

WINDOWS



RAMZAN TIMINGS

IFTAR (SUN) 06:35 PM

SAHER (MON) 04:38 AM



Saat Rasta wears a deserted look during restrictions imposed by the state government amid rising Covid-19 cases, in Mumbai on Saturday

BSF foils Pakistan's drone intrusion bid

JAMMU: BSF troops in Arnia sector of Jammu district foiled a drone intrusion bid by Pakistan on the International Border by firing upon two drones/UAVs that they observed entering from Pakistan side and compelled them to retreat. An official statement issued by the BSF said, "Today alert BSF troops in Arnia Sector foiled drone intrusion bid by Pakistan on International Border. During the morning hours, two drones/UAV were observed entering from Pakistan side and immediately fired upon by vigilant BSF troops which compelled it to retreat back to Pakistan territory." The BSF said the drone intrusion bid foiled by BSF Jammu troops is indicative of alertness and swift retaliatory action by BSF on a drone intrusion from Pak side.

"The BSF intelligence branch was receiving inputs about possible use of drones by Pakistan for ferrying arms and ammunition from Pakistan into Indian side. Accordingly, the troops are on alert and the border domination was exponentially increased," the statement said. It further said, "Despite the existence of ceasefire agreement between Pakistan and India, Pakistan Rangers did not stop their nefarious activities against India and carried on with their ill motives on International Border in Jammu.

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CHANNIL

If the situation doesn't improve soon, politicians might blame us for oxygen shortage

Justice N V Ramana sworn in as CJI

Appointed as 48th CJI, he holds the post till Aug 26, 2022



He succeeds Justice SA Bobde, who retired on Friday.

Justice Ramana will hold the post for 16 months, until August 26, 2022.

Justice Ramana takes over at a time when the judiciary is going back to a virtual mode, due to the second wave of Covid-19, and is entrusted with ensuring un-interrupted access to justice.

As Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority, Justice Ramana led efforts to ensure training to lawyers and litigants to adapt to e-courts during the pandemic.

Born on August 27, 1957 in Ponnavaaram village in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, Justice Ramana is the youngest of three siblings. **Continued on Page 4**

Euphoria in Ponnavaaram **P4**

10 killed in Uttarakhand glacier burst

NEW DELHI: At least 10 people died and eight are still missing after an avalanche occurred near the Indo-China border in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district late on Friday. The avalanche occurred after a part of a glacier collapsed beyond Sumna on Sumna-Rimkhim road where labourers were engaged in road construction work.

Rescue operations were launched by the Indian Army immediately and 430 persons were rescued. Ten bodies have been recovered so far from the avalanche site. Seven persons have sustained critical injuries and are undergoing treatment.

Of the seven injured, six have been admitted to Military Hospital in Joshimath while one has been treated at the Military Hospital in Dehradun.

"Border Roads teams from Joshimath clearing the area from Bhapkund to Sumna. It is expected to take another 6-8 hours," an official said. The area has been witnessing heavy rains and snow for the past five days.

"Rescue operations were launched by the Indian Army immediately....Rescue operations to locate other labourers at both the camps are continuing," said an army official.

COVID CRISIS

IT'S TSUNAMI NOT A WAVE: DELHI HC

'Will hang anyone who obstructs oxygen supply'

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court on Saturday asked the Centre about the preparedness to deal with the expected Covid-19 second wave peak in mid-May, terming the massive rise in cases as a 'tsunami', and warned it will 'hang' any person who tries to obstruct oxygen supplies to hospitals here.

Talking tough, a bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli, said this during a special hearing on a holiday on the issue of mounting oxygen crisis in various hospitals in Delhi. The court said the viral disease has a low mortality and those who have a low immunity will eventually die but the problem comes when people who could be saved are also dying. "The mortality rate needs to be reduced." Referring to a study by a team of scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur, the court noted its assessment that the peak of this Covid wave will come in mid-May.

"We are calling it a wave, it is actually a tsunami," the court said, and asked the Centre about the preparedness in terms of infrastructure, hospitals, medical staff, medicines, vaccines and oxygen as on date for the peak.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, said there might be a rapid rise in the number of

A man breaks down after losing his relative at Jaipur Golden hospital, Rohini, New Delhi on Saturday

OXYGEN SHORTAGE

25 Covid patients die at JGH

NEW DELHI

TWENTY-FIVE people died late on Friday at the Jaipur Golden Hospital (JGH) in Delhi due to shortage of medical oxygen, a top official at the hospital said, highlighting the worsening situation in the national capital's hospitals.

"We had been allotted 3.5 metric tonnes of oxygen from the government. The supply was to reach us by 5 in the evening, but it reached around midnight. By then, 25 patients had died," Dr DK Baluja, Medical Director at Jaipur Golden Hospital, said.

At least 215 Covid patients admitted at the hospital are critical and in dire need of oxygen, he added. The hospital has now approached the Delhi High Court for help.

"There is big human tragedy coming in next few minutes in our hospital. We have already lost 25 lives. We are gasping for oxygen.

Continued on Page 4

cases in May and June and the country needs to be ready for the worst. He said the Prime Minister and others are working on it and have decided to import oxygen and are also exploring the remotest possibility of generating oxygen from wherever it is possible. The court was

Bid to mitigate oxygen crisis IAF airlifts O₂ containers from Singapore

NEW DELHI

THE Indian Air Force (IAF) has begun airlifting oxygen containers from Singapore amid the acute oxygen shortage in India. The country has been witnessing a sharp rise in Covid-19 cases, leading to shortage of oxygen supply across various states. The first set of four containers will land in Panagarh. After getting refilled, they will be transported to different parts of the country.

try. "One C-17 of Indian Air Force got airborne at 2 am on Saturday from Hindan Air Base for Changi International Airport, Singapore. The aircraft arrived in Singapore at 7.45 am," the Indian Air Force said. "After loading 4 containers of cryogenic oxygen tanks, it will leave for Singapore and will then land at Panagarh air base. These containers will then be offloaded in the evening," the IAF said.

One C-17 of IAF with liquid O2 containers loaded at Changi airport, Singapore, and headed for Panagarh Air Base, to meet the shortage of medical oxygen for Covid-19 patients in India

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Customs duty on vax, oxygen imports waived

NEW DELHI

IN a bid to boost medical oxygen availability in the country amid a severe shortage across several states, including the national capital, the Central government on Saturday decided to waive basic customs duty and health cess on the import of oxygen and related equipment for a period of three months with immediate effect.

At a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a decision was also taken to exempt basic customs duty on the import of Covid vaccines with immediate effect for three months, a statement said.

Further, it asserted that the Centre has taken a lot of measures in the last few days to accelerate supply of medical equipment and oxygen.

The Prime Minister, at the meeting, emphasised that there was an immediate need to augment the supply of medical-grade oxygen as well as equipment required for patient care both at home and in hospitals. He also stressed that all ministries and departments need to work in synergy to up the availability of oxygen and medical supplies.

Modi further directed the Revenue department to ensure seamless and quick custom clearance of such equipment, the statement said. He was told that basic customs duty was exempted on Remdesivir and its API (active pharmaceutical ingredient) recently, and a suggestion was made that the import of equipment related to providing oxygen to patients needs to be expedited, the statement said, announcing the measures.

The items to benefit from the decision include medical grade oxygen, oxygen concentrator along with flow meter, regulator, connectors and tubing vacuum pressure swing Alabsorption (VPSA) and pressure swing absorption (PSA) oxygen plants, cryogenic oxygen air separation units (ASUs) producing liquid/gaseous oxygen.

AP places huge order for Covid vaccines

Plans to buy 4.08 cr doses each of Covaxin, Covishield

AMARAVATI

THE Andhra Pradesh government on Saturday placed an order for purchase of 4.08 crore doses each of Covaxin and Covishield for vaccinating 2.04 crore people in the 18-45 age group from May 1.

Principal Secretary (Covid Management and Vaccination) Muddada Ravichandra wrote letters to Bharat Biotech MD Krishna Ella and Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla in this regard. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had announced on Friday that all 2.04 crore people in the 18-45 age group would be given the coronavirus vaccine free-of-cost from May 1. "Extensive

arrangements are made at the State Vaccine Stores (Gannavaram), regional and district vaccine stores with state-of-the-art equipment for maintenance of vaccines and proper linkage of supply and monitoring. A mechanism to vaccinate over six lakh people per day is already in place in our state," Ravichandra said in the letter.

The Principal Secretary said the government was committed to vaccinate all people on a mission mode. "Hence, the vaccine doses may be supplied, as early as possible, directly to the state government and payment shall be made as per the commercials, as per rules," he added.

Phase 3 vaccination: Get ready with field hosps, Centre tells States

NEW DELHI

UNION Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan has asked the States and UTs to consider setting up of field hospitals with help from government research agencies or the private sector as vaccinations will be opened to all above 18 from May 1.

"States can take help from agencies like the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and simi-

lar agencies in the private sector to build field hospitals," the government said.

The Centre on Saturday released a strategy guide to take Phase 3 vaccination drive forward in the country.

Along with Rajesh Bhushan, Dr RS Sharma, chairman of the empowered group on technology and data management on Covid-19, also chaired a high-level meeting to guide the States/UTs on effective implementation of the New Vaccination Strategy

(Phase-3).

Dr Sharma noted that the CoWIN platform has now stabilised and is working at scale flawlessly. It is equipped to handle the complexities of the new phase of vaccination starting from May 1.

He highlighted the importance of uploading correct and timely data by states and UTs as any incorrect data would compromise the integrity of the entire system.

With regards to the Phase III Vaccination strat-

egy, the states were specifically advised to:

- Register additional private COVID Vaccination Centres (CVCs) in mission mode by engaging

with private hospitals, hospitals of industrial establishments, Industry Associations, etc, coordinating with designated appropriate authority, mechanism for applications/requests and their processing and monitoring of pendency of registration.

- Monitor the number of hospitals that have procured vaccines and have declared stocks and prices on COWIN.
- Schedule vaccination for the eligible population

for providing adequate visibility of vaccination slots on COWIN.

- Prioritize decision regarding direct procurement of vaccines by state/UT government.
- Publicize about facility of 'only online registration' for age groups 18-45 years.
- Train CVC staff about vaccination, AEFT reporting and management, use of COWIN – training schedule and reconciliation of vaccine stocks have been already

provided to private CVCs.

- Coordinate with law-and-order authorities for effective crowd management at CVCs.
- Regarding infrastructure augmentation for effective clinical treatment of the hospitalized Covid-19 patients, states were advised to review their existing hospital and other Covid treatment infrastructure in view of the daily new case, daily fatality and those that would require hospitalization.

Don't make TSPSC
a rehabilitation
centre, TSIV
urges govt

Requests the State
government to instill
confidence among
unemployed youth by
appointing efficient civil
servants and top
academicians as the
TSPSC chairman and
its members

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana State Intermediate Vidya Joint Action Committee (TSIV-JAC) on Saturday urged the State government to not to allow the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) to become a rehabilitation centre. The TSIV-JAC chairman Madhusudhan Reddy on Saturday reminded that the separate state of Telangana was fought for "Nillu, Nidulu and Niyamakalu" (water, funds and jobs). Though the first two objectives have been achieved, the TSPSC has completely failed to live up to the aspirations of the unemployed youth in the State for the last six years.

He reminded how none other than Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has expressed his disappointment at the functioning of the TSPSC. Also, the Chief Minister had taken a bold decision to fill 50,000 job vacancies, against this backdrop, it should be ensured that the recruitment process was transparent without facing any legal and technical hurdles. For this, he asked the State government to instill confidence among the unemployed youth by appointing efficient civil servants and top academicians in the country as the TSPSC chairman and members. He stressed an urgent need to revive the image of the TSPSC as a professional body with the highest standards in the country.

ULB polls: TRS leaders reluctant
to campaign amid Covid surge

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

WITH many leaders testing Covid positive after the Nagarjunsagar bypoll, some of the TRS leaders, who are entrusted with the job of campaigning in the Urban Local Bodies going for polls in the month end, are a worried lot. With only three days left for campaigning, several leaders are remaining indoors fearing Covid infection.

After the State Election Commission announced that it was going ahead with elections in two municipal corporations, five municipalities and other divisions in the State, the campaign has picked up pace. However, the TRS leaders are now worrying over contracting virus if gone out for campaigning akin to Sagar by-

- With only three days left for campaigning, several leaders are remaining indoors fearing Covid infection
- The TRS leaders are worrying over contracting virus if gone out for campaigning akin to Sagar bypoll where over 160 tested positive



(File Photo) TRS leaders campaigning in Nagarjunsagar

poll where over 160 tested positive, including Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao and party Sagar candidate Nomula Bhagat.

The leaders, including MLAs, who campaigned in Sagar had to be in isolation after the spike in cases in the constituency. These

leaders had limited themselves to their houses for more than a week. However, the leaders were given the next task of campaigning in the municipal elections in Khammam, Warangal and other places. A senior leader who was given the responsibility in

Warangal was hesitant to travel. The leader is learnt to have told his followers that he was mentally not ready to travel again as he had campaigned for over a month in Sagar. The TRS leader said that he would take a call whether to go for campaign or

not after interacting with the local leadership.

The opposition party leaders have already complained to the election authorities demanding a ban on the leaders campaigning in Nagarjunsagar. The Congress leaders pointed out that these leaders had campaigned in the constituency where hundreds of positive cases have come out and suspected that some of them may become carriers of the virus.

The party leaders, who actively took part in the campaign in Sagar, are seen reluctant to go public in the civic polls especially after Chief Minister, Minister KT Rama Rao, MP J Santosh testing positive, said the TRS leader. While the election campaign will end on April 27, and the election will be held on April 30, results will be announced on May 3.

Minister, MLA
campaign
in Kothur

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KOTHUR

EXCISE and Sports Minister Srinivas Goud along with Shadnagar MLA Anjaiah Yadav made pooris as part of election campaign for the upcoming elections to Kothur municipality. Campaigning in Kothur on Saturday, the Minister stopped at a hotel where he displayed off his cooking skills. Later, the duo met the traders in the locality and urged them to cast their votes in favour of TRS candidates. Speaking on the occasion, Srinivas Goud appealed to the voters to vote for TRS candidates who he assured would work for the development of Kothur Municipality. He said that the TRS party was aware of the problems and the party councillors would work towards solving them. Party leaders, activists and local people were present.

HANUMAN JAYANTI
Bajrang Dal to take
out bike rally with
Deeksha devotees

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Bajrang Dal on Saturday announced that it would take up Vir Hanuman Vijay Yatra bike rally on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti on April 27, with those who are observing Hanuman Deeksha.

Addressing a press conference here, Bajrang Dal convenor Subhash Chander and co-convenor Kumara Swamy said that the rally would start at 9.30 am from Gowliguda Ram Mandir after hawan and pooja at 8 am and would cul-

minate at Tadbund Veeranjaneeya Swamy temple. "There would be one person on the bike and the person should be involved in Hanuman Deeksha. No other person would be allowed in the bike rally other than those having Hanuman mala," said Subhash Chander.

He further added that the rally would be taken out in complete compliance with Covid 19 rules prescribed by the State government. He said that they had applied for the permission but there was no response from the police as of now.

CS calls for judicious use of medical oxygen

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

CHIEF Secretary Somesh Kumar has directed the State Health officials to have a triage in every hospital to effectively provide treatment based on patient's condition. He also directed to make optimum use of Corona Care Centres (CCC), and patients with mild symptoms can be treated at these centres. He said that no patient should be denied treatment when they come to the hospital.

The Chief Secretary held a video conference with the District Collectors, Additional Collectors, District Hospital/Area Hospital Superintendents and other officials on steps to be taken to control Covid-19, from BRKR Bhavan here on Saturday.

The Chief Secretary empha-

- Directs district authorities to ensure sufficient medical oxygen supplies to all hospitals in the State
- Instructs officials to convert available wards into Covid wards to accommodate more patients



- Informs government sanctioned Rs 20 crore to setup additional 12,000 beds with oxygen facility

sised the imperative need to judicious and optimal way to utilise the infrastructure and human resources for effective management of Covid control. He stressed the need to synergise the efforts of all the departments to combat Covid pandemic. The Collectors were

empowered to draft personnel from other departments and also to recruit personnel on temporary basis, if necessary. Somesh Kumar also asked district authorities to ensure sufficient medical oxygen supplies were available in all hospitals in the State. He stressed

the need to judiciously utilise the oxygen which was precious at this moment and to ensure that not a single unit of oxygen was wasted. It has been emphasised that effective management of present Covid wave was largely dependent on effective utilisation of oxygen.

He directed the officials to convert essential available wards into Covid wards with oxygen supported beds and ICU with ventilators facility to accommodate more patients. He also suggested to utilise all the infrastructure and human resources available in teaching hospitals. The Chief Secretary informed that the government has sanctioned Rs 20 crore to setup additional 12,000 beds with oxygen facility to augment the Covid situation in coming days. He instructed District Collectors to complete the task on war footing.

BJP asks cadres to
campaign aggressively
for ULB polls



HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHADNAGAR

TELANGANA State BJP in-charge Tarun Chugh along with National Backward Classes Commission member T Achari attended the party plenary meeting in Kothur of Shadnagar constituency on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion, Tarun Chugh said that development has gone in vain under the ruling of Telangana Rashtra Samithi government. He said that all BJP leaders and activists should partici-

pate in the election campaign for Kothur municipality by duly following the Covid safety norms. Every BJP leader and activist should take election campaign as a duty and should work hard for the party's victory.

BJP national vice-president DK Aruna, Telangana state general secretary Pradeep Kumar, district president Bokka Narsingha Reddy, Shadnagar BJP in-charge Srivardhan Reddy, leaders Anjan Kumar, Depalli Ashok Goud and others attended the meeting.

Two held for
strangling
woman to death



HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMANGAL

THE body of a woman, who was strangled to death and buried, was exhumed in Mallappa Gutta on Saturday. According to police, the victim, Amrita, from Alwal village in Keshampet of Ranga Reddy got in touch with Gangavarapu Shankar of Polepalli village in Amangal through a wrong call three years ago. Since then, they have been connected over phone. Recently on April 1, Amrita met Gangavarapu Shankar and his friend Vislavath Shankar. The same night, Amrita was taken to Mallappa Gutta in Talakondapally suburb of Amangal where she was strangled to death with a saree and was buried in a pit by the duo. A few months ago, a similar case of a woman killed in the same way and dumped in Mallappa Gutta was seen. Keshampet police said a case was registered against the two accused under various sections 302, 201, 379, 120b of Indian Penal Code and were sent to judicial remand.

INDIA IS NOT A 'DHARMSHALA'
FOR ILLEGAL MIGRANTS!

LEGAL CIRCLES
DR HC UPADHYAY

INDEED, the judiciary all over the world seems to be trapped between the devil and the deep sea when pleas of law-breakers, criminals, including the dreaded ones such as terrorists, extremists, Jihadis and killers are advanced in the courts by the advocates of human rights. Forgetting the maxim that law protects those who protect the law, the anti-national, anti-social and anti-human elements often go scot free after committing heinous crimes and disturbing the peace and harmony in the society. And in a rare cases when caught by the law enforcing agencies, lots of hue and cry is made against their arrest and prosecution all in the name of their human rights. Poor innocent victims get no justice at the end of the day. This is a very serious matter and requires consensus of all the three pillars of our Constitution, viz. Legislature, Executive and the Judiciary.

A case on hand is: Marium Khatoon vs State of Bihar wherein the Patna High Court vide its order dated April 7, inter alia, enquired from the Union government as to how it would deal with the petitioner, a Bangladeshi illegal migrant, if the government of Bangladesh refused to take her back. There are other queries too, which the High Court has posed. That apart, a three-member advocate commission has also been constituted to study the living conditions of the illegal migrants lodged in the 'After Care Home'.

Showing humanitarian concern for the illegal migrants is okay, more so when our country is known for its 'Atithi Devo Bhavah' or treating the guests as God since times immemorial. But showing concern for the future of the illegal migrants in case their native country refuses to take them back seems to be stretching the humanitarian



concern too much.

Recently, the Supreme Court has shown the way in such a case. The court while dealing with the Rohingya Muslims in Jammu made it clear what to do with their citizens who have illegally migrated to India is not our concern, but the matter to be dealt by Myanmar. Thus, when the Supreme Court of India has thought it fit not to transgress into the jurisdiction of other countries, it is too much on the part of the Patna High Court to show concern for such illegal migrants on the basis of assumption that what would be their fate in case Bangladesh refused to take back such illegal immigrants.

Truly speaking, these are the policy matters to be decided by the government and the courts in India have always refrained from entertaining such contentious issues. So far as the question of basic human rights are concerned, let the courts show any amount of sympathy (which they don't deserve, in any case), but let the courts even in their wildest dreams not think of granting such illegal migrants permanent asylum in India.

Like any sovereign country, we too, have our own concerns. We are already a home for about 135 million and adding to this number any illegal migrants would be suicidal, particularly when many of them have been in the 'Wanted List' for heinous crimes such as massacre, rape

and loot, while others have been sheltered as pawns to materialise Jihadi dreams in future.

Seen in this context, we need to devise a two-pronged policy. One, seal all borders of the country and give full powers to the security forces and army to stop all illegal immigrants from entering our country at any cost; and two identify and imprison all illegal immigrants from any country and their sponsors and givers of shelters within the country. As the present police force will not be sufficient to carry out such a mammoth task, services of neighborhood watch and SPOs from among retired security and defence forces and other civilians with unimpeachable integrity may be availed. Such a concentrated effort alone will save the country from becoming a Dharmshala for the illegal immigrants.

Offer of peanut
payment irks TS HC

A division bench of Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice B Vijaysen Reddy took exception to the offer of the Telangana State government to pay a monthly remuneration of Rs 5,000 to the chairman of the appellate body for the Pollution Control Board.

As per the law, the appellate body should be headed by a retired Judge of the High Court. The State government recently addressed a letter to the Registry of the High Court requesting for the recommendation of a

name for it for this purpose.

However, the State government's moves boomeranged when the court came down heavily on the government which had lowered the status of a High Court Judge by offering a paltry sum as remuneration, and directed the Advocate General to come back with a more honourable proposal.

Chief Justice Bobde retires
with 'mixed feelings'

The Chief Justice of India Sharad A Bobde demitted his office as the 47th CJI on April 23 and CJI-designate Justice N V Ramana will assume the august position of CJI soon.

On his last working day, CJI Bobde heard the suo motu case, Distribution of Essential Supply and Services during pandemic. During the hearing of the last matter by the outgoing CJI, lots of acrimonious exchanges were seen in the court hall between the Solicitor General and other side counsels. This unpleasant court hall exchanges made the outgoing CJI remark that he was having mixed feelings. Meanwhile Amicus Curiae Harish Salve recused himself from Covid-19 suo motu case for which the apex court granted permission. Unfortunately, with the apex court taking suo motu cognizance of the second wave of Covid-19 spread, an avoidable controversy had arisen. Some of the State High Courts which were seized with the matters relating to Covid-19 pandemic such as availability of beds in the hospitals, oxygen cylinders and medicine with the backing of some lawyers have risen a bogey about the need for the intervention from the Supreme Court. While it is true that under the Constitution, the Supreme Court of India is all powerful in the matters of law and its administration, it is high time that all the concerned bury their hatchets in this critical hour of national medical emergency and work in sync with other authorities for dealing effectively with the monster of Covid-19.

RR FACES SHORTAGE OF
COVID-19 TESTING KITS

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RANGA REDDY

THE shortage of Covid-19 testing kits in the district has hit the diagnosis of infection in the last two days and has become a cause for concern among the public. According to sources, there is no stock of antigen testing kits in Hayathnagar, Amangal, Shadnagar and Vanasthalipuram areas. In Hayathnagar City Health Centre, only 20 RT-PCR tests are being conducted per day due to lack of testing kits, and only 100 kits are available at Vanasthalipuram Area Hospital. Locals fumed that though they have been visiting for the last three days, they were sent back owing to non-availability of kits to conduct the tests.

Minor boy among 2 held for
spreading false news against KCR

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BASHEERBAGH

CITY police arrested a man and a minor boy for spreading false news on social media platform about Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. The man and the juvenile were deceiving people and making false propaganda against the Chief Minister.

Hyderabad City Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar said that Shekhar and a boy, who hails from Nalgonda district, created a WhatsApp group as Teenmaar Mallana Fans and posted fake news in the group. Police seized two phones from their possession. The 16-year-old boy was operating the WhatsApp group. He was receiving false news from various WhatsApp groups and later sharing it on different groups. Police booked them both and arrested.



RSS predicts 6, BJP expects 12 seats in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

FINALLY the RSS/BJP combine in Kerala has come out with their own assessment of what's in store for the BJP-led NDA in Kerala when votes will be counted on May 2.

While the RSS has predicted six seats, the BJP appeared more confident that their tally will be 12 and its youthful state president K. Surendran, went a step ahead and said that neither the Left nor the Right in Kerala will get a clear majority.

However, both the ruling CPI-M led Left and the Congress led Opposition have predicted that the BJP's account that was opened in the 2016 assembly polls, when it won one seat, will be closed this time, leaving the BJP drawing a blank in the 140-member Kerala Legislative Assembly.

Incidentally, soon after the April 6 assembly polls ended in the state, V. Muraliedharan, Union Minister of State for External Affairs, the lone Keralite in the Narendra Modi cabinet, said the BJP has put up an excellent fight in 27 constituencies.

On Friday, the Kerala unit of the RSS top brass pulled out their notebooks and after a few hours of detailed discussions, said they have huge hopes in six constituencies which include their sitting seat at Nemom in the state capital district, Manjeswaram, Palakkad, Thrissur, Kazhakoottam and Vattiyoorakavu.

In the BJP list of winning seats apart from the above six, they have put their money in seats like Kasargode, Chathanoor, Malam-puzha, Kozhikode North, Kattakada and Manaloor.

However, Surendran time and again has been saying that it will be the BJP who will be the deciding factor as neither of the traditional political fronts which have alternated in the seat of power, this time, will get a clear majority and what has left many astonished is his wishful thinking that if the BJP manages to win 35 seats, it will be a BJP led Kerala government.

Looking back at how the BJP has performed in elections in Kerala if Surendran's wishful thinking is to materialise, it's definitely something which is beyond rationale because at the 2014 Lok Sabha polls the BJP had a vote share of 10.33 per cent, which touched 15.10 per cent at the 2016 assembly polls (they won one out of the 140 seats) and at the 2019 Lok Sabha polls it was 15.6 per cent and drew a blank in the 20 constituencies.

At the 2015 local body polls the BJP secured 13.28 per cent vote share and managed to win around 1,200 seats out of around 21,000 seats and at the last year's polls, Surendran's predictions fell flat.

However, with just days left for the counting day, when the rival fronts have predicted victory in around 80 seats, all what remains to be seen is, whoever wins or loses, one thing is sure, the loser in the polls, will definitely say, the winner had a tacit relation with the BJP. (IANS)

SUDIPTO CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA

FORMER CPI(M) MP Prof. Malini Bhattacharya, who had handed chief minister Mamata Banerjee, her sole electoral defeat in 1989, does not feel the TMC supremo is the face of the resistance to BJP, and believes her rule facilitated the rise of RSS in the state. Bhattacharya, a leading academic, maintains Banerjee retains "close relations with the RSS even today while indulging in slanging matches with the BJP leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

Disagreeing that there is any pro-BJP wave in West Bengal, the former academic, blames the rise of the saffron party primarily due to anti-incumbency against the TMC. Bhattacharya was fielded by CPI(M) in 1989 against Banerjee who had in the previous general election burst on the political scene by emerging as a giant slayer by defeating prominent CPI(M) leader Somnath Chatterjee from Jadavpur, considered a Communist bastion for long.

To the surprise of many, the Professor from Jadavpur University, managed to topple Banerjee and win the seat back for the CPI(M), just four years after the major upset. She won the Lok Sabha seat a second time running in 1991 and was dubbed 'slayer of the giant slayer' by the media for her efforts. "There are some radical friends who tell us that in West Bengal Mamata is the face of the anti-BJP resistance and we have to go with her. But we must not forget that the 'face' and the reality may be two things Bhat-tacharya told PTI in an interview.

"Ever since she set up her party, she (Banerjee) has been very close to RSS and all its manifestations here. I am not going into the matter of her participation in NDA govt as minister, but even today for all her slanging matches with

"Ever since she set up her party, she (Banerjee) has been very close to RSS and all its manifestations here. I am not going into the matter of her participation in NDA govt as minister, but even today for all her slanging matches with Modi-Shah, her close relations with RSS continue," she pointed out. Banerjee's attempt to wipe out the Left opposition from Bengal has helped the RSS exponentially, she added. "One must not forget that her (Banerjee's) rabid attempts to eliminate the Left opposition in the state both physically and politically and her demolition of democratic institutions has helped exponential growth of RSS in the state during her regime," she said

Modi-Shah, her close relations with RSS continue," she pointed out. Banerjee's attempt to wipe out the Left opposition from Bengal has helped the RSS exponentially, she added.

"One must not forget that her (Banerjee's) rabid attempts to eliminate the Left opposition in the state both physically and politically and her demolition of democratic institutions has helped exponential growth of RSS in the state during her regime," she said. Bhattacharya also believes that communal conflict which was firmly dealt by the Left Front in Bengal, witnessed a "resurgence" during the Mamata

RISE OF RSS IN BENGAL

CPI(M) leader who defeated Mamata Banerjee blames TMC supremo



Prof Malini Bhattacharya

Banerjee-led government.

Besides, a "rich syncretic tradition, this state also had a history of communal conflict till the 1960s. The Left was able to deal firmly with the latter, but communalism not vanished," she said, adding that during TMC's rule,

"stoking of these fires has seen resurgence of communal incidents." According to the former chairperson of the West Bengal Commission for Women said "In the field of employment, agriculture, education, Banerjee has only been following Modi's path of serving corporate interests. She has

(also) behaved exactly like BJP to control all dissidence," she said.

Bhattacharya felt the left would gain from three positive factors in these elections. Firstly, we have successfully put together political forces against BJP in West Bengal on a common democratic-secular platform. Secondly, a generation of young workers have taken up the challenge to fight fascist forces and thirdly, efforts of our workers has created the space for policy alternatives we are talking about. She added that a feeling has grown among progressive intellectuals that the battle against fascist forces cannot be fought without the Left.

The former academic from Jadavpur University still feels that her former electoral rival cannot be trusted. "Even if she (Mamata) were to come to power again speculatively with our support, she would be doing all the same things. We cannot even be sure whether she will gang up with BJP again." (PTI)

NEW DELHI

THE Indian Army along with Assam Rifles troops has rescued Oil and Natural Gas Corporation's (ONGC) two abductees from the outlawed group, United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent (ULFA-I) in Assam on Friday late night.

"Operations are still in progress," said Indian Army. The banned group ULFA-I has still one ONGC employee in their clutches.

Three employees of the ONGC were on April 21 kidnapped by suspected ULFA-I militants from its Lakwa oilfield in Assam's Sivasagar district along the Assam-Nagaland border. The employees were kid-

napped in a company-owned vehicle from the state-run firm's Lakwa field in Sivasagar, where the exploration company has been operating for nearly six decades.

The three kidnapped employees are Mohini Mohan Gogoi (35), Ritul Saikia (33), both junior technicians (Production) and Alakesh Saikia (28), a Junior Engineering Assistant (Production).

The two rescued abductees are Alakesh Saikia and Mohini Mohan Gogoi. "One AK 47 has also been recovered," Indian Army said.



ONGC officials Alakesh Saikia and Mohini Mohan Gogoi rescued by Indian Army along with Assam Rifles in an operation on Friday night, in Nagaland on Saturday



OPERATION ON TO RESCUE THIRD

After the abduction incident, the Assam government asked the district police authorities to intensify the security arrangements at OIL and ONGC infrastructures in eastern Assam. The state government has asked all the Superintendents of Police of eastern and northeastern Assam districts to review and to step up the security arrangements at Oil India Ltd (OIL) and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) infrastructures under their juris-

dictions, especially those located in interior areas.

Local police had arrested 14 linkmen and sympathisers of the United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent who were helping the banned outfit directly or indirectly. Police, all army and para-military bases located in the area were alerted to find out the captives.

Soon after the incident, ONGC in a statement said that the abduction took place from a rig site of the company in Lakwa field of Sivasagar, and the abducted employees were taken away in an ambulance vehicle belonging to ONGC. Later, the vehicle was found abandoned near the Nimonagarh jungles close to the Assam-Nagaland border. (IANS)

FREEZE FRAME



View of the snow-covered mountain ranges at Keylong in Lahual Spiti district on Saturday

Param Vir Chakra recipient's son dies after hospital's 'negligence'

KANPUR

THE second son of a Param Vir Chakra awardee died of alleged negligence in his treatment at Lala Lajpat Rai (LLR) hospital here on Friday, his family claimed.

The aggrieved family members said the hospital authorities did not conduct any COVID-19 test on Ali Hasan (61), the second son of Param Vir Chakra recipient Abdul Hamid. Meanwhile, principal of GSV Medical College R B Kamal said he has been informed about

the death of PVC Hamid's son. He, however, refused to make any further comment over the issue.

Saleem, Hasan's eldest son, alleged that his father died due to negligence by the doctors and hospital staff, who allegedly turned a deaf ear towards his pleas. Saleem further told reporters late on Friday night that his father was unwell for the last two-three days and admitted at LLR hospital on Wednesday (April 21) after complaining of severe cough and difficulty in

breathing apart from a dip in the oxygen level.

After admission on April 21, Hasan was put on oxygen support but the facility was removed just after four hours by the hospital saying his health is stable and there was no need of oxygen anymore, Saleem alleged before the media. After witnessing Hasan's deteriorating health, they approached the hospital staff and beseeched before anyone to provide him oxygen facility, but requests fell on deaf ears.

The family members apprised the doctors that Hasan is the second son of 'Veer Abdul Hamid' who had received the country's highest military decoration, Param Vir Chakra, posthumously for his actions during the India-Pakistan war in 1965, but to no avail. Hasan had retired from Ordnance Equipment Factory (OEF) in Kanpur and settled here in the city. He is survived by his wife, four sons and three daughters, who are all married. (PTI)

Delhi's 'Ambulance Man' helps cremate Covid victims

NEW DELHI

AMID the increasing number of people dying of coronavirus in Delhi, getting an ambulance to transport the body from the hospital to the crematorium has become difficult. However, there is the 'Ambulance Man' of Delhi who comes to the rescue of those who want to cremate the bodies of their kith and kin when the hospital staff refuses to even touch them for fear of getting infected with Covid-19.

Chiranjeev Malhotra, known as the 'Ambulance Man' of Delhi, is a resident of Karol Bagh area and has helped people in the cre-

who have none to cremate them.

Chiranjeev Malhotra told IANS, "I have cremated 500 to 600 corpses of Covid-19 victims. We also cremate the unclaimed bodies."

Malhotra transports the bodies in his own ambulance to the crematorium from the hospital and performs the last rites with full rituals. If people are not able to pay, he does not ask for any money from them, rather he himself purchases all the materials used in the last rites.

He said, "In case of the whole family being infected with Covid-19, we come forward to help such families. There are many people

who live abroad, but if a family member has died here we also perform their last rites."

"We have issued a helpline number, we have started this service since last year. We have also started an NGO 'Sant Shiv Seva Foundation'. Our service is available free-of-cost."

"We have five ambulances which are being used only to bring the bodies for the funeral. If we have to transport any body from one place to another we also help people in that," he added.

Malhotra owns a wire making factory but in such difficult times he has given up everything to help people. (IANS)



NATIONAL PANCHAYAT RAJ DAY

AP gets 17 panchayat awards

- Union Panchayat Raj ministry conferred the awards at State, district, mandal and panchayat level
- AP receives state-level 2nd award in e-panchayat category, 2 in district level, 4 in mandal level and 10 in panchayat level
- PM transfers cash incentives in remote mode to districts, mandals and panchayats which won the awards

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy presented the National Panchayat Awards 2021, conferred by Union panchayat raj ministry to panchayats, mandals and districts of the state on the occasion of National Panchayat Raj day.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the National Panchayat Awards ceremony through video conference. Union Panchayat Raj Minister Narendra Singh Thomar, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and Chief Ministers of various states attended the event. With the push of a button by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, cash incentives were credited in the account of panchayats, mandals and districts which won awards. The Prime Minister also launched the distribution of e-property cards in 5,000 villages of seven states.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the village panchayats have performed well during Covid situation last year and the same situation is present this year and they should work with same spirit.

National Panchayat Raj Day is celebrated on April 24 as the powers were conferred on local bodies through the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force with effect



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Panchayat Raj Minister Narendra Singh Thomar and Chief Ministers of various States participate in the award ceremony (Bottom) Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy with winners of National Panchayat Raj awards at his camp office in Tadepalli on Saturday.



from April 24. Marking the occasion, Union panchayat raj department presents awards to best performing panchayats, mandals and districts.

Andhra Pradesh has won 15 awards in 2020 and 17 awards in 2021. The state has received state-level second award in e-panchayat category, two awards in district level, 4 awards in mandal level and 10 awards in panchayat level. A cash incentive of Rs 50,000 for district level, Rs 25,000 for mandal level and Rs 8,000-Rs10,000 for village level is given depending upon the population of the village.

The Chief Minister presented the state-wide second award for Andhra Pradesh in E Panchayat

category to panchayat raj and rural development minister Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy and panchayat raj and rural development commissioner Girija Shankar.

He presented the district level awards (Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar) to Z P CEO D Chaitanya for Guntur district and ZP CEO Surya Prakash Rao for Krishna district. He presented Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar at mandal level to MPDOs of Sodem mandal of Chittoor district, Kakina Rural of East Godavari district, Vijayawada Rural of Krishna district, Penugonda of Anantapur district.

Later, the Chief Minister presented awards to the panchayats of Varkuru in Kurnool district, pedalabudu of Vishakapatnam district, Gullapalli of Guntur district, Thada Kandriga, Thaallapalem, Parthavellanti, Pennabarthi of Nellore district and G Rangampeta of East Godavari district.

Panchayat Raj minister Ramachandra Reddy, revenue principal secretary V Usha Rani, panchayat raj and rural development commissioner Girija Shankar, land records, survey settlements commissioner Sidarth Jain, officers of various districts, mandal level officers and sarpanches were present on the occasion.

Not degrees alone, acquire skills too, students told

- Education Ministers takes part in Convocations of JNTU Anantapur and SKU
- Says CM is implementing several schemes to ensure that poverty doesn't come in the way of acquiring knowledge
- States there is no dearth of employment in the State, but students need to be employable

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR

EDUCATION minister Audumlapu Suresh said the noble objective of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is to ensure that no deserving student should be denied access to education as a result of poverty, which should never come in the way of acquiring knowledge.

Participating in the 11th convocation of the JNTU-A at the university campus here on Saturday, the minister said that there is no dearth of employment in the state and what matters is employability. One should focus on independent thinking and acquiring degrees alone does not sustain one in a competitive world. He said that the youth of today should emerge as torch bearers of a new knowledge society.

Education, Suresh said, is a powerful weapon for the transformation of the society. The Chief Minister in tune with the new education policy had embarked on two revolutionary schemes for making education accessible to all sections of society particularly to those below the poverty line. 'Vidya Deevena' and 'Vasati Deevena' are the two pillars of the new education policy which has brought all the economically backward sections into the intellectual mainstream of the society. By empowering mothers of the wards by crediting financial assistance of the



Education Minister A Suresh giving away degrees to the students at JNTU Convocation in Anantapur on Saturday

government into their accounts, the government has made parents as masters of their child's destiny as they are free to select their own colleges for pursuing education, he said.

The education minister felt that all central institutions in the state should channelise their intellectual resources to benefit state institutions although the central institutions are autonomous bodies. The state's objective is that education should be based on equality, affordability, uniformity and accountability.

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harischandan, who participated in the convocation from Vijayawada in virtual mode, described the 11th convocation to award degrees for the students of two academic years 2019-20 and 2020-21 as a milestone amidst the challenging pandemic which has dislocated the society.

Under the New Education Policy 2020, he suggested that the gross enrolment ratio be increased from 26 to 50 per cent by the year 2035. He congratulated the JNTU-A team for obtaining the privileged status of emerging as one of the five multidisciplinary universities in the country. He said that technical universities have emerged as fast forward universities in taking the concept of virtual class

rooms, online teaching and online examinations forward by assimilating the concept in these pandemic times.

JNTUA vice-chancellor Ranga Janardhana gave away gold medals to 69 students and Phd's to 203 students, on the occasion. Registrar Vijay Kumar was also present.

In the light of a jump in the Covid cases, all precautions had been taken to admit participants having a Covid negative certificates only. Many of the parents and students preferred to watch the proceedings online.

A similar convocation function was also held at the SK University campus in the evening. The 19th convocation was conducted by SKU in the campus where education minister Suresh was present. He spoke of the new education policy and the initiatives taken by the Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy in making education, both primary and higher, accessible to the common man.

The state Governor, who participated in virtual mode also lauded the university for its glorious past and present achievements. As many as 115 gold medals, 6 cash awards and 54 special prizes were presented on the occasion. Besides, degrees to 617 in person, 15,682 in 'absentia' and 11,402 in advance by postal mode were given away.

DHULIPALLA ARREST

Ayyanna laments politics of vendetta during Covid crisis

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

FORMER minister and TDP politburo member Ch Ayyanna Patrudu on Saturday strongly objected to the manner in which their party former MLA Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar was arrested as if he was a terrorist trying to escape from the law of the land.

Ayyanna Patrudu asked the government to explain whether it was wrong on the part of Narendra to bring the Sangam Dairy under the Companies Act. Even the Visakha Dairy was also brought under this Act but the Jagan Mohan Reddy regime has not initiated similar action against them.

In a statement here, the TDP leader termed it as a sadistic step on the part of the YSRCP government to harass and arrest a leader who had the record of getting elected as an MLA for five consecutive terms previously. The ACB and the CID officials should discharge their duties in an impartial manner without succumbing to the



- Questions why no action has been taken on Visakha Dairy which is also brought under Companies Act like Sangam Dairy
- Alleges that the CM is deriving 'sadistic pleasure' by getting all those who criticise him arrested and jailed

pressure from the ruling party leaders. The Sangam Dairy incident raised many doubts among the people, he said.

Ayyanna Patrudu deplored that political vendetta seemed to be the only pastime for the present Chief Minister while the general public were suffering due to Covid infections. The sadistic Chief Minister was getting arrested and putting all those in jail when they were criticising the government. For no fault of theirs, Atchannaidu and Kollu Ravindra were implicated in false cases and sent to jail in the past, he alleged.

The TDP leader said that Narendra just tried to open a

trust on behalf of the Sangam Dairy in order to set up a hospital and extend medical facilities to the poor and middle class people. Now, the government was finding fault with this. Even the Visakha Dairy was brought under the Companies Act but no action was taken against them. Was it because they were working for the YSRCP or they served butter-milk in the ruling party meetings, he asked.

Ayyanna Patrudu said that the AP police have lost their credibility and prestige all over the country because of their surrender to the Chief Minister's wishes for political vengeance.

AP sees 11K new cases for 2nd day in a row

37 persons succumbed to pandemic taking the total figure to 7,616

AMARAVATI

FOR the second day in a row, Andhra Pradesh reported over 11,000 new Covid-19 cases on Saturday as the state's cumulative tally rose to 10.20 lakh.

The state also reported 4,421 recoveries and 37 Covid-19 deaths in 24 hours ending 9 am on Saturday, a health department bulletin said.

So far, more than 1.59 crore tests have been completed that turned out 10,20,926 total positives.

The total recoveries increased to 9,31,839 and toll to 7,616 so far, leaving 81,471 active cases, the bulletin added. Srikakulam district once again registered the highest number of 1,641 new cases in 24 hours, followed by Guntur 1,581, Chittoor 1,306 and Anantapur 1,066. The remaining nine districts added between 292 and 909 each.

East Godavari and Nellore districts reported six fresh Covid-19 fatalities each, Anantapur and Chittoor four each, Srikakulam and West Godavari three each in a day.

Guntur, Krishna, Kurnool, Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram saw two deaths each and Prakasam one.

Dalit IPS officer donates month's pay for free vax



P V Sunil Kumar

AMARAVATI

SETTING an example for others to emulate, a senior Andhra Pradesh Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, P V Sunil Kumar, on Saturday donated one month's salary to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy's initiative of free vaccination of more than 2 crore people in the age bracket of 18-45 years.

"As a common man of this state and as my social responsibility, I am contributing my one month's salary to this noble initiative," said Kumar, additional director general of police (ADGP), CID.

The Dalit IPS officer said it is a privilege to be a part of

Sunil Kumar, working as ADGP, CID, says it is his social responsibility to contribute one month salary to the noble cause as a common man of the State

this noble initiative as he contributed his monthly gross salary of Rs 3.08 lakh.

"Without a doubt this initiative of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will save millions of lives and thus their families," he noted.

In a major development, Jagan Mohan Reddy on Friday offered free Covid vaccination for all people between the age group of 18 and 45 years.

More than 2 crore people in this age bracket are set to benefit with this move. According to the state government, there are 2,04,70,364 people in the 18-45 age category.

Andhra Pradesh is already offering free vaccines to people above 45 years of age.

The Chief Minister directed the officials concerned to order the required number of vaccine doses to meet the demand.

Euphoria in Ponnnavaram, wishes pour in for new CJI

PONNAVARAM (AP)

DESPITE coronavirus pandemic, Ponnnavaram, native village of the newly sworn in Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana is in a festive mood at the son of the soil's elevation in the Supreme Court on Saturday.

Many villagers in this Krishna district hamlet from Veerulapadu mandal fondly recalled Ramana and his love and care for the village.

"He used to mingle with everybody and show concern about everybody's welfare, checking how you are doing and others. Even after scaling the greatest heights, he always remained humble," said a villager.

The villager said the new CJI has always remained true to his roots

of rising from an agricultural family without any pride.

"This is the pride of Ponnnavaram village. We are proud of Ramana becoming the Chief Justice of India," he beamed.

According to the villager, Ramana loves to talk in his mother tongue and wished that he would give some verdicts in Telugu as well. The villagers wished that Ramana will give exemplary verdicts during his tenure which will last till August 2022.

Venkat Narayana, the new CJI's brother, said he is elated on Ramana's elevation and noted the importance of an agricultural family achieving this feat.

"Though many evil forces tried some attempts, his (Ramana's) integrity and helpful nature catapulted him to this exalted posi-

tion," said Narayana.

According to the new CJI's brother, whether Ramana is in Delhi, Hyderabad or anywhere, he always enquired if Ponnnavaram, a water scarce village, is getting drinking water and what efforts are being made on that front.

"This village is a water-scarce village. Daughters of this village are fortunate as they will eventually go to another village and drink potable water while daughters-in-law will drink salt water, this is a proverb," he highlighted.

Though Ramana could not do much, Narayana observed that he always remained concerned about the village, checking about everybody's welfare.

"When he used to visit the village and learn that the people who worked for them were sick, he

would go to the harijanwada (Dalit locality) and meet them, advising them to take care. He would lovingly greet even ordinary people," he said.

Other contributions of Ramana to Ponnnavaram include being the guiding force behind the construction of the village temple in 2000.

Narayana said the villagers managed to complete the temple only because Ramana was behind them.

In a recent phone conversation with the CJI's brother, Ramana expressed his desire to visit the village whenever possible and meet everyone, saying that he is happy with the way Ponnnavaram villagers are treating him fondly.

Meanwhile, congratulatory messages started pouring in for the 48th CJI from several personalities in the Telugu states.

"Hearty congratulations to Telugu pride N V Ramana as he takes oath as Chief Justice of India today. Eminent jurist for 40 years reaches the pinnacle of his illustrious career. Only the second Telugu to earn the glory after 55 long years. His motherland is joyous on the momentous occasion," said Chiranjeevi, Telugu film legend.

Similarly, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader Galla Jayadev wished a successful tenure to Ramana and highlighted that he came from humble background to scale the highest post in the Indian judiciary, calling his journey an inspiration to many.

At a few places in the southern state, some admirers have also erected flexi-posters congratulating Ramana and marking the occasion.

25 Covid patients die at JGH

Continued from P1

We have our Doctors before you. Please save lives. Please," Jaipur Golden Hospital said in its plea. Jaipur Golden Hospital is the second hospital in the city to send SOS over shortage of oxygen.

Earlier Moolchand hospital, in a tweet, appealed for urgent help from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Lt Governor Anil Bajjal. More than 130 Covid patients are on life support, it stressed.

"Urgent sos help. We have less than 2 hours of oxygen supply @Moolchand.Hos. We are desperate have tried all the nodal officer numbers but unable to connect. Have over 135 Covid pts with many on life support #. @ArvindKejriwal @CMODelhi i@LtGovDelhi @satinderjain26 @PMOIndia (sic)," read the tweet put out by Moolchand Healthcare in the morning. The hospital has stopped admitting new patients till it resolves the issue, sources said.

Madhu Handa, Medical Director, Moolchand Hospital, broke down as she gave details of the situation about an hour later. "We are down to around 30 minutes (of oxygen supply) at the moment but yes, cognizance has been taken and nodal officers have responded. But I think there are other hospitals facing similar challenge. So they now have to prioritise."

Several hospitals have, over the past three days, flagged a crisis of oxygen supply, beds and medicines amid rising Covid cases, and many have approached the Delhi High Court for help.

Where did we go wrong?

DR RITHVIK GOLLA

On a usual day, you walk into the AIIMS casualty, it is buzzing with patients everywhere. Residents scrambling from pillar to post to sort out patient issues. Working in a super speciality department, I receive calls almost once every 10-15 minutes, asking me to assess my patients and plan further line of care and management. It is a stressful job, but yet it was what we were trained here to do and that's what our passion resided in. But as days progressed, the calls on my mobile drastically came down, not because there were no patients, but just because the numbers of Covid positives were exponentially rising. With time the numbers just kept increasing and due to non-availability of beds, patients had to be kept in emergency itself.

The level-III PPE kits were back, grim faces and uncertainty loomed over us. The lines of patients just kept increasing; admissions just couldn't happen due to lack of beds. Patients pleading and requesting for admission after being shuttled from various hospitals, the scenes were stressful and depressing. We wanted to help, but yet we stood helpless and defeated. Many said the healthcare system of this country has collapsed, I kept telling myself, when did it collapse? "It never did, it just stands exposed".

Where do we start? Who do we blame? We have failed at every organisational level possible. We recently saw a celebrated post by NASA which claims to have produced oxygen for the first time in Martian environment. Despite a celebrated advance in science, a nation with a population of 1.3



billion finds itself scrambling for oxygen. A cruel irony it is. We all know it is not the time to play the blame game card and rather fight with unity and resolve in this unprecedented crisis. But yet we need to stand up and question where and when did we really go wrong?

Every pandemic we saw till date, let it be the Spanish flu to the recent H1N1, did see relapses happen. So, for a country like India wasn't it foreseen? When so many countries in the west have been experiencing resurgence in case load, didn't we see this coming? Why are we caught so off-guard?

We did see a lot of commotion in the first wave. Our government kept on ensuring us that we are doing much better compared to other countries. When we needed, hotels and stadiums were turned into makeshift hospitals and when the case load came down everything was again back to normal. Money was shunted to open the world's largest stadium, money was shunted to build the prestigious Central Vista project for our glorified political class and as usual the election fever gripped the country and Covid-19 almost was

forgotten, until it made its grand re-entry with various mutants.

The discussion of lack of ventilators and oxygen was very well highlighted during the first wave as well. The virus was kind enough to give you almost a year to act. But apart from rolling out vaccines, we never bothered to strengthen the basic pillars of healthcare infrastructure. Not a single stone has moved be it hospitals, ventilators or healthcare staff.

For a healthcare worker, he is only filled with anguish and pain to see patients suffer. It takes a heavy mental toll to see patients die right in front of you, not because of your inability, but because you are unable to provide the most basic and essential supply of "Oxygen". The decision makers of this country were busy attending rallies and roadshows to ensure victory of their parties and did not stop even when the surge was evident and warnings were thrown. The short televised address to the nation by the PM was sombre and lacklustre; he was confused, appalled and clueless. The PM and HM addressed rallies in West Bengal jet paced so



big that he said he hadn't seen one before, at a time when people were dying and crying for help.

This almighty second wave has just begun. Our government looks like a hare frozen in the headlights. Never stop your questions from being brushed under the carpet of warm ashes piling up at our crematoriums. If oxygen tankers are being airlifted by Airforce and green corridors being made under security cover for transport of basic oxygen, this is nothing less than a war like situation. Is it a war only against the virus or war against the mismanaged governance only time will tell, but let us all stand tall and positive in this tough times, and I can assure every healthcare worker is doing his best to save every precious life of his fellow citizens and hope we overcome this crisis at the earliest with minimal loss of life. Hope at least now the elite political class takes note of the deplorable state of healthcare of this country and give it due importance before it is too late.

(The author is Senior Resident, Dept of Gastroenterology and Human Nutrition, AIIMS, New Delhi)

Will lockdown become inevitable once again?

Our country is struggling hard to cope with the increasing number of Covid-19 positive cases as the country is in the grip of a second wave of Coronavirus. This is a global phenomenon and even Europe is not spared. But the grim fact is that India has sadly overtaken all other coronavirus-infected countries in the world causing consternation. Some of the countries in Europe have already imposed lockdowns and our Prime Minister's declaration that the country will not be locked down at any rate is not wise. One week imposition of lockdown would be an ideal one considering the grave situation in the country. As prevention is better than cure, it is better for our country to remain locked down for at least one week to contain the spread of this pandemic.

It is true that people have gotten used to Covid-19 pandemic and are less concerned about it. In effect, people started throwing caution to the wind. People thought that the Covid-19 pandemic would retreat and disappear in due course of time. But Coronavirus proved otherwise and it stayed back killing hundreds of people in India and millions worldwide. As a matter of fact, people began to lower guard against the pandemic, and thus, they stopped wearing masks, mingled with others without keeping the covid protocol.

So, the surge is the direct result of our vigil having been lowered and flagrant violations



of covid rules. What must be remembered at this time of introspection is that we must maintain personal hygiene, use masks compulsorily, wash hands quite often and maintain social distance. As a matter of fact, our country needs a real lockdown now, when the Covid cases are on the rise. Appalling thing is that coronavirus has spread to every nook and cranny of the country, and we need strict exercises to contain it. Candidly speaking, it has gone out of our control causing mayhem. Individuals can protect themselves by wearing masks and frequent washing of hands with soap and running water, and strictly observing social distancing. It is to be remembered that if we strictly follow Covid protocols, not only do we stop the spread of the coronavirus, but also, we

kill it without being transferred to others. However, the country is in the grip of a severe second wave of coronavirus and there is no shortcut to cure it except through administration of vaccine, which is in acute shortage. The only best option now lies before the government is to lock down the country at least for one week so that the pace of spreading of the pandemic can be arrested. Moreover, at this juncture, the government must be considerate towards its people, who have been hit hard by Covid-19 pandemic. A slew of relief packages also must be announced by the government to mitigate the suffering of people caused by the Covid-19 pandemic including moratorium on various loans from the nationalized and private banks.

T K Nandan, Kochi

Protecting Earth to protect humankind

With the safety and care of Planet Earth only the entire humankind will survive but hardly anybody takes it on a serious note. While youngsters observing Halloween's day and Valentine's day with pomp and gaiety, on the other hand they keep observing World Earth day for the sake of name only. And which has once again been proven with last passing World Earth day. Your article (We are part of this Earth and should behave so, Edit page 24, April) highlighted the impending dangers in future if we neglect the present situation.

We must take extra care in planting saplings of medicinal value and ensure they should not be destroyed by hooligans. For some demonic people, destroying whatever be a pleasure trip. Minerals are mindlessly excavated on the pretext of development but our posterity would not forgive us for wreaking havoc. Earth belongs to the entire humans and other creatures and it should be remembered before taking any colossal action causing damage to the collective good.

K V V S Murthy, Bhadrachalam

V. Ramu Sarma deserves all praise for coming out with a thought provoking article, relevant to many crises affecting the people across the world now, "We are part of this earth and should behave so" (THI, 24 April) where he rightly points out the catastrophic consequences of rising levels of human greed across the globe to destroy mother earth to maximize corporate profits where materialism and consumerism are driving forces. To be sure, this type of mindless exploitation of earth and natural resources already set the warning bells ringing sending ominous signals to mankind in the form of global warming, air pollution, contamination of water resources, unseasonal rains, natural calamities like floods and famines occurring more frequently with increased level of destruction, outbreak of pandemics hitherto unknown.

If human beings fail to learn right lessons about the correct way of adopting nature friendly lifestyles by integrating themselves with nature and by not doing everything possible to protect mother earth from being ruthlessly ruined by their ugly clamour for sheer profits and for establishing their supremacy over nature, it would pave the way for nature and mother earth reacting furiously to neutralize

the ecological imbalances caused by mindless human greed which would ultimately make mankind to pay heavy price for their misadventures.

There needn't be any second thought that people living on planet earth need to strive hard to lead a happy and prosperous life with improved living standards and with better use and management of natural resources. Obviously, this is possible only by achieving economic prosperity, industrial growth, technological advancement and infrastructural development. But, it doesn't mean that to achieve all these things, we should be oblivious to the health and wellbeing of mother earth. It is of paramount importance to not go to extreme in tapping natural resources by inflicting irreparable damage to nature and earth by letting greed supplant need.

The nature is well equipped to meet all the needs of people but not any of their greeds. It is right time for people and political leadership to exhibit sanity, sagacity, wisdom and maturity by balancing both development and ecology while attempting for better living standards. It is inexcusable on the part of people living on mother earth now and the current political establishments across the globe to continue to exploit the nature to the hilt which makes mother earth unliveable for future generations. Let us be mindful of our responsibility to let posterity lead a happy life on mother earth.

It is unfortunate that the most powerful and richest country in the world USA made an exit from "Paris climate agreement" which is nothing but abdicating its responsibility, as a global leader, of mitigating ecological and climatic imbalances. International solidarity and mutual assistance among various countries would certainly yield good results in this regard. To conclude, the insightful lines of V. Ramu Sarma are apt "In fact political leaders and political executive need to be sensitized more about the need to protect the planet."

Narne Raveendra Babu, Hyderabad

III

Ramu Sarma's essay "We are part of this Earth and should behave so" (April 24) is a reminder to the people on earth to consciously protect it in all ways always to enable themselves to be protected from all natural calamities. The other name of earth is mother. As mother looks after her progeny, earth also

serves all creatures to live longer. Five elements of nature are known as 'panchabhootalu' namely Earth, Aakash, Air, Water, Agni in which Earth is only the feminine gender and the rest are masculine gender.

All kinds of sins committed by human beings like polluting the environment and surroundings of dwelling areas have pushed the climate imbalancing and resulting in damaging the healthy atmosphere. Lord Vishnu in the incarnation of Kurmavatara saved earth from the demon Hiranyaksha and today again many Hiranyakshas are being born to spoil the sandal smell of Earth. Yet as the vedic dictum describes kshamaya dharitri, mother earth with lot of patience gives us all comforts for eking out a living despite disrespectful behaviour being showed to our saviour.

During lockdown in first wave of covid-19, vehicular traffic was drastically re-

duced and environmental pollution had gone down to minimum level, with the result there were torrential rains and depleted ground water resources were fully replenished. Can't we manage to continue the similar conditions by using pollution free battery vehicles? State and central governments take decision to ban phase wise the use of petroleum vehicles.

Trees are one of the main resources for balancing the environmental imbalances which are being felled for occupying the land. Government programmes for sapling plantations are welcome but it takes a longer period to reap its benefits. Saving the earth means saving our lives. So save our lives by saving the mother earth. Not only April 22, everyday is to be treated as Earth Day as we get our food everyday from our mother.

N Ramalakshmi, Secunderabad

Spending a lifetime with books

Like every year, April 23 was observed as "World Book Day" and as per UNESCO "In some countries, the number of books read seems to have doubled as people were forced to stay indoors due to pandemic though millions of underprivileged children who did not see the books are the main victims as they have no clue on where they would see their school and the books which some of them get free.

My own thoughts went back on how as a rookie to the world of books I started working for a reputed century old British established Indian Publishing House in the mid-'70s. When I was in school, knowingly or otherwise, always used to see the name of the publisher on the first page which later while working learned was called title page which carried the name of the book and also the "Logo" of the publisher who has published the book. When I joined the publishing house, there was little awareness about copyright and its ownership even among those who have been working in publishing house. It was my curiosity from school days which made me go in-depth to understand the copyright and its ownership, duration, and so on. On my own, I wrote to UNESCO to find out and learn more about copyright. Slowly, I learned how a simple typed or handwritten (pre-technology



era) bunch of papers containing several pages were called "manuscript" or "typescript" (former handwritten and later one typed version) was converted as a book which all of us either read or learn to pass our examinations.

The process I learned was not so easy and that too when computers were not in use in any field leave alone in the publishing house. On many occasions, the authors would churn out the page or after page which needs to be typed as many Indian authors could not afford a typewriter. I have seen some editors instead of depending on typist or their assistants would sit and type on their own to bring it to a shape which would then go as the first draft to the author who will clear or even add more handwritten.

Once the raw typescript is ready it would go into the hands of those who work in what's called "Production Dept" for cost estimation to arrive at the price.

To arrive at the cost, the cost of raw material which includes paper, printers charges, design, binding, packaging, etc gets added to arrive at manufacturing cost or in publishing term is called "Unit Cost" (cost of producing each book). The price of the course would depend upon the user and the number of copies printed. The published price would factor in how much discount book traders would get, royalty a percentage which the authors get on the published price (or cover price) and other overheads.

Once the books are ready, it is the turn of the salesforce who like medical representatives would start taking them to market which would again depend on the end-user. If educational books, the sales force would focus on that market, and if it's non-educational then they would directly go to book shops libraries, and so on. Of course, it is the team that includes editors, production, sales, stock, packers, and many others who are instrumental to make one learn from the books or read them to think.

I wish, our school children are taken to a publishing house for them to actually see how the books they see and read are made and in the process increase their curiosity.

N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

Revamp Sir Ronald Ross Institute of Parasitology

DR A SANJAY REDDY

Sir Ronald Ross performed pioneering research on malaria which won him the Nobel Prize in 1902. The Sir Ronald Ross Institute of Parasitology is the heritage building where Sir Ronald Ross discovered the cause and remedy for malaria in 1897. Declared a protected monument by the Archaeological Survey of India, the institute is now under the protection of Osmania University (OU), who acquired it from the then Deccan Airlines in 1955.

Research scholars from Osmania University worked here until the building was taken over by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). A pilot training centre was set up in this building. Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi trained here. In 1979, Osmania University took over the building and continued research here. But now, the building lies deserted.

Nobel laureate Ronald Ross discovered the presence of malarial parasite in the intestines of female anopholes' mosquito at the far end of his stint as medical officer on these premises between 1895 and 1897, when it was a hospital for the British regimental troops. Copy of a journal entry by Mr. Ross about the discovery dated August 20 can be found in the museum, as also his drawings of the parasite.



The building later served as an "officers mess" for British regiment and was under Deccan Airlines for a brief while. Later after accession of Hyderabad State, it was handed over to the Osmania Medical College for further research on Malaria.

However, later, the 2.5-acre premises were handed over to the Airport Authority of India (then National Airports Authority) for development of the peripheral areas of the Begumpet Airport. In 1975, with initiative from the OU Zoology department, the structure was handed over to the Osmania University, while the land remains with the AAI. After being identified as heritage structure, renovation of

the building was carried out in 2010-12 with Rs.45 lakh, which has brought back the lost aura to it. However, since then, the premises remain unoccupied, with whatever research in the institute's name, having been shifted out into the OU premises.

Land ownership by the AAI remains a road-block for any effort to develop it as a pioneering research centre for vector-borne diseases. There is no approach road to the premises. Being a heritage building, the Archaeological Survey of India had granted Rs 6.5 crores for its further development, but it could not materialise due to non-demarcation of the abutting land. Osmania University has not given any funds for

the development of the historic building and that the buck has been passed on to the state, who is equally uninterested in the welfare of the building.

The pride of being home to the discovery of malarial parasite is not something that any city would let pass without a care. The site of such historic discovery in Hyderabad, however, lies tucked away in a remote corner of Begumpet, unnoticed by many, and unused for more than 10 years.

The Sir Ronald Ross Institute of Parasitology, a heritage building, is under lock and key for most of the time, not open even for the visitors who might be interested in catching a few glimpses of the photo museum inside.

WISHLIST

- Make it as heritage museum and study (education and scientific) tourism place
- Explore potential for making it a major tourist attraction and an inspiration for students as it is here that Sir Ronald Ross made a huge discovery with just a microscope
- Provide facilities and appoint a Guide for visitors
- Repairs should be carried out
- Prevent unruly elements
- Protect the great facade

A visit to the institute makes the sad state of affairs abundantly clear. Located right opposite the Central Government Health Scheme Hospital (CGHS), the building still looks majestic despite its fading colours. Surrounded by dense foliage, the building looks just like an abandoned Victorian-era bungalow.

(The author is President, Telangana Pharma Society and Chairman, Lead India Foundation Campaign)

Philosophical, scientific and spiritual evolution

VANAM JWALA
NARASIMHA RAO

IN our ancient texts, pearls of wisdom and knowledge in all spheres of life and after life were preserved and often hidden under various layers of meaning. The Vedas, Upanishads, Vedangas, Puranas, Darshanas, Kavyas and scores of treatises on these by our Sages, scholars, Bhāṣyakaras, all have answers to several questions, doubts, apprehensions, true meanings on every aspect of life matter, that may appear unknown and offer permanent answers to the seeker. One such knowledge is on Evolution.

Evolutionary philosophies are seen in variety of ways in Hindu scriptures like Bhagavata and Bharata. These philosophical concepts are often coinciding with the thoughts of modern scientific thoughts. For example, the concept of Dashavatara can be seen as having some similarities to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. The first incarnation of Vishnu in the form of a fish resembles the evolutionary origin of fish in the Silurian Period (from 443 million to 416 million years ago. It was the third period in the Palaeozoic Era).

Darwin's theory is simple. He observed in Galapagos Islands of Latin America, that, life is evolved in water. All species on the earth from fish to flowers, from banana to birds, have common ancestors.

They struggled continuously and started rearranging their genes, their shape, their size, their food habits, selective mating, and finally they got totally new offspring's, and they were totally looking differently. Life in the form of Struggle for existence and survival of fittest was evolved in water. Slowly they changed to amphibians, and finally they changed to terrestrial animals. On the earth it took thousands of years to change from monkeys to primitive man and finally to present day human beings.

When we sit and read Bhagavat purana, Garuda purana, Lord Vishnu has taken Dashavatara, the ten avatars. Each and every avatar is interrelated and resembles Darwin's theory.

Lord Vishnu has taken his first avatar in water in the form of fish (Matsya avatar). This fulfils Darwin's theory of life evolved in water. Lord's second avatar is tortoise (Kurma avatar). It is amphibian and it fulfils Darwin's theory of continuous struggle of fishes to change and adapt to amphibian life. Third avatar is boar (Varaha avatar meaning Pig). This is totally terrestrial animal. Amphibians have struggled continuously to adapt to terrestrial animal. Boar reminds us about the dinosaurs that lived on the earth thousands of years earlier. Fourth avatar is Narasimha avatar, body is human form and face and hands are like lion.



Fifth avatar is Vamana avatar, short and intelligent human. Sixth avatar is Parashurama avatar, axe man who stayed in jungle. Seventh avatar is Rama avatar, perfect gentleman, who followed monogamy. Eighth avatar is Krishna avatar. Krishna is wise, shrewd statesman like today's politician. Ninth avatar is Buddha avatar. Buddha is pursuit of happiness. Tenth avatar is Kalki avatar. Kalki is man with weapons, Techno-humanoid man of tomorrow.

Does it not mean that our ancestors knew things that we are discovering now? Our ancestors told evolutionary theory in the form of simple and easily understandable stories. How did they get the entire evolutionary theory

right in so much precision is a million-dollar question?

Charles Darwin was born in a small town called Mount in England in 1809 to a popular doctor who wanted him to take up medicine as his career. Darwin however became scientist in a Ship and began his sea journey in 1831, from England towards Latin America. Sailing from one island to another island, he studied the animals, fossils, flowers, fruits, and the men on the island.

Darwin collected large number of fossils, animals, flowers from Galapagos Islands, Falkland Island, made careful study. He concluded that, life evolved in water in the form of simple single cell creature. The aquatic animals

slowly started changing their habitat from water to earth and then to four legged animals, and later two feet human beings. Many changes are also noticed in human beings, dwarf man, to man with weapons, intelligent human beings.

According to Darwin's theory, life began in the ocean. Vishnu's first avatar, Matsya, was a fish. Vishnu's first avatar was Matsya. He took the form of a fish to save Manu from the massive deluge. Darwin believed that water is the most essential ingredient to sustain life, and thus that is where life originated. Darwin said that the species then began coming out of the water. Kurma, Vishnu's second avatar was an amphibian.

The next logical step in evolution had to be the ability to travel on the ground. To accomplish this, species started developing legs. Boar, the third form taken by Vishnu, fought Hiranyaksha to bring the earth back from the bottom of the ocean. Narsimha avatar had the features of man as well as those of a beast. This could be similar to the species the very first human beings evolved from. This indicates evolution slowly going towards human beings.

The fifth avatar, Vamana was dwarfed human being, visually very similar to the short ape species that humans have evolved from. The earliest form of apes that human beings evolved from were in fact, much shorter in height than present-day human beings. The short ape-like species finally evolved into what we call 'early man'. Parashurama, Vishnu's sixth avatar was very similar to that. In the study of evolution, all these are the traits commonly associated with the cave dwelling 'early man'.

Aurobindo was an Indian philosopher, yogi, guru, poet, and nationalist. He became a spiritual reformer, introducing his visions on human progress and spiritual evolution. The central theme of his vision was the evolution of human life into a divine life. He believed in a spiritual realisation that not only liberated but transformed human nature, enabling a divine life on earth.

Aurobindo believed that Darwinism merely describes a phenomenon of the evolution of matter into life, but does not explain the reason behind it, while he finds life to be already present in matter, because all of existence is a manifestation of Brahman.

The unfolding of earth's and man's spiritual destiny is illuminated. The Life Divine is Aurobindo's principal philosophical work in which he presents a theory of spiritual evolution, which will culminate in the human being and the advent of a divine life on the earth.

The ancient Hindu wisdom is like the proverbial 'Akshaya Patra' and those who have it will never feel hungry for knowledge. Even in the Kavyas written for the easy understanding of the common readers, there are several layers of meaning. Take for instance the Sundarakanda from the Ramayana which is an encyclopaedia in itself. It has Dharma, Mantra, Tattva, Ayurveda, Jyotish, and Yoga shastras all rolled into one. This is only the tip of the iceberg. For the serious seekers and people with true curiosity the ancient texts are like a priceless treasure. It is our failure to understand the true meaning and knowledge of these Shastras that we tend to criticize out of our sheer ignorance. Ignorance is not always blissful, definitely not in the context of our rich heritage of wisdom.

(With VJM Divakar)

The impact of Covid-19 on your liver

AVNISH SETH

THE resurgence and exponential spread of Covid-19 has brought great challenges to our healthcare system. Most deaths are a result of respiratory failure due to significant injury to the lungs. We have also learnt that the virus may affect all parts of the digestive system including the food pipe, stomach, intestine, liver and pancreas. This has implications in diagnosis, management, and transmission of the disease.

Here are a few facts on liver and the impact a Covid-19 infection can have on it

Q: How does Covid-19 virus affect the liver?

A: The virus enters human cells by locking on to the angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE-2) receptor. Besides the lungs, these receptors are expressed in the cells of the intestine, liver, and bile duct, thus making these organs prone to injury by the virus.

What are the gastrointestinal and liver manifestations in Covid-19?

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and pain in abdomen have been reported in up to 15 per cent patients with Covid-19 infection. Of note, up to 10 per cent of patients with Covid-19 may present with these symptoms before or without respiratory features. It has been found that patients presenting with initial gastrointestinal symptoms may have delay in hospital admission and a more severe course of illness as compared to those without. Injury to the liver injury may manifest as elevation of liver enzymes in liver function blood tests (LFT). Current data suggests that 19 per cent of Covid-19 patients have abnormal levels of liver enzymes Alanine aminotransferase (ALT) and Aspartate aminotransferase (AST) during disease, with mostly mild elevation in serum bilirubin and

Gamma-glutamyl transferase (GGT). In most patients the liver injury is mild and transient, although severe liver damage has been reported.

How do patients with pre-existing liver disease handle Covid-19 infection?

The common causes of chronic liver disease in our country include alcohol abuse, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and autoimmunity. The immune system of these patients is weak, and they must remain extra careful as there is an increased risk for severe illness due to the virus. Liver injury due to the virus in patients with pre-existing chronic liver disease who may lead to acute on chronic liver failure (ACLF). More severe the Covid infection, greater is the extent of liver injury. Most medications used for treatment of Covid-19 also tend to injure the liver and there is a need for close monitoring and dosage adjustment as required.

What are the implications of Covid-19 in patients who have received a liver transplant? Is it safe to carry out liver transplant during these times?

There have been concerns that organ transplant recipients, who are on medications that reduce body immunity, may be more prone to infection with Covid-19 or have a more severe course of illness. It has now been consistently shown that use of majority of these medications is safe and may prevent severe Covid symptoms by blocking the cytokine storm. Outcome of Covid-19 infection is the same as healthy population in organ transplant recipients. It is no surprise that after initial apprehensions, transplant activity has resumed in the country, for those who need it most, as Covid-free

pathways have been established.

Should patients with chronic liver disease and liver transplant recipients take the vaccine against Covid-19 virus?

The safety of vaccination in this cohort has been well established now. All such individuals who are eligible must take the vaccine at the earliest. They should not pick or choose or wait for the perfect vaccine. It is felt that the efficacy of vaccine in patients on immunosuppression drugs may be a trifle less than the normal population, but there are no additional risks.

What are the precautions that patients with liver disease should observe to prevent Covid-19 infection and poor outcomes?

As compared to healthy individuals, patients with underlying liver disease tend to do poorly with Covid-19. Hence, every attempt must be made to keep the liver as healthy as possible. Fatty liver disease provides an unhealthy environment on which the virus may flourish. Avoidance of fatty food, sweets and fast food coupled with regular exercise for 30 minutes a day at least 5 days a week are good for the liver. Excessive alcohol intake should be avoided. Patients who are suffering from Chronic Hepatitis due to Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and auto-immunity must be regular with their medication. The availability of vaccine has brought hope that the pandemic may be controlled in a few months. Social distancing and prevention of transmission of virus will, however, continue to be of paramount importance as more and more vaccine-escape mutations in the virus are anticipated.

(Avnish Seth, Principal Director, Gastroenterology, Hepatobiliary Sciences and Transplant Hepatology, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram)

Now, download 20 books over next 20 days at Re 1 per book

NEW DELHI

READ a fictionalised biography of Kasturba Gandhi, who was as strong and great as the Mahatma; there's a love saga between a widower and an estranged woman; a tale of a new woman at the turn of Independence; analyse the relevance of older values in present-day life and the need to change with the times; observe the generational change and conflict in a Tamil community. There's this and much more as starting Saturday, over the next 20 days, Niyogi Books offers you from its Thornbird imprint a compelling melange of Indian language literature in translation -- one book a day at Re 1 each, in collaboration with the Indian Novels Collective and downloadable on Amazon.

Here's what's on offer:

April 24: The Heroine and Other Stories by D. Jayakanthan (translated from Tamil). Each story in this collection delves into the depths of the human psyche, revealing the hidden strengths ordinary people find within themselves when faced with extraordinary circumstances.

April 25: Ballad of Kaziranga by Dileep Chandra (translated from Assamese). This is not a love story (although it does seep in), but rather, the story of love three friends share for the beautiful and majestic Kaziranga, in their own unique way.

April 26: Blossoms in the Graveyard by Jnanpith Awardee Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya (translated from Assamese) is the story of a young girl from a village in what is at that time East Pakistan as she journeys from dependence to self-reliance in the midst of the Bangladesh liberation struggle.

April 27: Elegy for the East by Dhruvajyoti Borah (translated from Assamese) explores the utter helplessness and travails of man



in face of the relentless march of history.

April 28: Brink by S.L. Bhayappa (translated from Kannada) is a love saga between Somashekhar, a widower, and Amrita, an estranged woman and deliberates on the moral, philosophical, and physical aspects of love between a man and a woman.

April 29: Kasturba Gandhi: A Bio-fiction by Giriraj Kishore (translated from Hindi) is the fictionalised biography of Kasturba Gandhi, a woman as strong and great as Mahatma Gandhi, who earned a place in history because of her personal sacrifices and strength of conviction in what was right.

April 30: A Plate of White Marble by Bani Basu (translated from Bengali). It is the tale of the new woman of an era that has just witnessed the independence of a nation.

May 1: A Day in the Life of Mangal Taram by Anita Agnihotri (translated from Bengali) is a selection of 14 stories out of over 200 short stories written by Anita Agnihotri, whose works traverse a wide range of human emotions, spanning over three decades.

May 2: Island of Lost Shadows by E. Santhosh Kumar (translated from Malayalam). Through the voices of a myriad and sharply

sketched characters, the author brings to life the troubled times of the Seventies when sadistic excesses were the norm.

May 3: Giligadu: The Lost Days by Sahitya Akademi winner Chitra Mudgal (translated from Hindi) is a multi-layered novellette, short in length yet deep in meaning and messages for urban India.

May 4: Generations by Neela Padmanabhan (translated from Tamil) is an intricate tale, simply told by a master of fiction about a community of Tamil speakers who live on the borders of modern-day Kerala - a novel of generational change and conflict.

May 5: A Fistful of Mustard Seeds by E. Santhosh Kumar (translated from Malayalam) explores moral dilemmas and personal traumas and delves into the dark recesses of the soul.

May 6: Land Lust by Joginder Paul (translated from Urdu) offers poignant glimpses of the unequal multiracial relations in colonial Kenya, evoking insightful moments of compassion from within the harsh xenophobic environs.

May 7: Laila Ke Khutoot: The Letters of Laila by Qazi Abdul Ghaffar (translated from Urdu) has been hailed as the 'first specimen of a truly psychoanalytical fiction in Urdu'.

May 8: In the Glow of Your Being by Govind Mishra (translated from Hindi) examines the issues faced by the modern Indian woman and probes deep into the question of their freedom and its denial by society.

May 9: The Elixir of Everlasting Youth by Lakshmi Nandan Bora (translated from Assamese) is the story of an internationally renowned scientist who apparently has everything - scientific breakthroughs, awards, fame, wealth and a fine family; the key to rejuvenation continues to elude him till he finally learns the secret, helped by a yogi's treatment and modern science.

May 10: The Story of a Timepiece: A Collection of Short Stories by Sankarankutty Pottekkat (translated from Malayalam) deals with complex characters and human relationships in realistic, everyday situations, often reflecting the social consciousness of the pre-Independence period.

May 11: The Musk and Other Stories by Arupa Patangia Kalita (translated from Assamese) is an eclectic mix of short stories and a novella that sheds light on some of the burning issues that reverberate through the Assam Valley.

May 12: Jallianwala Bagh: Literary Responses in Prose & Poetry Edited by Rakhshanda Jalil (translated from Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi) attempts to open a window into the world of possibilities that literature offers to reflect, interpret and analyse events of momentous historical import.

May 13: Beasts of Burden by Imayam (translated from Tamil). Set in the early 1970s when ritual status and payment in kind were giving way to cash wages, this is an extraordinarily detailed picture of a lifestyle that has now passed.

Here's a chance to chance to build up an eclectic library at virtually zero cost. What are you waiting for? (HANS)



TRAGIC END

Smoke rises in the atmosphere due to cremation of Covid-19 victims at Swarn Rekha Ghat crematorium as coronavirus cases surge in Ranchi on Saturday

8th edition of Next Big Idea 2021 begins



HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

Zone Startups India, part of BIL-Ryerson Technology Startup Incubator Foundation (BRT-SIF), has announced the 8th edition of its Next BIG Idea (NBI) programme in partnership with the Government of Ontario, Canada, and Invest in Canada.

The programme was launched virtually in presence of speakers including, Andrew Smith, Minister (Commercial), High Commission of Canada; Chris Begley, Consul and Senior Economic Officer, Government of Ontario (Mumbai); and Hemant Gupta, MD, (BRTSIF).

The launch was followed by a panel discussion on the topic: "Canada: Your Startup Gateway to North America and the World", with eminent panelists from diverse spheres who shared their experience and words of advice with the audience.

The panel comprised Abdullah Snobar, Executive Director, DMZ, and CEO of DMZ Ventures; Elaine D'Souza, Trade Commissioner- Investment (Acting), Consulate General of Canada (Mumbai); Zohra Jaffer, Senior

Manager, KPMG Law-Canada, and Sandeep Todi, Co-founder and Chief Business Officer, Truly Financial and Remitr.

Saurabh Bhatia, Associate Director, IBI Group/Chairperson, ICBC (North Region India Council) moderated the panel discussion.

The event was attended by hundreds of startups and entrepreneurs from across India.

Established in 2013, as a joint initiative with the Government of Ontario, Canada, in the past 7 editions, NBI has received support from multiple stakeholders from both Canada and India - such as Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta; Industry Partners such as RBC, IBM, Amazon Web Services, HDFC Bank, Google, and TCS.

The NBI WebTalks - A series of in-depth talks on Canada's technology and innovation ecosystem as well as social and cultural context will be conducted from April 23 to May 21.

The applications for NBI Pre-Landing Programme - A 3-month market readiness programme will be available from April 23 to May 23.

The winner will be announced on June 9, after a thorough evaluation and selection process.



Viiveck Verma

In the year 1998, as the world had begun taking note of the damages the Y2K bug, which caused a computer's inability to differentiate between the years 1900 and 2000, could bring about, India responded with optimism and vigour. The Y2K, or the Year 2000 problem arose because programmes represented four-digit years with only the final two digits, causing confusion in distinguishing years; it was feared that when the year 2000 would begin, computers would malfunction across the board, not recognising the year correctly. A 1998 report from a leading publication notes Rusi Brij, Vice President of Satyam Computers calling it a "godsend" as the firm was instrumental in pioneering methods of debugging computers at risk. India, throughout this global crisis, provided skilled engineers and programmers to avert gigantic losses and consequently the Indian Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector shot up significantly. Since then, India has been at the forefront of animating a digital zeitgeist which has realised several unprecedented strides for the world. To top it all, this is merely one narrative in India's trove of phenomenal achievements which shines brighter in the face of the pandemic, with the country becoming the largest manufacturer of Covid-19 vaccines.

The Y2K moment was a milestone anticipating several other

gargantuan advances and India leads in several races today. As the Indian Brand Equity Foundation notes, India has become the digital capabilities hub of the world with around 75 per cent of the global digital talent present in the country. Indian IT companies have established centers all over the globe and as the biggest IT exporter in the world, the sustenance of the digital domain is unimaginable without India's contributions. India's digital product ecosystem braved the Covid reality and came out resilient and bursting with possibility. As Outlook reports, almost 98 per cent of the IT workforce was working from home at the peak of lockdown in India and companies like Infosys and Wipro closed multi-million and even billion-dollar deals. Healthcare and education incorporated digital innovation and IT companies increased their digital offerings for delivering services to citizens. Technology has become the chief propeller of endeavour during the pandemic and Indian innovation in this regard has

been nothing short of exemplary.

As the Covid-19 crisis made the threats of disease and death preponderant, India's digitally skilled pool crafted new avenues of prevention, care and recoveries. The medical technology sector in India saw an unprecedented increase in techniques of remote monitoring, digitisation of healthcare data and telemedicine via video-conferencing. In an abundance of apps making healthcare more accessible, AskApollo, the online platform for Apollo Hospitals, as noted publications report, facilitates about 7,000 appointments daily and guarantees wait times for a doctor of no more than 20 minutes, except in cases of emergencies. With thousands of active health technology startups and with government support, India has been able to expedite delivery of medical services and manufacture effective medical devices on a large scale. Information about vaccines and records of vaccination and monitoring of patients were all ensured by a digital regime. Under the Make in India

- Rise of BPO business in India
- Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat most remarkable achievements
- Ed Tech sector in India is consistently fashioning new modes
- Med Tech sector has demonstrated the most remarkable achievements
- CO-Covid moment is an unprecedented and bigger opportunity than the Y2K

Healthcare and education incorporated digital innovation and IT companies increased their digital offerings for delivering services to citizens. Technology has become the chief propeller of endeavour during the pandemic and Indian innovation in this regard has been nothing short of exemplary



tently fashioning new modes of doing justice to millions of students and teachers.

India's technology industry is not simply a tale of astounding resilience but also the key to its economic revival, despite the ravages of the pandemic. A Nasscom report revealed that the Indian IT services revenue is set to touch \$194 billion by end of 20-21, a 2.3 per cent increase from the previous year. This signals an incredible resurgence for India and is simultaneously emblematic of how the Indian economy has capacity for prodigious success in the face of challenges. These developments transcend sectors and symbolise a socio-economic fabric that has always bounced back and will continue to do so.

From Y2K to Covid, India's trajectory has been a story of unbridled durability and advancement. While the glorious journey of leading by example began with the IT industry, India's co-Covid response has illuminated new idioms of resistance and momentous victories.

India's homegrown talent and innovation has ushered in an acceleration for the world it cannot do without. The co-Covid moment is an unprecedented and bigger opportunity than the Y2K moment and with the world's largest vaccination programme in place, alongside a surge in innovation, India could not merely invigorate unforeseen development but craft a new dimension of everyday existence altogether. This is an occasion we must not squander and a potential dividend we must reap and with India's record of buoyancy and transformation, a triumphant future is certainly realisable.

(The author is Founder, Upsurge Global, and Senior Advisor, Telangana State Innovation Council)

Bitdefender's cloud solution to track cyber attack threats

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

BD Soft, exclusive country partner to Bitdefender, a leading global cybersecurity company protecting over 500 million systems worldwide, has launched a new cloud-based dedicated Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) solution, for enterprise customers and managed service providers (MSPs) to improve the ability to detect and eradicate cyberattack threats.

The new EDR package is resource-light and fully cloud-delivered for easy deployment and management and runs alongside third-party prevention technologies. Unique in the EDR space, it combines endpoint telemetry and human risk analytics with the advanced threat detection capabilities. The detection capabilities enable quick visibility into vulnerable systems on premises or in cloud environments, and offer one-click actions to mitigate risks including quarantining files, blocking IP addresses and killing processes.

"Businesses and MSPs struggle to keep pace with an onslaught of attacks as cybercriminals work diligently to capitalise on the industry's shift to less secure remote work environments for the foreseeable future," said Zakir Hussain, CEO, BD Software Distribution.

"The new Bitdefender EDR package delivers best-in-class attack visibility and effective response, backed by threat intelligence from Bitdefender Labs, to help organisations navigate these riskier, uncertain times and protect their most valuable assets," he further adds.

Bitdefender EDR is designed to increase resilience against cyberattacks by making detection more accurate with increased visibility into what's happening at the endpoint.

Exports on upswing despite Covid surge

Exports in March have shown a 60% increase over the same month last year

SUSHMA RAMACHANDRAN

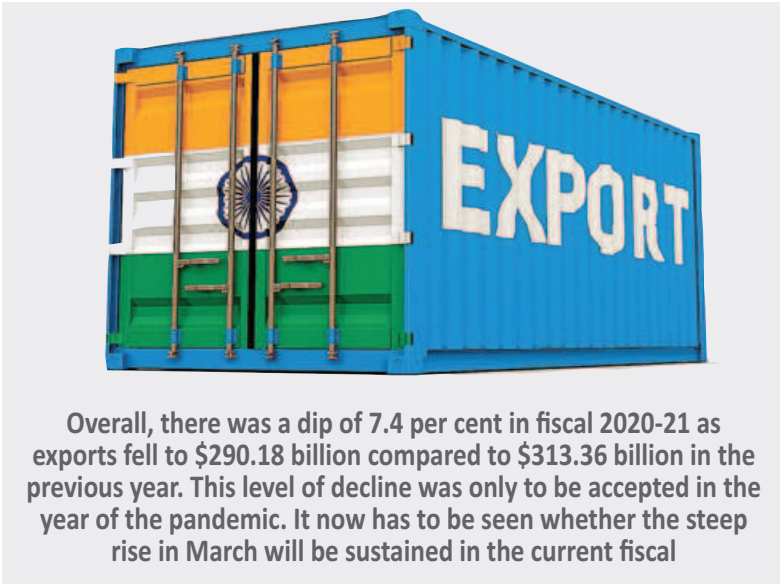
As the second wave of Covid rages in the country, one sector of the economy seems to be thriving despite all odds. And that is exports. The latest data for exports in March shows a 60 per cent increase over the same month last year. And Commerce Ministry officials are surprisingly upbeat about the outlook for 2021-22. This is despite the fact there was a 7 per cent contraction in exports in the last fiscal which was during the pandemic, when literally nothing was going right.

The last few months of that year, however, saw economic growth pick up in most sectors and exports have been no exception. These rose by 6 per cent in December, 0.1 per cent in January and then fell marginally by 0.3 per cent in February on a year on year basis. The spurt in March to \$34.45 billion compared to the same month last year reflects the rise in global demand for goods as well as the ability of Indian export industries to raise output to meet the requirements.

At the same time, this positive perception needs to be tempered by looking more realistically at the data. The March increase is over the extremely low base of the same month in 2020. Exports had then fallen by about 34 per cent compared to March 2019, reaching only \$21.49 billion. The dip was reflecting the effect of the virus that had caused a slowdown all over the world. The steep 60 per cent rise in March 2021 must be viewed in this larger context. Yet it cannot be denied that exports have shown a rising graph of exports on a month to month basis since January this year. From \$27.45 billion then, the value of export rose to \$34.45 billion in March, the highest ever in a single month.

So there is room for some cautious optimism on the export front. Overall, there was a dip of 7.4 per cent in fiscal 2020-21 as exports fell to \$290.18 billion compared to \$313.36 billion in the previous year. This level of decline was only to be accepted in the year of the pandemic. It now has to be seen whether the steep rise in March will be sustained in the current fiscal.

For this to happen, the scenario related to the Covid surge will have to improve in the coming months. As of now, it is clear that the localised curfews and movement curbs in many parts of the country will affect export oriented production during April and May. Subse-



quently, however, much will depend on export strategies and policies. For instance, more incentives need to be given to agricultural exports. These continued to show a significant increase of 18 per cent during the last fiscal (April to February 2021) going counter to the decline in all other segments. Wheat, rice, soya meal, spices, sugar, raw cotton and vegetables were among the commodities that showed the highest growth. Wheat showed sharp growth largely due to government to government supplies to Afghanistan and Lebanon. In any case, it is clear that greater attention needs to be paid to agricultural storage and processing so that India can become a long-term player in global markets.

One of the problems facing agricultural exports is the curtailment of export commitments owing to domestic needs. To become a long term supplier in the market, buffer stocks need to be built up to ensure that export contracts are fulfilled in a timely manner.

The second issue related to the present scenario is the need for export industries to provide better wages and housing to migrant workers. This will prevent an exodus every time there are movement restrictions due to the pandemic. This is an issue being faced by most export hubs like Ludhiana and Jodhpur. In the case of the knitwear export centre, Tirupur, exporters have decided to provide incentives to workers to stay on during the temporary displacement. In the long run, however, export industries will have to ensure better living conditions for workers along with providing a social safety net. This has to

be long term strategy to sustain the workforce that comes from distance places.

Thirdly, even as the government is funding large scale investments in infrastructure, some of this must find its way to support the supply chain for exporters. Warehouses and storages in ports and airports as well as cold chains for agricultural and horticultural products are critically needed to ensure that exports can be sustained on a long term basis.

And finally, and perhaps most important, red tape needs to be cut down drastically. The latest scheme to provide support to exports known as the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP) scheme has come into effect since January this year but the rates have not yet been notified. The scheme replaced an earlier one that was successfully challenged by the US at the World Trade Organisation. The new one rebates taxes and duties for export industries. But in the absence of the new rates, it is difficult for exporters to specify pricing for their goods. These are critical issues that cannot be taken lightly by the Commerce Ministry as it has a direct impact on the country's export earnings.

Export industries are doing relatively well despite being buffeted by the Covid surge along with the entire gamut of trade and industry. But if given adequate support for tiding over these short term issues, this sector may ultimately achieve the optimistic projections being made for export growth in the current fiscal.

QUIZ NO.
170

HANS BIZ QUIZ

'World Intellectual Property Day'

1. World Intellectual Property Day is observed annually on 26th April. What protects the intellectual property created by artists?

- a) Trademarks
- b) Patents
- c) Copyright
- d) Geographical Indications

2. What protects the intellectual property created by designers?

- a) Registered Designs
- b) Patents
- c) Copyright
- d) Geographical Indications

3. What protects the intellectual property created by inventors?

- a) Registered Designs
- b) Geographical Indications
- c) Copyright
- d) Patents

4. World Intellectual Property Day was established by the World Intellectual Property Organisation in 2000 to "raise awareness about patents, copyright, trademarks etc. Which of these is a geographical indication?"

- a) World Wide Web
- b) India Gate
- c) Cheese
- d) All of the above

5. 26th April was chosen as the date for World Intellectual Property Day because it coincides with the date on which the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organisation entered into force in 1970. Which of the below has a geographical indication?

- a) Uppada Jamdani Sarees
- b) Venkatagiri Sarees and Dharmavaram Handloom Pattu Sarees
- c) Mangalagiri Sarees and Fabrics
- d) All of the above

6. World Intellectual Property Day 2021 shines a light on the critical role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the economy and how they can use intellectual property rights to build more substantial,

more competitive, and resilient businesses. What does a trademark protect?

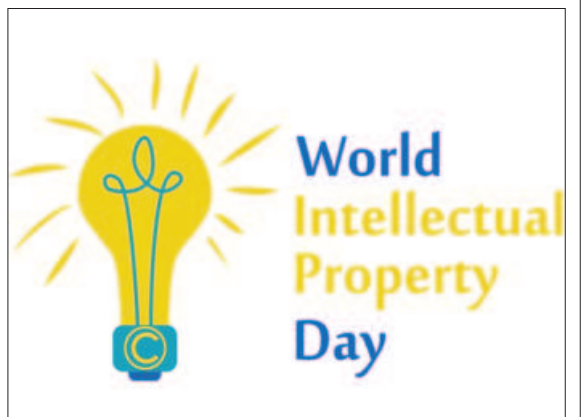
- a) An idea and invention
- b) The look, shape, and feel of a product
- c) Name, Logos, and brands
- d) A secret formula

7. In most countries, how long does copyright last for?

- a) 10 years after the creation of the work
- b) 50 years after the creation of the work
- c) 10 years after the death of the person who created that work
- d) 50 years after the death of the person who created that work

8. How long do patents usually last for?

- a) 20 years
- b) 15 years
- c) 10 years
- d) 5 years



9. Salman Khan sets up his own company to sell his own range of clothes. What type of intellectual property can Salman use to brand his range of clothes designed and manufactured by his company?

- a) Copyright
- b) Patents
- c) Registered designs
- d) Trademarks

10. If XYZ company develops a new technology that improves its main product, what type of intellectual property can it use to stop others from copying their invention?

- a) Patents
- b) Geographical Indications
- c) Registered designs
- d) Trademarks

The Hans Biz Quiz has been compiled by **Sunil Dhavala**, CEO, The Third Umpire Media. He had held senior management roles at Bertelsmann, NGC, Fox Broadcasting, Star TV and others. He is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

KEY

101 9D 8A 9D 69 5D 74 8D 2A 1C

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

It's Dhoni vs Kohli in clash of table-toppers

MUMBAI

TABLE-toppers Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) will take on second-placed Chennai Supers Kings (CSK) in what will be a battle between the current India captain Virat Kohli and former India captain MS Dhoni in an Indian Premier League match at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

While RCB have a clean

slate, having won four out of four matches in the tournament so far, CSK have won three out of their four matches.

Both the teams have looked in great form although CSK would be a tad worried with the way their bowling wilted under the onslaught from Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) lower order comprising Andre Russell, Dinesh Karthik and Pat Cummins, in their last match. The KKR trio took their team from 31/5 to 202 and just 18 runs short of CSK total.

With RCB batting looking by far the best in the tournament, CSK need to be wary. Devdutt Padikkal and skipper Kohli shared an unbeaten 181-run partnership for the opening wicket as RCB romped to a 10-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals.

Glenn Maxwell and AB de Villiers are also in the RCB line-up, meaning CSK will have to bowl really well to stop the Bengaluru franchise from putting up a big score.

For CSK, the concern will be the form of Suresh Raina and Ambati Rayudu. While both openers Ruturaj Gaikwad and Faf du Plessis have done well, the decision to promote Moeen Ali to No. 3 has also paid dividends as the left-handed batsman has batted aggressively.

However, Raina and Rayudu haven't done much and instead have been guilty of throwing their wickets away.

MS Dhoni will also be in focus as he has looked to promote himself and play some shots.

CSK's back-end though, with Sam Curran, Ravindra Jadeja and Dwayne Bravo has been quite good and effective. (IANS)

SQUADS

Chennai Super Kings

MS Dhoni (captain/wicket-keeper), Suresh Raina, Narayan Jagadeesan, Ruturaj Gaikwad, KM Asif, Karn Sharma, Ambati Rayudu, Deepak Chahar, Faf du Plessis, Shardul Thakur, Mitchell Santner, Dwayne Bravo, Lungi Ngidi, Sam Curran, Ravindra Jadeja, Imran Tahir, Robin Uthappa, Moeen Ali, K Gowtham, Cheteshwar Pujara, M. Harisankar Reddy, K.Bhagath Varma, C Hari Nishanth, R Sai Kishore, Jason Behrendorff.

Royal Challengers Bangalore

Virat Kohli (captain), Devdutt Padikkal, Finn Allen (wicket-keeper), AB de Villiers (wicket-keeper), Pavan Deshpande, Washington Sundar, Daniel Sams, Yuzvendra Chahal, Adam Zampa, Shahbaz Ahmed, Mohammed Siraj, Navdeep Saini, Kane Richardson, Harshal Patel, Glenn Maxwell, Sachin Baby, Rajat Patidar, Mohammed Azharuddeen, Kyle Jamieson, Daniel Christian, Suyash Prabhudessai, K.S. Bharat.

POINTS TABLE

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Tied	Net RR	Pts
1 RCB	4	4	0	0	+1.009	8
2 CSK	4	3	1	0	+1.142	6
3 DC	4	3	1	0	+0.426	6
4 MI	5	2	3	0	-0.032	4
5 PBKS	5	2	3	0	-0.428	4
6 SRH	4	1	3	0	-0.228	2
7 KKR	4	1	3	0	-0.700	2
8 RR	4	1	3	0	-1.011	2

Slow-bowler plan worked to perfection vs MI: PK's KL Rahul

probably took them by surprise. That was the best option on the (Chidambaram Stadium) pitch, I felt, because it was slow and it didn't look like the ball was going to come on to the bat. So, I felt, slower the bowlers, the harder it would be for the batsmen to hit. This is what we had planned before the game. And it worked on Friday," said Rahul.

"We have statisticians and analysts to tell us what the opposition players like and we knew that Rohit (Sharma) and Quinton (de Kock) liked the ball coming on and they like pace, so the whole point was to take the pace off, and I'm really happy that it worked."

While Hooda tied down the MI batsmen, conceding only 15 runs in his three overs and taking opener De Kock's wicket for three, young Ravi Bishnoi too played a big part, giving away only 21 runs in his four overs and dismissing top-order batsmen Ishan Kishan and Suryakumar Yadav. "I'm happy that we all struck to our plan. The previous games we have spoken a lot about strategies and tactics and, somehow, under pressure, we've not executed that really well, or not remembered our plans and swayed away from our plans. That's what hurt us. (Before the match) we spoke about it that we believe in our process, we believe in our plans and the way the boys started, the energy was really high," said Rahul.

CHENNAI

PUNJAB Kings skipper KL Rahul, who led from the front in his team's victory against defending Indian Premier League (IPL) champions Mumbai Indians (MI), said on Saturday that not allowing Rohit Sharma and Quinton de Kock to play their natural game was the main reason for the team's nine-wicket win. With some tight spin bowling, Punjab Kings restricted their opponents to 131 for six and then notched up the required runs for the loss of just one wicket and with 14 balls to spare. KL Rahul and Chris Gayle remained unbeaten on 60 and 43 runs, respectively. "The pair of Moises Henriques and Deepak Hooda

Match starts at 3.30pm

Williamson key for SRH against DC spinners

CHENNAI

A buoyant Delhi Capitals (DC), who are third in the points table, will face SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH), who are in the bottom half of the table, in an Indian Premier League (IPL) match at the MA Chidambaram Stadium here on Sunday night.

While DC are coming into this match on the back of two successive victories, over Mumbai Indians and Punjab Kings, their opponents SRH managed to get their first win of the season when they defeated Punjab Kings in their last match on Wednesday. SRH are sixth in the IPL points table.

DC remain favourites with their all-round side. Their batting has looked solid with opener Shikhar Dhawan leading the run-getters' list and the race for Orange Cap. Aussie batsman Steve Smith also looked good in the last game against Mumbai Indians (MI). Their bowling too has been good too with the presence of internationals Kagiso Rabada and

Match starts at 7.30pm

SQUADS

SunRisers Hyderabad: David Warner (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Basil Thampi, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jonny Bairstow (wicketkeeper), Kane Williamson, Manish Pandey, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Sandeep Sharma, Shahbaz Nadeem, Shreevats Goswami, Siddharth Kaul, Khaleel Ahmed, Vijay Shankar, Wriddhiman Saha (wicketkeeper), Abdul Samad, Jason Roy, Jason Holder, Priyam Garg, Virat Singh, Kedar Jadhav, Mujeeb ur Rehman, J Suchith.

Delhi Capitals: Rishabh Pant (captain/wicket-keeper), Shikhar Dhawan, Prithvi Shaw, Ajinkya Rahane, Steve Smith, Sam Billings, Shimron Hetmyer, Ishant Sharma, Kagiso Rabada, Anrich Nortje, Umesh Yadav, Tom Curran, Avesh Khan, Lalit Yadav, Pravin Dube, Rival Patel, Lukman Hussain Meriwala, M Siddharth, Marcus Stoinis, Axar Patel, Ravichandran Ashwin, Chris Woakes, Vishnu Vinod (wicketkeeper), Aditya Tare (wicketkeeper).

R Ashwin. Though it is young Madhya Pradesh pace bowler Avesh Khan, who has emerged as their top wickettaker. The right-arter has eight wickets this season and is fourth on the list of contenders for Purple Cap given to season's top wickettaker.

DC also saw the return of leg-spinner Amit Mishra in the last match. Mishra took four wickets to restrict MI to a low total. The former India player, returning this season after injury ruled him out of the major part of the last season, was adjudged man of the match for his bowling performance in DC's win over MI.

2022 World Cup will be my swansong: Mithali

NEW DELHI

INDIAN women's ODI captain Mithali Raj on Saturday indicated that the 2022 50-over World Cup in New Zealand will be her "swansong" after 23 illustrious years in international cricket.

The 38-year-old Mithali, arguably, the finest woman cricketer that India has ever produced, also said that she is seriously looking for some good seam bowling options for the lively New Zealand tracks that will be on offer next year.

"It's been 21 years of international cricket and I know 2022 is my swansong, The World Cup," Mithali said during the virtual launch of the book '1971: The Beginning of India's Crickering Greatness', published by Harper Collins and co-authored by Boria Majumdar and Gautam Bhattacharya.

"The last year is equal to the 20 years of my international cricket," she added. Mithali, the only women batter with 7,000 plus ODI runs, also spoke about how she had to keep herself motivated during the COVID-19 times which also pushed the global event by one year.

"I know we are in difficult times but it takes a lot out of me to keep working on my fitness. I am not getting any younger, in fact I am getting older and I know the importance of fitness," Mithali said.

"The importance of being in a very good emotional and mental set-up, knowing that there will be very few tours before the World Cup."

Indian women are set to

play four bilateral series -- away tours in England, Australia and New Zealand and a home series against West Indies sandwiched in between. "Every tour (from now on) is important for me as a batter as to how I am going to get the team to regroup and build a team for the World Cup," she said.

"Yeah, I am very optimistic looking at the girls and in the manner they have been working with whatever facilities they have in these times and focus and enthusiasm that a series is coming up." She admitted that fast bowling is one area that the team needs to improve upon and build a pool looking at the future as Jhulan Goswami also hits the business end of her career.

"We definitely need to look at a few players and prepare them for New Zealand, so yeah." Mithali also got some words of advice from the legendary Sunil Gavaskar, who was a co-panelist during the discussion. Gavaskar feels that Mithali and her bunch could take a leaf out of Virat Kohli's playbook of looking at opponent's eyes and giving it back without getting intimidated.

"I was with my wife at Lord's watching the 2017 Women's ODI World Cup final. What I saw was that English girls came hard at your lower order and intimidated them with their attitude," Gavaskar said.

"I would want the girls to glare back at the opposition instead of looking down. I feel body language is a very important aspect. Look at Virat Kohli, he stares at opposition and the rest of the team does that." (PTI)

Int'l hockey umpire Suresh Thakur dies of Covid

CHANDIGARH: Former international hockey umpire Suresh Kumar Thakur died in Mohali on Friday due to Covid-related complications. He was 51. Thakur had officiated in several prestigious international tournaments including the four-nation tournament in Hamburg (Germany) and the Azlan Shah Cup at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He also officiated as an umpire in the Hockey India League (HIL) in 2013 and 2014. Expressing Hockey India's (HI) condolences to the bereaved family, president Gyanendra Ningombam said, "Suresh Kumar Thakur was a well-known umpire on the international circuit and he will be sorely missed on the hockey pitch." (IANS)

AFC Champions League: Persepolis rout FC Goa 4-0

GOA: After putting up a brave fight in the previous match against the Iranian top-flight club on April 20, Indian Super League (ISL) side FC Goa suffered a crushing 0-4 defeat at the hands of Persepolis FC in their AFC Champions League Group Stage tie, which ended late on Friday. On a disappointing night at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Fartoda, a new-look FC Goa took to the pitch with head coach Juan Ferrando making eight changes to help his players recover from the fatigue of playing six games in the space on 20 days. FC Goa will hope for a better performance when they take on Qatar's Al Rayyan on April 26.

SL fiasco gives clubs open goal to reset with UEFA

GENEVA: Purged of most of its leaders in the Super League fiasco this week, the group representing European soccer clubs was given a chance to reinvent itself. Now the European Club Association is free to push for reversing Champions League changes that favor the wealthiest and more powerful who threatened to tear apart soccer's traditional fabric. The decisions UEFA made on Monday for a Champions League revamp in 2024 — of 36 teams each playing 10 games in a single standings — clearly favor the rebels. Two wild cards for storied clubs is one gift that can be taken back now they no longer dominate a key UEFA committee. Hours earlier around midnight on Sunday, the 246-member ECA lost 12 of the most influential — and most demanding — when they left to announce their own Super League. The project quickly collapsed amid a ferocious backlash from fans and domestic leagues, governments and Champions League organizer UEFA, handing the ECA a chance to restore trust.



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