

Womenia

INDIAN SPICE BOX, AN IMMUNE BOOSTER



Naini Setalvad

I always referred to my mom as a magician; so are all Indian cooks. They have the ability to make even the drabest food come alive. The secret to their trick is the little magical box that harnesses mighty power.

With monsoon in full swing, the need for this immune booster is amplified. As the world celebrates spices, let me pay homage to the original healer, The Indian spice box.

Turmeric

I call it the gold star of spices. It reduces respiratory infections when tempered in cow's ghee. Curcumin, the natural chemical present in turmeric has a positive effect on practically all kinds of cancers and lifestyle diseases due to anti-inflammatory effects.

Cumin seeds

Mild on the tongue, I suggest it to even children and elderly. It's full of therapeutic benefits. Aids digestion and purifies the blood. I make it a point to add

cumin tempering to all my foods.

Mustard seeds

My spice box is incomplete without this zingy spice. They contain healthy fats that protect cardiovascular health. Full of anti-oxidant, it prevents inflammation in the skin and body. With high selenium and magnesium content, it maintains strong bones and teeth. I make it a point to include this spice wherever I can.

Pepper

A touch of pepper in your food relieves chest and nasal congestion. Combined with cow's ghee, it prevents Alzheimer's and improves memory, heals hyperthyroidism and reverses Vitiligo. Tamarind and pepper rasam is a home remedy for cold.

Chilli powder

Ironically, the hottest spice is called Chilli. We Indians love to add this to all our dishes and rightfully so. Packed with immunity enhancing Vitamin C, it reduces nasal congestion due to its anti-inflammatory nature. It contains powerful antioxidants 'capsaicin' increases metabolic.



Coriander seeds

Personally, I think coriander is an all-round spice. Coriander seeds contain an array of phytonutrients along with being a very good source of iron, magnesium, potassium and manganese. This Immunity boosting and anti-oxidant rich spice fights aging, controls cholesterol and blood sugar.

Clove

My tempering is incomplete without the pungent clove. Aside from its unique flavour, cloves are anti-bacterial and anti-viral. Hence, it helps to cure coughs and colds. 'Eugenol' an active compound found in clove is said to be anti-carcinogenic. Cloves help prevent blood clots and toothache. Burning of clove oil is the best way to stop mosquitoes from biting.

Cinnamon

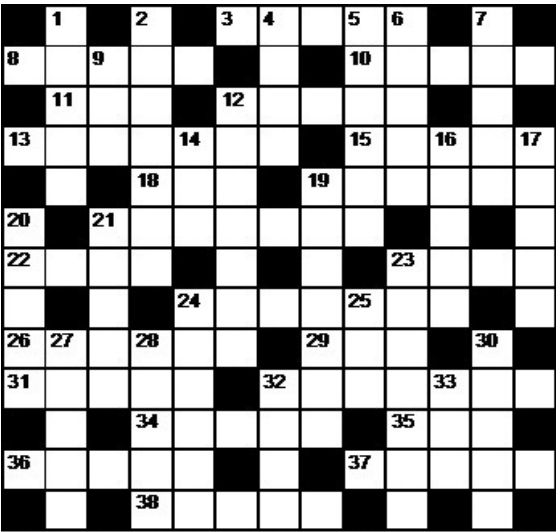
A tiny pinch of this spice goes a long way. Even a whiff of cinnamon can enhance mental ability and decrease anxiety. Cinnamon is effective in eradicating bacterial and fungal infection. I use cinnamon extensively in my practice to prevent, reverse and retard blood sugar levels and other cardiovascular diseases. The best way to get in all these healing spices is a simple Rasam which is perfect for the monsoon.



'Romantic' Mumbai rains make Kangana yearn for someone special

The Mumbai rains on Wednesday left Kangana Ranaut in a romantic mood. The Bollywood actress yearned for the person meant for her to show up. Kangana took to her Instagram story to share a beautiful photograph of her lost in thoughts. "Nothing's more romantic than Mumbai rains, but single people can just daydream. Who is meant for me please show up na," Kangana captioned her photo along with a couple of red heart emojis.

The "Manikarnika" actress recently took to social media to welcome the month of June saying it has ushered happy feelings, sparkling thoughts and new ideas in her mind. Taking to Instagram Story, the actress wrote, "Who all can feel a sudden gush of happy feelings, sparkling thoughts and new ideas with the beginning of June? There is a massive shift in how agitated and tired I felt through all of April and May. I am hopeful that this fizzy sparkling feeling will sustain."



S I F T S E A R A C H E
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C O N F E S S E S S A Y

SOLUTION TO JUNE 9

CROSSWORD

Across

- Liturgical vestment (5)
- Fanatic (5)
- Custom (5)
- Project (3)
- Tiny particles (5)
- Bunk (7)
- Made a catlike sound (5)
- Organ of sight (3)
- Made of two parts (6)
- Had a lie-in (5,2)
- 100 dinars (4)
- Tea - British slang (4)
- James Bond portrayer _____ Dalton (7)
- For everyone's use (6)
- Beverage (3)
- More cunning (5)
- Decipher (7)
- In force (5)
- Bond creator Fleming (3)
- Rescued (5)
- Anaesthetic gas (5)
- Minimal (5)

Across

- Important (5)
- Writers Edith, Osbert (7)
- Lepidopterous insect (4)
- Aromatic plant eg. fennel (6)
- City of the Ruhr (5)
- Romantic onlooker (5)
- Insect (3)
- Preventing putrefaction (7)
- Affirmative vote (3)
- Pallid (5)
- They change colours of fabrics (5)
- Prejudiced (7)
- Under _____ : in secrecy ? (5)
- Did nothing (3,2)
- A good cause (7)
- Angry outburst (6)
- Gumshoe (3)
- Pertaining to the bone in the forearm (5)
- Flat (5)
- Sleeper's woe (5)
- Immerses (4)
- Derisive shout (3)

SUDOKU

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8	1	9	7	4	3	5	6	2
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2	6	3	1	8	5	7	4	9

SOLUTION TO JUNE 9

TWEET PATROL

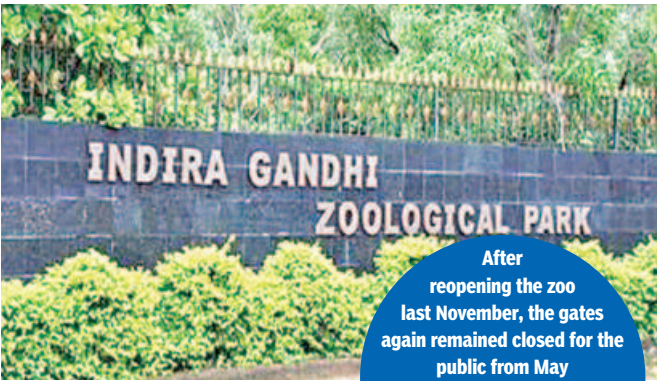


NEHA DHUPIA
@NEHADHUPIA

6 am #breakfastinbed
n watching the rain outside ...
#littlejoys



Amid challenges, she makes a mark



RANI DEVALLA

After reopening the zoo last November, the gates again remained closed for the public from May. IGZP curator aims to redefine IGZP, a destination for people to look forward to beyond a picnic spot.



Nandani Salaria

A year ago, when Nandani Salaria took the reins of Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (IGZP) as a curator, the zoo park was not in a great shape.

Thanks to the pandemic-induced lockdown, revenues came to a standstill and expenses continued to mount as the gates of the zoo remained shut for almost eight months.

Though respite came in the form of government grants, they were hardly adequate to meet the expenditure incurred. "Revenue generation is a major task in the current pandemic times. Funding support from the state government for diet charges of the zoo animals, repair works and renovation of animal enclosures is sought. Hopefully, we will be getting it in the coming months," explains the zoo curator, who took charge as IGZP curator in June, 2020.

After reopening the zoo last November, the gates again remained closed for the public from May amid the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

But the present situation did not stop the management from raising funds through different means such as awareness activities, sale of souvenirs, self-sustaining initiatives such as setting up

of a fodder plot for generating organic fodder, fruits and vegetables for feeding the zoo animals along with CSR funding from corporate firms. Despite the financial crunch, the focus is on rolling out new initiatives. They include, conservation education and outreach activities like butterfly walk, bird walk series, webinars and virtual summer camp, establishment of a souvenir and outreach centre. "There's an improved focus on animal and bird biology which helped many species to breed, especially Eclectus Parakeet and Macaws which had not bred for several years," elaborates Nandani Salaria.

A number of animal exchange programmes with Indian as well as foreign zoos are in the pipeline. Once it materialises, swamp deer, thamin deer will dot the zoo. Landscaping of the zoo, aesthetic improvement to the existing buildings, visitor amenities like public toilets, pink toilets for women which will contain a sanitary napkin vending machine, sheds, and seating benches will be taken up by the zoo authorities. Apparently, the stress is on animal adoption. "It is not only to make do for the upkeep of the animals

through adoption but also to develop a connect between the animal and the adopter which will remain for a lifetime," explains the zoo curator, a gold medallist in Veterinary Sciences in Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu.

Being an IFS officer Nandani Salaria says that one needs to be strong physically. "Women are very few in certain sectors. But yes, there is a lot of scope for earning a good reputation in the less trodden path," she clarifies.

When Nandani Salaria posted as a DFO in Kakinada, not many appeared to be pleased to see a woman officer. "It was my first posting and a challenging place. Being a woman officer, initially, people thought I would not be able to survive there for long. However, I did quite well during my stint as a DFO that lasted for three years and two months," the curator recalls.

Though challenges have been part of her work life, Nandani Salaria exudes confidence that she wants to redefine IGZP, a destination for people to look forward to beyond a picnic spot.

Decorate your home budget friendly

PUJA GUPTA

Home is where the heart is and decorating it is a real bliss! Whether it is about decorating the corner of your space or redoing the wall part, few additions can make a house feel like a home. Along with major furniture pieces, the little things matter too. So, is your home due for a quick design update? Here are some home decor ideas by interior designer Michelle Williamson, to deck up your home on a low budget. Let's move around every corner of your home to decorate.

Living Room

Cushion Covers

When it comes to the living room, the first thing that takes the limelight is the sofa set. And, di-



rectly or indirectly cushion covers have a relation with your sofa set. There's nothing as quick as redoing your home space with cushion covers. It has the power to instantly uplift the aura of your space and draws colours to the room. Whether square, triangle or rectangular, you can add cushion covers of different varieties available online of any colour you want.

Wall Arts

An empty wall in living room doesn't work

anymore. Make your wall exciting with a picture-perfect wall art. The options are tremendous; you can choose based on the style of your living room. For an example, Wooden Wall Mask or marble segments in this can really make a statement.

Carpets and Rug

Floor art also adds a new look to your room. There are a variety of designs in rugs and carpets to dive for. Along with providing the furnishing to your floor, it ties the entire look of your home. Abstract multicolour rugs these days can be your go-to option for a trendy home deck up.

Wall Clocks

As all the living room moments are precious, wall clocks in this case, are here to remind you that time is precious too. Look for a wall clock that doubles as artwork for the perfect makeover. The textured analog wall clock or a metal one these days can fit your requirements right.

Farm Workers Day



Farm Workers Day is a day to celebrate and be grateful for all the hard work that farmers do to keep fresh food coming. Vegetables, meat, herbs – the staples of your grocery bag all started out on a farm. It's sometimes hard for us to remember how lucky we are to have access to fresh produce, and we are somewhat disconnected from the roots – literally – of our food when we see it all packaged up in the supermarkets. On Farm Workers Day, we are reminded to thank farmers for making it all possible. Farm workers are often on the farm from sunrise to sunset – so it's no wonder that they have a day for them!

As far as we know, the first society to actively engage in farming on a larger scale was the Sumerians, who had a labor force specializing in farming. They also constructed irrigation methods to grow their crops and had a strict harvesting pattern across the year.

Farm workers are those in the fields, picking crops and looking after animals. With the advances in technology, specifically in farming, in the last century or so farm workers have found their work becoming even more specialized. When we talk about a farmworker, this can have quite a broad meaning. It could mean someone hired by a farm to take part in any activities on the farm, but it can also mean someone who is hired solely to be involved in the production – such as harvesting.

Working outside for long periods in all kinds of climates, and the bending and crouching needed for harvesting – not to mention the dangers of using farm machinery and being around some big and easily riled animals – can be very tough on farmworkers. Farm Workers Day is about thanking farmworkers for their hard work.



Govt nod for construction of 3.61L houses under PMAY-U

NEW DELHI

THE Central government on Wednesday gave approval to 708 proposals for construction of 3.61 lakh houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U)-- another move with the objective of providing pucca houses to all eligible beneficiaries of Urban India by 2022 with the vision of 'Housing for All'.

The decision was taken at the 54th Meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) under PMAY-U held here. The meeting was attended by 13 states and the Union Territories (UTs). This was

the first CSMC meeting during the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic.

These houses are proposed to be constructed across beneficiary led construction and affordable housing in partnership verticals.

With this, as on date, the total number of sanctioned houses under PMAY(U) is now 112.4 lakh and so far, 82.5 lakh have been grounded for construction of which 48.31 lakhs have been completed and delivered.

Total investment under the mission is Rs 7.35 lakh crore, which has Central assistance of Rs 1.81 lakh crore of which Rs 96,067 crore of funds have been released.



Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has laid renewed emphasis to accelerate housing construction and completion across the country within stipulated time under PMAY(U).

"The demand for sanction has saturated in all states and UTs. Utilisation of unused funds and ensuring completion of the projects within stipulated time is our prime focus now," said Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary (MoHUA), at the meeting.

The states and the UTs also put in their proposals for revision of projects due to various issues such as, of land, topographical hazards, inter-

city migration, change of preferences of verticals and loss of lives.

Addressing the participating states and the UTs, Secretary, MoHUA, laid emphasis on six Light House Projects (LHPs), the foundation stones of which were laid by Prime Minister in January this year.

The LHPs are being constructed at Agartala, Chennai, Lucknow, Ranchi, Rajkot and Indore. "These LHPs should galvanize all concerned departments involved in construction. Use of cutting-edge technology should be replicated and scaled up," said the Secretary.

UP Madrasa Board exams cancelled



LUCKNOW

THE Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has cancelled the Uttar Pradesh Madrasa Education Council Class 10 and 12 board examinations for session 2020-2021, keeping in view the "extraordinary situation arising due to the Covid pandemic".

An official release said that students from Classes 1 to 9 and 11 will be promoted to the next class without taking examinations.

The release said, "In view of the extraordinary circumstances arising due to Covid, class 10 and class 12 board examinations for the academic session 2020-21 in

Uttar Pradesh Madrasa Education Council-recognized and state-aided madrasas have been cancelled. Also, a decision has been taken to promote the students from class 1 to class 8, class 9 and class 11 to the next class."

UP Minority Welfare Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi said that regarding the promotion, compliance with the provisions mentioned in the orders issued and to be issued from time to time by the Basic Education Department and Secondary Education Department will be ensured.

The Yogi Adityanath government had earlier cancelled the 12th Intermediate Board examinations in view of the pandemic.

Raje goes missing from BJP posters



ARCHANA SHARMA

JAIPUR

IN a recent development in Rajasthan politics, former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje's posters have been removed from the BJP state headquarters.

The present posters have Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party national chief J.P. Nadda on one side and Satish Poonia and Gulab Chand Kataria on the other side but no picture of Raje anywhere.

In other posters, they have brought veteran leaders Deendayal Upadhyay and Syama Prasad Mookerjee as mark of tribute to senior leaders.

While the earlier posters had Raje's picture along with state president Satish Poonia, leader of opposition Gulab Chand Kataria, deputy leader of opposition Rajendra Rathore's pictures on one side; the other side projected a picture of PM Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

BJP officials said that the central leadership have issued a guideline that all BJP posters in state as a rule should have CM and state president's picture along with Modi's and Nadda's while in states where BJP is in opposition, there shall be picture of state BJP president and leader of opposition with Modi and Nadda and hence comes this change. In last few months, Raje

has been seen maintaining distance and difference from state party office and state party leaders and has been seen promoting 'Brand Raje' keeping herself aloof from all state BJP activities.

She has been seen engaged in promoting 'Vasundhara Raje Rasoi' when the party is running 'Sewa hi Sangathan' campaign.

Also her followers have been running a 'Team Vasundhara Raje 2023' campaign on social media projecting her as next CM face of Rajasthan for BJP.

Also, she has been running 'Office of Vasundhara Raje' handle on Twitter to help needy during pandemic when BJP was running its own handle to help those who wanted medicines, oxygen, beds etc.



Screening of dengue-malaria cases in border areas begins

GURUGRAM,

AFTER dengue and malaria cases rose in the national capital, the Gurugram District Health Department has also issued an alert. The department has now started screening to identify dengue and malaria cases in areas adjoining the Delhi border.

For this, the department has formed special teams. These teams will survey the areas adjoining the border every 15 days.

Patients suffering from fever and other symptoms will be identified and examined. Also, spray and fogging work has been started in these areas to prevent the disease. However, the health department has not confirmed a single case of dengue and malaria in Gurugram so far. A large number of people from Delhi and Gurugram cross the border daily. Due to the continuous movement between Delhi and Gurugram, the screening campaign has been started.

Health officials said the teams carried out a screening cam-

paign in Mullahera, Wazirpur and Dundahera. During this, it identified patients with fever and other symptoms. A team of the municipal corporation conducted fogging in the area to prevent mosquito breeding.

According to the health department officials, since January this year till now, the health teams have issued notices to 1,090 people who were responsible for mosquito breeding.

According to official data of the health department, 48 cases of dengue and four cases of malaria were reported last year. In 2019, 22 cases of dengue and 15 cases of malaria were found. In 2018, there were 93 cases of dengue and 30 cases of malaria in Gurugram.

"Screening campaign has been started to identify dengue and malaria cases in the border areas. Teams will survey the areas near the border every 15 days. Spray and fogging are also being done in these areas," said Dr Sudha Garg, Deputy Civil Surgeon.

AAP takes up fight for Bikru minor widow

LUCKNOW

THE Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), has now taken up cudgels for Bikru widow, Khushi, who is languishing in jail since the past ten months.

AAP MP Sanjay Singh has demanded immediate release of Khushi, who is a minor and is presently admitted to the Lohia hospital after she vomited blood.

Khushi had been married for just three days when the Bikru massacre in which eight police personnel were killed, took place in Bikru village on July 3. Khushi's husband, Amar Dubey, was one of the accused and he was killed days later in a police encounter. In a memorandum given to UP Governor Anandiben Patel, Sanjay Singh has said that the police implicated four women, including Khushi, and has kept them in custody since the past 10 months.

Singh has named the four women, three related to Dubey and one who worked at the house of the main accused, Vikas Dubey. He alleged that all four have been implicated in fake cases. "In Kanpur's Bikru inci-



dent, four women have been kept in jail for the past 10 months, with no consideration of law. This includes four women, three related to Dubey, including a minor and a woman who worked at his place, along with her two minor children one of whom is seven years and the other 2.5 years," Singh has said in his letter. Singh has also claimed that the then SSP of Kanpur had publicly announced that Khushi had not been found guilty and would be released soon, but she continues to languish in jail.

"I request you to immediately intervene in the matter and get the government to follow rules. The innocent women must be released at the earliest," Singh has appealed to the governor.

BKU protests after boy electrocuted

MUZAFFARNAGAR

THE Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) held protests in UP's Muzaffarnagar on Wednesday after a farmer's son was electrocuted in a village there.

The incident took place in Mahabalipur village under Charthawal police station when Ankit, who went to fetch cucumbers from his fields, came in contact with a broken electric wire

and died on the spot.

Bhartiya Kisan Union activists (BKU) led by Vikas Sharma, started a dharna, demanding the replacement of faulty old power supply line in the village and compensation for the victim's family.

Station House Officer M.P. Singh said senior officials rushed to the spot to pacify the protesting villagers, who refused to hand over the body to police.

Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences to open in LU

LUCKNOW

LUCKNOW University (LU) is set to open an Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (IPS) spread over 8,170 square metres on its second campus in Jankipuram area. Students aspiring to make a career in pharmacy will soon have a dedicated government institute for it in the state capital.

The proposal to open the institute under the engineering faculty has received a go ahead in the university's finance committee meeting and now it will be put before the Executive Committee on June 11 for final approval.

The three-storeyed hi-tech building will be equipped with four advanced laboratories and will be gradually developed into a dedicated research institute with the setting up of modern laboratories for microbiology, pharmaceutical chemistry, central instrumentation, biotechnology, human anatomy physiology and pharmacognosy.



The construction work of the institute is likely to be over by next year. Till then pharmacy classes will be held in the engineering faculty.

According to official sources, two self-finance courses -- Bachelor in Pharmacy (B.Pharm) with 100 seats and Diploma in Pharmacy (D.Pharm) with 60 seats -- will be offered at the institute for which 33 contractual faculties will be appointed. The B.Pharm course will be of four years (eight semesters) while D.Pharm will be of two years (annual pattern). M.Pharm course may start after two years as per the policy of Pharmacy Council of India, New Delhi. The application for the two

courses for academic session 2020-2021 will be invited shortly once the university receives approval from the Pharmacy Council of India.

The IPS will have four departments: pharmaceuticals, pharmaceutical chemistry, pharmacology and pharmacognosy.

IPS Director Naveen Khare said, "The main objective of the institute is to excel in pharmacy education, engage in cutting edge research to advance healthcare and drug discovery which is the need of the hour in the time of Covid pandemic. Innovative research in pharmaceutical, biomedical, and clinical sciences and practices will be in focus."

UP refuses to share info on forced IPS officer's retirement

LUCKNOW

THE Uttar Pradesh government has refused to share information with former IPS officer Amitabh Thakur, regarding his compulsory retirement, saying the documents are "highly confidential". Thakur termed this denial "improper and suspicious" and said that initially he was given compulsory retirement in an "arbitrary manner" and now he was being denied information related to his livelihood. IPS officer Thakur was given compulsory retirement on March 23 following a decision taken by the Union Home Ministry. He had sought documents related to the decision through a letter on May 26. "These documents cannot be provided because they are highly confidential documents related to the discussion and approval at the highest level," stated an order issued by Special Secretary, Home, Kumar Prashant. Earlier, the Ministry of Home Affairs had also refused to sharing the information under the RTI Act.



UP Congress sinks into despair, leadership unfazed

LUCKNOW

DISSENT, anger and now anguish. The Congress in Uttar Pradesh sank into the realms of despair on Wednesday as soon as the news of former union minister Jitin Prasad joining the BJP came.

UPCC president Ajay Kumar Lallu was busy staging a dharna inside the party office in protest against the Aligarh hooch tragedy, completely oblivious of the crisis in the party.

While Lallu did not comment

on Jitin's departure from the Congress, his supporters claimed that it was no loss for the party.

"Did he win any recent election? If he has gone, it is no loss for the Congress," said a Lallu supporter.

The young party workers, however, vented their ire against the party high command, particularly Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, for demolishing the Congress.

In a WhatsApp group run by these leaders, party workers 'congratulated' Priyanka for fin-

ishing the party.

One leader wrote, "Priyanka is directly responsible for the state

of affairs. She has leased the party to left wing leaders who do not understand the ideology and

culture of the Congress."

Sources close to Jitin Prasad said that his main grouse was that Priyanka did not give him time to discuss political issues and Rahul Gandhi did not wish to speak on UP affairs.

"Jitin's father, Jitendra Prasad, was a leader of stature in the Congress and if he has been forced by circumstances to leave the party, there has to be something very, very wrong," said one of his supporters.

He has been spearheading a campaign against atrocities on



Time to show that we can do it

FORTUNATELY, the Test Positivity Rate (TPR) in Telangana has dropped to 1.42 percent. We can now see a sense of relief and greater hope that the second wave was waning.

The second wave has caused serious damage. Several lives have been lost and the families of those who were affected with Corona had to sell their properties to meet the hospital bills. We have seen that there was nothing like humanity even during pandemic for those who are into business of selling medicines and hospital services.

The governments also blinked and failed to control the situation. Even now they are not clear how they will make the private hospitals to refund the excess billing that

was charged from the patients. Already licences to hospitals against whom complaints were received have been restored. No hospital has been made to pay any fine so far.

We don't seem to have learnt any lesson. We includes the people, the administration and political executive. Government's claim that they are gearing up for third wave. They say they were creating enough beds etc. There are many issues that need to be examined.

First and foremost is do we have enough paediatricians? So far the administration does not seem to have even discussed the need for working out an action plan to tackle the situation nor did it hold talks with medical fraternity on how to meet the issue of shortage of child specialists. It has also not

worked out action plan to see that there is black-marketing of drugs.

Experts say all the pandemics in the world have come in the form of waves. We are currently seeing a strong third wave in some European countries, so a third wave cannot be ruled out (in India). Director General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Dr Shekhar Mande said, "it was up to us to ensure the third wave does not come. As a society, we should resolve that we will be disciplined and regulated," Mande said.

This resolve and discipline is still missing. We still find people still not wearing masks while moving around. With relaxations to come into force from today, we may once again see that places like eateries may

become epicentres of Covid superspreaders. Chai pe charcha will gain importance among people.

Already there are reports from neighbouring Maharashtra that Pune had registered spike in new cases. We need to understand that notwithstanding the statements from Prime Minister down to the Chief Ministers of states, our healthcare system is shattered and health workers are tired.

Both the government and people should not forget how the second wave has ruined the families and economy of the state. The government needs to focus on treatment protocols and upgrade the health infrastructure and administration should be in a state of hyper alert.

But we still see politicians

hugging the family members who died of Covid. If they themselves refuse to follow social distancing, beating the third wave may be difficult. If need be authorities should impose heavy penalties as it was done during first wave for not wearing a mask. Flouting of Covid-19 norms, undoubtedly, had created the pitch for a more ferocious second wave.

Similarly, they should put a full stop to vaccine politics. There may be some shortcomings in the guidelines announced by the Centre but no government should allow its ego to come in the way of effective implementation of the vaccination programme. Governments should work out plans to speed up the process of vaccination in rural areas.

If at least these measures are effectively implemented, It is highly unlikely that the third wave will predominantly or exclusively affect children.



Mango varieties from Bengal, Bihar to be showcased in Bahrain

FOR the first time, 4,000 kg kilogram mangoes, spanning 16 varieties from West Bengal and Bihar, will be exported to Bahrain and will be displayed in different stalls there for eight days.

The process is a part of the effort to promote the local and lesser-known mangoes internationally.

To promote the lesser-known mangoes of the state and Bihar, the Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has organised the event for the promotion of these kinds of mangoes so that these can develop an international acceptance which eventually will enhance production. The exported mangoes will be showcased at 13 stores in Bahrain from June 11.

Other than a few commercial kinds, most of these varieties are indigenous, lesserknown and confined to the local areas only.

"One of the APEDA registered exporters from Kolkata is hosting the programme at Bahrain along with their importer client," a senior state Horticulture Department official, who did not want to be identified, told IANS.

All these varieties have been chosen based on their characteristics of being extremely delicious and unique in their own way. The first consignment was

shipped on Tuesday. The second consignment would be shipped on June 10, depending upon the flight availability.

The Horticulture Department official said that the mangoes would be sent by the exporter from the Centre for Perishable Cargo (CPC) Kolkata Airport on a commercial basis. Considering the fruit's perishability, the export consignment has been divided into two parts.

According to senior government officials, the entire programme was conceptualised and organised by the exporters and importers themselves.

"We are only working as facilitators. The importer and the exporter have jointly have done all the necessary arrangements to organise the show at their stores which includes live streaming through WEBEX at 5 of its stores, attractive display of the mangoes, preparation and putting up of banners/posters, inviting the local government officials and customers from other Gulf countries for the launch of the show," an official said.

"Such export promotion activity may open new horizons for the farmers and exporters to start sending overseas the indigenous and unique varieties of mangoes and thus help in the mandate of the state government to raise the farmers' income," the official said. (IANS)



Dhaka, Karachi among world's ten least liveable cities

DAMASCUS remains the world's least liveable city and most of the previous ten least liveable cities remain in the bottom ten this year, including Dhaka and Karachi in the Asia-Pacific region, as per the 2021 edition of The Economist Intelligence Unit's (The EIU) Global Liveability Ranking.

However, overall, the COVID-19 pandemic caused liveability to decline - as cities experienced lockdowns and significant strains on their healthcare system. This led to an unprecedented level of change in the rankings, with many of the cities that were previously ranked as the most liveable tumbling.

With an average score of 68.6, cities in the Asia-Pacific region scored below the average of 73.09 recorded before the pandemic began. The 2021 edition of The Economist Intelligence Unit's (The EIU) Global Liveability Ranking finds that Auckland is the most liveable city in the world.

There is a strong contingent of cities in the APAC region at the top of the rankings, with Osaka, Adelaide, Tokyo and Wellington rounding out the top five.

Auckland rose to the top of the ranking owing to its successful approach in containing the COVID-19 pandemic, which allowed schools, theatres, restaurants and other cultural attractions to remain open and the city to score strongly on a number of metrics including education, culture and environment.

Similarly, Wellington, the New Zealand capital, has also gained from this relative freedom, rising to joint fourth place in this year's ranking. Japanese cities of Osaka and Tokyo (capital) ranked second and fourth, respectively, owing to continued high stability scores.

The biggest gainer in this year's

index is Honolulu. The city rose 46 places to fourteenth after its strong progress in containing the pandemic and rolling out its vaccination programme

European and Canadian countries fared particularly poorly in this year's edition. Vienna, previously the world's most liveable city, fell to the 12th position. The biggest mover down the ranking globally was Hamburg, which fell 34 places to 47th.

Upasana Dutt, Head of Global Liveability at The Economist Intelligence Unit, said, "The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on global liveability. Cities across the world are now much less liveable than they were before the pandemic began, and we've seen that regions such as Europe have been hit particularly hard".

"The cities that have risen to the top of the rankings this year are largely the ones that have taken stringent measures to contain the pandemic. The tough lockdown and tight border controls imposed by Asia-Pacific countries such as New Zealand and Australia allowed their societies to re-open earlier and enabled residents to enjoy a lifestyle that looked similar to pre-pandemic life."

"Apart from cities in New Zealand, Australia and Japan, other cities in the Asia-Pacific region such as Taipei (33rd) and Singapore (34th) have also performed well."

"One area where there has been regrettably little change is at the bottom of our rankings. Damascus remains the world's least liveable city, as the effects of the civil war in Syria continue to take their toll. Indeed, most of the previous ten least liveable cities remain in the bottom ten this year, including Dhaka and Karachi in the Asia-Pacific region." (IANS)

The myriad pleasures in Indian marketplaces



Dr Mohan Kanda

“NEVER mind the noise in the market, only mind the price of it please”, went a popular number many decades ago.

"The consumer is the king", is a well-known principle in commerce. Consumer preferences drive market forces. And following the advent of the phenomena of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, in the early 90s of the 20th century, market imperatives dictated the strategies for the growth and development of countries and their economies around the world for over four decades now.

Globalisation annihilated international borders and transformed the manner in which the affairs of governments of countries are conducted. Economies were restructured and structural adjustment assistance obtained from international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Safety nets have been created to take care of those whom, inevitably, the advent of market forces impacted in an adverse manner. And, as I have had occasions to observe in this column earlier, the spirit of 'growth with justice' has yielded place to a new theme, namely, 'growth and justice'.

One encounters all sorts of markets in this world from the global to the village level. There are those like Harrods and Macey's which cater to the uppermost spectrum of wealthy consumers. And, at the other end of the spectrum, are those that can be reached only after

arduous travel through serpentine lanes and streets in many cities of the world from London, to Cairo and Hyderabad.

There are many that specialise in commodities such as the Bombay Stock Exchange which deals in shares, the Pearl Exchange in Tel Aviv, deals in precious stones and those that deal with education, agricultural commodities such as jagery or coconuts or, for that matter fish. And a visit to any of these is, indeed, a revealing and rewarding experience.

One often compares a noisy and disorderly situation to a 'fish market'. As Managing Director of the Andhra Pradesh State Fisheries Development Corporation my colleague K.V. Rao (who was the Chief General Manager of the Corporation), and I, visited the fishing harbour in Visakhapatnam one night in order to see, at first hand, what was going on. I have described elsewhere the lessons we learnt that night about the reality of fish marketing.

While my travels afforded an opportunity to visit many markets around the world, easily the most interesting place I visited was the Porta Portese market in Rome which functions every Sunday (just as the Sunday Market does, near the London Bridge). An unbelievable variety of commodities is offered for sale, and one can buy anything from a pair of cufflinks or a pill, to a television set, or even (quite seriously), a Jumbo Jet. With the added advantage that bargaining is not a taboo! There are, in addition, some very popular shops that sell excellent foodstuff too.

However, like many other places in Rome, one has to guard against pickpockets! The notoriety of the market has earned it international fame, so much so that even movies and poetry have found it as a subject fit to be addressed. One is not too sure whether developments, which began some years ago to regularise the establishments and the transactions, and bring them under the ambit of the law, are to be welcomed or regretted. After all, the grey



One encounters all sorts of markets in this world from the global to the village level. There are those like Harrods and Macey's which cater to the uppermost spectrum of wealthy consumers. And, at the other end of the spectrum, are those that can be reached only after arduous travel through serpentine lanes and streets in many cities of the world from London, to Cairo and Hyderabad

area in which the market functioned was one of its endearing charms!

The city of Chennai literally abounds in marketplaces. Decades ago, there was the Moore Market, close to the Central Railway Station probably occupying the pride of place. Anna Salai (Mount Road when we were children), Pondy Bazar and Burma Bazar remain great shopping destinations to this day. One can walk around for hours merely doing window shopping or purchase a particular thing not easily available elsewhere. Hyderabad offers many interesting markets to visit, such as the Abids Centre, the Mozamjahi market and the Laad or Choodi Bazaar near the Charminar in the old city (known for pearls and bangles).

While Connaught Place (which also houses the Palika Bazar underground) and Khan Market are famous destinations in Delhi, especially for tourists, Chandni Chowk, one of the oldest in business markets of the city, offers the best variety. In fact one can find streets dedi-

cated to commodities such as textbooks, electrical and sanitary goods for houses under construction and (yes) even parathas, of all things! Other shopping paradises are Meena Bazaar and Bengali market, each with its own unique charm and attraction.

The city of Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), is one of the most enchanting cities in the world. Formerly the capital of India until the British shifted to Delhi it presents a unique and interesting picture which is a mix of old worldly charm and modern technological advances. Home to several cultural organisations and art forms, it has produced famous and eminent painters, musicians, writers and dancers.

Naturally enough there are many markets in this great city each famous for its own special background.

While Chowringhee, with its many cinema halls, is well known to movie buffs, Crawford market is famous for fresh fruits and vegetables, as also props for parties and toys; and Bally-

gunge for electronic goods, furniture etc. New market, on the other hand, is a veritable paradise for shoppers and on offer products from shoes and saris to flowers and rare cheeses. While College Street, which is fully dressed up during the Dussehra-Diwali festival, is a literal haven for bibliophiles the Burra Bazaar market is one of the largest, and particularly popular during festive seasons.

As Registrar of Cooperative Societies I encouraged a friend of mine to start a Cooperative Society called FRESH in order to address the gross mismatch between the price realized by the vegetable grower and that paid by the consumer, largely on account of the mischief of middlemen. We tried the idea of selling cleaned, graded and packed vegetables. The idea did not catch on quite as much as I expected.

One could sense that the customers, especially housewives, much preferred the personal visit to the market, so that they could touch, feel and choose the vegetables they wanted to buy. Which is probably also why the attempt at marketing groceries and perishables, such as vegetables, fruits and meat and fish, has not lived up to initial promise.

(The writer is former Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh)

I LETTERS

'Yajnam' is an evergreen masterpiece

K A Ra's 'Yajnam' (gramatically, Yajnam is appropriate) as elaborated in the 'Moot Point' still ignites thought-provoking process and as the writer Suravajula felt it is still relevant. Sitaramudu's extreme step of killing his son should not have happened, rather revolt could have happened as did happen in many such feuds here and in Telangana. Debt trap is not only by land but employees are in lenders' trap and cheques, documents and ATM cards also are in the lender's grip and at their mercy the bonds employee gets a paltry rum barely for grains and when this ends is revolt again. In tribal areas Girijans' life is better than elsewhere, thanks to ITDA, NGOs. Ka Ra like igniters deserve a salute no matter how inexcusable Sitaramudu's helplessness is while sacrificing his son.

Dr T Ramadas, Visakhapatnam

Restore old OU logo

The present TRS Govt. removed the OU and Arabic writings from the logo of Osmania University along with Urdu name the university. Is this the love and respect being shown towards the Nizam Mir Osman Ali, the founder of the OU, which the CM of Telangana uttered on many occasions? Is it the secularism

chanted by the government on different ceremony to just please the minority, Muslims in particular? Many Osmanians, Urdu lovers and the kin of Nizam's family have been agitating through newspapers since beginning but the decision has not been revoked yet. Once again being an Urdu lover and Osmanian I appeal to the Hon.CM of Telangana to restore the logo as it was earlier.

S M Arif Hussain, Hyderabad

Let's unite to make India Covid free!

IT has been almost a year that the world has been co-existing with the Corona virus. India has been able to curtail the appalling pandemic during its first wave. As more priority inclined towards the election campaign, the Union government couldn't take proactive measures to inhibit the catastrophe from expanding its wings of disaster during its second



wave but the generators of vaccination have taken up the task of immunising the citizens in every individual state and union government.

Though there has been a paucity in production of vaccine, the Pharma giants like Bharat Biotech and Serum institute of India have pulled up their socks in the hour of need and are been able to deliver the vaccines to the primary health care centres and government or private medical centres. We need to applaud the Indian brain child behind such vaccine formula and the unprecedented efforts of the medical community.

India will soon witness every citizen immunised completely and be a Covid-free country. The only factor which pillars such a scenario is a mindset which accepts vaccination with an open and free will. Let's all give a combined effort in this achievement throughout the country.

Madhulika N, Hyderabad

Opposition and vaccine

EVEN after the government has decided to procure 75% of vaccines, leaving 25% for private hospitals, the opposition continues to do politics on vaccines. After the announcement of PM, Rahul Gandhi asked on Twitter - If vaccines are free for all, why should private hospitals charge for them? Can't he simply understand that if one wants to pay for the vaccines, he/she can go for being vaccinated in private hospitals? If they are not willing to do so the government

will inoculate them "free of cost". This doesn't mean that vaccination is not free in India.

Kartikey Upadhyay, Vadodara

Action on war footing

THIS refers to "Population Criterion For vax Allocation" (THI 9 June). It seems when the Centre first began procurement and distribution of vaccines, it has not followed the population criteria of the age group and density of such groups while distributing vaccines. On distribution, age-group density should always be the policy of any sensible government. Moreover, earlier the central government simply went on claiming that enough stocks have been sent. However, this time, the Centre should be more transparent and publish a vaccine tracker showing the number sent, used by states, wastage, and balance available.

This would help to monitor the vaccination management instead of simply claiming that states have not managed the vaccination program well. In fact, this would also help the people not panic about availability. Transparency would end once for all the blame game as it happened in the beginning. The Centre and state together should now on focus only vaccination and keep politics far away, until mission vaccination is achieved.

N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com

Governor supports students' plea for vaccination

Answers queries during live interaction, “Ask the Chancellor” on Twitter, with students of universities

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

GOVERNOR Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan on Wednesday supported students' request to get vaccinated to attend offline classes on university campuses. Answering a host of queries during her live interaction, “Ask the Chancellor” on Twitter, with students of universities and colleges, she supported a suggestion that students need to get vaccinated to attend physical classes and examinations offline.

“Definitely students should be vaccinated. I am happy about your awareness. Starting physical classes will be decided after assessing the pandemic conditions,” she replied to a query.

Most students sought early conduct of examinations for their promotion to the next semesters so as to not lag behind the schedule.

Many MBBS students of the Kaloji Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences (KNRUHS), Warangal, requested for early conduct of second and third year examinations for second and third year. They were lagging be-



hind by five months for their next year classes.

The Governor, who is also the Chancellor of State universities, assured to take up the issue with the Vice-Chancellor of the KNRUHS.

Several medical students sought postponement of entrance examinations conducted by the AIIMS, while some others asked for early conduct of NEET

exam for MDS aspirants.

Some physiotherapy students requested for doing away with final examinations and giving of degrees. A participant urged her to look into problems plaguing the Osmania University. The Governor assured to discuss them with the concerned.

Engineering students of JNTU enquired about examinations, while some expressed apprehen-

sions over conduct of exams offline due to prevailing ‘risky’ conditions.

Dr Tamilisai said the live interaction was aimed at understanding issues being faced by students, give them morale booster, and take up their problems with the officials concerned.

There was enthusiastic participation by students from all over the State.

Eatala tears into TRS

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

FORMER Minister Eatala Rajender has upped the ante against the TRS on Wednesday stating that he had not won the elections in a wave, but because of his capability.

He also dared the ruling party to win Huzurabad in a democratic way.

The Former Minister was addressing a press conference at his home town in El-lanthakunta on Wednesday.

Rajender said that the coming election would be a ‘Dharma Yudham’.

“This is a Dharma Yudham between ‘dharma and adhama’ and definitely dharma will win... people of Huzurabad will win. The TRS should fight the elections in a democratic manner,” said Eatala.

Adding that he had not won the elections by fluke, he recalled that his majority increased in 2008 compared to 2004 elections. “In 2009, out of 50 seats contested we won only 10 seats and Huzurabad was one among them. The MP candidate was defeated but Huzurabad contributed the

- Terms the elections to Huzurabad as Dharma Yudham
- Challenges the ruling party to win the polls in a democratic way
- Says he is neither floating a party nor joining any

highest majority of 54,000 votes,” said Eatala.

The former TRS leader maintained suspense on joining the Bharatiya Janata Party. He said, “Some are speculating that I will float a party and a few are saying I will join a political party. I am neither forming a party nor joining any.”

He said that people of Huzurabad have the capabilities to counter attack if the government adopts unethical practices against them. People will not be influenced by money or other sops, he said.

Eatala alleged that he was targeted in 2018 elections and conspiracies were hatched to defeat him. “During 2018 elections, they gave money to my opponent to defeat me and also tried to assassinate my character,” he said.



Jeevan hits out at govt over Covid treatment

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

CONGRESS MLC T Jeevan Reddy on Wednesday hit out at the State government, alleging it failed to provide free treatment to all Covid patients.

Speaking to the media at the Assembly point, Reddy alleged that the Central government-sponsored Ayushman Bharat scheme was not being implemented in the State even after entering into an agreement with the Centre

He asserted that lives of the poor in the State were ravaged due to the virus spread. “The State government has not included Covid treatment in Aarogyasri scheme” The MLC claimed that the government was not taking warnings on the onset of third wave of the virus into consideration. He demanded a compensation of Rs. 50 lakh to all those who succumbed to Covid.

Cong urges govt to allow new applications for ration cards

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana PCC official spokesperson G. Niranjan on Wednesday urged the State government to also allow new applications for ration cards.

While welcoming the State Cabinet decision to grant ration cards to all eligible applicants numbering 446,169, whose applications have been pending for a long period, he said in a letter: “we urge the State government to provide an opportunity for fresh applications, as thousands of households are not having ration cards and they are forced to purchase ration in the open market.

In the letter addressed to Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, a copy of which was released to the media, Niranjan stated that names of many members of houses were deleted from ration cards irrationally by offi-

TPCC spokesperson G Niranjan welcomes Cabinet decision to grant ration cards to all eligible applicants

cials. “We request the government to instruct the concerned to enquire and to include all those deleted names”.

He said though priority should be given to people belonging to the below poverty line in providing ration, in future, it may necessitate, taking care of other sections of people, irrespective of rich or poor, during this pandemic situation, he said.. The Congress leader said the government should consider providing ration cards to all citizens to enable them prepare to face future challenges. “We request for immediate attention of the CM for taking a decision”.

HMR timings rescheduled

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IN view of the extension of lockdown by the State government, the timings of the Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR) service have been rescheduled.

Accordingly, the HMR will start its first train from respective terminal stations at 7 am, while the last train will start at 5 pm and end at the respective terminating stations by 6 pm. For everyone's safety, passengers have been advised to strictly follow the Covid safety guidelines, including social distancing, wearing of face masks, regular hand sanitisation and thermal screening.

“Passengers are requested to cooperate with security personnel and staff of HMR in their efforts towards keeping their journey safe”, a press release said on Wednesday.

Diagnostic services unburden people: Harish Rao

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SANGAREDDY

FINANCE Minister T Harish Rao on Wednesday said the new diagnostic centres launched across the State will provide immediate services to people. With these centres the poor in districts can get 57 services free.

He inaugurated a diagnostic centre and RTPCR unit here at the Sangareddy district hospital. The minister observed that actually it costs around Rs 4,000- to Rs 5,000 for such tests in private diagnostic centres. “This burden will be avoided through the new diagnostic centres which are fully equipped with latest medical equipment. Each diagnostic centre costs Rs 2.5 crore and offers timely services”.

Rao said tests can be conducted for kidney, liver, thyroid, heart problem and 90 such ailments at the facility. “In Sangareddy alone samples

- Inaugurates a diagnostic centre & RTPCR unit at Sangareddy district hospital
- District will soon get radiology services; CT scan facility worth Rs 2.5 crore will be made available in hospital



of blood are collected from 25 PHCs and UHCs for tests. Within 24 hours patients can get information on their cell phones about the test results giving a big relief. There is no need of going round test centres again”.

“It is wonderful to get such speedy services through our diagnostic centres. Today 19 diagnostic centres began in districts and 16 more will be started”, the minister de-

clared.

He disclosed that that Rs 550 crore is to be spent to set up a medical college and a nursing college. A 650-bed hospital with modern facilities will be built by spending Rs 260 crore.

Stating that people in district will soon get radiology services, Rao announced that a CT scan facility worth Rs 2.5 crore will be made available in the hospital.

Junior doctors call off strike after govt promise

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

FOLLOWING the talks with the state government, Andhra Pradesh State Junior Doctors Association (AP JUDA) on Wednesday withdrew the strike notice and decided to continue the services activities. Earlier, the Junior Doctors association called for strike from June 9. Health minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas (Nani), health secretary, Anil Kumar Singhal, along with the DME, Dr M Raghavendra held talks with junior doctors association leaders and assured the latter of resolving their problems.

AP JUDA state president Dr Rahul Rao said that their demands were positively heard and the health minister assured to fulfil their demands regarding payment of ex gratia/health insurance, specialist health care for Covid-infected doctors, security for doctors on duty besides resolving TDS issue.

He said the family of any doctor who succumbed while serving in the Covid pandemic will be given ex gratia of Rs 25 lakh by the state government irrespective of the amount given by the Central government. An amount of Rs 25 lakh was promised to the family members of Dr Kandikatla



- Health Minister Alla Nani and officials hold talks with AP JUDA leaders

- JUDA State president Rahul Rao says family of any doctor who succumbs while serving in the Covid pandemic will be given ex gratia of Rs 25 lakh by the State govt irrespective of the amount given by the Centre

- Specialist care ill be provided to doctors infected during Covid duty free of cost and security will be tightened towards preventing any attacks

Rosy, house surgeon (2016 Batch), ASRAM Medical College as an ex gratia within 2-3 days. The young doctor succumbed to Covid recently.

Dr Rahul Rao said specialist health care will be given to any doctor infected in the line of Covid duty free of cost at any hospital at the expense of the state government. Security measures at all government hospitals will be increased to prevent any untoward incidents towards the duty doc-

tors. Finally, an assurance was given to resolve the TDS issue regarding stipend after discussions with the concerned authorities, said Dr Rao

He further said that a request was made with regard to provision of an incentive/hike in stipend, as a gesture of appreciation and encouragement for the junior doctors, which was received positively by the minister and the feasibility of the same will be looked into in the future, he added.

RAMATHEERTHAM TEMPLE TO BE OPENED IN JAN '22

- Endowments Minister Srinivas visits the temple premises
- The govt has sanctioned Rs 3 cr for the renovation of the temple
- Says security has been increased at Hindu temples following incidents of desecration at some shrines

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIZIANAGARAM

ENDOWMENTS minister Vellampalli Srinivas on said the Ramatheertham temple, being reconstructed at a cost of Rs 3 crore, will be inaugurated in January 2022.

“We are procuring the material required for the construction of the hill temple and are making arrangements to complete it by the appointed time,” he said during his visit to the temple at Nellimarla on Wednesday.

According to the minister, the reconstruction will comply with ‘Agamasashtra’, following consultations with priests and seers, without hurting the sentiments of devotees.

He said stonecutters from Chilakaluripeta will be roped in for the reconstruction as Ramatheertham is being planned to be a fully stone structure.



(Top) Endowments Minister Vellampalli Srinivas releasing the design of the temple under reconstruction at Ramatheertham temple on Wednesday. (Right) The design of the temple being reconstructed.

Srinivas also released a model of the forthcoming temple. The minister was accompanied by MP Bellana Chandrasekar and MLA Badukonda Appalanaidu during his visit to the temple, where he also worshipped the deity.

D Bhramaramba, regional joint commissioner, endowments, would supervise the works at Ramateertham hill to provide water, electricity and others. The government has already released the funds and a firm has started works of the



temple.

In December 2020, Lord Ram's idol in the temple was decapitated and dumped in a water body beside the temple by some unknown miscreants, leading to a major controversy as similar such incidents occurred earlier as well.

Following these incidents,

police increased security and installed surveillance cameras at several temples in the state.

“We strengthened security at all the temples in the state and placed them under CCTV camera surveillance. We are deploying modern technology for temples' security,” Srinivas added.

BJP in huddle to stop Bengal leaders’ home-coming to TMC

KOLKATA

THE BJP has launched efforts to salvage its Bengal unit, with several leaders in the state raising tough questions and not hiding their resentment after the party’s election loss. BJP Vice-President Mukul Roy skipped a party meet in Kolkata called by state chief Dilip Ghosh. Mr Roy has been silent but his son Shubranshu has not ruled out a return to Mamata Banerjee’s Trinamool

Congress. The Trinamool claims 35 BJP MLAs are eager to return and are in touch with the leadership. The tables are turned, gloats the party that lost its leaders and MLAs to the BJP in the weeks before the Bengal election. Amid signs of brewing rebellion and “reverse migration”, the BJP’s most prominent acquisition from the Trinamool, Suwendu Adhikari, met with Home Minister Amit Shah and



BJP president JP Nadda in Delhi. Two MPs, Arjun Singh and Saumitra Khan, are also head-

ing to Delhi for meetings aimed at “feedback and review”. The party’s strategy, both during and after the state election, has been called into question by Bengal leaders, especially those who ditched Mamata Banerjee just before the polls. These leaders resent that the BJP brought in campaigners from outside for the state election instead of relying on the local leadership that delivered 18 of Bengal’s 42 Lok

Sabha seats in 2019. It was a “mistake” that helped Mamata Banerjee, they say, as she turned it into a “Mamata versus All” and a “Trinamool vs outsiders” fight. Among the doubters is Trinamool alum and ex-minister Rajib Banerjee, who joined the BJP in the presence of Home Minister Amit Shah after dramatically flying to Delhi in a private jet arranged by the ruling party. Mr Banerjee has, in a Face-

book post, questioned his new party’s move to threaten President’s rule in Bengal and the Centre’s moves against Mamata Banerjee, who retained power by a landslide. The people of Bengal will not take it well, he says, and advises the party to focus on Covid and the aftermath of Cyclone Yaas. Another former Trinamool leader, Sabyasachi, told a local channel: “Getting leaders who can’t speak Bengali to run the campaign was a mistake.”

WINDOWS

PE teacher held for sexual abuse

CHENNAI

A physical education teacher, Annadurai, 52, working with a government-aided school in Myladuthurai, Tamil Nadu was arrested after three of the school’s alumni complained of sexual harassment against him. The accused was working at Diwan Bahadur T Rangachariar (DBTR) National Higher Secondary School in Myladuthurai, Tamil Nadu for the past 20 years. A 21-year-old woman complained to the police that the teacher had molested her when she was a student at the school. She complained that he had used inappropriate words at her and had touched her while she was a student at the school and also molested her at his home where she was called up to fill a form. The woman said that she did not have the courage to speak earlier about the molestation and gained confidence after similar incidents were reported across the state with several women complaining against her former teacher for having molested them during their school days.

Two Pak cops guarding polio vax workers killed

ISLAMABAD

GUNMEN shot dead two policemen guarding a team of polio vaccine workers in north-western Pakistan on Wednesday, police said, in the latest apparent attack on the campaign to eradicate the disease. The attack occurred in Mardan district of the conservative and volatile province of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, dpa reported. The health workers escaped the attack unhurt, police official Jumma Gul told dpa. Pakistan is two days into a five-day vaccination drive as part of a UN-funded campaign aimed at eradicating polio, which is still prevalent in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The campaign is targeting more than 30 million children under the age of 5.

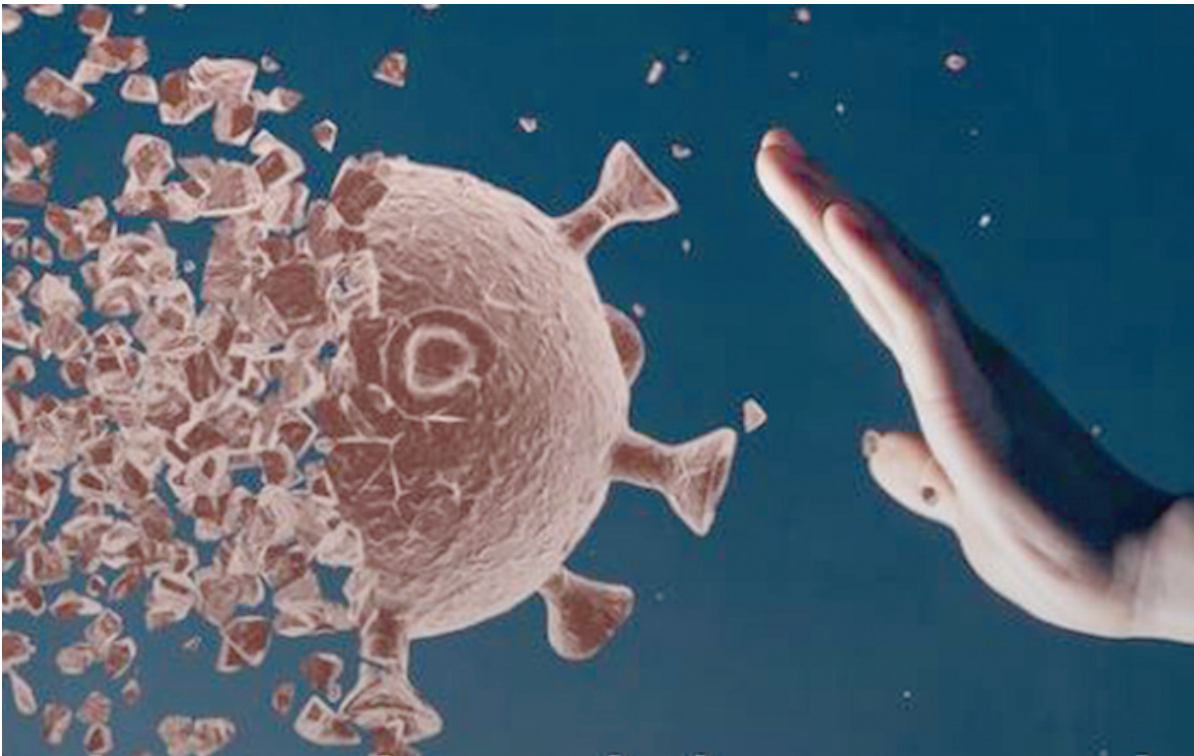
‘Don’t stand at borders for virus to come out’

Centre’s approach against coronavirus should be ‘like a surgical strike’

Will Uttar Pradesh govt bring out truth of Agra hospital mockdrill? Priyanka

MUMBAI

THE Bombay High Court on Wednesday said the Centre’s approach against coronavirus, which is the society’s biggest enemy at present, should be “like a surgical strike” instead of standing at the borders waiting for the virus to come out. A division bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G S Kulkarni said the Union government’s new “near to home” vaccination programme was like waiting for the virus carrier to come to the Centre. “Coronavirus is our biggest enemy. We need to strike it down. The enemy is residing in certain areas and in some people who are unable to come out. Your (government) approach should be like a surgical strike. You are standing at the borders waiting for the virus carrier to come to you. You are not entering the enemy territory,” Chief Justice Datta said. The bench said the government was taking decisions for the welfare of the public at large, but they were delayed which has resulted in the loss of several lives. Meanwhile, all central government employees will be able to get 15 days of special casual leave (SCL) in case their parents or any dependent family members test COVID-19 positive, according to an order issued by the personnel ministry. The government has announced a new update that enables an applicant to correct any inadvertent errors in name, year of birth and gender printed on the CoWIN vaccination certificate. Users can make the correction through the CoWIN website. Congress General secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday slammed the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh over the oxygen crisis in the Agra hospital and asked if the government would get to the bottom of the truth in the hospital for the mock drill and punish the people behind it. “At the time of the oxygen crisis, the Uttar Pradesh government repeatedly claimed that there was no shortage of oxygen. Across the state number of people died. In Agra also administration is claiming that there was no shortage of oxygen. Will Uttar Pradesh government bring the reality



TN runs out of stock, halts vaccination

CHENNAI: Vaccination in Tamil Nadu has come to a grinding halt as several districts have fallen short of the required doses in the state. 39 out of the 45 health units of the state reported a shortage of vaccines. The state is expecting 63,370 doses of Covaxin on Wednesday and another 40,000 doses on Thursday. A quantity of 3.6 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine is to be received by the state on Friday and health experts feel only after these arrivals would things get back on track. On Tuesday, Virudhanagar MP and Congress leader B. Manickam Tagore refused to take his second scheduled Covishield vaccine as there was a shortage of vaccines in the district for the common people. He had taken his first vaccine on April 8 and was scheduled to get his second dose on June 8 but as Government hospitals were running short of vaccines, and common man was not able to get the doses, the MP refused to accept his second dose.

of Agra medical mock drill and punishment them?” Priyanka Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi attaching several

India records 92K cases, 2,219 deaths

NEW DELHI: India on Wednesday logged 92,596 new Covid infections in 24 hours, less than one lakh cases for the second straight day and 6,098 cases more than Tuesday, the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry said. On June 8, India recorded 86,498 cases, lowest since April 2 when the country logged 89,129 new cases. In the past 24 hours, 2,219 more people succumbed to the pandemic. India’s overall tally of Covid-19 cases now stands at 2,90,89,069 with 12,31,415 active cases and 3,53,528 deaths so far. After battling a brutal second wave for weeks, fresh Covid cases came down below the three lakh-mark for the first time on May 17 after touching record high of 4,14,188 on May 7.

news reports. Her remarks came after a video went viral two days ago bringing to

Russia reports over 10k new Covid cases

MOSCOW: Russia has reported 10,407 Covid cases in the last 24 hours, the highest number of daily infections since March 7, according to the official data released on Wednesday. The total number of coronavirus cases in the country now stands at 5,156,250, Xinhua reported. The national Covid death toll rose by 399 to 124,895 in the past day, while the number of the country’s recoveries grew by 9,814 to 4,761,899. Meanwhile, Moscow, Russia’s worst-hit region, reported 4,124 new cases, taking its total to 1,209,214. More than 141.1 million Covid tests have been conducted across the country.

light the alleged heinous crime by the management of the Paras Hospital of Agra.

54 TEACHERS DIE IN BIHAR DUE TO COVID; NO SALARIES, NO EX-GRATIA TO KIN

‘Happiness is no longer part of my life,’ says victim’s wife

SHILPI VERMA MOTIHARI

“HAPPINESS is no longer part of my life,” said Kumari Neha. The 30-year-old was tragically widowed when her husband Deepak Anand, a government school teacher succumbed to Covid-19 while being treated at Government Medical College and Hospital at Bettiah, the headquarters of Bihar’s West Champaran district. It hasn’t even been two years since they got married and he leaves behind a one-year-old child. He is among the 54 government teachers claimed by the virus in East and West Champaran districts since the start of the second wave in April. The state education department has initiated an exercise to determine the state-wide toll. “The compilation of data from other districts is being done. It is still at an introductory level,” said a senior government functionary, refusing to be identified. “In April and May 2021 alone, 29 of our teachers died,” in-



formed Awdesh Kumar Singh, District Education Officer (DEO) of East Champaran. West Champaran has witnessed 25 deaths, according to DEO Binod Kumar Vimal. The districts are now staring at a huge loss to their basic education workforce when schools eventually reopen. While online classes were happening in an erratic manner, teachers had been struggling with finances either due to delayed salaries or increasing expenditures. As a result, they were often unable to pay for the treatments. Bihar Panchayat Nagar

Prarambhik Shikshak Sangh (BPNPSS), a teacher’s association in East Champaran, believes that timely salaries could have prevented some deaths. The delay in salaries is typical and a delay of two months is quite common for both regular and contractual teachers. The association’s president, Amardeep Kumar, told 101Reporters, “Most of them are contractual teachers who died owing to a financial crunch. They were deprived of their salaries for four months, and hence they did not opt for the best medical services. “As per the allotment re-

ceived, the salary was paid for November, December (2020) and January (2021) -- about 80 per cent of salary was received for the latter. Teachers were without payments between February and May 2021.” Praful Kumar Mishra, District Programme Officer (Establishment) of the education department in East Champaran, confirmed the delay in salaries. “We process the payment as soon as the allotment arrives. The pending salaries have been paid towards the end of May,” he said. Teachers have confirmed that they have now received their salaries but for many families, it is too late. “Due to lack of money, my husband ignored going to the doctor and preferred to take medicines prescribed by the chemist,” said Savita Kumari, 42, about Ramesh Sah, a government teacher in West Champaran. “But his health deteriorated suddenly and he had to be admitted to GMCH on May 1. He passed away the following day before he could even be tested,” she says.

WHO approval not enough for Chinese Covid vaccines

BEIJING

CHINA has developed two Covid-19 vaccines that have been approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO). These are Sinovac and Sinopharm. China has pursued an aggressive vaccine diplomacy with jab donations and exports to about 80 countries. However, even after supplying Covid-19 vaccines to so many countries, its jabs have not been a confidence booster in many nations in their fight against the coronavirus pandemic, which incidentally spread from China to the rest of the world. Concern over Chinese vaccines has grown in recent weeks. A spike in Covid-19 cases in Seychelles made global news in May. The country had the highest vaccination cover in the world with a majority of its population having received one jab or the other. A majority of those vaccinated had received the Chinese vaccine Sinopharm. Its government had said in early May that 37 per cent of



fresh infections were breakthrough cases — Covid-19 among vaccinated people. Since then, countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Philippines have expressed concerns over the approval granted to Chinese vaccines and their efficacy. In fact, in early May, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte had apologised for taking Sinopharm vaccine in the face of public criticism for promoting an

unapproved vaccine. A South China Morning Post report from May-end said Filipinos don’t want a Covid-19 vaccine, particularly a Chinese one, due to safety and efficacy concerns. However, the most serious doubts over Chinese vaccines were expressed by Saudi Arabia, which is among the countries that have not approved Sinovac and Sinopharm vaccines. India, too, has not opened up to Chinese vaccines.

TODAY's QUOTE

Govt has taken big step to bring farm laws

“All political parties of the country wanted to bring the farm laws, but they could not gather courage to bring them. Modi government took this big step in the interest of farmers and brought reforms. Farmers got benefit of that in several parts of the country.”


— Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister



NEW IT RULE

Twitter to appoint chief compliance officer

Twitter have written to the government that it is in advanced stages of finalising chief compliance officer as per the new IT rules and additional details will be submitted within a week. Twitter said that is making all efforts to comply with the new guidelines, but has been unable to do so because of Covid-19

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	73.68	South	
Euro	89.77	African Rand	6.18
UAE Dirham	20.45	Hong Kong Dollar	10.81
Thai Baht	2.57	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.47	New Zealand Dollar	53.04
Australian Dollar	57.05	Saudi Riyal	21.38
Canadian Dollar	60.92	Swedish Krona	10.15
Swiss Franc	82.19	Singapore Dollar	56.21

DELHI THURSDAY 10 JUNE 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Bookings open for Hyundai Alcazar

Hyundai Motor India Ltd has announced the commencement of bookings for its upcoming six and seven-seater premium SUV- Hyundai Alcazar. The company is accepting bookings at Hyundai dealerships and on its online car buying platform. Hyundai Alcazar comes with a host of features such as voice enabled smart panoramic sun-roof, second row one touch tip and tumble seats. Tarun Garg, Director, Sales, Marketing and Service, Hyundai Motor India Ltd, said: “Hyundai has had a remarkable 25-year journey of excellence in India. Over the years, we have captivated the dreams and aspirations of customers with benchmark products. We are pleased to open the bookings for Hyundai Alcazar, our premium six and seven seater SUV that will offer our customers quality time, making travelling together a more memorable and fun experience.”

Orientbell's new range

Orientbell Tiles has launched new designs in its Forever tiles range for the southern markets. The range comes with a specially formulated high resistance coating which is rated eight on the Mohs scale of hardness. Compared to other competing products, the finish on these tiles does not get affected even under heavy use or dragging heavy objects on them. These tiles can be used at homes or offices and even at airports, hospitals, schools, and similar high traffic areas prone to rough use. “New colours and designs have been introduced in the southern markets, keeping in mind the changing tastes of customers there. Everyone cares for their health, which makes this range with germ free features, an ideal choice to make their homes a safe space.” Alok Agarwal, Chief Marketing Officer, Orientbell Tiles

Karix's solution for Axis bank

Karix Mobile, a wholly owned subsidiary of Tanla Platforms, has announced the deployment of a conversational banking solution called WhatsApp Business for Axis Bank. The Banks customers can use the solution and start a WhatsApp chat with the bank to conduct frequent banking activities on-the-go. A gamut of financial services both transactional and informational - such as checking account balance, checking of credit card bill amount, knowing nearest branch or ATM location. “We are committed to develop solutions, from digitising the account opening process to serving the customer throughout the lifecycle with omni channel communication. Our obsession with improving customer experience has led to some path-breaking innovations in the cloud communications space for the banking industry,” said Deepak Goyal, Chief Business Officer, Tanla Platforms.

TTK Prestige unveils stove

TTK Prestige has unveiled the Svachh glass top gas stove in Hyderabad. The product with an easy clean design serves women who are frustrated with difficulty in cleaning the gas stove after use. The stove has innovative liftable burners fixed on a hinge with one arm. These burners can be easily lifted to clean, as there are no complex mechanisms involved. Chandru Kalro, Managing Director of TTK Prestige, said: “The gas stoves have not seen an innovation like this in several decades. As a market leader in the kitchen appliances space, we are pleased to introduce this revolutionary gas stove in the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana market.”

Covid takes toll on airports

Maintaining airport infrastructure a big financial challenge during these trying times, says APAO report

KUMUD DAS
MUMBAI

AIRPORT operators in India have suffered catastrophically from the ongoing Covid-19 outbreak in terms of its traffic base, revenues, and cash balance from March last year.

While the 1st wave of the pandemic had already wiped out traffic in FY21 denting the financials of the airports, the onset of the 2nd wave of Covid-19 has further compounded the crisis as domestic passenger traffic has dropped to less than 18- 25 per cent of pre-Covid levels.

Furthermore, international traffic, which is invariably the high yield segment for airports, has been suspended for the last 14 months (International traffic has dropped to 5-10 per cent of pre-Covid levels!) and there are no signs of restart of scheduled operations in near future, a report by Association of Private Airport Operators (APAO), an industry body of private airports in India, says.

In addition to this, the looming threat of the 3rd wave, which has

AVIATION ACHE	
● There are no signs of restart of scheduled operations in near future, a report by APAO	● Because there are very few flights taking off, so is the worsening revenue earning of airports
● A muted traffic recovery even in FY22 and the traffic will barely reach the FY21 level	● Airports are asset intensive businesses with high sunk costs

been predicted to be inevitable by many experts including government bodies, indicates a muted traffic recovery even in FY22 and the traffic will barely reach the FY21 level, which itself was not adequate for financial survival of airports, it added.

Talking to Bizz Buzz Jitendra Bhargava, an aviation expert, said, “So far, the govt hasn’t extended any support to the airport. Airports are getting low revenue from aeronautical side as there are very few flights taking off. They are not getting enough bob-aeronautical revenue as no visitor is coming at airport.”

GS Bawa, another aviation expert, says, “Airports and airlines both are linked to each other. Because there are very few flights taking off, so is the worsening revenue earning of airports. Govt should

provide all the support possible so as to ensure that flights resume and airports become operational in a full-fledged manner as early as possible.”

Airports are asset intensive businesses with high sunk costs, disproportionate to the revenues generated and having long gestation periods.

Airports have to incur fixed costs for maintaining and operating airport infrastructure such as runways, taxiways, apron, parking bays, and terminal buildings etc. In airports, of the total costs incurred, 80-85 per cent of it is fixed costs.

So, while on one side revenues have dried up, on the other hand airports have to continue incurring high fixed costs.

Due to Covid-19, airports had to incur additional operating expenses as well as additional opera-

tional capex due to re-designing of infrastructure and SOPs for containment of Covid-19 and for processing of passengers in a safe and convenient manner.

Airports are not generating sufficient cash flows to sustain operations, and meet debt obligations. Poor cash flows and consequently downgraded credit ratings have made it impossible for airports to take further financing support from financial institutions, the report said.

As per the forecasts by international agencies, the global passenger traffic will not return to pre Covid-19 levels until 2023-24.

As per the rating agency ICRA, the airports in India are expected to witness a decline in operating income by 61 per cent to Rs 8,400 crore while reporting an operating loss of around Rs 1,700 crore (-20 per cent margin) and a net loss of Rs 5,400 crore (-64 per cent margin) in FY21. The overall cash loss for the sector is estimated at around Rs 3,500 crore in FY21, impacted by a 66 year-on-year slip in passenger traffic amid Covid-19 induced travel restrictions.

As the cash flow situation is precarious, airports have been requesting the government amidst an extremely challenging environment to provide some relief measures to the airport operators which will directly alleviate the financial burden for airports. Relief measures are required not only to ensure sustaining operations at airports, but also needed to save jobs and allow economic recovery of the airport sector.

Bitcoin legal tender in El Salvador now



SAN SALVADOR

El Salvador President Nayib Bukele on Wednesday announced that the country has approved the bill to make Bitcoin cryptocurrency a legal tender in the Central American country. The Central American country is now the first country in the world to make Bitcoin legal tender. “The #BitcoinLaw has been approved by a supermajority in the Salvadoran Congress. 62 out of 84 votes! History!,” tweeted Bukele.

Bukele on June 5 announced the move in a pre-recorded message played at the Bitcoin 2021 conference in Miami, Florida, during a presentation hosted by Jack Mallers, founder digital wallet company Strike. “In the short term, this will generate jobs and help provide financial inclusion to thousands outside the formal economy,” the President had said. Mallers said he has been working with Bukele to determine the logistics of the move. “Over 70 per cent of the active population of El Salvador doesn’t have a bank account. They’re not in the financial system,” Mallers said during the presentation.

Profit-booking erodes early gains on weak global cues

Sensex slumps 334 pts, Nifty drops 105 pts

MUMBAI

DOMESTIC markets surrendered early gains to finish deep in the red on Wednesday as profit-booking emerged in Reliance Industries, banking and infra stocks amid a weak trend in global equities.

Concerns over frothy valuations and a depreciating rupee also sapped investor confidence, traders said. After a firm opening, the 30-share BSE Sensex suddenly succumbed to selling pressure in mid-afternoon trade. It finally closed 333.93 points or 0.64 per cent lower at 51,941.64, extending its losing streak to the second session.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty slumped 104.75 points or 0.67 per cent to end at 15,635.35. L&T was the top loser among the Sensex companies, shedding 1.80 per cent, followed by Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, SBI, Maruti, Axis Bank and Bajaj Auto. On the other hand, PowerGrid, NTPC, Titan, HCL Tech and Asian Paints were among the gainers, spurring up to 3.42 per cent.

“Domestic equities fell sharply as selling pressure in financials, auto and RIL dragged indices down,” said Binod Modi, Head - Strategy at Reliance Securities. Further, Asian

markets traded weak, reacting on higher-than-expected jump in China’s producer price index at 9 per cent for May, he added.

“Global investors remained cautious ahead of European Central Bank (ECB) policy decision and US inflation data to be released on Thursday. ECB is expected to continue its bond-buying policy to support a recovering economy.” And US inflation is forecasted to be high but transitory. Both these factors, if in line, will provide comfort to the market,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. Sector-wise, BSE energy, oil and gas, realty, capital goods, industrials and auto indices fell up to 1.71 per cent, while utilities, power and consumer durables closed higher. Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices fell up to 0.95 per cent.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong closed in the red, while Shanghai ended with gains. Equities in Europe were also trading on a negative note in mid-session deals. International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.36 per cent higher at 72.48 per barrel. The rupee declined by 8 paise to end at 72.97 against the US currency on Wednesday in its second straight day of losses.

Study supports favipiravir's safety: Glenmark

HYDERABAD

PHARMA major Glenmark Pharmaceuticals said interim data from its post marketing surveillance study on anti-viral drug favipiravir in India supports its safety and effectiveness in real world settings with no new safety concerns for Covid-19 patients. The study commenced in July 2020, aimed to evaluate safety and efficacy of favipiravir in mild to moderate Covid-19 patients. As on date, a total of 1,083 patients have been enrolled in the prospective, open label, multi-center, single arm study, Glenmark said.

A total of 13 sites across Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Nashik, Nagpur and Trivandrum took part in the study, it added.

Interim data presented by the company to the regulator reveals no new safety signals or concerns with the use of favipiravir and already-known side effects which were found to be mild in nature, the filing said. The time to fever resolution was seen on day 3, while two-thirds of the patients achieved clinical cure on day 7.

Petroleum Minister inaugurates CBG station

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

DHARMENDRA Pradhan, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel, has inaugurated the compressed bio-gas (CBG) station of IndianOil Corporation (IOCL) in Hyderabad through virtual mode and dedicated it to the nation along with two more from Karnataka and Punjab.

Minster has also launched “SATAT - Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation” website aimed at providing a developmental effort that would benefit both vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.

MoU has been signed among PSU oil marketing companies IndianOil, HPCL, BPCL, GAIL and Bhagyanagar Gas Limited on cooperating each

other and supporting the potential entrepreneurs to set up compressed bio-gas production plants and make available CBG in the market for use in automotive fuels. “This CBG is compatible for all CNG vehicles as a perfect alternative to CNG with much promising benefits like good mileage and environmentally friendly too,” said R S S Rao, Executive Director and State Head, TS & AP, IOCL.

Along with the Minister, top officials from ministry of PNG & Steel, Chairman of IOCL S M Vaidhya, Chairman of HPCL, Chairman of BPCL, Sr VP GAIL and MD, BGL, were present among others through a virtual mode. IOCL CGM Retail Sales (TAPSO) Anil Kumar also participated in the event from Hyderabad along with K S Venu Gopal, Divisional Sales Head of Secunderabad Divisional Office.

CoE on industry 4.0 tech at VSP soon

To have India's first 3D lab with 12 leading technology cos joining to promote innovation culture among the youth

SANTOSH PATNAIK
VISAKHAPATNAM

A Centre of Excellence (CoE) on industry 4.0 technology being set up by Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), an autonomous society under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in 1991 to promote software exports, is expected to be operational at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant by month-end.

“It will have India’s first 3D lab with participation from 12 leading technology players to promote innovation culture among the youngsters,” STPI Joint Director MP Dubey told Bizz Buzz on Wednesday.

He said the startup ecosystem would get a big boost in Andhra Pradesh with the CoE providing huge opportunities for the prospective entrepreneurs to make a difference in



society. Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, the corporate entity of VSP has already earmarked space for the centre in one of its buildings at Ukkunagaram, the township of India’s first shore-based integrated steel plant.

Industry 4.0 is based on disruptive technologies that include industrial Internet of Things, horizontal and vertical system integration, additive manufacturing involving 3D printing technology, augmented reality, autonomous robotics, cyber security and big data and analytics.

STPI is also involved in encouraging startup incubation and innovation by associating with Indian Institute of Management-Visakhapatnam, AP Innovation Society and Bhagavatula Charitable Trust, a voluntary organisation working for empowerment of rural people in Yamalanchili area.

Dubey said Visakhapatnam had emerged as an excellent place for growth of IT and IT enabled services (ITES). He said the city bagged highest number of seats in the country in the India BPO Promotion Scheme.

Omkar Rai, Director General of STPI, during the 30th foundation day of STPI, recently said that they would establish 12 CoEs across the country in health tech, big data, efficiency augmentation and other emerging technologies. The centre at Visakhapatnam is one among the 12 an-

Indian football team should fight like bees do: Captain Chhetri

DOHA

INDIA captain Sunil Chhetri says that "giving everything on the pitch" should be the motto of his team going forward. India, who defeated Bangladesh 2-0 in the FIFA World Cup 2022 and AFC Asian Cup 2023 qualifier match here on Monday, will take on Afghanistan on June 15 in their last Group E assignment here. "I tell the boys to just turn up and give everything on the pitch, and then you will take whatever result comes...you might not get as many moments of individual brilliance and technical play like through balls, but if we can fight like how bees fight by coming together, that's the foundation," said the 36-year-old striker.

"The opponent should think that we will be annoying and fighting and defending as a team; and that is the first step. Slowly, other things will come from there."

India have six points from seven matches and are placed third in the group. They have lost

three matches and three games have ended in draws. Qatar, as on Wednesday, lead Group E with 22 points from eight matches, thanks to their seven wins. Oman have 12 points from six matches and are second.



India are only fighting to qualify for the Asian Cup 2023, as they are out of contention for the 2022 World Cup.

Chhetri, who has now taken his international tally of goals to 74 in 117 matches, spoke about the virtues of playing more passes.

"We want to see more passing, as it would mean running less and more one vs one situations. The way forward is to keep the ball more and look to increase the number of passes and organised attacks," opined the striker.

Chhetri, who made his debut against Pakistan in 2005, said he tells youngsters to focus on fitness.

"Doing the right exercises, avoiding the wrong kind of food, taking good sleep -- all these are easy and that is why I demand high fitness." (IANS)

India have better record than NZ away from home in WTC

SOUTHAMPTON

INDIA and New Zealand may be playing at a neutral venue, but it is Virat Kohli's side that has shown dominance away from home winning two out of the three series they have played overseas in the run-up to World Test Championship (WTC) final. In contrast, New Zealand's run comprises only series wins at home with both their overseas tours in the run-up to WTC final yielding no success for them.

The Kiwis have played five series in the 2019-2021 WTC period and won three series at home against India, Pakistan and West Indies which saw them enter the final on the basis of percentage of points.

However, the second-placed team on WTC points table had started the WTC campaign on a poor note. The Kane Williamson-led side was held to a 1-1 draw in Sri Lanka in 2019 while they were thrashed 0-3 in Australia during the 2019-20 season.

India, on the other hand, began



their WTC final campaign in 2019 on a rousing note, thrashing West Indies in the Caribbean and earning 100 percent of the points available. They then swept series against touring South Africans and Sri Lankans at home the same year, beating the Proteas 3-0 and Bangladesh 2-0 while earning 100 percent of points available in both the series.

Virat Kohli's men then lost a two-Test series in New Zealand 0-2 in early 2020, before Covid-19 pandemic put a hold on their

cricketing activities.

The Test series in Australia was crucial as they needed to win to enter the final. They managed to bounce back from a thrashing in first Test and went on to win the series 2-1 and register their spot in the final.

The only thing going for the Kiwis are the conditions which are said to be similar to those in New Zealand. Former cricketers like Brett Lee, Glenn Turner among others have said the conditions in England will suit the

Kiwis more and that may give them the edge.

But as far as the overseas record goes, India has been doing better than New Zealand in the lead-up to the final which will be played in Southampton from June 18. New Zealand leg-spinner Ish Sodhi had said this week that winning in Australia alone will set this side Kiwis apart from the other great sides produced by the country.

"The fact that we have been able to rise above a lot of phenomenal cricket teams of this era and are in WTC final is great. Reaching and winning WTC final will be great. But it will be great to one day go to Australia and compete, and compete to win," he said on The Grade Cricketer show on Youtube.

"That is what will set aside this era's New Zealand side from New Zealand sides of other great era even though in terms of win percentage we have been the most successful," said the leg-spinner who will play for Worcestershire in the T20 Blast. (IANS)

French Open: Maria beats Iga, sets up semi-finals clash with Barbora

LONDON

DEFENDING champion Iga Swiatek was sent packing from the French Open by Greek world No.18 Maria Sakkari, who stunned the 20-year-old Polish star 6-4, 6-4 and set up a semi-final clash against Czech Republic's Barbora Krejickova.

World No.33 Barbora ended American teenager Coco Gauff's hopes of reaching her maiden Grand Slam semi-final with a 7-6 (8-6), 6-3 victory.

Maria, who is now the highest-ranked player in the field, is just two wins away from a historic maiden Grand Slam singles title for a Greek woman. A win at the end of the week could also propel her into the top 10. Iga was on a winning streak of 11 matches and 22 sets at the Roland Garros, but a right thigh strain seemed to be bothering her all through the match against Maria.

Coco had been in great form on clay and cruised to her maiden Grand Slam quarter-final with ease but on Wednesday she was unable to take any of the five set points in the opening set and simply faded away.

The 17-year-old led 3-0 and 5-3 in the opening set, as well as 6-4 in the tie-break, but each time Barbora clawed back.

The disappointment after the missed set-points for Coco was evident as she made a poor start to the second set. Coco's pent-up frustration came to the fore when she smashed her racquet after a double fault that left her 4-0 behind. (IANS)

Ethiopian Gidey breaks 10,000m world record

HENGLO (THE NETHERLANDS)

ETHIOPIA'S Letesenbet Gidey clocked 29 minutes 01.3 seconds to break the women's 10,000-metre world record by five seconds during the Ethiopian athletics trials here on Tuesday night. "I expected to run a world record. I would like to try to break the 29-minute [barrier] in 10,000m in future," the 23 years old said in the post-race interaction. Last year, Letesenbet set a world 5000m record of 14 minutes 06.62 seconds. The Ethiopian is the first woman to hold both the 5000m and 10,000m world records since Norway's Ingrid Kristiansen who held both the records from 1986 to 1993.

On Sunday, Dutch distance star Sifan Hassan had clocked a world 10,000m record of 29:06.82 on the same track in Hengelo. The



Ethiopian Athletics Federation is holding national selection trials in the Netherlands to select a team for the Tokyo Olympic Games starting July 23.

Trials were held in distances ranging from 800m to 10,000m, including the steeplechase.

But the women's 10,000m race was the highlight of the selection trials. Letesenbet set out at scorching pace passing the first 2000m in 5 minutes 54 seconds and 3000m in 8 minutes 50 seconds. She reached the half-way mark in about

14 minutes and 42 seconds.

She pushed the pace further in the next five laps to clock 20 minutes 32 seconds for 7000m. At the bell, she was a couple of seconds inside 28 minutes, and ran a final lap of about 68 seconds to set a world record of 29 minutes 01.03 seconds. Tsigie Gebreselama, who clocked 30 minutes 06.01 seconds, was second while Tsehaye Gemechu was third in 30 minutes 19.29 seconds. The women's 5000m was won by Gudaf Tsegay in 14 minutes 13.32 seconds.

Steeplechase specialist Getnet Wale won the men's 5000m event in 12:53.28 while Selemon Barega won a close men's 10,000m, clocking 26 minutes 49.51 seconds against 26 minutes 49.73 seconds by Yomif Kejelcha. Freweyni Hailu won the women's 1500m in a world-leading time of 3 minutes 57.33 seconds. (IANS)

Minor injury forces wrestler Punia to pull out of Poland Open

NAVNEET SINGH
NEW DELHI

OLYMPIC Games bound freestyle wrestler Deepak Punia has pulled out of Poland Open Ranking Series in Warsaw due to minor injury that resurfaced prior to his bout, said a Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) official on Wednesday.

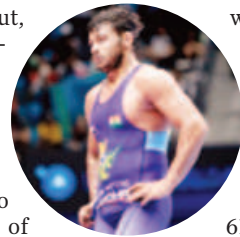
Punia was directly seeded into quarterfinals was scheduled to face Zahid Valencia of America.

"Punia who was carrying a niggle in the left hand withdrew from the men's 86kg freestyle event at the eleventh hour as there was possibility of injury being aggravating during the bout," WFI assistant secretary Vinod Tomar told IANS.

"Team coach Jagminder Singh was of the opinion that it would-

n't be wise to compete with injury in the ranking series as the Olympics are around the corner," he said.

The Poland Ranking Series got underway on Monday and will conclude on Sunday.



Ravi Kumar Dahiya, who has qualified for the Olympics in the men's 57kg freestyle, defeated Abdullaev Gulomjon of Uzbekistan 10-1 in the first round of the 61kg. He will face Asharov Adian of Kazakhstan in the second round. India's Anshu Malik (57 kg) and Vinesh Phogat (53 kg) will compete in the women's freestyle event.

After the ranking series, Indian team will also attend a coaching camp in Warsaw. The Indian team would return in the first week of July. (IANS)

Williamson to miss 2nd Test due to elbow niggle, likely to return for WTC final

BIRMINGHAM

SKIPPER Kane Williamson will miss New Zealand's second Test against England that begins here at Edgbaston on Thursday. "Captain Kane Williamson will miss the second Test of the BLACKCAPS Tour of England as he rests his irritated left-elbow," said a statement from New Zealand Cricket (NZC). Williamson has been managing the injury since March when he missed the limited-overs home series against Bangladesh and also the first few matches of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021. "It is not an easy decision for Kane to have to miss a Test, but we think it is the right one," said coach Gary Stead. "He has had an injection in his elbow to relieve the irritation he has been experiencing when he bats and a period of rest and rehabilitation will help maximise his recovery," added

Stead in the statement from NZC.

Stead, however, said that Williamson will be ready for the World Test Championship (WTC) final against India that gets underway on June 18 at Southampton. "The decision has been made very much with the ICC World Test Championship Final at Southampton in mind and we are confident he will be ready for that match starting on June 18," he said. Tom Latham will captain the side for the third time in Williamson's absence, while Will Young comes into the starting XI and will bat at No. 3, which is the position where the Kiwis skipper bats.

Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner has already been ruled out of the second Test and New Zealand are looking to rest some of their key frontline bowlers for the WTC final. Left-arm pace bowler Trent Boult will, however, play. (IANS)

Olympic hockey opener will set momentum: Forward Ramandeep

BENGALURU

Experienced India hockey forward Ramandeep Singh said on Wednesday that a good showing in the opening match at the Tokyo Olympic Games will give the team the "right momentum". The Indian men's team will begin their campaign in Tokyo on July 24, against New Zealand in a first round-robin match.

"To gain the right momentum, it will be important to begin well. A lot will depend on how we fare in the first match. A good result against New Zealand will set the momentum for the rest of the tournament," said the 28-year-old Ramandeep, who was a member of India's gold medal-winning team at the 2014 Incheon Asian Games.

The men's team is grouped in Pool A along with reigning Olympic champions Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, and hosts Japan.

Ramandeep said the coaching staff at the national camp at the Sports Authority of India centre here was replicating the "atmosphere of international competitions" and the squad

was "playing internal matches as part of the team's selection process".

"We are replicating the Olympic schedule. Three teams with different combinations from within the Olympic core group have been formed and the coaching staff has created an atmosphere that is similar to what it would be like at the Olympics," said Ramandeep.

"We wear the Indian kit, we get ready as though we are facing a tough international opponent, we do team activation (pre-match drills) just like we would before an international game and we also line up for the national anthem before the start of the match."

Ramandeep said missing international matches due to Covid is being made up by other means.



"We are paying attention on recovery when we have back-to-back matches and so on. Though we missed out on travelling for international matches due to the pandemic, I feel this exercise of playing internal matches is bringing out the match mentality," he said.

Ramandeep was part of the team that played in Europe earlier this year but suffered a cut on his hand that forced him out of the tour after the first game against Germany. "I ended up missing the Argentina tour. But now I feel I am in good nick," he said. "I had an ankle injury. But mid 2019 onwards I have been doing well and I believe I have returned to my old form." (IANS)

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