

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | 5 MAY 2021

## WEATHER

Max: 35°C  
Min: 23.6°C  
RH: 44%  
Rain: 4 mm

**Forecast:** Partly cloudy.  
Rain likely in evening.  
Max/Min temp. 37/24°C

## ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarakaya  
Tithi: Chaitra Bahula Navami till 1.25 pm  
Star: Dhanishta till 9.12 am  
Varjyan: 4.48 pm to 6.30 pm  
Durmuhurtam: 11.47 am to 12.37 pm

Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

## HIJRI CALENDAR

Ramzan 22,1442 AH

## PRAYERS

Fajar: 4.44 am  
Zohar: 12.23 pm  
Asar: 4.40 pm  
Magrib: 6.43 pm  
Isha: 7.55 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.37 PM  
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.49 AM  
MOONRISE TOMORROW 0.06 AM  
MOONSET TODAY 12.35 PM

## RAMZAN TIMINGS

IFTAR: 6.43 PM (TODAY)  
SEHRI: 4.21 AM (TOMORROW)



## COUNTER POINT



Double trouble, sir... Party performed negative and cadre tested positive!

## SHORT TAKES

**KCR RECOVERS FROM COVID, 2 TESTS NEGATIVE**

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, MAY 4

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao has completely recovered from Covid-19 according to a release issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) late on Tuesday.

Rapid antigen tests and RT-PCR tests were conducted on the Chief Minister and both the results came negative, it said. The tests were conducted under the supervision of CM's personal physician Dr M.V. Rao. The CM was tested positive for Covid-19 on April 19 with mild symptoms. Doctors advised him home isolation following which he isolated himself at his farmhouse.

Last week, the tests conducted on CM gave mixed results. While rapid test came negative, RT PCR test did not give definite result, the CMO said.

**Ex-J&K governor Jagmohan dies**

New Delhi: Former Jammu and Kashmir governor Jagmohan passed away after a brief spell of illness. He was 93. Jagmohan, who died on Monday, had started his career as a bureaucrat and was seen by many as a tough and efficient administrator. He had also served as the lieutenant governor of Delhi and Union minister in the Vajpayee-led government.

**Twitter suspends Kangana's a/c**

Mumbai: Twitter has permanently suspended actor Kangana Ranaut's account for repeated violations of rules, specifically its "Hateful Conduct and Abusive Behaviour policy, the microblogging site said in a statement on Tuesday. The 34-year-old Bollywood actor's handle @KanganaTeam now displays the message: account suspended.



## WORLD | 9

**Fauci tells India to get Army to fight Covid**



## BUSINESS | 11

**Bill Gates to divorce Melinda**



## SPORTS | 12

**Irregularities found in Maradona's death**

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## World rushes oxygen



The second shipment of the EU, from Ireland, carrying two oxygen generators, 548 oxygen concentrators, 365 ventilators and other medical equipment, arrives in Delhi on Tuesday.

— PTI

## Delhi HC puts Centre on notice

**Threatens contempt proceedings if Delhi doesn't get oxygen**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs  
NEW DELHI, MAY 4

you living in ivory towers," the bench said.

A bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli also rejected the Centre's submission that Delhi was not entitled to 700 metric tonnes of medical oxygen in light of existing medical infrastructure.

"You can put your head in sand like an ostrich, we will not," the High Court told the central government.

It added that the Supreme Court has already directed, and now the High Court is also saying that the Centre will have to supply 700 MT oxygen to Delhi right away by whatever means. "You are part of the city and seeing the situation yourself. No, you don't know. Are

■ More reports on Page 8

## 59 deaths in just one day shock TS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

As many as 59 people died of Covid-19 in one day in Telangana making May 3, the deadliest day. On the same day, the health department reported 6,876 new cases of Covid-19. So far, the state has recorded 2,476 deaths due to Covid-19, while total cases stood at 4,63,361 as on Monday.

The health department said 70,961 tests were conducted in the state on Monday, of which results for 3,864 tests were awaited. Though the daily case totals appear to have sta-

bilised around the 7,000 mark, the number of people testing positive has remained same even on Monday, as had been the case with the past few days with one out of every nine people tested turning up positive for the disease indicating that there is no slowdown in the rate at which the disease is spreading among the population in the state.

The GHMC area reported 1,029 cases, followed by 502 in Medchal-Malkajgiri, 387 in Ranga Reddy.

■ Page 2: Nalgonda turns new hotspot for Covid

## KCR plans to overhaul state machinery soon

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

A major overhaul of the administrative machinery at all levels in Telangana is likely to take place this time soon. Official sources said Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao would make a major reshuffle of IAS officers soon.

As all elections from village-level to national-level had been concluded and no major elections are scheduled in state until 2023 December Assembly polls, the Chief Minister is said to be keen to put more focus on administration for the remaining half of the tenure of the TRS go-

vernment by bringing more reforms in various departments for effective delivery of services on the lines of Dharmanagar, Municipal and Panchayat Raj Acts.

However, there is no talk about the Chief Minister going for Cabinet reshuffle in TRS circles but hint at the possibility of inducting a minister from

■ Page 3: Cabinet post for Dasyam or Peddireddy

Warangal district in place of Etala Rajendar, who was recently sacked from the Cabinet.

Though Rajendar represents undivided Karimnagar district, the Chief Minister wants to induce a minister from Warangal district as Karimnagar district is already represented by three ministers, K.T. Rama Rao, Koppula Eshwar and Gangula Kamalakar while two ministers (Errabelli Dayakar Rao and Sathyavathi Rathod) represent Warangal district.

The announcement came after Sunrisers Hyderabad's wicketkeeper-batsman Wriddhiman Saha tested positive for Covid-19 along with Delhi Capitals' veteran spinner Amit Mishra.

■ Full report on HC

Indian Premier League was on Tuesday suspended indefinitely after multiple Covid-19 cases were reported in its bio-bubble.

"The tournament has been suspended indefinitely. We will try to conduct the event in the next available window but this month is unlikely," IPL chairman Brijesh Patel said.

The announcement came after Sunrisers Hyderabad's wicketkeeper-batsman Wriddhiman Saha tested positive for Covid-19 along with Delhi Capitals' veteran spinner Amit Mishra.

■ Full report on HC

## RELIGIOUS EDICT

**God will hold individuals accountable for spreading the disease to others.**  
— Venugopala Diskshitulu,  
Chief priest, Sri Venkateshwara temple, Tirumala

If people go around spreading the disease, they should know they are committing a sin.  
— Acharya Vimalsagarji Marasab,  
Jain Monk

rules, will be answerable to God, they said.

While individual responsibility lies with everyone, acting in a manner that puts others at risk, especially by those who know they are Covid-19 positive but do not care about others around them, is doing a greater sin, they opined.

Venugopala Deekshith-

ulu, the chief priest at Lord Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala, said, "Considering the gravity of the situation, where many lives are affected, and with chaos all

over, people should take it seriously and must follow precautions."

He said to serve people was to serve God. "Everyone can do this by staying at home and following Covid-19 protocols and thereby do a great service to fellow humans," he said.

For those who have tossed the rules aside and are roaming about despite being Covid positive, he said such people should know that they will be held accountable for spreading the disease to others.

■ Page 3: Wahe Guru will not spare violators: Preacher

It is written in the Book of Isaiah, when a pandemic is around, you hide in the chambers, till it passes away.  
— Sis Joy Cherian,  
Founder of United Peoples Fellowship

According to the Prophet, when someone is ill, he should isolate himself, to stop spreading the disease.  
— Mohammed Husamuddin Sami Jaffar, Muslim preacher

## HC slams 'unusual haste' in Etala probe

Asks which law allowed entry into private land

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC HYDERABAD, MAY 4

The Telangana High Court on Tuesday found fault for the Medak district collector and other officials for conducting a survey and inspection in the lands of Jamuna Hatcheries, which belongs to the family members of former minister Etala Rajendar, without issuing notices or intimation to them. The court said that the action was a clear violation of Articles 14, 19, 21 and 300-A of the Constitution, and Section 153 of the TS Land Revenue Act.

"There is no provision of law which is shown to the court under which the district collector has conducted a detailed survey and filed a report. The only reason shown is that a complaint was received against the petitioners stating that assigned lands have been encroached by the petitioners," the court said.

These observations were made by Justice Tadakamalla Vinod Kumar on Tuesday while hearing a house motion petition filed by Jamuna Hatcheries Private Limited, repre-

sented by its director Etala Nithin and his mother E. Jamuna. The petition was against trespassing by the Medak district collector and other revenue officials into their lands in Hakimpet and Achampet villages of Medak district and conducting the survey without issuing notices to them.

The petitioners urged the court to direct the authorities to not take any coercive steps against them based on a report prepared by the officials, which stated that the petitioners had encroached on 66 acres of assigned land.

■ Page 5: HC asks if collector surveyed land sitting in car

Responding to the officials' hotfoot in preparing a report within 24 hours by conducting a survey and enquiry on allegations, Justice Tadakamalla Vinod Kumar wondered if the Chief Secretary, collectors and other officials showed similar quick response to all complaints which came to their notice.

● The judge said prima facie there has been a serious violation of the principles of natural justice and also non-adherence of the provisions of the TS Land Revenue Act.

"If so, what the authorities have acted on the complaints about violations of GO11. Have the authorities never received complaints, which are grievous to it?" Justice Vinod Kumar asked.

Stating that prima facie there has been a serious violation of the principles of natural justice and also non-adherence of the provisions of the Telangana State Land Revenue Act, Justice Vinod Kumar suggested, "If the government finds any violations and illegalities of encroachment of assigned lands by Jamuna Hatcheries, then go ahead at the front gate, not go by the back gate by violating the rule of law and using the force," the judge observed.

## Modi speaks to WB Gov. on post-election violence

Death toll in violence crosses 14 in Bengal

RAJIB CHOWDHURI and YOJNA GUSAI | DC KOLKATA/NEW DELHI, MAY 4

As the death toll in post-poll violence in West Bengal rose to 14 on Tuesday from six a day before, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dialled state governor Jagdeep Dhankher and expressed "serious anguish and concern" over the "worrysome" law and order situation in the state. The 14 killed include nine BJP cadres and four from Trinamul Congress (TMC).

Mamata Banerjee-led TMC, which retained power in the state for the third time, has come under severe criticism from the BJP, with Left and the Congress leaders also condemning the post-poll violence against their cadre.

Hours after the PM's conversation came after Sunrisers Hyderabad's wicketkeeper-batsman Wriddhiman Saha tested positive for Covid-19 along with Delhi Capitals' veteran spinner Amit Mishra.

Taking suo motu cognizance of media reports on alleged post-poll violence, the National Human Rig-

the IPC, he said. 'Amma' is a popular moniker of late CM J. Jayalalithaa and low cost 'Amma Canteens' are run by civic bodies in Tamil Nadu and here by the Chennai Corporation.

The flex type boards had Tamil words announcing 'Amma Canteen,' in addition to information on food that was being served in the eatery.

Subramanian said party chief M K Stalin ordered expulsion of the two men from the party, filing a police complaint against them and putting the boards back in the same place.

The AIADMK and the PMK condemned violence and political incivility of the attackers. — PTI

hts Commission (NHRC) has sent a fact-finding team while noting that it considers the incidents as a fit case of alleged violation of Right to Life of innocent citizens."

The National Commis-

sion for Women too constituted a fact-finding team to investigate alleged violence against women in various parts of the state.

■ Page 8: BJP compares TMC with Nazis

## JEE-Mains May edition postponed

New Delhi, May 4: Engineering entrance exam JEE-Mains scheduled from May 24 to 28 has been postponed in view of the Covid-19 situation, according to the ministry of education's National Testing Agency (NTA).

Earlier, the April edition of the exam was postponed following an exponential rise in coronavirus cases. "The JEE-Mains scheduled from May 24 to 28 is being postponed in view of the current pandemic situation," the NTA said.

The rescheduling of the April and May sessions will be done subsequently

and "the registration for the May session will also be announced at a later stage," it said.

From this year, the exam is being conducted four times a year to offer flexibility to students and a chance to improve their scores. While the first phase was conducted in February followed by the second phase in March. The next phases were scheduled to be held in April and May. Over 6.2 lakh candidates appeared in the first session while 5.5 lakh candidates appeared in the second session of the exam. — PTI



## SHORT TAKES

LAFARGEHOLCIM  
CENTRE, IIT-H  
COLLABORATEWOMAN DRINKS  
SANITISER, DIES  
IN HOSPITALDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

The LafargeHolcim Innovation Centre and the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H) announced an academic collaboration on Tuesday for development of innovative and smart building solutions. The study will explore smart sensing technology for continuous on-site strength evaluation of a concrete structure. The focus of the study will be to eventually reduce the time cycle for construction of buildings and infrastructure and also ensure highly accurate real-time strength development.

The growing population and increase in urbanisation need building infrastructure and housing to be ramped up at an unprecedented pace. Smart Building Solutions can play a vital role in building fast and qualitatively, the team at LafargeHolcim India said.

10-MEMBER GANG  
ARRESTED FOR  
COCKFIGHT BETSDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

A 10-member gang organising bets on cock-fighting at a farm in Rampally village has been busted by the Keesara police in Rachakonda.

Cops seized four roosters, 10 bikes and 10 mobile phones, as also tying threads, ₹24,510 in cash and six knives from their possession.

The police said it received a tip off that one Penumarchi Buchiraju, 51, a farmer by profession, has been frequently organising bettings on cock fights by calling and gathering fellow punters at his farm land.

"Police teams kept surveillance on it. On Tuesday afternoon, when around 10-15 members gathered and started betting, a raid was conducted and the gang was taken into custody. A case has been registered under Telangana Gaming Act."

CABINET POST  
FOR DASYAM  
OR PEDDIREDDY

From Page 1

Speculations are rife in TRS circles that the Chief Minister may induct Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar or Peddireddy Sudarshan Reddy from Warangal into his Cabinet. The last major reshuffle of IAS officers was done in February 2020 when 50 IAS officers at all levels were transferred.

Outbreak of corona in March 2020 and subsequent lockdown, besides Dubbaka Assembly bypoll, GHMC polls in December 2020 and Graduate MLC polls, Nagarjunasagar Assembly bypoll and municipal polls till April 30 in 2021, halted the reshuffle process as the Chief Minister was more focussed on elections and politics.

After the TRS came to power for second term in December 2018, it is facing a series of elections and model code of conduct since then starting from panchayat polls in January 2019, Lok Sabha polls in April 2019 and ZPTC/MPTC polls in May 2019 and municipal polls in January 2020.

LAST MAJOR reshuffle of IAS officers was done in February 2020 when 50 IAS officers at all levels were transferred.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

A twenty-year-old woman, who allegedly drank half a litre of hand sanitiser after an argument with her boyfriend on Sunday, died while undergoing treatment on Monday night.

According to the ACP of Petbasheerababu VVS Ramalinga Raju, deceased K Pratyusha was a resident of Dattatreyanagar and worked at a private company. "She was in love with an acquaintance, Jagadeesh, for the last couple of years. The two had a fight after he rejected her proposal for marriage. A depressed Pratyusha then consumed hand-sanitiser at her residence and was rushed to a hospital by her family members on Sunday.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

The office of the U.S. Consulate General in Hyderabad on Tuesday announced that anyone with a student visa would be able to enter the United States if their classes started on or after August. However, for those students whose programmes start before the said date, the embassy will not be able to approve exceptions for F Visa holders.

The U.S. Consulate General urged students with a start date before August 1 to contact their respective educational institutions and universities to discuss options in the case.

● **ON APRIL 30,** U.S President Joe Biden signed a Proclamation suspending the entry of non-immigrant travellers who have been physically present in India

due to the surge in Covid-19 cases across the country. The suspension came into effect on Tuesday.

However, students and certain academics covered by exchange visitor programmes were exempted from the order. The U.S. government said that students subjected to these geographic Covid proclamations due to their presence in India, China, Iran, Brazil, or South Africa, may qualify for a National Interest Exception only if their academic programme begins on August 1 or later.

Students with valid F-1 and M-1 visas intending to begin or continue an

academic programme commencing August 1 or later do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual National Interest Exception to travel. They may enter the United States no earlier than 30 days before the start of their academic studies. Students seeking to apply for new F-1 or M-1 visas should check the status of visa services at the nearest embassy or consulate; those applicants who are found to be otherwise qualified for an F-1 or M-1 visa will automatically be considered for a national interest exception to travel, they said.



## Double mutant fast replacing older variant in TS

New Delhi, May 4: The B.1.617 variant of the coronavirus, also known as the double mutant, is fast replacing the N440K variant in south India, scientists at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) said on Tuesday.

Former CCMB director Rakesh Mishra said the double mutant is now a dominant variant in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and now Telangana. After an exhaustive analysis of 5,000 variants earlier this year, the CCMB had found that N440K is spreading a lot more in the southern states compared to the other variants. But B.1.617 is fast replacing N440K, including in Kerala, Divya Tej Sowpati, a scientist with the CCMB, said.

"Lineages with #N440K are NOT the dominant ones in the second wave of #Covid19India. While N440K was indeed a mutation of concern in South India during and after the first wave, current data shows that it is essentially replaced by new VoCs such as #B1617 and #B117."

"In KL, though not much data is available on GISAID, we can see from https://genescov2.genomes.in that B.1.1.7 is increasing at present, whereas N440K is present in <20% of the genomes. Also, it is important to remember that just because a variant behaves a

— PTI

## VIT announces scholarships

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

Vellore Institute of Technology — Andhra Pradesh has announced scholarships for students enrolling into its under and post-graduate courses in non-engineering streams during 2021–22 academic year.

The awards were announced by VIT founder and chancellor Dr. G. Viswanathan. Providing details, VIT-AP vice-chancellor Dr. S. V. Kota Reddy said scholarships will be open for programmes, such as BBA, B.Com, Law, B.Sc. and B.A. as well as post-graduation in these subjects.

Students may apply for G. V. Merit Scholarship, Rajeswari Ammal Merit Scholarship and P. G. Merit Scholarship.

This offers 50 percent scholarship on tuition fee through all years of the programme.

VIT-AP vice-president Dr. Sekar Viswanathan said P. G. Merit Scholarship will extend 100 percent scholarship to all students admitted, who have secured CGPA of 9.0 / 90 percent or above in the qualifying UG examination and scholarship of 50 percent to the admitted candidates securing CGPA of 8.0 / 80 percent or more. Girl students will receive an additional 25 percent of scholarship amount.

Last date to apply for scholarships is May 31. More details can be sought by sending an e-mail to admission@vitap.ac.in or by calling 7901091283.

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## Pandemic woes



Enrolled members wait for their turn at a Covid-19 vaccination centre in Secunderabad on Tuesday. Officials provided only 100 doses to the centre.



Above: People wait for a word on vaccine at King Koti Hospital on Tuesday.  
Left: A woman from Dabeerpura entering with an oxygen cylinder to admit in King Koti hospital in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

## 'Wahe Guru will not spare violators'

From Page 1

"Sri Venkateswara Swami will soon bring a solution for this pandemic, he will keep all the families in his care," the Tirumala chief priest said.

Acharya Vimalasagarji Marasab, a Jain monk said, "Covid-19 has become a pandemic, and with no medicines to prevent it, people should act responsibly. Those who are positive have to be in quarantine. If such

people go around spreading the disease, they should know they are committing a sin. They should also know that they have failed in their duty towards society and the nation."

According to Sis Joy Cherian, founder of United Peoples Fellowship, "It is written in the Book of Isaiah, when a pandemic is around, you hide in the chambers, till it passes away."

She said, "When people know they are positive or symptomatic

and still roam around in public places and in gathering, it will be a sin in God's sight. If anyone who catches it from you and loses his or her life as a consequence, you will carry the burden of murder," she said.

"I have made what the Prophet said about such conditions as part of my sermons now," said Mohammed Husamuddin Sami Jaffar, a Muslim preacher. "According to the Prophet, when

someone is ill, he should isolate himself, to stop spreading the disease."

Gulbahar Singh, the Granthi, (chief priest) at Gurdwara Sahib, Ameerpet, said, "Anyone who spreads the disease, particularly after knowing that they have contracted it and ignore safety protocols that can save others around them, will have to face the consequences of their actions. 'Wahe Guru' will not forgive such people."

## LAST MAJOR reshuffle of IAS officers was done in February 2020 when 50 IAS officers at all levels were transferred.

**SHORT TAKES**  
**HOME-TO-HOME SURVEY TO CHECK COVID SYMPTOMS**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

As part of Covid control, 641 teams from Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and the Medical and Health Department conducted a large-scale home-to-home survey of people with Covid symptoms. They did this as per directions from the state government.

Members of each team, including an ANM, Asha worker and GHMC entomology worker went to the homes with a thermal scanner on Tuesday as part of the survey covering 40,000 homes in a single day. They found that 1,487 of them had the flu.

Of the 1,487 suffering from the fever, 1,400 were given the Covid medication kit.

**PATIENTS GASP FOR BREATH DUE TO O2 SHORTAGE**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, MAY 4

Nearly 200 patients undergoing treatment in 46 private hospitals that were allowed by the government are facing problems due to erratic supply of oxygen.

As per the details, there are two oxygen cylinder suppliers in Khammam and used to supply oxygen to the industries and private hospitals. The supply of oxygen is not at all a problem in Khammam before Covid-19 situation and a 40 litre cylinder will be available at ₹300.

Now oxygen is scarce product now in Khammam. The private hospitals, at present, require an oil tanker capacity of eight tons per three days. But, the two oxygen suppliers are getting a tanker per a week. The oxygen used to be supplied to Khammam from Vizag and Odisha.

The government has given permission for Covid-19 treatment to the 46 private hospitals in Khammam and these hospitals are extending treatment to nearly 350 patients. Many of the patients are coming to the hospitals in serious condition and oxygen back up is must to them. A serious patient inhales and exhales about seven to eight liters of air while resting in a minute. This is about 11,000 liters per day. K. Pradeep of a private hospital said that each Covid-19 patient is different from the rest. Among those who need oxygen supplement, some may require one or two liters of oxygen per minute. It is based on factoring in wastage in oxygen supply and utilization capacity of the lungs at the moment. This requirement may translate into three to four liters of medical oxygen per minute.

The collector divided the Covid-19 hospitals as two groups and asked the two oxygen suppliers to distribute it to the hospitals as per the supply. The two suppliers are unable to get oxygen as per the demand. There are allegations from the hospitals that the suppliers are asking to pay Rs 1500 per 40 liter cylinder sometimes by saying the non-availability of it. Getting required oxygen from Vizag and Odisha at this juncture is a big task now. M. F. Gopinath, a doctor said that the government should solve the issue by getting more oxygen to the state. The patients will be in trouble with the situation.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The General Public are hereby informed that Smt. Sadha Sita Reddy W/o. Sri T. Sivakumar Reddy, aged about 38 years, Occ: Housewife R/o Plot No.66, Cyber Meadows, Masjid Banda, Near Chirec Public School, Kondapur, Hyderabad- 500 084 has offered for sale of her Plot No.119, admeasuring 1200 Square Yards equivalent to 1003.20 Square Meters, in Survey No.230 of Manchiruve village, Rajendranagar Mandel, Ranga Reddy District, with the boundaries on North by Plot No.118, South by Plot No.120, East by Road and West by Plot No.128.

It is, therefore, notified to the public that if anyone has any claim in the aforesaid plot or objection to the aforesaid transaction, the same may approach the undersigned with all supporting documents, within one week of the publication of this notice. Otherwise, my client will proceed with the transaction, treating that there are no such claims or objections.

T.RATHNAKAR

ADVOCATE  
Flat No.501, Mytri Nivas,  
Hamun nagar Colony,  
Manikonda, Hyd-89  
Ph: +919030093609

Hyderabad, Dated: 01.05.2021

# WB voters stop Owaisi on his tracks

To ensure Trinamul victory, Muslims in Bengal voted against MIM's candidates

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

The expected eastward march of the All India Majlis Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen has been stopped in its tracks by voters in Bengal and this has sent some clear signals to the party.

When it comes to voting against the BJP, Muslim voters would avoid a split of

their support between two contending sides. They would support whatever is a better alternative to the BJP. They would not prefer a weak party even if it represented the community.

What the AIMIM faced in the Bengal assembly elections was nothing short of a drubbing. All its seven candidates lost and none could save his security deposit. Each of them got less than

1,000 votes. It appears that Muslims in Bengal voted en bloc for Mamata Banerjee's All India Trinamool Congress (TMC). They even voted against Muslim candidates of other parties to ensure the win of TMC candidates.

Muslims comprise 30 per cent of Bengal's population and a majority of them are spread over four districts - Murshidabad, Malda, North

24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas. In these four districts, which together have 63 seats, elections were held for 61 seats. Mamata's party managed to get 58 seats.

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, probably realising the way the winds were blowing in Bengal, limited AIMIM's exposure to seven seats. Even to gain a foothold there, Owaisi chose to go as an ally

of Furfura Sharif cleric Abbas Siddiqui, who invited Asaduddin Owaisi to Bengal. Later, Siddiqui decided to float his own political party, the Indian Secular Front (ISF). He fielded 30 candidates but won only one seat; from Bhantar. This saw many local Muslim leaders who first joined the AIMIM switch their loyalty to the TMC.

## 'Operation Catfish' to check damage to TRS

PULI SHARATH  
KUMAR | DC  
KARIMNAGAR, MAY 4

TRS party leadership has launched "Operation Catfish" to prevent party cadre in Karimnagar district from supporting former minister Etala Rajendar.

After being relieved of his ministry on allegations of grabbing assigned lands in Achampet and Hakimpet in Medak district, Rajendar had started gaining considerable sympathy from people not only in his Huzurabad constituency and Karimnagar district, but also from various parts of the state. Even leaders of opposition parties came out in support of him.

Feeling threatened that the ousted leader would take with him

of the TRS party if something happened to their leader. Some senior leaders among them even encouraged Rajendar to establish a new political party.

Under the circumstances, many were surprised when Banda Srinivas, one of the main followers of the sacked minister, advised against quitting the party. Rajendar's close confidantes feel Banda Srinivas statement is part of Operation Catfish.

TRS party cadre along with second rung leaders, TRS party leadership launched a perfect action plan beforehand. As part of it, the party leadership directed Karimnagar public representatives to counter the former minister by luring second rung leaders of his main followers with nominated posts under "Operation Catfish".

Incidentally, many of the former minister's followers had publicly said they will get out

## OLD FRIENDS BREATHE FIRE AT RAJENDAR

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

shekar Rao, we did not get an appointment. Reacting on this, Kamalakar wondered how conceited Chandrashekhar was and arrogantly he was behaving with public representatives. Now he is making comments against me and supporting the Chief Minister since he was handed over a script to read out with a perfect action plan by the party leadership.

Ministers Koppula Eshwar, Gangula Kamalakar and TS Planning Board Vice Chairman B. Vinod Kumar addressed a joint press conference at the Telangana Bhavan here to counter Rajendar's charges.

They said Rajendar had made no big sacrifice for the Telangana movement or the TRS or the people of the state. They also alleged that the former minister had tried to split the party on several occasions. "In fact, he was one of the biggest beneficiaries of the TRS in the last 18 years. He was given all important positions in the party, including the post of party floor or leader in the state assembly and minister for two terms since 2014. But he misused them for his personal gains and to a mass wealth and lands," Koppula said.

He pointed out that Rajendar was stripped off the Cabinet post in the wake of his involvement in land encroachments, but there had been no attempts to infringe his dignity or self-respect.

"People know the history of all leaders.

Who is opportunistic, who participated in the separate Telangana movement, who joined in later stages, who earned money being in the party? All the illegal activities done by every minister and MLA will come out one day or the other," he pointed out.

illegally for prices as high as ₹30,000 each.

Further, there is no official data concerning the number of injections supplied, the agencies supplied to, or the names of infected patients for whom it was required.

As attendants of infected patients are under pressure to procure Remdesivir injections, prices of such vital medicines have skyrocketed. Taking advantage of the crisis, middlemen and agents were also exploiting the sentiments

of people to charge exorbitant prices.

To make matters worse, patients are not verifying the prices being charged by private hospitals upon procuring Remdesivir and other essential medicines.

Drug inspectors also frequently ask medical shops to furnish the details of stocks of various medicines that were sold at their outlets. Despite this, the officials have failed to keep a check on diversion of life-saving drugs to the black market.

While the MRP of a pack of six Remdesivir injections is ₹2,700, they are being sold

## Rush for drug in Adilabad

## Remdesivir prices soar

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, MAY 4

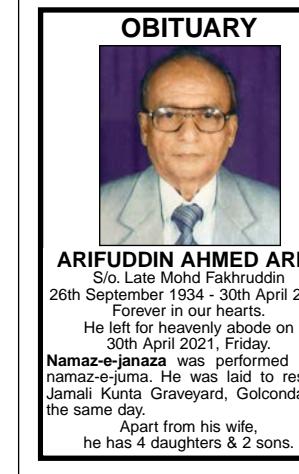
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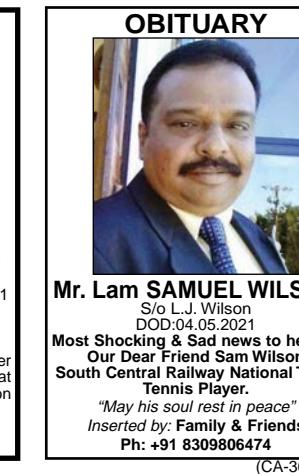
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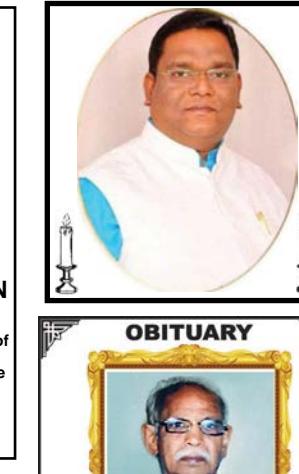
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**OBITUARY**  
**ARIFUDDIN AHMED ARIFI**  
S/o. Late Mohd Fakhruddin  
26th September 1934 - 30th April 2021  
Forrest in our hearts  
He left for heavenly abode on  
30th April 2021, Friday.  
Namaz-e-Janaza was performed after  
namaz-e-juma. He was laid to rest at  
Jamali Kunta Graveyard, Golconda on  
the same day.



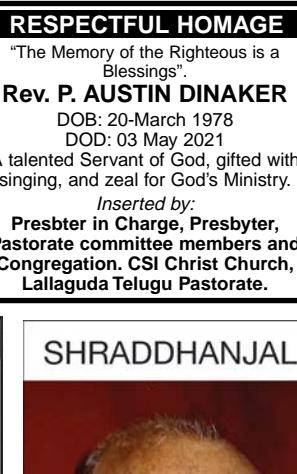
**OBITUARY**  
**Mr. Lam SAMUEL WILSON**  
S/o L. Wilson  
DOD: 04/04/2021  
Most Shocking & Sad news to hear of  
Our Dear Friend Sam Wilson  
South Central Railway National Table  
Tennis Player.  
"May his soul rest in peace"  
Inserted by: Family & Friends  
Ph: +91 8309806474



**OBITUARY**  
**V. A. Mohan Mudaliar**  
Retd. Manager, SBI, Sec-bad Branch  
Passed away peacefully on 25-04-2021.

Nadupu on 5-5-2021 @ 5:30 PM at our  
residence. Kammandaram on 6-5-2021 from  
8AM at Bharat Sevashram, Lower Tank Bund.

Insetted by: V. M. Chandra Shaker,  
V. M. Shiva Kumar (Sons)  
Phone: 040-27533241



**OBITUARY**  
**SALIKE PRAKASH RAO**  
DOB: 25 DEC 1941 DOD: 16 APR 2020

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OUR HEARTS FOREVER

LOVE, WIFE, CHILDREN  
& GRANDCHILDREN

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CONSTRUCTIONS PVT. LTD.

(S/2122/D00140)



**OBITUARY**  
**Smt. P. GODAVARI BAI**  
DOB: 5.5.1941 DOD: 1.3.2016  
You are in our hearts forever.  
Family Members

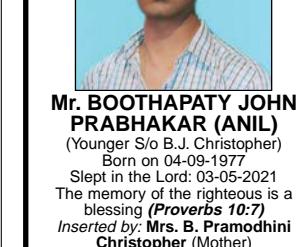


**OBITUARY**  
**M. VANAM RAVINDRANATH (TILLU)**  
Proprietor : Narasimha Engineering  
Works, Nacharam.

DOB : 01-02-1963 DOD : 03-05-2021

We deeply mourn the demise of our  
Nephew. Our prayers are with the  
bereaved family.

Insetted by :  
Mrs. & Mr. Baba Michael  
& Children Ph.8008415218



**OBITUARY**  
**SRI. PAKALA BALAKRISHNA MURTHY**  
(South Central Railway-Reid)

Shanti Apartments, Tamra, Hyderabad, 500017

Reached Heavenly Abode on 4th May 2021

The golden years you blessed us will  
remain in our hearts, mind&soul

In Grief:  
Nayantara Harding, Priyadarshini Kavoori,  
Ashwini Kavoori, Supreethi Manoranjan,  
Shishir Kavoori & family.

Phone: 9581140056, 9885824411



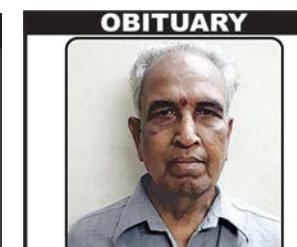
**OBITUARY**  
**SRI. KATEPALLI VISHWANATHAM**  
DOB: 5.6.1947 DOD: 1.5.2021

You will be remembered  
in our hearts for ever.

Insetted by: Singaravel Veerashem,

Smt. Vijaya Laxmi,  
Nageshwar Rao,

Smt. Jyothi Sri  
Sai Damodar



**OBITUARY**  
**S.V.V.S. MURTHY**  
1938 - 23/04/21

Retd. ANDHRA BANK

Born: 1938 Died: 23/04/2021

Date of Birth: 23-4-1938 Date of Death:

Left for heavenly abode on 23-04-2021

Insetted by: S. Padma Murthy (Wife)

Sons: Kishore Kumar / Ramesh Kumar

Ph: 9440699911, 7997680431



## Covid blues Rush for drug in Adilabad

## Remdesivir prices soar

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, MAY 4

As drug control officials fail to keep tab on the supply of Remdesivir injections to local medical agencies and approved private hospitals in old Adilabad district, there are allegations of these medical agencies colluding with one another, in order to sell these injections at higher rates in the black market.

While the MRP of a pack of six Remdesivir injections is ₹2,700, they are being sold

illegally for prices as high as ₹30

# Owaisi: Centre in comatose state

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, MAY 4

AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday said the Modi government is in a comatose state and failed to tackle the pandemic situation. He opposed imposing a fresh lockdown.

Speaking to the media here, Owaisi said the right to life is a fundamental right. The first duty of any government is to protect people's lives. Unfortunately, this is the consistent behaviour of the Modi government that it is clueless, lacks compassion, has no direction and is not in a position to control the pandemic situation.

He said India received at least 300 tonnes of international emergency Covid aid, which is lying in Delhi Airport. Of these, there were 5,500 oxygen concentrators, 3,200 oxygen cylinders and 1.36 lakh Remdesivir injections. What is Modi government doing to change the scenario for the better, he asked.

The government had

informed the Supreme Court that as far as oxygen supply and Covid situation were concerned, the Prime Minister and Home Minister were directly responsible. "Yet, why did you take five days to distribute this aid to the states? The PMO isn't telling us what has happened to it. This is not incompetence, it is the complete lack of compassion for fellow citizens," he alleged.

Owaisi said, "We are seeing only statements, promises made by the government before the Supreme Court. On the ground, things are not moving. Even now, hospitals in Delhi are crying for oxygen."

He asked why the Union Government has put a cap on the procurement of essential medicines. "People are dying because you are not giving life-saving drugs. This is a complete horror show," he said and pleaded that the government waive the import duty on medical equipment required to tackle the Coronavirus pandemic.

## Summer showers



City witnesses heavy showers after seeing a spike in temperature, on Tuesday. — R. PAVAN

## High Court asks if collector surveyed land sitting in car

From Page 1

Amazed at the 42-page report submitted by the officials within 24 hours of an order for enquiry issued by the Chief Minister of Telangana, the judge said, "When the Chief Secretary has directed the collector to conduct an enquiry, vis-a-vis, when the collector had ordered a tahsildar to conduct survey and inspection?" At what time, the tahsildar gave back the report by inspecting the site and conducting a survey? When did it reach the collector? Is it possible within one hour? What Mr Advocate General, in your long service, have you ever seen this swinging response from the state machinery," Justice Vinod Kumar asked Advocate-General B.S Prasad.

Explaining that the experience of conducting a physical survey of 18 acres of land owned by him, the Judge said, "the report of the District Collector indicates that he might have conducted the survey by sitting in his car and going around the land and prepared an enquiry report in sitting in his room."

Mr D. Prakash Reddy, senior counsel appearing for Jamuna Hatcheries, opposed the contention of the A-G, who informed the court that the report of the district collector is preliminary in nature. The senior counsel insisted that no law permits an official to hold a preliminary enquiry without putting the petitioner on notice.

After lengthy arguments and considering oral undertaken by the Advocate-General that the officials would proceed further by following due process of law, the court directed the district collector, Medak, to follow the procedure of relevant laws on the complaints received against the lands pertaining to Jamuna Hatcheries in Hakimpet and Masalpet villages of Medak district.

The court has further directed the Director-General of Police, Director-General, Vigilance and Enforcement, ACB and Medak Superintendent of Police against taking any coercive steps against the petitioners.

The court also issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Medak District Collector, Toopran RDO, Masalpet mandal revenue officer directing them to file their responses to the contentions raised by Jamuna Hatcheries within four weeks and adjourned the hearing to July 6.

"The Constitution ensures every citizen has something called freedom or fundamental rights, they cannot be breached by authorities. If so, how can it be tolerated," Judge said.

While reading the report of the district collector, which says that a detailed and full

partnered with Cyberabad Police Department to install 51 CCTV cameras at Nanakramguda in the city.

The installation of CCTV cameras is aimed at assisting the police department to keep a close watch and

real-time tracking of the movement in the streets and increase the safety quotient. These CCTVs will be spread through a stretch of 4 km at Nanakramguda. The current drive is in continuation to the company's

previous collaboration with the city police to install CCTV cameras in Somajiguda as well.

## ADP collaborates with Cyberabad cops to raise security

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

HYDERABAD, MAY 4

ADP India on Tuesday

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA  
REVENUE LAND ACQUISITION DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COLLECTOR, SIDDIPET

### DECLARATION FORM - VII

Collector's office File No. G2/1992/2019 Dt: 30.04.2021

O/o. Revenue Divisional Officer, File No. D4/06/2018

Dt: 22.04.2021

Dt: 30.04.2021

Gazette No: 35/2021  
Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/District Collector, Siddipet that the Land extent of Ac. 55.08 gts in Marpadaga village, Kondapaka Mandal, Siddipet District is needed for the public purpose i.e. Devadula Godavari Lift Irrigation Project 9R 14 9R of D4 1L of D4 8R of D4 7R of D4 Phase II Tapaspally Tank Left main canal formation, declaration is made to acquire that land.

Therefore declare that the land measuring Ac. 55.08 gts of standard measurement under acquisition for the purpose of formation of Devadula Godavari Lift Irrigation Project 9R 14 9R of D4 1L of D4 8R of D4 7R of D4 Phase II Tapaspally Tank Left main canal whose detailed description is as following:

### SCHEDULE

9R OF D4 L.M.C. OF TAPASPALLY TANK MARPADAGA

Village: Marpadaga Manda: Kondapaka District: Siddipet

Extent of Land and Acquisition

Category of Land

Event of Land under Acquisition

Survey No. and Date

Name of Land Pattered/Father/Enjoyer/Father/ Interested Person and Address

Extn of Land and Acquisition

Category of Land

Event of Land under Acquisition

Survey No. and Date

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# DECCAN Chronicle

5 MAY 2021

## Rank and file let down, BJP keeps stony silence

**W**hat's going on inside the BJP after the stinging electoral rebuke the party received in the just held Assembly polls in West Bengal and Kerala, and the less than enthusiastic response in other poll-bound states, may only be guessed at. Unlike other political parties, the BJP bars its doors to the world unless it has something to say. Dissent is monitored and tamped down hard. The party's mentor, the RSS, is an even more of a bamboo curtain sort of outfit.

Therefore, the evaluation of the recent state elections by the leadership — if the propagandist component, of which enough can already be heard on television through worshipful anchors, is to be discounted — is likely to remain something of a state secret for now. At lower levels, however, disappointment — even bitterness toward the top leadership in Delhi — is writ large.

On Tuesday, this newspaper reported voices from below of the party faithful in West Bengal. The fingers are pointing at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union home minister Amit Shah, and the loutish state BJP president, Dilip

Ghosh. The trio didn't fight a normal political battle in which the opponent's handicaps are exploited within the bounds of normal debate and within culturally sanctioned levels of public decency. They descended to the level of the sewer.

The voter rejected this in a massive way. Chief minister Mamata Banerjee was defeated in Nandigram but her party won big in seats around that constituency. This is suggestive of fishy goings-on. The ensuing public reaction is likely to further demoralise the local saffron cadres.

In Kerala, the BJP drew a blank and polled a lower percentage than last time. In Tamil Nadu, in alliance with AIADMK, it won four seats. But these will be

viewed as chimeric — here today, gone tomorrow. The party has no base to speak of in the state and commonly attracts hostility. In the UT of Puducherry it brought down the Congress government through defections, and then tied up with a regional party to form government. Like in TN, this too cannot be a moment's savour. In Assam, the BJP has indeed done well by resorting to its usual game of religious polarisation and returned to power. But polling percentages of rivals suggest there is not that much to choose between the winning side and the Congress-led Opposition front.

For the past five years, the BJP rank-and-file took policy disasters such as demonetisation and botched GST in its stride, as indeed did the voter. The overarching communal motif of punishing "the other" has won the day for the most part. For the rest, the BJP was busy overturning electoral verdicts in states and forming governments anyway, as constitutional bodies and state institutions became accomplices or mute witnesses to political crime.

But all this was before the Chinese intrusion and continued occupation of traditionally Indian territory, and before the Covid crisis. Now, it is hard to do so much false propaganda, a speciality of the ruling party and its infamous IT cell, as to efface from the public mind images of flames leaping out of crematoriums in every part of India.

The just ended polls are not just a common story of a poll reverse. They constitute a testament framed within well-documented policy collapse — negatively affecting employment and growth, besides the monumental Covid failure — which has made this country an object of international pity and derision.

The leadership is uncharacteristically quiet. This is because much is at stake.

## The Kerala lesson

**K**erala's election results giving a consecutive second term for a government in the last 43 years gives out the signal that there is no alternative to good governance which can make people think beyond their basic identities while exercising their franchise. It has proved to the Opposition that there is no alternative to hard work in politics; it has also left a message for the media that it would lose credibility if it does not follow principles of fair journalism and starts following its own agenda.

The CPI(M)-led Left Democratic government swept to power on the back of the support it has received from people across sections, especially the most vulnerable ones. The Pinarayi Vijayan government ensured that the entire state machinery was on its feet when life was thrown out of gear by an epidemic, a pandemic and two back-to-back floods in four of the five years when it was in power.

It discovered innovative routes to fund infrastructure; political will alone helped complete projects worth tens of thousands of crores of rupees. They all paid rich electoral dividends, too.

The LDF, however, will have to fight a tougher battle this term against the communal forces that are waiting in the corner. The LDF has ensured that the BJP closed the account it had opened in the last elections but the reach of the communal forces across followers of all religions is on the rise. The LDF will have to ensure that it gives no room for these forces to manipulate the minds of the people and make a gain.

The outgoing government drew flak for its running of the home department, thanks to a spree of encounter killings and the reckless use of UAPA; it will have to realign its policy in tune with that of the left parties. Holding the Kerala society together while moving on the path of development is the task waiting for the new government.

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K. SUDHAKAR  
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Anita Katyal  
Political Gupshup



Cong intra-party democracy is first casualty of poor show in state polls

**I**ntra-party democracy in the Congress could well prove to be the first casualty of the outcome of the state Assembly elections declared last Sunday. The Congress was originally scheduled to elect its new president in May but the election was deferred till June on the pretext of the Assembly polls. Rahul Gandhi's camp followers had hoped that a credible performance in these polls would make it easier for the Nehru-Gandhi scion to return as Congress chief. However, Rahul Gandhi's failure to make any impact in these polls has silenced his supporters and led to speculation that the internal election for the party president's post could be further delayed. Congress insiders do not rule out the possibility that Rahul Gandhi himself may decline to take over the party's reins. Then there is a section in the party that wants a non-Gandhi to head the Congress. But it is said Sonia Gandhi is not keen on this option and would prefer to continue as interim president till her son is ready to return as Congress chief.

It now transpires that BJP leaders in West Bengal had informed the Central leadership about its failure to defeat the Trinamul Congress days before the prolonged poll campaign drew to its close. A few state leaders even admitted as much in private conversations to media-persons in Kolkata. Nevertheless, an optimistic BJP had lined up its senior ministers for media sound bytes and interviews on the day of the results. As seen on earlier occasions, it would not have been surprising if Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah had come forth to exult over the result. As it happened, there was radio silence from the ministers while word was put out that Mr Modi and his ministers were busy handling the coronavirus pandemic. It was eventually left to the tried and tested BJP spokespersons like Amit Malviya and Sambit Patra to put a gloss on the party's performance. They did try to put down Mamata Banerjee over her defeat in Nandigram but were constrained from getting too jubilant as Mamata Banerjee's failure to win her

own seat was totally eclipsed by her party's emphatic victory in the Assembly polls. The BJP drew solace from the fact that it now occupies the Opposition space in West Bengal and that the Congress and the Left parties have been vanquished.

**T**he BJP may be bemoaning the Assembly election results but the party's failure to dethrone Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal comes as a huge relief for Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Had the party succeeded, his chief rivals in the state — Kailash Vijayvargiya and Narottam Mishra — would have actively campaigned for Mr Chouhan's ouster. Mr Vijayvargiya was handpicked by home minister Amit Shah to supervise the West Bengal election while Mishra was also given key responsibilities in the eastern state. A victory in West Bengal would have automatically given a boost to their ratings in the party and emboldened them to resume their campaign against Mr Chouhan. Both Mr Vijayvargiya and Mr Mishra are eyeing the chief min-

ister's post in Madhya Pradesh.

**T**he Capital's political grapevine is rife with speculation that Delhi lieutenant general Anil Baijal is on his way out. Though Mr Baijal is an old Delhi hand and a favourite with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, the Centre is said to be of the view that Mr Baijal's tenure has run its course. According to the buzz in Delhi, the Modi government was also dissatisfied as it felt Mr Baijal had been unsuccessful in checkmating the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party. Several names are doing the rounds regarding Mr Baijal's successor. Former Puducherry lieutenant general Kiran Bedi is among those who figure in this list. If this proves to be true, it would be interesting to see how Ms Bedi and Delhi chief minister will work together. The two were among the leading faces of the 2011 anti-corruption movement but Ms Bedi subsequently left and joined the BJP following differences with Mr Kejriwal and others.

Former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje and her nephew Jyoti Prakash Scindia figured in the list of star campaigners in the recent Assembly elections. While Vasundhara Raje was expected to campaign for the bye-elections in the desert state, newly minted BJP member Mr Scindia was put down for the crucial West Bengal polls. However, Vasundhara Raje failed to turn up for the campaign. It is an acknowledged fact that she is sulking because a concerted effort has been made by the BJP's Delhi leaders to marginalise her ever since she lost the last Assembly election. The party wants to promote a fresh leadership in Rajasthan and end its dependence on Vasundhara. With his aunt backing out, the BJP deputed Mr Scindia to take her place on the campaign trail in Rajasthan. Despite his estranged aunt's absence, the election results showed that Mr Scindia did help the BJP win one of the three bye-elections.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

Subhani



## After Bengal, Oppn must devise national strategy

Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay



Nilanjan  
Mukhopadhyay

working among the Opposition parties, so evident during the West Bengal elections when several leaders appeared on the Trinamul Congress' platforms, will be an added headache for the BJP.

Mamata Banerjee was congratulated by almost every Opposition leader in the country but it would be premature to assume the emergence of an all-encompassing anti-BJP Opposition front any time immediately. There were previous occasions, most famously in 2015, after the BJP's defeat in Bihar, where similar hopes were eventually belied. The chief minister of West Bengal visualises a role for herself, indicative in her promise that uprooting "communal forces" from Delhi will be her next task. For this ambition to come remotely close to fruition, the Opposition parties will be required to sink their differences and put local aspirations in various states on hold.

What is crucial to the formation of an anti-BJP conglomerate is the posture of the Congress Party. Will it cede its claim to be the leader of an Opposition bandwagon in favour of a regional leader with whom it has locked horns in the past?

After all, the Congress had formed an alliance with the Left Front in West Bengal even though the two parties were locked in a direct contest in Kerala. Left with a barely three per cent voteshare in West Bengal, it is time for the Congress to scale down its ambitions and see itself as a slightly bigger regional party. Something like what the Janata Dal used to be in the last 1980s and early 1990s before its split into smaller factions.

**What is crucial to the formation of an anti-BJP conglomerate is the posture of the Congress. Will it cede its claim to be the leader of an Opp. bandwagon?**

### LETTERS

#### AMEND CONSTITUTION

Defeated Mamata Banerjee staking claim for CM post is wrong and unethical. No doubt she has full support of elected TMC MLAs. Nandigram rejected her and she is returning as CM without the people's mandate. This is legally allowed but morally wrong. Alternatively, another MLA from her party could have been made CM and Banerjee is free to contest a bypoll, win a seat and get back to the CM post. Normally, an elected MLA can become CM and an MP the PM. That is the established democratic tradition.

**Dr B. Shankar Narayanan**  
Hyderabad

#### OXYGEN DEATHS

The DMK won Tamil Nadu Assembly polls after 10 years of rule by the AIADMK. Its leader M.K. Stalin would take over as CM on May 7. The DMK supported by the Congress won the polls easily. The DMK on its own has the majority in the new Assembly. The NDA's ally the AIADMK lost the polls and E Palaniswami and O. Panneerselvan have been sent packing. This is a big gain for the DMK after a decade of being in oblivion. Congratulations to the DMK and Stalin.

**V.R.K. Valmeekey**  
Hyderabad

#### 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

#### States to have more say in planning

NEW DELHI, May 4  
The new Ministry of Planning will be concerned with technical questions relating to planning and planning organisation and the policy and details of specific schemes would be dealt with by the Central and Administrative Ministries and State Governments.

The new rules on allocation of business among various Government Departments signed by President V.V. Giri have spelt out the demarcation of functions between the Planning Commission on the one hand and the Central and State Governments on the other.

The rules make it clear that the Commission would formulate perspective plans, besides five-year development programmes.



## SHORT TAKES

## DESHMUKH SEEKS PROTECTION AGAINST CBI

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC  
MUMBAI, MAY 4

Former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh has approached the Bombay High Court seeking to quash FIR registered against him by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on charges of corruption. He has also sought protection from any coercive action pending his petition.

A division bench of Justice S.S. Shinde and Justice Manish Pitale is expected to hear this petition this week. Apart from quashing of FIR Deshmukh has also sought court interim relief that pending hearing of his petition no coercive action should be taken against him.

Former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh, had written a letter to chief minister Uddhav Thackeray leveling allegations of corruption, misuse of his official position and malpractices against Deshmukh.

In his letter to CM, Singh had alleged that Deshmukh had asked API Sachin Vaze to collect ₹100 crore as bribe from bars and restaurants in Mumbai every month.

The HC had directed the CBI to initiate preliminary inquiry against Deshmukh. After inquiry, the CBI registered an FIR against Deshmukh in April and also conducted raids at several locations, including his residence at Nagpur.

## ODISHA: 12-YR-OLD ENDS LIFE OVER ONLINE GAMING

AKSHAYA KUMAR  
SAHOI | DC  
BHUBANESWAR, MAY 4

A 12-year-old boy studying in Class 8 allegedly hanged himself to death in Kharan Nagar area of the state capital on Sunday night, police said on Tuesday.

It is suspected that the minor boy had fallen into the trap of online gaming or betting that encouraged him to take the extreme step.

Jashoban Routray, the student, was studying in a private English medium school in Cuttack staying in his uncle's house. He had come to his house here recently.

Sources said the minor boy used to indulge in online mobile phone gaming most of the time.

On Sunday night, he and one of his friends were busy playing online games. On Monday morning, he was found hanging from the ceiling of a room in the house.

He was rushed to Capital Hospital but doctors declared him brought dead.

Though family members of the deceased did not provide any exact reason behind the suicide, they claimed that the child used to remain quiet most of the time.

They suspected that he might have been negatively affected due to excessive indulgence in online gaming or betting.

The local Kharan Nagar police registered an unnatural death case and sent the body for post-mortem.

## More lives lost to Covid-19



Relatives perform last rites of Covid-19 victims at the Hindon crematorium in Ghaziabad on Tuesday. Meanwhile, a group of Muslim youths helped cremate a 60-year-old Hindu man, who died of Covid-19, at Balrampur in UP, as his family members were hesitant to go ahead with the rituals for fear of contracting the disease.

## Cong accuses BJP of transferring votes to CPM in Kerala

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
MAY 4

On the CPM claim that it had closed the account of BJP in its lone sitting seat in Nenmom in Thiruvananthapuram district, the opposition leader said.

"It was the Congress which actually closed BJP's account by fielding a formidable candidate like K. Karunakaran's son K. Muraleedharan."

Meanwhile, the BJP also countered the Chief Minister's allegations of vote trade with the UDF. "If the CPM is accusing us of trading votes, then what happened during 2019 Lok Sabha elections when there was a huge dip in their vote share? Did they sell the votes to the Congress at that time?" asked BJP state president K. Surendran. He said the BJP cannot be blamed for the weakness of Congress.

Opposition leader and senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala alleged that the BJP had transferred its votes to the CPM in as many as 69 constituencies. The Chief Minister came up with the allegation against the UDF to hide his own party's clandestine deal with the BJP.

Compared to last Assembly elections the BJP votes came down by 4,35,606 and majority of these votes went to the CPM-led LDF, he added.

He said the UDF put up a strong fight in Manjeshwaram, Palakkad and prevented BJP victory in these constituencies and pushing the CPM to third place. He alleged that the CPM had transferred its votes to the BJP in Majeshwaram and Palakkad, Chennithala said the allegations of the Chief Minister were totally baseless and didn't even deserve a response.

Surendran said there was minority consolidation in favour of LDF and UDF wherever the BJP was in a winning position.

## Modi, Boris adopt 'road map' to steer ties for next 10 years

Nine pacts inked in various fields including one on students' movement

SRIDHAR  
KUMARASWAMI | DC  
NEW DELHI, MAY 4

gal migration.

In a statement, the British High Commission (BHC) said the bilateral "unique agreement includes a special Young Professionals scheme to allow young Indian and British professionals to work and live in each other's country for two years — the first such scheme for a visa-national country (countries which require visit visas to visit the UK)".

## BRITISH HIGH

Commission says the bilateral "unique agreement includes a special Young Professionals scheme to allow young Indian and British professionals to work and live in each other's country for two years — the first such scheme for a visa-national country (countries which require visit visas to visit the UK)".

Nirav Modi.

Both countries also agreed to boost defence and security cooperation including in the Indo-Pacific region where joint naval exercises will be conducted and also begin a "new maritime dialogue", measures seen as a veiled message to China.

Boosting bilateral defence cooperation will also include "India-UK collaboration on key military technologies including combat aircraft, maritime propulsion system and complex weapons" to help "deliver the next generation of defence and security capabilities through co-development and co-production".

The "comprehensive Roadmap 2030" that was launched which will pave the way for further cooperation over the next decade across five key

areas, namely people-to-people relationship, trade and prosperity, defence and security, climate action and healthcare". It was also announced that the CSP between India and UK is "underpinned by their shared commitment to democracy, fundamental freedoms, multilateralism and a rule-based international order".

Prime Minister Modi thanked British Prime Minister Johnson for the prompt and massive assistance provided by UK in the form of critical medical equipment for ameliorating the current Covid pandemic situation in India and both leaders also agreed to expand and enhance the existing UK-India vaccines partnership including in nasal vaccines, highlighting the successful collaboration between Oxford University, AstraZeneca and the Serum Institute of India (SII) on an effective Covid19 vaccine (Oxford AstraZeneca/Covishield that is "developed in UK, Made in India and distributed globally". Discussion of the Covishield vaccine manufactured by the India-based SII and its manufacture in Britain was also discussed.

On defence cooperation,

a Joint Statement issued, said, "Both Prime Ministers agreed to deepen in their defence and security cooperation through the India-UK Defence and International Security Partnership framework and welcomed the finalisation of the new logistics MoU. During the deployment of the UK's Carrier Strike Group in the Indian Ocean Region in 2021, they agreed to hold joint exercises that will deepen cooperation in a region of critical strategic importance to both countries. They affirmed their shared vision of an open, free, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region ...".

The nine pacts also include an MoU to launch of a new Global Innovation Partnership (GIP) to support the transfer of inclusive, climate smart innovations from India to selected developing countries, an MoU for Customs cooperation and one in the field of medicinal regulation.

Both leaders also condemned terrorism in all its forms and agreed to continue cooperation including on information and intelligence sharing on terror networks and to share experiences on dealing with the growing phenomenon of extremism and radicalisation."

## कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी जिला-बैठेतरा (छ.ग.)

Email ID:bemetaracmho@yahoo.com

क्रमांक/पु.चिकित्सा अधि. /टोडी/ 2021-22/3532 बैठेतरा, दिनांक 30/04/2021

Covid 19 के संक्रमण से बचाव व रोकथाम हेतु जिला बैठेतरा हेतु नवीन उपकरण CT Scan मशीन क्रय करने के संबंध में

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी जिला बैठेतरा (छ.ग.) की ओर से Covid 19 के संक्रमण से बचाव व इलाज हेतु चिकित्सकीय उपकरण नवीन CT Scan मशीन के क्रय के संबंध में निविदा आमंत्रण किया जाता है। नवीन CT Scan मशीन की अनुमानित लागत 3 करोड़ रुपये हैं, जानकारी निम्नानुसार है:-

निविदा प्रपत्र बिक्री की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक : 17/05/2021 समय दोपहर 11.00 बजे तक  
निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक : 17/05/2021 समय दोपहर 12.00 बजे तक  
निविदा खोलने की तिथि दिनांक : 17/05/2021 समय दोपहर 01.00 बजे तक  
अधिक जानकारी के लिए विभागीय वेबसाइट [www.bemetara.gov.in](http://www.bemetara.gov.in) का अवलोकन करें।

मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी जिला-बैठेतरा (छ.ग.)

G-60429/2

Department of Atomic Energy  
Hyderabad Regional Purchase Unit

## e-TENDER NOTICE

Regional Director (P&S), HRPSU, Nuclear Fuel Complex, ECIL Post, Hyderabad 500062 invites online tenders as given below:

1. (a) Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRPU/NFC/E-661/PT/TPT/CAP/11209A (b) Description Design, Manufacturing, Supply, Performance demonstration, Erection and Commissioning of Automatic Tube End Facing and Chamfering Machine - Qty. 2 Nos. detailed Specifications as per Annexure (c) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 17/05/2021 upto 2:00 PM (d) Tender Fee NIL (e) EMD: NIL, subject to submission of Bid Security Declaration.

2. (a) Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRPU/NFC/E-8387/PT/TPT/CAP/11317 (b) Description Design, Manufacture, Testing, Supply of Electro Coagulation Treatment System of 10 KL/Hr Capacity to NFC, Kota - Qty. 1 set. detailed Specifications as per Annexure (c) Last date for submission of online pre-bid queries: 24/05/2021 upto 2:00 PM (d) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 30/06/2021 upto 2:00 PM (e) Tender Fee: NIL (f) EMD: NIL, subject to submission of Bid Security Declaration.

3. (a) Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRPU/NFC/E-6816/E-PT/ENG/17137 (b) Description: i) Design, Fabrication & Supply of Progressive die set for punching of 37e PHWR End Plate Components - Qty. 1 No. ii) Spares for 37e End Plate Component Progressive Die - Qty. 2 Sets. detailed Specifications as per Annexure (c) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 25/05/2021 upto 2:00 PM (e) Tender Fee: NIL (f) EMD: NIL, subject to submission of Bid Security Declaration.

4. (a) Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRPU/NFC/E-14145/PT/MTL/7805 (b) Description High Purity Magnesium Ingots of Grade-I Quality - Qty. 200 MT. detailed Specifications as per Annexure (c) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 07/06/2021 upto 2:00 PM (d) Tender Fee: NIL (f) EMD: NIL, subject to submission of Bid Security Declaration.

5. (a) Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRPU/NFC/E-8384/PT/TPT/MIA/2381 (b) Description: Supply of Automatic Eddy Current Test System for Round Bars - Qty. 1 No. (c) Last date for submission of online pre-bid queries: 22/05/2021 upto 2:00 PM (d) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 23/06/2021 upto 2:00 PM (e) Tender Fee: NIL (f) EMD: NIL, subject to submission of Bid Security Declaration.

6. (a) Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRPU/E-14129/PT/CHEM/9539 (b) Description Helium Gas to be supplied in NFC and Party's Cylinders - Qty. 54000 cum. detailed Specifications as per Annexure (c) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 09/06/2021 upto 2:00 PM (d) Last Date for Submission of Bid Online: 23/06/2021 upto 2:00 PM (e) Tender Fee: NIL (f) EMD: NIL, subject to submission of Bid Security Declaration.

Visit <https://etenders.dpsdae.gov.in> for details.

[DPS/HRPU/NFC/2122/04]

## POLL ANALYSIS

Momentum to give Front a proper shape will pick up once Covid crisis is contained

## TMC, LDF, DMK win leads to 'Federal Front' talks

SANJAY BASAK | DC  
NEW DELHI, MAY 4

The victory of the Trinamul Congress, DMK and LDF in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala respectively have given rise to the possibility of the Opposition parties coming together to form a Federal Front to take on the ruling BJP-led NDA in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. While Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee returned to power by trouncing the BJP in West Bengal for the third time, the LDF-led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan created history with his second consecutive electoral victory. In Tamil Nadu, DMK leader M.K. Stalin convincingly defeated the BJP-backed ruling AIADMK to form the government in the state.

The momentum to give the front, or a grand alliance, a proper shape will pick up once the Covid-19 crisis is contained. Speculation is rife that Prashant Kishor, the poll strategist and architect of the victories of Mamata Banerjee and M.K. Stalin in West Bengal and Tamil

Nadu could play a key role in "conjuring up" a grand Opposition alliance. After guiding Banerjee to her spectacular victory in the high-voltage West Bengal elections, Kishor in a TV interview declared that he would "quit this space" — of election strategising for political parties.

Meanwhile, as most of the Opposition parties appeared to be responsive to the idea of a federal front, it's the Congress Party led by the Gandhis which seemed to be somewhat reluctant.

A senior Congress leader, who is part of the pressure group (G-23), went to the extent of saying that the Congress could even "split" on the issue of a regional satrap-led Federal Front. He argued that even though the Congress had been "neutralised and lost its clout in the Opposition space, the family would still try to control the narrative". He said that the only way for Congressmen to support such a federal front was to "bypass the family". He then added: "At the end, Congress could split."

Talking about Opposition

unity, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Roy too expressed his reservations about the Congress. "We don't trust the Congress," he said. "On one hand the Congress projects a secular image and on the other they join hands with fundamentalist outfits like Abba Siddiqui's Indian Secular Front in West Bengal and the Muslim League in Kerala for political gains," he pointed out.

Roy insisted that there has to be a Common Minimum Programme (CMP) focusing mainly on the economy and how to contain the divisive politics of the BJP. The slogan of "Modi hatao" would not work, he said. It can be mentioned that in 1972, the then Opposition raised the slogan of "Indira hatao", which Indira Gandhi successfully countered with her slogan of "Garibi hatao". People voted to remove poverty, not Indira. Roy said that the catchphrase needed to be something like "desh bachao" (save the nation).

On the issue of Banerjee emerging as the face of the Opposition, Roy argued that at the West Bengal poll results had a "national impact". Even though DMK leader M.K. Stalin "won a great victory", his electoral triumph was a "foregone conclusion", he said.

Saying that the Congress continued to remain an "important player" at the national level, Roy said that the entire might of the Centre and its machinery. "It was a direct fight between Modi and Mamata," he said.

Speaking to this newspaper, CPI(ML) leader Dipankar Bhattacharya also said that the victory of Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal had a "major national impact". He pointed out that even the farmers protesting in North India distributed sweets to celebrate her victory. "They celebrated even though the farmers' issue hardly figured in the TMC campaign," the CPI(ML) leader said.

Bhattacharya felt that after the West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu victories, an "Opposition alliance is the need of the hour". He made it clear that the CPI(ML) was "willing to be a part of any such Opposition alliance". Mr Bhattacharya felt that the realignment of all the Opposition forces should start immediately.

On the issue of CPI(M), Bhattacharya pointed out that at the national level, the Left generally "supports" Opposition unity. He felt that the "CPI(M) cannot afford to make Mamata Banerjee taboo" and pull in a different direction.

Bhattacharya said after it was ousted from the state in 2011, the Left continued to look at itself as a "government in waiting" ... and did not play the role of an Opposition". Bhattacharya said that after 2011, the CPI(ML)-led Left should have "reinvented" itself, which it did not do.

The CPI(ML) leader hoped that if there was a move to form a grand Opposition alliance, both the Congress and the Left would "change their outlook" and join the bandwagon.

On Prashant Kishor playing the key role in forming a grand alliance or federal front, Roy felt it was an "excellent idea". Roy said that Kishor has a "great political mind... and was a brilliant strategist". Bhattacharya toed a similar line by saying that "even though I don't know much about the role he played, but what he did in Bengal was simply excellent".

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## SHORT TAKES

POST-POLL CLASH:  
BJP COMPARES  
TMC WITH NAZIS

From Page 1

The BJP claimed that the violence is "state-sponsored" and compared the TMC with "Nazis". Among Tuesday's victims, three — Mintu Barman of Shitalkuchi and Haradhan Roy and Chandan Roy of Dinhata — were from the BJP which lost six cadres on Monday. The 14 deceased also include five from Burdwan East. Of them, four were from the ruling TMC. While two of them — Shahjahan Shah and Bibhas Bagg — were killed Nabagram in Jamalpur, another, Ganesh Mullick, was beaten to death at Samaspur in Rautia with an aged TMC panchayat member Srinibas Ghosh at Ketugram in three separate attacks by the BJP.

At Nabagram in Jamalpur, a female CPI(M) worker Kakali Khetrapal, was hacked to death by a group of TMC workers during an attack on her home. Apart from the killings, several BJP offices and many party workers' houses were vandalised across the state.

On Mr Modi's worries, Mr Dhankar tweeted, "PM called and expressed serious anguish and concern at the alarmingly worrisome law and order situation @MamataOfficial. I share grave concerns @PMOIndia given that violence, vandalism, arson, loot and killings continue unabated. Concerned. Must act in overdrive to restore order."

Lashing out at Mr Modi immediately, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien tweeted, "PM makes a call to West Bengal governor on 'political violence'. (Exaggerated 214%). Stop the stunts, Mr Prime Minister. Work, the phones are on #COVID19India."

In a series of tweets earlier Mr Dhankar said, "Police @WBPolice @CPKolkata must end senseless political violence, vandalism, arson, killings and intimidation that shames democracy. Bengali diaspora world over has expressed concern over alarming lawlessness. Why post-poll violence only WB? Why this assault on democracy? Reports indicate the horrendous state of affairs. Horrified people are fleeing to save themselves. Flooded with SOS appeals. Harmads are on a killing and destruction spree. Such nose-diving of constitutional values cannot be countenanced. Call upon @MamataOfficial to restore order."

Mr Nadda claimed, "TMC knew that if BJP would have come to power in the state it would not be able to extort money and play its politics of appeasement. There is a list of names who attacked and killed our party workers. But no one was arrested. I assure you that crores of BJP workers stand by each affected here. Their sacrifice will not go in vain. We will fight till the end to give justice to them."

On Wednesday, when TMC chief Mamata Banerjee will take her oath as the chief minister for the third consecutive time, the BJP would organise a nationwide demonstration against the killings of its workers.

## RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL FINED ₹10K IN ODISHA

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, MAY 4

Authorities of Odisha's Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Tuesday raided a residential school for violation of Covid-19 norms. The school was fined ₹10,000 for flouting the pandemic guidelines issued by the Odisha government.

According to reports, the school was running offline classes on its premises when the BMC authorities raided the institution. It was also found during the raid that the residential school was providing food and accommodation facilities to more than 30 students. "We were only teaching the relatives of our staff with all the Covid-19 guidelines in place. Outside students were not allowed in the class. All of them have been sent home. So there has been no question of violating the pandemic norms," said the school authority.

However, according to the BMC officials, it was a clear violation of the guidelines.

"Keeping in view of the surge in Covid-19 in the state, the Odisha government has ordered the closure of all the educational institutions in the state from April 19. Keeping so many students in school premises is a clear violation of the pandemic norm," said a BMC official.



A woman at the deserted Dal Lake after the government announced a lockdown following a massive increase in the death toll due to the Coronavirus, in Srinagar on Tuesday.

— PTI

## Complete lockdown in Bihar till May 15 to stop case rise

**Decision comes a day after Patna HC orders govt to impose full lockdown**

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, MAY 4

Bihar has been placed under a complete lockdown till May 15 to stop the surge in Covid-19 cases.

The announcement was made by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar after he held a meeting with ministers and officials.

Announcing his decision on social media Bihar CM Nitish Kumar said, "Lockdown has been enforced in the state till May 15 after consulting ministers and officials. The Bihar crisis management group has been directed to release a guideline in this regard".

The decision comes a day after Patna High Court stepped in and ordered the government to impose a complete lockdown in the state. The court in its observation had said that "it seems that the state government is heading towards total failure. There is no action plan in this regard. Whatever plan you have submitted is not up to the mark and no steps have been taken. Everything is an eye-wash".

Earlier, the Indian Medical Association and

heads of four government hospitals in Patna had also urged the Bihar government to enforce a complete lockdown to "break the chain of rising Covid-19 cases".

As per the guidelines issued by the crisis management group after the lockdown was announced all essential services like healthcare, general provisions stores, banking sector, E-commerce, and courier services, petrol pumps, and media have been exempted from the lockdown.

While the BJP welcomed the state government's move to impose lockdown in the state, the opposition RJD blamed Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the health department for the crisis.

Calling Nitish Kumar as "Chote Sahab" Tejaswi Yadav said in a tweet that "it seems he was following the order of his superiors that there can't be a lockdown till May 2. For the last 15 days, the opposition had been demanding lockdown. Now when the infection has spread in the state including villages they are enforcing a lockdown. Come out of low-level gimmick and politics in this hour of crisis".

The minister also announced that they are

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, MAY 4

Amid the Covid positivity rate hovering between 8 to 10 per cent, Assam health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday feared that if current trend continues, the state may have to face the shortage of beds in hospitals soon.

Asserting that the state government was keeping a close watch on the situation, Sarma told reporters that they have asked the district administration to identify the localities and wards where the rate of positivity is high.

"We intend to start declaring such wards as a containment zone in the first phase," said the minister, clarifying that they are not facing shortage of beds so far but the situation may turn worse if necessary steps are not taken.

The minister also announced that they are

ASSAM TO start vaccination for above 18 youths from Wednesday but it will pick up only after May 7.

going to start vaccination for above 18 youths from Wednesday but it will pick up only after May 7.

He reiterated that there is no other way to check the surge other than controlling the movement of people and following Covid-appropriate behaviour.

Meanwhile the state government on Tuesday revised the night curfew timing which will come into effect from 6 pm to 5 am daily from Wednesday (May 5).

In the revised SOP issued by the state government, it also said that the shops and other business establishments will be closed from 2 pm which was closing down from 6 pm.

No people or individuals

could move out of their home after 6 pm. However, emergency services will be exempted from the order.

The government has also imposed new rules for marriage. The new order said that only 20 persons will be allowed to attend the marriage party.

No meetings, public gatherings will be allowed in open space.

The health officials said that the detection of 4,489 Covid positive cases out of 55,939 tests done on Monday, a rise from 2,385 cases the previous day, may be an indication that the second wave is reaching its peak in the state.

"In Assam, the transmission is yet to reach its peak, if we go by trends in other states. Thus, more caution is required. We have stepped into the second month of increase in new positive cases. The peak time may be on the cards soon," Assam NHM officials said.

## Delhi to give free ration for 2 months

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MAY 4

The Delhi government will provide free ration for two months to 72 lakh ration card holders and financial assistance of ₹5,000 to auto-rickshaw and taxi drivers in the city to help them tide over the Covid-19 crisis, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Tuesday.

Kejriwal said he is hopeful that the situation in Delhi will improve and lockdown will not be needed.

"The 72 lakh ration card holders in Delhi will be provided free ration for the next two months," he

said.

CM said, "Our decision to provide free ration for two months does not mean that at the lockdown will continue for two months. We imposed the lockdown to contain the spread of Covid-19. However, lockdown creates a financial crisis for people, especially for the poor and daily wage earners who find it difficult to run their homes, he said.

Further, Kejriwal said, "The Delhi government provided financial assistance of ₹5,000 to each of the 1.56 lakh auto and taxi drivers during the last year's lockdown and will

do so again this time to help them."

The Delhi government imposed a lockdown in the national capital to check the spread of Covid-19. However, lockdown creates a financial crisis for people, especially for the poor and daily wage earners who find it difficult to run their homes, he said.

Last week, the Delhi government had announced financial assistance of ₹5,000 for construction workers, he said.

Describing the current situation in Delhi as a "very difficult time," the CM appealed to people to help each other in finding hospital beds, oxygen, and medicines and provide food wherever needed.

"We are undergoing a very difficult time and the second wave has been extremely dangerous. There is so much despair and sadness all around. This is the time to become good human beings and help each other," he said.

## Insufficient infra led to more deaths in Delhi: Experts

New Delhi, May 4: A more virulent strain of Coronavirus, insufficient infrastructure to handle critical cases and hoarding of essential drugs have led to more deaths in Delhi, experts said on Tuesday, a day after the city registered a record 448 deaths.

They also said the number of deaths could be more as many patients die outside hospitals waiting for a bed.

Dr Jugal Kishore, the head of community medicine at Safdarjung Hospital, said the "insufficiency of infrastructure" to handle critical patients is leading to more deaths.

"The virus is not causing so many deaths, it is the insufficient resources and

facilities. This is the major reason," he said.

Critical cases are piling up but there are no beds available for them. Many patients have died on the way to hospitals or outside healthcare facilities waiting for a bed, while many have died due to unavailability of oxygen, Dr Kishore said.

Critical patients spend 10 to 20 days in ICU or on oxygen support. So, the beds remain occupied for this period, even as the number of critical cases keep increasing every day, he said.

Black-marketing and hoarding of essential drugs being used to treat critical patients is another reason.

"This has limited the

people's access to these drugs," he said.

Sudhanshu Bankata, the Executive Director of Batra Hospital in Tughlakabad Institutional Area, said a critical patient succumbs to the virus after 14 to 15 days of testing positive.

Deaths will be high on the 14th or the 15th day," he said.

Bankata also said that a large number of patients are being treated at home, as hospitals beds are full.

"In many cases, patients require high oxygen flow which can only be provided at hospitals and not through concentrators or cylinders. By the time a bed becomes available, their situation has already deteriorated sharply," he said.

Dr D.K. Baluja, medical director of Jaipur Golden Hospital, said, "The quantum (of infections) is very high. The number of cases has increased from 8,000 to 25,000. So, the absolute number of deaths will be three times more."

"Your logistics, manpower-



People argue with police personnel at a Covid-19 vaccination centre after vaccine shortage, at Mallathahalli in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

## Over 3.6 L Covid cases in 24 hours

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MAY 4

to 17,01,979 and recoveries to 13.39 lakh, the state government said.

The toll, however, mounted to 5,507 with 57 more deaths.

Goa reported 2,814 new Covid-19 cases, 52 deaths and 1,870 recoveries in the last 24 hours. The active cases stand at 26,731.

Manipur reported 433 new Covid positive cases, 2 deaths and 111 recoveries in the last 24 hours. Total cases stand at 32,956 and active cases at 2,391.

Uttar Pradesh reported 25,858 new cases and 352 fatalities in the last 24 hours, as per the state health department.

Meanwhile, the Indian Council of Medical Research has issued an advisory for Covid-19 testing, saying that laboratories are facing challenges in meeting the expected target due to the extraordinary caseload and staff contracting the infection.

According to the advisory, RT PCR test must not be repeated in any individual who has tested positive once either by RAT or RT PCR.

According to the Union health ministry's discharge policy, no testing is required for Covid recovered individuals at the time of discharge, the document states.

## Maha seeks 200MT oxygen from Centre

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, MAY 4

enhanced by at least 200 MT," the chief secretary said.

He also asked the central government to enhance the allocation at locations convenient to the state, otherwise, earlier allocation from RINL, Vizag, and Jindal Steel Plant, Angul, Odisha remains on paper only.

"My request is to enhance allocation from Jamnagar, Gujarat from the current 125 MT/day to 225 MT/day. Similarly, allocation from Bhilai may be increased to 230 MT from current 130 MT. These geographically close locations will reduce turnaround time of oxygen tankers, which are limited in number. This will also enhance our daily lifting and better demand management," Kunte said.

According to his letter, Maharashtra is continuing to face the onslaught of a second wave of Covid pandemic with the current active caseload of 6,63,758. Of these, 78,884 cases admitted are on medical oxygen including 24,787 in ICU units. Moreover, Palghar, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, Solapur, Nandurbar, Beed, Parbhani, Hingoli, Amravati, Buldhana, Wardha, Gadchiroli and Chandrapur- a total 16 districts- are showing continuous growth in Covid active cases and oxygen requirement.

"I assure you that we are taking oxygen audit in every district to contain the demand in every possible manner," he wrote to the Union Cabinet secretary.

Meanwhile, 250 tankers are being used for the supply of LMO.

er, everything crashes in such a situation. The way the load is increasing, your capacity is not able to match up to it," he said.

Of the 17,414 Covid-19 deaths in Delhi since the pandemic began, more than 5,050 have occurred in the last two weeks.

Delhi logged 448 deaths due to the deadly coronavirus on Monday, the highest in the city since the pandemic began ravaging countries.

The capital reported 407 deaths on Sunday, 412 on Saturday, 375 on Friday, 395 on Thursday, 368 on Wednesday, 381 on Tuesday, 380 on Monday, 350 on Sunday, and 357 on Saturday last week, according to government data.

— PTI

## SHORT TAKES

## 15 KILLED, 35 INJURED IN PAK BUS ACCIDENT

**Islamabad:** At least 15 people were killed and more than 35 others injured when a speeding passenger bus fell into a ravine in Pakistan's Punjab province, the police said on Tuesday.

The accident occurred on a motorway in Hasan Abdal area of Attock district. The bus was traveling from Lahore to Mardan in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. According to the police, the bus driver lost control while trying to avoid an accident with another car. The rescue teams shifted the dead and injured to a nearby hospital.

At least 15 people have lost their lives while over 35 others have been injured in the incident, the police said. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari expressed grief over the incident.

## EGYPT BUYS 30 RAFALE FIGHTER JETS

**Cairo:** Egypt's military has confirmed it ordered 30 Rafale jets from French defence firm Dassault Aviation to shore up "national security".

The order, which follows the 2015 purchase of 24 Rafale jets, will be financed through a 10-year loan, the military said in a statement late Monday.

Investigative site Disclose had reported earlier on Monday that the order was part of a secret mega-defence deal worth almost four billion euros (\$4.8 billion).

Egypt is the world's third biggest arms importer after Saudi Arabia and India, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Its arms purchases grew by 136 percent over the last decade and it has diversified its sourcing beyond the United States.

## UBER JOINS UK TECH FIRM FOR ELECTRIC CAR

**London:** Uber has teamed up with UK technology startup Arrival to create an electric car for the app-based US ride-hailing firm that will help to cut emissions, the pair said on Tuesday.

The vehicle is expected to enter production in the third quarter of 2023 and the two companies will "explore a strategic relationship in key markets, including the UK and EU," according to a statement. It comes after six-year-old Arrival, which is creating also electric vans and buses, listed on Wall Street's Nasdaq in March.

"Arrival, the global technology company creating electric vehicles using its game-changing technologies, is partnering with Uber to develop an affordable, purpose-built electric vehicle for ride-hailing drivers," the statement said.

The Arrival car "will address the global need to shift ride-hailing and car sharing services... to electric to reduce emissions and improve air quality in cities", it added.

## MARINE CORPS INSPECTOR GEN. GETS SUSPENDED

**San Diego:** The Marine Corps inspector general, Major General Robert Castellvi, has been suspended amid the ongoing probe into last summer's fatal sinking of a seafaring tank off the Southern California coast, a newspaper reported on Monday.

Nine men died in the accident involving an amphibious assault vehicle July 30 near San Clemente Island. Castellvi becomes the highest-ranking officer to face discipline in the multiple investigations into the disaster, the San Diego Union-Tribune reported. His suspension was announced by the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps commander in a hearing before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness on Monday.

Gen. David Berger, the commandant of the Marine Corps, ordered the suspension last week pending the outcome of the probe, the newspaper said. Castellvi was the commanding general of the Camp Pendleton-based 1st Marine Division until September.

He was named in a previous investigation as someone who has some responsibility in the accident. However, the Marines did not punish him.

## Bibi gets deadline until midnight to form coalition

**Jerusalem, May 4:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced a midnight deadline on Tuesday to put together a new coalition government — or be looking at the possibility of leading his Likud party into the opposition for the first time in 12 years.

Netanyahu has struggled to secure a parliamentary majority since March 23, when elections ended in deadlock for the fourth consecutive time in the past two years. Despite repeated meetings with many of his rivals and unprecedented outreach to the leader of a small Islamist Arab party, Netanyahu has not been able to close a deal during a four-week window. That window was to expire at midnight, at which point the matter returns to President Reuven Rivlin in the absence of an agreement.

A failure to reach a deal would not immediately push Netanyahu out of office. Rivlin could give him an additional two weeks to form a coalition. He could give one of Netanyahu's opponents an opportunity to form a government, or in a final move of desperation, send the matter straight to parliament. That would give lawmakers a chance to choose one of their own as a prime minister.

If all options fail, the country would face another



Benjamin Netanyahu

er election this fall, meaning months of continued political paralysis.

In the March 23 election, Netanyahu's Likud emerged as the largest single party, with 30 seats in the 120-member parliament. But to form a government, he needs to have the support of a 61-seat majority. That task has been complicated in large part by members of his own religious and nationalist base.

The New Hope party, led by a former Netanyahu aide, refuses to serve under the prime minister because of deep personal differences. Religious Zionism, a far-right party that espouses an openly racist platform, supports Netanyahu but has ruled out serving in a government with the Arab partners he has courted. Yamina, another right-wing party led by a former Netanyahu aide, has refused to commit to either him or his opponents.

—AP



Members of the Lebanese Communist Party burn a make-shift Israeli flag at a sit-in near the town of Naqoura on Tuesday, protesting against resumption of indirect talks on the demarcation of the maritime border. —AFP

## Lebanon, Israel resume talks on maritime border

**Naqoura (Lebanon), May 4:** After a nearly six-month pause, Lebanon and Israel on Tuesday resumed indirect talks with US mediation over their disputed maritime border.

The US has been mediating the issue for about a decade, but only late last year was a breakthrough reached on an agreement for a framework for US-mediated talks.

The talks began in October but stopped few weeks later. Israel and Lebanon have no diplomatic relations and are technically in a state of war. They each claim about 860 square kilometers (330 square miles) of the Mediterranean Sea as being within their own exclusive economic zones. In the second round of talks, the Lebanese delegation offered a new map that pushes for an additional 1,430 square kilometers for Lebanon. —AP

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legation offered a new map

that pushes for an addi-

tional 1,430 square kilo-

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and US officials to the Israelis. American Ambassador John Desrocher, who serves as the US mediator, arrived in Beirut on Monday night to take part in the talks. The US has been mediating the issue for about a decade, but only late last year was a breakthrough reached on an agreement for a framework for US-mediated talks.

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tional 1,430 square kilo-

meters for Lebanon. —AP

based on preliminary results from laboratory studies and clinical studies.

"These studies suggest

that the vaccine triggers

the production of antibodies"

that fight the Covid

"and may help protect against the disease," the agency said in a statement.

The EMA added that no application has yet been submitted for marketing authorisation. —AP

## Dr Fauci advises India to gather all resources

Country needs to build makeshift field hospitals, says expert

**Washington, May 4:**

Terming the situation in India "very desperate", America's top public health expert Dr Anthony Fauci has suggested the government marshal all its resources, including the armed forces, to immediately build makeshift field hospitals, and urged other countries to help with not only materials but also personnel.

In an exclusive interview, Fauci, who is the Chief Medical Adviser to US President Joe Biden, also called for a nationwide lockdown, not necessarily for six months but "for a few weeks" to break the "continuity and transmission of infection."

Dr Fauci's suggestions and dire assessment of India came as the number of new Covid infections in India officially passed 2 crore, almost double the number three months ago. Of these more than 2,20,000 people have died, according to official figures.

In contrast, the United States has recorded 3.2 crore cases and 5,77,000 deaths in a population that's one-fourth of India's 120 crore since the pandemic began. Still, because of India's inadequate healthcare infrastructure, weaker economy and lower standard of living, the suffering has been magnified, especially in the second wave that has led to a huge shortage of oxygen and hospital ICU beds.

The government says the infection rates have consistently dropped since April 30, when it recorded more than 400,000 cases. It reported over 355,000 cases on Tuesday. "Given the fact that India is under such terrible stress right now with the extent of the outbreak, the rest of the world should pitch in to help, similar to what the US is doing," he said.

"The world can help by supplying India with materials, and perhaps even personnel, but certainly materials that they need to adequately address it (the pandemic)," he said. The 80-year-old physician and immunologist, who serves as the director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, on Monday also recommended mass vaccination to arrest the current spread of the deadly disease across India. "Right now, they should start getting as many people vaccinated as they possibly can," Fauci said. —PTI

Washington, May 4: The travel ban imposed by US President Joe Biden for people coming from India, which is experiencing one of the worst waves of the Covid-19 pandemic, came into effect on Tuesday.

Biden issued a proclamation on Friday restricting travel from India starting from May 4.

Certain categories of students, academics, journalists and individuals have been exempted from the ban, according to the US State Department. —PTI

The 15,000 doses were flown in early hours of Tuesday to the Indian ocean island nation which is struggling to obtain Covid-19 vaccines because of the delay in getting them from the neighboring India.

Sri Lanka has ordered 13 million doses of the Sputnik V vaccine from Russia in the future. —AP



People walk through an alley near Houhai lake in Beijing during the Labour Day holidays, which take place from May 1 to May 5, on Tuesday. — AFP

## Chinese tourists move with ease as Covid fears recede

**Beijing, May 4:**

Sipping bubble tea and dressed in their holiday finest, millions of Chinese travellers flocked to domestic tourist attractions over the May 1 long holiday with Covid-19 fears already a distant memory.

Beijing's historic alleys were packed with camera-wielding visitors on Tuesday, while a bride dressed in red tulle took wedding photos with her groom outside the Forbidden City.

China has largely brought the virus under

## CHINA

Out-of-towners also mobbed popular sites in Shanghai over the weekend, many dragging roller bags and snapping selfies against the city skyline.

In Wuhan, where Covid-19 was first reported in late 2019, thousands of maskless revellers cheered and danced shoulder to shoulder at the outdoor Strawberry Music Festival.

China has largely brought the virus under

control with strict lockdowns and border controls since mid-2020, with only 17 cases among quarantined travellers reported in the country on Tuesday.

The Chinese economy recorded an explosive 18.3 per cent increase in GDP in the first quarter, and life in China has largely returned to normal aside from occasional small outbreaks, even as a devastating new wave of infections overwhelms neighbouring India. — AFP

## Lanka gets 1st batch of Sputnik V shots

**Colombo, May 4:** Sri Lanka has received its first batch of the Russia's Sputnik V vaccine.

The 15,000 doses were flown in early hours of Tuesday to the Indian ocean island nation which is struggling to obtain Covid-19 vaccines because of the delay in getting them from the neighboring India.

Sri Lanka has ordered 13 million doses of the Sputnik V vaccine from Russia in the future. —AP

the Russia's Gamaleya Institute. State Minister of Pharamaceutical Production, Supply and Regulation Channa Jayasuma, and officials from the Russian embassy were present at the country's main airport to receive the vaccines. Jayasuma said he was hopeful that Sri Lanka would receive the total of 13 million doses of the Sputnik V from Russia in the future.

— PTI

## NORTH KOREA PEOPLE WARNED AGAINST COVID STRUGGLE

**Seoul, May 4:** Isolated North Korea is warning its people to brace for a prolonged struggle against the Coronavirus, claiming that broadening outbreaks and muddled immunisation programmes in other countries show vaccines aren't the ultimate solution.

The column published on Pyongyang's official Rodong Sinmun newspaper came amid questions on when and how vaccines would arrive in North Korea. The UN-backed programme to ship Covid-19 vaccines worldwide said in February that North Korea could receive 1.9 million vaccine doses.

However, Covax has since warned of global shortages because the Serum Institute of India, which is licensed to produce the AstraZeneca vaccine, is putting its supplies into domestic demand. — AP

## UN extends help to Indian authorities

**United Nations, May 4:**

The UN team in India is supporting authorities to address the Covid-19 pandemic, including combatting misinformation, a spokesperson for UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said.

Stphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, told reporters at the daily press briefing on Monday that the UN team in India is working to promote the Secretary-General's 'Verified' campaign, which was launched last year to deliver trusted

information and life-saving advice amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

Launched in May last year, the Verified initiative is aimed at promoting and sharing verified and science-based content and fact-based advice.

Dujarric said that the United Nations Children's Fund in India continues to help with the national vaccination strategy. The agency is translating messages in many languages and stepping up its work with communities across 16 states, he said. — PTI

where Macron has a working majority, but it has been heavily criticised by environmental groups.

Campaigners see it as too timid given the pace of climate change globally and accuse the French leader of half-hearted commitment to a cause he has admitted to being belatedly.

**SHORT TAKES**  
**UK ADOPTS 3D SCANS FOR RAPID HEART DIAGNOSIS**

**London:** Britain's health service announced on Tuesday that it is rolling out revolutionary technology to diagnose and treat around 100,000 patients with suspected heart disease, five times faster than normal.

The National Health Service (NHS) said the technology known as HeartFlow turns a regular CT scan of the heart into a 3D image allowing doctors to diagnose life-threatening coronary heart disease in just 20 minutes. Previously patients would have to go into hospital for an invasive and time-consuming angiogram.

"The NHS Long Term Plan committed to cutting strokes, heart attacks and other major killers as well as ensuring patients would benefit from cutting edge therapies and techniques and HeartFlow is just the latest example of that," said NHS medical director Stephen Powis.

**SIKH MAN ATTACKED WITH HAMMER IN NY**

**New York:** A Sikh man was attacked with a hammer by a person of colour who shouted at him "I don't like you" and "You're not the same skin" at a hotel in Brooklyn here, prompting a prominent New-York based advocacy group to call on investigators to examine if the assault was a hate crime incident.

Sumit Ahluwalia, 32, of Astoria has said his assailant was fuelled by racial hatred, according to report on *New York Daily News* website. Ahluwalia said the man, a Black, assaulted him on April 26 at his workplace, the Quality Inn in Brownsville.

He said the man came into the lobby of the hotel at around 8 am and started shouting while the front desk lady asked him if he needed help.

**EU LAWMAKERS SEEK RELEASE OF ARMENIAN POWS**

**Brussels:** More than 120 members of European Parliament have urged the EU to increase pressure on Azerbaijan to release Armenian prisoners of war captured last year in fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh.

"We ask you to act to demand the return of all Armenian prisoners of war to their country," they said, in a letter to the heads of the European Commission, European Council and EU diplomatic service.

It called on the officials — Ursula von der Leyen, Charles Michel and Josep Borrell "to bring all our weight, and use all levers at our disposal, to demand that Azerbaijan purely and solely respect international law".

Armenia suffered a harrowing defeat in the six-week war last year that left at least 6,000 dead on both sides as Azerbaijan won back swathes of territory it lost in fighting some three decades earlier.

Under a Russia-brokered peace deal on November 9 to halt the bloodshed, the two sides agreed to return all prisoners of war and the remains of those killed in the fighting.

**NZ BIZMAN GIVES UP KNIGHTHOOD POST GUILTY PLEAS**

**Wellington:** A well-known New Zealand businessman who was found with hundreds of child sex abuse images gave up his knighthood Tuesday before it was stripped from him.

Ron Brierley last month pleaded guilty to three charges in an Australian court, sparking a rarely invoked procedure to strip him of the honor he received more than 30 years ago.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said her intention was to remove the title from Brierley if he hadn't written first to relinquish it. Ardern said Britain's Queen Elizabeth II had been informed, and that Brierley will longer be able to use the honorific Sir. I think its a sad day for the children of New Zealand and, indeed, the world, when someone is found guilty of possessing such horrendous images, Ardern told reporters. It is only right that there are significant consequences for that because as a country we have to reject anyone that thinks that is okay.

Ardern said Brierley had been found with over 1,000 images portraying children being abused, which had completely rewritten his history.

# Mexico metro accident kills 23

**Mayor Claudia Sheibaum hints at possibility of people getting stuck inside car**



An aerial view of subway cars dangle at an angle from a collapsed elevated section of the metro, in Mexico City, on Tuesday. The elevated section of Mexico City's metro collapsed late on Monday killing at least 23 people and injuring at least 79, city officials said.

Gisela Rioja Castro, 43, was looking for her husband, 42-year-old Miguel Angel Espinoza. She said that her husband always takes that train after finishing work at a store, but he never arrived home and had stopped answering his phone. When she heard what happened, she immediately feared the worst but has received no information from the authorities. "Nobody knows anything," she said.

The collapse occurred on the newest of the Mexico City subway's lines, Line 12, which stretches far into the city's south side. Like many of the city's dozen subway lines, it runs underground through more central areas of the city of 9 million, but then runs on elevated concrete structures on the city's outskirts.

The collapse could represent a major blow for Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary Marcelo Ebrard, who was Mexico City's mayor from 2006 to 2012, when Line 12 was built, and who is considered a potential presidential candidate in 2024 elections.

Allegations about poor design and construction on the subway line emerged soon after Ebrard left office as mayor. The line had to be partly closed in 2013 so tracks could be repaired.

Ebrard wrote on Twitter: "What happened today on the Metro is a terrible tragedy." Of course, the causes should be investigated and those responsible should be identified," he wrote.

## LANKA DEFERS DEBATE ON CHINA-BACKED COLOMBO PORT

**Colombo:** May 4: The Sri Lankan Parliament on Tuesday postponed a debate on the controversial Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill which was scheduled for discussion on Wednesday.

All party leaders in the House agreed that the debate should be rescheduled as the Supreme Court's determination on the constitutionality of the bill had not yet reached Parliament, officials said. The USD 1.4-billion Colombo Port City project, expected to play a key role in China's ambitious 'Maritime Silk Road' project in India's backyard, is said to be the single largest private sector development in the island.

China has built the port city on reclaimed sea, adjoining the Port of Colombo. The Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill aims to provide for a special economic zone to establish a commission to grant registrations, licenses, authorisations and other approvals to operate business in such economic zones. As per the schedule on

Wednesday, the Supreme Court's determination of the bill was to be read in Parliament by Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena before the House was opened to debate on it. However, the determination has not yet reached Parliament.

The apex court had concluded the examination of the bill on April 23. The Supreme Court has heard 18 petitions filed against the bill by the Opposition parties and civil groups. Some of the pleas called for the Supreme Court to order a national referendum and a vote of two-thirds majority in Parliament to pass the bill. The bill was gazetted on March 24 and placed in the order paper of Parliament on April 9.

## China's UN envoy seeks Myanmar coup resolution

**United Nations:** May 4: China's UN ambassador on Monday urged stronger diplomatic efforts to resolve the confrontation in Myanmar since the Feb. 1 military coup, warning that further violence could lead to a chaotic situation "and even a civil war".

Zhang Jun also warned that "any wrong handling" might lead to further tension in Myanmar. The UN Security Council on Friday strongly backed calls by Southeast Asian nations for an immediate cessation of violence and talks as a first step toward a solution following the military coup in Myanmar that ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her party and reversed years of slow progress toward democracy.

The council again demanded the restoration of democracy and the release of all detainees including Suu Kyi and condemned the use of violence against peaceful protesters and the deaths of hundreds of civilians. Zhang, who described Myanmar as "a friendly neighbour", strongly backed diplomatic efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations known as ASEAN and by UN special envoy for Myanmar Christine Schraner Burgener, and expressed hope they would produce results. He said "China is not in favor of imposing sanctions."

"We should really be creating a more favourable environment for bringing the country back to normal and finding a political solution through dialogue among the relevant political parties within

**● ZHANG JUN** warns that "any wrong handling" might lead to further tension in Myanmar.

**● MYANMAR** FOR five decades had languished under strict military rule that led to international isolation and sanctions.

the constitutional and legal framework," he said.

Myanmar for five decades had languished under strict military rule that led to international isolation and sanctions. As the generals loosened their grip, culminating in Suu Kyi's rise to leadership in 2015 elections, the international community responded by lifting most sanctions and pouring investment into the country. The coup took place following November elections, which Suu Kyi's party won overwhelmingly and the military contends was marred by fraud.

"It's mainly an issue relating to the difference on the election," Zhang said. "The political parties should be able to find a solution on that. So that's why China prefers ... more diplomatic efforts." "That's why China is working very closely with the relevant parties urging them really to refrain from going extreme, avoiding violence, and try to find a solution with dialogue. That's why the council is also now giving full support to the diplomatic efforts of ASEAN," he said.

It called for calm on all sides ahead of a planned mass protest on Wednesday, and stressed that security forces should only use firearms as a last resort.

Spokeswoman Marta Hurtado told reporters in Geneva that the situation remained volatile.

"What we can say clearly is that we have received reports, and we have witnesses, (of) excessive use of force by security officers, shooting, live ammunition being used, beatings of demonstrators and as well detentions," she said.

Protesters in Colombia called on Monday for a new mass rally after 19 people died and more than 800 were wounded in clashes during five days of demonstrations, according to official figures.

Separately, a European Union spokesman said the bloc also condemned "the death of the people killed during those protests, reports are saying that amounts to at least 19 victims, and one police officer."

**● UN CALLS** for calm on all sides ahead of a planned mass protest on Wednesday, and stressed on usage of firearms as a last resort.

## Political demonstration



Members of feminist group Femen protest in front of the poll station where the far right party Vox candidate Rocio Monasterio will vote during the regional election for a new regional assembly in Madrid, Spain, on Tuesday. Over 5 million Madrid residents are voting on Tuesday for a new regional assembly in an election that tests the depths of resistance to lockdown measures and the divide between left and right-wing parties.

— AP

## German man held for sending threat letters

**Berlin:** Police in Berlin have arrested a 53-year-old German man on suspicion of sending dozens of threatening letters to politicians, lawyers and journalists that were signed with the acronym of a far-right extremist group, officials said on Tuesday.

Prosecutors in Frankfurt, who are handling the case, said the man was detained in the German capital on Monday. The suspect, whose name wasn't released for privacy reasons, has previous convictions for "numerous crimes, including ones that were moti-

vated by right-wing ideology," prosecutors said.

The letters were signed "NSU 2.0" — a reference to the National Socialist Underground group that was responsible for a string of violent crimes between 1998 and 2011, including the racially motivated killings of nine men with immigrant backgrounds and a policewoman.

In July 2019, a regional politician from Chancellor Angela Merkel's party was killed by a neo-Nazi; three months later, a gunman tried to force his way into a synagogue on Yom Kippur, killing two people. In February of last year nine people with immigrant backgrounds were shot dead in Hanau, near Frankfurt, by a gunman who had called for genocide.

ained personal data on the people he targeted from official records or Darknet forums. German security agencies warned of the growing threat of violent far-right extremism.

In July 2019, a regional politician from Chancellor Angela Merkel's party was killed by a neo-Nazi; three months later, a gunman tried to force his way into a synagogue on Yom Kippur, killing two people. In February of last year nine people with immigrant backgrounds were shot dead in Hanau, near Frankfurt, by a gunman who had called for genocide.

— AP

## The Latin American country has around two million accounts for crypto trading

## Downfall of Argentine economy fuels crypto craze

**Buenos Aires:** May 4: Argentina's economic downturn, with high inflation, a deflating currency and a shortage of US dollars to invest in, has in fact proved a shot in the arm for one sector: cryptocurrency.

As they seek safe havens for their dwindling nest eggs, Argentines — used to buffering against economic crises — have been putting their money into Bitcoin, Tether, Ethereum or Dai.

The number of user accounts for investing in 'cryptos' has multiplied ten in Argentina since 2020," said Maximiliano Hinz, Latin American director of cryptocurrency exchange Binance, the world's largest by trade volume. There are now an estimated two million crypto trading accounts in the country of 45 million people.

Argentina has been in recession since 2018, with inflation averaging 45 per-

cent over the last three years, and a GDP contraction of 9.9 percent in 2020. Poverty haunts two in five people, and unemployment is at 11 per cent. For those wishing to put

money aside for a rainy day, cryptocurrencies offer relief from low interest rates and a government-imposed limit on greenback purchases of \$200 per month in a population accustomed to dollarising savings.

One Bitcoin is now worth about \$60,000, or 5.6 million pesos.

"It is no coincidence that Argentina and Venezuela, countries with high inflation, are the main crypto poles in South America,"

said Marcos Zocaro, a specialist in digital assets.

Where previously cryptocurrencies may have been the reserve of tech wizards, trading platforms "have evolved to create bridges to a public without financial education," said Sebastian Valdecantos, an economist and founder of Moneda PAR, an online Argentine credit system.

On some platforms it requires just two clicks to make a purchase or sale. Also no longer limited to

the rich, Argentines from all backgrounds and age groups are getting on board,

with investments possible from a single peso.

"I have older clients who used to be afraid of making a fixed deposit with a bank but are buying cryptocurrencies without fear of risk," said Zocaro.

In Argentina, it is becoming increasingly common to buy and sell everything on sites operating in virtual currency.

— AFP

## quick BITES

### INDICATORS %

Sensex	48,253.51	-0.95
Nifty 50	14,496.50	-0.94
S&P 500*	4,135.43	-1.37
Dollar (₹)	73.86	0.08
Pound Sterling (₹)	102.51	-0.09
Euro (₹)	88.68	0.46
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,758.97	0.20
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	68.82	1.87
IN 10-Yr T-bill yield	6.015	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.578	-0.028

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

### Telcos get nod for 5G trials, no Chinese tech

The DoT approved applications of telecom companies—Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone and MTNL—for conducting 5G trials but none of them will be using technologies of Chinese entities. The list of telecom gear makers approved for trials include Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung, C-DOT and Reliance Jio's indigenously developed technologies. This means that Chinese gear makers will not be part of the 5G trials.

### Steel makers hike prices of HRC, CRC by ₹4,500/t



Steel makers have hiked the prices of hot rolled coil (HRC) and cold rolled coil (CRC) by Rs 4,000 and Rs 4,500 per tonne, respectively, sources said. After the price revision, the cost of a tonne of HRC will be Rs 67,000 and CRC, Rs 80,000. The price revisions have been made in the last three days, the sources said. They said the prices of HRC and CRC could again be increased by Rs 2,000-4,000 per tonne.

### RBL Bank Q4 net dives 34% as provisions rise

Small-sized lender RBL Bank reported a 34 per cent decline in its March quarter profit to Rs 75 crore compared to Rs 114 crore in the year-ago period due to provisioning for possible loan losses in the retail unsecured segments. The Mumbai-based lender's net profit for FY21 increased marginally to Rs 508 crore from Rs 506 crore. The bank's core net interest income was down 11 per cent during the quarter at Rs 906 crore.

### CIL work slowed as employees catch Covid-19

Coal India Ltd said its operations slowed down with more than 5,400 of its employees and their wards across subsidiaries testing positive for the coronavirus. But offtake rose to 54.1 million tonne last month. "Ofttake could have been even higher but the pandemic spread affected over 5,400 company's employees and their wards across subsidiaries, including contractual workers, slowing down the operations."

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## Sales, production halve in busy season Cold summer for durables

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, MAY 4

After a total washout last summer, consumer durables, especially cooling products, are facing yet another difficult summer. While sales are almost half of 2019 summer, production is down by 60 to 70 per cent.

"Due to the nation-wide lockdown last year, summer sales were completely lost. This time, the second wave and the lockdowns in some of the states and an overall fear about the pandemic has affected the sales. If we compare with a good summer of 2019, this year's sales are 45 to 50 per cent," said Kamal Nandi, head executive VP, business at Godrej Group.

The onset of the summer season was strong, as the distribution channels were stocking up in March. Expected price hikes in April on account of rising commodity prices also led to the demand across the channel. However, the second



Covid wave has been a dampener for secondary sales across key geographies in the country, with the south faring marginally better than other regions, says Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

For cooling products like air-conditioners, air-coolers and fans, almost 50 per cent of the yearly sales happens during the March to May season. Further production also is down to 30-40 per cent of the 2019 summer, as the oxygen needed at production units has been diverted for Covid patients. Most of the units are either shut or working at a

fraction of their capacities, said Nandi.

Though manufacturing is down, there is no let up in the uptrend in commodity prices, with prices of metals such as copper, aluminium and steel going up by 16 per cent, 7 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively, in a quarter. Prices have zoomed 30 to 60 per cent in a year. The trouble is that despite the higher input costs, consumer durable companies were not able to hike prices in April due to subdued demand and aggressive marketing by deep-pocketed players like Samsung.

### Serum leads cross-sector investments into UK

ADITI KHANNA  
LONDON, MAY 4

Serum Institute of India will invest 240 million pounds in the UK to expand its vaccine business and set up a new sales office, creating a large number of jobs, Downing Street announced as part of plans for a 1-billion pound India-UK Enhanced Trade Partnership creating around 6,500 jobs in Britain.

The announcement came ahead of a virtual summit between Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and Narendra Modi on Tuesday.

The Pune-based vaccine-maker headed by CEO Adar Poonawalla is among a list of nearly 20 Indian companies across sectors such as healthcare, biotech and software services to announce significant investment plans in the UK this week. It was also revealed that Serum Institute has started phase-I trials in the UK of a nasal vaccine against the coronavirus.

"The sales office is expected to generate new business worth over \$1 billion, 200 million pounds of which will be invested into the UK," Downing Street said.

"Serum's investment will support clinical trials, research & development and possibly manufacturing of vaccines. This will help the UK and the world to defeat the coronavirus," it said.

— PTI

## Bill and Melinda Gates to divorce with \$146 bn at stake

DINA BASS,  
SOPHIE ALEXANDER &  
DEVON PENDLETON  
MAY 4

Bill and Melinda Gates, who for decades have overseen one of history's greatest fortunes and philanthropic operations, said they plan to divorce.

The announcement on Monday that the couple is splitting after 27 years of marriage has the power to ripple through the technology industry, a vast portfolio of business and real estate holdings and into the realms of global health, climate change policy and social issues, including equality for women.

The pair, who command an estimated \$146 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, made no public hint of their financial plans, though they emphasised that they will cooperate on continuing their philanthropy.

"After a great deal of thought and a lot of work on our relationship, we have made the decision to end our marriage," the two said in a brief statement posted on Twitter. "We have raised three incredible children and built a foundation that works all over the world to enable all people to lead healthy, productive lives."

"Bill Gates, the 65-year-old co-founder of Microsoft Corp, ranks as the world's fourth-richest person. Melinda Gates, 56, is a former Microsoft manager who's gained international prominence as co-running the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation over the terms. It calls their marriage 'irretrievably broken.'

It's the second bombshell divorce among the uppermost ranks of the world's richest people in recent years, following the 2019 separation announcement of Jeff Bezos and MacKenzie Scott.

That split, which divided the couple's stake in Amazon.com Inc, immediately made MacKenzie



one of the world's richest people. In the months that followed, she became one of the most influential philanthropists in the world, giving away billions of dollars to often overlooked causes among billionaire donors.

But for Bill and Melinda Gates, separating assets potentially poses a bigger challenge than dividing the Bezos fortune, which was largely concentrated in Amazon stock.

Bill Gates' net worth originated with Microsoft but shares of the software-maker now probably make up less than 20 per cent of his assets. He's shifted much of his stake into the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation over the years and his exact stake hasn't been disclosed since he left Microsoft's board last year.

Gates's biggest asset is Cascade Investment, a holding company he created with the proceeds of Microsoft stock sales and dividends that's run by Michael Larson.

Through Cascade, Gates has interests in real estate, energy and hospitality as well as stakes in dozens of public companies, including Canadian National Railway and Deere & Co.

— Bloomberg

### DELL AMONG 19 FIRMS APPLIED FOR HARDWARE PLI SCHEME

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, MAY 4

The government has received applications from 19 companies for the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for IT hardware.

The electronic equipment manufacturing companies that have applied under the

category IT hardware companies are Dell, ICT (Wistron), Flextronics, Rising Stars Hi-Tech, DigiLife, HLBS, RDP Workstations and Conocis.

The target IT hardware segments under the proposed scheme include laptops, tablets, all-in-one personal computers and servers.

— PTI

### Bajaj pledges ₹200 crore, Tata to fly in 02 tankers

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
with agency inputs  
PUNE, MAY 4

tireless effort to contain the spread, amidst adversity.

"As the nation grapples with this second wave of the pandemic, we as a group, continue to remain steadfast in our commitment towards extending all our support and care in helping the affected communities at large to tide through these unprecedented times," Rahul Bajaj, chairman-emeritus at Bajaj Auto, said.

Tata Group will airlift 60 cryogenic oxygen tankers from abroad and build around 400 oxygen generating units that can be used by hospitals in small towns.

Besides, the group makes around 5,000 beds available for Covid-19, with various group firms coming together in the fight against Covid-19.

The group is also reskilling some of its staff, especially within Indian Hotels, which has converted many of its hotels into Covid-care facilities.

"As we speak, we are making available around 900 MT of oxygen per day, that is Tata Steel alone," said Bammali Agrawala, president-infrastructure, defence & aerospace and global corporate affairs, Tatas Sons.

Agrawala also lauded the government for providing planes from the Air Force to bring some of the containers.

— PTI

### Top jewellery maker to shun mined diamonds

CHRISTIAN WIENBERG  
MAY 4



markets in 2022.

The decision to shun mined diamonds comes less than a year after Pandora pledged to stop relying on newly mined gold and silver in its jewellery. By 2025, its entire production will use only recycled precious metals as part of a plan to ensure its operations are carbon neutral within four years.

Pandora, which is based in Copenhagen, said on Tuesday it will now only use diamonds manufactured in laboratories. The company is set to release its first collection using lab-made stones in the UK, and will turn to other

markets in 2022.

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Pandora is taking a stand on its raw materials as investors increasingly focus on sustainability. Nordea's asset management unit recently said it plans only to hold securities that live up to environmental, social and governance standards across all its portfolios.

To be sure, Pandora uses relatively few diamonds in its production. The company, which has branded itself a maker of affordable trinkets, used mined diamonds in about 50,000 pieces last year out of a total of roughly 85 million pieces of jewellery.

Pandora also highlights

### DIESEL TO HAVE BIODIESEL MIX FROM USED COOKING OIL

New Delhi, May 4: India on Tuesday began experimenting with doping diesel with a small portion of biodiesel extracted from leftover cooking oil in kitchens to cut reliance on imports as well as reducing carbon emissions.

Global

diesel sales fell 15 per cent in 2020 due to lockdowns, travel restrictions and economic uncertainty, according to a research report by the Antwerp World Diamond Centre and Bain & Co. Production of rough diamonds fell 20 per cent in 2020 and prices declined by 11 per cent.

The market for lab-created stones currently enjoys double-digit growth, with younger customers in particular keen to identify sustainable producers, according to the Bain report. The lab-made diamonds will have the same physical characteristics as mined stones, Pandora said. The new collection will include rings, bangles, necklaces and earrings, it said.

— Bloomberg

### Chip stocking strategy helps Hyundai: COO

GABRIELLE COPPOLA  
MAY 4

ies. South Korea's Hyundai sold 77,523 units last month, up 128 per cent from a year ago. The Japanese auto giant's US sales grew 183 per cent to 239,311 vehicles, including the Toyota and Lexus brands.

Automakers around the

the excess chip-making capacity, they've been caught flat-footed.

"Most of our competitors decided to cut the orders," Jose Munoz, Hyundai's global chief operating officer, said in an interview. "We saw the market differently."

— Bloomberg

### VOLVO CAR INDIA HIKES PRICES

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, MAY 4

Swedish luxury car maker Volvo Car India has increased the prices of its luxury sedans S90 and pre-series SUVs XC40, XC60 and XC90 ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh effective from May 3. It also hinted that the price of the Volvo models will see another price hike later this year.

After the price revision, the Volvo S90 D4 Inscription will be available at Rs 60.90 lakh, while the Volvo S60 T4 Inscription will be available at Rs 45.90 lakh.

### SUSTAINABLE | SOLUTION Company will feed food waste to crickets and mealworms

### Insects fed food waste to become fish feed



The project looks to replace traditional fish and soybean meal as the main sources of protein for aquafeed. The insects will eat the

food waste and convert it into body biomass containing about 60 per cent protein. The dried larvae will then be made into

insects are emerging as a sustainable solution to several problems. Using a fraction of land and emitting less carbon, they turn food waste into feed and offer an alternative source of protein. Ynsect SAS, a French startup that breeds mealworms to feed fish and pets, attracted money from investors, including "Iron Man" movie actor Robert Downey Jr. in a round of funding last year.

The deal will give Singapore's

farmers access to domestically produced animal feed, which is traditionally purchased from overseas. The Southeast Asian nation imports more than 90 per cent of its food and has set a goal to produce a third of its food locally by 2030. It also aims to achieve an overall recycling rate of 70 per cent by then. Currently, less than 20 per cent of Singapore's food waste is recycled.

As part of the partnership, Dubai-based dnata will add Blue Aqua to its list of suppliers to purchase locally farmed seafood for its catering operations.

— Bloomberg

**SHORT TAKES**  
**Padukone tests +ve, hospitalised**

New Delhi: Legendary Indian badminton player Prakash Padukone has tested positive for COVID-19 and is recovering from the infection at a hospital in Bengaluru. The 65-year-old, who is the first Indian to win the prestigious All England Championships title in 1980, is likely to be discharged later this week. "Around 10 days back, Prakash, his wife (Ujala) and second daughter (Anisha), they developed symptoms and got themselves tested and the results came out to be positive," Vimal Kumar, a close friend of the legendary shuttler and director at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) said. "They got themselves isolated but after a week Prakash's fever didn't come down, so last Saturday, he was admitted to a hospital here in Bengaluru. He is okay now." — PTI

**Top boxing official dies of Covid-19**

New Delhi: The Boxing Federation of India's Executive Director R. K. Sacheti died on Tuesday after battling COVID-19. He was 56. The long-serving administrator was fighting the dreaded infection at a hospital here for the past few days and was on ventilator support. "With a deep sense of sorrow & grief, we inform you that Mr. RK Sacheti, ED (BFI) left for heavenly abode today morning, creating a huge void in the sports world," the BFI said in a statement. BFI President Ajay Singh said Sacheti was the "life and soul" of the national federation. "Indian boxing reaching such heights in the last few years was largely his contribution. We will miss him dearly. Boxing will miss him. Indian sport will miss him. Rest in peace my dear friend. We will always be proud of you," Singh said. — PTI

**Hockey League matches put off**

Lausanne: India's upcoming FIH Hockey Pro League away fixtures against Spain and Germany later this month have been postponed due to the international travel restrictions imposed in the wake of surging Covid-19 cases in the Asian country, the world body (FIH) informed on Tuesday. The Indian men's hockey team was scheduled to play against Spain on May 15 and 16, followed by the two-leg tie in Germany on May 23 and 24. "Since the matches initially planned in London on 8-9 May were also postponed we are currently looking at all potential options to rearrange these matches at a later date," the international hockey federation said. — PTI

**Irregularities found in Maradona death**

Buenos Aires: A medical report on the death of Diego Maradona given to prosecutors said the Argentine legend agonised for more than 12 hours, did not receive adequate treatment and could still be alive if he had been properly hospitalised. The medical panel worked for two months on the report which was written by more than 20 doctors. The document further complicates the defence of seven people under investigation in the case, including brain surgeon Leopoldo Luque and psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov, both of whom worked for Maradona. The medical report said "the patient's signs of risk of life were ignored," adding that Maradona "showed unequivocal signs of a prolonged agony period" of at least 12 hours. The document also said the attention Maradona was getting "did not fulfil the minimum requirements" — AP

**4 Indian women to play in Hundred**

New Delhi: The BCCI has granted No Objection Certificates to four Indian women cricketers, including T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur, to play in the inaugural 'Hundred' tournament in the UK starting on July 21. Opener Smriti Mandhana and all-rounder Deepa Sharma are among the four bound for the 100-ball tournament. The name of the fourth player is not yet known. — PTI

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# INDIA MAY LOSE THE CUP

T20 World Cup set for UAE shift with 3rd wave expected in Nov.

New Delhi, May 4: This year's T20 World Cup is set to be moved from India to the UAE with the BCCI acknowledging that none of the participating teams would be "comfortable" coming here because "a third wave" of Covid-19 cases is expected at the time of the event.

While a final decision will be taken in a month's time but it is understood that even the Indian cricket board is jittery about holding the 16-team tournament in October-November after the ongoing IPL had to be suspended because of multiple Covid-19 cases inside the bio-bubble.

It's learnt BCCI officials have had very recent discussions with some of the top decision-makers in the central government and a shift to the UAE has been more or less agreed upon. The dates of the marquee competition, which was planned across nine venues, have not yet been finalised.

"The suspension of IPL within four weeks is an indicator that it's not really safe to host a global event of that magnitude at a time when the country is fighting its worst health crisis in last 70 years," a senior BCCI source privy to development said on conditions of anonymity.

"There is a chance of a third wave hitting the Indian shores in November. So while BCCI will remain the hosts, the tournament will probably shift to the UAE," he added.

Health experts have warned of a third wave in India in September, a view that has been shared by Maharashtra health minister Rajesh Tope.

The dire situation in India, where a daily addition of over 3 lakh new



A groundsman fumigates the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi.

cases has continued for the past many days, has shaken most of the member boards and the ICC is unlikely to take a risk with safety of international cricket teams.

"You can be rest assured that most of the top nations wouldn't like to tour India within next six months unless the situation comes to normalcy. The players and their families would be very wary to travel if they are in the middle of another surge."

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