

DECCAN CHRONICLE

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

NELLORE | TUESDAY | 1 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 35.2°C
Min: 25.8°C
RH: 62%
Rainfall: Nil
Forecast: clear.
Max/Min
temp. 35/25°C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES (+70,417)	DEATHS (+880)
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36,84,339	65,427
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covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,873)	(+9)
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TS: 1,24,963	827
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(+10,004)	(+85)
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AP: 4,34,771	3,969
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CASES AROUND THE WORLD

2,55,12,793	
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DEATHS

8,52,488	
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COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213	
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worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana

Tithi: Bhadrapada Shuddha Chaturdasi till 9.40 am

Star: Danishta till 4.39 pm

Varjyam: 12.26 am to 2.10 am

Durmuhurtham: 8.33 am to 9.23 am; 11.06 pm to 11.53 pm

Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HJRI CALENDAR

Muhamram 12, 1442 AH

PRAYERS (SHAHI MASJID)

Fajr: 4.46 am

Zohar: 12.10 pm

Asar: 4.33 pm

Magrib: 6.23 pm

Isha: 7.34 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.21 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.58 AM

MOONRISE TOMORROW 6.02 PM

MOONSET TODAY 5.54 AM



COUNTER POINT



The government has replaced my Black Cat security with this swadeshi dog!

IN BRIEF

LAUNCH OF YSR SAMPOORNA POSHANA PUT OFF

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 31

The state government has deferred the launch of nutrition supplementation programme called YSR Sampoorna Poshana scheme scheduled to be held from September 1 to September 7 as the Centre declared seven days of state mourning following the death of former President Pranab Mukherjee.

Information and public relations commissioner T. Vijay Kumar Reddy in a statement issued on Monday stated that though the YSR Sampoorna Poshana scheme was scheduled to be launched by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, it was deferred to September 7.

He said that the scheme was taken up at ₹1,863.11 crore to benefit 30.16 lakh people in 55,607 Anganwadi centres to provide supplementary nutrition.

ATCHANNAIDU DISCHARGED FROM NRI HOSPITAL

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 31

Telugu Desam MLA K. Atchannaidu was discharged from NRI hospital after he tested negative for Covid-19 on Monday.

The AP High Court had granted him bail on ESI scam on August 29. Though ACB had arrested him a few months ago to inquire on his role in the scam, he fell sick and tested Covid-19 positive. He took treatment at the government hospital at Guntur for a health problem and later shifted to Ramesh Hospitals. Since he tested Covid-19 positive, he was shifted to NRI hospital for treatment.

After taking a few days of treatment, he was cured of the infection and discharged from the hospital.

LOKESH: YSRC BEHIND ATTACK ON SCRIBE'S HOUSE

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, AUG. 31

The Telugu Desam (TD) national general secretary Nara Lokesh once again held the ruling party, YSR Congress, responsible for an incident of attack on the house of a journalist, working with a vernacular Telugu newspaper, from Chittoor district.

Reportedly, the house of one Venkata Narayan, a local journalist from Kanuru village in Somala mandal was allegedly vandalised by three men on Sunday. The video in which the three men damaging the scribe's house has gone viral on social media.

This episode took a political turn on Monday when the TD leader Lokesh alleged that the YSRC minister Peddireddy Ramchandra Reddy was behind the attack.

Posting a video on Twitter, Mr Lokesh alleged that the ruling party men have tried to burn the house of the scribe while he was trapped inside. The attack was a retaliation for exposing Dalit auto-driver Om Pratap's death and the local sand mafia.

Mr Lokesh tweeted the video and said, "Shocked to see Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy's men attack the house of journalist Venkata Narayana & vandalise his property. The goons threatened to douse the family with petrol & burn them alive. This was in retaliation for exposing Om Pratap's death & YSRC sand mafia".

He also tweeted, "The family locked themselves inside their house in terror, saving themselves from getting lynched. This is one of the many ghastly acts of violence against press freedom, and proof that the ruling party is indulging in organised terror. This is total lawlessness, I strongly condemn these brutal acts of terror and call for the perpetrators to be punished without political interference. Press freedom must be protected at any cost".

Meanwhile, in an official statement, Punganur rural inspector Mr T. Madhusudhan Reddy denied on Monday any political angle behind the attack. "Three members from a family of a minor girl, who allegedly faced harassment by her school headmaster, had attacked the house of the journalist. They did this as he was allegedly trying to mediate and force the girl's family for a settlement," he said and added that a case had been registered and accused G. Bhaskar, K. Hari and Suresh were arrested".

Poor storage capacity of reservoirs affects Seema

Tungabhadra water not used to its maximum due to leakages

NAGABHUSHANAM
HOSKOTE | DC
ANANTAPUR, AUG. 31

The poor storage capacity of reservoirs in Rayalaseema have been unable to make use of sources from the Tungabhadra dam for the past three decades.

Pulivendula, part of HLMC catchment area, has never got minimum water from the Tungabhadra. Kurnool city is also suffering a drinking water crisis every year due to poor storage facilities during peak season. The Penna Abobilam balancing reservoir (PABR), the only major source to preserve water, has been unable to have even half of water due to leakages.

Though, PABR's capacity is 11 TMC ft, it cannot store even 5 TMC ft. In addition, the mid pennar reservoir with 5 TMC ft capacity has to keep about 4 TMC ft.

CPI state secretary K. Ramakrishna, told *Deccan Chronicle* that he wrote a letter to Chief Minister, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, to fight against false reports about the silt level. "Jagan should resist Karnataka's false reports on silt and demand additional water as compensation," Mr Ramakrishna said.

Former minister and Telugu Desam politburo member, Kalava Srinivasulu, recalled that he asked for an additional reservoir near Untakal and funds were released for DPR preparation for a 5 TMC ft reservoir. Its construction is still moving at a snail's pace, said Mr Ramakrishna.

Tungabhadra high level main canal (HLMC) superintending engineer Nayakanti Rajasekhar, said the irrigation department submitted a preliminary report for the Tungabhadra board for a parallel flood canal towards AP. The department assessed that at least ₹540 crore would be needed. "We will prepare a detailed project report soon after board meeting. We also demand the pending survey report 2016 on silt," Mr Rajasekhar told this newspaper.

AP gets its share from the Tungabhadra towards the HLMC and low level canal (LLC), along with power generation. The HLMC canal is unable to draw maximum water even if the Tungabhadra board authorities are ready to release more water during rainy season.

Tungabhadra board secretary, Naga Mohan, said



High Level Canal flows from Tungabhadra Dam to AP.

Water drawing capacity of canals from Srisailam to be increased

PATHRI RAJASEKHAR | DC
NELLORE, AUG. 31

The drawing capacity of water channels from Srisailam to Kandaleru are being increased to divert floodwaters to Somasila and Kandaleru dams at an estimated cost of ₹955 crore to ensure supply of drinking water to Chennai, apart from meeting the other requirements.

Enhancing the capacity of canals became a necessity for effective utilisation of floodwaters, as they are available only for 30 to 45 days as against 120 days in the past thanks to dams built upstream by both Maharashtra and Karnataka.

According to the chief engineer of the NTR Telugu Ganga project, K. Harinarayana Reddy, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh should provide 5 tmc ft of water each to Chennai following the agreement of the Telugu Ganga project.

After bifurcation, Telangana state had to deliver 40 per cent of the 5 tmc ft of water and the balance should be borne by AP.

However, Maharashtra

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF CANALS
capacity of canals became a necessity for effective utilisation of floodwaters, as they are available only for 30 to 45 days as against 120 days in the past thanks to dams built upstream by both Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Mr Reddy said they wrote to KRBMB (Krishna River Management Board) to sort out the issue. "Water realisation at the Chennai end is only 60 to 70 per cent because the Telugu Ganga canal discharge capacity from 78 km to 151 km in the Tamil Nadu side is only 1000 cusecs as against 4000 cusecs from Kandaleru to 78 km. Moreover, we should release the water when there is no demand for irrigation to avoid misuse. We told TN engineers to enhance the canal capacity to 2000 cusecs from 78 km to increase the realisation."

Referring to a recent meeting with the higher authorities of Tamil Nadu, he said they reacted positively to provide funds in advance for the widening of canals from Srisailam to Kandaleru in accordance with the existing agreement where Tamil Nadu should share 30 per cent of any expenditure pertaining to the Telugu Ganga project.

Thereafter they have to maintain a minimum of 16 tmc ft of water at Veligodu project, 30 tmc ft of water at Somasila and

10 tmc ft of water at Kandaleru to supply water from one point to another to ensure water to Chennai from Kandaleru.

Mr Reddy said they wrote to KRBMB (Krishna River Management Board) to sort out the issue. "Water realisation at the Chennai end is only 60 to 70 per cent because the Telugu Ganga canal discharge capacity from 78 km to 151 km in the Tamil Nadu side is only 1000 cusecs as against 4000 cusecs from Kandaleru to 78 km. Moreover, we should release the water when there is no demand for irrigation to avoid misuse. We told TN engineers to enhance the canal capacity to 2000 cusecs from 78 km to increase the realisation."

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that the board acts neutrally to assist all three states in sharing water from the reservoir. He further said that the board

was to ready release maximum water based on available capacity. The board would call for a meeting in September.

AP to take up comprehensive land survey from next January

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 31

Andhra Pradesh will take up a comprehensive land survey, availing high-end technology, from Jan. 1, 2021 to Aug. 31, 2023.

Chief Minister, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, directed officials to come up with an action plan to take up the comprehensive land survey in the state and complete it in two-and-a-half-years, during a review meeting with ministers and the senior officials at his camp office here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Jagan asked officials to provide the services of office of sub-registration at village secretariats and felt the need for newly purchased equipment to be made available for taking up such a survey at village

secretariats.

He called for a simultaneous land survey in all mandals in the state and asked officials to enhance the number of the 4,500 newly formed teams for the survey.

Calling for widespread publicity for the survey in village secretariats by displaying posters providing all requisite information, Jagan asked officials to procure all requisite equipment for the survey, including specially designed stones to earmark area of ownership, drones and rovers and called for setting up base stations, mobile tribunals and vehicles for the movement of the survey teams. He laid stress on training the teams involved in land survey on key issues to make the survey fool-proof.

Given that this is the first survey in decades, Jagan called for awareness-building among the people by conducting gram sabhas and also asked officials to explain

the benefits of the survey to landowners.

All efforts were being made to resolve pending land disputes, said officials, adding that they were taking up a special drive to resolve 52,866 land disputes pending in revenue courts and 79,405 disputes related to lapses in webland.

A comprehensive survey was taken up as a pilot project at Jaggayapatna in Krishna district.

While 182 kamatas were exiting earlier, after the survey their number had gone up to 631. Officials also informed Jagan that for 631 kamatas, there were 829 survey numbers in the mandal.

Transparency in the land survey would help farmers get rights over their lands without any issues.

Officials informed Jagan that AP would be the first state in the country to avail high-end technology to take up a comprehensive land survey and newly formed teams for the survey.

They said that survey would help purification of land records and benefit the farmers in a big way. During the survey, rovers would transmit data to enable the recording of survey details online so that it would avoid any tampering of data.

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the benefits of the survey to landowners.

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He further stressed that to facilitate exports and imports also, the Tirupati (Renigunta) airport, which is already a classified international airport, must immediately begin to

TS to give stiff competition to AP in race for bulk drug park

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Telangana state will give stiff competition to Andhra Pradesh in the race for the bulk drug park. The Centre will evaluate the proposals of the competing states and decide on rankings.

Hyderabad has the traditional advantage of being the bulk drug capital of the country and the TS government has already acquired about 8,000 acres for Hyderabad Pharma City (HPC) and set into motion the acquisition of another 7,000 acres.

K. Rama Rao, TS industries minister, has been promoting HPC as the world's largest pharmaceutical cluster that would finally come up in 19,000 acres and would be an ideal international destination for global pharma players opting out of China. Besides, it will also accommodate the existing and new domestic players.

Another advantage of the TS model is that the government, apart from arranging land, will bear the expenditure for basic infrastructure like roads, drainage and power while the private player has to invest in the common effluent treatment plant and other capital intensive facilities mandated

JAGAN TO REACH KADAPA BY TODAY EVENING

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, AUG. 31

Chief Minister, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, is coming to Kadapa on Tuesday evening and will stay at Idupulapaya. He will pay tributes to his father at YSR ghat on Wednesday morning with family members.

He reaches Kadapa airport 4.45 pm on Tuesday and departs for Idupulapaya by special helicopter and will stay there.

On Wednesday morning, he reaches YSR ghat, Idupulapaya by 9.45 am. From 9.50 am to 10.30 am, he will pay tributes along with family members to his father, late Chief Minister Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy at YSR Ghat.

Later he will depart from Idupulapaya to Kadapa airport by 10.45 am. He will depart from Kadapa airport to Gannavaram by flight at 11.15 am.

CPM DEMANDS ACTION ON CHENNUR SUGARS

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, AUG. 31

CPM state committee member Narayana, demanded that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, who is coming to Kadapa on Tuesday, make a clear statement on the Chenur co-operative sugar factory.

At a press conference at the CPM district office on Monday, Mr Narayana pointed out that the factory had been closed for the past eight years. Nearly 50 workers had no salaries and they are in hardship and some have died, he said. Jagan Mohan Reddy had assured the farmers during his padyatra that he would open the factory and support the farmers and workers.

He said he, along with five members of his family, purchased it from one Kandrapu Konadu. On October 31, 2002, local tahsildar with the help of armed police personnel cleared all the encroachments.

It has been a year now but no progress has been made so far, Mr Narayana said.

He said he, along with five members of his family, purchased it from one Kandrapu Konadu. On October 31, 2002, local tahsildar with the help of armed police personnel cleared all the encroachments.

He said the government had introduced a new industrial policy to focus on providing best-in-class infrastructure on the concept and principles of 'work, live, learn and play.' Sri

City is home for 187 industrial units from 27 countries, offering job opportunities to over 50,000 people. He further stressed that to facilitate exports and imports also, the Tirupati (Renigunta) airport, which is already a classified international airport, must immediately begin to

ramp up its cargo carriage facilities.

Mr Karikal Valaven said that as the state's economic growth hinges on industrial development, the government has focused on the industrial sector and also on ways to attract more investments.

He said the government had introduced a new industrial policy to focus on

providing best-in-class in-

Aurobindo in talks with GMR Group for land bank

From Page 1

scheme and offered a grant of about ₹1,000 crore for developing infrastructure.

Sources said various options are being worked out between the two groups including the GMR leasing out 2,000 acres to a special purpose vehicle (SPV) through Aurobindo or the latter purchasing land outright and offering it to the SPV as its equity.

"Offering 2,000 acres of land parcel free from encumbrances is a challenge and Aurobindo alone might be in a position to do that," sources pointed out. The Centre announced funding for three bulk drug parks under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atmanirbhar Bharat

for maintaining a clean environment like heating and cooling. The HPC is ready with the master plan according to which 3,394 acres would be allotted to the red category industries, 1,615 acres to the hybrid category, 2,797 acres for orange and 558 acres for green and white categories. It proposed to set up a pharma university of interna-

tional standards. It will gear up to treat 120 million litres per day of effluents and manage waste of 164 tonnes per day. Andhra Pradesh on the other hand has just begun the race and set up the AP Bulk Drug Infrastructure Corporation and is in search of a private partner who in all probability will be Aurobindo Pharma.

Prasad's senior counsel, P. Veera Reddy, argued against the issues mentioned in the counter affidavit filed by the state government.

Advocate general, S. Srinivas, informed the court that the findings of the Cabinet subcommittee were sent to the centre and also expressed willingness for a CBI probe. He felt the need to add both the centre and the CBI as respondents in the case.

SHORT TAKES

165 TEST CENTRES FOR WARD/VILLAGE SECRETARIATS

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, AUG. 31

As many as 165 exam centres are being arranged for holding the exams to fill vacant posts in wards and village secretariats from September 20 to 26 in SPSR Nellore district.

As many as 54,000 candidates applied for the vacant posts in 655 village/ward secretariats. During a review with the officials concerned, Collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu has directed them to arrange buses and told the candidates to be present at the exam centre one hour before the test.

He told them to wear masks and maintain social distance while attending for the exams. He said that they would impose Section 144 at all the exam centres.

While advising the candidates with Covid-19 symptoms to avoid attending the exam, he instructed the officials to arrange separate rooms if anyone with symptoms turns up for the test. "The invigilator in the room must wear a PPE kit," the Collector said.

He said that they had arranged a call centre with five landlines to clear the doubts of candidates. The phone numbers include 0861-2326744, 0861-2326755, 0861-2326766, 0861-2326772 and 0861-2326776. Mr Chakradhar Babu told the officials to arrange hostels for night stay for the candidates coming from outside a day before the exam.

VSU TO HOLD UG AND PG EXAMS FROM SEPT. 14

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, AUG. 31

Vikrama Simhapuri University (VSU) will hold final semester exams for undergraduate courses from September 16 and postgraduate courses from September 14 by duly following the Covid-19 safety precautions. Exams will be conducted at VSU College, VSU Campus and PG Centre in Kavali.

Students who are not able to attend the exams because of infection will be allowed to attend the exams later. The VSU authorities said that they would follow the UGC guidelines released on July 6 and also follow the recent verdict of Apex Court. For further details, students may check the university website www.simhapuriuni.ac.in, according to a press release.

TWO NEW LIFTS OPENED TO PUBLIC AT RAIL STATIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, AUG. 31

Giving a boost to the passenger amenities, South Central Railway Vijayawada Division has dedicated two new lifts, one each in Ongole and Gudur Railway Station on Monday, August 31.

These lifts will help rail passengers, especially specially-abled people, senior citizens and pregnant women to reach their boarding points with ease.

These two lifts, which have a carrying capacity of 13 passengers, were procured and commissioned at ₹1 crore. At the Ongole station, the new lift is installed on Platform 1 at the Foot Over Bridge near the main entrance.

This lift will connect passengers to the FOB leading to the platforms 2 and 3. All the platforms on Ongole are now directly connected with lift facility, along with escalator service on platform 1 for the convenience of the passengers.

In Gudur, this new lift was installed on recently commissioned new platforms 4 and 5 at the North Foot Over Bridge. The Vijayawada Division has already commissioned seven new lifts against the target of nine lifts for the financial year 2020-21.

Currently, works are in fast progress for commissioning two new lifts in Gudivada by the end of September.

Vijayawada Division has also got approval for procurement and commissioning five new lifts in Bapatla, Annavaram, Kakinada town and Rajahmundry and two new escalators on the proposed Mega FOB at Vijayawada railway stations. With this, Vijayawada Division now has 42 lifts at 14 stations and 18 escalators at seven stations.

P. Srinivas, Divisional Railway Manager, Vijayawada complimented team members.

Private hospitals charge up to ₹5 lakh per bed in Covid cases

Private hospitals accept only cash and no online financial transaction to avoid detection

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 31

bed and this leads managements to charge a whopping four-five lakh rupees for a bed.

Private hospitals accept only cash and no online financial transaction to avoid detection. Once a patient is admitted, his or her family members hardly get any information about the course of treatment, except to pay the amount at the cash counter for medicines, injections, medical tests and other requirements.

Unfortunately, in case the patient dies within a few hours of admission, family members cannot ask for part of money back. Instead, they will be asked to pay for shifting the body for cremation to the tune of ₹10,000 to ₹15,000, depending upon the distance and ₹1,500 for

● Several patients and their kin questioned the state health authorities for failing to update the data on bed strength on a regular basis, which has facilitated the illegal practice.

a PPE kit for the driver. In a case in Rajahmundry, a 70-year-old man infected with Covid-19, related to a local builder, was admitted in a private hospital paying ₹5 lakh and in seven hours, he breathed his last. No money was returned and instead his family was asked to pay extra for the ambulance to take the body for cremation.

Though the state government has issued directions fixing rates for providing Covid-19 treatment, most

private hospitals are ignoring them. There is no display of the number of beds available and occupied, though the hospitals are instructed to do so.

Hospitals are also not accepting cashless hospitalisation offered by some health insurance firms while others are not following norms to provide treatment under YSR Aarogyasri scheme.

Family members of Covid-19 patients allege that private hospitals are entertaining requests for beds only from VIPs and the rich who can pay money for the treatment while those who belong to the middleclass and the poor are being ignored.

They say that the doctors have fixed a package of four-five lakh for each Covid-19 patient to provide

general treatment for four to five days and in case the patient requires oxygen and ventilator, they will charge more.

East Godavari collector, D. Muralidhar Reddy, said, "We have been instructing private hospitals to provide treatment to Covid-19 patients following government fixed rates and also under YSR Aarogyasri scheme and in case any hospital flouts such norms and charges more, we will cancel permission to treat Covid-19 patients immediately and initiate necessary action."

We will open a toll-free call centre so that anyone can lodge a complaint about hospitals for violation of norms, so that we can take action to curb such practices." In Visakhapatnam, a government doctor had to beg

a private hospital to provide a bed for his kin who developed breathlessness and started vomiting blood. He managed to get a bed after 10 hours and after a few hours of getting admission, the patient charge more.

A gazetted government employee working in panchayat raj was ready to sell his three-bed room flat for ₹40 lakh to provide treatment to his mother infected with Covid-19 in a private hospital.

Though the state health authorities have been maintaining that they are keeping track of number of beds available and occupied in all the hospitals in the state and posting such data online on their website, the data is found to be old, with no regular updates.

BJP DEMANDS MSP TO PADDY

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, AUG. 31

BJP leaders demanded MSP to paddy while taking a serious view over offering a low price for the harvested paddy in Nellore district. In a representation submitted to the revenue authorities on Monday, BJP leaders alleged that brokers have been paying Rs 10,000 for Putti (850 kgs) of paddy to the farmers but producing receipts for Rs 16,000 by forging the signatures of farmers.

CAR CATCHES FIRE, 5 ESCAPE

Visakhapatnam: Five people, including the driver, had a miraculous escape when their car went up in flames near Gopalapatnam close to the petrol bunk in Vizag city on Monday. On noticing the fire from the engine of the vehicle, the driver and occupants immediately got out of the car and ran for cover.

State-of-art technology for new Parakamani building

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, AUG. 31

The entire building as well the machinery should be designed using the state-of-art technology for the upcoming Parakamani building in Tirumala, said the TTD EO Mr Anil Kumar Singhal.

The TTD EO along with Additional EO A.V. Dharma Reddy on Monday reviewed the works of the new Parakamani Building, which is in the offing in Tirumala, at a meeting held at the TTD administrative building in Tirupati on Monday.

TTD's chief engineer M. Ramesh Reddy presented the layout design of the building coming

up in front of the Matrusri Tarigonda Vengamamba Anna prasadam complex at Tirumala in an area of 22,622 sq ft on a donation basis at ₹9 crore. He said that the cellar has strong rooms meant for banks while the ground floor has coins parakamani hall and strong rooms for keeping hundi and the first floor houses a hall for currency parakamani, gold and other offerings.

The EO directed the officials concerned to present a perfect plan overcoming the existing glitches of sorting, segregation, counting and security frisking. "The new building should be constructed with state-of-art technology and

machinery, and the process of parakamani should be carried with less workforce involvement to have a more transparent and speedy counting mechanism.

He also discussed the electrical wiring, fire-fighting measure setup, installation of surveillance through CCTV cameras, soundproof glass for coin counting machinery, compound wall with protective spikes, donor Hall, security Room etc. and instructed to take up the works at a faster pace.

Meanwhile, the three-day Pavitrotsavam festival commenced at the Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple in Tiruchanoor on Monday in Ekantham.

TIRUPATI COVID-19 CENTRES ADD AYUSH ELEMENTS TO TREATMENT

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, AUG. 31

State-run hospitals in Tirupati have added traditional elements in treatment of Coronavirus patients, while continuing their allopathic regimen. Notably, herbal tea Kabasura Kudineer and turmeric milk, which are rich in medicinal properties and boost immunity, are being supplied to patients in government Covid care centres. In addition, patients at the Padmavati Nilayam centre in Tirupati are also doing yoga to increase their immunity.

As per recommendations of the central Ayush ministry, along with allo-

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, AUG. 31

pathic treatment, Covid-19 patients admitted in various Covid care centres of Tirupati are being served 40 ml of herbal tea twice a day, 60-80 ml of Kabasura Kudineer and turmeric milk once in a day to enhance their immunity. Yoga classes have also been introduced under sunlight, which is the most natural form of receiving the required daily dose of vitamin D.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Padmavathi Nilayam in-charge S. Lakshmi said these traditional medicines are contributing substantially towards boosting the immunity of patients.

Experts say the recovery rate of Covid-19 does improve if yoga classes are included.

SI SUSPENDED FOR INACTION

Prakasam District SP Siddharth Kaushal has suspended SHO of Dornala town S.K. Abdul Rehman as per the orders of Guntur Range IG J. Prabhakar Rao on the grounds of corruption allegations and inappropriate behaviour with the public.

The SP brought the SHO of Komorolu police station S. Mallikarjuna Rao and Gudluru police station SHO Y. Panduranga Rao to VR at the headquarters.

AP crosses 1-lakh mark in active Covid cases

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 31

Andhra Pradesh has crossed the one-lakh mark of Covid-19 active cases by registering 1,00,276 during the last 24 hours. State health authorities released Covid-19 bulletin here on Monday reporting that out of 56,490 samples tested, 10,004 individuals have tested Covid-19 positive, raising the overall tally to 4,34,771. The bulletin also reported the death of 85 patients, taking the death toll to 3,969.

Out of 37,22,912 samples tested in the state so far, 3,30,526 infected patients have been discharged after recovery while 1,00,276 patients are active and undergoing treatment in various hospitals of the

state. East Godavari continues to top the state by registering the highest number of 1,383 new Coronavirus infections, followed by 1,142 in West Godavari, 1,023 in Srikakulam, 1,086 in Nellore, 973 in Anantapur, 936 in Chittoor, 686 in Kurnool, 634 in Visakhapatnam, 540 in Vizianagaram, 524 in Prakasam, 498 in Guntur, 420 in Kadapa and 159 in Krishna.

Among the cumulative cases of infection, East Godavari has been the worst-affected district with 59,403 cases, followed by 44,745 in Kurnool, 41,128 in Anantapur, 37,106 in West Godavari, 36,694 in Visakhapatnam, 36,649 in Chittoor, 35,761 in Guntur, 30,680 in Nellore, 26,119 in Kadapa, 29,078 in Visakhapatnam, 27,799 in Guntur, 27,368 in Chittoor, 23,733 in Nellore, 18,913 in Kadapa, 17,185 in Srikakulam, 13,725 in Krishna, 12,396 in Prakasam, 12,353 in Vizianagaram, 12,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

Nellore has registered the day's highest number of deaths, with 12 infected patients succumbing to the virus, followed by nine each in Chittoor and Prakasam, eight in Kadapa, seven each in Anantapur, East Godavari, Guntur and West Godavari, six each in Kurnool and Visakhapatnam, four in Srikakulam, two in Krishna and one in Vizianagaram.

The state health authorities have discharged 8,772 patients after recovery from the infection in the last 24 hours in the state. AP has carried out Covid-19 tests on 69,717 samples per million population and has registered Covid-19 positive rate of 11.68. Maharashtra tested 32,767 samples with a positive rate of 19.08.

ACCUSED IN MURDER CASE HELD

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, AUG. 31

The Chirala police apprehended the accused in a murder case that took place on the night of March 17, under the new railway bridge at Vetapalem in Chirala rural circle.

It may be recalled the Prakasam SP Siddharth Kaushal had suspended Vetapalem SI Ajay Babu a few days back for registering the murder case as a suspicious death even after a medical report clearly stated that it is cold-blooded murder.

SP handed over the case to Chirala rural CI after taking action on the SI. The CI investigated the case and arrested the accused Akkala Subba Reddy, 30, of Vetapalem on Monday.

According to the DSP of Chirala, Y. Jayaram Subba Reddy, the deceased, Donthina Venkateswar Reddy is the brother-in-law of the accused Subba Reddy.

Subba Reddy has been nursing a grudge against Venkateswar Reddy for the abusive language he was using against the former's wife and mother after consuming liquor.

Unable to bear his attitude, Subba Reddy had attacked and killed Venkateswar Reddy with an axe when he was walking on the railway track to return home on March 17 night.

He pushed the body into a canal next to the track to project the murder as a train accident and hid the axe and his blood-stained clothes in his house.

Though Ajay Babu picked up Subba Reddy for questioning, he freed him later. Subba Reddy attempted to escape from Vetapalem after he came to know about the suspension of Ajay Babu, but the Chirala CI foiled his attempt and took him into custody along with the weapon and clothes.

Farmer cultivates dragon fruit in Kadapa district

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDIA | DC
KADAPA, AUG. 31

A farmer from Kadapa district has for the first time started cultivating dragon fruit over an acre of land on an experimental basis at Adavi Cherlapalli village in Veerapunayunipalle mandal of Kadapa district. He showed some of the fruits he had harvested from his farm to ministers Amjad Basha and Suresh in addition to collector Harikiran on occasion of the Independence Day.

Mooli Gangireddy, a young man from Adavi Cherlapalli came across dragon fruit for the first time when he went to be with his younger brother working as a software engineer in Hyderabad and admitted to a hospi-

tal for fever. At that time, Gangireddy had gone to the market to fetch fruits for his brother and came across dragon fruit. The shop owner told him that the fruit has good nutritional value and provides quick relief to those suffering from fever. He then brought two of these fruits for ₹150 each.

Subsequently, Gangireddy, a graduate who owns 20 acres of land, thought of cultivating these fruits and collected details from Google. He bought 1,760 drought-tolerant varieties of dragon fruit saplings from Karambadi area of Tamil Nadu. He constructed cement pillars on his farm over an acre of land and planted the saplings in December 2019. He said the district horticulture officers have been wholeheartedly helping.

Gangireddy told *DC* that the plants are currently in flower and budding stage. Normally, the inside of dragon fruits is white. But the variety he has cultivated is completely red. Gangireddy said he has come to know that there is a good demand for this type of fruit in the US. Currently, the price of dragon fruit in the local market is around ₹150 to ₹200 each. Gangireddy said some of the fruits are taking shape but he has not yet harvested them. He would wait for some more time before selling them in the local market. Once planted, dragon fruit can be harvested three times a year for about 30 years. He said the district horticulture officers have returned only now to find that they have lost most of their belongings.

"During the floods, we had to shift and my mother also

became ill. After she got treated in a hospital, I have sent her to my relative's house. On returning, I have found that my TV has got spoilt, utensils and other belongings have got washed away and the forest products have got damaged," said Mantha Anilkumar of Thoyeeru village in Devipatnam mandal. He said that he has never seen such floods in their village. He felt he would have avoided losses, had the government construct their rehabilitation colonies before the floods.

P. Krishna Rao, honorary president of Polavaram Project Nirvasithula Parirakshana Samithi, Devipatnam mandal, said tribal and non-tribal people had urged officials to sanction amounts for them to reside in rented houses in upland areas during the floods. But the officials said the rent amount will be adjusted in the Resettlement package.

Krishna Rao wanted the government to help the flood-hit people of the Polavaram affected villages. Meanwhile, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPM has demanded that the government sanction ₹50,000 for each damaged house and ₹25,000 for other houses in flood-hit villages.

The party

SHORT TAKES
**MAOISTS KILL
 ABDUCTED COP IN
 CHHATTISGARH**

DC CORRESPONDENT
 BHOPAL, AUG. 31

Suspected Maoists killed an assistant sub-inspector who was abducted by them at Mengapat under Kurnool police station in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Bijapur on Sunday evening.

Body of Korsa Naigaya (59), posted in Kurnool police station, was recovered at Ketulnar nearly two km from Mengapat on Monday, a senior Bijapur district police officer said.

The slain cop had taken a fortnight's leave to visit his home in Dantewada in south Bastar and started for Dantewada on his bike on Sunday evening, police said.

He was abducted by Maoists at Mengapat, nearly five km from his place of posting at Kutru.

His abduction came to light when the police found his bike abandoned in Mengapat.

A search operation was launched by security forces to rescue him. His body was recovered at a deserted place in Ketulnar. A Maoist leaflet was found near his body", police said.

In another incident, a Naxal was gunned down in an encounter with security forces under Pushav police station in Dhamtari district in Chhattisgarh on Monday.

The slain has been identified as Ravi, member of Gabra Local Organisation Squad of CPI (Maoist).

**SP STUDENT WING
 MEMBERS
 LATHICHARGED**

Lucknow, Aug. 31: Police on Monday lathicharged and detained Samajwadi Party student wing members protesting near the Raj Bhavan here against conducting the NEET and JEE Main amid the Covid-19 pandemic, police said.

Carrying placards with messages such as India United to postpone JEE and NEET, 'Satyagrah against exams during Covid-19' and 'Stop atrocities against students', the party workers were marching towards the Raj Bhavan when they were stopped by police.

As they insisted to move ahead, police used lathicharge to disperse them, and later detained them, a senior police officer said.

Samajwadi Party national spokesman Rajendra Chowdhury said police lathicharged peaceful protesters.

Other party leaders said holding medical entrance exam NEET and engineering entrance exam JEE Main amid a raging pandemic is not in the interest of students. It should be postponed till situation improves, said one of them.

While engineering entrance exam JEE Main has been planned from September 1-6, the NEET is scheduled to be held on September 13.

Earlier on August 27, Samajwadi Party workers were lathicharged by police when they were marching towards the Raj Bhavan in protest against the Centre's decision to hold these exams.

Party president Akhilesh Yadav had last week written an open letter against holding the two exams.

Pranab wanted 'Red Diary' to be cremated with him

The diary is apparently the 'truthful account of his political journey'

SANJAY BASAK | DC
 NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

A magazine once described him as "The man who knew too much."

Pranab Mukherjee, former President was the "veteran insider" in the corridors of power. The man, who apparently had "the memory of an elephant." Pranab, the treasure trove of political secrets was an avid diary writer as well.

His much talked about 'Red Diary' is apparently the "truthful account of his political journey." It is believed that this diary if ever published could stir the hornet's nest in Indian politics.

In his e-book *Akothito Pranab* (Untold Pranab), journalist and author, Goutam Lahiri wrote that Pranab Mukherjee had said, "My Red Diary will never be published. It will be cremated along with my body." There were speculations that he would eventually handover his 'Red Diary' to his daughter Sharmishtha.

Pranab Mukherjee's political journey began in West Bengal in 1969, as the election agent for V.K. Krishna Menon, who was contesting a Lok Sabha by-election as an independent candidate.

In his 50-odd years, he was the ultimate insider. He had a vast network of key political players, cutting across party lines. He was not only close to the CPI(M) leader and the then West Bengal chief minister, Jyoti Basu but had often invited RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat to Rashtrapati Bhawan during his tenure as the President.

He had powerful allies and equally powerful enemies.

The man, who was virtually "number two" during the rule of Indira Gandhi was expelled from the party by her son, Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv influenced by Congress leaders, like Arun Nehru, A.B.A. Gani Khan Chowdhury, Balaram Jhakhar among the few not excluded Mukherjee from Union Council of Ministers but later expelled him.

He was told that Pranab nurtured the ambition of being the Prime Minister after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984.

Lahiri in his e-book recounts the details of this "misunderstanding."

Lahiri writes, "Rajiv Gandhi (on his way to Delhi from Bengal) sought Pranab's advice on 'who after Indira'".

Mukherjee reminded that when Jawaharlal Nehru died in 1964 and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1966, the senior-most cabinet minister, Gulzar Lal Nanda was appointed as acting PM.

Pranab Mukherjee was

Mukherjee signed AP Reorganisation Bill

S.A. ISHAQI | DC
 HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Former President Pranab Mukherjee had signed the AP Reorganisation Bill to form Telangana state, after it was passed by Parliament on February 20, 2014. He had earlier headed the sub-committee on Telangana constituted by the UPA-1 government.

B. Vinod Kumar, former MP and Telangana State Planning Commission vice-chairman, said Mukherjee had complete understanding of Telangana issue. He said Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had first met Mukherjee prior to the 2004 elections. Rao had gone to meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi for a pre-poll alliance, and she asked Mukherjee to talk to Rao. "After their one to one meeting Mukherjee assured KCR in my presence that he will ensure that Telangana is formed if the UPA comes to power," Vinod Kumar told *Deccan Chronicle* on Tuesday.

"I used to hand over consensus letters collected from various parties and Pranab Mukherjee always appreciated our efforts."

Chief Minister, in his condolence message said, "the former President used to say that there was justice in the demand for a separate Telangana and he used to offer several useful suggestions."

PRANAB Mukherjee had a fairly smallish room for his office in the building. The room may have been small, but he never stopped anyone from entering it and having a quick chat.

One day, after the daily media briefing, I wanted to know more about some facts and figures related to the economy and the budget. And the best person to explain was Pranab da.

I had in the past squeezed into his room along with other 'well-established' Delhi journos who knew him for a long time. But this time was different. He did not know me at all, I was still a greenhorn as far as 24

number two in Indira Gandhi's cabinet. This apparently was distorted and the coterie close to Rajiv Gandhi indicated that Pranab was pitching for himself.

This was the beginning of Pranab's fall during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure.

However, hit by Bofors scam, a revolt by V.P. Singh later forced Rajiv Gandhi to get Pranab back into Congress in 1988. Sometime before his assassination, Rajiv in a magazine interview had confessed, "Things people told me about Pranab

He said Mukherjee was instrumental in including the Telangana issue in the Common Minimum Programme of the UPA-1 government.

When the TRS decided to leave the UPA-1, it was Mukherjee who tried to stop them as Telangana state would be a reality during the UPA tenure.

When the UPA sub-committee on Telangana, headed by Mukherjee, said that it would be able to finalise its report only after receiving responses from all political parties, Rao started consultations with all other parties, Kumar said.

"I used to hand over consensus letters collected from various parties and Pranab Mukherjee always appreciated our efforts."

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People teach parties a lesson, Pranab had said

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC
 HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

more than anything else. Referring to five, instead of three, elections between 1989 and 1999, Mukherjee said that politicians, accustomed to single party rule could not adjust to coalition politics. The people forced them to do mid-course corrections by continuing to give fractured mandates.

The result, he said, was an unwritten understanding among the parties that stability should not be disturbed. From then on the country saw stable governments despite fractured mandates. "You people (media) even suggested Constitutional amendments to ensure stability but people have their own way of setting things right," he said smiling broadly.

I wanted his views on the highly sensitive issue of state bifurcation. He started saying that people and parties come together to resolve issues but his press secretary barged in and said a strict no.

Pranab then moved on to the simplicity of yester-year politicians.

Akbar Road was concerned. I was apprehensive but I clearly remember how warm and welcoming Pranab Mukherjee was as I asked him if I could enter his office. I also clearly recall how he ordered some samosas for me as we got down to business.

As I told him I was having some difficulty in reading the country's budget and had questions. He answered my questions and we spent about an hour or so discussing the budget. And then he made an offer I could not refuse.

"Come home tomorrow morning and I will teach you how to read the budget," Pranab Mukherjee had said. For me it was a double delight. Pranab da would get to know me a little more. On top of that, I

probably just landed the best teacher as far as reading a government budget and understanding it was concerned.

The next day I showed up at his residence in the morning, around 11 am if I recall correctly and he spent the next two hours explaining how a budget is prepared, how to read and understand the numbers and what each 'head' of the budget meant.

And that was only the first lesson. After that day, I visited him at his house several times to sit with him and learn more about country's economy and budget preparations.

He was a willing teacher and I wish I was a better student. Today, at his passing, I grieve the loss of one of the best teachers I ever had.

THE ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE began questioning Gaurav Arya from 10.30 am at the agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of money and on the narcotics messages that were exchanged in 2017.

ly to grill Arya in connection with the drugs angle. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) meanwhile grilled Chakraborty for the fourth consecutive day on Monday.

The ED began questioning Arya from 10.30 am at the agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of money and on the narcotics messages that were exchanged in 2017. The text messages were later shared with the NCB and the CBI by the ED. Arya has however refuted the allegations saying he neither ever peddled drugs nor spoke to Rhea till date.

The Enforcement Directorate earlier questioned Rhea, her brother Showik and two sisters of Rajput apart from his chartered accountant and other staffers.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is also like-

Pranab's career defined by Gandhis

From Page 1

MUKHERJEE HIT THE headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.

Mukherjee did not let that influence his work and in 2004-2014 he was heading most of the groups of ministers. Speaking at the launch of Mukherjee's book *The Coalition Years*, Dr Singh said: "He (Pranab) had reason to feel upset but he respected me and we have a great relationship which will continue till we live." There were rumours that it was Rahul Gandhi who took the final call.

The Gandhi family also seemed reluctant at first about nominating him for President. Some say the Gandhi family (post-Indira) "could never fully trust Pranab da".

Mukherjee wrote: "She (Sonia) told me frankly, 'Pranabji, you are the most eminently suited for the office, but you should not forget the crucial role you are playing in the functioning of the government. Could you suggest an alternative?'"

Then came something which virtually forced Sonia's hand. Mamata Banerjee, at a joint press conference with Mulayam Singh Yadav said their presidential nominees were A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Dr Singh and Somnath Chatterjee. Ms Banerjee revealed that Sonia Gandhi had proposed the names of Hamid Ansari and Mukherjee, which were "unacceptable" to them.

Realising they could not lose the presidential election, several meetings were held among UPA partners, and the Left proposed Mukherjee's name, which was seconded by others. Sonia endorsed his candidature.

Mukherjee wrote in *The Coalition Years*: "After briefing the meeting on the presidential election, Sonia Gandhi bid me an emotional farewell... Thereafter, with a mischievous smile, she looked at me and said: 'Along with that, of course, I will miss some of his tantrums'."

Mukherjee hit the headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.

It is double whammy for guest workers, entrepreneurs in Odisha

AKSHAYA KUMAR
 SAHOO | DC
 BHUBANESWAR, AUG. 31

The Covid-19 crisis had hit them hard. But their spirit always remained high and they had refused to surrender to economic challenges posed by the pandemic.

However, the floods in the major river systems of Odisha have convincingly vanquished them.

So much so that many of them are staring at dark days ahead if the state government does not take care of them.

First-time rural entrepreneurs and guest workers who had undertaken agriculture activities in the coastal areas of Odisha have lost all their investments as the high floods in the major river system washed away their dream projects.

"I had invested nearly ₹5 lakh on raising a poultry farm. The birds had grown fully and I was about to sell them in the next few days. I was expecting a return of

"I had grown various veg-

etables on two acres of land on the bank of Brahmani river. The swirling water of Brahmani has destroyed it all. There is no trace even of the roots of the vegetable plants," said Rout.

A few other guest workers who had opened carpentry, pottery and iron furniture fabrication units also narrated similar harrowing stories.

"I was working as a mechanic in a textile unit in Bangalore. After I returned, I had opened a furniture fabrication unit with a savings of ₹2 lakh rupee. My unit was washed away in the Mahanadi flood," said Tapan Kumar Swain of Banki in Cuttack district.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has assured all the affected entrepreneurs a compensation after the flood damage assessment exercise is completed by the district authorities.

Major rivers in Odisha, including Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Birupa, Luna and Chitratopala have ravaged almost all the coastal districts.

The Chief Minister on Monday afternoon undertook an aerial visit of the affected areas and later reviewed the responses of various departments to mitigate the plights of the people.

After the review meeting, the Chief Minister announced that all people hit by the floods will be provided with cooked food / dry food as long as they are in shelter.

He also announced 50 kilograms of rice and ₹500 as immediate support to the families of the severely affected / submerged villages.

"One polythene sheet will be provided to each eligible family whose house has been demolished," he said.

Chief inspection



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inspects a flood-affected area with Army jawans near Hoshangabad district on Monday. He assured farmers that all possible measures will be taken to compensate for their losses. "Farmers should not get worried about the losses. The government is in action and all possible measures will be taken to compensate them through crop insurance scheme and RBC (revenue book code) provisions," he said.

IN BRIEF

Nod to Amazon drone delivery

San Francisco: Amazon on Monday said a freshly-issued Federal Aviation Administration certificate has cleared the launch pad for drone deliveries in the US. "This certification is an important step forward for Prime Air and indicates the FAA's confidence in Amazon's operating and safety procedures for an autonomous drone delivery service that will one day deliver packages to our customers," Amazon VP David Carbon said. "We will continue to develop and refine our technology to fully integrate delivery drones into the air-space," he said. — AFP

Chinese-born Oz journalist held

Sydney: A Chinese-born Australian journalist for CCTV-News, the English-language channel of China Central Television, has been detained in China, Australia's government said Monday. Australian officials had a consular visit with Cheng Lei at a detention facility via video link on

Thursday, foreign minister Marise Payne said in a statement. They will continue to provide assistance and support to her and her family. Australia had been informed by Chinese authorities of her detention, but made its first public announcement on Monday. — Agencies

2 detained over Ryanair security

London: British counter-terrorism police were holding two men on Monday following a "security threat" aboard a Ryanair flight that led to fighter jets being scrambled to intercept it. Police said they a 34-year-old man from Kuwait and a 48-year-old man from Italy under terrorism laws late on Sunday at Stansted Airport after the flight from Vienna landed. Britain's Royal Air Force said it had launched two Typhoon fighter jets from a base in nearby Lincolnshire "to intercept a civilian aircraft". "The aircraft was escorted safely to Stansted," it added. — AP

2 die in UAE restaurant blast

Abu Dhabi: A powerful blast ripped through a restaurant in the UAE's capital here on Monday, killing two persons, police said. A number of people were injured in the explosion which took place at the fast food restaurant in a building on Rashid Bin Saeed Street, according to a newspaper report. According to on-site investigations, the incident was caused by a misalignment in the gas container fittings following refuelling, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said. Emergency response teams evacuated residents of the building and cordoned off the area. — P71

SUDAN, REBELS STRIKE DEAL TO END ROW

Juba, Aug. 31: Sudanese leaders and rebel commanders agreed Monday on a historic peace deal, a crucial step towards ending 17 years of conflict in which hundreds of thousands of people were killed.

Leaders of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organisation of rebel groups from the western region of Darfur and the southern states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, raised their fists in celebration after inking the agreement.

Fighting in Darfur alone left around three lakh people dead after rebels took up arms there in 2003, according to the United Nations, with former government leaders accused of carrying out genocide and of crimes against humanity.

Conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile erupted in 2011, in the wake of South Sudan's independence, resuming two decades of war.

"I congratulate all in Sudan on reaching a historic comprehensive peace that addressed the roots of the problem and ended the war, God willing," said Gibril Ibrahim, commander of one of rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

He paid tribute to all those killed or affected by the long years of war.

Sudanese paramilitary commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo — best known by his nickname "Hemeti", and who commanded fighters in the war — signed the deal on behalf of Khartoum. — AFP

Israeli flight in UAE

US National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien speaks next to US Presidential Adviser Jared Kushner (centre) and Head of Israel's National Security Council Meir Ben-Shabbat (left) in front of an airplane of El Al at the tarmac of Abu Dhabi airport, following the arrival of the first-ever commercial flight from Israel to the UAE, on Monday. The US-Israeli delegation took off on a historic first direct commercial flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi to mark the normalisation of ties between the Jewish state and the UAE. — AFP

Trump seizes on protests, Dems slam him for tension**Aides want Don to give aggressive message on law, order****State cops in Portland to probe clashes death**

Portland, Aug. 31: State Police will return to Portland to help local authorities after the fatal shooting of a man following clashes between President Donald Trump supporters and counter-protesters that led to an argument between the president and the mayor over who was to blame for the violence.

Protesters were back on the streets for a demonstration Sunday night outside a public safety building. Police declared an unlawful assembly and arrested 29 people. Two of those arrested had handguns and others had knives and at least one had an expandable baton, police said.

Many wore helmets, gas masks, goggles and external armour. Police said some carried shields and reflective squares used to reflect police lights back toward officers. — AP

4 hurt in shooting at Kansas City club

Kansas City, Aug. 31: Four people were shot and injured Sunday at a night club in Kansas City, Missouri, where a mass shooting occurred in January, police said.

One victim found at the scene with several gunshot wounds was taken to a hospital. Three others arrived separately at hospitals. All four victims remained stable. — AP

Investigators said the shooting was related to an argument that started inside the club and then moved outside where several people fired shots.

The United States had recorded 5.99 million cases of infection as of 0030 GMT Monday, according to Johns Hopkins University's tracker. The death toll is just over 183,000. The US hit five million cases three weeks ago, just 17 days after reaching four million, the tracker said.

The virus has hobbled the US economy and cast a shadow over President Donald Trump's once-promising re-election prospects. — AP

nine weeks until Election Day, some of his advisers see an aggressive "law and order" message as the best way for the President to turn voters against his Democratic rival, Joe Biden. — AP

the summer cast American cities as under siege by violence and lawlessness, despite the fact that most of the demonstrations against racial injustice have been largely peaceful. With about

Trump has throughout

whose government resigned in the aftermath of the deadly August 4 blast at Beirut port.

The 48-year-old was born in the northern city of Tripoli and is a Sunni Muslim, making him eligible to become Prime Minister under Lebanon's sectarian-based power-sharing system.

Adib's name only emerged on Sunday to replace Hassan Diab,

His biography on the Berlin embassy website presents him as an academic who holds a PhD in political science. It says he has conducted "research and expert work in the areas of both human and state security, parliamentary oversight of the security sector, decentralisation and local democracy, and electoral laws".

From 2000 to 2004, he served as an adviser to Najib Mikati, a billionaire and former prime minister. — AP

count the foreigners in our midst — regardless of race, language or religion — as our friends, Channel News Asia quoted Singh as saying.

It is precisely because we need foreigners to help power our economy that we need to pay more attention to the Singapore worker... some of whom feel excluded from (the) opportunities created in their homeland, Singh said.

The House passed a motion to double Singh's speaking time from 20 minutes — which is allotted to backbenchers — to

40 minutes, the duration allotted to office holders.

Singh took the seat directly opposite Prime Minister Lee in the chamber. This is similar to the practice in other countries that formally recognise the role of the Leader of the Opposition, Indraneet pointed out. Singh called on the Ministry of Manpower to publish the names of "recalcitrant" employers who do not give locals a fair chance in hiring and promotion. The MOM had recently placed 47 companies on the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF) watchlist. — AP

was a ministerial statement by the Leader of the House Indranee Rajah on Monday when the city-state's Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the country's first Leader of the Opposition.

Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 it contested in the July 10 General Election, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's parliamentary history.

As the House began proceedings on Monday, one of the first orders of business

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Merkel condemns 'shameful' virus stir**38,000 had gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest restrictions to curb Coronavirus**

Berlin, Aug. 31: German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday condemned as "shameful" an attempt by protesters angry at Coronavirus restrictions to storm Parliament, saying they had abused the right to demonstrate peacefully.

Several hundred people tried to get into the Reichstag building during a rally against Coronavirus rules in Berlin on Saturday.

"This right to demonstrate peacefully is of course a very valuable asset even during a pandemic," Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said at a government press conference in Berlin.

However, he said their actions were "a clear

Germany tells Russia to probe poisoning

Paris, Aug. 31: Germany on Monday urged Moscow to step up its efforts to investigate the apparent poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny who is currently being treated at a Berlin hospital in a coma.

Foreign minister Heiko Maas said in an address to French ambassadors that Europe needed "constructive" relations with Russia for the sake of the continent's own security but it was clear now that "dark clouds" were hanging over bilateral ties.

"Of course we have the expectation that Russia should contribute more to clearing up of the Navalny case than it is doing at the moment," he said alongside French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian. Berlin's Charite hospital said on Friday there was "some improvement" in Navalny's condition, but the 44-year-old remains in a medically induced coma and on a ventilator. Navalny fell ill after boarding a plane in Siberia earlier this month.

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Merkel praised as "quick-witted and brave" three police officers who were seen pushing back crowds from the entrance to the Reichstag alone until reinforcements arrived.

Police estimated 38,000 people, double the number expected, gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest at restrictions imposed to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, such as wearing masks and social distancing. Several hundred broke through barriers and a police cordon to climb the steps leading to the entrance to the Reichstag. They were narrowly prevented from

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Lebanon's PM-designate vows reforms

Beirut, Aug. 31: Lebanon's Prime Minister-designate Mustapha Adib vowed Monday to swiftly launch a reformist government and seek international financial assistance after the Beirut blast deepened a political and economic crisis.

In a televised speech after his nomination, Lebanon's former ambassador to Germany said there is "a need to form a

government in record time and to begin implementing reforms immediately, starting with an agreement with the International Monetary Fund".

Adib faces the nearly impossible challenge of embodying change after being picked by the political establishment.

Adib's name only emerged on Sunday to replace Hassan Diab,

His biography on the Berlin embassy website presents him as an academic who holds a PhD in political science. It says he has conducted "research and expert work in the areas of both human and state security, parliamentary oversight of the security sector, decentralisation and local democracy, and electoral laws".

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DECCAN Chronicle

1 SEPTEMBER 2020

As Covid-19 cases spike, go slower on 'unlocking'

As the Centre and states open up more sectors and allow the resumption of further activities from Tuesday, September 1, as India begins the "Unlock 4.0" phase, it is important not to forget how the pandemic is spiralling across the country, with daily coronavirus cases crossing 80,000 Sunday, the highest anywhere in the world. The last week of August witnessed a huge spurt in cases, and not just in Maharashtra and some southern states but also Delhi, that earlier seemed to have the numbers under control. And while there has also been a considerable increase in the number of tests per day, which is likely to rise, there is no hard evidence to say the rise in infections detected is primarily due to the increased testing – as health officials and the government fondly hope.

One really wonders how the Centre and state governments are confident that this is the right moment to open more activities. Schools/colleges will remain shut till September 30, but the authorities have decided to go ahead with the JEE and NEET exams for medical and engineering admissions, which will expose thousands of students across the country to the risk of contracting the virus. Also, teachers and some students from Classes 9 to 12 might be called to schools for "guidance" from later in September, the first time most will come into physical contact with each other since March – which again appears to be an avoidable step.

Most important, the government's decision to allow the resumption of Metro rail services – even if in a staggered manner – appears premature. To allow public transport buses (with 20 people allowed and with seats spaced out; or taxis or autos, with two/three passengers) is one thing, but the Metro trains carry thousands of passengers travelling in close proximity, not to mention the thousands who will collect at Metro stations even if the capacity on the trains is restricted. All this creates a situation which might facilitate the spread of the virus. A serious rethink needs to be done prior to September 7, when Metro services are set to resume, and it should be permitted only in those areas where the Covid-19 pandemic is completely under control. That, unfortunately, is not yet the case in any of India's major metropolises.

From September 21, social, religious, political, academic and sports functions can be held with up to 100 people, and weddings and funerals (now allowed with lesser numbers) will be permitted with 100 people. This, in our view, is also premature, and should wait till things stabilise further. The festival season is fast approaching, and it is vital to set strict norms now to ensure that low-key celebrations are held which will not endanger people's lives. There is, of course, the counter-argument: that we must "learn to live with Covid" till a vaccine is found and distributed, which might take up to a year, and that people cannot put off economic and other activities indefinitely. The lockdown that India imposed in March was one of the world's harshest – which severely hurt a lot of people and its benefits remain debatable. But now we might be swinging to the other extreme – rapidly opening up activities without considering all the consequences. We need to find a balance – and move a little slower.

Trouble for NRC 'rejects'

The stalemate in the process of preparing the Supreme Court-mandated National Register of Citizens in Assam has put the lives of 19 lakh-odd people who were excluded from it in serious trouble. The process mandates that each excluded person should be issued a rejection slip which can be challenged in the Foreigners Tribunal, which is empowered to declare a person non-citizen. The failure to issue the slips has stalled the entire process. As a result, those affected face difficulties in matters of their normal life such as finding a job, getting married, going on a foreign tour and contesting polls. The government blames it on Covid-19, which made most government departments other than those involved in the containment of the pandemic non-functional for months on end.

The very process of preparing the NRC was riddled with serious issues. It was at first perceived as an attempt to exclude Muslims who had migrated to Assam from other parts of the country. Serious discrepancies such as members of the same family getting different status were reported as soon as the list was published. The BJP, which had all along called it a tool to "eliminate infiltrators", changed its stand after discovering that a third of those excluded were Hindus. The party's Assam unit called for the verification of the list but it looks next to impossible after reports said the basic data of the NRC has been lost.

Citizenship is the primary identity of a person, and its denial, rightly or wrongly, compromises the very right to life. No government has the right to keep a decision on it pending for long. The government must admit that it had not thought through the process and hence the present mess. It must either cancel the entire exercise or fast-track it. This is not an issue for which it can blame an act of God.

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Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax: 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auru Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234
Visakhapatnam: Survey No 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285
Rajahmundry: Venagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904
Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433
Nellore: Survey No.52/2, Burrapur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/ 48/50/51; Adv/Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Feet Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560 095 Ph: 080-43460500; Fax: 080-22960552
Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422-2231255
Kochi: No.3-B, 3rd Floor of DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph's Press, TC 15/1040, Cotton Hill, Thycaud (PO), Thiruvananthapuram 695 014
Kozhikode: Door No 6/1002 E, First Floor of City Mall, Opp. YMCA, Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001, Ph: 0495 4019 018
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Subhani

INDIA CAPABLE OF BECOMING TOY HUB: MODI



Is another global eco crisis now inevitable?

Mohan Guruswamy

Speaking at the London Business School recently, former Reserve Bank governor Raghuram Rajan warned that the global economy was "slowly slipping" into the Great Depression-like problems of the 1930s and that central banks must sit together and define the new "rules of the game" to find better solutions. Dr Rajan, who was earlier IMF's chief economist, was one of the few to have predicted the 2007-08 financial crisis.

The essential problem we must confront is how to rectify a world economic system that has gone hopelessly wrong and resembles nothing like what was envisaged in early 1940s. To understand the situation we are in, imagine living on an island as a part of a small group, in which people are assigned specific vocations and tasks. In this system one person makes clothes, another shoes, someone pots and pans, someone grows food and someone else prints money to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. The shoemaker exchanges his goods with another for money which he uses to pay for food or whatever. Since everybody in this system can produce as much as possible, the person who prints the money will be best off among all as he can buy whatever he wants and pay for it with his own money. Take this one step further. Producers who hold more paper than they need then start leaving it with the person who prints them to hold.

In 1995, advanced economies held around 67 per cent of total foreign exchange reserves, with 82 per cent of these being allocated reserves.

By 2011, the picture had been flipped on its head: emerging and developing countries held 67 per cent of total reserves. The purpose of sharing these three world economy snapshots is to offer a

The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US President Nixon delinked the dollar from the gold standard.

general backdrop on how we have come to this pass. A situation where the rest of the world invests in the US, so that it can splurge on itself. When it's short, it can just print more dollars, which the rest of us lap up quite happily. Every time the US goes into convulsions due to its innate profligacy and economic mismanagement, the world economies go into a tailspin as the US is the world's biggest importer and it's where the world keeps its money. Now let's turn to how the system actually works.

Countries like China and India produce goods and services at low cost for consumption in the US, which in turn pays them in dollars, that they deposit in American banks. Since money can't sit still, this money then lent to Americans, who today have the highest per capita indebtedness in the world, to splurge on houses, cars, flatscreen TVs and computers, that mostly they can often ill-afford. In effect, the rest of the world is plying the US with cheap credit, encouraging it to splurge even more. But there is no global regulator to caution the US on its profligacy or force it to mend its ways.

At the July 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, in the last phase of World War II, Lord Keynes had in mind an elaborate scheme that called for the

Total world reserves in 2019-Q2 was \$11.8 trillion, of which 61.8 per cent was held in US dollars, 20.5 per cent in euros, 5.7 per cent in yen and 1.8 per cent in Renminbi.

establishment of an international reserve currency called "bancor", administered by a global central bank, but this had to be shelved in the face of American obduracy. This central bank would be vested with the possibility of creating money and with the authority to take action to ensure balanced trade. As outlined by Keynes, countries with payment surpluses should increase imports from the deficit countries, thereby ensuring foreign trade equilibrium.

But the United States, as a likely net exporter and creditor nation, and eager to take on the role of the world's economic powerhouse, thwarted the Keynes plan. The American delegates seemed more concerned about inflationary pressures in the post-war economy. Its delegate, Harry Dexter White, argued that an imbalance was a problem only of the deficit country. White's determined obduracy is now under a cloud after he was unmasked as a Soviet spy. Did he scuttle "bancor" at Moscow's insistence to ensure the crisis we now are living through?

The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US President Nixon delinked the dollar from the gold standard. In the absence of a standard and a useful regulatory function for the IMF, the great private banks were given a licence to run amok. We now reap the bitter harvest. With the US dollar as the world's preferred currency, the US and its profligate citizens have an apparently endless access to easy credit to satiate their sundry appetites.

Ironically, the ever-rising annual US trade deficit is the de facto engine of growth for many economies, like China, the ASEAN countries and even India.

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

LETTERS

MANN KI BAAT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was full of surprises in his Mann ki Baat (Vizag's wooden toymaker to go electric after PM pat, DC, Aug. 31). By getting a mention in PM's talk, artisans and small-scale industries got hope now, which should be followed by help from the state. But his suggestion to fellow Indians to rear dogs of Indian breed is quite puzzling. Perhaps, every (Indian) dog has its day! Dr D.V.G.Sankararao Vizianagaram

Finally Prime Minister Narendra Modi recognised an Indian artisan's work that too Etikoppaka toymaker C.V. Raju from AP. He also rightly spoke about the skills and quality of our products and need for the use of electronic and mechanical devices which are to be added to Etikoppaka toys to gain a majority toy market worldwide. A big help from governments is urgently necessary for the toy industry which is now suffering a lot due to Covid-19.

Panchakarla Govardhana Rao Krishna

MUHARRAM & VIRUS

Thousands of people participated in the Bibi ka Alam procession in Hyderabad on Sunday. This should serve as a yardstick to know whether such gatherings where people did not use facemasks or maintained social distancing are a source of increase in Covid-19 cases and if there is no remarkable increase in the cases in the next one week or so then we can rest assured that the pandemic is on the diminishing trend.

N.S. Sharma Visakhapatnam

Five die in Calcutta firing

CALCUTTA, AUGUST 31 Five persons were killed and five others seriously injured in police firings at three places in North Calcutta today.

Two most serious incidents were at Bidhan Sarani and Girish Chandra Avenue both in

north Calcutta. Police fired four rounds killing two people when a police picket was attacked with bombs near Star Theatre at Girish Chandra Avenue in the Bagbazar area. A police vehicle was subjected to heavy brickbats and bomb attacks. Teargassing proving ineffective, police opened fire from revolvers killing two people and injuring four others.

Akbar Patel



'Unlock' rules are illogical: If flights allowed, why not trains?

From Tuesday, September 1, we will have Unlock 4.0. I have lost track of what this means and I do not think anybody really understands it. What the Indian government has done is try and manage the spread of Covid-19 by keeping things shut. If India forces people to stay away from one another by denying them access to services, it will stop or slow the spread of the infection.

This has produced rules that, as I said, I do not really understand. For instance, the airlines have been operating since May, and have been flying for more than three months now. Flights are allowed to be flown at full capacity, with the middle seat occupied. However, the Indian Railways is still by and large largely shut, and has been shut since the lockdown began. From running 17,000 trains daily, it today runs only 230 special ones. What is the logic of not having trains run when planes are allowed to run full? Air passengers cannot maintain the six-foot separation on their seats so it seems illogical to allow people to fly but not travel by train.

The benefit to the stopping the spread of Covid-19 is uncertain but

Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

The damage to the economy is visible. Reports from Surat last month said that the production of textiles was less than 25 per cent of normal and the big reason was the lack of labour.

More than 30 lakh people had left Surat and its surrounding industrial zones in April and May, according to a report in the Hindu Frontline magazine published on July 31. There is almost no way for these people to return to their jobs even if they wanted to now come back. There are reports that mill owners and other businesses have begun flying labourers back. But why not just open the Railways? This has not been explained to us.

Delhi's Metro will reportedly open this week with 50 per cent capacity (again note the difference with airlines), while Mumbai's local trains, the city's lifeline and its artery, have stayed shut. I saw a very moving note from journalists to the chief minister asking that those who were not accredited with the government to be allowed to use the trains because it was too expensive for them to take taxis everywhere.

Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. Again, this makes no sense to me. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

We are told that cinema halls will have to stay shut as it won't be feasible to run shows with only 25 per cent capacity due to physical distancing norms. But a movie is about as long as a flight and the seats are equidistant in both. What is the thinking behind the decision to disallow movie halls, a very large sector of the entertainment industry and its employment, from opening?

It all seems slightly eccentric to me, and I suspect that some of this is

touched with the moralism that we see in the Prime Minister. For instance, restaurants were allowed to open but not bars. Why? There is no standard format in a restaurant's seating, as we know. And the same is true for bars. The only reason seems to be that the government in some way looks down on those who drink.

In Unlock 4.0 bars, will be allowed to serve liquor over the counter but not inside. Meaning the bar will be turned into a liquor store and the employment that its waiters and cooks and other staff would have otherwise got is not available even today, in September, more than five full months after the lockdown began.

Some of the confusion has then come from the Centre versus State differences. Apparently, the opening of gyms is allowed by the Centre but many of the states are not letting them do so.

In other nations, the lockdowns have been mostly voluntary. In India, it has been like a curfew. Even today, the Mumbai police can confiscate your vehicle if you cannot show a "good reason" for being out. What is a "good reason" is left for the

police to determine of course. We have one nation one tax, but we do not have the free movement of people. Those going from one state to another state must fill out some application and ask for permission which may or may not be given.

As I said at the beginning, India has tried to slow or stop the spread of Covid-19 through denial of services. Has it worked? I don't think so. India is the only large nation along with Argentina whose numbers have continuously and without a break risen from March. The only way of stopping the spread of Covid-19 is good individual behaviour at the mass level. But we have Union ministers in meetings wearing their masks on their chin instead of covering their mouth and nose. How can such people communicate good behaviour to the public? They simply cannot. And so we have the endless tweaking of rules, all leading to failure as is visible in the numbers, with bureaucrats being kept busy making funny and illogical rules for 1.0 and 2.0 and 3.0 and now 4.0.

Akbar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist



quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	38,628.29 -2.13
Nifty 50	11,387.50 -2.23
S&P 500*	3,505.94 -0.06
Dollar (₹)	73.60 -0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.93 0.50
Euro (₹)	87.50 0.10
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,638▲161 0.30
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	45.84 0.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.078 -0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.723 -0.006

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Trai gives Voda Idea time till Sept. 4 to reply

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has granted additional time till September 4 to Vodafone Idea to respond to its showcase notice on the firm's priority plan, a source said. Trai had slapped a showcause notice on Vodafone Idea over its pay-more-for-priority-treatment mobile plan, saying the tariff offer "lacks transparency", is "misleading" and not in compliance with regulatory framework.

Vedanta ties with SBI for ₹10,000 cr syndicated loan



Vedanta Ltd said it has tied up with State Bank of India for a long-term syndicated loan facility worth Rs 10,000 crore. A syndicated loan is offered by a group of lenders. SBI has given a commitment of Rs 5,000 crore as a lender. Hindustan Zinc, a subsidiary of Vedanta, said in a filing to the BSE. The facility end-use stipulates refinancing of near-term debt maturities of Vedanta and for capital expenditure.

Cyient to acquire Oz consulting firm IG Partners

Cyient said it has agreed to acquire Australian consulting firm IG Partners, a move that will help the Indian IT firm expand its end-to-end offerings for the local and regional resources sector. The rationale for the acquisition is gaining access to decision makers with global mining majors, acceleration in Cyient's mining strategy and positioning Cyient as a digital transformation leader in the market, the company said.

L&T completes divestment of Schneider arm

Engineering and construction giant Larsen and Toubro on Monday said it has completed the strategic divestment of its electrical and automation business to Schneider Electric. The move will see India becoming the third largest country in terms of revenues for Schneider Electric. With this, about 5,000 employees of L&T's electrical and automation business will be integrated with Schneider's 2,000 employees.



■ Sebi's new margin rules sour sentiments

Border clash, GDP worries fell stocks

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, AUG. 31

Market benchmark Sensex fell more than 1,600 points intra-day on fresh China military buildup and unconfirmed reports of clashes in the Ladakh region. This unexpected development together with fear of a likely sharp fall in the first quarter GDP growth, scheduled to be announced after market hours, led to profit-taking in the market.

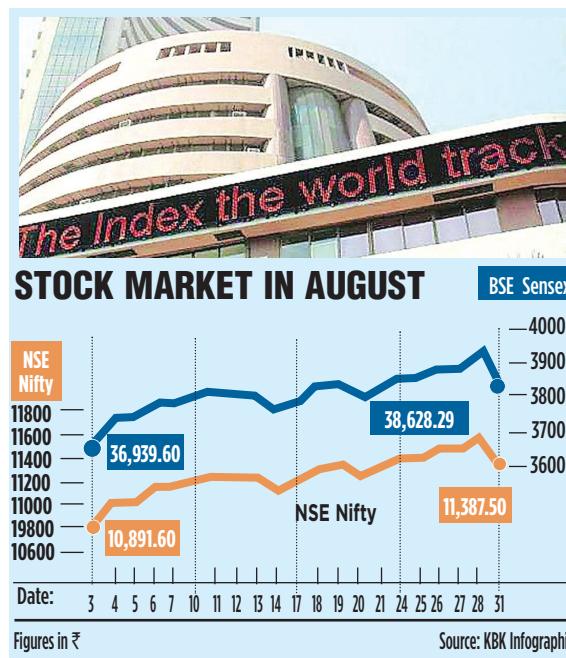
The selling pressure may increase on Tuesday, with GDP contracting by -23.9 per cent in the June quarter.

"Indian Army informed that Chinese troops violated the earlier agreement and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo on the nights of August 29-30," reports said.

Sameet Chavan, chief analyst-technical and derivatives at Angel Broking, said, the sell-off was triggered mainly by the news of India-China clash once again taking place at the border. This resulted in a massive liquidation in the market by continued selling in the remaining part of the day.

New Sebi rule for margins in equity trading coming into effect from September 1 also played spoilsport in the second half of trading, as the market regulator has declined an extension being sought by the broking community.

Sensex and Nifty-50 final-



ly closed more than 2 per cent down after strong early morning gains pushed the Sensex above the 40,000 mark.

The Sensex closed 839 points down at 38,628.39, recovering partly from the day's low of 38,395.89 and the Nifty-50 closed at 11,387.50, down by 260 points.

Investors lost more than Rs 4.55 lakh crore in a day as the broader market fell more, with the BSE Mid-cap Index down 3.79 per cent and the BSE Small-cap Index down 4.73 per cent.

All sectoral indices closed down by 2 to 4.5 per cent except the IT index, which was down over half

a per cent. Sectoral heavy-weight banks and financials fell heavily with the BSE Bankex Index plunging 3.29 per cent and the Nifty Bank by 3.14 per cent.

Deepak Jasani, head of retail research, HDFC Securities, said, "The change in margin system and securities pledging could undoubtedly bring disruptions in volumes of daily trading, as there is insufficient preparation and validation by the participants in this system, viz. exchanges, depositories, depository participants, Clearing Corporation, brokers and clients."

The Hybrit project aims to reduce CO2 emissions to 25 kg per tonne of steel from about 1.6 tonnes by using hydrogen to produce direct reduced iron (DRI) as a feedstock, along with scrap, to make the metal.

Electrolysis water from renewable energy sources will generate the hydrogen.

Product launch in a "big, commercial scale"

is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and will target "the automotive industry and others," Lindqvist said in an interview. —Bloomberg

SWEDEN MOVES CLOSER TO MAKING FOSSIL-FUEL-FREE STEEL

HANNA HOIKKALA & TERJE SOLSVIK
OSLO, AUG. 31

A Swedish joint venture that hopes to rewrite the rules of steel production took a major step forward on Monday.

Hybrit, an initiative run by steelmaker SSAB AB, iron ore producer LKAB and energy supplier Vattenfall AB, aims to remove fossil fuels from the steelmaking value chain by replacing coking coal with hydrogen and clean energy.

The project is now starting test operations for the production of fossil-free sponge iron — something that SSAB's chief executive Martin Lindqvist sees as a "milestone" given the industry accounts for 7 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions globally and 10% in Sweden, he said.

The Hybrit project aims to reduce CO2 emissions to 25 kg per tonne of steel from about 1.6 tonnes by using hydrogen to produce direct reduced iron (DRI) as a feedstock, along with scrap, to make the metal.

Electrolysis water from renewable energy sources will generate the hydrogen.

Product launch in a "big, commercial scale"

is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and will target "the automotive industry and others," Lindqvist said in an interview. —Bloomberg

Norway fund drops Page Inds. over human rights breach risk

GWLADYS FOUCHE & TERJE SOLSVIK
OSLO, AUG. 31

Norway's \$1 trillion wealth fund said it had excluded Taiwan's Formosa Chemicals and Fibre, Formosa Taffeta and India's Page Industries from its portfolio, saying they posed an "unacceptable risk for violation of human rights".

The world's largest sovereign wealth fund sells holdings before announcing such exclusions to avoid excessive market moves.

Formosa Chemicals and Fibre declined to comment. An official reached by telephone at Formosa Taffeta said the company was closed for the day. Page Industries was not immediately reachable for comment.

In recent years, the fund, which operates under guidelines established by the Norwegian parliament, has focused on working conditions in textile factories in Asia, excluding companies



that pose an ethical risk to its investments.

Set up in 1996 to preserve Norway's oil revenues for future generations, the fund holds around 1.5 per cent of globally listed shares and its decisions are often followed by other investors.

Formosa Chemicals and Fibre declined to comment. An official reached by telephone at Formosa Taffeta said the company was closed for the day. Page Industries was not immediately reachable for comment.

At the end of 2019, NBIM held a 0.84 per cent stake in Formosa Chemicals & Fibre, valued at \$144 million, and a 0.64 per cent stake in Formosa Taffeta valued at \$12.2 million.

The board of the Norwegian central bank, which manages the fund, concluded "active ownership" was therefore appropriate. —Reuters

RBI announces measures to cool yields, boost liquidity

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, AUG. 31



Heading to banks' long-pending wish-list, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday allowed banks to park new government bonds acquisition made from September 1, 2020 upto March 31, 2021 under the 'held to maturity' (HTM) category up to an overall limit of 22 per cent of their deposits against the existing limit of 19.5 per cent, thereby allowing an additional purchase capacity of approximately Rs 3.6 lakh crore for banks without worrying about fluctuations over this period.

This kind of rural projects will bring resilience in the rural farmers who are now left with no option but to migrate to the cities, it added.

"As part of its Covid-19 response, a few projects have been launched. One of the projects, focused on creating end-to-end value chain for millets, has been initiated in Bargarh, Odisha," the NGO said in a statement.

For the past few years, some farmers have shifted from paddy to finger-millet cultivation and it is now receiving wider acceptance in the area.

Rahi said FPOs have become a common vehicle to share resources and inputs and they also provide an assured market platform in the absence of which an individual farmer would be subject to the whims and fancies of private vendors.

Farmers are expecting 80-100 per cent growth in production and 100 per cent increase their income per acre of land. With an assured income, the farmers will have better resilience with less dependence on migrant income, it added.

In the past, Rahi programmes were carried out in Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya to create value chains for pineapple and banana farmers.

Currently, Rahi is working in four tribal villages of Bhil tribes in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh to create an end-to-end value chain for goat farmers. "Hunger and lack of income is the biggest enemy for the rural poor," Rahi executive director Dola Mohapatra said. —PTI

Secondly, concerns on fiscal deficit and future borrowing programme of the government impacted sentiment as it is assumed that there would be a lot of government paper coming into the market. The GST debate has only heightened such expectations. As a result, the 10-year government bond rate rose up to 6.15 per cent.

The 5.79% bond closed at 6.08 per cent on Monday while the 5.77 per cent bond at 6.12 per cent.

Suyash Choudhary, head of fixed income at IDFC AMC said, "It is also true that more than 50 per cent of the Rs 20 lakh crore plus (Centre and states combined) borrowing programme is still ahead of us. To that extent one can argue that the announcements today were a 'must have' if markets were to continue to behave in an orderly fashion... reinstatement of orderly functioning now allows participants to start deploying risk capital with more confidence to take advantage of what are quite attractive valuations."

The yields on government bonds have risen in the last one week on two concerns—the RBI MPC minutes released last week did not say anything new, yet led to consternation on the future course of inflation.

Among the other measures, the RBI also announced a slew of measures to cool bond yields and maintain market stability at a time when more than 50 per cent of the Rs 20-lakh crore plus (Centre and states combined) borrowing programme will be coming up.

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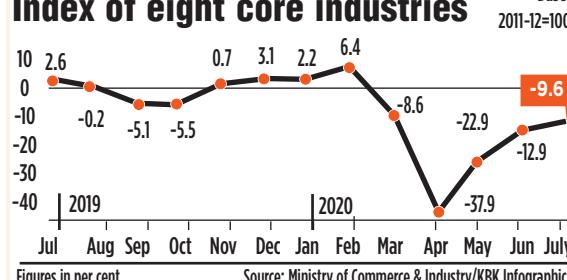
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Core sector output contracts 9.6% in July

Index of eight core industries



With the phase-wise implementation of unlockdown, production in the country's eight core sectors has shown a slight improvement, contracting to -9.6 per cent in July against the -12.9 per cent contraction in June. This is the fifth consecutive month of contraction for the core industries, according to government data released on Monday.

The data on the core eight sectors—coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity—comes ahead of the government further easing restrictions on the movement

and assembly of people in September in a staggered fashion.

The eight sectors collectively have a 40 per cent weightage on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Aditi Nayar, principal economist at Icra, said that based on the available trends for the core sector, auto production and merchandise exports, "we expect the contraction in the Industrial Index of Production to ease to 7-11 per cent in July 2020 from 16.6 per cent in June 2020".

The production of 8 core sectors had expanded by 2.6 per cent in July 2019, the release said. Output of all sectors showed contraction in July except the fertiliser segment.

The deficit is predicted to cross 7.5 per cent of GDP in the 2020-21 fiscal year that began in April, private economists said, from initial government estimates of 3.5 per cent, mainly due to a sharp economic contraction triggered by the pandemic.

—Reuters

Demand for online doctors creates a \$39-bn titan

RICHARD MACAULEY
AUG. 31



shares have almost doubled this year, surging the most of any company in the Nikkei 225 Stock Average and taking the fortune of Tanimura to \$1.2 billion, according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

"Online doctor capabilities are in the spotlight with Covid, as people are staying home," Jefferies Japan Ltd analyst Hiroko Sato said in an interview. "It's really a theme stock."

SHORT TAKES
Root returns for ODIs, misses T20s

Manchester: England announced on Monday they had recalled several World Cup winners for their upcoming white-ball series against Australia but Test captain Joe Root has again been omitted from the Twenty20 squad.

Fifty-over world champions England have been fielding separate red and white ball squads in a season hit by the coronavirus pandemic. But with all six Tests spanning two series wins against the West Indies and Pakistan now completed, England have recalled some of their multi-format players for next month's limited-overs matches against Australia.

Root was the third-highest run-scorer at the 2016 T20 World Cup but has not played a T20 international for over a year, despite still wanting to feature in the format. He has, however, hit scores of 64 and 65 for Yorkshire in this season's Twenty20 Blast.

— AFP

Birdie bomb lifts Rahm to victory

Washington: Jon Rahm drained a swinging 60-foot birdie putt at the first playoff hole on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour BMW Championship over world number one Dustin Johnson. Spain's Rahm, ranked second in the world behind Johnson, was in the right rough off the tee at the first playoff hole, the 18th at Olympia Fields near Chicago. His second shot rolled to the back of the green, leaving him what could have been a tough two-putt for par. "Never did I think I'd be making another 50-, 60-footer — couple of breaks in there, too — to end up winning it," said Rahm, who gave a roaring fist pump as the putt dropped. Johnson's tee shot was also off course, but ricocheted off a tree to settle in the fairway. The American found the middle of the green, but his birdie attempt settled inches from the cup. — AFP

Oly flame out on display in Tokyo

Tokyo: The Olympic flame is going on display in Tokyo, just a short walk from the new National Stadium where it was supposed to be burning a month ago. The flame arrived in Japan from Greece in March and has been largely hidden away in Tokyo since the Olympics were postponed until next year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The flame was unveiled on Monday at a small ceremony with Yoshiro Mori, the president of the Tokyo Olympic organising committee, and Yasuhiro Yamashita, the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee. The flame will be on display beginning at the new Japan Olympic Museum for at least the next two months. — AFP

Ewan takes Tour Stage 3 honours

Sisteron, France: Australian Caleb Ewan timed his effort to perfection to win the third stage of the Tour de France in a bunch sprint at the end of a 198-km hilly ride through the Alpine foothills on Monday. Sam Bennett looked in control but the Irishman had probably underestimated the headwind and settled for second place as he watched Lotto-Soudal fast-man Ewan whiz around him to snatch his fourth stage win on the Tour. Italian Giacomo Nizzolo took third place. France's Julian Alaphilippe retained the overall leader's yellow jersey. — Reuters

Live on TV
CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Jamaica Tallawahs vs Trinbago Knight Riders from 7.30 pm; Guyana Amazon Warriors vs Barbados Tidtens from 3 am (Tuesday) on Star Sports 1, 2, HD

CRICKET

England vs Pakistan third T20 from 10.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

TENNIS

US Open matches from 8.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

WWE RAW

Bouts from 5.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 1, 3, HD

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SURASH SHOT!

CSK might part ways with their star Raina

New Delhi, Aug. 31: His exit from the IPL attributed to personal reasons this season, all-rounder Suresh Raina's stint with Chennai Super Kings seems in jeopardy even next year as the franchise might part ways with him before the 2021 edition.

The CSK camp based in Dubai reported 13 Covid-19 cases, a development which an IPL source said, played a role in the recently-retired India player's exit from the event. However, it has now emerged that the team management was not happy with the 32-year-old's "conduct" during the quarantine time, something which infuriated CSK owner and former BCCI president N. Srinivasan.

"In CSK, the norm is that the coach, captain and the manager get suites. However, Raina also gets a suite in any hotel that the franchise stays. It's just that his room didn't have a balcony," a source said.

"It was an issue but I don't think big enough to warrant a comeback (to India). There could be something more than just the scare of rising Covid-caseload," the source added, alluding to a speculated breach of the bio-bubble by Raina.

He said given the situation, Raina could well be gone for good now not only this season but also the next IPL scheduled in April, 2021. Is there a possibility of Raina coming back, thereby changing the circumstances?

"He is unavailable this season and that is clear from the official statement issued by the CSK. Now there are certain things that have not gone down too well with the top people," the source said.

"It looks highly improbable that someone who has retired and likely won't play any cricket will come back for CSK. Maybe, he will be back in auc-



AB de Villiers (centre) of the Royal Challenger Bangalore during a training session in Dubai.

Dhoni should bat at No. 3: Gambhir

New Delhi, Aug. 31: Mahendra Singh Dhoni should be batting at number three for Chennai Super Kings now that Suresh Raina has pulled out of the Indian Premier League, feels former India opener Gautam Gambhir.

Raina pulled out of the IPL due to "personal reasons" and Gambhir thinks that Dhoni, who has been away from the game for over a year, should try and play as many balls possible.

"It will be a good opportunity for M.S. Dhoni to come and bat at No. 3," Gambhir said on Star Sports' show.

"And he has been away from the game for the last one year, so he would end up getting a lot more balls to face and then he can actually play the anchor innings as well which he has been doing for India for the last couple of years," the two-time IPL-winning skipper said.

Gambhir said that Dhoni can come at one down as there are batsmen who can play the finishing game.

"So, MS Dhoni at No. 3 and then they have got depth with Kedar Jadhav, Dwayne Bravo, Sam Curran, all those guys they can come in," Gambhir said.

— PTI

Five Star Lyon ladies leap for joy



Lyon players run towards the trophy after beating VFL Wolfsburg in the UEFA Women's Champions League football final in San Sebastian, Spain, on Sunday. Lyon won 3-1 to win their fifth straight Champions League. — AFP

Chess players deserve better: Anand

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, AUG. 31

where each member of the side spoke about the memorable day.

During the final, India's Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh were disconnected from the host server. Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand said the global internet outage wasn't India's fault. "We did nothing wrong. We were ready for anything. We were ready to play two games or even six games. Fide looked at the big picture," he said.

There was a hint of disappointment, however, didn't stop the Indian team from celebrating their maiden Olympiad gold by organising an online meeting. "There's been a drop off

in the attitude of the Sports Ministry towards chess players. I don't mean at a personal level obviously. Just that institutionally, we no longer get the awards for international competitions," said Anand.

The veteran player from Chennai feels the issues in the All India Chess Federation could be a reason for the awards snub. "I think some of it might be due to various issues they have brought up pertaining to the code of conduct and so on. And our federation has had some difficulties. But it would be nice to reset this," he said.

Anand said the best way

to change the scenario is not by writing long letters to the editor but by having good results like the Olympiad success. "I hope that this result will have a positive impact and that they will look at chess as they did years ago. Several years ago they had recognised this as one of the sports where we do incredibly well... and that we have a good team. And I hope this will have an impact and we will once again start coming in for Arjuna and Dronacharya awards," he noted.

Grandmaster P. Harikrishna said it's the responsibility of the federa-

tion to take up this issue. "It is sad that none of the chess players have won an Arjuna Award or Dronacharya Award for several years. But these are not the reasons why chess players are playing the game. These are how ever small things that the govt and federation can take up," he noted.

Terming it a golden moment for the Indian chess fraternity, Koneru Humpy said Sunday's success would motivate many youngsters to pursue chess professionally. "We always talked about winning a medal at the Olympiad. I am happy that it has finally happened," she added.

Sandeep is out of Hyd, goes to Goa

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

After A. T. Rayudu and G. H. Vihari, Hyderabad has lost one more good cricketer to another state — top order batsman Bavanaka Sandeep has decided to play for Goa in the Ranji Trophy from this year. The 28-year-old received his no objection certificate from the Hyderabad Cricket Association on Monday.

The left-handed batsman is believed to have lost faith in the administrators, selectors and others who call the shots in the HCA after being overlooked many a time, including being dropped from the side despite doing well. He currently has the best batting average in the team.

He was also miffed at not being pitched for South Zone teams despite good performances. Former India player and Hyderabad captain Rayudu was instrumental in weaning Sandeep away from the HCA, it is reliably learnt.

Sandeep is currently in Dubai for the IPL with the Sunrisers Hyderabad team, which he made this year after impressive shows in Twenty20 matches.



Bavanaka Sandeep

es — he averaged 87 with a strike rate of 140 last season.

As an 18-year-old, Sandeep announced his arrival with a bang in Ranji Trophy, scoring a century (144) on debut against Jharkhand in November 2010 after Hyderabad was shot out for a humiliating 21 by Rajasthan in the previous match, triggering an overhaul of the team. He has scored 3,631 runs in 58 first class games since, averaging 44.82 with seven centuries, including a double ton, and 21 fifties. A part-time left-arm spinner, Sandeep also has 12 wickets against his name.

US OPEN | TENNIS



Angelique Kerber of Germany returns a shot during her women's singles first round match against Ajla Tomljanovic of Australia on the first day of the US Open tennis championships at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on Monday in New York City. — AFP

Kerber cruises into 2nd round

New York, Aug. 31: Former champion

Angelique Kerber returned to action for the first time in seven months and beat Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4, 6-4 on Monday to reach the second round of the U.S. Open.

In the second, Kerber settled into a groove and broke her opponent twice before sealing the win on her third match point when a Tomljanovic forehand sailed long.

The US Open is the first Grand Slam to be contested since the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown global tennis in March.

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic sets out on his quest for an 18th Grand Slam title at the US Open with his world number one standing enhanced in the latest ATP rankings released on Monday. The Serb headlines the opening day at Flushing Meadows where he faces Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia-Herzegovina. — Agencies

OLYMPIC GOLD'S THRILL LASTED 2 SECS: BINDRA

New Delhi, Aug. 31: Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra says the thrill — the biggest of his life — lasted merely two seconds after his gold at Beijing Games where relief was the first and only emotion he felt despite scripting history.

A web series titled *The Finish Line* has been conceptualised to relive eight defining moments of Indian sports through the athletes themselves. And Bindra was the first guest to feature on the show hosted by ace squash player Saurav Ghosal.

"It was the greatest emotion that I had felt. I was very happy as this moment was the biggest thrill of my life, that thrill lasted for two seconds and that's it," Bindra said on the show, recalling the moment 12 years later.

"The greatest emotion I felt at that moment was the feeling of relief because, throughout my journey, I have been very obsessive with my goal.

All my eggs were in one basket, certainly not the way I promote to young athletes. It was a huge amount of relief that, what I had set out to do in my life, I was able to achieve that," he said.

Bindra remains India's only individual gold medallist at the Olympics and he came tantalisingly close to adding another podium finish at the 2016 Rio Games, only to miss out by a point. — PTI