



WINDOWS

Man commits suicide at Chawri Bazar Metro Station

NEW DELHI

A 55-year-old man allegedly committed suicide by jumping in front of a moving train at Chawri Bazar station on the Delhi Metro's Yellow Line on Tuesday, police said.

Services were briefly delayed between Rajiv Chowk and Kashmere Gate stations due to the incident, according to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). The man, who has been identified as Mohammad Khizar, a resident of Sitaram Bazar, jumped in from of the moving train around 12 PM at Chawri Bazar metro station, a senior police officer said. The body was sent to Lady Hardinge Hospital for a post-mortem examination, the officer said. The DMRC took to Twitter to inform commuters about the delay in services. "Delay in services between Rajiv Chowk and Kashmere Gate due to a passenger on track at Chawri Bazar. Normal services on all other lines," it said in a tweet posted at 12:16 PM. In another tweet posted at 12:32 PM, it informed commuters that normal services had resumed on the Yellow Line.



Delhi constable injured in road accident

NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old Delhi Police constable was injured after an Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) was hit allegedly by a tempo in north Delhi's Civil Lines area in the early hours of Tuesday, officials said.

The constable, Anil, who is posted at Civil Lines police station, was on duty as a driver with Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Devender when the incident took place around 2 am, they said. According to the police, the team was patrolling in the ERV along the dark stretches between Chandigram Akhara and Majnu Ka Tilla when they stopped the vehicle and stepped down to check the air pressure in one of the tyres. Meanwhile, a tempo allegedly hit the ERV, injuring Anil, and fled from the spot. The ASI immediately shifted the injured constable to Parmanand hospital where is undergoing treatment, a senior police officer said. The constable sustained injuries on his ribs and lower abdomen but his condition is stated to be out of danger, he said.

Approvals for foreign Covid vax on fast track

Vaccines approved by other countries to be cleared for emergency use

NEW DELHI

THE Union government on Tuesday said it is speeding up emergency approvals for foreign-made vaccines that have been granted emergency use authorisation (EUA) in other countries amid alarming spike of coronavirus infections across India.

This is being done to expand the basket of vaccines for domestic use and hasten the pace and coverage of vaccination, according to an official statement from the government.

India, now the second most affected nation by Covid-19, on Tuesday recorded a massive surge of 161,736 Covid-19 cases. With this, India's Covid tally has shot up to 13,689,453 cases, according to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare data. The country also witnessed 880 fatalities due to Covid-19 in a single day. The death toll from the deadly infection stands at 171,089.

Presently three vaccines --- Covaxin by Bharat Biotech and Covishield by Serum Institute of India (SII) and Sputnik by Dr Reddy's --- have received emergency approvals from the national regulator Drugs Controller General of India. The DCGI has granted permission for Sputnik on Tuesday. The matter of augmenting the basket of vaccines available for fighting the pandemic as well as to accelerate the pace and coverage of domestic vaccination programme was

The first 100 beneficiaries of such foreign vaccines shall be assessed for seven days for safety outcomes before it is rolled out on mass scale

discussed in the 23rd meeting of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEG-VAC) held on April 11, chaired by Dr V K Paul, Member (Health), Niti Aayog. NEG-VAC, after comprehensive deliberation, recommended that vaccines for Covid-19, which have been developed and are being manufactured in foreign countries and which have been granted emergency approval for restricted use by USFDA, EMA, UK MHRA, PMDA Japan or which are listed in WHO (Emergency Use Listing) may be granted emergency use approval in India, mandating the requirement of post-approval parallel bridging clinical trial in place of conduct of local clinical trial.



Delhi reports over 13.5K cases

NATIONAL capital registered more than 13,500 coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, the highest ever single-day spike since the onset of the pandemic early last year.

The new figure comes as city has continued to witness an unabated resurgence of new cases in the last few weeks. According to the Delhi government, last time highest daily spike was 8,500 registered on November 11, 2020. "Delhi has fought against three waves of Covid-19 in the last one year but this fourth wave is more critical," Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal said

52 jail inmates, 7 staffers hit by Covid

NEW DELHI

Over 50 inmates and seven staff members in the three prison complexes of Delhi are presently undergoing treatment for COVID-19, officials said on Tuesday.

"A total of 174 inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 so far," Director General (Prisons) Sandeep Goel said. According to the

data shared by officials, the number of active COVID-19 cases in Delhi prisons till Tuesday stands at 59, including seven jail staff. "Of the 174 positive cases, 120 inmates have recovered and two have died, leaving 52 active cases. A total of 300 prison staff contracted the infection so far. Of them, 293 have recovered and seven are still under

treatment," Goel said. The first case of the coronavirus was reported in Rohini Jail on May 13. Two COVID-19 positive inmates of Mandoli Jail died on June 15 and July 4. Both were senior citizens. The officials had said ever since the outbreak of the pandemic in March, the Prisons Department remained vigilant and instructed its staff to

not only maintain hygiene and social distancing among themselves but also spread awareness about the infection among inmates in the three jail complexes.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Monsoon likely to be normal for 3rd straight year

New Delhi: Monsoon is likely to be normal or above normal for the third consecutive year, Skymet Weather, a private weather forecasting agency, said on Tuesday. In its preliminary forecast for 2021, Skymet said the rainfall from June to September is likely to 103% of the long period average (LPA) of 88cm based on average monsoon rain from 1961 to 2010. In 2020 and 2019,

the monsoon was above normal at 110% and 109% of LPA, respectively.

The monsoon season, which begins on June 1, is crucial for summer crops and brings about 70% of India's annual rainfall. It is crucial to the country's agriculture, which is one of the mainstays of its economy. Monsoon spurs farm produce and improves rural spending.

Fearing lockdown, migrants start leaving Delhi

NEW DELHI

AMIDST the rising number of COVID cases in the national capital, some of the migrant workers have started returning to their native places in fear of imposition of lockdown.

Some alone, with backpacks, while some with their families, migrant workers can be seen leaving for their home at ISBT, Anand Vihar and other key transit points in the city.

With increasing COVID numbers the fear of imposition of lockdown has been making migrant workers anxious. Gouri Shankar Sharma, who hails from Lucknow said, "The way COVID numbers are rising, there are chances of lockdown. There is no work. So I am leaving."



"The current situation, pushing Delhi towards another lockdown. I have no choice. I am leaving for home," Sunil Gupta, a migrant worker

from Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly said.

"The leaders do not have any problem. They travel in air-conditioned cars. If lockdown is imposed, the transportation will be closed. So I am leaving now," a migrant worker who was heading for Kanauj in Uttar Pradesh said.

"The rate at which the cases are rising makes it obvious that lockdown would be imposed. That is why I am going home," a labourer said.

The country had last year witnessed a major movement of migrants labourers and workers after the imposition of a nationwide lockdown in the last week of March.

The nationwide lockdown resulted in an exodus of migrant workers from cities to their native places.

Cancel CBSE exams: Kejri

PURNA SINGH
NEW DELHI

DELHI has reported over 13,500 cases in 24 hours, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Tuesday and appealed to the Centre to cancel the Class 10 and 12 board exams and explore alternative methods, including online exams.

Warning that conducting the exams may contribute to the large-scale spread of the virus, he said the centres could emerge as major hotspots. "Six lakh children in Delhi are going to write CBSE exams. Nearly one lakh teachers will be a part of it. These (the centres) can become major hotspots leading to large-scale spreading of corona. Children's lives and health are very important to us. I request

the Centre to cancel the CBSE exams," he said at a press conference on Tuesday afternoon. The Central Board of Secondary Education can explore other methods, including online exams and promoting students on the



basis of internal assessments, he said. "Several countries have done it, some states in India are doing it too. Some alternative methods could be thought of. Children can be promoted this time on the basis of either an online method or internal assessment. But the

exams should be cancelled," he added. The CBSE Class 10 and 12 exams are scheduled to begin on May 4. With the exponential increase in coronavirus cases, the chorus for cancellation or postponing the board exams is growing.

Delhi CM appeals for plasma donation

NEW DELHI

DELHI Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said plasma stocks to treat COVID-19 patients are running very low and appealed to those who have recovered from the infection to be proactive in donating it. A day after 14 hospitals in the national capital were converted into COVID-only facilities, the chief minister said planned surgeries like knee replacement can be delayed for 2-3 months though he stressed that there is enough capacity for emergency surgeries.

"This wave is very dangerous. According to data of last 10-15 days, 65 per cent of patients are below 45 years of age. Your health and life are very important to us. So, I



would like to appeal to the youth to step out of the house only when it is necessary and follow all Covid protocols," Kejriwal told a press conference.

"During the last wave of coronavirus, the people of Delhi came together to donate.

In the past months, the dip in cases decreased both

the demand and the number of plasma donations. Once again, the daily demand of plasma has increased and there is very less plasma available in stock. I request those citizens of Delhi who have recently recovered from Covid to step forward and donate plasma. "You can do this at LNJP and Rajiv Gandhi hospital.

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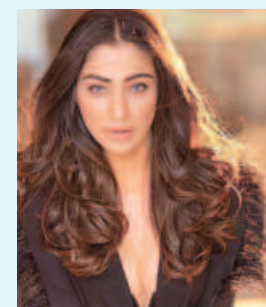
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TWEET PATROL



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Sutapa's new genre with 'The Cursed Inheritance'

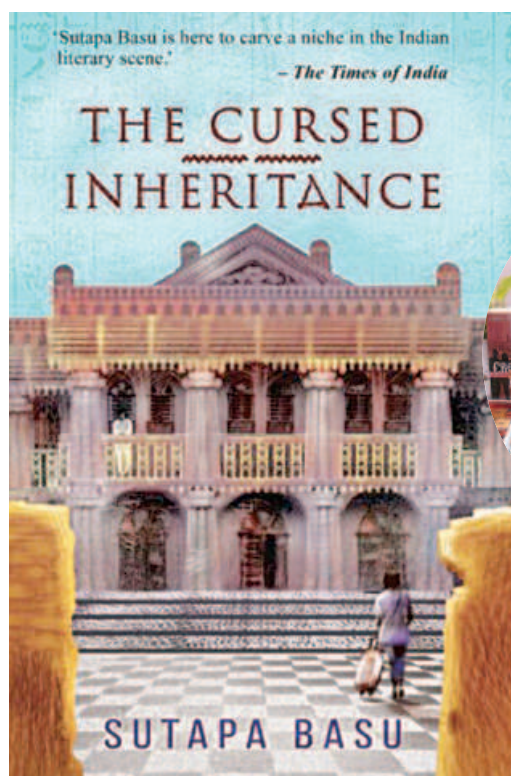
In the 14th edition of the UN-designated International Women's Day Awards, best-selling author and poet Sutapa Basu has been honored with an award in Publishing Professional by Public Diplomacy Forum and Narmadeshwari

ASKARI JAFFER

Sutapa Basu is the winner of the JK Papers Author Awards 2020 and has the bestselling Padmavati, The Queen Tells Her Own Story to her credit among anthologies and other historical fiction. Sutapa has explored beautifully a very different genre.

Set in a huge, dilapidated mansion in Kolkata 'The Cursed Inheritance' is the journey of a young, intelligent, and digitally savvy woman whose idealistic, ethical beliefs are pitted against an older, corrupt, immoral mindset. Sutapa also runs a live chat show Bistro Buzz Conversations with Sutapa Basu that hosts unique people from across spheres and the world. One can read her works on her website storyfuntastika.com and Readomania.com.

Sharing about 'The Cursed Inheritance', Sutapa shares, "It is a cozy mystery set in a heritage mansion. The protagonist, Anahita Sarkar, born and bought up in London inherits a mansion in Kolkata. At first, she decides to sell it. But after a few days of living in the mansion, she changes her mind. She is utterly charmed by its elegance and beguiled by the aura of her family's history that permeates the mansion. Each day, she finds the residence becoming more and more a part of her. However, she soon discovers that the mansion holds deep secrets. She is visited by a mysterious person who seems to know



read stories by authors such as Enid Blyton, Agatha Christie, O Henry, Maupassant, Nevil Shute and so many more my imagination soared to parallel universes. I have wished and I dreamed intensely that one day, I would also write like

them and create new worlds for my readers. The main trigger for The Cursed Inheritance has been my abiding fascination with old mansions of Kolkata. Whenever I saw one, I would try to imagine the people who had lived in it over the years maybe centuries ago. I would wonder what secrets it held. Invariably, it led me to think about treasures hidden in it. For a long time, I wanted to weave a story about an imaginary mansion that appeared in my fantasies. Now here it is; in The Cursed Inheritance, the mansion with all its magic."

Before beginning to write this book, Sutapa had to do a lot of research on old mansions, their secrets, their appearance and what their owners are doing with them. She also had to study about Kolkata and its special features.

She adds, "I had to also find information about a special mythological aspect of the spirit world that I wanted to introduce in the story. There were gaps in my knowledge about Egyptology, Indian Mythology, Tantric practices and the state of old heritage buildings in India. The research to bridge these gaps took a month or so. But once I began writing, the story flowed, and I was surprised to find that I could turn the book around in about a month's time."

The AHA moment in Sutapas life came when her hands held, for the first time, her first published debut titled Dangle, which is a psychological thriller, whereas the OUCH moment for her comes when people mispronounce her name.



Sutapa Basu

too much about her. She encounters a friendly foe who leaves cryptic riddles that are clues leading to a bewitching curse."

Later, the enigmas pursue her and threaten her values and her family's reputation. Anahita wants to overcome all the obstacles to dig out the truth; not for personal gain but because truth must be revealed.

The Cursed Inheritance asks to main questions to the readers in the start; Is she able to succeed in her mission? Will she be able to turn her inheritance from a curse into a blessing?

Sharing about her inspiration behind the book, Sutapa shares, "I am inspired by great authors from the past and the present. Books have always been my getaway vacations from the real world. When I



Lacking emotional support in relationship

Emotional support comes in a variety of sizes and shapes. At its core, however, emotional support is about providing love, support, reassurance, acceptance, and encouragement in a relationship.

It's especially important in times of stress or sadness as it stabilizes the relationship and provides a positive foundation for both partners.

In order to address and improve emotional support within a relationship, you need to be able to identify when a relationship is lacking it. Here are some signs a relationship is lacking emotional support:

You and your partner feel distant

Without true emotional intimacy and support, you and your partner are bound to drift. Perhaps you and your partner are talking less or aren't spending as much time together as you used to. If you're not fueling your feelings of togetherness and connection, your relationship's emotional support will ultimately break down.

You don't discuss your emotions

Another sign your relationship is lacking emotional support is if you and your partner aren't being fully honest or forthcoming with each other. When you don't talk about feelings or emotions, you're more likely to bottle up toxic ones or push your partner away out of fear. So do your best to open up about your daily problems and anxieties, and keep the lines of communication as open as possible.

You're leading separate lives

With this scenario, you and your partner aren't only emotionally distant; you're also spending very little time with each other. Maybe you don't text much or go out on as many dates,

Are you or your partner feeling a lack of emotional support in your relationship? Unsure of what you can do to get your relationship back on track? Here are some signs a relationship is lacking emotional support

or perhaps you've drawn up two distinctly different social groups.

You should want your partner involved in your life and desire to spend a lot of time with them. If you don't want to do this or feel uncomfortable doing so, you most likely have an emotionally distant relationship.

You're struggling with listening problems

Even if you and your partner are having frequent conversations, your emotional intimacy is lacking if you aren't actively listening to each other. This can cause a myriad of problems like forgetting important birthdays, anniversaries, or failing to truly understand what the other person is trying to say in moments of vulnerability. You can address this problem by practicing active listening, and intentionally communicating and connecting with your partner with compassion and presence.

You're not physically intimate

Another big sign your relationship is lacking emotional support is if you and your partner aren't engaging in physical intimacy. Partners who are unable to emotionally support each other find it more difficult to provide physical support to one another. If they're avoiding your physical touch, talk to them and try to get at the root of where your physical intimacy issues stem.

Sanya Malhotra flaunts perfect skin in latest photo-op

NEWS ROUNDUP



Actress Sanya Malhotra shared a new picture on social media on Tuesday and she looks every inch stunning in the post.

In the Instagram image, Sanya is dressed in an ivory crochet dress with a plunging neckline. The actress is seen flaunting her curly hair and she looks away from the camera.

Sanya captioned her post with a sun emoji.

Sanya's latest film "Paggilait" released on OTT a while back. In the film, she is Sandhya, a young woman who becomes a widow within a few months of marriage. While the family grieves, Sandhya is unable to bring herself to mourn the death of her husband. The dramedy, directed by Umesh Bist, also features Sayani Gupta, Shruti Sharma, Ashutosh Rana, Raghubir Yadav, Sheeba Chaddha, Meghna Malik and Rajesh Tailang.

Summer Styling hacks

Summer can be a hard season to dress for, but there are a few reliable ways to dress for sweltering heat and humidity. Summer fashion is all about comfortable clothing. Even casual outfits can be flaunted like a fashionista during this season. All you need is some essentials and a bit of fashion sense. Your closet should have certain summer staples to raise the hotness quotient and beat the heat. These must-have outfits can completely transform your look and can make you grab the attention for good.

Light colours are better than dark

Not only will lighter colours keep you cooler, but they also have a better summer vibe. You can wear dark colours such as black, charcoal, violet, or dark blue, but it doesn't have that light airy feel that is synonymous with summer.

Flowy tops, dresses and skirts are better than form-fitting

The summer calls for light fabrics that float in the wind. To give off the summer loving vibe, opt for flowy clothing instead of anything that is skin tight. Find clothing made in light cotton, silk, chiffon, lace or crochet. This applies to everything: dresses, skirts, tops, rompers, and even shorts. Summer is hot and wearing clothing that is very form fitting will make you and your clothes sweaty. Secondly, flowy clothing and summer go hand in hand.

Off-the-shoulder tops and dresses are always sexy

Every couple of years off-the-shoulder clothing becomes popular. All the stores have them in stock and everyone is wearing them. But off-the-shoulder tops and dresses are stylish every summer. Don't think of them as trendy or disposable, because they really are a fashion staple that you can wear every year. They are great pieces for achieving that easy summer style.

If you only have one handbag, go with a neutral brown

If you're only going to invest in one handbag for summer go with a neutral earth-tone brown. Look for a summer handbag that is not that structured and that you'll want to wear over many summers.

The Day of Pink

The Day of Pink is the International Day against Bullying, Discrimination, Homophobia, Transphobia, and Transmisogyny across the world. We invite everyone to celebrate diversity by wearing a pink shirt and by organizing activities in their workplaces, schools, and communities.

The Day of Pink was started in Nova Scotia when two straight high school students saw a gay student wearing a pink shirt being bullied. The two students intervened but wanted to do more to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying.

They decided to purchase pink shirts, and a few days later got everyone at school to arrive wearing pink, standing in solidarity. The result was that an entire school took a stand and began working together to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying.

The campaign has continued to grow: it is now an international campaign that thrives in schools, workplaces, and communities. The Day of Pink and the conversations, awareness, and acceptance that stems from it are making a real difference in the lives of queer and trans youth. So, let's wear pink, spark some conversations, and inspire acceptance. Wearing a pink

shirt is more than just a one-day thing. It's a commitment to allyship that spans the rest of the year. Wearing a pink shirt on April 11th is an important first step – it shows that you stand together with those who have been bullied, especially with those who have been bullied for their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The word ally is not a noun but instead a verb. To ally yourself with someone is to be listening and learning about how to care and support different people. It is essential to work year-round to stand up not just for others, but with them.

It is only with this year-round commitment that we can make real progress towards eliminating bullying and dis-



crimination in all communities. If you see someone in your community being bullied, whether that's the schoolyard or the office, it's time to step up and say something. Only by being active and continuing the discussion about bullying can we hope to put an end to this harmful practice and help make the world a safer place for everyone.



FASHIONISTA

This village in Rajasthan speaks story of *Atmanirbhar Bharat*

JAIPUR

A small village in Rajasthan situated near Jaipur, which was washed away in floods four decades back, is now speaking the story of Atmanirbhar Bharat, with the villagers earning their livelihood by creating organic lamps, Holi colours and saffron flags for Navratri.

The village, then known as Chadel Khurd, was destroyed when gushing waters from the Dhund river engulfed it in 1981.

Now, this village stands as a role model for other villages, with only one temple and one well, a concept

aimed at ending caste discrimination.

Keshavpura is turning the slogan of Atmanirbhar Bharat into a reality with people joining hands to become self dependant by cashing in on festive fervour in India while producing handmade products which are much in demand during festive times.

On Holi, women from this village produced Gulal which earned them money in lakhs of rupees, while on Diwali, they produced lamps and decor products, all handmade and organic in nature which were sold in large quantities across the state.

This time, the women here have



produced 50,000 saffron flags to be hoisted on the rooftops of houses.

Being sold at Rs 2.5/flag in the market, the project has earned

them a decent income.

Now, we are training women in tailoring and generating employment for them while boosting their confidence. This tailoring work is sure to help them earn a decent living, said Pushpa Saini from this village. Says Ramkaran Saini, "Keshavpura, an ideal village, is taking a step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat. The efforts of the village development committee, which started working in this direction since the last two years, are now yielding the desired results."

Keshavpura near Chaksu in Jaipur, which was devastated by floods in 1981, has now emerged as

a model village.

The village was re-established by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) volunteers.

After 37 years, it got its name registered in the revenue records of the state on October 5, 2018.

The RSS volunteers worked hard to rebuild the village and helped in constructing pucca houses and get the lives of the villagers in order. The flood waters destroyed everything including their houses, animals etc. However, the volunteers here helped in building pucca houses, roads, community halls, temple and well and the village is now emerging as a new model.

15K UP SCHOOLS SWITCH OVER TO ENGLISH MEDIUM

LUCKNOW

THE Uttar Pradesh government has converted 15,000 primary and upper primary schools into English medium, with a view to modernise the education system.

The move is aimed at honing English speaking skills of children studying in the government schools, right from the beginning, so that they can compete with missionary and convent school students.

Nearly 1.83 crore children are studying in more than 1.5 lakh primary and upper primary schools in the state.

In Lucknow alone, around 60 primary and upper primary schools have been converted into English medium schools.

In every block, two or three



schools have been developed much like the private schools.

Director, basic education department, Sarvendra Vikram Singh said the hard work and dedication of teachers to equip students of these primary and upper primary schools with Eng-

lish speaking skills has already started paying dividends as they are competing with children of the private schools today.

According to him these schools boast of smart class, beautiful classrooms and 'most importantly, the school children now

speak English.'

The Uttar Pradesh government provides free books, uniforms, bags, shoes and socks as well as sweaters in winter for students.

The state government of the day has also renovated 1.39 lakh schools under 'Operation Kayakalp' to offer better academic facilities to the students.

Two to three schools in every block of the state have been developed on the lines of English medium schools.

According to Vandana Srivastava, teacher in-charge of Primary School, Hirapur, Barabanki, her school features among the top schools of the block. The school has also been awarded by the government for its achievements, she added.

UP Minister warns of lockdown amid Covid surge

LUCKNOW

A day after Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that he would not impose a lockdown, state Minister Brajesh Pathak on Tuesday categorically stated that a lockdown could be imposed in Lucknow if Covid cases continued to surge. In a letter to the Additional Chief Secretary Health and Principal Secretary Health, Pathak, who holds the law portfolio, said that he is getting calls for help due to lack of resources at hospitals but he is "unable to help out".

He alleged that no one picks up the phone at the chief medical officer's office and went on to underline that beds should be increased in hospitals to attend patients.

He added that hospitals should ramp up testing as well.

The letter, marked "confidential", is going viral on the social media. The Minister stated in his letter



that strict measures are needed to bring the situation under control and that a lockdown cannot be ruled out if it shows no improvement. "It is unfortunate that private hospitals have reduced testing. There is a need of 17,000 testing kits, whereas only 10,000 are available," Pathak said in the letter. He also mentioned the case of histo-

rian Yogesh Praveen who died because the ambulance did not reach him on time.

Uttar Pradesh is witnessing a fresh and a very severe wave of the pandemic. The state has recorded as many as 18,021 new cases in the past 24 hours. Lucknow alone reported 5,382 new Covid cases in the same period.

Sidhu questions his govt's probe into 2015 firing incident



CHANDIGARH

IN a veiled attack apparently aimed at the Congress government in Punjab, former Cabinet minister and party leader Navjot Singh Sidhu on Tuesday demanded to make the report of the SIT of Punjab Police probing the sacrilege incidents of 2015 and the subsequent police firing public. Two persons were killed and many others were injured after the police under the previous SAD-BJP government resorted to unprovoked firing on hundreds of people protesting the alleged desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib in Bargari village in Faridkot district in 2015.

Blaming the government for 'weak' investigation into the cases, Sidhu, who visited the Burj Jawa-

har Singh gurdwara, the epicentre of the sacrilege incidents in Bargari, on the occasion of Baisakhi on Tuesday, said that just like the tabling of the Justice Ranjit Singh Commission report in the Assembly, the report prepared by the head of the Special Investigation Team, Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh, should also be made public.

After paying obeisance at the gurdwara, Sidhu said that people had high hopes that the guilty of the Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan firing cases would be brought to book.

Without mincing words, he said: "More law, less justice... Justice delayed is justice denied."

The Justice Ranjit Singh Commission, in its report, had said that it was only a fact-finding report and

further investigations were required. Subsequently, Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had picked the SIT team led by Inspector General Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh for the probe.

Last week, the Punjab and Haryana High Court had quashed the SIT probe into the Kotkapur firing case and directed the state to constitute a new SIT without Vijay Pratap Singh.

The directions were passed by the bench of Justice Rajbir Sherawat, which was hearing a plea filed by Gurdeep Singh, former police officer at Kotkapura, and another official who had approached the court seeking directions to remove the IPS officer from the investigation team.

In a related development, after the high court order, the Chief Minister had refused to accept the resignation letter of Vijay Pratap Singh seeking premature retirement from service.

Declining the voluntary retirement plea of Vijay Pratap Singh, who is currently heading the SITs probing the Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan firing cases, the Chief Minister said that he was a highly competent and efficient officer whose services were needed in the border state, especially at a time when Punjab is faced with various internal and external security threats.



Special steps to check Covid spread during UP Panchayat polls

LUCKNOW

SPECIAL steps are being taken for the safety of the staff going to the field as part of the polling duties in the ongoing Panchayat elections in Uttar Pradesh.

According to the government spokesman, it has been decided that essential items including facemasks, sanitizer and gloves would be given to every member who would be performing duty in the Panchayat polls.

Liquid hand wash will also be made available at polling stations which would be used by the voters.

Steps are also being taken to ensure that all norms of social distancing are followed strictly at the polling stations.

"These are challenging times and our employees have stood to the occasion with utmost vigour. But, to support their efforts in terms of performing their duties, we have ensured to take utmost care so that they do not get infected with the coronavirus, for which all norms would be followed as instructed by

the state government", said the spokesman.

Besides, in order to conduct polling properly in the Panchayat elections, the officials of the administration have started meeting candidates, Panchayat wise. The candidates are being motivated to encourage voters to come out of their houses at different time duration of the day.

Voters are being told to refrain from moving out for polling in groups.

The candidates have also been told to make the villagers aware that the Covid guidelines should be followed at all costs.

Voters would not be allowed to arrive at polling centres without wearing masks from home. Likewise, voters of the Panchayat are also made aware about the concept of social distancing which has to be followed while voting and also while waiting for their turn.

The voters will also be motivated to wash their hands once they arrive at the polling centre. Thermal screening of all the voters would also be done to ensure minimizing the threat of spread of the deadly virus.

CBI arrests senior passport assistant for taking bribe

NEW DELHI

THE Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday said that it has arrested Adarsh Kumar, a senior Passport Assistant posted at the Regional Passport Office in Jammu in an alleged bribery case. A CBI official here said that the agency arrested Kumar for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 4,000 from the complainant. The agency had registered a case on a complaint alleging that the official had demanded a bribe for issuance of his passport in January 2020. "The complainant was informed that an FIR has been registered against him and due to this, issuance of passport was pending. The complainant however informed that he has been acquitted in the said FIR. Thereafter, the complainant visited Passport Office, Jammu and met Kumar," he said. Kumar allegedly demanded bribe of Rs 5,000 for issuing the passport but agreed to accept Rs 4,000 after negotiation, the CBI official said.

THE HANS CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

My son, Shreyash Chauhan, is a student of class 9E in St. Michaels Senior Secondary School, Pusa Road, in his school my name wrongly wrote as K. S. Chauhan instead of my full name KHEEM SINGH CHAUHAN, while all my documents and cards have my full name i. e. **Kheem Singh Chauhan**. Please correct my name in schools records.

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TCS results signal good days for IT

IT services major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) kickstarted the results season with a bang. Margin improvement, all-round performance across verticals, sound deal pipeline, and robust hiring are the key take-aways from TCS' earnings for the fourth quarter ended March 2021. Especially, a total contract value of \$9.2 billion, which is the highest for any quarter of TCS, indicates the momentum in the technology outsourcing market. Though revenue in constant currency terms declined for the whole fiscal, it can be considered as a one-off event arising out of the Covid pandemic, which badly battered top line numbers in the first quarter of the company.

The most heartening signal of growth is the robust hiring done in the January-March quarter of last fiscal. TCS added 19,388 people during this period taking the total headcount addition to 40,185 in FY21. The total employee base of TCS now stands at 4.8 lakh strong.

The Mumbai-headquartered firm also said it would hire around 40,000 freshers from campuses in the current financial year. This is good news for the engineering students pursuing their final year. After a dip in hiring during last fiscal, the company's intent of hiring more number of fresh graduates augurs well for the overall hiring outlook of the country.

After Accenture, the world's third largest IT services company TCS also gave positive commentary on the growth outlook for 2021-22 period. The management said that the company is entering FY22 with much better visibility with double-digit growth prospects. Such commentary also indicates that large players like TCS are gaining market share in the outsourcing market - a trend which is likely to continue for a few more years. When the outlook given by Accenture and TCS are seen in tandem, it can be safely assumed that IT industry is out of woods as far as the negative im-

pact of Covid is concerned. Also, the depreciating rupee puts Indian IT firms in good stead as rupee revenue will rise apart from expansion of margin in coming quarters.

Despite the good numbers, the stock performance of TCS remained subdued. Some experts pointed out that it was mostly due to high expectations from the company. The share price of TCS also had a stellar run during last year despite the pandemic.

After TCS, Infosys is the next company to announce its results on Wednesday, followed by Wipro. If the top four IT biggies give a positive outlook on growth prospects, it will definitely be seen as a good indicator of hiring growth for this year. As these four companies employ more than 8 lakh employees with massive hiring of fresh engineering graduates, India will be at a safe place to push the GDP growth for the current financial year. Despite all the positive news, risks like rising wage costs in coming quarters, the proposal of the US government to increase the corporate tax rates, and the second wave of the Covid pandemic have to be watched out for by the investors.



Social media emerges as a powerful tool in UP panchayat polls

VIVEK TRIPATHI

SOCIAL media remains a powerful weapon of publicity even in the panchayat elections in Uttar Pradesh which are scheduled to be held in a couple of days. Candidates have made it a medium to reach out to the people, especially the youth who use WhatsApp and other social media platforms all the time.

Covid cases have surged since panchayat elections were announced in Uttar Pradesh. In such a situation, social media platforms have come handy for candidates who have formed several WhatsApp groups to reach out to the voters with their plans and strategy. Several caste-based groups have also been created to tell voters about the activities and other related matters, besides these groups are used from morning greetings to other electoral agendas in a big way.

Elderly candidates are not far behind in using the social media for publicity. Despite being less educated, they use their children's phones to present their claims and reach out to the people.

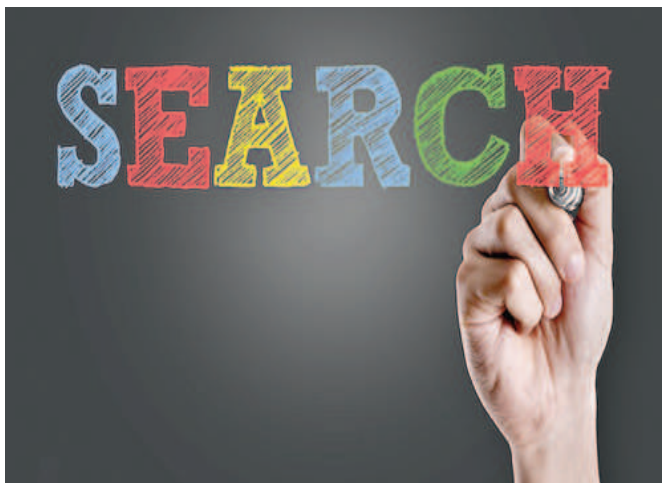
Out of the different social media platforms, Facebook is being used widely as it has the option of sharing live video, and this facility is being used frequently by candidates. Candidates' supporters host meetings and door-to-door campaigning live on Facebook. Similarly, some tech-savvy candidates are also seen making full use of Twitter.

Sarita Pandey, who is contesting the Panchayat polls from Padrauna seat in Kushinagar, is using social media platforms to the hilt. She said this is the digital era. "Social media is a good way to reach your viewpoints to people on the go. It saves the cost of posters, banners, wall paintings etc. That is why it is being widely used even in panchayat elections.

Bhai Lal Yadav, who is contesting the Panchayat polls from Mavai III in Ayodhya, said that in modern times, social media is a very easy and inexpensive way to get your point across. "Gone are the days when banners, posters and graffiti were used to make people aware of party programmes, events and campaigning related activities. Every person has a mobile phone these days. Sending a photo with a small caption has become a lot more easy. We use social media for this reason only. Whenever we face any difficulty, our children come forward to help us."

Kanchan Pal, a candidate from the Bahria block Birapur gram panchayat in Prayagraj, says social media is a very strong medium to put your viewpoint. "Forget Panchayat elections, bigger battles are fought here. Now it has reached rural areas too. Using this, we convey our viewpoint in a short span of time to a large number of people. It is also being used to inform the public about our achievements and future endeavours. This is very useful and effective way of communication.

Senior political analyst Prasoona Pandey says, "Social media has now become a very powerful medium for candidates in elections to speak out. It is being used by the youth a lot. It is gaining momentum as almost every hand has a mobile phone. It has become so important that even governments are formed and dislodged on social media. It is being used in these panchayat elections too in a big way. One can reach out to people at no extra cost. This is a big change in canvassing and electioneering that has taken place on our political landscape."



Identifying great opportunities and leveraging them

ARE you waiting for that once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to change your life, change your business or change the world? How will you know when it comes? How will you be sure you're ready?

"Opportunity - Seize the day. Win at life." (John Murray Press/Hachette) is not about waiting for an opportunity that might never come. It's a book for the right now, containing ideas and strategies that can be employed right away, and will ensure that you attract opportunities, whether big or small, all the time.

Successful people are sometimes lucky - but most of all they find success because they have trained their minds to identify great opportunities and make the most of them when they arrive, rather than freezing with uncertainty or lacking the vision to see them through.

In this book Rob Moore, the bestselling author of "Money, Start Now. Get Perfect Later" and "I'm Worth More" shows you how to elevate your emotional intelligence and decision making to ensure that when opportunity strikes you are ready to take advantage, seize the day, and win at life.

It'll make sure that when opportunity knocks, you'll be ready.

Rob Moore is a self-made property investor, businessman, entrepreneur, best-selling author, world record holder, speaker, pilot and proud dad, who co-owns seven companies in property, lettings and finance.

Moore has partnered with many of the biggest business and household names, featured in prime time TV shows for Living as a business mentor, on Channel 4, the BBC, The Independent and The Business Channel, as well as mentoring success-hungry people who want to achieve more money & recognition in business & life. He is the bestselling author of "Life Leverage" and "Money" and the host of the "Disruptive Entrepreneur" podcast. (GANS)

BINAY KUMAR SINGH

A third world country that is on the brink of economic implosion, living on IMF loans and unable to guarantee the necessities of life to its people is still procuring military equipment from some of the most advanced nations in the world! A country which has been kept on the FATF grey list yet again and regularly signs dubious deals with proscribed organisations and faces strictures by the UK High Court with millions being debited from the bankrupt nations accounts due to the aforementioned shady deals. A country whose foreign exchange reserves stand as on date at only \$13 billion - barely adequate for two months imports.

No prizes to guess the right answer, it's a state where the Army has a nation, Pakistan. The situation has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Ayesha Siddiqi, a noted Pakistani author and defence expert states, "before the pandemic, Pakistan was already burdened by an external debt of about \$112 billion. Today it is facing the additional challenge of feeding some 25 million poor families that can no longer make a living due to Covid-19. Moreover, the country saw a 30 per cent reduction in tax revenue, due to the government's incompetence and decreased spending caused by the coronavirus lockdown". Or as Tara Kartha a former Indian National Security Council member blithely states, "An Army that drives its posh SUVs oiled by Chinese money is bad news, whether in Mandarin, Punjabi or English".

In such a situation, the leaders of Pakistan should have focussed on the economy and growth. However, Ayesha Siddiqi brings out, in comparison with the spending on the pandemic caused by the pandemic, the Government did not focus on the economy "Islamabad allocated \$7.85 billion for defence and merely \$151 million for health in the budget for the financial year 2020-2021. This represents a 12

per cent rise in Pakistan's defence spending compared with the last financial year."

Should we be surprised? Actually, no.

Adm Zafar Mahmood Abassi, Pakistan's Chief of Naval Staff till October 2020, had painted his evision' to transform the Pakistan Navy. In a televised address to the nation on October 7, 2020, he spoke about three pillars of his approach - (a) enhancing combat readiness, (b) jumpstarting the maritime economy and (c) reinvigorating the ideological domain. Whilst the third facet of his address should worry the efriends' of Pakistan, and, the new Biden administration, the recent steps to procure state-of-the-art military hardware indicates the operationalisation of Admiral Abassi's plan.

So, buy high-end military equipment it does. The Pakistan Navy buys passenger aircraft from Brazil through a third party deal and then gets them modified for military purposes in another EU country; it is attempting to procure German engines for its new Chinese submarines as it finds the Chinese engines too noisy; it is procuring ten low-level air search radars from Italy; it is also buying Italian torpedoes once again for its Chinese built submarines. Obviously, it finds the Chinese torpedoes unreliable. According to a report by the Italian Government - Pakistan has become the second largest arms importer from Italy.

This by itself is quite normal as the Pakistan Armed Forces have always looked at key procurements, especially of force multipliers, to retain their edge over the vastly superior Indian forces. The list is quite endless and begets the question - how does a country which is mired in debt and whose friends including the UAE are seeking a return of their loan - buying such equipment?

Another important facet is that e as the larger comity of nations is now coming together against a Re-



The Pakistan Navy buys passenger aircraft from Brazil through a third party deal and then gets them modified for military purposes in another EU country; it is attempting to procure German engines for its new Chinese submarines as it finds the Chinese engines too noisy; it is procuring ten low-level air search radars from Italy; it is also buying Italian torpedoes once again for its Chinese built submarines. Obviously, it finds the Chinese torpedoes unreliable. According to a report by the Italian Government - Pakistan has become the second largest arms importer from Italy. This by itself is quite normal as the Pakistan Armed Forces have always looked at key procurements, especially of force multipliers, to retain their edge over the vastly superior Indian forces. The list is quite endless and begets the question - how does a country which is mired in debt and whose friends including the UAE are seeking a return of their loan - buying such equipment?

visionist China, the Chinese are using their rentier state e Pakistan to procure high-end technology from across the world in order to reverse engineer the same and induct it for the PLA forces. Otherwise, there is no way to explain these costly procurements in foreign exchange from Western sources without any financial aid. Tara Kartha alludes, "all of this is being powered by Chinese money. Which means that Beijing has just bought itself an army, with a State attached". It is also within the realm of possibility that, the Chinese soft loans amounting to over \$5 billion given ostensibly to fund the four Type054A and eight submarines purchased from Chinese shipyards, also includes a covert

tranche for foreign purchases. Was this also a part of the MoU that was signed in December 2020 by the Chinese and the Pakistanis amidst tensions with India?

To convince the diehard fans of Pakistan, let me provide some more examples of the Pakistani dedication for sharing sensitive Western technology and intellectual property with the Chinese. The recent report by HI Sutton in Forbes, based on satellite imagery of an Agosta-90B berthed between two CCP Navy ships during their visit to Karachi in January 2020, and he states (sic) "This (berth of Agosta-90B) was not in the Pakistani Navy's usual berths, but in a cordoned-off part of the commercial docks. The placement of the

Pakistani Navy submarine cannot be viewed as coincidental". Readers may also recall the admission by the former PM Nawaz Sharif who, in Oct 2020 stated that the Pakistanis had shared a Tomahawk missile found in Balochistan with their iron-brother, China, in 1990s which in turn assisted Pakistan to develop the Babur cruise missile.

Thus, the Biden administration and other governments in the EU should remember that a hand of friendship extended to the Pakistanis along with Aid and an assurance to take Pakistan of the FATF grey List in June 2021, may lead to key defence technologies being delivered on a platter to the Xi Jinping and the CCP Armed Forces.

LETTERS

Campaigning in social media era

Almost all politicians instigate religion, caste, region and other sentiments during polls and so Election Commission should ban campaigns forever for all (Mamata barred from campaigning for 24 hours, April 13). What is the need for parties to conduct meetings, roadshows and other campaigns when people are well aware what governments did to them due to availability of social media, 24/7 news channels? Such hard decisions will stop poll violence drastically and ensure free and fair elections. Today country needs dynamic and unbiased bureaucrats like T N Seshan, who reformed elections by banning graffiti, noisy campaign, wall writing and posting posters during his tenure.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao, Hyderabad

Allow only e-canvassing

I request President of India and CEC to allow only e-canvassing in view of corona-phase-2. Ban all public / social gatherings (including physical presence requiring public meetings, door-to-door campaigns / canvassing) as they can spread Covid. A life lost cannot be got back. Also we can know the real winner in elections (when held without any public gathering). Even voting / ballot time should ensure all safety precautions (mask wearing, 6 feet distance, sanitizer using and regular washing of hands).

Sreelekha P N, Secunderabad

Covid and elections

It is a matter of serious concern to one and all that the number of Covid19 cases with its variant forms is surging ahead claiming lives on the one hand and political rally and religious gatherings like Kumbh Mela are being permitted on the other. Prime Minister advises all to save self and others by wearing mask and maintaining physical distancing. But his public meetings do not reflect the same sentiments.

Holding elections and capturing power seems to be more prioritised agenda than saving lives of the people. Perhaps after the spell of elections administration may come out with more stringent measures and lockdown. Winning power should not turn to be a predatory affair.

A G Rajmohan, Anantapur

Bidding goodbye to FCAT

THE abolition of the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT) by the central government comes as a blow to filmmakers and producers amid Coronavirus pandemic. The move would cause untold problems to the filmmakers and producers who can't afford delays on their scheduled film releases. The FCAT was in fact a statutory body constituted to hear appeals of filmmakers/producers aggrieved by the cuts suggested by the Central Board of Film Certification. It was the first avenue for them to appeal if a filmmaker disagrees with a Censor Board's decision. With the scrapping of FCAT, the filmmakers and producers have no choice but to approach the High Court. According to film fraternity, the abolition of FCAT is arbitrary and restrictive.

The abolition of FCAT would actually make way for more bottlenecks with their

film certification process getting prolonged due to judicial delay in hearing their appeal cases which may adversely affect their release of films in the future. This will force the filmmakers and producers to either cut or alter their films to the whims and fancies of the Censor Board or seek legal recourse. Approaching the court will further complicate timeless and delay matters.

K S Rao, Thane

'Power Star' pyrotechnics

PAWAN Kalyan's latest movie 'Vakeel Saab' was released last Friday. Many fans and well wishers of the hero were very excited for the release and movie. This latest Tollywood movie is a remake of the Bollywood movie 'Pink' starring Amitabh Bachchan which was a box office hit. Pink movie portrays how women of this era are standing for themselves against powerful people and there's comes the famous dialogue "No means No". But coming to Vakeel Saab all the hype and praise is all about the hero starring in it and this movie is seen as a Power Star movie rather than a women empowering movie. The film is being focused on the hero who plays the role of a lawyer who supports the women who are standing for justice. People should change their mindsets and focus on the concept and plot of the film rather than the actors in it.

K Nikitha Rachel Melissa, Hyderabad

Honouring Bapu

I wonder why political leaders do not demand Bharat Ratna award for the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi? It's a million dollars question that got no answer from the decades. After the attainment of Independence Congress was

the ruling party at national level and in the states also. It's a well-known fact. Hope the present BJP government at the Centre takes the initiative in this regard.

Pesala Narayana, Badvel

Worst status of Warangal

THE main thoroughfare of Warangal Chowrasta is beyond disgusting...what with poor traffic sense adding to crowded dirty ill-maintained roads! What development worth crores is being touted here? The facelift of the Collectorate and a few attempts here and there?

Water connections in slum areas are being given whereas tax payers are left in the lurch without tap connections even in main localities! Supplying drinking water every day would only lead to wastage of this precious nectar of life! There are people who let water flow into the drains because they want to clean the drains, so to speak!

We have submitted letters signed by the whole colony to the chief whip, the collector and the municipal commissioner, with specific details and requests for development works...but to no avail. Not a single response!

Our colony is just past the main vegetable market of Kazipet, yet some drain works are not done, roads have not been laid in some places, open plots are a nuisance!

These small works would require just a small portion of the funds allocated for development works, yet we keep hearing ONE refrain - funds crunch!! I really wish our MA&UD minister would look beyond the happy picture that the officials paint for him.

Helen G T, Vijayanagar Colony, Kazipet

COVID-19 SOPs NOT FOLLOWED DESPITE SURGE

Govt fails to check implementation of SOPs, allege activist

MOHAMMED HUSSAIN
HYDERABAD

LACK of monitoring and implementation of Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) in view of the surging Covid-19 cases, at shopping malls, cinema halls, hotel and other public places remain a concern, particularly when the second phase is on rise.

The SOPs were issued last year by the government during post-lockdown when hotels, restaurants and other services, like shopping malls, cinema halls, and religious places, were reopened with limited people and implementation of norms were made mandatory. Even though the SOPs have not been withdrawn, most commercial establishments appear to have ignored them in the recent months.

In view of the recent upsurge in cases, several activist groups and NGOs have demanded the State government to take immediate measures to educate people and to strictly enforce SOPs with immediate effect.

Speaking to The Hans India, SQ Masood, a social activist said, "the Telangana government has failed to take steps to educate poor and illiterate people before enforcing any law. Thousands of people are still unaware of basic rules to be followed during these pandemic times."



SOPs include provision of hand wash & sanitisers, thermal screening, permitting only an asymptomatic person inside, staggered entry of devotees, visitors & customers, making facemask mandatory, prohibition of huge gatherings & compulsory display of preventive measures of Covid-19

He pointed out that SOPs issued last year were not being followed in City. "levying fine of Rs 1,000 or registering cases against

a poor person cannot really work; it will be added burden to the downtrodden," said Masood.

Another city-based activist, Mohd Minhaj said, "Penalising people for not wearing a face mask is not enough. The State government must strictly ensure the implementation of SOPs in public places."

In June last year, the State issued SOPs to be observed in areas outside the containment zones that were reopened. The general SOPs included: provision of hand wash and sanitisers, thermal screening at the entrance, permitting only

an asymptomatic person inside, staggered entry of devotees, visitors and customers, making facemask mandatory, prohibition of huge gatherings and compulsory display of preventive measures of Covid-19.

It was also advised earlier that seating capacity in public places had to be 50 per cent of the capacity. Adequate manpower is required to ensure social distancing, disposable menus, and cutleries in restaurants.

"Since then SOPs remain only on paper; there is no implementation. Even the government is not bothered to check and monitor the enforcement of SOPs in view of the increase in Covid-19 cases. The authorities last year have shut most commercial establishments for not following SOPs, but now there is no track on SOPs", claims Masood.

Heavy rain forecast in TS today

Thundershowers to lash Hyd from April 14 to 17

Rain occurred in Kondapur, Vikarabad & Sangareddy

1 cm rain in Hyderabad

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

RAIN occurred at isolated places in the State. There was one cm rain each in Hyderabad, Warangal (urban), Sangareddy, Manthani (Peddapalle), Atmakur (Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri). Hailstorm occurred at isolated places in Jangaon district during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Tuesday, the IMD bulletin said.

The chief amounts of rainfall (in cm) were: Nallabelli (Warangal - Rural district), Aswaraopeta (Bhadrachalam-Kothagudem) 6 each, Atmakur (Warangal - Rural), Kondapur (Sangareddy), Shayampet (Warangal - Rural) 3 each, Hanamkonda (Warangal - Urban), Venkatapuram (Mulugu), Vikarabad 2 each.

The highest maximum temperature of 38.6 degrees Celsius was recorded in Bhadrachalam. The day temperatures rose appreciably ranging from 2.1 degrees Celsius to 4 degrees Celsius in some parts. They rose markedly by 4.1 deg C or more in some parts and were below normal in some areas and appreciably below normal by 3.1 to 5 deg Celsius in some others.

According to the bulletin, the other day temperatures in the State were: Mahbubnagar 38.5, Medak 38.2, Adilabad & Ramagundam 38



HEAVY
RAINFALL

each, Nalgonda 37.4, Khammam 37.2, Nizamabad 36.9,

Hanamkonda 36, Hyderabad 35.6, Dundigal 34.7, Hakimpet 33.7

Temperatures

Bhadrachalam recorded the highest max temperature of 38.6 deg C; Mahbubnagar 38.5, Medak 38.2, Adilabad & Ramagundam 38 each, Nalgonda 37.4, Khammam 37.2, Nizamabad 36.9, Hanamkonda 36, Hyderabad 35.6, Dundigal 34.7, Hakimpet 33.7

Meanwhile, the IMD warned of heavy rain likely to occur at isolated places across the State on April 14. It said thunderstorms with lightning, gusty winds of 30-40 kmph with hailstorm were very likely to occur at a few places during the day.

According to the bulletin, thunderstorms with lightning, gusty winds of 30-40 kmph with hailstorm are forecast on April 15 at isolated places. It said on April 16 and 17 thunderstorms with lightning are very likely to occur at isolated places in the State.

In Hyderabad, the forecast is rain or thundershowers towards evening or night from April 14 to 17, with day temperatures of 36, 36, 36 and 37 degrees Celsius respectively. On April 18 and 19 it would be partly cloudy sky with thundery development. The day temperature would be 37 degrees Celsius each.

ONLINE CLASSES

Even teachers distracted, impacting education of children

SABYA SINGH
HYDERABAD

CONTRARY to belief that students were too bored to attend online classes, parents who are spending their hard earned money now have issues with the way teachers are showing interest in online education. Annual assessment of teachers in several schools shows that even they were not keen and appeared to be distracted.

Though many schools feel that students have taken it easy with online classes by switching off cameras, not every teacher has been proactive either. Even though most of them have adapted to the new mode of learning, many parents complain to the managements.

The assessment found that teachers would switch off their cameras, assign class work and walk away. Some would play videos, not be present and children were supposed to pick up the lessons from the videos. A few have been playing videos for long stretches without giving any lectures. Such teachers have been told that online mode is to



stay here and the performance is unacceptable. Teachers have been told that the load of correcting exercise books is off now, which lessens their responsibility. They have to only correct answer scripts. Hence, they can focus on online lectures.

Teachers have to share the links and passwords with the head. Anytime the head can intervene and make surprise checks, said Laxmi (name

changed), working in a well-known private school.

"It is easy to say children do not focus when cameras are turned off in class. But have all teachers not done similar things. We are taking this very seriously," said S Osama, Principal, Little Stars High School, Kompally.

"As the new session begins with a new academic year, rules for online classes have been

changed, such as sudden inspections. Many parents have registered complaints to the school managements. Reason being, many teachers are grappling with teaching difficulties because classrooms were easier and engaging, felt Shubhangi Katre, an upper-class primary teacher at a well-known CBSE school in City. She added that teachers share e-contents or recorded video-lectures which are not always welcoming for students.

Several schools across City found out that teachers were less active by turning cameras off, playing power presentations, and not interacting enough with children without intermittent face-time. Parents have said that since the beginning of online learning, they have noticed the difference in the quality of education. "The performance by teachers is extremely poor. We realised that when we attended one of the classes of our kid. It took us by surprise that they assigned the work on WhatsApp and took a few online lectures," said, Vijay, a parent whose son studies in class VII.

Home Minister denies attack on Naidu meet



HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

HOME minister Mekathoti Sucharitha dismissed the allegations that the YSRCP activists hurled stones at former chief minister and TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu during his public meeting in Tirupati on Monday night. She made it clear that there was no truth in the allegations and the police investigation so far could not establish any attack.

She inaugurated a blood dona-

tion camp at Ambedkar Bhavan here on Tuesday. Speaking to the media on this occasion, Sucharitha said, "There is no need for YSRCP activists to indulge in such acts. YSRCP is in a strong position in Tirupati by-poll and going to win. With a fear of defeat, Chandrababu Naidu is making baseless allegations against YSRCP and trying to get sympathy of the voters."

Stating that voters were not in a position to believe false propaganda of Naidu, she expressed confidence that people who benefited from the welfare schemes of

the YSRCP government would vote in favour party candidate Dr Gurumurthy. Referring to YS Vivekananda Reddy murder case, the home minister said the case investigation was under the jurisdiction of CBI. If CBI asks, the state police officials will extend their co-operation in the probe, she said adding that the BJP government at the Centre has to speed up investigation.

She suggested that BJP-Jana Sena have to mount pressure on the Centre to speed up the investigation of Vivekananda Reddy murder case.

AP CM unveils welfare calendar

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy unveiled government welfare calendar 2021-22 as part of Ugadi celebrations at the camp office here on Tuesday.

The state government has been implementing various welfare schemes and in the process, prepared a calendar for welfare schemes to implement them.

The first page of the calendar contains the details of all the schemes and the second page has the details of the number of people benefitted from different schemes, including financial details in the last 22 months (from June 2019 to March 2021).

As per the calendar, in April month, the first phase of Jagananna Vidaya Deevena and Jagananna Vasati Deevena,



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy releases the calendar of State government's welfare schemes for 2021-22 at his camp office on Tuesday

YSR Zero Interest loans to farmers (Rabi-2019) and DWACRA women, and regular schemes like YSR Sampoorna Poshana, Jagananna Gorumud-dha, nine-hours free electricity to farmers, DR YSR Aarogyasri, Dr YSR Aarogya Aasara, YSR Pension Kanuka will be implemented. In May, YSR free crop insurance (Kharif -2020), first phase of YSR Rythu Bharosa,

Matsyakara Bharosa (diesel subsidy) and Matsyakara Bharosa (subsidy on fishing prohibition) will be implemented. In June, YSR Cheyutha, Jagananna Vidya Kanuka and other regular schemes will be implemented. In July, second phase of Jagananna Vidya Deevena, YSR Kapu Nestham, YSR Vahana Mitra and other regular

schemes will be implemented.

In August, Zero Interest loans to farmers (Kharif-2020), Industrial subsidies to MSMEs, and spinning mills, YSR Nethanna Nestham, payments to AgriGold Victims will be made. In September, YSR Aasara and in October second phase of YSR Rythu Bharosa, Jagananna Chedodu, Jagananna Thodu will be implemented.

In November, YSR EBC Nestham and in December, second phase of Jagananna Vasati Deevena and third phase of Jagananna Vidya Deevena, YSR Law Nestham and other regular schemes will be implemented. In January 2022, third phase of YSR Rythu Bharosa, Jagananna Ammavodi, increase in YSR pension to Rs 2,500 and in February 2022 fourth phase of Jagananna Vidya Deevena and other regular schemes will be implemented.

Welfare sans empowerment pushes AP to the brink

W CHANDRAKANTH
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy approved welfare calendar for 2021-22 comes as a shocker to the well-wishers of the state. It cites that the 'Suvarna Adhyayam' or the golden era of Jagan's rule has so far spent from June 2019 to March 2021 just Rs 1,00,117.26 crore on both Direct Benefit Transfers to the people and non-DBT transfers.

Out of this amount, Rs 15,714.58 crore has gone to the non-DBT category and the rest has been made under the DBT.

However, what is worrying experts is the fact that the state's revenues are in bad shape. This residuary state, created in 2014 after a prolonged separate Telangana agitation, inherited a huge debt. Jagan Mohan Reddy inherited a minus Rs 65,000 crore exchequer when he came to power in 2019. At present, the debt bur-



den is looming beyond the Rs 3 lakh figure factoring in the interest repayment of Rs 30,000 crore annually.

There are reports suggesting that the government is mulling sale of its land banks to shore up its revenues. Payment of salaries to the government employees itself had run into trouble this month. Welfare measures are always welcome in this country as a huge population reels under poverty and due to lack of equal

opportunities there is always this gap in the economy. However, there is a vast difference in attempting to eradicate poverty and making cash transfers to sustain the people.

The latest global formulation of Sustainable Development Goals lays emphasis on five Ps: People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership. It recognises the need to adopt a holistic, integrated perspective on line and development, he said.

US recommends pause for J&J vaccine over clot reports

6.8 mn doses of vaccine have been administered in US, the vast majority with no or mild side effects

WASHINGTON

THE US recommended a “pause” in administration of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine to investigate reports of potentially dangerous blood clots.

In a joint statement on Tuesday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration said they were investigating clots in six women that occurred in the days after vaccination.

The clots were observed along with reduced platelet counts — making the usual treatment for blood clots, the blood thinner heparin, potentially “dangerous.” More than 6.8 million doses of the J&J vaccine have been administered in the U.S., the vast majority with no or mild side effects.

U.S. federal distribution channels, including mass vaccination sites, will pause the use of the J&J shot, and states and other providers are expected to follow. The other two authorised vaccines, from Moderna and Pfizer, are not affected by the pause.

CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will meet Wednesday to discuss the cases and the FDA has also launched an investigation into the cause of the clots and low platelet counts.

“Until that process is complete, we are recommending a pause in the use of this vaccine out of an abundance of caution,” Dr. Anne Schuchat, Principal Deputy Director of the CDC and Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research said in a joint statement.

They are recommending that people who were



given the J&J vaccine who are experiencing severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath within three weeks after receiving the shot contact their health care provider.

Officials say they also want to educate vaccine providers and health professionals about the “unique treatment” required for this type of clot.

The J&J vaccine received emergency use authorization from the FDA in late February with great fanfare, with hopes that its single-dose and relatively simple storage requirements would speed vaccinations across the country.

Yet the shot only makes up a small fraction of the doses administered in the U.S. as J&J has been plagued by production delays and manufacturing errors at the Baltimore plant of a contractor.

Last week the drugmaker took over the facility to scale up production in hopes of meeting its commitment to the U.S. government of providing about 100 million doses by the end of May.

Until now concern about the unusual blood clots has centered on the vaccine from AstraZeneca, which has not yet received authorisation in the U.S. Last week, European regulators said they found a possible link between the shots and a very rare type of blood clot that occurs together with low blood platelets, one that seems to occur more in younger people. The European Medicines Agency stressed that the benefits of receiving the vaccine outweigh the risks for most people. But several countries have imposed limits on who can receive the vaccine; Britain recommended that people under 30 be offered alternatives.

WINDOWS



Devotees dressed in traditional attire look out from the window of their house as they celebrate 'Gudi Padwa' festival, marking the beginning of Marathi New Year, in Mumbai on Tuesday

Kerala Min Jaleel resigns

KOCHI: Kerala Higher Education minister K T Jaleel on Tuesday resigned from the Pinarayi Vijayan cabinet days after the state Lokayukta held that he had ‘abused’ his position as a public servant to obtain a favour for a relative. Jaleel has sent his resignation to the CM and it has been forwarded to the Governor, sources in the Chief Minister’s office said. The development was also confirmed by the minister in a Facebook post. The resignation comes a day after he moved the Kerala high court seeking a stay on the Lokayukta order.

Waze set to be dismissed

MUMBAI: The Mumbai Police has initiated the process of dismissing officer Sachin Waze from service, said sources. Waze was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in the case of an explosives-laden SUV found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani’s residence in Mumbai and the murder of businessman Mansukh Hiran. Waze was arrested by the NIA on March 13. The city police’s special branch recently wrote to the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) and sought documents pertaining to the case.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee stages a protest after EC imposed a 24-hour campaigning ban, in Kolkata on Tuesday

10 die due to Oxygen shortage

PALGHAR/MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

IN a shocking tragedy on Gudi Padwa, at least 10 Covid-19 patients have died in the Vasai town due to alleged shortage of medical oxygen, officials said here on Tuesday. According to relatives of the deceased and local authorities, at least 10 persons may have directly succumbed to the alleged scarcity of oxygen.

There are over 7,000 ‘active cases’ in Vasai, of which at least 3,000-odd need regular oxygen facilities.

The maximum deaths are reported from the tertiary care centre, Vinayaka Hospital, Nala Sopara, but the hospital authorities have rejected the contentions saying all patient were serious comorbid who succumbed in a single day and there is no oxygen shortage.

Nala Sopara MLA Kshitij Thakur said, “I wish to draw the attention of PM Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to the development and appealed for help.”

“There is an acute shortage of oxygen in the Vasai taluka. Notably, the supply can run for only three hours. Unfortunately, three lives have already been lost due to no oxygen supply in our area. I request to look into this serious matter and provide ample oxygen supply to the tehsil. This will prevent any more loss of lives,” Thakur urged. Metal structures of furnaces at some crematoriums in Surat have started melting or breaking as they are being used round-the-clock due to the rush of bodies amid the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said on Tuesday.

Since the past one week, around 16 gas-based furnaces at the Kurukshetra Crematorium and Ashvini Kumar Crematorium in Gujarat are operating 24X7 to cremate bodies, hence maintenance issues are cropping up, they said.

Maharashtra minister Aslam Shaikh accused celebrities and cricketers of allegedly occupying beds in major hospitals despite having no serious symptoms of coronavirus infection. Shaikh, who is the guardian minister of Mumbai, said personalities from the film industry and cricketers have occupied beds in major private hospitals for longer periods of time. “Some celebrities from the film industry and cricketers had mild symptoms or were asymptomatic, but they got themselves admitted to major private hospitals and occupied beds for longer periods,” the state textile minister said.

Metal structures melt at Surat crematoriums

Maha Min blames celebs for lack of beds



A Covid-19 patient looks at his family members through a glass barrier at Shehnai Banquet Hall, temporarily converted into an isolation ward, near Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital in New Delhi, on Tuesday

Highest-ever daily spike of 18,021 in UP

Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday reported the highest-ever single-day spike of 18,021 coronavirus cases while 85 fatalities took the death toll in the state to 9,309, a senior official said here. The total number of cases in the state stands at 7,23,582 and the active caseload is 95,980. “In the past 24 hours, 18,021 fresh cases were reported while 3,474 people were discharged in this period. There are 95,980 active cases while 6,18,293 were treated and discharged. The state reported a total of 9,309 deaths



‘Kumbh returnees may cause havoc’

MUMBAI: Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut expressed apprehension that the people returning from Kumbh mela in Haridwar will turn out to be potential carriers of Covid infection which will “cause havoc”. Raut’s comments came a day after lakhs of devotees took the holy dip at various ghats of the Ganga river in Haridwar. Also, thousands of saffron-clad seers and ash-smeared Nagas had flouted norms and converged at Har Ki Pauri in the holy town in Uttarakhand for a holy dip during the second royal bath of the Kumbh Mela.

Mamata stages dharna against ban

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee sat on a dharna on Tuesday at Gandhi Murti in Kolkata, as a mark of protest against what she called the Election Commission of India’s “unconstitutional decision” to bar her from campaigning for 24 hours in the ongoing state assembly polls.

The poll panel’s order had come after Banerjee’s remarks against central forces and a statement which had alleged religious overtones.

EC’s Move To Bar Mamata Banerjee From Campaigning Was Taken At BJP’s Behest: Sanjay Raut

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut accused that the move was taken at the behest of the BJP.

This was a “direct attack on democracy” and sovereignty of independent institutions of the

country, Raut claimed. The Shiv Sena MP also wondered why only Banerjee was punished when other parties also violated some of the other rules during the ongoing West Bengal election.

Terming Banerjee as the “Bengal Tigress”, the Sena’s chief spokesperson expressed solidarity with her and claimed she will win the election in her State.

The Shiv Sena, which is not contesting the West Bengal polls, has extended its support to Banerjee, who heads the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

During his rally in Katwa, Home Minister Amit Shah said, “Didi has no concern for the poor people of Bengal...only BJP has.”

“You gave Didi 10 years to rule, AIIMS has not been formed in North Bengal. After the formation of the BJP government on May 2, the BJP government will start work for AIIMS in six months in North Bengal,” he said.

EC bars Rahul Sinha for 2-day

NEW DELHI

A day after imposing ban on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for 24 hours, the Election Commission on Tuesday banned BJP leader Rahul Sinha from campaigning for 48 hours in the fifth phase of Assembly elections in the state charging him of making “highly provocative statements mocking the human life”.

Taking suo moto cognizance of the matter, the poll panel considered that Sinha, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)’s candidate in Habra constituency in West Bengal, “violated the provisions of Model Code of Conduct”, announcing that the leader is banned from “campaigning in any manner from next 48 hours com-

mencing from 12 hours today (Tuesday) till 12 hours on April 15”.

The commission decided to issue this order without giving any notice to Sinha “due to urgency of the matter”.

Sinha is the second BJP leader after party’s West Bengal chief Dilip Ghosh who courted controversy over his remarks regarding firing on some people by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) last week in Sitalkuchi Assembly Constituency in Cooch Behar district in which four people were killed during the fourth phase of Assembly elections.

Sinha allegedly said on Monday that not four, but eight people should have been shot by the central forces in Cooch Behar’s Sitalkuchi.



SC directs States to furnish data on migrant children amid pandemic

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday directed state governments to apprise it on the condition of migrant children and also data on their numbers, on a petition seeking protection of fundamental rights of children in the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S.A. Bobde asked all state governments, which have been party in the case, to submit their response. Senior advocate Jayna Kothari appeared for the petitioners before the bench also comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian. After a brief hearing in the matter, the bench gave two weeks to the state governments to file

their replies.

On March 8, the top court had agreed to examine agreed to examine a plea by Child Rights Trust and a resident of Bengaluru and issued notice.

The top court had said: “Application for impleadment is allowed. Issue notice to the newly added party respondents returnable two weeks. As prayed for, the petitioner is allowed to take steps to serve the Standing Counsel of the States/UTs in the meantime.”

The plea, filed through advocate Rukhsana Choudhury, ar-



gued that children of migrants and migrating children remain invisible and are the most vulnerable, and are denied access to healthcare and proper nutrition, and they are living in unhygienic and testing conditions.

“Migrant children affected due to Covid-19 are still working in brick kilns, stone crusher units, construction sites, rice mills, plantations and other sectors where children as young as 5 years lend a hand to help their parents earn their daily sustenance”, said the plea.

The plea contended that though

there has been marked efforts by governments to provide migrant workers with welfare measures, no report has come from either the Centre or state governments citing the details of relief measures implemented.

The counsel for the petitioners had requested the court to issue directions on prayers regarding sharing data on out of school migrant children and a plan to provide their temporary education to get back when schools reopen.

The petitioners submitted that lockdown had resulted in tremendous hardship for migrant children and till date there has been no assessment of the exact numbers of migrant children, infants, and pregnant or lactating migrant women and their needs.

TODAY'S QUOTE

eSaNTA platform will empower farmers

“ This e-commerce platform eSaNTA for marine products will clearly empower our farmers with a new and digital solution, with an additional alternative way of selling their products. Now, our farmers can sell on a click of a button from this platform. The platform would also provide more freedom, options and opportunities to fish and aqua farmers

— Piyush Goyal, Union Commerce & Industry Minister



SELF REGULATION

Facebook to tackle harmful content

Facebook sets up an independent Oversight Board to look into hate speech and other undesirable content on the platform. It will now accept cases from Facebook and Instagram users who believe the company wrongfully allowed such content to remain on these social media platforms. The board includes former judges, journalists and human rights activists

Uber set to deliver marijuana at doorstep

SAN FRANCISCO

AFTER alcohol at your doorstep, Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi now plans to deliver cannabis or marijuana when “the road is clear.”

The Uber CEO told CNBC News that the ride-hailing company could start delivering weed once federal regulation allows the company to do so.

“When the road is clear for cannabis, when federal laws come into play, we’re absolutely going to take a look at it,” Khosrowshahi said during the ‘Tech Check’ show on Monday.

Marijuana still remains illegal under the US federal law, but some lawmakers have expressed a willingness to change the policy. To date, 16 States, along with the District of Columbia, have legalised cannabis for recreational use, according to the report.

New York is the latest State to legalise recreational marijuana, allowing the delivery of marijuana products.

DELHI WEDNESDAY 14 APRIL 2021



BPCL, Accenture in pact for digital transformation

NEW DELHI

ACCENTURE on Tuesday said it has partnered with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) to help in the digital transformation of the country’s second-largest oil and gas company’s extensive sales and distribution network.

Accenture will use its capabilities in data, artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud technologies to build, design and implement a digital platform, called IRIS, a statement said. This platform will integrate real-time data from across BPCL’s countrywide network to provide a consolidated view of its extensive operations, it added. BPCL’s network includes more than 18,000 fuel retail outlets, 25,000 tank trucks, 75 oil installations and depots, 52 liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottling plants and 250 additional industrial and commercial locations. The IRIS platform will subsequently trigger automated alerts and actions, including rapid response to equipment failures or hazardous situations, the statement said.

It will also empower the BPCL workforce of more than one lakh across the country to make faster and more accurate decisions.

BIZ BRIEFS

PwC opens new centre

PricewaterhouseCoopers Service Delivery Center Private Limited (PwC AC Kolkata) and PwC AC Bangalore has announced the opening of a new Acceleration Centre (AC) office in Hyderabad. The AC in Hyderabad is projected to grow swiftly as the new office is designed to be a truly cross-functional and collaborative location. The office will further enable the growth of PwC’s Acceleration Centres in the country. “Our ACs in India are growing rapidly and are expanding their competencies to serve global client engagements more efficiently while delivering higher value,” said Hari Kumar, PwC Acceleration Centers Managing Partner. The opening of our new office in Hyderabad is a testament to the quality of talent in Telangana and represents the growing demand for global, collaborative teams.

Vivo’s IPL fan contest

Vivo, the title sponsor of IPL 2021, has announced the #PerfectFan contest for cricket fans. Fans can participate across all Vivo’s social media channels - Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and answer the questions of the contest. 21 winners will have chance to meet Virat Kohli virtually. Lucky winners will have an opportunity to be on live television and win exclusive gifts such as autographed bats and many more throughout the competition. The contest is valid for residents above 18 years of all States. Nipun Marya, Director-Brand Strategy, Vivo India, said: “Cricket in India is not just a sport. It is an emotion that binds the nation together. What better way to do this than providing an opportunity to cricket lovers to meet their cricket hero Virat Kohli”.

Vedanta signs MoU

Vedantahas signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for value-creation from bauxite residue (red mud), which is a by-product generated during processing of bauxite into alumina using the Bayer process. Along with peer aluminium producers, Vedanta has entered the partnership with three research institutesCSIR-National Metallurgical Laboratory (NML), Jamshedpur, Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT), Bhubaneswar, and Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research, Development & Design Centre (JNARDDC), Nagpur. As part of this, all three research institutes will work together to develop technologies for bauxite residue utilization.

Central Bank’s deposit scheme

In order to encourage vaccination under Covid -19, Central Bank of India as a part of its social commitment to a healthy society has brought out a special deposit product -Immune. India Deposit Scheme for 1111 days at an attractive extra interest rate of 25basis points above the applicable card rate for the citizens who got vaccinated.Central Bank of India requests the citizens to vaccinate Covid- 19 and avail the attractiveoffer which is for a limited period. Senior Citizens are eligible for extra interest asapplicable.Public health response to Covid -19 campaign as notified by Ministry of Finance (DFS)GOI, emphasizes the need to wear mask, follow physical distancing and maintain handhygiene, the bank said.

Bank of Maharashtra to go private way

Tata Capital, Bajaj Finance & CSB Bank likely to bid for the public sector bank

KUMUD DAS
MUMBAI

EVEN as the central government is going for disinvestment in PSUs and State-run banks, the Pune-based State-run lender Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as a prime contender for disinvestment.

This assumes significance at a time when the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said on the Budget Day that the government will go for disinvestment in two of the State-run lenders. The government currently holds 93 per cent and 4 per cent with LIC. However, the government is likely to divest only 51 per cent and reap benefits in coming years of privatization on balance 42 per cent holding.

If a source is to be believed, then NITI Aayog and the Union Finance Ministry officials are likely to meet on April 14 to discuss privatization of Bank of Maharashtra (BoM). The bank’s MD & CEO AS Rajeev said that the bank aims at growing at 10 per cent per annum which sounds well. He has further said that only Rs 1,000 cr loan book is required to be restructured now as against Rs 15,000 cr in 2016. “Full year expectation is Rs 5,000 cr, so at operating level stock is trading at 0.8 times, whereas valua-



बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra
भारत सरकार का उद्यम

KEY FINANCIALS

Total Biz	Rs 26,6875 cr
Market cap	Rs 13,000 cr
Liquidity coverage ratio	275% (RBI requirement 90%)
Net Interest Margin (NIM)	3.06% (2.86% a year ago)
CASA	50.91%
Provision coverage ratio	90%
Net NPA	2.59% (from 5.46% in Dec 19)
Total advances	Rs 1,04,904 cr
Total deposits	Rs 16,1971 cr

It assumes significance at a time when the Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman had said on the Budget Day that the government will go for disinvestment in two of the State-run lenders

tion matrix suggests that deal even in the normal course happens at 5x of operating profits,” Hemant Gupta, promoter founder of Denofwealth told *Bizz Buzz*. He expects very aggressive bidding from at least four financial powerhouses. As per sources,

three players are interested in this bank, which include Tata Capital, Bajaj Finance and CSB Bank.Interestingly, Bajaj Finance, which is Pune-based, could be an ideal suitor as BoM is also headquartered in the city, making easy to manage.

Saras-3D unveils novel learning platform

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

SARAS-3D, an edutech startup, announced the launch of its ‘Genius 3D Learning’ a stereoscopic 3D technology-based learning platform that uses interactive visualisation to help students gain a deeper understanding of science and mathematics. Genius 3D features real life like 3D models and simulations and includes video lectures in 3D presented by subject matter experts and reviewed by alumni from the world’s leading universities. The interactive visualisation experience comes bundled with extensive quizzes, theories and activity tracking reports. The solution is NCERT based and aligned to CBSE and ICSE boards. It is available for classes 10th to 12th and designed to give students the edge they need for JEE/NEET.

Mkt rebounds amid global cues

MUMBAI

STOCK markets regained footing on Tuesday after the previous session’s massive selloff, tracking renewed buying interest in financial, bank and auto counters amid firm global cues.

Participants also cheered the government’s decision to fast-track approval for foreign-produced Covid-19 vaccines. Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine has received emergency use authorisation in India, paving the way for the third coronavirus vaccine in the country.

However, the Covid-19 situation remains worrisome and will determine market trajectory in the near term, traders said. Building on a positive start, the 30-share BSE Sensex



gained momentum in late-afternoon trade to close 660.68 points or 1.38 per cent higher at 48,544.06. On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty surged 194 points or 1.36 per cent to finish at 14,504.80. M&M was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying 8.02 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, IndusInd Bank, ICICI Bank, ONGC and Axis Bank. On the other hand, TCS was the biggest laggard, slumping 4.21 per cent, a day after reporting its March quarter results. The country’s largest tech exporter on Monday reported a 14.9 per cent jump in consolidated net profit for the March quarter to Rs 9,246 crore, but posted a marginal increase in reported post-tax profit at Rs 32,430

crore for FY21. Dr Reddy’s, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, Infosys and Nestle India were among the other losers, shedding up to 4.18 per cent. Market attempted to pull back from yesterday’s selloff but wasn’t that enthusiastic. IT sector broke the trend due to profit booking as initial Q4 results were in line with expectations not providing enough leeway to a highly valued sector.

“While Industrial production for February declined by 3.6 per cent primarily due to contraction in the manufacturing and mining sectors, India’s retail inflation for March also rose to 5.52 per cent. However, it did not harm the market sentiment as it was in line with the recent RBI policy forecast. How the lockdowns will affect the economy will determine the trend of the domestic market, in the short-term,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Gold hallmarking to be mandatory from June 1

NEW DELHI

THE government on Tuesday said it is fully prepared to implement mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts from June 1, 2021.

Gold hallmarking is a purity certification of the precious metal and is voluntary in nature at present. The Centre, in November 2019, had announced that hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts would be made mandatory across the country from January 15, 2021. The government had given jewellers more than a year to shift to hallmarking and register themselves with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). But the deadline was extended for four months till June 1 after the jew-



ellers sought more time to implement in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. “No extension has been sought. BIS is already fully energised and involved in giving approvals to jewellers for hallmarking,” Consumer Affairs Secretary Leena Nandan said in a virtual press conference here. Elaborating more, BIG Director-General Pramod Kumar Tiwari said, “From June, we are fully prepared to implement (mandatory hallmarking).

PANDEMIC IMPACT

‘Global fiscal deficit tripled in 2020 to \$6.5 trn’

MUMBAI

AS governments across the world raised their spending amid the pandemic to support economies along with the healthcare system, the global fiscal deficit marked a three-fold increase in 2020 to \$6.5 trillion, according to a report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services. The report noted that although the fiscal deficit expanded everywhere, the magnitude of response was divergent in advanced economies (AEs) and emerging and developing economies (E&DEs).

“Our calculations suggest that the global fiscal deficit almost tripled to \$6.5 trillion (or 9.8 per cent of GDP) last year from \$2.2 trillion (or 3.2 per cent of GDP) in CY19,” it said.

It said that while global fiscal receipts fell to a decade low of 17.3 per cent of GDP in CY20 (2020) from 17.8 per cent a year ago, global fiscal spending surged to 27.2 per cent of GDP from 21 per cent of GDP in CY19. Regarding the divergence of government spending amongst countries, the report said that while fiscal deficit expanded in both advanced economies (AE) and emerging and development economies (E&DE), the stimulus in AEs was much bigger than E&Des. Excluding China, fiscal deficit in the remaining E&DEs jumped to 4.7 per cent of GDP last



While global fiscal receipts fell to a decade low of 17.3% of GDP in CY20 (2020) from 17.8% a year ago, global fiscal spending surged to 27.2% of GDP from 21% of GDP in CY19

year, higher than 2.9 per cent of GDP in CY19. “While expansion in fiscal deficit in the former was due to higher spending, the expansion in deficit in E&DEs is attributed to a fall in fiscal receipts,” it said.

Fiscal deficits in AEs jumped to 12 per cent of GDP last year against 2.7 per cent of GDP in CY19. In contrast, fiscal deficit in E&DEs increased to 6.3 per cent of GDP in CY20 from 4 per cent of GDP in the previous year. The Motilal Oswal report noted that there were large differences in the economic support provided by authorities in the advanced economies in comparison to that in emerging economies, with the former supporting much more than the latter.

Ficci seeks incentives for Covid vax makers

NEW DELHI

THERE is a need to roll out incentives for Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers to help them ramp up production in a bid to cater to the rising demand across the country, industry body Ficci said on Tuesday.

The government also needs to give provisions for immediate and sufficient grants and subsidies, through its Covid funds, for those manufacturers that are already developing or manufacturing Covid vaccines in the country, it noted. “There is an urgent and critical need to encourage vaccine manufacturers to substantially augment their capacities for production. Since the cost of vaccines have been capped by the government, the vaccine manufacturers need to be provided with appropriate incentives for ramping up the production,” Ficci said in a statement.

The industry body has recommended financing under the PLI-type scheme to support vaccine manufacturers, it added.

While welcoming approval of Sputnik V vaccine for emergency use, the industry body said that vaccines that are proven and successful in other markets should be encouraged



to be brought into India at the earliest, in order to maintain supply chains. “This should be considered for import and sale of international vaccines as well as initiate manufacturing of such vaccines in the country. Given that most of these vaccines have extensive dossiers and data on their safety and efficacy for large populations, including for Indians living abroad, we should waive off the need for Indian clinical trial data,” it added.

FICCI noted that many States have been facing the shortage of Covid vaccines over the past few days, including locations in Pun-

jab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar, compelling State governments to scale down their daily vaccination targets. “India intends to vaccinate a priority population of 30 crore by August 2021. Given that 10.85 crore people have received at least the first dose of Covid vaccination and going with the current rate of 30 lakh vaccinations per day, we would need more than 38 crore doses (of two dose vaccines) to fully vaccinate this priority group,” it said.

According to reports, Indian government has 2.04 crore doses in pipeline for next few days, FICCI stated.

Covid test kit making unit inaugurated



HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

MEKAPATI Goutham Reddy, Minister for Industries and Commerce and IT, Andhra Pradesh, has inaugurated the Transasia Bio-medical’s state-of-the-art medical devices manufacturing plant at Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) in Visakhapatnam. The facility is largest of its kind in Asia spread over 35,000 sq feet with an investment of over Rs 30 crore. The company will manufacture ‘ErbaLisa Covid-19 IgG’ Elisa test kits, RT-PCR kits and rapid test kits for India and other emerging markets. “We are truly delighted to partner with AMTZ, in contributing our bit to realise the dream of making India’s Atmanirbhar programme a success and a global export hub for IVD products and solutions. With worldclass infrastructure for manufacturing, testing and certification of medical devices available in the park, the facility would play a key role in import substitution of medical devices,” said Suresh Vazirani, Founder and Chairman, Transasia-Erba International Group of Companies. The new facility has the capacity to produce 6 lakh Elisa-based antibody detection test kits per day besides RT-PCR and rapid test kits. Transasia will significantly invest in R&D and manpower at the facility with total hiring estimated at 500 employees.

KKR dishes out 3-pronged spin attack in power-play



CHENNAI
AHEAD of the Indian Premier League, Chinaman bowler Kuldeep Yadav had said that his team Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) has probably the best possible spin attack in the tournament.
Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) won the toss and elected to bowl in their match against Mumbai Indians (MI) here at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Tuesday. KKR had won their first match against SunRisers Hyderabad while MI has lost their opener to Royal challengers Bangalore.
In Tuesday's game against Mumbai Indians (MI), KKR skipper Eoin Morgan flaunted the depth in his spin bowling attack by pressing into attack all three of his spinners -- in the playing XI --- in the first five overs of the MI innings.
It had an impact and gave KKR a good start.

MI could make just 37 for one in the first five overs. With Australian pacer Pat Cummins bowling the sixth over of the innings and conceding just five, MI's accumulation in the power-play period was just 42 for the loss of Quinton de Kock's wicket.
Off-spinner Harbhajan Singh had opened the bowling, conceding just three runs. Mystery spinner Varun Chakravathy then went for seven in his first over but got rid of Quinton de Kock, who was caught trying to hit the bowler out. Harbhajan then conceded 14 in his next over but Morgan brought in Bangladesh left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan who leaked just four.
Chakravathy then bowled his second for nine. The number of options in the KKR squad shows the depth in spin department.
Apart from the three playing, KKR have West Indies international Sunil Narine, left-arm spinner Pawan Negi and current India spinner Kuldeep Yadav. Kuldeep is yet to play a game.
MI have brought Quinton de Kock in place of Chris Lynn while KKR fielded an unchanged squad. (ANS)

Indian Premier League

SRH eye first win as RCB look to cement position

CHENNAI
SEEKING to consolidate their position after a winning start, Virat Kohli's Royal Challengers Bangalore will have their task cut out as they take on a determined Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League here on Wednesday.
While RCB began their campaign with a morale-boosting win over five-time defending champions Mumbai Indians at the same venue, the David Warner-led SRH lost to Kolkata Knight Riders in their tournament opener.
Having put up a decent performance in the first game, RCB will be strengthened further when the immensely-talented Devdutt Padikkal makes the team after his recovery from COVID-19. Padikkal has said he is now completely ready to play his part in the IPL and confident of replicating his stupendous domestic form in the ongoing league.
He contracted the deadly virus on March 22 and was in isolation, but has since completely recovered and resumed practice with his RCB teammates. In the event Padikkal is unable to return for Wednesday's game, RCB will stick to the opening pair of Kohli and Washington Sundar. RCB might try out the likes of Mohammed Azharuddeen and Australian leg-spinner Adam Zampa in the coming matches. Kohli and the incomparable AB de Villiers will be the key men again for RCB in batting, with Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell hoping to

make invaluable contributions with the willow. He looked good in the first game in RCB jersey, and has the backing of the team management, including skipper Kohli.
Barring the trio of Kohli, de Villiers and Maxwell, RCB look thin on batting and that's why Padikkal's presence at the top is important for them. The 20-year-old Karnataka left-hander was RCB's highest run-getter in IPL 2020 with 473 runs from 15 matches, including five half-centuries in what was his debut season.
Padikkal continued rich form in the last Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (218 runs at an average of 43.60 in six matches) and Vijay Hazare Trophy (737 runs in seven matches). After their failure in the opener, Rajat Patidat and Washington would look to make amends against SRH.
Almost all of RCB's bowlers were economical against MI's formidable batting with medium pacer Harshal Patel returning excellent figures of 5/27. They will certainly look for an encore.

As far as SRH are concerned, both their openers Wriddhiman Saha and Warner failed to get going against KKR in the first game and will look to make up for that against RCB.
The swashbuckling Warner has close to 600 runs against RCB and he will aim to add to that impressive tally.
In opening, SRH have the option of reuniting Warner with Jonny Bairstow, who made a fifty while batting in the middle-order against KKR alongside Manish Pandey, who made a 44-ball 61. Kane Williamson is unlikely to return on Wednesday as coach Trevor Bayliss had said the Kiwi would require some more time to regain full match fitness. Bhuvneshwar Kumar went for runs against KKR but the experienced seamer is expected to get his rhythm back sooner than later.
The likes of Rashid Khan and Mohammed Nabi can also ask probing questions with their crafty bowling. (PTI)



SQUADS
Royal Challengers Bangalore:
Virat Kohli (c), Devdutt Padikkal, Finn Allen (wk), AB de Villiers (wk), 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 Prabhu, K.S. Bharat
Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner (c), Kane Williamson, Jonny Bairstow (wk), Manish Pandey, Sreevats Goswami (wk), Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Priyam Garg, Vijay Shankar, Abhishek Sharma, Abdul Samad, Virat Singh, Mitchell Marsh, Jason Holder, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Shahbaz Nadeem, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, T. Natarajan, Sandeep Sharma, Khaleel Ahmed, Siddarth Kaul, Basil Thampi, Jagadeesh Sushith, Kedar Jadhav, Mujeeb-ur-Rahman.

Bat fearlessly like Hooda: KL Rahul

MUMBAI
A relieved Punjab Kings skipper K.L. Rahul called on his batsmen to bat fearlessly just like Deepak Hooda after his team managed to see off a resilient Rajasthan Royals led by Sanju Samson.
Rahul, who himself made 91 off 50 deliveries, breathed a sigh of relief after Samson's 119 failed to get RR past the finish line.
"Deepak Hooda's innings was amazing. That's the kind of batting we want to see as a team. We want to bat fearlessly and take down bowlers. We have a lot of power in our line-up but we have been slightly tentative. It is important for us to bat fearlessly. It is great to see boys trying to understand what we expect," said Rahul after the match. Hooda made 64 off 28 balls, his knock helping the team put up a big 221-run total.



While he praised his batsmen he did add that the bowlers were a bit inconsistent with their lengths and needed to pull up their socks.
"Heart rate was high but I didn't stop believing. We knew a couple of wickets would bring us back. Till the first 10-11 overs, we bowled well. It was close because we dropped a few sitters, including me. We batted really well and bowled well in patches. We weren't consistent with the lengths but the bowlers will learn," he added.
"It's a young team, some new boys, the boys are talented and skillful, so we need to back them."
Rahul acknowledged his opposite number saying it is always hard to bowl against him.
"When you're bowling against Sanju, it's difficult," he added. (ANS)



109-year-old Kagawa becomes world's oldest Olympic torch bearer

TOKYO
SHIGEKO Kagawa, a 109-year-old woman, has become the oldest Olympic torch bearer after she took part in the Tokyo Olympic torch relay in Nara Prefecture.
Kagawa, who was born in 1911, took the record from Aida Mendes of Brazil who walked with the Rio Olympic torch in Macapa, Brazil when she was 107 years old in June 2016, Xinhua reports.
Kagawa is the second centenarian to attend the Olympic torch relay since it started on March 25.

Shitsui Hakoishi, a 104-year-old barber, carried the flame in the rain on March 28, 2021, in Nasukarasuyama, Tochigi Prefecture. But the world record is expected to fall next month when Kane Tanaka, the world's oldest living citizen, is set to carry the Olympic torch.
Tanaka, 117, is recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest person in the world and was already Japan's senior citizen. She is due to carry the flame when it passes through Shime in Fukuoka Prefecture on May 12. (ANS)

Bhuvneshwar wins ICC Player of the Month award

DUBAI: Experienced India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar on Tuesday won the ICC Player of the Month award for his superlative show in the recent limited over series against England in March.
The 31-year-old Indian took six wickets with an economy rate of 4.65 in the three ODIs, while capturing four wickets with a fantastic economy rate of 6.38 in the five T20Is to emerge as the standout bowler on either side in the white ball series.
"After what seemed like a really long and painful gap, I was delighted to be playing for India again. I used the time away to work on my fitness and skill and I am happy to be back taking wickets for my country," Bhuvneshwar said in an ICC release.
"I would like to thank each and every person who helped me in this journey starting from my family and friends and my teammates. Also, a special thank you to the ICC voting academy and all the fans who voted for me and made me the ICC Men's Player of the Month for March."
Besides Bhuvneshwar, ace leg-spinner Rashid Khan of Afghanistan and Zimbabwe's Sean Williams were also nominated in the men's category. Former India batsman VVS Laxman, representing the ICC Voting Academy, said: "Bhuv missed nearly a year and a half of international cricket through multiple unrelated injuries, but you'd never have guessed."
"He was outstanding in both the PowerPlay overs and at the death in the white-ball formats against a powerful, aggressive England batting line-up. Economical and penetrative, he was instrumental in shaping Indian triumphs in both series."
South African Lizelle Lee, who played four ODIs against India where she scored a century and two half-centuries to move to the top of Women's ODI Batting Rankings, was named the ICC Women's Player of the Month for March.
"I am happy and honoured to receive this award. Such accolades are a great way to keep me motivated and to continue to work even harder on my game. A big thank you to my teammates for their support as this would never have been possible without them," Lee said.
Commenting on Lee's performance in March, Ramiz Raja, representing the ICC Voting Academy, said: "It is not easy scoring those many runs in alien batting conditions. It is always a challenge to adjust from bouncy pitches to slow low turning tracks and Lizelle did magnificently."
The nominees among the women's also comprised Indian duo of Rajeshwari Gayakwad and Punam Raut. According to a release issued by the game's governing body, the three nominees for each of the categories were short-listed based on on-field performances and overall achievements during the period of that month (the first to the last day of each calendar month). The short-list was then voted on by the independent ICC Voting Academy and fans around the world. (PTI)



Marin, Momota big stars as India Open to be held behind closed doors from May 11

NEW DELHI
OLYMPIC champion Carolina Marin and world No.1 Kento Momota will be the top seeds in the India Open Super 500 badminton tournament which will be held behind closed doors at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi from May 11-16.
The tournament is part of the Olympic qualification calendar with 228 (114 men and 114 women) entries coming from 33 different national associations, including China.
With Covid-19 cases surging in India, the organisers decided to hold the tournament behind closed doors. The Badminton Association of India (BAI) said that all the players and officials coming from South Africa, Brazil, Middle East and European countries including United Kingdom will be serving a seven-day quarantine period and have to reach New Delhi on May 3. Players and officials from the rest of the world can arrive on May 6 and undergo a four-day quarantine period.
The Delhi government will conduct RT-PCR tests on arrival on May 3 and 6 as well as on May 9 and 14. The Badminton Association of India (BAI) will provide one additional meal of choice for all participants, officials and support staff during the quarantine period.
"We are really happy to finally be able to resume badminton action and host such top shuttlers from across the world. But with the recent spike in cases, we have to be more cautious. Players' safety has always been of prime importance and our top priority and this tournament will be no different. We will be implementing and following strict COVID-19 protocols and guidelines as shared by Government of India and Delhi Government," BAI general secretary Ajay Singhania said.
"We understand

spectators have been an integral part of our growth story but this year despite it being an Olympic qualifier and an array of star shuttlers in action, we have to take the decision of conducting the tournament in a bio bubble. We hope fans and media will understand the challenges and support us. We will be using all our digital handles to broadcast and interact with fans and bring the players and fans much closer," he said.
Three-time world champion Marin will lead the women's singles category along with other top-10 shuttlers like Japan's Akane Yamaguchi, India's reigning world champion PV Sindhu, South Korea's An Se-Young and Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong, alongside Indian former world No. 1 Saina Nehwal.
With 48 players (27 women and 21 men), hosts India are fielding the largest contingent while Malaysia has fielded the second largest squad with 26 shuttlers, which includes 10 women and 16 men. China has fielded 10 shuttlers -- four women and six men.
In the men's singles section, the top-10 players in the fray include Japanese two-time world champion Momota, Denmark's defending champion Viktor Axelsen, his compatriot Anders Antonsen and Malaysian All England Open champion Zii Jia Lee. Former world No. 1 Srikanth Kidambi will lead the charge for India along with B Sai Praneeth, HS Prannoy and Parupalli Kashyap.
India's men's doubles challenge will be spearheaded by world No. 10 pairing of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy while Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy will aim for valuable Olympic qualification points in women's doubles. Ashwini will also partner Rankireddy in the mixed doubles category which sees the Japanese pair of Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino leading the list of the six Top-10 combinations in the fray. The last date for withdrawal of entry is April 19 while the draw will be announced on April 20. (ANS)



Hockey player Balbir Singh Junior dead

CHANDIGARH
BALBIR Singh Junior, who was a member of the silver medal-winning 1958 Asian Games Indian hockey team, died here at the age of 88, his daughter Mandeep Samra said on Tuesday. He is survived by his wife, daughter and son.
"My father passed away in sleep on Sunday morning due to heart failure," his daughter said. His son is settled in Canada and could not attend the last rites of his father because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Born on May 2, 1932, at Sansarpur in Jalandhar, also known as the nursery of Indian hockey, Balbir Singh Junior had played alongside legends like Balbir Singh Senior, Leslie Claudius, Prithpal Singh, Balkishan and Charles Stephen among others. Singh took to hockey when he was six years old. He studied at Lyallpur Khalsa College in Jalandhar and was first selected to play for the Indian hockey team in 1951 during the tour of Afghanistan. He was part of the Punjab state hockey team and also captained Panjab University team.
Later, he also played for the Indian Railways team that toured European countries such as Spain, Switzerland and Italy. The team also played Test matches in Netherlands. In 1962, he joined the Army as an emergency commissioned officer. He played for the Services hockey team in the national tournaments at Delhi.
Singh retired as a Major in 1984 and later settled in Chandigarh. Post retirement he took keen interest in playing golf. Hockey India condoned the death of Balbir Singh Junior. (PTI)



Indian women to play one-off Test, 3 ODIs, 3 T20Is in England in June-July

LONDON: The Indian women's cricket team will play a historic one-off Test against England in Bristol as part of a multi-format series that will also feature three ODIs and as many T20 Internationals across June-July.
The Test will be played at the Bristol County Ground from June 16-19, kicking off the England team's summer. The match was first confirmed by BCCI Secretary Jay Shah earlier this year but the exact date and venue were unveiled by the host board on Tuesday.
While the Indian women's team will take part in a Test for the first time since 2014, England last played a red-ball game during the 2019 Ashes. The one-off Test will be followed by three ODIs and T20Is each with the tour concluding on July 15 in Chelmsford.
Following the engagements against India, The Hundred will take place, after which the England women's side will face New Zealand in three T20Is and five ODIs respectively, in September. India's tour of England (fixtures): June 16-19 - Test match - Bristol County Ground June 27 - 1st ODI - Bristol County Ground June 30 - 2nd ODI - The Cooper Associates County Ground, Taunton July 3 - 3rd ODI - New Road, Worcester July 9 - 1st T20I - The County Ground, Northampton July 11 - 2nd T20I - The 1st Central County Ground, Hove July 15 - 3rd T20I - The Cloudfm County Ground, Chelmsford. (PTI)