

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | 23 APRIL 2021

**WEATHER**

Max: 36.8°C
Min: 24.9°C
RH: 39%
Rainfall: Trace

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Rain likely in some parts.
Max/Min temp. 38/25°C

ASTROGUIDE

Plava; Uttarakaya

Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Ekadasi
till 9.41 pm

Star: Magha till 7.39 am

Varjyam: 3.12 pm to 4.43 pm

Durmuhuram: 8.28 am to

9.19 am; 12.39 pm to 1.29 pm

Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon

HIJRI CALENDAR

Ramzan 10,1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajr: 4.52 am

Zohar: 12.24 pm

Asar: 4.39 pm

Magrib: 6.39 pm

Isha: 7.50 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.34 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.54 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 2.55 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 3.03 AM

RAMZAN TIMINGS

IFTAR: 6.39 PM (TODAY)

SEHRI: 4.29 AM (TOMORROW)

COUNTER POINT

Come out only for
emergency shopping,
poll rallies...

SHORT TAKES**Yechury's son dies of Covid-19**

New Delhi: CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury's son Ashish died of Covid-19 at a Gurgaon hospital on Thursday morning. The death of the journalist was announced by Yechury. He was recovering well at Medanta Hospital, people close to the family added, describing his sudden death at 5.30 am after a two-week battle with Covid-19 as a shock.

India adds 3.15L Covid-19 cases

New Delhi: India on Thursday added another 3.15 lakh fresh cases of Covid-19 — the highest caseload that any country has ever added since Coronavirus attacked humans. The deaths toll too is on a sharp rise. On Thursday, 2104 new fatalities were also recorded in the last 24 hours.

■ More reports on Page 7

Amarnath Yatra booking halted

Jammu: Registration of pilgrims for the upcoming annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir has been temporarily suspended on Thursday due to the Covid situation, officials said. The offline and online registration for the annual Amarnath Yatra through Baltal and Chandanwari routes will begin from April 1 and April 15 respectively.

UAE bans travel from India

Dubai: The UAE has banned travel from India for 10 days from Sunday due to the Covid-19 situation in the country. The travel ban will come into effect from 11.59 pm on Saturday, April 24, and is subject to review after 10 days, the Gulf News reported. Passengers who have transited through India in the last 14 days will not be allowed to travel to any other place in the UAE.

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It's a national health emergency, says SC

Gives Centre 24 hrs to explain oxygen shortage

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Describing the prevailing Covid situation as a "health emergency", the Supreme Court on Thursday gave the Centre 24 hours to present to it a national plan on the supply of oxygen, essential medicines and manner and method of administering vaccine.

Emphasising on the necessity of a national plan on the supply of oxygen, essential medicines and vaccines, Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde, heading a bench also comprising Justice L. Nageswara Rao and Justice S. Ravindra Bhat, took up motu on its own cognizance of the prevailing Covid situation which witnessed an unprecedented 3.14 lakh cases in the last 24 hours — the world's largest single-day spike since the outbreak of the pandemic last year. More than 2,000 people succumbed to corona virus in 24 hours.

Coupled with the top court taking suo motu notice of the worsening Covid crisis in the country, the court on Thursday also agreed to hear mining giant Vedanta's plea for operating its copper smelting plant in Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu which has been shut down since 2018 on the ground that it would produce thousand tonnes of oxygen and give it free to treat patients.

As the Tamil Nadu government opposed Vedanta's plea for top court nod to begin operating its closed copper smelting plant on various grounds, including that the plea for reopening of the plant, has already been rejected by the Supreme Court, CJI Bobde

Don't stop oxygen tanks, says Centre

VINEETA PANDEY | DC
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

meeting on the unfolding Covid-19 situation, felt that the responsibility has to be fixed with the local administration in cases of obstruction of oxygen supplies.

He directed the officials to ensure that oxygen supply to various states happen in a smooth, unhindered manner and stressed on the need to ensure faster transportation of oxygen to the states.

Modi stressed that the states should come down heavily on hoarding.

He was informed by officials that oxygen supply to states is "steadily increasing" and against the present demand from 20 states of 6,785 MT a day of liquid medical oxygen, the Centre has allocated 6,822 MT a day to these states from April 21.

said, "We understand all this. We will ensure compliance of all environmental norms by the plant and its oxygen producing facility would be allowed to operate. We are on the oxygen plant."

Saying that there is almost a national emergency, CJI Bobde told the Tamil Nadu government, "You don't put spokes in the solution."

Appointing senior lawyer Harish Salve as amicus curiae to assist the court in the matter, the bench said that it will consider at a later stage transferring to itself the Covid related matters being

heard by different high courts across the country.

As solicitor general Tushar Mehta sought a clarification that since top court has taken suo motu cognizance of the situation created by the surge in Covid cases in its second wave, should Centre now respond to the proceedings before the high courts, Justice Ravindra Bhat said, "You can submit the national plan to the high courts".

The matter will be taken up for hearing on Friday with court making it clear that it will hear the solicitor general and amicus curiae Harish Salve only.

"Tomorrow, will be chairing high-level meetings to review the prevailing Covid-19 situation. Due to that, I would not be going to West Bengal," Modi tweeted on Thursday.

The BJP later said

Modi will be addressing voters of West Bengal through a virtual medium at 5 pm on Friday.

■ More reports on Page 7

Sonia slams Centre for dual vax pricing

New Delhi, April 22: Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the new Covid-19 vaccine policy, terming it as arbitrary and discriminatory and urged him to intervene immediately to reverse it.

Why is the government allowing a policy that reeks of such "insensitivity", she said in the letter to the Prime Minister.

The Congress chief alleged that the new vaccine policy implies that the central government has abdicated its responsibility of providing free vaccine to all Indians between 18 and 45 years of age.

"This is complete aban-

donment of the government's responsibility towards our youth," she said.

Noting that any reasonable person will agree on the benefit of a uniform price for vaccination, she said, "I would urge you to intervene immediately and reverse this ill-considered decision."

She said the nation's goal must be to ensure that everyone over 18 years is given the vaccine, regardless of their economic circumstances.

Gandhi said she is writing to him to convey the deep concern and sense of anguish that the new Covid-19 vaccination policy has caused amongst the people.

— PTI

New Delhi, April 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not be visiting West Bengal on Friday to address poll meetings as he will be chairing high-level meetings here to review the Covid-19 situation, and will instead address the state voters virtually.

"Tomorrow, will be chairing high-level meetings to review the prevailing Covid-19 situation. Due to that, I would not be going to West Bengal," Modi tweeted on Thursday.

The BJP later said

Modi will be addressing voters of West Bengal through a virtual medium at 5 pm on Friday.

■ More reports on Page 7

QUOTA | ORDER**Govt violated law by holding village polls without BC count: HC****HC faults delay in BC enumeration**

UVJINI VAMSIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD APRIL 22

tions due in 2024. The court also directed the government to file an affidavit informing when the commission will be constituted.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Vijayendra Reddy was dealing with a batch of petitions challenging the decrease of BC reservations for the gram panchayat elections from 34 to 28 per cent. The petitions also challenged Section 201 of the Telangana Panchayat Raj Act, 2018 which allowed the Telangana BC coopera-

tion

tive finance corporation to conduct a survey of the BC population instead of a dedicated commission as mandated by the Supreme Court in the K. Krishna Murthy case.

The state government clearly violated the law

■ The HC directed the government to set up a dedicated commission to collect empirical data of the BC population ahead of the next local body elections due in 2024.

tive finance corporation to conduct a survey of the BC population instead of a dedicated commission as mandated by the Supreme Court in the K. Krishna Murthy case.

Observed the CJ: "How did the government choose

and rules by considering the survey reports of the BC finance commission and others to fix the reservations, instead of appointing a dedicated commission. This is a clear breach of the Supreme Court judgment. As a result, the elections conducted in 2019 were *prima facie* illegal. Why don't we set aside the entire election process that is already completed? We can do it and we have the powers to set it aside," Chief Justice Kohli affirmed.

Observed the CJ: "How did the government choose

to consider the data collected by its own departments? It was a violation of the law. Who gave such authority to the government? Are you thinking that you are the law yourself or consider yourself being above the law? We can take it as contempt of court?"

Additional advocate general J. Ramachandra Rao agreed that this was a clear violation. "In future, the government will follow the rules."

■ Page 2: HC observed polls were held illegally

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for a "concrete action at a high-speed, on a large scale, and with a global scope" to combat climate change.

Addressing the US-convened Leaders' Summit on Climate 2021 in virtual format on Thursday, Modi said he and US President Joe Biden are launching the "India-US climate and clean energy Agenda 2030 partnership" to help "mo-

bile investments, demonstrate clean technologies, and enable green collaborations".

The Prime Minister said India is doing its part in combating climate change and that India's per capita carbon footprint is 60 per cent lower than the global average "because our lifestyle is still rooted in sustainable traditional practices".

"Sustainable lifestyles and a guiding philosophy of 'Back to Basics' must be an important pillar of our economic strategy for the post-Covid era," he said.

CITY HOSPITALS STARE AT OXYGEN SHORTAGE

Oxygen supply falls short by 120 tonnes; Etala blames Centre

Polis risk 12.45L people's lives: Worth it, SEC?

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

Hyderabad city and the rest of Telangana are facing a serious crisis of oxygen supply in hospitals with doctors in different hospitals admitting that they fear running out of supplies as the hospitals are increasingly witnessing a steady stream of Covid-19 patients requiring to be put on supplemental oxygen.

The current daily requirement of medical oxygen in the state is 384 tonnes, but the state was getting just between 260 and 270 metric tonnes, leaving a shortfall of around 120 metric tonnes a day.

Even in hospitals that have liquid oxygen tanks, the situation is not good as the internal supply systems are getting overwhelmed by the hundreds of patients requiring to be put on oxygen.

According to sources, the situation in the Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences (TIMS) is beginning to cause concern as patients being accommodated in upper floors are not receiving oxygen under the pressures required.

"As we go up each floor, the pressures in the piping system is dropping, the pressure is only good on the ground floor and to some extent on the first floor," the sources said.

The situation was dire enough to prompt health minister Etala Rajendar to squarely hold the Central government responsible for the emerging crisis saying that the Centre was controlling oxygen supplies to states. "Since we do not manufacture oxygen, we have to depend on supplies from Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh and Bellary in Karnataka. The Centre allocated oxygen for Telangana from a plant 1,300 km away in Odisha. Another 35 tonnes was okayed for supply from Perumbudur in Tamil Nadu but that state said nothing doing, we are not giving oxygen to anyone," he told a news conference.

"If Telangana ends up facing oxygen shortages, the responsibility for this will lie squarely with the Centre," Rajendar said.

Meanwhile, most hospitals in the city reported that they were out of oxygen beds including some run by the government.

Doctors at some private hospitals said they were somehow managing for the time being but were unsure how long they could continue as they were facing supply problems with shortage of tankers, as well as other oxygen tanks typically used in such facilities that do not have their own liquid oxygen storage facilities.

While the hospital has

Testing times

A large number of people queue up without maintaining physical distancing to get themselves registered for COVID-19 vaccine at the Musheerabad Urban Healthcare Centre in Secunderabad on Thursday. Many among the crowd had also come for COVID-19 tests.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

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IN BRIEF
10 TS, AP scribes due to Covid-19

Hyderabad: The second wave of Covid-19 is catching up fast those reporting on it everyday. In the past 24 hours, 10 journalists in the Telugu states have lost their lives to the Coronavirus, the Telangana State Media Academy said. These included senior journalist K. Amarnath and Chinta Nagaraju from Hyderabad, P. Ramesh and B. Ramesh from Karimnagar, Prabhakar Reddy from Kadapa, Surya Prakash from Visakhapatnam, Ramchandra Rao, Srinivasa Rao and Kalpana. According to the Telangana State Media Academy, at least 1,927 scribes have tested positive in the past one year.

TRS MP TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

TRS Rajya Sabha member Jognapally Santosh Kumar tested positive for Covid-19 on Thursday. Santosh, nephew of TRS president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, said on Twitter that he was asymptomatic and had quarantined himself under the supervision of doctors.

Santosh had accompanied the CM, who tested positive earlier this week, to Yashoda Hospital on Wednesday. Sources said Santosh is staying at the CM's farmhouse in Erravelli since April 19. Santosh has always accompanied the CM since he launched the TRS in 2001.

Sources said CM's wife K. Shobha, son K.T. Rama Rao and daughter K. Kavitha were also staying in the farmhouse since April 19.

VALEDICTORY HELD AT COLLEGE OF AIR WARFARE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

The valedictory function of the 44th Higher Air Command Course (HACC) was conducted on Thursday at the College of Air Warfare (CAW) in Secunderabad. The annual flagship course of CAW, commenced on July 27 last year with 52 officers of the rank of Group Captain and equivalent from all the three services.

The course is aimed at educating the officers in development and employment of aerospace power and its applications in joint operations at the operational and strategic level.

Air Vice Marshal K.S.K. Suresh, Commandant, CAW, congratulated all the course officers and appreciated the untiring efforts of the college in making the course possible amidst Covid-19 restrictions.

The Air Chief Marshal L.M. Katre Trophy for best overall performance and Commandant's Trophy for excellence in academics were awarded to Group Captain Parag Lall, the Air Marshal K.B. Singh Trophy for best individual research paper was awarded to Group Captain S.K. Anand. Book prizes were given to meritorious officers.

The vanishing lake



The water hyacinth totally covers the Langar Houz Huda Park lake in Hyderabad. Despite several complaints by the residents of the surrounding areas, GHMC has not looked into the problem.

— R. PAVAN

KTR slams Centre over cost of jabs

Minister questions firms selling vaccine cheap to Centre, charging states more

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

IT minister K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday slammed the Centre for the 'differential pricing policy' for the Coronavirus vaccine from May 1, when the vaccination drive will be open to all adults.

He questioned the rationale behind the vaccine companies selling a vaccine dose at ₹150 to the Centre and ₹400 to states.

The minister took to Twitter to wonder why there is no uniform pricing for the Covid-19 vaccine.

"We agreed for One Nation — One Tax (GST). But now we see, One Nation — Two different Vaccine prices? For Govt of India @ ₹150 And State Govts @ ₹400 Can't the GoI subsume any additional cost from PM CARES & help rapid vaccination across India (sic)," Rama Rao posted on Twitter with the hastag #SabkaSaathSabkoVaccine.

Rama Rao asked whether the Centre would not bear the cost of the vaccine as part of the PM Cares Fund.

Health minister Etala Rajendar also picked up the differential pricing to criticise the Centre.

"We can't understand this logic of the state having to pay ₹400 for the vaccine while the Centre pays only ₹150. Is this the way to tackle the pandemic," he said on Thursday.

Rama Rao also said that all the frontline work-

RAJENDAR SAID it was unfair of the Centre to cut Telangana's supply so drastically while it allotted lakhs of injections for various other states.

since the injection is manufactured in Hyderabad, we will take what we want but the Telangana government is equally concerned about everyone in the country who needs the injection. We take serious objection to the Centre's attitude and are writing to Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan registering our protest," he said.

Rajendar said it was unfair of the Centre to cut Telangana's supply so drastically while it allotted 1.63 lakh injections for Gujarat, 2 lakhs for Maharashtra, 61,000 for Delhi, and 92,000 for Madhya Pradesh. It is sad to see the Centre adopting such an attitude during a crisis such as the current one instead of making states its partners in overcoming the challenges, he said.

K.T RAMA RAO asked whether the Centre would not bear the cost of the vaccine as part of the PM Cares Fund.

ers in municipal administration department in the state were being taken care of.

The percentage of vaccination in 141 municipalities is 95.55 and in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) it is 96.19. He said the department was striving for cent per cent vaccination at the earliest.

Attendance dips at BRKR Bhavan over rise in cases

No WFH despite death of 7 OU, JNTU teachers

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

After the death of at least seven teachers from JNTU-H and Osmania University in the past one week due to the Coronavirus, the Telangana Schools Technical Colleges Employees Association (TSTCEA) has written to the registrars and VCs of both the institutions to demanding that teachers be allowed to work from home.

Faculty members working in the colleges and autonomous colleges, especially those within the university, are not being given holidays or work from home facilities, and they come to the college every day. In this situation, many people

come to the college using various modes of transport, risking their life, said a petition submitted by the teachers' union.

They also demanded that faculty members be paid full salaries while working from home, and that no cuts should be made.

"Teachers have been living on meager salaries for a long time, but in the event of such an unforeseen event, there should not be an added expense for healthcare at hospitals," the petition added.

They demanded that the authorities give health cards to all the teachers, to provide group insurance for everyone and to provide ESI facilities to those eligible.

Telangana Secretariat Employees Association has submitted a representation to the state government seeking 50 per cent rotation for employees. The government had enforced this measure during the first Covid-19 wave.

With no decision from the government on extending the rotation scheme, the employees have started working from home. With this, the attendance in government offices has fallen to less than half.

BJP rebukes Etala, says TRS failed to fight Covid

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

The BJP condemned the charge of health minister Etala Rajendar and other ministers that the Centre was not supporting the state government in controlling Covid-19 and helping in the treatment of patients.

Party vice-president D.K. Aruna, Nizamabad MP D. Arvind, and BJP Legislative Party leader T. Raja Singh, instead, said the state government had failed in controlling the disease spread and was blaming the Centre to cover its own failures.

They alleged that the state government had not reviewed how to control the Covid cases and had

that front taken by the Centre.

On the minister questioning the dual pricing of vaccines, they asked the government how many drug inspectors it had. They slammed the ministers for allegedly failing to provide infrastructure for government hospitals and blaming the Centre for only their political survival.

The BJP alleged that the government had not controlled private and corporate hospitals looting the people. They asked whether the Chief Minister had issued any call to the people to take the Covid-19 vaccination, and said he had failed to take the vaccination himself.

Etala flays Centre for control on drugs

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

Telangana state could well see a severe shortage of remdesivir injections, that many doctors treating Covid-19 patients across the state have come to rely on, during the second wave of Covid-19 in the state.

Indications of what might be in store for the state on the remdesivir front came when health minister Etala Rajendar during a news conference on Thursday severely criticised the Centre for taking under its control the distribution of the injections in the country.

Over the past few days, the Telangana state government has held discussions with remdesivir manufacturers and placed orders for 4 lakh doses.

"But the Centre on Wednesday issued orders that all distribution of the injection will be as per its directives and allotted just 21,500 injections to the state over the past 10 days. We can say that

since the injection is manufactured in Hyderabad, we will take what we want but the Telangana government is equally concerned about everyone in the country who needs the injection. We take serious objection to the Centre's attitude and are writing to Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan registering our protest," he said.

Rajendar said it was unfair of the Centre to cut Telangana's supply so drastically while it allotted 1.63 lakh injections for Gujarat, 2 lakhs for Maharashtra, 61,000 for Delhi, and 92,000 for Madhya Pradesh. It is sad to see the Centre adopting such an attitude during a crisis such as the current one instead of making states its partners in overcoming the challenges, he said.

K.T RAMA RAO asked whether the Centre would not bear the cost of the vaccine as part of the PM Cares Fund.

ers in municipal administration department in the state were being taken care of.

The percentage of vaccination in 141 municipalities is 95.55 and in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) it is 96.19. He said the department was striving for cent per cent vaccination at the earliest.

State falling short of even RT-PCR Covid-19 test kits

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

The state running out of kits to test for Covid-19 was visible on Wednesday with the health department saying a total of 1,02,335 tests were conducted for the day, falling from 1,30,105 on Tuesday. Health minister Etala Rajendar, addressing a press conference said that there were some shortages owing to supply issues as the state was ramping up the testing, something that was being addressed.

"If we rely on RT-PCR tests, then by the time the results come, those infected might get worse or spread it to others," he said.

He also said that the reliance of Telangana

on rapid antigen tests (RAT) was to ensure quick testing and getting results compared to RT-PCR tests that take a day or two. The delays in getting RT-PCR test results, he said, was because the state, between all the government and private labs, could process only about 30,000 samples a day, indicating that more than that number of RT-PCR samples were being received every day.

"If we rely on RT-PCR tests, then by the time the results come, those infected might get worse or spread it to others," he said.

Teachers finding it difficult to get sop

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

Thousands of teachers in the state are unable to reap the benefits of the government's programme to distribute ₹2,000 cash and 25 kg rice to private school teachers and staff. The Telangana Recognised School Correspondents Association told Deccan Chronicle on Thursday,

The staff members visiting the fair price shop, they said, are being turned back without their due, because of non-availability of data.

"The data with the fair price shops are not allotted as per their locality. It has been allotted in such a confusing manner that if one has to reach their collection shop, it becomes a matter of stress. All the fair price shops display old numbers and the school staff has been given new shop numbers, creating confusion. This has led to several teachers being left out in the process," they said.

Teachers are now requesting the state government to make it easier to access the promised aid. They also wanted the programme to be extended. They have suggested that this facility be made an open one like a regular distribution system, so that teachers can collect it from a place that is closer to them.

Under section 14(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land, i.e., sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrance on such land from the date of publication of such Notification without prior approval of the Special Collector. Objections to the acquisition if any and claims from all the persons interested/entitled for settlement by negotiation of the compensation, may be filed by the person interested in the land within 60 (sixty) days from the date of publication of this Notification as provided under Section 15 of the Act before Special Collector/Authorized officer.

Sd/-
Special Deputy Collector (LA),
GHMC, Hyderabad.
Sd/-
Special Collector (LA) &
Commissioner, GHMC,
Hyderabad.

RO No: 36/LA-PP/Advt/Pub/2021-22

This Notification is made under the provisions of Section-11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2010 (Central Act 40/2010) as amended by the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Telangana Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No. 21 of 2017) to all whom it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Special Collector & Commissioner, GHMC, Hyderabad on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana / Special Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to authorize Officer i.e., Special Deputy Collector, Land Acquisition, and its staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in Section -12 of the said Act.

Under section 14(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land, i.e., sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrance on such land from the date of publication of such Notification without prior approval of the Special Collector.

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Special Collector (LA) &
Commissioner, GHMC,
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RO No: 36/LA-PP/Advt/Pub/2021-22

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SHORT TAKES

POLLS WILL BE HELD ON APRIL 30, SAYS SEC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

The Telangana State Election Commission (TSEC) on Thursday announced that municipal elections will be held as scheduled on April 30 by duly following Covid-19 norms.

Though the SEC received several representations from Opposition parties to postpone the elections amid the steep increase in Coronavirus cases, it decided to go ahead with the polling on April 30 after the state government conveyed its opinion to the SEC in favour of holding elections as scheduled.

The SEC had written to the government on April 19 seeking its opinion on holding municipal polls on April 30 in the wake of increasing Coronavirus cases, given the directions of the High Court. The government conveyed its opinion on Thursday in favour of holding elections on schedule. Following this, State Election Commissioner C. Partha Sarathi issued orders on Thursday on the Covid norms that should be enforced for municipal polls during campaigning, polling and counting of votes.

There will be a ban on campaigning from 7 pm to 8 am. The last date for campaigning was advanced to 5 pm on April 27, 72 hours before polling. Wearing of masks mandatory for all during the entire election process.

HC IRKED BY ₹5K HONORARIUM FOR EX-JUDGES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

The Telangana High Court has taken strong objection to a proposal sent by the government sanctioning ₹5,000 per month as honorarium and ₹1,000 per sitting to a retired high court judge who would head the Telangana State Pollution Control Board Appellate Authority.

The court expressed its irritation with the attitude of the government towards appointment of the appellate authority, a post that was lying vacant for two years as a result several appeals were pending. Constitution of appellate authority to the issues related to PCB is mandatory and a retired high court judge was to be appointed as appellate authority.

As the appeals were mounting and the post lay vacant, the court had fixed a timeline to the government to fill the post. The government, in return, addressed a letter to the High Court registry, advising it to propose the name of a retired HC judge for the post, with an offer that the judge could be paid ₹5000 as honorarium per month.

Reacting to this, Chief Justice Hima Kohli commented: "I am sorry, the registrar general has been told to return the letter to the government. This is an insult to us that a retired High Court judge will be paid ₹5,000 as honorarium per month... Does the government think retired judges will work for such a paltry sum and that retired judges are hanging around for work (on such terms)? I refuse to pass any order as it is insulting for the high court... One does not give such a paltry sum even to a local commissioner visiting a site, forget about a retired judge." The CJ directed Advocate General B.S. Prasad to advise the government for issuing a fresh GO by Monday, failing which the court said it will take the concerned secretary of the forest, science and environment to task.

Justice Vijayeswar Reddy also took strong objection to such an offer from the government, termed it a "demeaning act" and reminded the advocate general about the uniform procedure followed by governments while sending proposals to nominate the chairpersons to other bodies.

It's time for Bandi to bite the bullet

Dissent by old guard kicks up row in BJP

SRIRAM KARRI | DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

submit its report to the party and till the party discloses the decisions to the media, I cannot speak." Ramchander Rao, responding to the issue, said, "The party shall decide shortly after the panel submits its report. Those who went there had no malafide intent and are disciplined workers of the party."

Insiders, however, reveal a very different and deeper issue at play. "Ever since Bandi Sanjay took over, the old guard, predominantly upper caste leaders, who got very comfortable cosying up the powers in the state, have been shaken up. Fearing irrelevance in the new BJP 2.0 under the dynamic Sanjay, they are trying to undermine him. There were a series of meetings held recently at the residence of a senior leader at Uppal to spoil Sanjay's image and try to re-establish the cloud of the old guard," said a senior leader.

Speaking of the frustrations within, the leader also said, "They got used to being friendly with the TD when Naidu was in power and with TRS after 2014. They never wished to take on the TRS and try to bring the party in power. Now, with the change in scenario, they are so frustrated, they were happily badmouthing our party president to the working president of the rival party."

Reportedly, when Rama Rao "complained" to Shekhar Rao about the "objectionable words used by Bandi Sanjay", especially against the Chief Minister, he not agreed with him but also reportedly replied, "several people are unhappy in the BJP with Sanjay's leadership, especially his style of talking. Even the RSS is aware. Action will be taken soon."

When asked about the incident, another senior BJP leader said, "it was a sudden meeting. The district-level party wanted to go and meet

both Congress and TRS leaders and convey their request, especially because of the Covid, to avoid another bypoll. It was conveyed to Sanjay and only after he agreed, did these people go?"

It was angrily contested by a senior leader from the Sanjay camp. "These leaders are so happy praising TRS leadership and criticising our own. They are upset that a BC leader is rising in Telangana. It is the coming together of upper castes - Brahmin, Reddy and Velamala - none of whom can stomach an OBC being accepted by a majority of people in Telangana."

The BJP state leadership, under Sanjay, has taken a very serious view of the matter. "We see it as an attempt to dilute the BJP's narrative that it is the alternative to TRS. It was to cause doubts in minds of people, on the eve of Nagarjunasagar polls, that the BJP and TRS are potential partners in future, not rivals."

The state unit has written to both party president J.P. Nadda and state in-charge Tarun Chugh about the issue. "It is necessary because the two senior leaders — Perala Shekhar Rao and Ramchander Rao — are members of the party national executive. A state committee cannot take action against them," a leader explained.

While some leaders said the party image was getting damaged with the small issue being blown out of proportion in public glare, the new guard feels it is time for Sanjay to bite the bullet and establish who the boss is.

"If leaders go and start creating alliances with TRS without informing the party leadership, it is a serious offence. The leadership must take stern action action to quell such tendencies as well as to convince people that the BJP is serious about bringing down the TRS government in the next election."

HC pulls up govt for failure to help NSG commando

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

A DIVISION bench of Chief Justice Hima Kohli and B. Vijayeswar Reddy expressed serious concern over the government not extending financial aid to the commando to enable him build a house.

THIS WAS despite an undertaking the state had submitted to the High Court that it will provide a 300-square yard plot and build a house for him there.

paper report on the commando, which had highlighted the plight of the former commando. He was struggling to secure compensation from the state and central governments.

Counsel representing the government informed the bench that though the government had allocated the plot (GO 92), the file pertaining to sanction of money for this remained pending with the finance department. He sought a week time to get instructions from government on this matter.

Brushing aside the contentions, the bench directed the principal secretary to present before it on June 3 in case of the money was not sanctioned for construction of the house.

SAD DEMISE



DOB: 26-4-1959 DOD: 21-4-2021

Inserted by: Wife, Children & Family Members

Ph: 9885155979

Late. Bandaram Peppal Narayana

DOB: 22-4-2021

Inserted by: Wife, Children & Family Members

Ph: 9885155979

OBITUARY



DOB: 01-09-1957 DOD: 18-04-2021

We deeply regret to inform you about the sad demise of Dr. S. Padma Rao on 22-04-2021.

Inserted by: Grieving Family Members

OBITUARY



DOB: 01-09-1957 DOD: 18-04-2021

We deeply regret to inform you about the sad demise of Dr. S. Padma Rao on 22-04-2021.

Inserted by: MELKONTE PARK FRIENDS

OBITUARY



DOB: 12-1-1942 DOD: 14-4-2021

Your innocent, pure and unconditional love are eternal.

MAY HER SOUL REST IN PEACE

FROM: NEAR & DEAR

LATE: BHUMA AMRUTHA

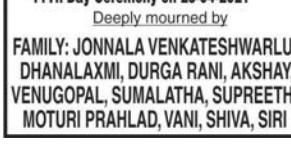
DOB: 12-1-1942 DOD: 14-4-2021

Your innocent, pure and unconditional love are eternal.

MAY HER SOUL REST IN PEACE

FROM: NEAR & DEAR

SHRADHANJALI



DOB: 11.10.1938 | DOD: 23.04.2020

You are always in our hearts & we love You so much. We miss you every moment in our life.

Wife: Suvarna Devi

Family members, Near & Dear

Shri. Machanpalli Vittal Rao

DOB: 11.10.1938 | DOD: 23.04.2020

You are always in our hearts & we love You so much. We miss you every moment in our life.

Wife: Suvarna Devi

Family members, Near & Dear

1st ANNIVERSARY

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Family members, Near & Dear

1st ANNIVERSARY

SHORT TAKES
MP VILLAGES CAN NOW IMPOSE CORONA CURFEW

RABINDRA NATH CHOURHURY | DC BHOPAL, APRIL 22

Madhya Pradesh government has empowered the panchayats in the state to impose corona curfew in the wake of surge in Covid-19 cases.

Principal secretary of state panchayat and rural development department Umakant Umrao has issued a circular asking the district collectors and chief executive officers of the zilla panchayats in the state to generate awareness among the villagers about corona curfew.

The villages have now been given power to take decision on imposition of corona curfew in their area of jurisdictions keeping in view the pandemic situation and threat of spreading the virus by the guest labourers who return back to their homes in the current reverse migration triggered by the second wave of Coronavirus, a senior officer of the panchayat and rural development department said unwilling to be quoted since he was not authorised to speak to the media.

"We plan to encourage community-based initiatives in villages to tackle the pandemic in view of the looming reverse migration to rural Madhya Pradesh in coming days", the officer said. Panchayat secretaries have been authorised to establish quarantine Centres for the migrant labourers who return to their villages from other states during reverse migration and also asked to lodge FIR against those who refused to be quarantined.

Village community Centres, schools and anganwadi Centres can be converted into quarantine Centres, the officer said.

SITARAM YECHURY'S SON DIES OF COVID-19

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

CPI (M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury's elder son Ashish passed away due to Covid-19 related complications on Thursday morning at a hospital in Gurugram.

Yechury tweeted, "It is with great sadness that I have to inform that I lost my elder son, Ashish Yechury to Covid-19 this morning. I want to thank all those who gave us hope and who treated him doctors, nurses, frontline health workers, sanitation workers and innumerable others who stood by us." Ashish, who studied at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, worked in several publications, including the Times of India in Delhi, before moving to Pune.

Journalists who worked with him remembered him as a mild-mannered and warm professional who was knowledgeable and well read. He would have turned 35 this year in June. People close to the family said that he was doing fine in the Gurugram hospital for the last two weeks and finally passed away at 5:30 am on Thursday.

Condolences poured in from all quarters. Leaders from across the country, including President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, conveyed their condolences.

KERALA TO GO AHEAD WITH MASS TESTING

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THURUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 22

The Kerala government has decided to go ahead with mass testing (augmented testing) for Covid-19 in the wake of huge spike in cases.

Kerala recorded its biggest single day spike with 26,995 cases on Thursday. Over the last six days the state has reported 1.4 lakh cases.

Under these circumstances the government has decided to intensify testing. As part of mass testing campaign, samples of 3.5 lakh people were taken across the state in the last three days. Of these, the results of 1.5 lakh have come out and the authorities expect to get the remaining results in a couple of days.

Health minister K.K. Shailaja defended government decision to go for mass testing in the wake of unprecedented spike in cases. The government decision came in for criticism from state's largest organisation of government doctors the Kerala Government Medical Officers Association (KGMOA).

The association has termed mass testing as "unscientific" as there was a delay of four to five days in getting results because of the huge pressure lab technicians and shortage of laboratories. Moreover the association wants the government to test people with symptoms and those on the contact list of Covid positive patients.

However, the minister says there is no logic in KGMOA stand. "People who are giving samples during mass testing campaign should not mingle with others till their results are out. This self imposed restriction is important to prevent the spread of infection. It is only a matter of three four days," she said.

Shailaja said right from the beginning the government had adopted a scientific approach of testing only those with symptoms. But there was huge criticism from different quarters that the state was not doing enough testing to suppress the cases.

Hosps run out of O2, discharge patients

Families of patients beg, plead with politicians

VINEETA PANDEY | DC
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

India is facing an unprecedented health emergency situation as hospitals in Delhi, Lucknow, NOIDA and some other major cities have started discharging patients from Intensive Care Units as they ran out of medical oxygen on Thursday. Families of patients were seen begging and pleading with politicians, and their local MPs, MLAs for beds and oxygen as their dear ones gasped for breath. Though some hospitals managed Oxygen supplies, many were still struggling.

Sunil Saggars, CEO of Shanti Mukund Hospital in East Delhi broke down as he gave details of Oxygen crisis in his hospital. "We are hardly left with any Oxygen. We have requested doctors to discharge patients, who ever can be discharged. Oxygen may last for 2 hrs or something. Patients will die," Mr Saggars said.

The Oxygen saturation of 12 patients on ventilators in this hospital had started dipping forcing staff to use Oxygen cylinders to save them.

India added over three lakh fresh cases of Covid-19 to the already overburdened and now crumbling healthcare infrastructure.

Thursday's figures are the biggest one-day increase in daily cases worldwide ever since the Covid pandemic started.

The deaths toll too is on a sharp rise. On Thursday, 2,104 new fatalities were also recorded in the last 24 hours.

These numbers could be much higher as in several states RT-PCR tests have gone down and deaths may have not been recorded appropriately since many are dying without test and without treatment.

Even basic supplies of medicines in local markets are hit as home isolation patients struggled to buy Fabiflu, steroids, anti-allergic tablets and even immunity boosters like Zinc and Vit C.

In fact, earlier in the day, Dr Sangita Reddy,



DEMAND WAS....

700 MT/day

National demand before Covid-19 outbreak last year.

DEMAND JUMPED TO

2,800 MT/day

In the first spike of Covid-19 last year.

CURRENT DEMAND

5,500 MT/day

In the second wave.

A family member of a Covid-19 patient carries an oxygen cylinder. — PTI

for medical use. Safety stocks of these industrial establishments are also being diverted for medical use.

Reliance Industries has already tweaked its oxygen facility in Jamnagar to produce 700 MT/day of medical grade oxygen from the existing 100 MT/day. It will be increased to 1,000 MT/day shortly.

TATA, JSW, JSPL and Arcelor Mittal are already supplying nearly 800 MT/day of oxygen to hospitals across the country.

IOC, BPCL and others are doing the same in various capacities ranging from 100-200 MT/day.

Most large plants producing medical oxygen are concentrated in Eastern and Western India.

North and Central India have limited capacities and therefore logistics becomes an issue for supply of the commodity in some regions.

Woman ends life after losing mother to virus

Raisen, April 22: Depressed over the death of her mother due to Covid-19, a 32-year-old woman allegedly committed suicide in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on Wednesday when the woman jumped from her house on the fourth floor of Himanshu Wings housing complex in Mandideep industrial township, Additional Superintendent of Police Amrit Meena said.

She was critically injured after falling from a height of about 50-feet and was rushed to a hospital where she died during treatment, he said. Her mother died of the Coronavirus infection two days back, the police said.

A video surfaced on social media in which the woman was seen jumping from the housing society.

Her father said she slipped into depression after losing her mother to Covid-19 two days ago. — PTI

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Tender Notice No. G-01/21-22
Tenders are invited from eligible vendors for Fabrication of Iron Materials at District Stores in Nalgonda Circle and Other works. Details are available at www.tssouthernpower.com
Ph. No. 08682-223867
Last Date: 30.04.2021
R.O. No. 1115-PP/CL/Advt/1/2021-22

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Follow us on www.scrailwayindia.com Details of the Tender Notices of S.C.Railway can be seen on our website : www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

TELEPHONIC/ONLINE INTERVIEW
Notification No.01/2021/Medical dt.22.04.2021
With reference to the above, a copy of notification for engagement of Medical staff on contract basis is enclosed herewith for information.

A Notification has been issued by SCR SC division to fill up Medical categories on contract basis:

Specialist Doctor	01 Post
Contract Medical Practitioners	13 Posts
Nursing Sisters	21 Posts
Pharmacist	02 Posts
Hospital Attendants	23 Posts

Vide Employment Notification No.01/2021/Medical dt.22.04.2021.

The details of notification & instructions to candidates are available in the website www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in.

Telephonic/Online interview:- will be communicated to eligible candidates

A0397 Senior Divisional Personnel Officer/Secunderabad.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता,
लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी खण्ड, दन्तवाड़ा
(फोन / फैक्स नं. - 07856-252362, ई-मेल - eedan-phe-cg@nic.in)

निविदा सूचना क्र. 23-25 / ले.सा./का.आ./ले.सा.या.खण्ड, /2021

दन्तवाड़ा, दिनांक: 19 / 03 / 2021

//इ-प्रोक्षेप्टेंट शिवित्र-01//

एकीकृत पंजीयन व्यवस्था प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रीमि में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से प्रपत्र "ए" प्रतिवाद दर पर निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की गयी थी जिसमें फिरी भी ठेकेदार द्वारा भग नहीं लेने के कारण उत्तर निविदा की तिथि आगे बढ़ायी जाती है।

निविदा क्रमांक कार्य का नाम सिस्टम टेंडर क्रमांक ग्राम/विकासखण्ड अनुमानित लायर

23 / 19.03.2021 जिला दन्तवाड़ा के 207 ग्रामों का (EOI) Survey and DPR for Singal Village Scheme का कार्य।

24 / 23.03.2021 जिला जीवन मिशन के अंतर्गत रेट्रोफिटिंग का कार्य।

25 / 23.03.2021 जिला जीवन मिशन के अंतर्गत रातकी घोटाला-1 / गोदाम का कार्य।

निविदा की सामान्य शर्त अन्य जानकारी वेबसाइट पोर्टल

<http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> पर दर्शित है। निविदा उत्तरलाल करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 30.04.2021 है।

कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी खण्ड दन्तवाड़ा

(G-60294/7)

प्रतिवाद दर पर निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की गयी थी जिसमें फिरी भी ठेकेदार द्वारा भग नहीं लेने के कारण उत्तर निविदा की तिथि आगे बढ़ायी जाती है।

Bihar Vocational Training State Society (BVTSS)
Labour Resources Department

A- BLOCK, 4th Floor, Niyojan Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna-800001, Phone: 0612-2535142
Email: det-bih@nic.in Website: [https://state.bihar.gov.in/labour](http://state.bihar.gov.in/labour)

LETTER INVITING e-TENDER (Letter of Invitation)

Tender Notice No: RE-TENDER TRG/01/2021-2022

Proposals (Two Bid System) are invited from reputed and experienced Chartered Accountant Firms for selection of Statutory Auditor, to conduct the Statutory Audit of Bihar Vocational Training State Society (BVTSS) for the Financial Years 2016-17 to 2020-21.

S L N.	Scope of Work	Tender processing Fee (Non Refundable)		EMD to be paid through e-payment mode (i.e. NEFT/RTGS/Credit Card/Debit card) (in Rupees)	Document Fee (Non Refundable) to be paid through e-payment mode (i.e. NEFT/RTGS/Credit Card/Debit card) (in Rupees)
		Dated: 06-04-2021	Dated: 16-04-2021		
01	Selection as Statutory Auditor, to conduct the Statutory Audit of BVTSS for the F.Y's 2016-17 to 2020-21.	Rs. 590.00	Rs. 1,00,000.00	Rs. 5,000/-	

Tender Schedule/Programme

Sl. No. Activity Date/Time : Duration

1. Bid Submission Start Date From 26.04.2021 (15:00 Hrs.) ([https://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in))

2. Date, Time and Place of Pre-Bid Meeting Labour Resources Department #A-BLOCK, 4th Floor, Niyojan Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna-800001, on 01:00 PM TO 05:

DECCAN Chronicle

23 APRIL 2021

Vaccine policy has many holes in it, needs a rejig

The Union government's decision to withdraw from its responsibility to complete a universal vaccination programme against Covid-19 militates against the basic ideas of democratic governance, governmental responsibility during a pandemic, and worse, makes its own budgetary proposals questionable.

Most vaccines against common diseases are free at the receivers' end as governments take upon themselves the primary responsibility of public health. Vaccines are a critical tool for ensuring it. And a pandemic means the crippling of normal life and the resultant crippling of the economy. No government can afford to pass over that job to any other agency, leave alone the private sector.

The Government of India, which worked with the state governments last year when the first wave of the pandemic Covid-19 hit our shores, seems to be abdicating that responsibility in so far as its younger population is concerned, despite studies pointing out that the current sweep of the virus has hit the younger ones more fatally than in its previous avatar.

The government has very little option, and time, to rework its policy and formulate a workable action plan as the nation scales new heights in the number of Covid-19 cases and sets world records every day

It is more perplexing that the government washed its hands of the programme in spite of the fact that the budget for financial year 2021-22 had allocated ₹35,000 crores for vaccination alone, with finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman promising additional funds if required. A back-of-the-pack calculation using the information available in the public domain will convince anyone that the government has parliament's sanction to vaccinate every Indian aged above 18. It goes like this: There are about 100 crore Indians who are eligible for vaccination and the government will have to procure 200 crore doses to vaccinate them all. The government has been purchasing the vaccine at the rate of ₹150 per dose, which the chief executive officer

of Serum Institute of India says gives his company profits but denies it super-profits. Even if the government pays a little more, say ₹175 per dose, the budgeted amount of ₹35,000 crores would be sufficient for a universal vaccination programme. Given this math, the government must now explain to the people why it has chosen to abandon the vaccination plan and asked the state governments to compete in the marketplace for vaccinating Indians.

The government has very little option, and time, to rework its policy and formulate a workable action plan as the nation scales new heights in the number of Covid-19 cases and sets world records every day

The government has very little option, and time, to rework its policy and formulate a workable action plan as the nation scales new heights in the number of Covid-19 cases and sets world records every day

The signals are too bad, and cannot brook delays. The government should take over Covid management without loss of time, reverse its ill-conceived vaccine policy, ensure every Indian is vaccinated for free as in most other nations, and stop the dance of death and the sinking of the economy.

Saving soccer's soul

English soccer fans scored the goal of their lifetime in staving off The Super League and helped keep the game tied to its traditional moorings in Europe. Twelve of Europe's biggest football clubs, including six giants of the EPL in Manchester United, Manchester City, Chelsea, Arsenal, Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspurs, were planning to switch to a multi-billion dollar US pro sport format that would have made them stink rich but would have left the game poorer. The fans reacted so fiercely that owners of all 12 clubs retreated. Fans who invest so much of their passion, time and money to follow the sport with their unique tribal loyalty to their clubs would have felt cheated by such a Super League.

The public outcry, the government of Boris Johnson taking a fierce anti-Super League stand with the PM's open threats of barring players from EPL and making them ineligible for their national teams and star players' opposition to the breakaway proposal bound into such a powerful force that within three days of announcing grand plans, the owners of the "Big Six" of EPL plus Real Madrid, Barcelona and Atletico Madrid from Spain and Juventus, Internazionale and AC Milan from Italy, had to make grovelling apologies for so much as supporting it.

The American Pro Sport model is not universally liked as it breeds elitism and can be construed as non-competitive in the sense that participation rights are guaranteed regardless of performance and, importantly, very little of the billions trickles down. The traditional soccer model is more equitable even as it upholds the primacy of the Premier League in England and the national leagues in Europe. Foreign owners from the US, Russia and the UAE may not have seen it that way as they plotted to undermine traditions while inviting a kind of Kerry Packer revolution in football. Good sense seems to have prevailed in the nick of time and the soul of soccer saved — at least for the moment.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burrapur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
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Saeed Naqvi
Wide Angle

Recalling Iraq's tragedy in 2003 & statesmanship of PM Vajpayee

April 2003 was the cruellest month for the people of Iraq, a month of reflection on Pakistan by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and a rare opportunity for Worldview India, group of Indian journalists who helped lift the mist from the month's historic events.

The Americans occupied Iraq by April 3. Vice-president Dick Cheney, the real author of the operation, was eager to declare victory on April 9. It had to be a spectacular media event. After all, Mr. Cheney embedded 300-plus journalists with the US military.

The choreography was audacious. In a prepared statement, Mr. Cheney would declare victory on the global media, which would be interspersed with images of an ecstatic, popular upsurge pulling down the statue of Saddam Hussein at Firdous Square. Mr. Cheney's talking head would alternate with the slow fall of the statue. Mr. Cheney would never have dreamt that all the back-channel tricks that went into the manufacture of the memorable spectacle would be exposed. For the first time in Indian journalism history, Worldview India posted camera units/reporters in Baghdad, Najaf, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Amman and in Lebanon. Some of these reporters hap-

pened to be in Palestine Hotel, witnesses to the real story, the one the world wasn't supposed to know.

Contrary to the narrative of a popular uprising toppling the statue, the Americans had to think on their feet: they had to improvise the iconic images because the popular upsurge had simply not materialised. US Marines were mobilised to 'lasso' the statue's neck and have it pulled down by cranes. CNN, the occupation's prime cheerleader, has to this day incorporated a video of the statue as a lasting symbol of Americans replacing a "brutal" dictatorship with democracy. The sole superpower can arrange for a statue to be pulled down, but how does it show images of crowds celebrating Saddam Hussein's fall?

The 1991-92 Shia uprising in Najaf/Karbala, encouraged by Operation Desert Storm, was harshly put down by Saddam. The only images of the damaged shrine of Imam Hussein was brought to the world by a TV crew led by this reporter. The Shia refugees from this unreported conflict had been settled in a vast ghetto on Baghdad's outskirts. It was named, like much else those days, as Saddam City. It dawned on Mr. Cheney's team that one group of people thrilled at

Saddam's fall were the inmates of the nearby ghetto, teeming with disgruntled Shias.

A deal was struck with controversial cleric Muqtada Sadr. Saddam City was renamed "Sadr" City. That's when celebrations erupted on Baghdad streets. Crowds from Sadr City trampled on Saddam posters and beat it with their sandals. The American romance with Iraq's Shias burgeoned.

On March 20, 2003, Thomas L. Friedman of the *New York Times* recommended Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani for the Nobel Prize. Sistani remains the blue-eyed ayatollah because he differs with Tehran on the clergy's role in governing the state.

Mr. Cheney's contrivance of a quick victory in Iraq was matched by the energetic diplomacy of the US embassy in New Delhi. They persuaded South Block to participate in the American victory by taking over the administration of Iraq's Kurdish North. Powerful ministers like Jaswant Singh found the US blandishments tempting. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, as much a statesman as a skilful politician, rather than rubbish his Cabinet colleagues, went into one of his extended spells of deep reflection.

He called up his friend A.B. Bardhan,

CPI secretary-general. "Are you supporting Indian occupation of Kurdish Iraq?" Vajpayee taunted. "Not at all," exclaimed Mr. Bardhan. "But I see no protest". Vajpayee replied. The PM was looking for signs of street restiveness on the issue to cite in opposing the idea. The source for this exchange was Mr. Bardhan, but Vajpayee didn't deny it.

This was a period of extraordinary tension between India and Pakistan. After the December 13, 2001 attack on India's Parliament, the two militaries were in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation. On April 18, Vajpayee landed in Srinagar and, without a hint to his Cabinet, held out the hand of peace to Pakistan. "An awesome power has arisen". Regional quarrels have no meaning now. Conflicts in the region would have to be composed. The January 4, 2004 India-Pakistan summit in Islamabad followed.

Vajpayee found the "sole superpower" moment forbidding. Hence his quest for regional peace. Narendra Modi's crawl towards a regional entente is dictated by a different set of circumstances. The burgeoning China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan togetherness in the vicinity makes a friendly America look too distant. Worldview India's journalists

remember April 2003 for the kind of journalism Indians haven't practised before or since. The idea was to cover the war and occupation of Iraq from an Indian perspective. The Western media would of course cover it, but from its own perspective. The embedded journalists were in fact a part of the war effort. This wouldn't be the Indian perspective, unless New Delhi accepted that it was India's war too. Indian media houses are stone deaf on such issues. For coverage of foreign affairs, they have deals with Reuters, BBC, CNN and so on — so much for "atma nirbharta". A word of gratitude is owed to S.Y. Qureshi, Doordarshan's then director-general, for grasping the significance of the project. He fought the resistance in the system. The standard argument against covering foreign affairs was that it "has low TRP ratings".

Let Mr. Qureshi bear witness. Amitabh Bachchan's *Kaun Banega Crorepati* had the highest ratings until *Worldview India's* one-hour prime-time reporting from the Gulf by dedicated reporters pipped it to the post.

The writer is a senior journalist and commentator based in New Delhi

Subhani

OXYGEN
SHORTAGE

To uphold secularism, free temples from state control

L. Ravichander

It has been Indian secularism's biggest defect that our Constitution, which promises to be fundamentally secular, has multiple provisions specifying exactly how religious institutions should run. A government that has its eye on the wealth of temples must also have the intellectual honesty to not maintain that it's a secular government. Yet of this failure, every single Indian government of the past, and the present, is culpable.

To argue that within the *prakaaras* of Hindu temple are layers of secular functions, which are intertwined and which necessitate the state's overarching intervention, is illogical. Such a schema is inherently faulty. If monies to temples come through *hundi* offerings by the Hindu devout, the government can't argue that since a temple also has secular dimensions, its control is kosher. This is a virus inside our collective thinking, a shibboleth serving the agenda of populist leaders.

Legally, what is a temple? A temple is not "an establishment" under the Shops and Establishments Act.

In accordance with Article 25 of the Constitution, which guarantees to all persons: "freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practise and propagate religion", the proviso, which is also part of the original Constitution, that the guaranteed does not prevent the state from making a law "regulating" or restricting any "economic, financial, political or other secular activity" which may be associated with religious practice was a red herring.

Would the "privatisation" or "liberalisation" to apply a phrase implying reverting of ownership and control from the state to the

people in economics, of Hindu temples necessarily lead to their better management? Would it assure these endowments are administered in a manner that guarantees safeguarding of the basic civil rights of the various different followers of the Hindu religion?

The state's argument that its intervention in Hindu endowments and trusts is not aimed at deforming religion out of existence, but rather at ensuring that the administration of endowments stays true to both the will and intent of the grantor and of India's secular ideals, is clearly flawed. In theocratic states like the Vatican, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the state is founded on a stated belief that a nation will be ruled directly by God's will, or indirectly through God's priests or theologically defined representatives. Religion, therefore, would have to have a stated, defined non-role in a secular system.

The Article 25, which envisages preventing the state from making any laws which restrict it, also empowers people's will to be really "free" to practise or profess whichever religion they believe in (or not in the case of atheists and agnostics). But the history of Hindu temples and religious institutions being supervised, controlled or regulated started emphatically way back in 1929. As the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha said recently, "Traditionally, a temple was at the centre of community life and was not just a place of worship. Education, art, sculpture, architecture, music, poetry, literature, agriculture and even the local judiciary were all promoted and sustained by a temple. We have several inscriptions evidencing the reverting of ownership and control from the state to the

The liberal black robe has gone to an extent of declaring that the seva puja for Lord Jagannath has both a religious and a secular aspect, and the state was justified in regulating the secular aspect

The Madras Acts served as inspiration and guide for more than a dozen laws passed by the Tamil Nadu government as well as by neighbouring states. It included the 1959 law of Andhra Pradesh. Tamil Nadu thus has the dubious distinction of pioneering the Hindu Religious and Endowments Acts, and controls directly through government servants around 43,000 temples and endowments, acquired

The logic was taken to its extreme conclusions by the Supreme Court when it was held that management of a temple is, in fact, a secular function.

By holding succession a

a

secular matter, the state has now become the appointer of a religious head of any Hindu institution. Resultantly, courts now determine if a matter related to a Hindu institution is religious or not. Would they be equally at ease doing so for other religions?

A

time when state roles in spheres like railways, airways, ports and banks are being privatised, and governments are claiming to be spokespersons of Hindu dharma, this is an issue that calls for attention. The state needs to hand over control of temples back to the Hindus.

T

he reports said the fall of Mymensingh, which was not affected by the war in the past 27 days, followed the arrival of troops from Dacca at the nearby Madhopur Cantonment.

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Mukti Fouz captures key rail station

AGARTALA, APRIL 22

The Bangla Desh Forces today achieved a major victory when they wrested control of the Kasba railway station in the Akhaura-Brahmanbaria sub-sector while the west Pakistan troops, aided by tank units, overran Mymensingh town in the western sector and Sylhet town in the eastern sector, reports from across the border said.

The reports said the fall of Mymensingh, which was not affected by the war in the past 27 days, followed the arrival of troops from Dacca at the nearby Madhopur Cantonment.



3rd WEEK

KALYAN

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SUDARSHAN 35MM
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11.00am, 2.15, 5.00pm

VISWANATH 70 : 11.45, 2.45, 5.00
RAJADHANI 70 : 11.00, 2.00, 5.00
SRI LAXMI 70 : 12.00, 3.00, 5.00

MANJU 70MM
11.00, 2.00, 5.00
SRI SAI RAM 70
11.15, 2.15, 5.00

RANGA 70MM
11.00, 2.00, 5.00
Sridevi 70MM
11.30, 2.30, 5.00

SENSATION SUNSHINE
11.00, 2.00, 5.00
SUSHMA 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 5.00

PVR

FORUM - Kukatpally - 10.10, 11.00, 1.20, 2.20, 4.30 I
GALLERIA - Punjagutta - 10.00, 11.00, 1.10, 1.45, 4.20 I
RK - Banjara - 11.10, 4.20 I **S2 - 10.00, 1.10, 4.20 I**
INORBIT - Cyberabad - 10.55, 1.10, 1.20, 4.20 I
IRRUM MANZIL - 10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 4.20 I
MOSARAMBAGH - 10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 4.20 I
PRESTON - Gachibowli - 11.20, 4.15 I
ICON - Hitech - 10.00, 1.10, 4.20 I

Cinépolis
INOX

GVK - Banjara - 10.20, 11.30, 12.45, 1.45, 3.00, 4.15 I
GSM - Miyapur - 11.00, 12.00, 1.00, 2.30, 3.30, 4.30 I
MP - Kachiguda - 11.30, 12.45, 1.30, 3.00, 4.30 I

PRASAD MULTIPLEX - 12.00, 1.00, 3.00, 4.00 I
AMB CINEMAS - 11.05, 1.15, 4.25, 4.45 I
TIVOLI CINEMAS - 11.00, 2.00, 5.00 I
TALLURI - 11.00, 2.00, 5.30
SLN - 1.00, 4.00 I

NATION

DECCAN CHRONICLE | HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | 23 APRIL 2021

pg 7

CINEMA

RELEASING TODAY



SANDHYA 35-RTC X ROADS
(Enjoy 4k laser projection & dolby atmos)
11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

ANJALI 70MM-SEC'BAD
11.15, 2.15, 5.45PM

SAPNAABIDS SVCINESQUARE
11.00AM(ONE SHOW) 11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

SENSATIONINSO VENKATASA170
11.00AM(ONE SHOW) 11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

SRLAXMIKALAMANDIR-ALWAL
11.30, 2.30, 5.30PM

PVR FORUM-2.10PM | INORBIT-5.00PM
GALLERIA-2.10PM | ICON-2.05PM
MUSARAMBAGH-5.20PM | RK-1.50PM
IRRUMMANZIL-5.20PM | PRESTON-1.35PM

INOX GVK-5.00PM | MP-1.00PM
GSM-5.00PM

Cinépolis MANTRA-5.30PM OAMB 2.15
CCPL-12.10PM PM

NOMA TALKIES-4.20PM

Contact 7013388396

RELEASING TODAY



SHIVAPARVATHI 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

SAPNACINEMA-ABIDS
2.15, 5.45PM(2 shows)

KUMAR 70-KACHIGUDA
11.00, 2.30, 5.30PM

SRINIVASA 70MM-UPPAL

11.15, 2.15, 5.45PM

JYOTHI IDABL RM KRISHNA ALIYABAD
11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM 11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

SENSATIONINSONMIA-2.30PM

MAHESWARI 70-11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

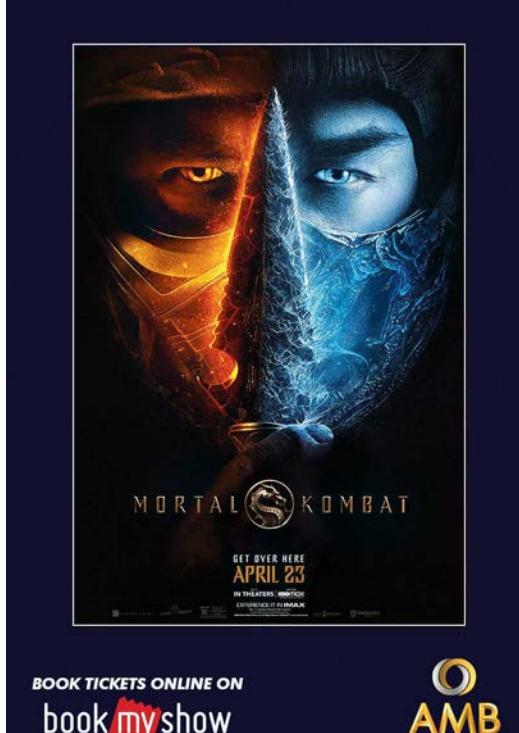
VENKATESWARA 70-GUMMADIDHALA

11.00, 2.00, 5.45PM

PVR FORUM-4.50PM CCPL-5.40PM
L&T-4.50PM DSL-11.30AM

INOX GVK-1.50PM | MP-4.00PM
GSM-1.00PM

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SP CHOKKALINGAM | G MAGESH | V MANIKANDAN | TUDHAYAKUMAR | HARIBHARASUDHAN | BASKAR | SURESH CHANDRA-REKHA | SASI & SASI

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500 docs, health workers in Bihar down with Covid

AIIMS Patna expands bed capacity to 250 and all beds are occupied



Coronavirus victims kept for cremation at Swarn Rekha Ghat Crematory, as cases surge in the country, in Ranchi on Thursday. — PTI

Patna, April 22: More than 500 doctors and health workers of the two leading hospitals in Patna — AIIMS and Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) — have been infected with Coronavirus during the ongoing second wave, sources said.

Altogether, 384 employees of AIIMS Patna, including doctors, nurses, sanitation workers, have been infected during the second wave so far, said its medical superintendent C.M. Singh.

PMCH superintendent Dr Indu Sekhar Thakur said more than 125 of its employees have tested positive so far. He said the list includes 70 doctors and over 55 nurses and other health workers.

AIIMS and PMCH along with another state-run medical establishment, Nalanda Medical College and Hospital, are catering to a large number of Covid patients in the state capital.

The PMCH superintendent said that the hospital authorities have arranged separate isolation spaces for its infected employees.

PMCH, the century-old premier hospital of Bihar, has a facility of around 105 beds for Covid patients barring its staff and all are occupied at present, Thakur said.

AIIMS Patna has expanded its bed capacity to 250 and all the beds are occupied.

The PMCH superintendent said that due to the infection of many staffers, the hospital is facing a manpower shortage. "But since leave of all the staff has been cancelled, we are managing the functioning of the Covid wards," he said.

Meanwhile, the Bihar chapter of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has published a list of 40 doctors across the state with their phone numbers for assistance to the needy.

"Our doctors are providing treatment over the phone to patients who are primarily in home isolation," its state president Dr Shahjanand Singh said.

Singh, a surgeon, is himself on the list of doctors helping the needy during the crisis.

The IMA Bihar chief said these doctors are available over the phone from 10 am-12 noon and 4-6 pm.

Bihar is witnessing a second surge of Coronavirus like the rest of the country. As per the health bulletin issued on Wednesday, a total of 12,222 more people tested positive, while 56 lost their lives due to the deadly disease.

The state has a total of 3,54,281 Covid cases while the death toll stands at 1,897. Bihar has 63,745 active cases of Coronavirus at present.

— PTI

5 die due to lack of oxygen in UP hosp.

Aligarh (UP), April 22: Five Coronavirus patients died at a private hospital in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh allegedly due to a shortage in oxygen supply.

The incident took place at Naurangabad locality in Gandi Park area here on Wednesday, according to police.

However, Dr Sanjeev Sharma, the owner of the hospital, denied the claims and said the hospital had adequate oxygen stock.

Shyam Kashyap, whose 50-year-old brother Anil was among those who died at the hospital, told media persons that hospital authorities tried to cover up the lapse by arranging 40 oxygen cylinders after the tragedy took place.

"If the hospital had sufficient stock of oxygen, then why did it suddenly ask authorities for oxygen supply

● AGITATED FAMILY members of the deceased persons created a ruckus at the hospital, following which police officials rushed to the spot.

at 9 pm on Wednesday?" he asked.

Agitated family members of the deceased persons created a ruckus at the hospital, following which senior police officials rushed to the spot and defused the tension.

The hospital owner said none of the patients died due to lack of oxygen. Sharma said all the five persons were on ventilator and their death was a "mere coincidence".

Meanwhile, City Magistrate Vineet Kumar said, "At around 9 pm on Wednesday, the hospital authorities called for an emergency supply of oxygen which was given by 10 pm." Kumar said the incident was being investigated. — PTI

CHHATTISGARH CANCELS CLASS 10 EXAMINATION

Raipur, April 22: The Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education (CGBSE) on Thursday cancelled its Class 10 examinations this year in view of the prevailing Covid-19 situation in the state and safety of students, authorities said.

The board also suspended its Class 12 examinations scheduled to commence from May 3, and a fresh time-table will be released once the Covid-19 situation improves, they said.

The decision comes days after the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) cancelled its Class 10 examinations and postponed Class 12 examinations.

A notification issued by CGBSE secretary V.K. Goyal said that keeping in view the surge in cases, the High School Certificate (Class 10) examination for the academic year 2020-21 stands cancelled.

— PTI

Mumbai police's witty reply to man earns netizens praise

Mumbai, April 22: Mumbai police's humorous reply to a Twitter user, who wanted to meet his girlfriend during the ongoing Coronavirus-induced restrictions imposed by the Maharashtra government, has won the hearts of netizens.

At present, section 144 of the CrPC that prohibits assembly of five or more people at one place is in force in Mumbai and other parts of the state to bring down the Covid-19 cases. The city police have also made it mandatory for the vehicles in emergency/essential services to put up colour-coded

stickers in a bid to limit the vehicular movement.

Police are implementing the prohibitory orders in a strict manner and action is being taken against the vehicles, which are out on the streets without any valid reason.

Against this backdrop, a Twitter user named Ashwin Vinod tagged the Mumbai police and tweeted that he wanted to meet his girlfriend, and asked which sticker he should use for his vehicle to move out.

"@MumbaiPolice what sticker should I use in order to go out and meet my girlfriend? I

miss her," he said.

In its response, the Mumbai police said his requirement does not fall under the category of essential or emergency services, and requested him to stay at home.

"We understand it's essential for you sir but unfortunately it doesn't fall under our essentials or emergency categories! Distance makes the heart grow fonder & currently, you healthier. P.S. We wish you lifetime together. This is just a phase," the Mumbai police tweeted with the hashtag #StayHomeStaySafe. — PTI

IN BRIEF
Pak hotel parking bomb blast kills 5

Karachi, April 22: A powerful bomb blast in the parking area of a luxury hotel in the restive southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta has killed at least five persons and injured 12 others, authorities have said, dismissing reports that the Chinese Ambassador was present in the building when the explosion occurred. The blast took place in the parking lot of the Serena Hotel in Quetta on Wednesday night. Several vehicles parked in the area caught fire after the blast. According to initial reports, the hotel was hosting Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong.

Quetta is the capital of Pakistan's Balochistan province. Initial investigation has revealed the blast was caused when explosive material, fitted inside a car was detonated, said police.

Dutch asylum stabbing: 7 hurt

The Hague (Netherlands), April 22: Seven people were injured, two of them seriously, in a stabbing at an asylum-seekers' centre in the Netherlands late Wednesday night, police said.

A 24-year-old resident of the centre was arrested. The motive for the stabbing in the town of Echt, located 180 kilometres south of Amsterdam, was not immediately clear. Police said in a statement on Thursday that officers were called to the asylum-seekers' centre around 10:15 pm (2015 GMT) and arrested the suspect 10 minutes later. The wounded were all taken to a hospital for treatment. Residents of the building where the stabbings happened were moved to other buildings in the centre while police investigated. — AP

China committing genocide: UK

London, April 22: British lawmakers on Thursday approved a parliamentary motion declaring that China's policies against its Uighur minority population in the far western Xinjiang region amounted to genocide and crimes against humanity.

The motion is non-binding and does not compel the British government to act. But it is another move signalling the growing outcry among UK politicians over alleged human rights abuses in China. The motion was moved by Conservative lawmaker Nus Ghani, one of five British lawmakers recently sanctioned by China for criticising its treatment of the Uighurs.

The US government and the parliaments of Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada have accused Beijing of genocide, although Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has been reluctant to use the term. More than 1 million people have been confined to camps in Xinjiang, according to foreign governments and researchers. Authorities there are accused of imposing forced labor, birth controls and torture.

The Chinese government has strongly rejected complaints of abuses and says the camps are for job training to support economic development.

HOUSE OKAYS DC STATEHOOD, FIGHT LOOMS IN SENATE

Washington, April 22: A decades-long movement to reshape the American political map took a further step Thursday as the House of Representatives approved a bill to make the nation's capital the 51st state.

Voting along party lines with minority Republicans in opposition, the House approved the bill 216-208.

That's likely the easy part, though. The proposal faces a far tougher fight in the Senate, where simple Democratic control of the chamber won't be enough.

The legislation proposes creating a 51st state with one representative and two senators, while a tiny sliver of land including the White House, the US Capitol and the National Mall would remain as a federal district.

Instead of the District of Columbia, the new state would be known as Washington, Douglass Commonwealth — named after famed abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who lived in Washington from 1877 until his death in 1895.

An identical statehood bill passed the House in 2020, but it quickly died in the then-Republican-controlled Senate.

Now, with the 2020 elections leaving Democrats in control of both chambers and the White House, Republican senators may resort to a filibuster to stymie the statehood bill.

Heathrow: No to 8 India flights

Ahead of 'red list' travel ban from today

London, April 22: Heathrow Airport in London, the UK's largest and busiest airport, has declined requests from at least four international aircraft carriers to land eight extra flights from India on Thursday, ahead of the coronavirus pandemic "red list" travel ban which comes into force from Friday.

The airport said the decision to decline requests for additional flights was taken to ensure that the existing pressures on the border are not "exacerbated", resulting in long queues and crowds at passport control on arrival. India's addition to the travel "red list" was announced in the House of Commons earlier this week amid 103 cases recorded in the UK of a new variant of coronavirus first detected in India.

Health Secretary Matt

ANYONE WHO is not a UK or Irish resident or a British citizen cannot enter the UK if they have been in India in the previous 10 days.

MATT HANCOCK, Health Secretary

Hancock told MPs that the decision had been made after studying the data and on a "precautionary basis". "That means that anyone who is not a UK or Irish resident or a British citizen cannot enter the UK if they have been in India in the previous 10 days. UK and Irish residents and British citizens who have been in India in the 10 days before their arrival will need to complete hotel quarantine for 10 days from the time of

arrival," said Hancock. It has since triggered considerable confusion and panic as hundreds of Indian students and other UK-based British Indians scramble for return flights ahead of the Friday deadline.

London-based family-owned travel agency, Tickets to India, is among the agents who have been working round the clock to try and sort out charter flights to carry Indian-origin passengers back to the UK. "Hundreds of British nationals are still requesting seats but there is very little time to arrange a second charter before Friday," said the company, which was working on getting clearance for one Qatar Airways A350 to bring 300 passengers back before the cut-off time (4am local time) on Friday. — PTI

TRAVEL BAN: U.S. VOTES TO CURB PREZ POWER

Washington, April 22: The Democratic-led House passed legislation designed to constrain a president's power to limit entry to the US, a response to former President Donald Trump's travel ban covering five Muslim-majority countries. President Joe Biden reversed the travel restrictions from the Trump administration in one of his first moves in office, easing limits on Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen, as well as North Korea and some government officials from Venezuela.

But Democrats say Congress has a responsibility to prevent future administrations from enacting similarly broad restrictions. The bill passed the House by a vote of 218-208. It is unlikely to advance in the evenly split Senate, with Republicans broadly opposed. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, the Democratic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, said presidents from both parties have used their authority to exclude narrow groups of people from entering the US, such as certain North Korean officials. — AP

WH's tax credit to help spur vax

UK FOOD BANK USE UP BY A 3RD IN COVID TIMES

Washington, April 22: President Joe Biden on Wednesday announced new employer tax credits and other steps to encourage people reluctant to be inoculated to get the Covid-19 vaccine as his administration tries to overcome diminishing demand for the shots.

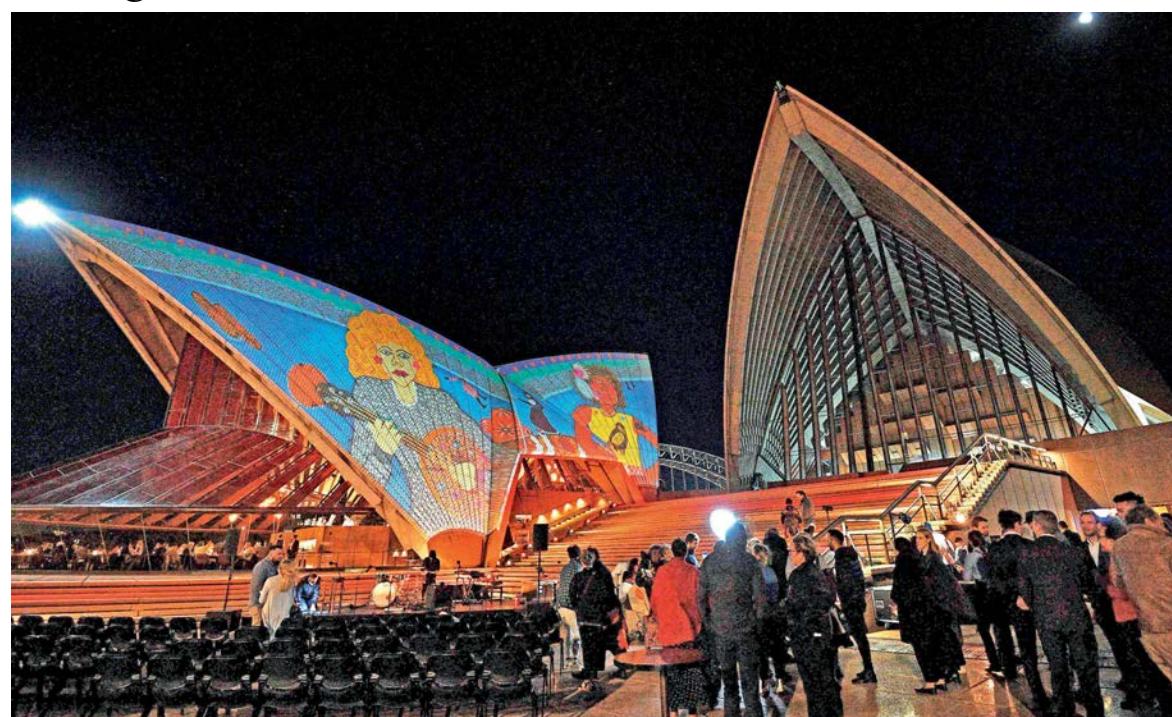
The moves came as Biden celebrated reaching his latest goal of administering 200 million coronavirus doses in his first 100 days in office.

With more than 50 per cent of adults at least partially vaccinated and roughly 28 million vaccine doses being delivered each week, demand has eclipsed supply as the constraining factor to vaccinations in much of the country. In a White House speech on Wednesday, Biden acknowledged entering a "new phase" in the federal vaccination effort that relies on increased outreach to Americans to get their shots, both to protect them and their communities.

"Vaccines can save your own life, but they can also save your grandmother's life, your co-worker's life, the grocery store clerk or the delivery person helping you and your neighbours get through the crisis," Biden said.

"That's why you should get vaccinated." Over the past week, the pace of inoculation in the US has slowed slightly. That is partly a reflection of disruptions from the "pause" in administration of the Johnson & Johnson shot for a safety review, but also of softening interest for vaccines in many places even as eligibility has been opened to all those older than 16. — AP

Aboriginal art



The Opera House sails are lit with art works by six female Aboriginal artists as part of Badu Gili: Wonder Women in Sydney on Thursday. — AFP

EXCHANGE SHUT **Several police vans were seen parked outside the Istanbul's Thodex office**

Turkish crypto founder flees with \$2 bn

Istanbul, April 22: Turkish prosecutors on Thursday launched an investigation after the Istanbul-based founder of a cryptocurrency exchange froze trading and fled the country with a reported \$2 billion in investors' assets.

The Thodex exchange suspended trading after posting a mysterious message on Wednesday saying it needed five days to deal with an unspecified outside investment.

Turkish security officials then released a photo of Thodex founder Faruk Fatih Ozer going through passport control at Istanbul airport on his way to an unspecified location.

Local media reports said Ozer — reported to be 27 or 28 years old — had flown either to Albania or Thailand.

Thodex went dark after running a promotional campaign that sold Dogecoin at one-fourth the price

at which they were trading on other exchanges. But the exchange locked in those investments and did not allow the coins to be either sold or converted into other cryptos.

"Why don't you allow my coins to be transferred?" Dogecoin investor Kaya Dinar asked Thodex in one typical tweet from a worried crypto trader.

Reports said the website had shut down while holding at least \$2 billion from 391,000 investors.

"There has been no

access to Thodex website for more than 24 hours. Hundreds of thousands of users cannot get access to wallets holding their crypto assets or cash money," investors' lawyer Oguz Evren Kilic said.

"We have started the legal procedures and lodged a complaint at the prosecutor's office," he said.

Turkey's private DHA news agency said prosecutors were investigating the businessman on charges

of "aggravated fraud and founding a criminal organisation".

Several police vans were seen parked outside the Thodex office on the Asian side of Istanbul on Thursday afternoon.

The Thodex website re-emerged after going dark on Wednesday to state that "we kindly inform you that the negative news on the internet does not reflect the truth".

— AFP



Faruk Fatih Ozer



Indonesian marine police take part in the search operation for an Indonesian Navy submarine that went missing during military exercises off the coast of Bali, at Celukan Bawang port in Buleleng province on Thursday. — AFP

Race to find Indonesia sub

Oil spill points to fuel tank damage, fears of deadly disaster

Bali, Indonesia, April 22: Indonesian warships led the hunt Thursday for a submarine that went missing with 53 crew aboard and only enough oxygen for a few days.

off holiday island Bali where it disappeared.

"The submarine's oxygen reserve capacity in a

blackout is 72 hours," Navy Chief of Staff Yudo Margono told reporters.

"There's time until Saturday around 3:00 am. Let's hope we can find them before then," However, defense analysts have warned that the vessel could have broken into pieces if it had sunk to depths believed to be as much as 700 metres (2,300 feet).

Australian Defence Minister Peter Dutton said initial reports raised the pro-

spect of "a terrible tragedy". The German-built submarine was scheduled to conduct live torpedo exercises when it asked for permission to dive. It lost contact shortly after.

Navy spokesman Julius Widjojono said Thursday that search teams were focused on an area around the oil slick, but that the exact location of the vessel had yet to be pinpointed.

Six warships and a helicopter have been sent to look for the sub, the navy said.

Other nations, including the United States, Aust-

ralia, France and Germany have offered help.

"It's very distressing for families and particularly for the Indonesian navy," Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne told broad-

caster ABC.

"We've indicated that we will help in any way we can."

Neighboring Singapore and Malaysia have already dispatched ships that are expected to arrive in the coming days, including the city-state's MV Swift Rescue — a submarine rescue vessel.

— AFP

RUSSIA DRILLS IN CRIMEA AMID UKRAINE STRAIN

Moscow, April 22: Russia's defence minister on Thursday ordered troops back to their permanent bases following massive drills in Crimea that involved dozens of navy ships, hundreds of warplanes and thousands of troops in a show of force amid tensions with Ukraine.

After watching the drills, Russian Defence Minister Shoigu declared the manoeuvres over and ordered the military to pull the troops taking part in manoeuvres in Crimea and western Russia back to their permanent bases. "I consider the goals of the snap check of readiness fulfilled," Shoigu said.

"China has committed to move from carbon peak to carbon neutrality in a much shorter time span than what might take many developed countries, and that requires extraordinary hard efforts from China," Xi said.

— AFP

US emission reduction goal doubled by Biden

Washington, April 22: President Joe Biden on Thursday doubled US ambitions on slashing greenhouse gas emissions, leading Japan and Canada at a summit in making new commitments that bring the world closer to limiting the worst climate change.

Putting the United States back at the forefront on climate, Biden told a virtual Earth Day summit that the world's largest economy will cut emissions blamed for climate change by 50 to 52 percent by 2030 compared with 2005 levels.

"The cost of inaction keeps mounting. The United States isn't waiting," Biden told a two-day summit of 40 leaders, includ-

ing the presidents of rivals China and Russia.

"We have to step up," Biden said. "We have to take action — all of us."

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, who discussed climate last week when he was Biden's first foreign guest, significantly raised the goals of the world's second largest developed economy to cutting emissions by 46 percent in 2030 compared with 2013.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, another early ally of Biden, boosted ambitions of his energy-exporting country to reductions of 40-45 percent below 2005 levels, compared with an earlier target of 30 percent.

German Chancellor

Angela Merkel said, "I'm delighted to see that the United States is back, is back to work together with us in climate politics, because there can be no doubt about the world needing your contribution if we really want to fulfil our ambitious goals."

President Xi Jinping reiterated his pledge that China — by far the world's largest emitter — would reach carbon neutral by 2060.

"China has committed to move from carbon peak to carbon neutrality in a much shorter time span than what might take many developed countries, and that requires extraordinary hard efforts from China," Xi said.

— AFP

Oz cancels two China BRI deals

Canberra, April 22: Australia has cancelled two Chinese "Belt and Road" infrastructure building initiative deals with a state government, provoking an angry response from Beijing. The bilateral deals with Victoria state were among four vetoed under new laws that give the federal government power to overrule international agreements by lower-level administrations that violate the national interest, Foreign Minister Marise Payne said late Wednesday.

The "Belt and Road" deals struck with Beijing in 2018 and 2019 triggered the legislative response. Victoria Education Department pacts signed with Syria in 1999 and Iran in 2004 were also canceled.

"I consider these four arrangements to be inconsis-

tent with Australia's foreign policy or adverse to our foreign relations," Payne said.

The Chinese Embassy in Australia said the decision "further shows that the Australian government has no sincerity in improving China-Australia relations." It is bound to bring further damage to bilateral relations, and will only end up hurting itself," it said on Thursday, referring to the Australian government.

Global Times, the Chinese Communist Party's English-language mouthpiece, said in a headline: "Australia faces serious consequences for unreasonable provocation against China." The move "marks a significant escalation on that could push icy bilateral relations into an abyss," it said.

— AFP

"The troops have shown their defence capability and I decided to complete the drills in the South and Western military districts." Shoigu said the troops should return to their bases by May 1, but he also ordered to keep the heavy weapons deployed to western Russia as part of the drills for another massive military exercise later this year.

DY KILLED MAN DURING SEARCH, SENT ON LEAVE

Elizabeth City, April 22: A North Carolina deputy shot and killed a PoC man while executing a search warrant, authorities said, spurring an outcry from a crowd of dozens that immediately gathered at the scene and demanded law enforcement accountability.

The Pasquotank County Sheriff's deputy was placed on leave pending a review by the State Bureau of Investigation. Sheriff Tommy Wooten II said at a news conference.

He said the deputy shot Andrew Brown Jr. at about 8:30 am on Wednesday while serving the warrant with the assistance of a nearby sheriff's office in Elizabeth City, a municipality of about 18,000 people 274 km northeast of Raleigh. Wooten said he didn't know Brown's age and he didn't release the deputy's name.

quick BITES

INDICATORS %

Sensex	48,080.67	0.79
Nifty 50	14,406.20	0.77
S&P 500*	4,173.95	0.01
Dollar (\$)	74.96	0.07
Pound Sterling (\$)	104.20	-0.90
Euro (\$)	90.24	0.40
Gold (10gm)* (\$)	47,450▼168	0.35
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	65.52	0.31
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.050	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.552	-0.012

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Rekha Menon appointed Nasscom chief

IT industry body Nasscom appointed Rekha M. Menon as its chairperson for 2021-22. She is the chairperson and senior managing director of Accenture in India. Menon takes on the position from her previous role as vice-chairperson, succeeding U.B. Pravin Rao, chief operating officer, Infosys, who served as Nasscom chairman for the year 2020-21. Menon is the first woman to take on the role of chairperson at Nasscom.

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■ Eyes 2-wheeler sales in 100 cities in a yr Ola plans largest charger network

MICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, APRIL 22

Ola Electric is betting big on the electric vehicle (EV) ecosystem.

After announcing the construction of the world's largest electric two-wheeler factory in Tamil Nadu with an investment of Rs 2,400 crore, the company on Thursday revealed plans to set up its 'hyper-charger network', which is billed to be the world's largest and densest EV charging network, in the country.

The network will cater to Ola's upcoming two-wheeler models, starting with its first product, Ola scooter, to be launched in the coming months.

The network will offer a comprehensive set of charging options to Ola's EV customers, including high-speed Ola hyper-chargers and home-chargers that will be offered as standard with Ola electric scooter purchase.

"Electric is the future of mobility and we are reimagining the entire user experience of owning an electric vehicle. By creating the world's largest and densest 2-wheeler charging network, we will dramatically accelerate the customer adoption of electric vehicles and rapidly move the industry to electric," Bhavish Aggarwal, chairman and group CEO at Ola, said.

Companies like Tesla and Ather Energy in India have been trying to implement a network to make charging their vehicles easier. Ola, however, wants to set up the network at a monumental scale with the long-term goal being over 1,00,000 charging points spread across 400 cities.

EV SALES DROP 20% IN FY21

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, APRIL 22

pared to 1,52,000 units sold in FY20 there was a decline of 6 per cent.

In the three-wheeler segment 88,378 units were sold against 1,40,633 units in FY20—a decline of 37 per cent. Three-wheelers not registered with the transport authority are not included in this. The four-wheeler segment saw a 52 per cent growth to 4,588 units compared to 3,000 units in FY20.

"A lot more needs to be done to achieve the target under the FAME II scheme," said Sohinder Gill, D-G, SMEV.

CHIP WOES: JLR TO SUSPEND PRODUCTION

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, APRIL 22

Tata Motors owned Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) on Thursday announced plans to suspend production at two of its plants in the UK due to supply chain disruptions.

"Like other automotive manufacturers, we are currently experiencing some Covid-19 supply chain disruption, including the global availability of semiconductors," JLR said.

The company plans to set up over 5,000 charging points across 100 cities in the first year of operations, which is more than double the existing charging infrastructure in the country.

LIC clocks record new premium last fiscal

FC BANKING BUREAU
MUMBAI, APRIL 22

Despite being a challenging year due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, strong traction in traditional insurance business and revival in unit-linked insurance plans (Ulips) helped public sector behemoth Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) collect its highest ever 'new business premium' of Rs 1.84 lakh crore. Both individual and group business showed high growth.

The individual assurance business grew 10.11 per cent during 2020-21, recording the highest ever premium of Rs 56,406 crore. LIC's pension and group schemes vertical also created a new record by clocking its highest ever new business premium income of Rs 1.27,768 crore over a huge base of Rs 1.26,749 crore in the previous year. The number of new schemes is also a new record of 31,795, a company release said.

The state-owned insurer procured an impressive 21.0 crore policies, out of which 46,72 lakh were procured in the month of March alone, with a growth of 298.82 per cent over last year for the corresponding month. The market share garnered by LIC comes to 81.04 per cent in number of policies for the month of March 2021 and 74.58 per cent for the year. For first year premium, the market share is 64.74 per cent for March and 66.18 per cent for the whole year.

Vedanta offers to make oxygen at copper unit; SC to hear plea



New Delhi, April 22: The Supreme Court on Thursday termed the Covid-19 situation as almost a "national emergency" while agreeing to hear Vedanta's plea for opening its Sterlite copper unit at Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu on the ground that it would produce a thousand tonne of oxygen and give it free of cost to treat patients.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S. A. Bobde was unimpressed with the objection of Tamil Nadu government which initially sought hearing of Vedanta's plea on Monday and opposed its opening on various grounds, including that it has been

rejected by the apex court earlier.

"We understand all this. We will ensure compliance of all environmental norms by the plant and its oxygen producing facility would be allowed to operate. We are on the oxygen plant," the bench, also comprising Justices L. Nageswara Rao and S. Ravindra Bhat, said when senior advocate C. S.

Vaidyanathan, appearing for Tamil Nadu, objected to the company's plea.

"There is almost a national emergency and you (Tamil Nadu) don't put spokes in the solution. We will hear it (plea of Vedanta) tomorrow," the bench said in the hearing conducted through video conferencing.

The apex court on December 2 last year had rejected the interim plea of Vedanta Ltd that it be permitted to inspect its Sterlite copper plant and to operate it for a month to assess the pollution level.

Vedanta had sought handing over of the plant for three months.

— PTI

ESG FUNDS SEE RECORD INFLOW

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, APRIL 22

Worldwide investment in ESG (environmental, social and governance) funds saw a record \$152.3 billion inflow in the fourth quarter of 2020, according to a note by Morningstar, released to coincide with Earth Day on Thursday.

The Covid-led crisis has only accelerated the demand for sustainable investing.

The Indian mutual fund industry also witnessed increased interest in ESG funds, with the launch of several new ESG funds in the second half of 2020. India had the largest quarter-on-quarter asset growth as new launches resulted in the doubling of ESG fund assets to \$1.3 billion, Morningstar said.

said.

Since India's first ESG fund launch in 2018, inflows in these funds are picking up pace (from Rs 16.01 crore in January 2019 to Rs 103.78 crore in March 2021), though it's still early days.

Globally assets in sustainable funds hit a record \$1,652 billion as of the end of December, up 29 per cent from the previous quarter.

"Europe accounted for almost 80 per cent of these inflows. The United States took in 13.4 per cent, up slightly from 12 per cent in the previous quarter, while flows in the rest of the world also grew, clocking in at \$11.1 billion for Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Japan, and Asia combined," the Morningstar note said.

BHAGYODAYA FRIENDS CO-OP'S LICENCE CANCELLED

Mumbai, April 22: The RBI on Thursday said it has cancelled the licence of Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank Limited (Amravati), as the lender does not have adequate capital and will be unable to pay its present depositors in full.

However, as per the data submitted by the bank, more than 98 per cent of the depositors will receive the full amounts of their deposits from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation, the RBI said.

On liquidation, every depositor would be entitled to receive a deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to Rs 5 lakh from DICGC.

— PTI

GAMES

SHORT TAKES

Nadal struggles to win in Barcelona

Barcelona: Rafael Nadal needed three sets to beat his 11th-ranked opponent in his first match at the Barcelona Open, while Fabio Fognini was disqualified for alleged verbal abuse.

Fognini was defaulted while trailing 0-6, 4-4 against qualifier Bernabe Zapata Miralles of Spain, after a line judge told the chair umpire that the ninth-seeded Italian had used foul language.

Fognini denied wrongdoing and was upset as he left the court, breaking his racket after hitting it at the net post on his way out.

Nadal had to overcome a slow start to defeat Ilya Ivashka of Belarus 3-6, 6-2, 6-4. — AP

Aditi placed tied 43rd in LA Open

Los Angeles: India's Aditi Ashok got off to a modest start at the HUGEL-Air Premia LA Open here with a one-under 70 and was placed tied 43rd. She looked set for a much better start but two late bogeys spoilt a card that was 3-under through 14 holes.

Aditi was once again accurate off the tee finding 12 of the 14 fairways but reached only 10 greens in 18.

However, some good work on the greens with just 25 putts for the round gave her a decent score of 70 at Wilshire Country Club. She was six shots behind co-leaders, Jessica Korda and Tiffany Chan, who carded 64 each. — PTI

FC Goa to face Persepolis again

Margao: Debutants FC Goa will have another chance to make an impression against fancied Persepolis FC when they face the Iranian side in the second leg Group E league match of the AFC Champions League here on Friday.

After playing out 0-0 draws against Al Rayyan of Qatar and Al Wahda of the UAE, FC Goa lost to Persepolis 1-2 on Tuesday, and the two sides are facing each other once again in three days time.

Captain Edu Bedia gave FC Goa a surprise lead in the 14th minute before Persepolis replied with two goals (18th and 24th) soon in the match. — PTI

City fight back to conquer Villa After Super League climbdown, Guardiola's men score vital win in EPL



Manchester City's Phil Foden (second from left) scores against Aston Villa in an English Premier League match at Villa Park Stadium in Birmingham on Wednesday. — AP

points of fourth-place Chelsea in the race for Champions League qualification. It was a great way for Ryan Mason to start his interim tenure as manager, as the replacement for the fired Jose Mourinho.

The coach, who is above 50 years of age and is an athletics coach, is currently lodged in Tihar Jail under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The SAI said it has learnt that a coach under its payrolls has been arrested after an alleged incident of molesting a 13-year-old girl, reportedly at

At 29 years, 312 days, Mason became the youngest person to manage a team in a Premier League game, a proud moment for the former Tottenham midfielder who was forced to retire in 2018

after failing to fully recover from a fractured skull sustained during an FA Cup match.

They were the first games for City and Tottenham since they were pressured into withdraw-

ing from a breakaway Super League which they had formed with 10 of Europe's other elite clubs.

A small band of supporters protested outside Tottenham's stadium ahead of match against Southampton, calling for the removal of chairman Daniel Levy and the club's owners, the ENIC Group.

Organisers say the 30-

year-old policeman was assigned to control traffic on the April 17 leg in Kagawa prefecture.

They said the officer developed symptoms and tested positive the next day. Local health authorities are investigating.

Officials say the police-

man was also coming off a loss to Chelsea in the FA Cup semifinals, ruining their bid for an unprecedented quadruple, so Guardiola knew the importance of the Villa match and fielded his strongest available team.

Phil Foden stood out, the

20-year-old England forward canceling out John McGinn's very early opener for Villa by scoring the equalizer with a volley at the end of a flowing team move involving Riyad Mahrez and Bernardo Silva.

— AP

SAI coach arrested for molesting minor girl

● Sports Authority of India said it has learnt that a coach under its payroll has been arrested after an alleged incident of molesting a 13-year-old girl.

the Siri Fort Sports Complex where he was giving her private training.

"The alleged incident happened in a non-SAI premises, where the coach was imparting training without taking due approval and second under the POCSO Act,

which calls for immediate suspension of a government servant.

— PTI

Authority," the SAI said in a statement.

"The coach has been suspended and an enquiry has been ordered with respect to breach of conduct rules by the said coach. The alleged incident is being investigated separately by the police under relevant provision of law."

According to a SAI source, the coach breached his service agreement on two counts — first imparting private training without taking due approval and second under the POCSO Act,

which calls for immediate suspension of a government servant.

— PTI

Gitika, Babyrojisana clinch gold medals

New Delhi, April 22: Indian boxers Gitika (48kg) and Babyrojisana Chanu (51kg) clinched gold medals in the youth world championships in Kielce, Poland, notching up dominating victories in the finals on Thursday.

While Gitika prevailed 5-0 over Poland's Natalia Kuczewska, Babyrojisana defeated Valeria Linkova of Russia by a similar margin.

Gitika opened the proceedings for India and she grunted her way to domination, outpunching her hapless opponent.

Kuczewska, on the other hand, looked clueless for most part, rarely managing to connect and unable to cope with the sheer

pace and aggression of her rival.

Gitika gave Kuczewska a bloodied nose in the third round, refusing to take her foot off the pedal even for a second.

Babyrojisana, on the other hand, fought out a more intense battle. Both the boxers spent the opening round taking a measure of each other but the Indian landed enough straight to get a 3-2 verdict in her favour in the first



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DECCAN CHRONICLE, HYDERABAD, FRIDAY, 23 APRIL 2021

pg 10

ORANGE	
Shikhar Dhawan, DC	231
Glenn Maxwell, RCB	176
Jonny Bairstow, SRH	173

PURPLE	
Harshal Patel, RCB	12
Deepak Chahar, CSK	8
Avesh Khan, DC	8

Off the field



MI's Dhawal Kulkarni is all smiles with his little daughter Nitara and wife Sharaddha Kharpude.

Covid situation in MS family in control

Chennai Super Kings coach Stephen Fleming said the franchise will "monitor" the condition of skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni's parents, who are being treated at a private hospital in Ranchi after testing positive for Covid-19.

At the post-match press conference after CSK's win over KKR on Wednesday night, Fleming said the situation is "under control".

"From the management point of view, we're well aware of his family situation and the support has been set up for MS and his family. The situation is under control for now but we will monitor that over the next few days," Fleming said.

Dhoni's parents, mother Devika Devi and father Pan Singh, were admitted to the hospital after testing positive for Covid-19 on Wednesday.

ROYAL RAP!

Kohli, Padikkal punch big as Bangalore bash up Rajasthan

Mumbai, April 22: Devdutt Padikkal managed to overshadow none other than the great Virat Kohli with an elegant hundred in Royal Challengers Bangalore's successful 178-run chase against Rajasthan Royals, in a virtual cakewalk of an IPL contest here on Thursday.

It hardly happens that someone as brilliant as Kohli, plays second fiddle, allowing the talented left-hander use his sinewy wrists to caress the balls to all parts of the ground during a mind-blowing maiden IPL century — an unbeaten 101 off 52 balls.

RCB never looked in any tearing hurry and yet the target was achieved in only 16.3 overs with all 10 wickets intact.

Kohli went on the offensive once Padikkal had ensured victory as his contribution was 72 not out off 47 balls in their unbroken opening stand of 181.

The RCB juggernaut continues to roll with their fourth victory on the trot and a strong foundation in the points table going into the third week of the tournament. Royals, with a team that hardly inspires confidence, are again looking good for bringing up the rear.

The sixes that came off Padikkal's blade was more about timing than power as he hit 11 fours and six sixes during his knock.

Picking the length of Mustafizur Rahaman's short ball and getting into the shape to execute a perfect pull-shot for a six showed why experts feel that it's only a matter of time before he dons national colours.

The inside out chip off Riyam Parag over extra cover to complete his half-century off 27 balls, the sweep shots, the slash



Devdutt Padikkal (right) of Royal Challengers Bangalore acknowledges cheers after scoring a fifty against Rajasthan Royals in Mumbai on Thursday. — IPL

over backward point and the straight sixes with economy of footwork, were all testimony to his solid technical foundation.

Once Padikkal was in his mid 80's, the RCB skipper chanced his arms including a six over extra cover off Royals' costliest bowler Chris Morris.

Kohli's 50 came off 34 balls and was followed by a personal milestone of

6000 runs in IPL as Royals surrendered way before the match officially ended.

Earlier, Rahul Tewatia's impressive death overs hitting ensured a fighting 177 for 9 for Rajasthan Royals after yet another familiar top order no-show.

On a good batting surface, Royals managed a total which may be 25 runs short but credit for

the decent score goes to a counter-attacking effort from all-rounder Shivam Dube (46 off 32 balls) which stemmed the rot and big-hits from Tewatia (40 off 23 balls) that helped them get past 175-run mark.

Dube smashed two sixes and five fours and with Riyam Parag (25 off 15 balls) giving him good support, added 66 runs for the fifth wicket off only 6.2 overs to give his team's total some semblance of respectability.

For Royal Challengers Bangalore, Mohammed Siraj's (3/27 in 4 overs) off-cutter first-up cleaned Jos Buttler (8) and Manan Vohra (7), with another atrocious shot selection off Kyle Jamieson (1/28 in 4 overs), might have ensured a lengthy spell for himself in the dug-out.

— PTI

POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Points	Net RR
RCB	4	4	0	0	8	+1.009
CSK	4	3	1	0	6	+1.142
DC	4	3	1	0	6	+0.426
MI	4	2	2	0	4	+0.187
SRH	4	1	3	0	2	-0.228
KKR	4	1	3	0	2	-0.700
PBKS	4	1	3	0	2	-0.824
RR	4	1	3	0	2	-1.011

Mighty Mumbai seek consistency

Chennai, April 22:

Mumbai Indians would be aiming to address their batting woes to achieve consistency while Punjab Kings would be desperate to arrest their overall slide when the two sides clash in an IPL match here on Friday.

The Rohit Sharma-led Mumbai crashed to defeat against Delhi Capitals following an inept batting performance and will look for redemption. The skipper shone with the bat, but others could not get going and the misfiring middle-order would be a major concern for the side.

The MI bowlers have more often than not risen to the occasion and won matches for the team.

However, they couldn't do so against Delhi and would like the batters to put up bigger scores for them to do the job.

Rohit looked in good touch against Delhi. However, Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan, stars of the team's victorious 2020 campaign, have not been able to make match-winning contributions and that has hurt MI along with middling performances from Kieron Pollard and the Pandya brothers — Hardik and Krunal.

It is still early days in this year's IPL but Mumbai Indians would like its players to find form and consistency and a match against an under-performing Punjab could well be the beginning.

Punjab have flattered to deceive after a winning start. Being shot out for 120 by Sunrisers Hyderabad on Wednesday hinted at bigger problems for the KL Rahul-led team, which has more than one issue to resolve, especially its composition. The formidable

Live on TV

Mumbai Indians vs Punjab Kings
from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

HEAD to HEAD

Matches 26

MI 14 PK 11

TIE 1

• Punjab Kings defeated Mumbai Indians in Super over after match ended in a tie in 2020.

FOR THE RECORD

• Kieron Pollard with 199 fours in 151 innings of 168 matches needs one more four to become the fourth Mumbai Indians batsman to complete a double century of fours in IPL.

• Mayank Agarwal who scored 981 runs at an average of 25.81 in 39 innings of as many matches, needs 19 runs to become ninth Punjab Kings batsman to complete 1000 runs in IPL.

LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

• Mumbai Indians defeated Punjab Kings by 4 runs at Abu Dhabi.

• Punjab Kings beat Mumbai Indians in Super over after match ended in a tie at Dubai.

STATS: S. PERVEZ QAISER

batting unit hasn't hit the straps, save for Rahul and Mayank Agarwal and the bowling has been pedestrian.

'Universe Boss' Chris Gayle has not been able to boss over proceedings while his fellow West Indian Nicholas Pooran, expected to provide the big shots in the middle, has come a cropper so far.

Three straight losses would have definitely dent ed Punjab Kings' morale and the team needs to recover quickly or else its play-off hopes would slip fast.

— PTI

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