP as under: total deposits of banks grew by Rs.87,469 crore (18.05%). The total deposits were at Rs. 571,909 crore. He said the total advances grew by 56,621 crore (9.92%). The advances of all banks were at Rs. 627,039 crore. During the FY 20-21, banks lent Rs. 41,200 crore under Kharif & Rabi. They disbursed Rs.16,816 crore as term loans towards investment credit, agri-allied, agri-infra and agri-ancillary activities.

The lending towards educational/housing loans under the priority sector was Rs.693 crore and Rs.4,162 crore respectively.

The banks together disbursed Rs.103,126 crore to borrowers under the priority sector, achieving 84.04% of targets. The banks disbursed Rs.38,416 crore to the MSME segment, achieving 109 % of the targets. Under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana Scheme, they disbursed Rs.6,445 crore, as against a target of Rs.5,197 crore, achieving 124% of targets.

The banks covered all the 255 unbanked rural centres with population above 5,000 with brick and mortar branches or with banking outlets. All villages within five km radius and villages with 500 and above house-

holds in hilly areas have been covered with banking infrastructure. They so far opened 103.79 lakh accounts under PMJDY. As many as 85.28 lakh seeded with Aadhar and RuPay cards were issued to 84.39 lakh accounts.

About 102.36 lakh customers were covered under the Pradhan Manthri Suraksha Bheema Yojana (PMSBY) and 39.26 lakh customers under the Pradhan Manthri Jeevan Jyothi Beema Yojana (PMJJBY). As many as 9.39 lakh customers were subscribed under the Atal pension Yojana. According to Mishra, the banks sanctioned Rs.7,080 crore and disbursed Rs.5,969 crore un-

der the Guaranteed Emergency Credit line of 20%. Under the PM Street Vendor’s Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (a micro finance scheme for street vendors), they sanctioned 352,167 applications and disbursed 310,145 up to May 2021. The State occupied pan India number 1 position in disbursement of the PM Svanidhi loans, with SBI taking lead with 42% of disbursements. He said under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, a target of Rs.3,075 crore was set for four years. During the first year 20-21, banks sanctioned Rs.334 crore. The current financial year’s ACP Plan outlay is higher than previous year at Rs.186,035 crore, of which the priority sector share is Rs.143,954 crore (77.38%).

The agriculture segment has a major share of 63.59% of the priority sector at Rs. 91,541 crore, whereas MSME segment has a share of 27.34% (Rs. 39,361 crore) out of the priority sector advances. An investment credit disbursement target of Rs.32,102 crore has been projected to promote sustainable income for farmers.



# No need of Chardham Yatra at this stage: HC

## The State Cabinet had on June 25 decided to open the Yatra for the residents of some districts

NAINITAL

The Uttarakhand High Court on Monday stayed the Chardham Yatra reversing a state cabinet's decision to open it partially for residents of three districts from July 1.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the state government's arrangements for pilgrims and tourists during the yatra amid the Covid pandemic, Chief Justice R S Chauhan and Justice Alok Kumar Verma stayed the decision to permit residents of Chamoli, Rudrapur and Uttarakashi districts to visit Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri.

The state cabinet had on June 25 decided to



open the yatra for the residents of these districts where the famous Himalayan temples are located. On the state government's assertion that live streaming rituals performed at

the temples was against the traditions, the court said it is being sympathetic towards the emotions of the priests.

The court made the observations while hear-

ing a petition related to the risks involved in conducting the yatra amid the Covid pandemic. Rejecting the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) issued by the state government for the yatra, the court said they were just a copy of the guidelines issued during the Kumbh Mela.

The court has all along been asking the state government to suspend the yatra so that it does not become another "Covid super spreader" like the Kumbh.

However, considering the sentiments attached with the temples, the court asked the government to make arrangements for nationwide live streaming of the ongoing ceremonies. On an objection raised by the state government that telecasting such events is not in tune with

the traditions, the court said it is being sympathetic towards the emotions of the priests.

"Yet, it must be kept in mind that when the shastras (scriptures) were written there was no technology like television for broadcasting important events," the court said. The court further observed that it is more important to save everyone from the Delta Plus mutant of coronavirus rather than being considerate towards the feelings of a few. Interpreting the court's order, the petitioner's advocate Dushyant Mainali said no physical permission will now be granted to anyone for the yatra. Uttarakhand Chief Secretary Om Prakash and Tourism Secretary Dalip Jawalkar were also virtually present at the hearing.

### WINDOWS

#### Terrorists kill SPO, his family members

SRINAGAR: The gruesome killing of a Special Police Officer and his family by terrorists of banned Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) has sent shock waves across Jammu and Kashmir with political parties terming it a "dastardly and cowardly" act and a blot on the security scenario in the valley. Officials on Monday said Fayaz Ahmed, his wife, Raja Begum, and 22-year-old daughter, Rafia, were in their house in Hariparigam in Awantipora area of South Kashmir when terrorists barged inside at 11 pm on Sunday and indiscriminately opened fire on them. The village is located around 50 kms south of Srinagar city. Ahmad was declared brought dead at the hospital, while his wife passed away during the night and the daughter succumbed on Monday morning. The area has been cordoned off and a manhunt launched to track down the assailants but no arrests have been made so far, the officials said.

#### Pay ₹10L to kin of those who died due to Covid

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Monday demanded Rs 10 lakh compensation to the family of those who died due to Covid as it said the government has profited from petroleum products.

He said the excessive excise duty on petrol and diesel that the government collects is the public money. If the government can't spend 10 per cent (Rs 40,000 crore) of it on the families of the deceased, what is the use of this money?

Addressing a press conference Congress spokesperson Gaurav Vallabh said, "The Congress party demands that the government include Covid-19 as disaster like other natural disasters and provide compensation of Rs 10 lakh to the families of the deceased."

"It is our debt of gratitude to the families of the deceased. It is an insult to the frontline workers who have laid down their lives in fighting at the forefront. A government that can't provide Rs 10 lakh to the families of the deceased has no right to rule," he added.



Devotees visit Mata Vaishno Devi temple after authorities eased restrictions in Bikaner on Monday; (Right) children along with their parents meet MLA Udhayanidhi Stalin, to thank him for arranging free school seats at his office, in Chennai on Monday



#### 'Covid cases with variants of concern rose from 10% to 51%'

NEW DELHI

COVID-19 cases with variants of concern rose from 10.31 per cent of total infections in May to 51 per cent till June 20, top government officials told a Parliamentary panel on Monday and stressed that both Covaxin and Covishield work against these strains albeit with slightly reduced potency.

The panel was informed that the economic impact of the second wave of viral infection was "asynchronous in its onset and wider in its spread particularly in rural hinterland", a source said. About the availability of vaccine doses, officials informed the panel that 135 crore jabs will be made available in the country during the August-December period this year.

The doses would be of Covishield, Covaxin, Bio E Subunit vaccine, Zyklus Cadila's DNA vaccine and Sputnik V, they said. Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, Additional Secretary in the Home Ministry Govind Mohan, Additional Secretary in the Finance Ministry K Raja Raman were among the officials who deposited before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs on 'Socio-economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic's second wave'.

The committee is chaired by senior Congress leader Anand Sharma. Sharing details about various coronavirus variants of concern, officials told the panel that it includes the Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta variants. These variants have been traced in 174 districts of 35 states and Union Territories, with the maximum reported from Maharashtra, Delhi, Punjab, Telangana, West Bengal and Gujarat, the parliamentary panel was informed. According to the details shared by officials with the parliamentarians, coronavirus' variants of concern led to increased transmissibility, change in virulence and effect on diagnostics, drugs and vaccines.

# Min asks docs not to create panic

NEW DELHI

UNION Minister Jitendra Singh has urged medical professionals "not to create a panic" about a possible third wave of Covid-19 infection and stressed that the basic approach should be "precaution, no panic".

Instead of getting tempted to make alarmist observations one could be a little more reassuring, he said at the Public Health Summit 2021 on 'Emerging Imperatives in Strengthening Public Health for India'.

"Let us put all our might together to fight the second wave instead of talking about the third one. Medical professionals have found a good platform in the media... so instead of getting tempted to make alarmist observations we could be a little more reassuring," the minister said.

Asero survey conducted by the Brihan-mumbai Municipal Corporation has indicated that 50 per cent of children in a healthcare setting in Mumbai have Covid antibodies.

A survey of children between the ages of 6 and 18 was conducted in May and June in 24 wards of Mumbai.

The Sero survey results may prove promising against a predicted third wave expected to hit the state in the coming weeks, or months.

Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin wrote to Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan,

#### India adds 46,148 new cases

NEW DELHI: India logged 46,148 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,02,79,331, while daily fatalities were recorded below 1000, taking the death toll to 3,96,730, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Monday.

The country registered 979 fresh fatalities due to COVID-19 in a day, the lowest in 76 days.

The active cases declined to 5,72,994 comprising 1.89 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has improved to 96.80 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Also, 15,70,515 tests were conducted on Sunday taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far for detection of COVID-19 in the country to 40,63,71,279.

requesting an increase in the allocation of vaccines to Tamil Nadu and also increase the sub-allocation of vaccines for government institutions to 90%.

The Centre has said that more than 1.15 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines are still available with states and union territories.

#### Strengthen health system: Guleria

NEW DELHI: All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Director Dr Randeep Guleria said, "As we now prepare for the possibility of the third wave and (the spread of) new variants like Delta Plus... we need to look ahead and see how we can strengthen our public health system focusing on lessons we have learnt from the past." "What COVID-19 has shown us is that we need a robust healthcare system. We need to address the challenges that we have in front of us. One is under-investment in healthcare. Another is that the public healthcare system should be driven by technology and data that would help us make evidence-based decisions," he said. The AIIMS director stressed on creating a specialised workforce, improving the health infrastructure as well as on increasing doctor-patient and nurse-patient ratios.

The Supreme Court paid tribute to 77 advocates of the apex court lawyers' body, who lost their lives due to COVID-19. At the start of the day's proceedings, a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana expressed condolence on behalf of the Supreme Court judges.

#### Over 50 countries interested in Co-WIN

NEW DELHI: About 50 countries, including Canada, Mexico, Nigeria and Panama, have shown interest in having a Co-WIN like system to run their vaccination drive, a senior official said, adding India is ready to share the open source software free of cost. Dr R S Sharma, the chairman of the empowered group for Covid-19 vaccine administration, said PM Modi has directed officials to create an open source version of the platform and give it free of cost to any country that wants it. "The Cowin platform has become so popular that as many as 50 countries from central Asia, Latin America, Africa all showed interest in having a Co-win like system," Sharma said at the second Public Health Summit 2021 on 'Emerging Imperatives in Strengthening Public Health for India' organised by Confederation of Indian Industry.

"We are informed by the Secretary of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) that 77 advocates who were members of SCBA have lost their lives to COVID-19. We pay our deepest condolences. We will observe two-minute silence for the departed souls," Chief Justice Ramana said.

## Navjot Sidhu to meet Rahul Gandhi today

NEW DELHI

AMID infighting in the Punjab Congress, sulking party leader Navjot Singh Sidhu is expected to meet Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday. This meeting is ahead of the Congress peace formula which is to be given by the AICC and rejig in Punjab unit -- both in the government and in the organization.

Rahul Gandhi will try to pacify the disgruntled leader and will press for an amicable solution to the infighting between chief minister Amarinder Singh and Navjot Singh Sidhu ahead of next year's crucial assembly election.

Sidhu had also met the three-member panel formed by party chief Sonia Ganshi to resolve the issues.

Last week Punjab Congress president Sunil Jhakar, finance minister Manpreet Singh Badal and MPs Pratap Singh Bajwa and Manish Tewari met Rahul Gandhi and apprised him of the situation after infighting escalated in the state.

Sunil Jhakar said after the meet, "Hope that the current situation will be resolved and some wrong people are advising the chief minister over the decision on jobs to kin of MLAs."

## Governor Dhankhar corrupt: Mamata

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday launched a volley of attacks on Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and called him a "corrupt" man whose name "was in the chargesheet of Jain Hawala case".

Mamata Banerjee also said that she has written three letters for the removal of West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar.

"I have written three letters for removal of West Bengal Governor. He is a corrupt man, his name was in the chargesheet of Hawala Jain case in 1996," CM Mamata Banerjee said on Monday during a press conference.

"Why should he dictate even after our government getting a huge mandate?" Mamata Banerjee added.

The Hawala scandal, also known as the Jain Diaries case or the was a hawala scam of the 1990s involving payments allegedly sent by politicians



through four hawala brokers, namely the Jain brothers. It was a \$18 million scandal that involving some of the country's leading politicians. All is not well between the TMC-led West Bengal government and Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar. Last week, sources said that the TMC is planning to pass a resolution in the state assembly against Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar.

## Kejri promises free electricity in Punjab

AMRITSAR: Ahead of assembly elections in Punjab next year, Delhi Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday promised free electricity in that state if his Aam Aadmi Party wins the polls. A day ahead of his visit to Chandigarh, the AAP leader also claimed that women in Punjab are very unhappy with inflation.

"...In Delhi we provide 200 units of free electricity to every family. The women are very happy. Women in Punjab are also very unhappy with inflation. The AAP government will also provide free electricity in Punjab. See you tomorrow in Chandigarh," Kejriwal tweeted in Punjabi. Assembly elections in Punjab are scheduled to be held in February or March next year. Earlier, the AAP accused the Punjab government of denying its national convener Kejriwal permission to hold a press conference in the state, a charge denied by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

Dismissing the accusation, Singh asked why would the state government stop Kejriwal from holding a press conference when he was allowed to hold a party programme a few days back.

# Study shows Delta strain is a threat even after vaccination

Fresh lines of evidence have amplified concerns among health researchers that the highly infectious Delta variant driving India's second Covid-19 wave also has the capacity to cause infections in people believed protected by vaccination or by previous Covid-19 episodes.

Researchers have found that the Delta variant, which now makes up over 50 per cent of sequenced viruses from new Covid-19 cases in eight states including Bengal, dominated infection clusters among vaccinated healthcare workers in three Delhi hospitals, according to The Telegraph report.

While severe disease in fully vaccinated healthcare workers was rare, the clusters of infections among the vaccinated individuals are "concerning", the researchers from multiple institutions

in India and the UK have said in a new study. Their study has also suggested that the Delta variant has spread fast through its high transmissibility and capacity to evade immune responses and is able to dodge 20 to 55 per cent of immune protection provided by prior Covid-19 infections.

Lab measurements have indicated that antibodies generated by Covishield and Covaxin, among other Covid-19 vaccines, show reduced activity against the Delta variant, but the Indian Council of Medical Research has said residual activity is strong enough for both vaccines to work against the variant.

Senior ICMR officials have also underlined that vaccines work not only through antibodies but also through other arms of the immune system that can help mitigate the impact of a viral infec-



tion. The new study by researchers at the University of Cambridge, India's National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, and collaborating hospitals in Delhi has provided fresh insights into how the Delta variant contributed to the second wave.

In a set of biological experiments, the researchers also observed that the Delta variant showed increased replication in tissues designed to mimic human airway cells, a feature they believe could lead to higher viral loads and easier transmission.

The Delta variant's footprint has expanded in India alongside the second wave. The variant spread from one district in December 2020 to 52 districts by March 2021 and 174 by June, said Suseet Singh, director of the NCDC, a lab coordinat-

ing a nationwide coronavirus genome sequencing effort.

In eight states — Andhra Pradesh, Bengal, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab and Telangana — the Delta variant now makes up more than 50 per cent of viruses sequenced from samples of new Covid-19 cases, Singh said.

Singh and other officials have asserted that irrespective of the variant in circulation, the response measures remain the same — early testing, treating, contact tracing, precautions such as masks and crowd avoidance, and vaccination.

The India-UK researchers hypothesised that given its capacity to evade immune responses, the Delta variant might compromise vaccine efficacy and sequenced so-called breakthrough infections among vaccinated healthcare workers.



## TODAY's QUOTE

### Hope to resolve Covishield travelling issue soon

"I realise that a lot of Indians who have taken Covishield are facing issues with travel to the EU, I assure everyone, I have taken this up at the highest levels and hope to resolve this matter soon, both with regulators and at a diplomatic level with countries


— Adar Poonawalla, CEO, Serum Institute



## IPO

### Sebi keeps on hold Go Airlines' IPO draft papers

Markets regulator Sebi has kept in abeyance the processing of Go Airlines' draft papers for an initial public offer worth Rs 3,600 crore. Go Airlines (India) Ltd, which has announced rebranding itself as 'Go First', filed preliminary papers for an initial share sale worth Rs 3,600 crore in May

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	75.14	South	
Euro	89.71	African Rand	5.52
UAE Dirham	20.61	Hong Kong Dollar	10.04
Thai Baht	2.44	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.63	New Zealand Dollar	53.19
Australian Dollar	57.05	Saudi Riyal	21.77
Canadian Dollar	61.13	Swedish Krona	9.29
Swiss Franc	81.88	Singapore Dollar	56.23

DELHI TUESDAY 29 JUNE 2021

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Now product from Sunfeast

TC's biscuit & cakes brand Sunfeast, has launched its new biscuit product as 'Sunfeast All Rounder' with a new-to-market experience with inclusion of potato. The biscuit is said to be one of the thinnest biscuits ever manufactured in India. "Sunfeast All Rounder aims to offer consumers a differentiated premium offering in a cracker format. With crackers constituting a large segment in the biscuits category, we believe it is an opportune time to further strengthen our portfolio and provide consumers with trending and delightful offerings," said Ali Harris Shere, Chief Operating Officer, Biscuits & Cakes Cluster, Foods Division, ITC. The new biscuits will be available for sale first in South India, West Bengal and North East markets through ITCstore.in, general trade outlets and modern trade outlets.

### Vivo rolls out new device

Vivo has announced the launch of 6GB variant of Vivo Y51A in India. The product has features such as 5000 mAh battery, 18W fast charge, 48MP rear camera, paired with Qualcomm, Snapdragon, six-series processor. It features super night selfie that uses aura screen light and a noise cancellation algorithm to capture sharp images in low light conditions. The vivo Y51A is designed to provide wide and immersive view while streaming on a 16.71 cm (6.58) halo full view display with FHD+ resolution that also filters out harmful blue light to prevent eye strain. It is available for purchase in two colour options titanium sapphire and crystal symphony on Vivo India E-store. It is priced at Rs 16,990.

### Virtual event on yoga held

A virtual event titled Peace and Harmony through Yoga and Ikebana was presented by First Master Ohryu Rekha. Taga Masayuki, Consul General of Japan Chennai, and Yogacharya Shashidhar, a yoga guru, took part in the event as guests of honour. The practice of Ikebana is said to be leading us closer to nature. This sublime art form infuses spirituality and connects India as the Buddhist monks were the first to practice it, and Buddhism originated in India, spreading to Japan. Rekha Reddy, said: "The theme – Yoga and Ikebana is a celebration of two schools of thought that have many things in common. Yoga promotes physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. This ancient Indian science and its benefits is unparalleled."

### Yamaha unveils new scooter

Yamaha Motor (IYM) has launched Fascino 125 Fi Hybrid. The scooter available in both disc and drum brake versions, powered by a BS-VI compliant, air-cooled, fuel-injected (Fi), 125 cc blue core engine that produces a power output of 8.2 PS at 6,500rpm, It flaunts a smart motor generator (SMG) system with added functionality that newly adopts the hybrid system wherein the SMG functions as an electric motor to give a power assist when you accelerate from a stop, reducing the insecurity caused by the wobble during startouts. Motofumi Shitara, Chairman, Yamaha Motor India said: "The all new Fascino 125 Fi Hybrid applies electric power assist for the first time in our two-wheelers in the Indian market. We are sure that the new Fascino 125 Fi will provide a rich riding experience to customers."

## FRESH STIMULUS

# India Inc gets ₹1.5-trn credit

■ FM brings in those who're out of fold ■ healthcare sector, tourism in focus

NEW DELHI

UNION Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday announced Rs1.5-lakh crore of additional credit for small and medium businesses, more funds for the healthcare sector, loans to tourism agencies and guides, and waiver of visa fee for foreign tourists as part of a package to support the pandemic-hit economy.

Together with previously announced Rs 93,869 crore spending on providing free foodgrains to the poor till November and additional Rs 14,775 crore fertiliser subsidy, the stimulus package – mostly made up of government guarantee to banks and microfinance institutions for loans they extend to Covid-hit sectors – totalled up to Rs 6.29 lakh crore. Addressing a press conference, Sitharaman said: "Economic relief measures are being announced today."

She provided Rs 23,220 crore of additional funding for setting up children and paediatric care/paediatric beds at hospitals to prepare healthcare infrastructure to deal with any emergency arising for Covid wave hitting children.

To incentivize job creation, the government committed to paying the employer and employee's share to provident fund (PF) for all new recruitments done till March 2022. Previously, the government paid Rs 902 crore for 21.42 lakh beneficiaries of 79,577 establishments. With the tourism

**Another Breather: Stimulating Sagging Growth**

₹1.10-L cr loan guarantee scheme for Covid-hit sectors



₹50,000 cr to health sector

₹60,000 cr loan guarantee to other sectors

Free tourist visa scheme to cost ₹100cr

Expands ECLGS from ₹1.5L cr to ₹4.5L cr

- Offers 75% guarantee for medical infra loans for 3 years
- 100% guarantee on loans to tourist agencies

sector being hit hard by the pandemic, she announced up to Rs 10 lakh loan to tourist agencies and Rs 1 lakh loan to tourist guides while waiver of visa fee for the first five lakh foreign tourists visiting India after travel restrictions ease. Tourist visa fee waiver will cost the government Rs 100 crore.

Other announcements included an additional Rs 19,041 crore for providing broadband internet cover to all village panchayats, an extension of tenure of production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for large scale electronics manufacturing by a year and Rs 88,000 crore of insurance cover for goods exporters. The support measures were announced as states start lifting restrictions after new coronavirus infections showed a decline. The economy seems to be on a recovery path after being hit by a

devastating second wave of infections that was dubbed as the world's worst Covid-19 surge.

Sitharaman said the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme is being expanded to Rs 4.5 lakh crore from Rs 3 lakh crore. Under the scheme, a collateral-free loan is provided by banks to small businesses and the government stands guarantee for any default.

The ECLGS, launched last year, has helped cash-starved small businesses raise funds during the Covid-19 lockdown for working capital and to meet their orders. As much as Rs 2.73 lakh crore has been sanctioned under the three previous ECLGS programmes, of which Rs 2.10 lakh crore has already been disbursed. Another Rs 1.1 lakh crore loan guarantee scheme for Covid-affected sectors was announced. This included Rs

50,000 crore for the health sector, with a three-year single loan of Rs 100 crore carrying an interest of 7.95 per cent. Loans to other sectors such as tourism and hospitality would come at 8.25 per cent per annum interest rate. Also, micro-finance institutions will extend 25 lakh small borrowers loans of up to Rs 1.25 lakh at an interest rate that is 2 per cent lower than the benchmark lending rate, she said. The government also extended the loan guarantee programme to the tourism sector, after last month widening it to airlines and hospitals. Financial Services Secretary Debasish Panda said the objective of credit guarantee is to encourage banks to lend to enterprises so that they get credit at low cost. The measures announced Monday are "to ensure money comes into hands of small, medium and large

### New stimulus to ease cashflow distress: CII

HANS BUSINESS  
NEW DELHI

THE Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) welcomed Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcement on economic relief measures to revive industries marred by the deadly second wave of Covid-19 in the country.

Commenting on the economic relief measures announced on Monday, Chandrajit Banerjee, director general, CII, said: "Extending liquidity support to the stressed sectors emanating from the pandemic, the announcement of slew of measures such as loan guarantees for healthcare, tourism sectors and small borrowers, in addition to increasing the scope of ECLGS by Rs 1.5 lakh crore are laudable. These measures are expected to address the severe cash flow distress precipitated by the business disruptions caused by the lockdowns in the wake of second wave of the pandemic."

enterprises," he said. The credit programme supplements separate measures announced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) last month to boost credit for health care services and provide fresh lending to vaccine-makers.

## Hyderabad entrepreneur unveils fast charging EV

HANS BUSINESS  
NEW DELHI

A Hyderabad-based entrepreneur has announced launch of new range of two-wheeler electric vehicle (EV) Quanta here. The EV has been designed and built indigenously. Available from Rs99,000, the EV bike has a capacity to reach 70km speed per hour, says Parshuram Paka, founder and CEO, Gravton Motors, after unveiling it here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Parshuram said: "I felt the need to end the stigma associated with electric vehicles regarding performance, affordability and availability of spare parts. The Quanta EV bike, built by my company, has a 3kWh Li-ion detachable battery, which comes with a three years warranty, and gives an average travel range of upto 120 kilometres per charge."

The major attraction consists of its fast-charging feature as the bike can be charged



Gravton Quanta electric scooter

at home in three hours and can be fast-charged with an optional proprietary charger in 90 minutes with no requirement of special charging infrastructure. The CEO also announced Gravton's Swap Ecosystem to further gain the confidence of its customers. "Every component of this bike has been sourced from India. So, there should be no issue in procuring spare parts," Parshuram, added.

The company has announced the bike price as Rs 99,000 with a life span of minimum 15 years. The company is targeting to sell 2,000 units by the end of FY-22. As per the official announcement, the company has received \$1million investment, which has been utilised for varied purposes including research and development, design and establishing manufacturing unit.

### CtrlS bags USGBC leadership award

HANS BUSINESS  
HYDERABAD

CtrlS, Asia's largest rated-four hyper-scale datacenter, has been honoured with USGBC Regional Leadership Award by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). The company joins an impressive slate of awardees that include organizations, projects and individuals around the world who are using green building and sustainable practices to improve the quality of life for those around them. "Following a difficult year, it is truly inspiring to recognize our green building leaders that have continued their commitment to green building and sustainable communities, while adapting to the changing environments around us," said Mahesh Ramanujam, president and CEO, USGBC.

Caring for Planet Earth has been integral to CtrlS DNA. The company has engineered 80 innovations in energy efficiency and sustainability space and has reduced the PUE to 1.35 reducing energy consumption at its hyper-scale data centers in India.



## Fresh stimulus fails to cheer investors

Sensex retreats from record peak of 53,126.73 pts as RIL, IT stocks skid; Nifty tests intra-day record of 15,915.65 pts

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmark BSE Sensex reversed early gains to close 189 points lower on Monday, pressured by Reliance Industries (RIL) and IT stocks, as investors gave a lukewarm response to the government's fresh stimulus measures for Covid-hit sectors.

A lacklustre trend in global equities further weighed on sentiment, though robust buying in pharma and metal counters capped the losses, traders said. After touching a life-time high of 53,126.73 points in opening session, the 30-share BSE index ended 189.45 points or 0.36 per cent lower at 52,735.59. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty settled 45.65 points or 0.29 per cent down at 15,814.70.



It touched an intra-day record of 15,915.65. "The market got volatile in the closing hour, ahead and during the FM announcement, though it was focused on the Covid-19 relief package mainly for healthcare and stressed sectors, which will benefit the broad economy," said Vinod Nair, head (research) at Geojit Financial Services.

Titan was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 1.56 per cent, followed by TCS, HCL Tech, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance Industries, UltraTech Cement and Bharti Airtel. On the other hand, Dr Reddy's topped the gainers' chart with a leap of 1.75 per cent after the pharma major announced the commercial launch of its Covid-19 treatment drug 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG). Tata Steel, Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharma, HUL and PowerGrid were among the other winners, climbing up to 1.64 per cent. To help revival of the economy battered by COVID-19, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday announced a slew of measures, including a Rs 1.1 lakh crore credit guarantee scheme for improving health infrastructure, and enhancing the limit under the ECLGS by 50 per cent to Rs 4.5 lakh crore for the MSME sector facing a liquidity crunch. "After opening at a record high, the domestic markets slipped into the negative zone tracking cues from global peers due to spike in COVID cases across Asia. PSU Banks were in focus in anticipation of progress in privatisation. BSE energy, capital goods, tech, IT, telecom, power fell up to 0.80 per cent, while metal, healthcare and basic materials indices mustered solid gains."

## ₹1.75-trn disinvestment target on track: CEA

HANS BUSINESS  
HYDERABAD

CHIEF Economic Advisor Krishnamurthy Subramanian said that the target of mopping up Rs 1.75 lakh crore from disinvestments in some of the public-sector companies including LIC and BPCL during the current fiscal, is on track and the government is preparing the groundwork for the goal.

On the Covid-19 pandemic, Subramanian said the impact of the second wave was lesser than that of the first one. In an interactive session, organised by Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCC) here on Monday, the CEA said: "Robust GST collections, over Rs one lakh crore per month for eight months in a row shows that consumption is picking up indicating positive signal for

Krishnamurthy Subramanian says every rupee spent by governments on freebees would contribute only ₹0.98 to the country's economy as against ₹4.50 when used on capital expenditure

growth. There has to be a lot of work, which is going on and this year there is actually a lot of emphasis on achieving these targets. Remember that Rs 1.75 lakh crore, a good part of it will be from LIC's IPO (Initial Public Offering). Second is Bharat Petroleum (BPCL) privatisation. And these two together itself can account for a large part of (disinvestment target)." Earlier in his



Krishnamurthy Subramanian

speech, he said every rupee spent by governments on freebees would contribute only Rs 0.98 to the country's economy against Rs 4.50 when used on capital expenditure.

The Centre budgeted Rs 1.75 lakh crore from stake sale in public-sector companies and financial institutions, including 2 PSU banks and one insurance company, in the current fiscal year. The disinvestment plan includes strategic sale of IDBI Bank, BPCL, Shipping Corp, Container Corporation, Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd, among others, and also legislative amendments required for LIC IPO would be brought in 2021-22. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said in her budget speech.

### Reliance Nippon among best cos to work for

HANS BUSINESS  
HYDERABAD

RELiance Nippon Life Insurance Company Limited has been acknowledged amongst India's Best Workplaces in BFSI 2021. The company has successfully created a Great Place to Work for all their employees as the company have excelled on the five dimensions that are a hallmark of a high-trust, high-performance culture credibility, respect, fairness, pride and camaraderie.

Ashish Vohra, ED, CEO, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Co. Ltd said: "Reliance Nippon Life's commitment towards making the organization the best work environment is what makes us different from other players in the sector. At our organization, employees are considered as true assets which are reflected in the various growth & development opportunities we have in place for employees across levels."

## Doceree closes pre-series A funding round

HANS BUSINESS  
HYDERABAD

DOCEREE, the first global network of physician-only platforms for programmatic marketing has announced the raising of pre-Series A funding of an undisclosed amount led by existing and new investors.

The company will utilize the fresh capital to expand its programmatic offerings and advancing the efficiency and effectiveness of physician marketing. It is the only platform in this category which owns all three components of an Ad Exchange – SSP, DSP and DMP. "Being able to

garner a positive cash flow within a year of our commencement in the first launch market validates the capabilities of our platform in elevating business outcomes in the pharma and healthcare sector," said Harshit Jain MD, Founder and Global CEO, Doceree.

The platform has raised seed funding from angel investors in the United States and India. The company has bolstered its team to up to 75 members with industry veterans from Amazon, Adobe, Sprinklr and Experian. Pre-Series A is a bridge round and Doceree has already started the process of raising Series A from global investors.





## EURO 2020 CHAMPION SHIP

# Portugal elimination caps lacklustre season for Ronaldo

SEVILLE

CRISTIANO Ronaldo was slowly walking off the field when Romelu Lukaku came over to give him a hug.

The two embraced for a few moments, with Lukaku speaking into the Portugal great's ear.

Ronaldo politely thanked him, but quickly made his way back to the tunnel. He wasn't in much of a chatting mood. While Lukaku was moving on to the European Championship quarterfinals with Belgium, Ronaldo was heading home after a disappointing end to his tournament — and to his season.

There was no repeat European title. There was no world scoring record. And there probably won't be a player of the year award, either. The 36-year-old Ronaldo capped a lacklustre season in Portugal's 1-0 loss to Belgium in the round of 16 at Euro 2020 on Sunday.

Even though he scored more than 40 goals with his club and his country, his numbers were far from impressive by his standards. He failed to win the Italian league with Juventus, where his future remains uncertain with his contract ending next year.

His only titles in 2021 came in the Italian Cup and the Italian Super Cup. Ronaldo got off to a fantastic start at Euro 2020, though, scoring five goals in the first three matches to move level with former Iran striker Ali Daei as the men's all-time top scorer with 109 goals.

If he kept scoring, and if Portugal stayed on track for another title, he could have been back in the conversation for player of the year. It's didn't happen. Ronaldo threw his captain's armband to the ground after the final whistle against Belgium, then was one of the first to walk off. Portugal had several

## Czech knock out 10-man Netherlands in last-16

BUDAPEST

Two second-half goals from Tomas Holes and Patrik Schick helped the Czech Republic book a Euro 2020 quarterfinal berth after getting past Frank de Boer's Netherlands 2-0 in a round-of-16 match at the Puskas Arena here.

The Dutch caused problems for the Czech initially with their pace on Sunday, but Matthijs de Ligt and Denzel Dumfries lacked accuracy upfront, reports Xinhua. As the match progressed, Czech Republic grew in confidence and posed danger on counterattacks as Tomas Soucek's diving header missed

the target just wide in the 20th minute before Schick's deflected attempt forced Dutch goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg into action two minutes later.

With 37 minutes gone, the Czech got the best opportunity in the first half but Antonin Barak's promising shot from close range was blocked by De Ligt in the nick of time.

The Netherlands were off to a promising start in the second half and should have opened the scoring, but Donyell Malen failed to beat Czech goalkeeper

Tomas Vaclik in a one-on-one in the 52nd minute. The momentum of the game changed though moments later as De Ligt was sent off for a handball, which weakened the Dutch. The Czechs

immediately utilised their numerical advantage and snatched the opener through Holes, who nodded home a flicked-on set piece with 68 minutes played. (IANS)

League in 2019.

"It's a big disappointment for us because we believed we could win, like we did in 2016," Portugal coach Fernando Santos said.

"But there are things to look forward to. In 2018, we were eliminated as well but then in 2019 we won the Nations League. Now we will try to win the World Cup (in 2022)."

Ronaldo will be 37 by then, and most likely will already have broken the international scoring record. For now, he could still take solace from having a chance to finish as the top scorer at Euro 2020. He remains the tournament's leading scorer with five goals, one more than Patrick

Schick of the Czech Republic, who has advanced to the quarterfinals. (AP)



Belgium's Thomas Vermaelen (rear) and Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo challenge for the ball during their Euro 2020 soccer championship round of 16 match at the La Cartuja stadium in Seville, Spain late on Sunday

## BWF cancels India Open, Hyderabad Open; shifts Sudirman Cup, WTF

NEW DELHI

THE India Open Super 500 and Hyderabad Open Super 100 tournaments were on Monday cancelled by the Badminton World Federation (BWF), which announced a revamped international calendar to salvage the remaining season affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The USD 400,000 India Open, which was supposed to be one of the qualifiers for the Tokyo Olympics, was scheduled to be held from May 11 to 16 but was postponed in April due to rising COVID cases in the national capital. The USD 1,00,000 Hyderabad Open was slated to be held from August 24 to 29. However, Syed Modi India International Super 300 tournament, scheduled to be held in Lucknow from October 12 to 17, remained on course as of now, according to the new calendar. "A number of tournaments previously classified as postponed from Q1 and Q2 or originally slated for Q3 and Q4 of 2021 have subsequently been cancelled," BWF said in a statement. In other announcements, the world body on Monday said that Finland will host the Sudirman Cup Finals in September-October while

the season-ending World Tour Finals will be staged in Indonesia.

China was scheduled to host both the Sudirman Cup Final and the World Tour Finals but BWF decided to move both the events out of the country due to COVID-19 restrictions. The apex body also decided to push the prestigious World Championships, to be held in Spain, by two weeks. "COVID-19 restrictions have meant it is not feasible to conduct tournaments in China this year. Therefore, alternative host cities have been identified for the TotalEnergies BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2021 and the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2021," BWF said. "Vantaa, Finland is the new host of the TotalEnergies BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2021 in Week 39 (26 September – 3 October 2021)." Action will then shift to Denmark which will host the Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2020 in Aarhus (October 9-17), which was postponed last year.

It will be followed by back-to-back World Tour events -- DANISA Denmark Open in Odense (October 19-24), YONEX French Open in Paris (October 26-31) and SaarLor-Lux Open in Saarbrücken, Germany (November 2-7).

The governing body will then create a bio-bubble in Indonesia, similar to Thailand, to host a three-tournament Asian Leg in Bali, including the World Tour Finals. The Indonesia Masters and Indonesia Open will be held from November 16-21 and November 23-28, followed by the World Tour Finals from December 1-5. "The final tournament of the calendar year will be the TotalEnergies BWF World Championships in Huelva, Spain in Week 50 (12-19 December 2021)," the world body said. (PTI)

# T20 World Cup in UAE as BCCI confirms it can't host it

NEW DELHI

THE Indian cricket board has decided to inform the International Cricket Council (ICC) that it won't be able to host the T20 World Cup, leaving the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which was kept as standby for the tournament, as the host.

The tournament will be held in October-November, reportedly between October 17 and November 14, with some of the initial games also to be played in Oman.

"We had a meeting of office-bearers today (on Monday). We decided that it will be impossible to host the T20 World Cup amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. There are talks of a third wave. So, it would be highly risky. We will soon inform the ICC about our decision," Board of Control for Cricket in



India (BCCI) vice-president Rajiv Shukla told IANS on Monday.

The tournament will be hosted by India even though it will be played in the UAE as ICC has already clarified.

The ICC said it will make a statement once it hears from the BCCI.

"We will make a statement soon, once we hear from the BCCI," said an ICC official.

It has been learnt that the BCCI also

failed to guarantee tax exemption to ICC. A source aware of the developments told IANS, "The BCCI had filed application for tax exemption but there was no intimation from the [finance] ministry on it."

The BCCI would have had to pay a minimum of Rs 227 crore and a maximum of Rs 906 crore to the ICC on failure to get exemption.

The Board had already missed a few deadlines over the past one-and-a-half years to guarantee exemption.

The shifting of the T20 World Cup to UAE comes after the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 was suspended on May 4.

In fact, an ICC team of officials that was to visit India for a recce for the T20 World Cup during IPL 2021, cancelled its visit due to the horrific COVID-19 situation in India.

## South Africa beats West Indies by 16 runs in 2nd T20

ST GEORGE'S (GRENADA)

ONLY 24 hours after losing the opening match by eight wickets, an unchanged South Africa lineup produced an improved but still imperfect bowling and fielding performance to restrict the West Indies to 150-9 in reply to its 166-7 on Sunday. The match stayed alive until the final over, thanks to a superb rearguard innings from Fabian Allen whose 34 runs from 12 balls included five sixes. The West Indies came to the final over bowled by Lungi Ngidi needing 36 runs to win — six sixes.

Allen raised their hopes with maximums off the first two balls. After a dot ball, a wide kept their faint chances alive. A third six from Allen created the possibility of an extraordinary finish but he was trapped lbw next ball and South Africa held on. At first, Sunday's match seemed to be eerily similar to the first match of the series at the same venue. South Africa again lost the toss, was sent in and its batting performance followed the pattern of the day before when it made 160-6 in an innings which started well, then faltered. On Sunday, Reeza Hendricks (42) and Quinton de Kock (26) put on 73 for South Africa's first wicket and captain Temba Bavuma made 46 from 33 balls to guide South Africa to 96-1 at the midpoint of its innings. But the second half of the innings didn't match the first and only two other batsmen, David Miller (11) and Heinrich Klaasen (10) reached double figures. The last four wickets produced only 27 runs. Obed McCoy took 3-25 from his four overs and Kevin Sinclair 2-23. Evin Lewis, whose match-winning 71 steered the West Indies to victory in the first match, started his innings Sunday in the same way he did a day earlier, with a six in the first over. After that promising beginning, he fell for 21 and the West Indies innings lacked the anchor Lewis provided in game one. Andre Fletcher made 35 from 36 balls and the West Indies looked in a reasonable position at 62-2 in the ninth over.



Snehit with Marek Tatarczuch, owner of the Polish 1st league club- UKS Villa Verde Olesno

all set to play in a couple of league matches in Germany in July before coming to Hyderabad to attend his final examinations.

Snehit thanked his coach Somnath Ghosh of 'Somnath Ghosh MLR-UTT Academy' for his strong support and guidance. "I am happy for Snehit. It is a great opportunity for him to be in the league of international players," Somnath Ghosh said.

## Snehti inks one year deal with European TT club

HYDERABAD

THE Hyderabad-based Table Tennis player S Fidel R Snehit signed with Polish 1st league club- UKS Villa Verde Olesno, to represent it in the next season.

The former national youth champion and bronze medalist in men's in the latest edition of Senior Nationals, Snehit interacted with the club owner Marek Tatarczuch and signed a contract on Sunday. The Olesno-based club recruited Snehit for one year.

Snehit is the first Telugu player to get an opportunity to play in European leagues from a continental club. "I am really excited with this contract. It is a new journey that would give me a great opportunity in terms of international match exposure."

Snehit, a final year Mass Communication and Journalism student of St Joseph's College, has been in Spain since May to represent a club in league matches. Later he moved to Poland where he won a league title last week. He is

SOUTHAMPTON

ICC match referee Phil Whitticase -- who officiated in the three-match T20I series between England and Sri Lanka which concluded on June 26 with the hosts winning 3-0 -- has tested positive for Covid-19.



Whitticase, along with seven other officials, will not officiate in the three match ODI series


## ICC match referee for Eng-SL ODIs tests Covid-positive

beginning at Chester-le-Street, Durham on Tuesday. The England and Wales Cricket (ECB) Board said in a statement on Sunday that, "Following a PCR test administered on Friday 25 June at the Ageas Bowl, Southampton, The England and Wales Cricket Board can confirm

that ICC Match Referee Phil Whitticase has tested positive for Covid-19. Whitticase, who was officiating during the three-match Vitality IT20 Series between England and Sri Lanka, is well and is asymptomatic.


"He will now observe a period of 10-days of self-isolation from 25 June, in accordance with the UK Government's protocol on quarantine," ECB stated.



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