

SHORT TAKES

DEMAND FOR
EX GRATIA FOR
COVID WARRIORSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

Ex gratia for all Covid-19 warriors must be released by the state government, the Healthcare Reforms Association demanded on Monday. Doctors, nurses and paramedical staff attended the meeting, demanding that a government order on the matter must be released within 48 hours. They have also demanded free treatment for all healthcare workers in hospitals of their choice. To protest against the apathy of government black badges will be worn by healthcare staff in Telangana state. They have also decided to organise a candle march at 7 pm in solidarity with Coronavirus warriors.

FIVE TEMPLE
EMPLOYEES TEST
COVID POSITIVE

Hyderabad, Aug. 24: Five staff members of the Laxminarasimha Swamy temple in Dharmapuri tested positive for Covid-19, prompting the authorities to shut down the temple for five days from Monday, till August 28.

Two priests, a sweeper and two others were infected. Depending on the situation, the authorities will agree to reopen it on August 29.

Temple executive officer Srinivas, in a statement said that a number of positive cases have been registered in temple town and surrounding villages in the past few days.

While five temple staff tested positive, the others were worried about their safety, he said, adding that the decision to shut down the temple was taken to allow testing of other staff.

The shrine had remained closed for about two months from the first week of April following the lockdown to check the spread of coronavirus. It reopened on 8 June with the government of the Union granting permission to open places of worship.

— INN

COPS FACILITATE
TRANSPORTATION
OF ORGANSDC CORRESPONDENTS
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

The traffic police of Hyderabad and Cyberabad facilitated transportation of three live organs from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Shamshabad to KIMS Hospital in Begumpet in a span of 30 minutes.

Two kidneys and a liver arrived at the RGIA on Monday morning in a flight from Kolkata. In coordination with the Cyberabad traffic police, the city traffic police formed a green channel for 36.8 km for the medical team carrying the live organs to reach the hospital.

The Hyderabad traffic police have facilitated live organ transportation five times since January this year.

The lungs, donated by the family of a patient who was declared brain dead in Kolkata, were transplanted into a 36-year-old patient. The state Jeevandan, Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation and doctors of KIMS Hospital and Institute of Neuro Sciences in Kolkata facilitated the transplant effort. The patient was suffering from lung fibrosis and was in the end state. He was placed on the nationwide waiting list of patients waiting for a donor. The match of the recipient and the donor allowed the transplant to happen.

This is for the first time that an organ has been brought from West Bengal for transplant to a hospital in Telangana state, according to sources.

Quick decisions, awareness drive gave results: Anjani

DC INTERVIEW

Responding to the challenges thrown by the Coronavirus pandemic, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar undertook several initiatives to ensure the city emerged victorious. In an interview to Chandra Vardhan, Kumar spoke about the nature and magnitude of the challenges.

It must have been a challenge to implement a lockdown to contain the spread of the virus. How did you go about it?

It was an unprecedented situation faced by any police organisation in the world. Hyderabad, the fourth largest city in India and an emerging global megapolis, has its own uniqueness. Our challenges were greater, more complex. We had a series of meetings, briefings, wireless conferences, teleconferences and videoconferences to ensure every constable and officer were on the same page. I told everyone the situation is like World War III, a war against Covid-19, which has affected over 180 countries. They realised the

uphill task, took up gigantic targets and ensured massive mobilisation needed.

How did the lockdown start and pan out?

In our first meeting Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao drew up an action plan and expressed his expectations from each and every wing of the administration – health, GHMC, police and others. Telangana was the first state to initiate a lockdown. The Hyderabad city police stepped out on the roads immediately to enforce janata curfew and other containment measures. The results were visible. Our initial Covid-19 infections were much less than other cities in India, though we have a population of about one crore.

How did you motivate your force during the crisis?

Initially, we motivated our 12,000-plus police personnel. We then worked on getting support from the



Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar

community. We went to every lane and spoke to residents. We assured them that we are with citizens round the clock. Our constables and officers were seen managing roads day and night. When the entire population was locked down inside houses, our brave people were out at odd hours. Every night, at around 1 to 2 am while returning home, I would stop at places to talk to and motivate our officers. We celebrated birthdays on the roads, greeted colleagues on their anniver-

saries from roads. It developed a great bonding with families. A senior Central government official called me to say never in the past 50 years was the image of police so high. We felt proud of our uniforms.

What were the initial hiccups?

At short notice, we deployed security personnel at places where none of us had any training or experience. We were asked to provide security to Covid-19 wards at Gandhi Hospital. We had to moti-

IN OUR first meeting, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao drew up an action plan and expressed his expectations from each and every wing of the administration.

vate our officers to enter Covid-19 wards at short notice wearing PPEs. I salute my men who were prepared both physically and mentally for long duty hours inside the Covid-19 wards. Then came the identification of those coming from other cities and countries. Passengers of every aircraft and train were screened and analysed. Within the first few days, we checked over 15,000 people.

Movement of essential goods is equally important during the lockdown. Special teams were set up for this purpose. The CM was monitoring everything and taking regular feedback. His proactive leadership was a great source of encouragement.

Creating awareness about the virus was a huge

task. Helmets shaped like the Coronavirus were effective. I got messages on social media on the helmet campaign. The city police organised a card campaign by almost 900 students from Classes II to VII. Children prepared cards to show appreciation and gratitude for both police and medical departments.

How was the coordination done at the field level?

A Covid-19 Control Room was established headed by a joint commissioner of police, with a team of 35. They ensured movement of every lorry, van, autorickshaw for distribution of vegetable, milk, groceries and other essentials was smooth. We had to strike a balance between enforcing lockdown while allowing movement of essential goods.

You are known to be tough. As it was not a general law and order concern, what approach did you adopt in tackling the crisis?

Hyderabad is a hub of infrastructure activities.

Over two lakh guest workers from far-off states work here. Inspired by the CM's philosophy that guest workers are partners in economic development, it became our responsibility to look after them as a 'mool mantra'. We organised food and basic medicines for guest workers. Many donors, philanthropists and NGOs helped us in this. We adopted a humane approach as the crisis was of a different nature and magnitude.

We moved beyond policing duties. There were numerous cases where police personnel shifted pregnant women to hospitals in police vehicles when ambulances could not reach in time. The additional CP (crime), a lady officer, was coordinating this vertical. Fear of an imminent threat unites us. We are proud our teams and our citizens responded so positively. I have been a basketball player and a great fan of the game. I often remember a quote from Michael Jordan, "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships".

282T of Covid-19
waste cleared

Biomedical waste treated at 11 facilities

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

Telangana state has generated 281.8 tonnes of Covid-19 related biomedical waste so far, which has been treated and disposed at 11 biomedical waste treatment facilities, the Pollution Control Board (PCB) has said. On an average, since March 19 till August 18, the state was generating 1,842 tonnes of such biomedical waste. PCB officials, who revealed this information, were briefing forests and environment minister A. Indrakaran Reddy on pollution control measures and steps being taken on this front, at a meeting here on Monday.

The minister, after the meeting, launched the TSAIR app, for both Android and Apple devices, that can be downloaded from the respective app stores. The minister said people can check the ambient air quality levels at their locations. People can lodge complaints, upload photographs using the app, Indrakaran Reddy said.

He instructed officials of the PCB to provide live updates on the details of biomedical wastes collected from Covid-19 care facilities.

This information should include the amount of waste collected, and which treatment and disposal facility the material has been shifted to for disposal.

Any hospital that does not follow biomedical

TS reports 1,842
new Covid casesKANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

The number of tests fell to 36,282 on Sunday, from more than 40,000 in the previous two days, according to data released by the health department in its Covid-19 bulletin on Monday. A total of 9,68,121 tests have been carried out so far.

There were 1,842 new cases and six deaths recorded in the state on August 23, taking the total to 1,06,091 and 761 deaths. Active cases are at 22,919 and those under treatment in home isolation are 16,482.

The number of active cases continue to be high as prolonged treatment is required. Besides, many patients are still coming very late to the hospitals. In districts there are certain underprivileged communities have been unable to go to hospitals as they have no money for transport and or to buy medicines. These people are not coming forward at

all and their homes are having more than two cases.

Districts continue to reel under the burden of high infection rate. Testing is being done only for those who are able to make it to hospitals.

Karimnagar again saw a rise of 134 cases, Nizamabad 158, Suryapet 113, Ranga Reddy 109 and the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation 373 cases. The non-GHMC areas recorded 1,469 cases.

While the government helpline and numbers are available, people are still having problems finding testing centres as also their timings. Those who fall sick at night and have to rush to hospital are finding it difficult to get admission. That is leading to confusion, anger and also loss of precious time.

There is still a gap noted in information spread due to which these problems are occurring at the ground level.

control norms.

"There is also a need for a comprehensive long-term pollution control and mitigation plan for the city of Hyderabad," he said.

Fugitive tests +ve, arrested

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA
T. | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

A 30-year-old remand prisoner who escaped from the isolation ward at the Osmania General Hospital by jumping from the second floor early on Monday morning was caught by the Afzalgunj police in the evening. He had fractured his leg while escaping.

His Covid-19 test returned positive after the pris-

oner escaped. He has now been admitted to Gandhi Hospital for treatment.

According to the Afzalgunj police, the accused, 30, a resident of Suryodaya Colony in LB Nagar, was arrested by the Alwal police for alleged theft and was lodged at the Cherlapally prison. As he had symptoms of Covid-19, he was admitted to OGH on August 21. He escaped at about 4 am on Monday.

The escort police who noticed his escape lodged a complaint, and he was traced to Chaitanya Nursing Home at Ibrahimpatnam, where he went to get treatment for his fractured leg, said the police.

Afzalgunj inspector M. Ravindar Reddy said, "The team took necessary precautions as we learned that the Covid-19 test turned positive. He was brought in an ambulance and the police wore PPE kits."

See you next year



A girl whispers a wish to Lord Ganesh while bidding goodbye before the idol was immersed in Hussainsagar on the third day of Ganesh Chaturthi festival celebrations in Hyderabad on Monday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

E-CLASSES IN
SCHOOLS TO
START SEPT. 1DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

Online classes in all schools in Telangana state will begin on September 1, the education department announced on Monday. The department said the decision to allow online classes as part of e-learning and distance education formats, will use various digital, TV and V-Sat platforms.

No decision has been taken yet on reopening of schools and recommencement of regular classes. Separate instructions will be issued as per Central guidelines on this. Until then, all schools and other educational institutions shall remain physically closed for students, the department said. All teachers have been instructed to attend schools regularly from August 27 and prepare e-content, and lesson plans. In its orders on restarting of classes, the department said the Director of School Education (DSE) has been instructed to follow an alternative calendar prepared by the SCERT. The DSE has also been instructed to issue detailed guidelines on this front.

Owaisi plans bill against
facial recognition techATHER MOIN I DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, the Hyderabad MP, is contemplating introducing a private member bill in the ensuing session of Parliament proposing a ban on face recognition and remote biometric surveillance.

In a series of posts on his Twitter handle, Owaisi said the Supreme Court's Puttaswamy judgment had stated very clearly that privacy is a fundamental right. "There's a huge risk when our personal information is used without our consent. Most importantly, facial recognition technology is unreliable and biased," he said.

Owaisi pointed out that such technology can record and use the gait to identify the person. Face recognition technology is inaccurate in identifying dark people, women, persons with disabilities and young people, he said.

Owaisi said: "accuracy of these technologies depends on the database. These databases are themselves riddled with bias. For example, a database of arrested people will obviously have an over-representation of SCs, STs & Muslims. Such technology

HOW LONG WILL MUSLIMS BE SLAVES
OF CONGRESS, MIM CHIEF ASKS AZADDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, rubbing salt into senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's wounds, asked for how long will Muslims remain slaves of the Congress. He described Azad's offer to resign from the party over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's reported remarks about "collusion with the BJP" as 'poetic justice'.

Owaisi was reacting to media reports that Rahul Gandhi had accused the 23 Congress leaders who wrote to Congress president Sonia Gandhi asking to overhaul the party

structure of "colluding" with the BJP. In an apparent reference to Rahul Gandhi, Owaisi said that anyone opposing "janeudhari leadership will be branded B-team (of the BJP)". He said Azad used to refer to the MIM as the B-team of the BJP. "Now you're reaccused of the same," he said.

Owaisi posted on Twitter: "Ghulam Nabi Azadi sahab you had accused me of exactly this. Now you're accused of the same. 45 years of ghulam for this? Now it's proven that anyone opposing Janeudhari leadership will be branded B-Team. I hope Muslims now know the high cost of loyalty to Congress (sic)."

also obstructs us from freely exercising other rights for fear of surveillance."

"A strong and stringent Data Protection Law is needed to protect our privacy and national security. Despite this urgency, the Union government has drafted a weak Bill that is unlikely to do much," Owaisi said.

● **OWAISI POINTED out that such technology can record and use the gait to identify the person. Face recognition technology is inaccurate in identifying dark people, women, persons with disabilities and young people, the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen leader said.**

Exempt MV Tax for lockdown period: MIM

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi has written to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao requesting exemption of Motor Vehicle (MV) Tax

for the lockdown period as the transport industry is facing severe challenges.

Owaisi said he had received a representation from K.M. Govind Raju, president of the Hyderabad and Secunderabad Cities Contract Carriage Bus Owners Association, seek-

ing the exemption.

Owaisi said it is learnt that the transport industry is on the verge of collapse. A number of transporters have lost their business and nearly 6 lakh people employed by them have lost their livelihood. Transport operators are still under undeclared

lockdown.

The MIM president said the travel industry had suffered huge losses in the absence of regular business. The operator were barely managing the necessary expenses and retaining the staff by paying remunerations even for the lockdown period.

No option but to charge patients

From Page 1

They have no other option but to recover these costs from patients.

Given the circumstances and rights of insurance patients, it has been decided to work out a feasible rate structure wherein all costs of personal protection equipment, disinfection kits and other Coronavirus-related expenses are distributed.

Deepthi Nemani, who has co-ordinated with insurance companies and hospitals, explained, "A baseline

● Apart from hospital stay in wards or intensive care units, packages include primary consultation fees, nursing charges, isolation, Covid-19 PPE, safety and biomedical waste management, oxygen and other costs. These have been included in the per-day cost for stay in hospital, which ranges from ₹7,000 to ₹15,000 per day and more.

● Charges for complications related to co-morbid conditions are excluded from these packages, as they vary depending on the insurance company. It is thus difficult to give a baseline for this segment of patients, it is stated.

structure has been aligned with PPE kits, allowances for healthcare staff, infection control measures, oxygen availability and intensive care unit charges. This allows patients to be in two brackets, wherein the costs

are divided. The costs of daily tests, pharmacy and cross consultations are, however, excluded from this. This has helped bring down the burden on both patients and hospitals, and is expected to reduce com-

plaints."

Insurance companies are hoping this method will enable cashless patients to get admitting into private hospitals and also bring down complaints with regard to billing.



IN BRIEF

Two arrested for stealing 13 TVs

Hyderabad: The KPHB police arrested two men for stealing 13 smart TVs from a boy's hostel. The accused D. Venkateshwarlu, 27, of Kukatpally and D. Praveen, 25, of Suraram, were caught on Monday when they were at a bus stop carrying the TVs. The duo on questioning confessed to having stolen the TVs by breaking the locks of 13 rooms on the intervening night of August 19 and 20. All the stolen TVs were recovered, said the police.

Citizens throng offices over tax

Nizamabad: Setting aside Covid-19 fears, people thronged municipalities in undivided Nizamabad district for redressal of property tax problems on Monday. All seven urban local bodies — the old one at Nizamabad, Bodhan, Kamareddy, Armoor and new ones at Banswada, Yellareddy and Bheemgal — conducted the melas. Municipal administration department said that melas would be conducted on Mondays and Wednesdays till September 15. In the old municipalities, the taxpayers complained about receiving tax over and above the assessed amount, double assessment, mistakes in the entries like name and change of names of owner after transactions (mutation). In new municipalities, instead of revision of property tax, most of the people sought rectifications in mutations.

19 HELD FOR BETTING ON COCKFIGHTS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

The Rachakonda Special Operations Team apprehended 19 persons for betting on cockfights at Bibinagar in Yadadri Bhongir district. The police seized 32 roosters, ₹1.5 lakh cash, 14 cars and 30 motorcycles from the accused.

The SOT was tipped off about the event being held at Channapalugu thanda and raided the place where at least 50 persons were seen betting on the cockfights organised by accused Madhusudhan Reddy, 30, of Bhongir, M. Sridhar, 32, of Secunderabad, and Pandu, 35.

The organisers and some others escaped from the spot, but 19 others were taken into custody. The 19 persons, all residents of the city, had been visiting the hamlet to bet on the illegal activity.

Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat said that a suo motu case was booked against the accused under the IPC, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Gaming Act. Efforts are on to nab the absconding accused.



Municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao, meets Union minister of state for housing and urban affairs Hardeep Singh Puri, at Nirman Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday. — D. KAMRAJ

KTR asks Puri for Central funds of TS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

Municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao on Monday called on Hardeep Singh Puri, Union minister of state for housing and urban affairs, and requested the release of funds under key Central sector schemes amounting to ₹2,537.81 crore.

Rama Rao was accompanied by B. Vinod Kumar, Vice-Chairman, Telangana State Planning Board at the meeting held in Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi.

A detailed discussion was held on the release of funds under Pradhan

● **RAMA RAO** requested Puri, who is also civil aviation minister, to expedite work on the Warangal airport under the Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.

Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) of ₹1,184.8 crore, pending grants under Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) of ₹217.49 crore, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) fund of ₹351.77. Rama Rao also sought release of funds under the 15th Finance Commission for the GHMC (million plus city) and for non-mil-

lion-plus cities of ₹783.75 crore.

Rama Rao briefed Puri on the projects taken up by the state government which were in the completion stage to provide basic amenities such as public toilets, dump yard and sewage treatment plants in urban bodies.

Rama Rao requested Puri, who is also civil aviation minister, to expedite work on the Warangal airport under the Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme. He asked the Centre to speed up the survey process of proposed airports in the state including the revival of the Mamunuru airport in Warangal.

COUPLE DIES BEING HIT BY BUS ON NH 44

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

A couple hailing from Mahbubnagar district was killed when a speeding private bus hit them on the National Highway 44 at Rajendranagar on Monday. The couple was working as labourers at an under-construction flyover in front of Prof. Jayashankar Telangana State Agriculture University.

According to reports, the victims Shekaraiah, 50, and Shanthamma, 45, both natives of Mahabubnagar district had moved to the city and were working as labourers. On Monday noon, when they were working at an under construction flyover on the highway in front of the Agriculture University, a private bus speeding towards the city hit the couple and killed them on the spot.

Wife murdered, husband flees

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T. | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

A 20-year-old woman was found dead with injuries at her mother's house on Sunday night. Her husband and her younger brother, a minor, are missing and the Dundigal police is searching for them.

The victim, Kasi Bai, 20, a native of Aurad taluk in Karanataka, married Madhav of Lathur in Maharashtra about two years ago. The couple was living in Pune until the lockdown and moved to Hyderabad.

About three months ago, Madhav left for Pune while Kasi Bai was residing at her parents' house in Pandu Basthi in

Quthbullapur. On August 22, Madhav returned to the city to stay with his in-laws.

On Sunday, Kasi Bai and Madhav were at home while her parents Phool Bai and Vishwanath and elder brother Baswanth went out to work. When they returned home at night, the kitchen door was locked from outside, and Madhav and Kasi Bai's younger brother, a minor, who was supposed to be at home, were missing.

With the help of neighbours they broke open the door, and found Kasi Bai body. The Dundigal police said a kitchen knife was used to slit her throat and she died on the spot.

EXCLUSION OF ARABIC FROM NEP STIRS DEBATE

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

The All India Muslim Educational Society has written to Union education minister Dr Ramesh Nishank Pokhriyal expressing surprise over the exclusion of Arabic while mentioning foreign languages in National Education Policy.

Society general secretary M.S. Farooq requested the minister to consider the aspirations of crores of citizens and continue offering Arabic to students as an option and choice at secondary level by practising the policy of inclusion as reiterated by the NEP 2020.

He said that the policy document speaks about multilingualism, diversity, inclusion, flexibility, learning about the cultures of the world to enrich global language and mobility. Under the topic 'Multilingualism and the power of languages' the NEP lists English and eight foreign languages with the population that speaks the language mentioned in brackets, namely Korean (72 million), Japanese (130 million), Thai (50 million), French (275 million), German (220 million), Spanish (437 million), Portuguese (270 million) and Russian (144 million) at the secondary level for study, excluding Arabic (400 million) which is a cause of concern to crores of Indians particularly Muslims.

He claimed the Arabic language has the dual distinction of being important to citizens of India both at national and international levels. The Arabic language has a history of over 10 centuries in India and with the passing time, Arabic words spread to all Indian languages. Arabic transcriptions are found as epitaphs, dedications and ornamentations in tens of thousands of historical monuments in India.

Officials' mobiles go off GHMC site

Citizens have to contact the staff through landline

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has instructed its information technology (IT) department to remove the mobile-phone numbers of its officers from the official website. Citizens now have to contact the officials only on their landline numbers. According to a GHMC official, the corporation said citizens were making excessive calls with excessive calls if mobile-phone numbers of additional commissioners and zonal commissioner were listed on the GHMC's website.

Quoting an incident, an official said a city resident in a span of 30 minutes had raised as many as 80 grievances. Officials were forced to book a case against him with the cybercrime police. "When the issue was taken to the notice of higher authorities, they instructed us to remove all mobilephone numbers of additional commissioners

● **QUOTING AN** incident, an official said a city resident in a span of 30 minutes had raised as many as 80 grievances. Officials were forced to book a case against him with the cybercrime police.

● **THE CORPORATION** has been clearing mobile bills according to the tariff plan but did not clear the bills for additional calls and data usage. The corporation is yet to clear bills worth ₹58 lakh. The GHMC has cleared ₹3 lakh of bills.

and zonal commissioner," he said.

Asked whether the GHMC would provide the numbers if they were sought under the Right to Information Act, the officer said the corporation would reply stating that certain individuals had attacked officials if the mobilephone numbers are provided on the website.

However, officials are not attending calls from public representatives and media personnel.

While this is so, *Deccan Chronicle* has learnt that there could be another reason. A few officials have been using an old tariff plan with a network though the contract expired in June. Corporation removed all phone numbers on that network since outgoing and incoming calls were barred due to excessive usage and non-payment of bills.

The corporation has been clearing mobile bills according to the tariff plan but did not clear the bills for additional calls and data usage. The corporation is yet to clear bills worth ₹58 lakh. The GHMC has cleared ₹3 lakh of bills.

To clear the rest, the corporation's IT wing has to seek permission from higher authorities. A senior GHMC official said that the issue came to their notice when the civic body decided to switch the mobile network.

More Than 5 Crore Satisfied Users

MYFAIR
Improves texture & Brightens Skin

A Product of
ZEE LABORATORIES LTD.
9896134500 • www.myfair.in

ANTI SCAR & WRINKLES LIGHTENS DARK PATCHES OF SKIN BLENDISH FREE SKIN

Cream • Soap • Face Wash • Sun Screen

A Complete Cosmetic Range • Available at all leading chemist stores

Trade Enquiry in Andhra & Telangana: SDS Pharma 09866999001, 8662412212
Required RSMs, ASMs & Sales Executives Call - 9896306767 or Email - corp@zeelab.co.in

Habitat Centre to be set up at Khanamat

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24



After wasting seven years, the HMDA has dusted off the plan to construct the Hyderabad Habitat Centre (HHC) at Khanamat. It also put forth a demand to revive the State Central Library at Afzalgunj and starting a digital library.

Urban development officials claimed that minister K.T. Rama Rao had endorsed the proposal to construct the HHC, which would be on par with New Delhi's Indian Habitat Centre. They said the ₹266-crore project, which will come up on an 11-acre site, is intended to promote art and heritage.

The proposal was first made in 2013, during the Congress regime. The HMDA would act as chief promoter, contributing land and seed capital for the HHC, which will be built on the public-private partnership (PPP) mode.

This apart, the HMDA has decided to build an automated multi-level parking facility at Ameerpet on 1,648 square yards, to accommodate about 200 four-wheelers and 190 two-wheelers at a

● **THE PROPOSAL** was first made in 2013, during the Congress regime. The HMDA would act as chief promoter, contributing land and seed capital for the HHC, which will be built on the public-private partnership (PPP) mode.

● **IT WOULD** have a visual art gallery, sculpture courts, Artiplex theatres, learning centres, an open-air theatre, outdoor facilities along with a clubhouse, restaurants and food courts.

cost of ₹27.30 crore, and another on a 2.24-acre site at Sarooranagar. However, the Hyderabad Metro Rail has already occupied the parking space in Ameerpet.

A senior MA&UD official said the revival of the State Central Library would be taken up only after GHMC polls and the proposal for HHC was the initial stages. Both the projects would be time consuming and would be only possible during the next financial year, he said.

NHPC Limited
(A Government of India Enterprise)
Regd. Office : NHPC Office Complex,
Sector-33, Faridabad-121003 (Haryana)
CIN : L4010HR197SGO1032564

Come on board to embrace exciting challenges with NHPC...
THROUGH GATE-2020 UGC NET-JUNE 2020, CLAT 2020 (for PG) & CA/CMA Score

NHPC Limited, a premier Schedule - A. 'Mini Ratna company of Government of India with 7071.2 MW installed capacity is looking for bright, energetic young Graduate Engineers and Professionals. NHPC is involved in construction and operation of Hydro, Solar and Wind Power Plants across the country especially amidst the beautiful surroundings and breathtaking views of mountainous region including the region of Devbhoomi Himalayas.

NHPC, the biggest hydropower company in India and a leader in design, construction and operation of Hydropower Plants, offers exciting opportunities and challenges to learn and grow. The total annual emoluments for the new joiner shall be approx. Rs. 15 Lakh. The vacancy details are as below:

Post	No. of Posts
Trainee Engineer (Civil)	30
Trainee Engineer (Mechanical)	21
Trainee Officer (HR)	05
Trainee Officer (Law)	08
Trainee Officer (Finance)	22

Candidates can view the detailed advertisement with post and category wise vacancy position, eligibility conditions and instructions for filling online applications by visiting Career Section of NHPC website <http://www.nhpcindia.com/career.htm>, only online mode of application is accepted.

Opening of NHPC website for online Submission by candidates:	29.08.2020
Last date for Submission of online application by candidates:	28.09.2020
ENERGY IS FUTURE...	MAKE IT BRIGHT
Davp 34128/11/0003/2021	

INTRODUCING

Invest in LIC's Jeevan Akshay VII
Invest in lifelong Happiness

• **Plan:** Single Premium Immediate Annuity Plan

• **Multiple Options:** 10 Annuity options to choose from

• **Flexible Annuity Payments:** Monthly, Quarterly, Half-yearly or Yearly

• **Age Eligibility:** Min. Age at Entry: 30 years (Completed)
Max. Age at Entry: 100 years (Completed) for option F, 85 years (Completed) for all options except option F

Sample Illustration: Age - 50, Annuity payable - Yearly, Mode - Offline

Purchase Price*	25 Lac	50 Lac	1 Crore	5 Crore
Option A	1,70,000	3,40,750	6,82,500	34,12,500
Option F	1,34,250	2,69,250	5,39,500	26,97,500
Option J	1,33,750	2,68,250	5,37,500	26,87,500

*Plus applicable tax as per rules. Figures in Rupees

Also Available Online

Download LIC Mobile App "MyLIC" Visit: licindia.in Call Centre Service (022) 6827 6827

For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch or SMS YOUR CITY NAME to 56767474

Beware of Spurious Phone Calls and Fictitious / Fraudulent Offers. IRDAI is not involved in activities like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

Follow us: [f](#) [y](#) [t](#) [i](#) LIC India Forever IRDAI Regn No.: 512

LIC
भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

LIC/FRA/2021/06ENG

SHORT TAKES

SC REJECTS PLEA
OVER SHRINES
IN SECRETARIAT

New Delhi, Aug. 24: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking a direction to the Centre and the Telangana state government to reconstruct the religious structures which have been razed during the demolition of the old Secretariat building in Hyderabad.

The Telangana state government has decided to demolish the Secretariat for constructing a new one spread over 25 acres in Hyderabad and, in the process, two mosques and a temple have been razed, the plea said.

The prayer is misconstrued under Article 32 (under which a plea is directly moved to the apex court for protection of fundamental rights), said a bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and R. Subhash Reddy in the hearing held through videoconferencing.

The top court, which allowed Hyderabad-based lawyer and petitioner Khaja Aijazuddin to withdraw the plea to pursue the remedy in the High Court, refused to direct the Telangana High Court to decide the case pertaining to demolition of religious structures expeditiously.

"Petitioner-in-person (Khaja Aijazuddin) seeks permission to withdraw the Writ Petition. Permission is granted. Accordingly, the Writ Petition stands dismissed as withdrawn," the bench said in its order.

The plea had sought a direction for the Centre and the state government to pass an executive order or resolution in the State Assembly of Telangana state or Parliament by giving a commitment for rebuilding the religious places only or at the same places where they stood, and also by terming the demolition as highly unwarranted, illegal and unconstitutional.

It said a Nalla Pochamma temple and two mosques namely, Masjid Dafaatir-e-Muatamadi and Masjid-e-Hashmi were located in the Secretariat premises which have been demolished.

—PTI

TWO GHMC
EMPLOYEES GET
TWO-YEAR RI

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24**

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) bill collector T. Venkatesh and Gaddam Ravinder, then working as a ward officer with the corporation, were convicted by a special court for ACB cases for demanding and taking a bribe of ₹2,000 from a person for doing official work. The court imprisoned the accused duo to undergo two years of rigorous imprisonment.

The ACB said that accused Venkatesh and Ravinder were arrested in 2008 for demanding and accepting the bribe from the complainant A. Ramachandra Rao.

The accused demanded the bribe to feed the name of the complainant in the government records as a property assessee, to issue property demand notices that are generated automatically every year and to receive property tax of the penthouse of the complainant situated at Balajinagar in Kukatpally, said the ACB.

Both accused were sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment. Venkatesh was ordered to pay ₹2,000 as penalty and Ravinder ₹1,000, the ACB said in a press note.

● **THE ACB** said that accused Venkatesh and Ravinder were arrested in 2008 for demanding and accepting the bribe from the complainant A. Ramachandra Rao.

Man gets back job after 25 yrs

SHRC intervenes; he had been sacked after extending medical leave

**PULI SHARATH
KUMAR | DC
KARIMNAGAR, AUG. 24**

The timely intervention of Telangana State Human Rights Commission (TSHRC) has helped a bank manager to join duty after 25 years here.

Kapila Rambabu, working as a branch manager of Satavahana Gram-eena Bank, now called Telangana Gram-eena Bank from 1984 applied for sick leave in May 1996 and later extended it

until March 1997. Later, when he reported for duty, the chairman of the bank did not accept it.

Rambabu alleged that since he belonged to a downtrodden community, the chairman had shown racial abuse by refusing his resumption. Undeterred Rambabu approached the High Court and sought justice.

After hearing the case, the court gave a verdict in his favour in 2005 and ordered the chairman of the bank to take him into service. However, he was

● **K. RAMBABU** said that he had been removed from service without reason in 1996 and for the past 25 years he has been fighting for justice.

not taken back.

Then, Rambabu approached the Human Rights Commission. The commission which took a serious note of the issue pursued the case. On July 28, it ordered the bank to reinstate Rambabu as per the

orders issued by the High Court in 2005.

Receiving the orders from the HRC, the General Manager of the Telangana Gram-eena Bank, C. Murali Mohan clarified that orders issued by the High Court were implemented and Rambabu was allowed to resume services.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Rambabu said that he had been removed from his services without any reason in 1996 and for the past 25 years he has been fight-

ing for justice.

"Prior to going on sick leave I used to get a monthly salary of ₹9,000. All these years, I faced hardships and I was mentally depressed. During these testing Covid-19 times, the HRC has given me a fresh lease of life. I will remain indebted to the Commission." He said bank officials were delaying settlement of his salary dues of all 15 years even after receiving orders from the High Court and HRC.

ACB GETS CUSTODY
OF TAHSILDAR,
THREE OTHERS IN
BRIBERY CASE

**JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA
T. | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24**

The special court for Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) cases here granted custody of Keesara tahsildar Erva Balraj Nagaraju and three persons who were arrested at Kapra, to probe the involvement of government employees in land settlement cases.

The ACB on August 14 arrested Nagaraju from his house when he took a bribe of ₹1.1 crore from C. Srinath Yadav, a realtor, who was also arrested. This was part of a ₹2 crore bribe demand of the tahsildar to clear an issue pertaining to a parcel of land at Rampally Dayara village.

Subsequently, the sleuths arrested Rampally village revenue assistant B. Sai Raj and real estate broker K. Anji Reddy.

The sleuths found ₹36 lakh unaccounted cash, about half a kg of gold ornaments and immovable properties with Nagaraju. The officials found some documents related to land located at different places in possession of the accused. To extract more information with regard to illegal earnings, and connections of the accused with others, the ACB had filed a custody petition before the special court.

A senior official in the ACB said, "The court granted three days custody of the four accused. They will be taken into custody from Tuesday for further questioning."

Nagaraju, Srinath Yadav, Sai Raj and Anji Reddy, are currently lodged in the Chanchalguda prison.

● **ACB SLEUTHS** also arrested Rampally village revenue assistant B. Sai Raj and real estate broker K. Anji Reddy.

● **THE SLEUTHS** found ₹36 lakh unaccounted cash, about half a kg of gold ornaments and immovable properties with tahsildar Nagaraju. The officials found documents related to land located at different places in possession of the accused.

DC impact



GHMC maintenance staff undertake repair works on the footpath stretch outside the GHMC head office, Tank Bund, following a picture published in these columns highlighting the misery of pedestrians right in front of the corporation's head office due to poor condition of the footpath.

—P. SURENDRA

Sonia helped in creation of
Telangana state, says Uttam

From Page 1

"It is Sonia Gandhi alone who is responsible for creation of separate state of Telangana, that is an indisputable fact," said TPCC president Uttam Kumar Reddy. He said "we are happy that Sonia Gandhi has agreed to continue as Congress president for another six months and we urge Rahul Gandhi to take over as Congress president after that and lead the Indian National Congress to a resounding victory in 2024 elections."

"The episode that has been happening in the country and party circles in the last two-three days, it is really unfortunate that some senior leaders have leaked the

content of a letter written by them on internal party issues." Such issues need to be discussed in the party forum behind closed doors.

Congress Legislature party leader Bhatti Vikramarka and leaders including Marri Shashidhar Reddy, Ponnala Lakshmaiah, Mohammed Ali Shabbir, A. Revanth Reddy, Ponnam Prabhakar, Gudur Narayana Reddy and Gandhi family loyalist V. Hanumantha Rao expressed support to the leadership of the Gandhi family.

Some leaders are planning a signature campaign supporting the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and for Rahul Gandhi to be made her successor. AP Congress

leaders want Sonia Gandhi to continue as the party's president and, in case change is inevitable, Rahul Gandhi must take charge.

In a letter addressed to Sonia Gandhi, APCC president Dr Sailajanath said that they had unanimously resolved that the incumbent should continue to lead the Congress at this crucial juncture where a fierce fight was the need of the hour to save democracy in the country. He said that history proved that Sonia Gandhi had taken several challenges head-on and succeeded.

Sailajanath said that in case Sonia Gandhi had decided to make way, Rahul Gandhi should shoulder the

responsibility.

He opined that no leader in the Congress could provide such a strong leadership and cautioned that any move to deprive the party of such a visionary and courageous leader would give advantage to divisive and dictatorial forces. He asserted that Rahul Gandhi had already proved that he had the daring to take on the 'treacherous' forces.

PCC vice-president N. Tulasi Reddy in a statement said, "We want our Congress president Sonia Gandhi to continue to lead the party. Both she and Rahul Gandhi have time and again proved that they are the leaders who could be relied upon."

‘LUMPY SKIN’
DISEASE HITS
CATTLE, HENS

**PILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, AUG. 24**

Lumpy skin disease, caused by a virus, is spreading among cattle in tribal areas of Adilabad. Owners of the such buffaloes, goats and cows, apart from hens, say they are showing symptoms similar to Coronavirus among human beings. The animals are also developing lumps and the yield is falling. There is no vaccine or medicine.

1 arrested for duping
eatery owner ₹1.3 cr

**JAYENDRA
CHAITHANYA T. | DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24**

A 38-year-old man from the city who cheated a restaurant owner and his aides of ₹1.3 crore on the pretext of providing government jobs and also to open a restaurant in Bangkok, was arrested by the Central Crime Station police of Hyderabad on Monday.

Accused Sharjeel Bin Fareed, 38, met M.

Ravinder, who runs a bar and restaurant at Bachupally, through a friend in January 2019. Sharjeel, who dropped out after Class X, introduced himself as a realtor, with contacts in the Chief Minister's office and with some businessmen based in Thailand.

The accused promised to provide a job for Ravinder's son in the road transport department as assistant motor vehicle inspec-

tor, and to the children of Ravinder's aides in the revenue and stamps and registration departments, and collected ₹84 lakh.

Sharjeel also collected ₹50 lakh from Ravinder with a promise to establish a restaurant in Bangkok. Sharjeel Bin Fareed gave fake appointment letters to the job aspirants and did not help Ravinder to establish the business abroad.

HC weighs in on farmers' seed pact

**VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA
| DC
HYDERABAD, AUG. 24**

The Telangana High Court on Monday told the state government that if cotton seed farmers desire to have a written agreement with seed companies, the government must ensure that it is done. The Centre's ordinance makes a written agreement optional only for farmers but not for seed companies, it said.

A division bench of Justice A. Rajashekar Reddy and Justice B. Vijayen Reddy was dealing with a PIL com-

plaining that farmers have no option to make an agreement with the seed companies.

A. Sanjeev Kumar, government counsel, said the government in principle was agreeing with the demand raised in the PIL. The government had held three tripartite meetings on this issue, chaired by the agriculture minister, in recent months but the process had been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kumar submitted said that the Centre's ordinance of June had caused ambiguity over whether the state law

and rules would apply or not. He said the ordinance made the issue of having written agreements optional for the farmers while the state law had made it mandatory. He said the state government would be ready to ensure the agreements are made if both the farmers and seed companies come forward. The bench pointed out to the government pleader that the ordinance had given the option only to the farmers and not to the companies. If the farmers come forward to have agreements, the government must

ensure they are made.

Assistant Solicitor General N. Rajeshwar Rao sought 10 days time to get instructions from the Centre about the applicability of the ordinance vis-a-vis state laws. Neeli Arjun Kumar, counsel for the petitioner, said if the government was sincere in ensuring that the interests of farmers are protected, it would not have remained silent even as the collector's specific orders in November 2019 about having written agreements with seed companies were not being implemented.

MAN MURDERED TO ‘FIX’ LAND OWNER

**ANUDEEP
CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, AUG. 24**

A flower vendor, Venkanna, of Kesamudram in Mahbubabad district was found murdered in Girni thanda on Monday. Police said that the accused, Amgoth Harish of Girni thanda, was traced

with hours and arrested. Harish has eight cases to his name.

Mahbubabad DSP A. Naresh Kumar said Harish is involved in a land dispute with one Karpurapu Gopal. To grab his land by scaring him, Harish murdered Venkanna and threw his body in Gopal's plot.

10th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



T. RAMESH
04.10.1945 - 25.08.2010
Reserve Bank of India, Bombay (Retd.)
RUPALA: JEEVAN & SURENDER
TATELU: RAJKUMAR, DAYANAND & CHANDU
P.J. SURI, VINCENT
Ph: 9849431998

(CA-3392)

IN LOVING MEMORY

The righteous man walks in his integrity;
His children are blessed after him. — Prov 20:7



Late P.E. NOBLE LUCK
(S C Railways)
DoB: 30.07.1936 DoD: 25.08.2007
Indeed a man of noble qualities!
Forever you will live in our thoughts
And until that day, when we shall meet again
We'll continue to cherish 'All the memories of you'
Comfort comes, Hope abides.
We miss you dearly!
Wife - Irene Luck
Daughters and Their Families
994235165

OBITUARY
INFORMING THE SAD AND
SUDDEN DEMISE OF

Mr. KAMALUDDIN MOHAMED
S/o. Late Samiuddin Mohamed
In 22 August 2020
"Visitors not encouraged - respecting
current norms of Social Distancing."
Phone: 9848034111, 9848010521.

(S/2021/D00480)

31st ANNIVERSARY
IN EVER LOVING MEMORY

Smt. SUDERSHANAM SUSHEELA BAI
W/o Late Shri S.R. Kanniah
Inserted by:
S.K. Narendar Kumar & Sreedevi
S.N. Sai Sreenivas & Rajitha
Ch. Aarush, S.N. Shiv Charan
& Kathyayini, S.N. Sushel Kumar
& AMOORU FAMILY. Cell: 9885360968

(S/2021/D00494)

SUDDEN DEMISE

"I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever. Psalm 23:6



Rev. DASARI VICTOR PAUL
Presbyter, CSI Medak Diocese
DOD: 24.08.2020
Funeral will be held on 25.08.2020 at
11:00 a.m. in CSI Mettuguda Cemetery.
Inserted by:
Rt. Rev. Dr. A.C. Solomon Raj,
Bishop in Medak, Officer of
the Diocese & The Clergy
CSI Medak Diocese

(S/2021/D00484)

REMEMBRANCE

"The Memory of The Just is Blessed" Prov 10:7



Mr. E. Jayapradarsana Rao
I Thank & Praise God for His Life & The Hope
I will meet him again in heaven
Mrs. Syamala J.P.Rao, Children & Grand Children

Remembering

DR. A.K.S. BHUJANGA RAO
Former Director NATCO



Dr. A.K.S. Bhujanga Rao was associated with NATCO Pharma as a director for over 17 years. With his demise we have lost a Scientist and a columnist. He inspired everyone at NATCO with his dynamic leadership and systematic approach towards solving problems. NATCO Pharma's NATCO Research Centre (NRC) won lot of global recognition and process patents. He has won a lot of IP battles in India and in USA for NATCO. His knowledge in Pharma IP litigations was admirable. NATCO Family will deeply miss his absence and remember him forever for his contribution and vision.

9th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

"Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." — Roman 14:8

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



Late N. VASANTH KUMAR
Who slept in the Lord on 25.8.2011
"Your memories are always
remembered in our hearts forever."
Inserted by: Wife & Children

SHRADDANJALI



BATCHU SUKUMARI
DOD: 19-08-2020
Your memories lies in our hearts forever
Inserted by:
Paluru Prabhakar
Paluru Jayalakshmi and family

REMEMBRANCE

"The just man walketh in His integrity; His
Children Are Blessed After Him" Prov 20:7

OUR DEAR FATHER



Mr. E. Jayapradarsana Rao
D.O.B: 04-02-1935 D.O.D: 25-08-2018
Sujatha & Vijay Kumar, Henry & Udaya,
Paul & Susan, Daniel & Esther and Grand Children

SHRADDHANJALI

The righteous shall be in everlasting
remembrance. Psalm. 112.6



Late. Mr. M. GOPALAN
DOB: 12.06.1952 - DOD: 25.08.2015
"We think of you every day and will for the
rest of our lives. Words cannot describe
how much we miss you"
From : Loving Family Members
Ph: 9160882424

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE



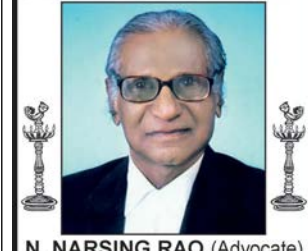
RAGHUVVER CHANDER ADKAL
(Engineer-in-Chief (Retd.))
D.O.B. 07-08-1929 | D.O.D. 13-08-2020
Death Leaves a heartache, no one can heal
Love leaves a memory, no one can steal.
Inserted by:
Dr. Rita Adakal, Gautham Adakal
& J. Raghuvver - Children
Dr. Priyanka Rokkam, Siddharth Rokkam
and Radhika Adakal (Grand Children)

1st ANNIVERSARY



Late: Sri. Rajesh Kumar Nandikanti
DOB:- 07-08-1980 DOD:- 25-08-2019
"MAY YOUR SOUL REST IN PEACE"
From :
P. Pramodh Yadav & Family
K. Vinay Kumar & Family

9th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



N. NARSING RAO (Advocate)
D.O.D: 4-9-2011
We look upon you, as a lamp of
our life. We know that you are the
one, who timely guided us to the
path of success. There is never a
day ever passes and ends without
your remembrance.
Near & Dear

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby inform that our client M/s. ICONIC CASA LLP, Rep. by its Managing Partner MOHAMMED ZUBAIR KHAN S/o. Late Mohammed Muqtada Khan, R/o. Office at Metro Plaza, Madhapur, Hyderabad is intending to enter into Development Agreement cum GPA from Mr. MIRZA MOHIBBE ASGHAR and ZAREENA SULTANA, R/o. H.No. 22-2-479, Balasethykhair, Hyderabad in respect of Plot Nos. 58, 59 and 60, Total adm. 684 sayds, forming part of Sy. Nos. 177/a/a, Situated at "Sirmille Gardens" Phase-1, Upperpally Village, Rajendranagar Mandal and Municipality, R.R. District.

If anybody he, she or they are having any objections they may see the undersigned with authenticated documents within seven (7) days or else our client shall proceed in entering into the transaction, thereafter no objections will be entertained.

**MOHAMMED SHUJAUDDIN,
SYED ARIF ALI - ADVOCATES.**
#16-7-311/2, Azampura, Hyderabad - 24.
Cell: 90000 07006.

SHORT TAKES

THREE OF FAMILY ATTEMPT SUICIDE OVER COVID DEATH

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 24

Three members of a family attempted suicide a day after the head of the family died of Covid-19 infection. The incident took place in Prakasraopeta under Maharanipeta police station limits in the city on Monday.

The police said a 42-year-old woman and her daughters aged 20 and 14 years consumed alcohol-based sanitiser. The 53-year-old head of the family, who ran a medical store, contacted the virus a few days ago and was admitted to a hospital, where he died on Sunday.

Maharanipeta inspector Somasekhar said that the relatives of the patient were initially informed that he was alive. His family came to know of his death on Monday morning.

Somasekhar said that all three women were admitted to King George Hospital in Vizag city. While the daughters are out of danger, the mother is said to be stable and undergoing treatment.

A mother along with her son and daughter jumped into River Godavari near Kovvuru of West Godavari district after the head of the family succumbed to Covid-19. Social activists are demanding the government to take steps to prevent suicides related to Covid-19.

COP SUSPENDED FOR SEEKING SEXUAL FAVOURS

DC CORRESPONDENT
SRIKAKULAM, AUG. 24

The district superintendent of police suspended a sub-inspector allegedly seeking sexual favours from a woman who was caught selling liquor illegally along with her father. The SP also sought a comprehensive report from the senior police officials in this regard.

According to a report, the police carried out a search in the house of the woman's father on August 22 in Tungapeta in Ponduru of Srikakulam district and seized 48 liquor bottles.

Sub-inspector Kollu Ramakrishna did not register a case against the woman and her father. On Sunday, Ramakrishna made a phone call to the woman and asked her to come to his residence in Ponduru to discuss the case. He indirectly sought sexual favours from her to help her in the case.

Though she refused, the sub-inspector allegedly repeatedly insisted on his demand.

She lodged a complaint with the same police station along with recordings of her conversation with the SI as proof. Ponduru inspector Malleswara Rao said that the enquiry was going on in the incident.

Srikakulam superintendent of police Amit Bardhar suspended sub-inspector Ramakrishna and asked the police personnel to submit a comprehensive report on the incident.

Stormy sea



Palm trees get uprooted after high tide erodes sand on the Ramakrishna beach in Visakhapatnam on Monday. The condition at the sea was rough due to recent rains across the sea coast. — P. NARAYAN MURTY

Study: Many develop immunity against virus

Sero-surveillance carried out in four districts

SAMPAT G.
SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, AUG. 24

A good number of people from four districts have developed community immunity for Covid-19 due to antibodies in their body after getting exposed to Coronavirus in the state.

The state government carried out sero surveillance to identify the people who have tested positive and of them how many have developed immunity by generating antibodies to fight the virus. The pilot project was taken up recently in Anantapur, East Godavari, Krishna and Nellore districts.

Health authorities have found 16.7 per cent sero-prevalence in Anantapur, 14.4 in East Godavari, 21.7 in Krishna and 8.2 per cent in Nellore. This indi-

● **HEALTH** authorities surveyed 3,000 persons from the general population and 750 from high-risk sectors like health care professions, police personnel and carried out sero-surveillance for Covid-19 in each district.

● **AROUND 70%** from rural areas and 30% from urban areas were selected.

cates that 16.7 per cent of Anantapur's population has developed community immunity for Covid-19 and so is the case with other districts.

For instance, Krishna district has a population of 45.17 lakh as per 2011 census and with 21.7 per cent of them having developed community immunity, there is a major relief for the government as they require

no Covid-19 tests and no treatment as long as the infection does not recur.

As they turned out to be Covid-19 warriors, they can also donate their plasma to conduct plasma therapy on relatively young and moderately infected patients. The surveillance report also discloses the people covered under various categories, including containment zones, non-containment zones, high-risk population, prevalence among men and women and in urban and rural areas.

In Krishna district, the prevalence is 21.8 per cent among general population in containment zones, 5.1 per cent in non-containment zones, 22.3 per cent in high risk population, 19.1 per cent in men, 24.8 per cent in women, 35.2 per cent in urban areas, 14.8 per cent in rural areas

as and 99.4 per cent among positive patients found to be asymptomatic.

Similarly, in Anantapur district, the prevalence is 19.9 per cent among general population in containment zones, 14 in non-containment zones, 10.7 in high risk population, 17.2 among males, 15.8 among females, 28.8 in urban areas, 12.3 in rural areas and 99.5 per cent among positive patients found to be asymptomatic.

A senior health official at Covid-19 Command Centre said, "We have got good results from sero-surveillance as a very good number of people developed community immunity for Covid-19, which is contrary to our below 10% of total population estimate. The state government will shortly take a call on taking up the surveillance in other districts."

TIRUPATI TO GET E-POWER PUSH FOR SMART CITY

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, AUG. 24

The advisory committee of the Tirupati Smart City Corporation Limited (TSCCL) has approved several eco-friendly projects to develop the temple town as a smart city. The corporation is scouting for agencies to execute these initiatives, including setting up of battery charging stations, modular toilets, dormitories for RTC commuters, and modernisation of the graveyard.

A major eco-friendly project is setting up of battery recharging stations at 13 points across Tirupati. These will enable e-bikes, e-cars and e-auto rickshaws, which are already operating in the temple city, to recharge their vehicles more easily.

e-bikes have become popular in recent times with municipal workers using them widely as a means of transport. Similarly, e-cars are being used by most of officials of APSDCCL as well as some private organisations. The number of e-autos in the city has also increased in recent times.

TSCCL proposes to purchase 40 e-bikes for police to patrol the city. These bikes will have advanced equipment like GPS tracking, apart from siren and floodlights. The advisory committee has suggested that these e-bikes be procured from a reputed electric motorcycle company.

The smart city corporation further wants to create amenities like modular toilets, dormitories, and multi-level car parking facilities for convenience of RTC commuters. In addition, it is proposing to start a gas-based crematorium at the Harishchandra Smanasana Vatika. Work on this crematorium has already commenced and it is expected to be completed on or before September 10.

The other plans of TSCCL include building a 25 MLD sewage treatment plant in the city, laying new cement concrete roads and creating an additional sports facility on the Nehru municipal high school grounds.

● **TSCCL PROPOSES** to purchase 40 e-bikes for police to patrol the city. These bikes will have advanced equipment like GPS tracking, apart from siren and floodlights.

WESTERN RAILWAY
ADDENDUM TO EO1
In reference to the Expression of Interest called regarding Development of Udhna Freight Handling Railway Terminal as a Common User facility for multi cargo, multi modal operation including provision of additional freight/ parcel handling line, covered warehouse, open stacking area (including containers), mechanization of handling systems and truck parking terminal on a PPP model, the following addendum may please be noted: **The last date of submission of EoI response is extended till 05.09.2020 up to 15 hrs.**
D-17
Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

Scared of Covid-19, people draw up will

V.K.L. GAYATRI | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 24

A fallout of increasing number of deaths due to Covid-19 pandemic is that more and more people, particularly those with assets, legal or illegal, are writing their wills to avoid complications in the event of their demise due to Coronavirus.

According to sources in the Andhra Pradesh registration and stamps department, over 10,000 persons have registered their wills from March to August 10 with the department.

People are sharing information with close kin about their financial dealings, assets and properties. They include mainly business people and entrepreneurs, apart from senior officials as well as employees. They are executing wills in favour of their spouse, children or loved ones, as the case may be.

Some of the people registering their will documents are also using the sealed cover facility, informing a person called 'key' to open the cover after s/he dies. "Yes, I have written my will in a sealed cover, detailing my legal partners as well the assets I have. I have some family disputes due to which my son and daughter-in-law are neglecting me. I have a widowed daughter who takes care of me. I have some obligations due to which I have registered a will document and kept it in a sealed cover," said 69-year-old C.S. Dakshina Murthy, who has recently recovered from Covid-19 and is living in the port city.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PD SOUTH ZONE-II
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 04/EE/ PD SZ-II/GHMC/2020-21
Name of the Work: Engaging of Consultancy services for preparation of Comprehensive development of Storm Water Drain under Chandrayanigutta, Constituency, South Zone, GHMC.
Down Load Start Date / Last date & time for receipt of Bids: 25.08.2020 from 12:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Sd/- Y. Srinivas, Executive Engineer (PD), South Zone-II
CHMC, Ph. No. 795079778
Smt. K. Hema Latha, Asst. Engineer
Ph. No. 795079804
Further details can be seen at e-procurement@www.tender.telangana.gov.in
RO No: 4257-PP/CL/Adv/1/2020-21 Sd/- Executive Engineer, PD South Zone-II, GHMC

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER, ENDOWMENTS
DEPARTMENT, HYDERABAD
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER
NIT No. EE/20/Tender Notice/2020. Date 20.08.2020
Tenders Were invited for Development of (05) Temples in Jogulamba Gadval District for an amount of Rs. 156.50 Lakh through e-procurement. For more information visit <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> Bid Downloading Starting Date: 28.08.2020 Bid Download End Date (Submission): 11.09.2020
Sd/-
DIPR No. - 392-DP/CL-Agency/Adv/1/2020-21 Addl. Commissioner, Endowments Department, Hyderabad

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
OFFICE OF DISTRICT MEDICAL & HEALTH OFFICER R.R.DISTRICT
NOTIFICATION FOR POST OF MEDICAL OFFICER UNDER NHM R.R.DISTRICT
RO No. 443/E/1DHMO/R2020 Dt. 21.08.2020
Applicants are invited to fill up the post of Medical Officers in Basthidawakhnas to attend for Walk-in interview on 26.08.2020 at 10.30 AM at O/o District Medical & Health Officer, R.R.District under NHM in Ranga Reddy District on contract basis with consolidated Pay of Rs. 42,000/- per month for a period of (1) year with qualification MBBS registered with TS Medical Council to work for the period of one year. All the eligible candidates are requested to attend for Walk in interview along with the Original certificates and submit their applications along with Bio-Data and self attested of all certificates Xerox copies with Bonafide from 1st to 7th at O/o District Medical & Health Officer, Ranga Reddy District, Near Piller No. 294 of P.V.N.R. Express Way, Manikanta Colony, Shivarampally, Rajendra Nagar, Ranga Reddy District.
R.O.No.-389-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADV/1/2020-21 Sd/- Dist Collector & Magistrate, R.R District

CSIR-INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY
(Council of Scientific & Industrial Research)
Uppal Road, Tarnaka, Hyderabad - 500 007, Telangana, India.
NOTIFICATION
Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for filling-up of two positions of "MEDICAL OFFICER (CONTRACTUAL)". Interested candidates are requested to submit their complete Bio-Data/CV along with Testimonials / Experience. For complete details visit our website www.iiictindia.org
The last date for receipt of applications is 28th August, 2020 at 17:00 hrs.
Sd/-
Controller of Administration

COIR BOARD COIR INDUSTRY AWARDS
FOR 2017-18 & 2018-19
Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India, M.G. Road, Kochi - 682 016.
Applications are invited from persons/firms/organisations from among the eligible categories for consideration of the COIR INDUSTRY AWARDS for the years 2017-18 and 2018-19 for outstanding performance in coir sector. Visit Coir Board Website: <http://www.coirboard.gov.in> for more details and for submitting the application.
The last date for receipt of online applications is 18.09.2020. Hard copies printouts of the online applications should reach the undersigned on or before 5.00 p.m. on 25.09.2020. For further details contact Development Officer (EM), Coir Board (Ph. 0484, 2351900, email: em2@coirboard.org).
For more details, please logon to: www.coirboard.gov.in
20.08.2020 Sd/- Secretary
davep 25131/11/0004/2021

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
The Chief Administrative Officer/Const-II/Northern Railway, Kashmere Gate, Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work :-
Mode of Tender (E-Reverse Auction)
Tender Notice No. 74-W/3/2/428-A/WA/LKO
Full name of work Bilharghat-Ayodhya Section (Zone-II): Earth work in formation including filling, cutting and compaction, supply and laying blanketing material on embankment, extension of minor bridges by RCC Boxes, construction of LHS by Air pushing methodology etc. & other allied works between Bilharghat (including) to Ayodhya (including) in connection with Doubling of Barabanki-Akbarpur of Lucknow Division on Northern Railway
Approx. cost Rs. 51.00 Crores
Completion period 18 (Eighteen) Months
Earnest money amount Rs. 27,00,200.00
Availability of tender document on Rly. Website Tender documents will be available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 26.08.2020 to 15.09.2020 up to 11:30 hrs.
Last date/Time of upload of tenders 15.09.2020 up to 11:30 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS website w.e.f. 01.09.2020 to 15.09.2020
Date and time of opening of tender 15.09.2020 at 11:30 hours (immediately after close of uploading of tender (D2). In case of two packet system, Financial bids of the eligible tenderers would be opened subsequently on the date & time to be notified later on
1829/2020
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Kadapa may get Apple, Redmi units

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDA | DC
KADAPA, AUG. 24

Kopparthi Industrial Estate (KIE), which is close to Kadapa city, is abuzz with excitement with the keenness being shown by Taiwan mobile phone maker Foxconn and Apple to set up Redmi and Iphone manufacturing units in the estate's Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) and their talks with government officials.

Around 6,553 acres of land has been developed by the AP Industrial Infrastructure Corporation limited (APIIC) in

● **CURRENTLY, ABOUT 10** small and medium scale industries are functional at the KIE, while the APIIC is in the process of setting up an EMC over 500 acres.

KIE. There has been a good response from potential promoters to establish units as all required facilities are in place. Currently, about 10 small and medium scale industries are functional at the KIE, while the APIIC is in the process of setting up an Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) over 500 acres.

Recently, Foxconn

announced its readiness to set up two more manufacturing units to Andhra Pradesh. The company has mobilephone manufacturing units at Sri City near Tirupati and Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu.

Negotiations are underway to set up units at the Kopparthi EMC. The state Cabinet has approved the EMC. Top sources in the state government told *Deccan Chronicle* that the discussions are in progress.

Then Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy had proposed the mega industrial estate with the idea of developing

Kadapa as an industrial hub for Rayalaseema. Towards achieving it, over 6,500 acres of land stretching from Kadapa to Pulivendula were acquired by the government.

In 2007, during the Kadapa bicentenary celebrations, Dr Rajasekhar Reddy announced that another steel plant would be set up near Kadapa. After his death in 2009, the company did not set up a factory. The proposed industrial estate languished in neglect for almost 12 years. But, now the locals are happy that an electronic manufacturing cluster has been put in place.

Ammonium nitrate warehouse had no fire NoC until Beirut blast

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, AUG. 24

The transit warehouse run by Shraavan Shipping Services Pvt Ltd., which stores around 30,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate at any given point of time, had no fire NoC till the blast at Beirut on August 4. The ISO 9001:2008 certified company applied for NoC only after the explosion.

"We found no record of Shraavan Shipping ever obtaining NoC since its inception. They hurried through an application only after the nitrate ripped through Beirut," said Nagarajuna Reddy, regional fire officer at GVMC in Visakhapatnam. Reddy told this correspondent on Monday that they issued the certificate after a team of fire service personnel thoroughly checked the facilities at the warehouse.

The AP Pollution Control Board in addition to this NoC also found several inadequacies for which they asked the Visakhapatnam Port Trust not to allow ships carrying ammonium nitrate to enter Vizag port.

● **THE AP Pollution Control Board** in addition to this NoC also found several inadequacies for which they asked the Visakhapatnam Port Trust not to allow ships carrying ammonium nitrate to enter Vizag port.

Cyprus-flagged MV Krasezewski flag with 20,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate was anchored on the high seas on August 11 after Visakhapatnam Port Trust refused permission on the instructions of AP Pollution Control Board. Another vessel, expected to arrive on August 29, is also struggling to get permission from Visakhapatnam Port authorities.

While the management of the warehouse is struggling to meet all the requirements, another vessel MV East Ayuthaya carrying Thailand flag with 18,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate is heading for Visakhapatnam Port which sent its ETA on August 29. For both the vessels, the load port is Ukraine. Another vessel carrying an equal quantity, whose details are still to be known, is

also heading for Vizag port.

Chairman of Visakhapatnam Port Trust K. Rama Mohan Rao told this correspondent that APCCB officials had sent him a letter stating that since the warehouse designated to store ammonium nitrate in transit has inadequate facilities and some need to be improved, all vessels carrying ammonium nitrate should not be allowed to berth until further orders.

According to the rules drafted in 2012, ports are not allowed to store ammonium nitrate and should be quickly evacuated on arrival. The rules were framed after the Mumbai terror attack in 2008. "The AP Pollution Control Board has raised objections to the storage facility at the warehouses being run by stevedores Shraavan Shipping Pvt Ltd. The Board said it still needs improvement of its facility to store the ammonium nitrate," port chairman K. Rama Mohan Rao said.

The warehouse had over 30,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate when just 2,750 tonnes ripped through Beirut city killing 100 people

and destroying half the city. The blast prompted the authorities to check the storage facility across the ports in the country. Shraavan Shipping Pvt Ltd, which manages the six warehouses, drew the attention of the government as it stores more than 30,000 tonnes at any given point.

"We have all the prerequisite permissions from the government to store the nitrate. The cargo is evacuated soon after arrival. At this moment we have only 5,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate," said managing director of Shraavan Shipping G. Sambasiva Rao. The people in Vizag have expressed fears over storage of ammonium nitrate in the city after the Beirut blast, particularly after a streak of industrial mishaps since May this year.

A common chemical ingredient of agricultural fertilisers, the nitrogen-rich compound is also the main component of the explosive composition known as ANFO - ammonium nitrate fuel oil commonly used in mining and construction.

DECCAN Chronicle

25 AUGUST 2020

Letter a wake-up call to Congress on its future

The serious issues and concerns raised in a letter by a galaxy of senior Congress leaders, including several former Union ministers and former CMs, to Mrs Sonia Gandhi earlier this month are far-reaching, and how the party handles it will be crucial not only to its own future but to the state of our polity. While Mrs Gandhi was quick to call a meeting of the CWC to discuss the matter on Monday, the questions it raised are too wide-ranging to be resolved at one meeting.

The letter flagged the sense of drift in the party that many raised of late, and sought a “full-time” and “effective” leadership that will be “visible” and “active”. To an extent this could be seen as criticism of Mrs Gandhi’s stewardship for the past 12 months as interim president. But it would be wrong to regard her as its target — Mrs Gandhi is hugely respected by all sections of the Congress — and the letter’s primary aim might have been to deter any attempt to reinstall her son Rahul as Congress president, interim or otherwise. Mr Gandhi’s two-year term as chief wasn’t a great success, though he did lead it to a string of Assembly victories, before presiding over the Congress’ second successive Lok Sabha debacle in mid-2019, after which he swiftly resigned. Many Congressmen are unhappy that though not having any formal role, he plays an active role behind the scenes and takes decisions that “create confusion”. Many are upset that he doesn’t listen to them or they don’t have any access to him.

It’s undeniable that the Gandhis — Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka — are the Congress’ only nationally recognisable figures. All others are identified with a state or region. That gives them a unique standing. But that said, the Congress must also accept that if the Gandhis — for whatever reason — want to pass on the mantle, India’s only national Opposition party must make other arrangements. If it showed wisdom, it would be a huge mistake to treat the letter’s signatories as dissenters or rebels — let alone accuse them of playing the BJP’s game. Most have served the Congress for decades, many all their lives. It would do well to treat the letter as a wake-up call, on how to revitalise India’s grand old party so it can take on the BJP as well as several regional rivals.

Six years after it lost power to the Narendra Modi-led BJP, and again last year, the Congress failed to make any honest introspection on the reasons for successive defeats. Any problem cannot be tackled until one acknowledges it in the first place, but the Congress prefers to brush all inconvenient truths under the carpet. That is no solution. In any democracy, dissent, discussion and debate only strengthens a party, not weakens it. Congress leaders could look towards America’s Democratic Party, for instance, on how widely divergent views, freely expressed, built a stronger organisation to focus on the removal of Donald Trump. In India, the issues are many — the government’s handling of the economy, the pandemic, the Chinese intrusion, what stand to take on the Ram Mandir — which the party should discuss in depth before taking on the BJP. A stronger Congress means a stronger Opposition, which is vitally needed in India so that a government with a sweeping parliamentary majority can be kept in check.

Politics over vaccine race

It’s like a repeat of the space race of the 1960s as the world waits expectantly for the promised silver bullet of a vaccine against the Coronavirus. The first nation to produce an effective, mass-produced vaccine could help their people achieve near normality while shedding a morbid fear of the virus. Most governments have failed to contain Covid-19 as evidenced in mounting caseload and their only hope is to get their hands on “the holy grail”, the hunt for which is, however, being driven by politics more than science.

Vladimir Putin of Russia jumped the gun in claiming success first but far from giving Russia another Sputnik moment brought only scepticism and West-inspired rumours that his daughter who got vaccinated had died. For obvious reasons, Donald Trump wants a working vaccine before Election Day (November 3). Narendra Modi had put out a teaser hinting at Independence Day heralding a magic “Made in India” moment. On the other hand, China is already vaccinating thousands of health care and other workers on an urgent basis through a mass programme run by the military. Authoritarian governments in Russia and China can hand out hurriedly developed vaccines or even placebos to its people. The free world must let science take the lead in passing careful judgment on the 78 vaccines that are confirmed as “active” now. USA’s Moderna with its mRNA-based vaccine and UK’s Oxford University-Jenner Institute with their adenovirus variety are the scientific leaders in developing a vaccine that can be franchised to production lines in record time once third phase clinical trials have evaluated their safety.

Realistically, a vaccine is months away, which gives time for countries to plan on how to achieve an equitable distribution. India is lucky to have the world’s largest vaccine manufacturer and so access should not be a problem. However, given the play of divisive politics, the fear is over how well we will manage the big task of inoculating over 100 crore people.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

ADITYA SINHA
Editor

K. SUBHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax: 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234

Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285

Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswarum Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208

Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904

Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433

Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemmudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580

Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325

Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Feet Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560 095 Ph: 080-43460500; Fax: 080-22960552

Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255

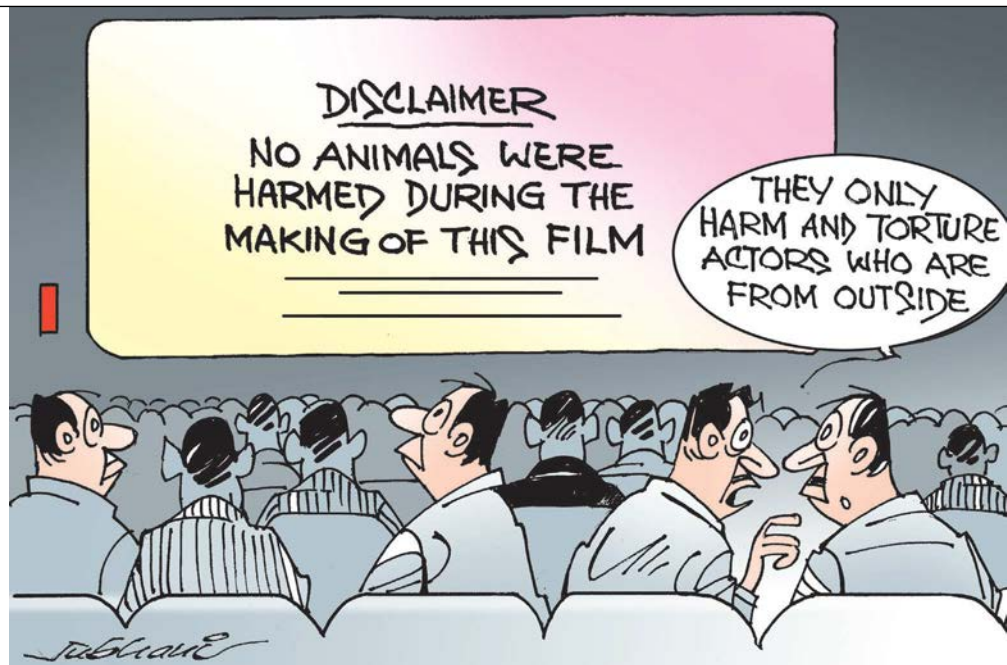
Kochi: No.3-B, 3rd Floor of DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408

Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph’s Press, TC 15/1040, Cotton Hill, Thiruvananthapuram 695 014

Kozhikode: Door No 6/1002 E, First Floor of City Mall, Opp. YMCA, Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001, Fax : 0495 4019 018

Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08

Subhani



India’s eco challenges: A matter of philosophy



Mohan Guruswamy

The divide between the Keynesians and the Chicago School is as intense and often antagonistic as the Sunni-Shia, Catholic-Protestant or Thelakara-Vadakarai-Iyengar divides.

Now the only dispute on national income is how much will be the contraction. The finance ministry hopes there won’t be any. The IMF has officially said it will be 4.5 per cent. The rating agencies predict a contraction of 6.8 per cent, while many are suggesting something closer to 10 per cent. How do we deal with it now? The government tends to be “conservative” in its outlook and has made no serious suggestion on an economic stimulus. What it calls a stimulus isn’t actually one. The problem is more philosophical.

Keynesian economics is a theory that says the government should increase demand to boost growth. Keynesians believe consumer demand is the primary driving force in any economy. As a result, the theory supports expansionary fiscal policy. The Chicago School is a neo-classical economic school of thought that originated at the University of Chicago. Its main tenets are that free markets best allocate resources in an economy and that minimal or zero government intervention is best for economic prosperity. They abhor fiscal deficits.

The only reason why the actual stimulus package is only Rs 63,000 crores is the obsession with fiscal deficits by Chicago economists like Raghuram Rajan and Krishnamurthy Subramanian, now chief economic adviser. They are true disciples of the Washington Consensus to judge countries like India by their fiscal

deficit size. The instruments used to beat countries like India into submission are ratings agencies like Moody’s, which just downgraded India. We shouldn’t lose too much sleep over it. India is a hardly a borrower abroad and is more of a lender, holding \$490 billion as reserves.

That’s why the CEA, asked about a big stimulus, said: “There are no free lunches!” That’s exactly what Milton Friedman said. But they quite happily ignore the fact that America is the biggest deficit financed economy in the world. Dr Rajan told Rahul Gandhi on his videoconference that a stimulus of Rs 65,000 crores would suffice in today’s situation. Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee and former CEA Arvind Subramanian suggest a stimulus package like the US or Japan. The US has announced a stimulus of over \$3.5 trillion, or over 15 per cent of GDP. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s stimulus is just 0.3 per cent of GDP.

Many serious economists see fiscal deficits in a positive way. The great John Maynard Keynes believed deficits help countries climb out of economic recession. Fiscal conservatives, however, feel governments should avoid deficits and ensure balanced budgets.

The fastest growing economies in the world, and its biggest — the United States, China, Japan and most of western Europe — have the highest debt/GDP ratios. Japan’s debt/GDP is over 253 per cent before the latest stimulus of 20 per cent of GDP. China’s debt is over 180 per cent of GDP.

America’s debt/GDP is near 105 per cent, yet it is raising \$3 trillion as debt to escape the Covid-19 quagmire. India’s debt/GDP ratio is a modest 62 per cent, but

Getting money to move India again isn’t a huge problem. What stands in the way are the philosophical blinkers.

still it intends to pump in just 0.3 per cent of GDP as stimulus?

Pump priming the economy by borrowing is by itself not bad. It’s not putting the debt to good use that is bad. Nations prosper when they use debt for worthwhile capital expenditure with assured returns and social cost benefits. But we in India borrow to give it away as subsidies and to hide the high cost of government. To give an analogy, if a family must make a choice of borrowing money to fund the children’s education or to support a man’s drinking habit, the rational choice is obvious. The children’s education will have a long-term payback, while the booze gives instant gratification. But unfortunately, our governments always make the wrong choices.

If borrowed money is used productively and creates growth and prosperity, it should be welcomed. What we want to hear from the government is not about fiscal deficit targets, but economic growth, value addition, employment and investment targets.

What can Mr Modi do now to get us out of this quagmire? If the government abhors a stimulus financed by deficit financing, there are other options. But the PM is hamstrung with a weak economic management team with novices as the two key players, the finance minister and the RBI governor.

India has over \$490 billion nesting abroad earning ridiculously low interest. Even if a tenth of this is monetised for injection into the nation’s economy, it will mean over ₹3.5 lakh crores. At last count, the RBI had about ₹9.6 lakh crores as reserves. This is money to be used in a financial emergency. We

are now in an emergency like we have never encountered before. Even a third of this is about ₹3.2 lakh crores.

There are other sources of funds too but tapping these will entail political courage and sacrifices. Our cumulative government wages and pension bill amounts to about 11.4 per cent of GDP. After exempting the military/paramilitary, which is mostly under active deployment, we can target one per cent of GDP just by cancelling annual leave and LTC and rolling back a few DA increases.

The government can also sequester a fixed percentage from bank deposits, say five per cent of deposits between ₹10-100 lakhs and 15-20 per cent from bigger deposits for tax-free interest-bearing bonds in exchange. The 10 biggest private companies alone have cash reserves of over ₹10 lakh crores.

There’s money in the trees: all it needs is a good shakeup to pick the fruit. The pain of the lockdown mustn’t be borne by the poor alone. The government can easily target 5-6 per cent of GDP, or around 10-12 lakh crores, for the recovery fund as an immediately achievable goal.

This money can be used to immediately begin a limited basic income scheme, by transferring ₹3,000 monthly into Jan Dhan accounts of BPL people for the financial emergency period; fund GST concessions to move the auto and engineering sectors; begin emergency rural reconstruction projects to generate millions of new jobs and get our core infrastructure sectors like steel, cement and transportation moving again.

Getting money to move India again isn’t a huge problem. What stands in the way are the philosophical blinkers. Call it Chicago economics or the Gujarati mindset.

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

LETTERS

TABLIGHI ORDER

I fully share your views and your angst on the ‘Tablighi judgment’. What is more painful is the attitude of TV media which ignored the judgment. When the incident happened in New Delhi, all channels debated it for days. Now, there is total silence after the judgment was delivered. While I understand the predicament of the ‘committed’ channels, the silence of more ‘liberal’ channels is deplorable.

J.S. Sastry
Hyderabad

SCHOOL REOPENING

It is a daring move by the AP government to reopen schools from September 5. With SOPs the schools can be open. It has been observed worldwide that children are not affected by Covid-19 like adults. The parents must be taken into confidence about the move.

P.R. Ravinder
Hyderabad

SRISAILAM PROBE

The probe into the Srisaillam blaze is welcome but officials too are responsible for not doing preventive maintenance at the power plant. The TS government’s ex gratia is very less. The lives of the lost ones cannot be measured in terms of money. The inquiry should be fair without any political pressure on officials.

Mohammed Wasif Ali
Secunderabad

23 drowned near Armoor: Godavari rising

FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NIZAMABAD, AUGUST 24

Latest reports indicate that the Godavari has started rising again this afternoon in the vicinity of Pochampad.

Reports from Sikkonda revenue circle

in Armoor taluk say that 20 persons

lives were lost in the outskirts of

Gadkol village of Armoor were

drowned in Kappalavagu in

Ramadamug project. Three more

bodies were reported to have

been sighted in Peddavagu in

Armoor taluk by field officers.

Traffic in Nizamabad-Karim-

nagar road continues to be dis-

rupted due to breaches of

Peddavagu.

It may take several months for

repairs to the bridge. It is sug-

gested that PWD authorities

should put up a steel ladder for

pedestrians crossing.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist



Aakar Patel

Why are we so obsessed about a Bollywood actor’s death?

The Central Bureau of Investigation has deputed five teams to investigate the death of an actor who killed himself. I do not know why the CBI is investigating this case nor do I understand why there is such great public interest in this issue.

I have been told that this is because of some political reason linked to the election in Bihar. If there is, I am not able to understand what it is. Bihar is the one of the oldest political entities in India, going back to the time of Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya.

Are Biharis so naïve as to vote based on this sort of material? Perhaps they are, and I will be disappointed to know if this is the case. Bihar is one of the poorest parts of the world.

The state has been governed by two parties that have been in charge for a decade. Will the voter determine whether or not to vote for them based on a Bollywood event? If so, it is amazing. Two other reasons have been put forward as possible reasons for the pushing of this story.

First, that it is targeted at the son of the Maharashtra chief minister.

On Covid-19, the data is clear. We are number three in the world in terms of the number of cases, we are number one in terms of the number of daily cases and we will likely end up with the most infected people in the world sometime soon. This is not the record of a government and a PM who is popular.

Second, that it is aimed in some fashion at the Muslim actors of Bollywood.

That seems to me to be more reasonable given our times. This government is hostile to Muslims and will use any lie to attack them, including this one.

But to return to the question of voter interest, it was written last week by my friend Shekhar Gupta that the Prime Minister would return to power in 2024 unless he inflicted damage on himself. Gupta’s

argument so far as I have understood it is that the damage inflicted on the voter is not relevant because the voter doesn’t care about such things as the collapse in the economy, the record unemployment, the occupation of our land by the Chinese and the inability of this government to contain the Covid-19 pandemic.

Gupta did not explain in detail how he had come to this conclusion, but he said that a survey that had a previously good track record showed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was at the peak of his popularity.

Again, I do not know if this is the case, but it would be quite interesting if this were to be so. Our GDP has been declining since January 2018 for nine successive quarters, based on the Modi government’s own data. Unemployment has been the highest that it has ever been recorded in India, again according to the government’s own data. It is unclear who believes Mr Modi when he says that there has been no Chinese intrusion, I hope it is not the Prime Minister himself because that would be a sign of delusion.

We are currently engaged with the

Chinese in trying to get them to withdraw from our land, and our generals have had over half a dozen meetings with them already. Presumably, these meetings are being held because what Mr Modi says (or believes) is untrue. There is no reason to negotiate with them if they are not on our property.

On Covid-19, the data is clear. We are number three in the world in terms of the number of cases, we are number one in terms of the number of daily cases and we will likely end up with the most infected people in the world sometime soon.

This is not the record of a government and a Prime Minister who is popular.

In another nation, this would be signal disaster politically. Is it the case that for all or most Indian voters, their political affiliation is unrelated to their actual life?

Could it be that we vote as we do a Facebook like or Twitter forward? Is our political action through voting and support of a party based not on its performance but on its image? Surely this is not true, and even if it is true for many, it cannot be true for all. Certainly, it is not true for me.

But how many people think normally in this way? If there were many, then we would not have the circus that we do on a Bollywood actor’s death at a time which is the worst that I can remember, and I am not a young man. I cannot remember a time in my life when we had such economic strife, such levels of unemployment, a national epidemic and the enemy inside our house, and such little interest in these and a focus on Bollywood and temples and such things.

Is this who we really are as citizens, individuals and voters? I should hope not. I do not think that our young generation of this time certainly or the next will be so unconcerned about their politics. The question is whether the current generations of our time do not care about the nation’s security, their health, their employment and their future and whether they are more interested in Bollywood. I do not have the answer to this, but it is an answer that we will know for certain fairly soon.

SHORT TAKES

PAK VIOLATES
CEASEFIRE
AGAINYUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, AUG. 24

The Army on Monday said that the Pakistani troops again targeted the Indian forward areas with small arms and mortar guns in Rajouri district along the Line of Control (LoC) earlier during the day.

A defence spokesman in Jammu said that the Indian Army retaliated “befittingly” to the “unprovoked ceasefire violation” by using the same caliber weapons.

The spokesman said that the firing and shelling from across the de facto border in Sunderbani sector of Rajouri started at 1.30 pm and was going on when reports last came in.

“Pakistan initiated the unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars,” he said adding that there was no immediate report of any casualty on the Indian side.

The police sources said that the Army together with J&K police, Border Security Force and various Central armed police forces have beefed the security up in frontier districts of entire Jammu region including Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Poonch and Rajouri to ensure that no militants sneak in these areas from across the LoC or International Border.

BIPIN RAWAT
TALKS OF
MILITARY OPTIONSDC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

In a strong message, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat on Monday said that India has “military options” to deal with the Chinese transgressions in Eastern Ladakh if talks between both the countries at the military and diplomatic level don’t yield results.

“The military option to deal with transgressions by the Chinese Army in Ladakh are on but it will be exercised only if talks at the military and the diplomatic level fail,” Gen. Rawat was quoted by a news agency.

However, he refused to discuss in detail the military options that India could exercise to push back the transgressions by the Chinese Army in Ladakh sector, said the news agency report.

The military stand off between India and China is now nearing four months with no prospect of a resolution in near future.

The talks between the two sides have been going on for the last three months.

K'TAKA TO BE
FIRST STATE TO
IMPLEMENT NEP

Bengaluru, Aug. 24: Karnataka would become the first state in the country to implement the new National Education Policy, Deputy Chief Minister Dr. C. N. Ashwath Narayan said on Monday.

“The state government is making all preparations to bring in administrative reforms and amendments to the laws which are essential to implement the national education policy.

The state would become the first state in the country to implement the policy,” Narayan, who holds the portfolio of higher education, said while addressing the inaugural session of a five-day online workshop on “Highlights of the national education policy and its implementation.”

The workshop is being organised by the Bangalore University.

The Deputy Chief Minister said the state government is going ahead with regard to this with specific goals and a clear agenda.

“A high-level task force was constituted immediately after the draft of the policy reached us and this committee has already held several meetings,” he added.

According to him, the committee has already come out with suggestions to implement the policy in a phased manner and only the recommendations of the final stage are awaited.

The administrative and legal steps would be taken as soon as the final recommendations are made, he explained.

The new policy would make high quality education available to all students benefitting the whole system with quality teaching, Narayan said.

Rahul fumes over timing of the letter

Former Congress chief says leaders should discuss differences in party platforms and not in media

New Delhi, Aug. 24: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday questioned the timing of the letter by a section of the party and attacked them for going public against the leadership, saying differences needed to be discussed in party platforms and not the media.

He also insinuated that the letter seeking leadership changes was written in cahoots with the BJP, as it came at a time when Sonia Gandhi was hospitalised and the party was fighting with the BJP in Rajasthan to save its government, sources said.

The charge invited sharp rebuttals from former minister Ghulam Nabi Azad at the meeting. Azad said he would resign if any such link with the BJP is established, the sources said.

In his brief moving intervention at the CWC, Rahul Gandhi is learnt to have said why that timing was chosen to send the letter when Sonia Gandhi was in hospital and the party was fighting the BJP in Rajasthan, insinuating that such a letter at the time would help the BJP, the sources said.

Azad, who is one of the signatories of the letter, read out the contents, saying the leaders are not questioning Sonia Gandhi and only wanted organisational reform in the larger interest of the party.

Earlier addressing the CWC, Rahul Gandhi said Sonia Gandhi had accepted the party presidency only after the committee last year urged her to take responsibility.

He took on the leaders who went public with their complaints saying, “it is the CWC where we discuss our differences and put out our thoughts, not the media.”

Meanwhile, party workers gathered at the AICC headquarters raised slogans, asserting that no one except from the Gandhi family would be acceptable as party chief. The scenes at the party headquarters were indicative of the growing tumult in the Congress with the party deeply divided on the leadership issue. Though the CWC meeting took place virtually, several Congress workers gathered outside the party’s 24 Akbar Road office and raised slogans in support of the Gandhi family.

Many carried placards like *Gandhi ke alawa adhyaksh manzoor nahi* (nobody is acceptable as president except Gandhi) and *Gandhi parivar ke alawa koi adhyaksh bana, toh party toot hi jayegi* (if anybody outside the Gandhi family becomes chief, the party will break).

As the main opposition party faces yet another internal crisis, several top leaders, including its chief ministers and state unit presidents, have rallied behind the Gandhi family, calling for Sonia to stay or Rahul Gandhi to take charge again. -PTI

CBI YET TO
SUMMON RHEA
AND FAMILYDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, AUG. 24

Actor Rhea Chakraborty’s lawyer has requested people to avoid speculations and has clarified that the actress will visit the CBI office whenever she will receive summons in the actor Sushant Singh Rajput death case.

Chakraborty’s lawyer Satish Maneshinde issued a statement on Monday as some reports earlier in the day claimed that the actress and her father Indrajit have been summoned by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as part of the probe.

The statement read, “Dear friends, Rhea Chakraborty & family have not received any summons from CBI so far. No sooner she receives it, she & family will attend as they did before Mumbai Police and ED as law abiding citizens. No speculations are necessary.”

IF RAHUL WANTS,
WE WILL QUIT
GOVT: MAHA
CONG MINISTERDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, AUG. 24

While several Congress leaders from Maha-rashtra expressed their faith in Rahul Gandhi’s leadership, state minister Vijay Wadettiwar said that the Congress will even get out of the power in Maharashtra if Mr Gandhi doesn’t want to continue alliance with Shiv Sena.

Mr Wadettiwar, who joined the Congress from Shiv Sena in 2005, said the Gandhi family has the capacity to lead the country and that Rahul Gandhi should be reinstated as the party president.

“The Congress party epitomises true democratic values, hence the letter written by some party leaders to Sonia Gandhi over demand for a full-time president should not be seen as opposition to current leadership,” he said.

Asked if Rahul Gandhi asked the Maharashtra Congress to snap ties with the Shiv Sena, Mr Wadettiwar said, “If he asks us to leave the government, we will do it immediately. We will not stay with the government one more day.”

KAMAL NATH
WANTS SONIA
AS CONG CHIEFRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, AUG. 24

Amid ongoing churning in Congress over leadership issue, former chief minister Kamal Nath on Monday threw his weight behind party’s interim president Sonia Gandhi unequivocally to continue as the chief.

Mr Nath, without the slightest hesitation, said Ms Gandhi should continue to lead the party, while fielding a question by reporters on the issue.

“I have already made it clear that Ms Gandhi should head the party”, he said.

The Congress veteran, whose proximity to the Nehru-Gandhi family being a ‘buddy’ of late Sanjay Gandhi is well known in Delhi political circles, ran a series of tweets a little past midnight on Sunday, to express his unambiguous support to Ms Gandhi to lead the party at this juncture. “It is nonsense to question Ms Gandhi’s leadership and suggest for alternative to her (to head the party). I appeal to her to continue to lead the party to strengthen it”, he tweeted.

17 injured as bldg
collapses in Maha;
70 feared trappedDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, AUG. 24

Seventeen persons were injured after a five-storeyed residential building collapsed in Maharashtra’s Raigad district on Monday.

Around 70 people are feared trapped in the debris after the building, which was around 10 years old, collapsed at Kajalpura in Mahad tehsil around 7pm.

There were around 45 flats in the building, an official said, adding 25 persons have been rescued and shifted to a local hospital at Mahad, which is around 170 km from Mumbai.

Teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been moved to the spot for rescue operations.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray spoke to the district officials and asked them to expedite



A file photo of senior Congress leaders Kapil Sibal and Ghulam Nabi Azad. Sibal and Azad rebutted after Rahul Gandhi charged that the letter seeking leadership changes was written in cahoots with the BJP, during a CWC meeting on Monday.

-PTI

5 chiefs from Nehru-Gandhi family,
13 from outside since Independence

New Delhi, Aug. 24: As a leadership crisis grips the Congress, experts having chronicled the country’s oldest political party said on Monday that it may be theoretically possible for the party to have a president outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, but not practically.

The party’s history shows that it has had at least 13 presidents from outside the Nehru-Gandhi clan since Independence as against five from its first family.

However, the family members have been at the helm for a much longer period of time as against the others.

Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi have headed the party for the majority of the period since Independence.

Sonia Gandhi, who has been its longest-serving president, offered to quit at a stormy CWC meeting on Monday after a letter from more than 20 party leaders sought organisational reforms and a collective leadership, but she was urged to stay on as the interim chief till a full-

● **AMONG THE** leaders outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, J. B. Kripalani, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Purushottam Das Tandon, U. N. Dhebar, N. Sanjiva Reddy, K. Kamaraj, S. Nijalingappa, P.V. Narasimha Rao and Sitaram Kesri among others have headed the party.

time president is appointed.

Among the leaders outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, J. B. Kripalani, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Purushottam Das Tandon, U. N. Dhebar, N. Sanjiva Reddy, K. Kamaraj, S. Nijalingappa, Jagjivan Ram, Shankar Dayal Sharma, D.K. Barooah, K. B. Reddy, P.V. Narasimha Rao and Sitaram Kesri have headed the party.

The debate over whether a person from outside the Gandhi family was re-

ignited last week when Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in a year-old but recently published interview, endorsed her brother Rahul Gandhi’s stand on a non-Gandhi president for the Congress, saying there are plenty of people capa-

ble of leading the party.

Rasheed Kidwai, senior journalist and writer of the book *24 Akbar Road*, said the key issue before the party today is about the political leadership which has always been with the Nehru-Gandhi family.

“In the first general election, the slogan was ‘A vote for Nehru is a vote for the Congress’. Even 2004 onwards, Sonia Gandhi wielded the political leadership that now resides with Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka. So the political leadership of the Congress has by and large always been with the Gandhis and even non-Gandhi presidents have owed allegiance to them,” he said.

Asked if a non-Gandhi can run the party with the Gandhi family retaining the overall leadership, he said, “Theoretically yes, practically no.” Sanjay Kumar, Director at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, said the tenure of Gandhi family presidents cannot be compared with non-Gandhi family presidents as there would be stark difference in the quantum

of tenures.

“A person from the Gandhi family is both an asset and a liability for the party. The person would be an asset as he/she acts as a glue for the party which keeps the party together. They are also a liability and that liability is coming to the fore more prominently now as the Gandhi family has not been able to inspire voters and leaders of the party,” Kumar said.

He opined that it is going to be very difficult for a non-Gandhi president to function in the prevailing situation as various factions could emerge and the pulls and pressures would be very high.

Sanjay K. Pandey, a political commentator and a professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), echoed similar views, saying it will be very difficult for a non-Gandhi president to work with the family having a dominant imprint on the party.

“Unless the Congress devises a mechanism to deal with such a scenario, the future of the party is not very bright,” he said.

-PTI

KMSS to float
political partyMANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, AUG. 24

After AASU and AJYCP, the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) has announced to float a new political party to challenge the growth of saffron brigade in Assam.

Regretting that the present government was not allowing its leader - a noted RTI activist Akhil Gogoi to come out of jail by implicating him on various charges, the KMSS president Bhasco D. Saikia said the organisation has already prepared the agenda and constitution of the party.

The party will field candidates in the upcoming elections. Also, the KMSS will hold discussions with all the organisations with which it collaborated during the recent movement against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.

In 2015 also, the KMSS had launched a political outfit with the name ‘Gana Mukti Sangram

● **IN 2015,** the KMSS had launched a political outfit with the name ‘Gana Mukti Sangram Asom’, which they have decided to dissolve.

Asom’, which they have decided to dissolve.

The new party will have a new name, which the KMSS will make public soon.

The KMSS president said that if their leader Akhil Gogoi comes out of jail by the year end, then the new party will project him as its chief ministerial candidate. “But if he fails in the legal battle, we will chalk out a different strategy,” he added.

Pointing out that the new political outfit will be a regional political force that will represent the people of every caste, religion and tribe of Assam he said, “It will not compromise on any issue related to the interests of Assam and Assamese people.”

KAPIL SIBAL
WITHDRAWS
TWEET
AGAINST RAHUL

New Delhi, Aug. 24: Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal on Monday withdrew his tweet in which he had hit out at Rahul Gandhi, and said the former party chief had informed him personally that he had never made the “colluding with the BJP” remark.

Sibal is among the 23 party leaders who have written to Sonia Gandhi seeking “full-time” leadership that is active in the field and “visible” in party offices, devolution of powers to state units and revamping of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) in line with the party constitution among other changes.

As the CWC meeting was underway on Monday and it was reported that Rahul Gandhi had lashed out at the letter writers, Sibal tweeted, “Rahul says ‘we are colluding with BJP’. Succeeded in Rajasthan High Court defending the Congress Party. Defending party in Manipur to bring down BJP government.”

“Last 30 years have never made a statement in favour of BJP on any issue. Yet ‘we are colluding with the BJP!’”

Sibal said a little later that he was withdrawing the tweet.

“Was informed by Rahul Gandhi personally that he never said what was attributed to him. I therefore withdraw my tweet,” he said.

Sibal then deleted his earlier tweet in which he had hit out at Gandhi.

Tagging Sibal’s earlier tweet, Congress’ chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala also said that Rahul Gandhi hasn’t said a word of this nature nor alluded to it.

“Please don’t be misled by false media discourse or misinformation being spread. But yes, we all need to work together in fighting the draconian Modi rule rather than fighting & hurting each other and the Congress,” Surjewala tweeted.

Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad said a section of media is “wrongly attributing that, in CWC I told Shri Rahul Gandhi to prove that the letter written by us is in collusion with BJP-let me make it very clear that Shri Rahul Gandhi has neither in CWC nor outside said that this letter was written at the behest of BJP!” -PTI

● **SIBAL IS** among the 23 party leaders who have written to Sonia Gandhi seeking “full-time” leadership that is active in the field.

CONGRESS IS ‘B’
TEAM OF BJP,
SAYS KERALA CMGILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
AUG 24

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday hit out at the Congress accusing it of becoming the “B” team of BJP and paving the way for the growth of ‘Hindutva’ forces in the country.

The stinging remarks came during the reply to the no trust motion moved against the CPM-led LDF Government by Congress-led Opposition UDF in Kerala Assembly.

As expected, the no-trust motion was defeated 87 to 40 votes (current strength is 138) after a marathon day-long session which concluded with Mr Vijayan’s nearly four-hour long reply, the longest in the history of Kerala Assembly.

Vijayan said the Congress was ganging up with the BJP-RSS to topple the LDF government in Kerala.

IN BRIEF

Austria expels Russian diplomat

Berlin: Austria said Monday it is expelling a Russian diplomat, a decision that Russia said was “unfounded” and would draw a response from Moscow. The Austrian Foreign Ministry confirmed that a diplomat at the Russian Embassy is being ordered to leave, saying only that his behavior was not compatible with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Austria Press Agency reported. The ministry said it would not give further details. Austrian daily newspaper *Kronen Zeitung* reported that the Russian diplomat has until September 1 to leave and said, without citing sources, that he allegedly had been engaged for years in economic espionage at a technology firm with the help of an Austrian citizen. In a statement posted on its website, the Russian Embassy said it was “appalled by the unfounded decision of Austrian authorities”.

June '21 set for Iran Prez poll

Tehran: Iran's constitutional watchdog on Monday set June 18 as date for the country's next presidential election, a vote that will choose the successor to President Hassan Rouhani who has served two four-year terms in office. The watchdog, the Guardian Council, approved the date, Iranian election headquarters chief Jamal Orf told the official *IRNA* news agency. Candidates hoping to run in the balloting are to apply in early April for approval; the final list is to be announced in early June. Under Iranian law, an incumbent president cannot run for a third term if he has already served for two consecutive terms in office. Rouhani was first elected in 2013 and re-elected four years later. Rouhani has been under increasing pressure from the US sanctions since President Donald Trump two years ago pulled America out of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

Trump adviser Conway resigns

Washington: US President Donald Trump's top adviser Kellyanne Conway has resigned abruptly and will leave the White House this month to focus on her children, giving them “less drama, more mama”. Conway, 53, is among the key speakers on day three of the Republican National Convention (RNC) which begins on Monday, according to a list released by the Trump campaign. Now it is unclear if she would still speak at the convention, which will formally nominate Trump as the party's presidential candidate in the November 3 election, the US media reports said. In a statement, Conway said: “I will be transitioning from the White House at the end of this month. George (her husband) is also making changes”. Her husband George Conway, a vocal critic of President Trump, also made a similar statement on Twitter. “I'm withdrawing from Project Lincoln to devote more time to family matters. And I'll be taking a Twitter hiatus.”

POMPEO: ARAB WORLD, ISRAEL TIES LIKELY

Jerusalem, Aug. 24: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said he hoped other Arab countries would also establish diplomatic relations with Israel as he kicked off a Mideast tour on Monday to press the momentum of the Trump administration's Arab-Israeli peace push. Pompeo spoke at a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, the first stop on a multi-country tour of the region following the August 13 announcement of the historic agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, brokered by Washington, to establish diplomatic ties.

“I am hopeful that we will see other Arab nations join in this,” Pompeo said. “The opportunity for them to work alongside, to recognise the state of Israel and to work alongside them will not only increase Middle East stability, but it will improve the lives for the people of their own countries as well.” The Israel-UAE agreement delivered a key foreign policy victory to President Donald Trump as he seeks reelection and reflected a changing Middle East in which shared concerns about arch-enemy Iran have largely overtaken traditional Arab support for the Palestinians.



Police and military secure the site of an explosion in the town of Jolo, Sulu province, Philippines on Monday. — AP

Philippines bombings: 14 dead, 75 wounded

Twin strikes in island that is stronghold of Islamist militants

Jolo, Philippines, Aug. 24: At least 14 people were killed and 75 wounded — including members of the security forces and civilians — in twin bombings Monday involving a suicide attacker on a southern Philippine island that is a stronghold of Islamist militants, officials said.

The apparently coordinated attacks happened in Jolo in Muslim-majority Sulu, where government-backed security forces have long been fighting the Abu Sayyaf group.

Seven soldiers, a police officer, and six civilians were killed in the two bombings, the first at around midday when an improvised explosive device attached to a motorcycle parked outside a supermarket

blew up, Lieutenant General Corleto Vinluan said.

That was followed by a second blast a short time later in the same street when a suicide attacker blew herself up as security forces cordoned off the area, Vinluan said.

A soldier had been trying to apprehend the bomber when she detonated her explosives, he added. A total of 48 civilians were also wounded along with 21 soldiers and six police.

A soldier saw a person leave the motorbike outside the grocery store “where there were a lot of people” including members of the military. It immediately detonated, Lieutenant Colonel Ronaldo Mateo said. “Our soldiers are conducting security opera-

tions. That was the time that the improvised explosive device detonated,” he said. Abu Sayyaf was “most probably” behind the double bombing, Mateo said.

Listed by the United States as a terrorist organisation, Abu Sayyaf is a loose network of Islamic militants blamed for the Philippines' worst terror attacks as well as kidnappings of foreign tourists and Christian missionaries.

They also have ties to Islamic State militants seeking to set up a caliphate in Southeast Asia.

Monday's attacks come after the arrest earlier this month of an Abu Sayyaf leader on the southern island of Mindanao.

Security forces had been

on alert for possible reprisal attacks after detaining Abduljihad Susukan, who is accused of kidnapping and beheading several foreigners. He has been charged with 23 murders, five kidnappings and six attempted murders, police have said. President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque condemned the “dastardly attacks” and issued condolences to the families and loved ones of those killed.

“We call on the residents of Jolo to stay vigilant and report suspicious personalities and unattended items in their areas,” Roque said. The Philippine Coast Guard issued a “red alert” for Sulu and several other areas in the restive south.

— AP

Protest erupts after Wisconsin police shoot man from behind

One killed after 3 shot inside Lexington mall

Lexington (US), Aug. 24: Three people were shot inside a Kentucky mall Sunday, and one of them was later pronounced dead, police said.

The Lexington Police Department said in a post on social media that the shooting occurred around 4 p.m. outside of a store at the Fayette Mall.

Police said later that the shooting did not appear to be random.

“It appears from the

information that we've gathered thus far that the persons involved knew each other.”

Lexington Police Chief Lawrence Weathers told reporters. “We know at least the intended target may have known the suspect.”

Officers evacuated the mall and checked each store. Three people were taken to a hospital, Weathers said.

— AP

THREE POLICE OFFICERS SHOT WHILE RESPONDING TO CALL IN MARYLAND

Hyattsville (US), Aug. 24: Three police officers were shot while responding to a call Sunday evening in Maryland, police said.

The shooting happened around 6:30 p.m. in Hyattsville, a city about 32 miles (52 kilometres) southwest of Baltimore, the Prince George's

County Police Department said on its Twitter page.

Police returned gunfire, and two men were in custody. The men were not struck, police said. The injured officers have been transported to a hospital for treatment. The conditions of the officers were not known.

— AP

China launches advanced warship for Pakistan Navy

Beijing/Islamabad, Aug. 24: China has launched first of the four advanced naval warships it is building for Pakistan, amid deepening economic and defence ties between the two all-weather allies. The launching ceremony for the first warship was held at the Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai on Sunday.

Pakistan-China defence ties turn a new chapter with the launch of the first ship of Type-054 class frigate, Pakistan's state-run APP news agency reported. The Type-054 class, equipped with the latest surface, subsurface, anti-air weapons, combat management system, and sensors will be one of the technologically advanced surface platforms of the Pakistan Navy fleet, the report said.

Pakistan signed a contract with the China Shipbuilding Trading Company Ltd. (CSTC) for the delivery of two Type-054

A/P frigates in 2017. Last year, the Chinese official media reported that under a major arms deal between the two all-weather allies, China would build four advanced frigates for Pakistan Navy.

The terms of the deal and the price of the ships were not revealed. The launching of the ship coincided with the 2nd strategic dialogue between Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi and his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi held at the Chinese holiday resort of Hainan on August 21.

Meanwhile in Islamabad, Foreign Minister Qureshi said on Monday that China and Pakistan were strategic partners.

He said the cooperative relationship between Pakistan and China was an answer to objections regarding the ambitious \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). — PTI

PAK: S. ARABIA DIDN'T DEMAND MONEY BACK

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUGUST 24

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi Monday said that Saudi Arabia had not demanded of Pakistan to return loan neither Riyadh had stopped oil supplies.

Speaking at a news conference here, there was no change in the stance of Saudi Arabia on Kashmir.

“Both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are discussing different proposals. The OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) has several times passed unambiguous resolutions in support of the Kashmiri people,” he added.

Kin confront NZ mosque shooter at sentencing

Christchurch, Aug. 24: Families and survivors had their first chance to confront the white supremacist who slaughtered 51 worshippers in a mass shooting at two New Zealand mosques as his four-day sentencing hearing began Monday.

“You killed your own humanity, and I don't think the world will forgive you for your horrible crime,” said a tearful Maysoon Salama, the mother of 33-year-old Atta Elayyan, who was killed in March 2019 attacks.

“You thought you can break us. You failed miserably.” The gunman, 29-year-old Australian Brenton Harrison Tarrant, ple-

aded guilty in March to 51 counts of murder, 40 counts of attempted murder and one count of terrorism — the first terrorism conviction in New Zealand's history.

He could become the first person in New Zealand to be sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, the toughest sentence available.

Tarrant was brought into the Christchurch High Court shackled and wearing a gray prison outfit. In the dock, unshackled and surrounded by five officers, he showed little emotion throughout the hearing. He occasionally looked around the

room, tapped his fingers, and watched the survivors as they spoke.

The courtroom was only half full due to coronavirus distancing requirements, while many others watched from adjacent courtrooms where the hearing was streamed. Survivors and family members occasionally wept and comforted each other.

Two dozen victims and family members told the court about the pain of losing husbands, wives, sons and brothers. Some had family members around them for support, others spoke through translators or on pre-recorded videos from abroad.

— AP

3 Belarus Oppn activists detained

Minsk (Belarus), Aug. 24: Belarusian authorities on Monday detained three leading opposition activists who have helped spearhead a wave of protests demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian president of 26 years following his reelection that opponents say was rigged.

The Coordination Council established by the opposition to negotiate a transfer of power said police detained members Sergei Dylevsky and Olga Kovalkova in Belarus' capital, Minsk. Later in the day, the opposition also reported the detention of Alexander Lavrinovich, the leader of striking workers at a major industrial plant.

The police actions signal President Alexander Lukashenko's determination to stifle massive post-election demonstrations that have entered their third week. He toted an assault rifle in a show of force as he arrived at his residence by helicopter on Sunday while protesters rallied nearby. Last week, he warned that the opposition council's members could face criminal accusations. — AFP

BORDER ROW WITH LITHUANIA OVER BALLOONS

Vilnius, Aug. 24: Lithuania and Belarus on Monday traded accusations over their border after the release of balloons during a demonstration in Lithuania in solidarity with Belarusian protesters. Lithuania said a Belarusian military helicopter crossed the European Union and NATO state's border minutes before thousands of people linked hands in a human chain stretching from the capital Vilnius to the border with Belarus on Sunday.

“The Belarusian ambassador was summoned to the foreign ministry and a protest note was handed over the state border violation,” the ministry said in a statement.

The Belarusian defence ministry said it had countered an “attempted violation” of its airspace by “a probe made up of eight balloons with anti-government symbols”. — AFP

NEW FINDINGS

Instances of people discharged from hospitals and testing positive again reported in China

HK reports first documented Coronavirus re-infection

Hong Kong, Aug. 24: A Hong Kong man who recovered from Covid-19 was infected again four-and-a-half months later in the first documented instance of human re-infection, researchers at the University of Hong Kong said on Monday. The findings indicate the disease, which has killed more than 800,000 people worldwide, may continue to spread amongst the global population despite herd immunity, they said.

The 33-year-old male was cleared of Covid-19 and discharged from a hospital in April, but tested posi-

tive again after returning from Spain via Britain on Aug. 15.

The patient had appeared to be previously healthy, researchers said in the paper, which was accepted by the international medical journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

He was found to have contracted a different Coronavirus strain from the one he had previously contracted and remained asymptomatic for the second infection.

“The finding does not mean taking vaccines will be useless,” Dr. Kai-Wang To, one of the leading

authors of the paper, told *Reuters*. “Immunity induced by vaccination can be different from those induced by natural infection.” To said. “(We) will need to wait for the results of the vaccine trials to see if how effective vaccines are.”

World Health Organisation (WHO) epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove said on Monday that there was no need to jump to any conclusions in response to the Hong Kong case.

Instances of people discharged from hospitals and testing positive again for Covid-19 infection have been reported in mainland

China. However, in those cases it was not clear whether they had contracted the virus again after full recovery — as happened to the Hong Kong patient — or still had the virus in their body from the initial infection.

The preliminary number of patients in China who tested positive again once being discharged from hospital was 5%-15%, Wang Guiliang, an infectious disease specialist in China's expert group for Covid-19 treatment, said during a press briefing in May. One explanation was that the virus still existed

in the lungs of patients but was not detected in samples taken from upper parts of the respiratory tract, he said. Other possible causes were low sensitivity of tests and weak immunity that could lead to persistent positive results, he added.

Jeffrey Barrett, an expert and consultant with the Covid-19 Genome Project at Britain's Wellcome Sanger Institute, said in emailed comments to *Reuters* that it was very hard to make any strong inference from a single observation.

— Reuters

VITALLY IMPORTANT TO GET CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL: UK PM TO PARENTS

London, Aug. 24: It is vitally important to get children back into schools after the lengthy Covid-19 lockdown as being kept away from classrooms for a longer period would be far more damaging than the deadly virus, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in a direct appeal to parents on Monday.

His appeal comes as different parts of the country prepare for the end of the summer break and the sta-

rt of a new school term, with Scotland and Northern Ireland first in line followed by England and Wales from next week.

Reiterating a joint statement issued by England's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and his counterparts from different parts of the United Kingdom over the weekend, Johnson said the risk posed to children from the deadly virus is very small.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

TURKEY FLOOD: DEATH TOLL RISES TO 7

Ankara: Turkish rescue workers on Monday recovered the body of another victim of severe weekend floods that swept along Turkey's Black Sea coast, raising the death toll to seven, officials said. At least nine other people were reported missing. Helicopters hovered above the town of Dereli and the surrounding region in support of the search-and-rescue mission, which was launched after flooding caused by heavy rain washed away roads and buildings late Saturday. Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu, who travelled to the region to oversee the rescue operation, said one more body was recovered early Monday. The private *DHA* news agency said the victim was a police officer who was riding inside a vehicle that was swept away by floodwater and fell into a ravine while heading to the disaster area. Two other police officers who were in the vehicle already had been confirmed dead. Two more officers and the operator of a mechanical digger are among the missing. Excavators were seen Monday clearing mud and debris in Dereli, which lies 12 miles (20 kilometres) inland from the Black Sea in Giresun province. — *AP*

CONTAMINATED WATER: 500 FALL ILL IN CHINA

Beijing: Hundreds of people in eastern China have been infected with bacteria which can cause dysentery after drinking contaminated water, state media said Monday, prompting the closure of a local water plant. Nearly 500 people in the rural town of Baoyi — about 550 kilometres (342 miles) west of Shanghai — have developed fever and diarrhoea since late last week. A report by the local government published Sunday found they have been infected with the shigella bacteria — a genus of microbes that can cause dysentery. The town's water supply has been shut down and nearly 300 people have been hospitalised, county officials said. Video footage posted on social media by the state-run *People's Daily* on Monday showed patients sitting in rows of beds in a local hospital. Many of the patients were elderly or children, according to the newspaper. Fears over the safety of drinking water remain a problem for much of China — including its wealthiest cities, where many residents rely on bottled or boiled water. China's Ministry of Water Resources had improved water supply services for 256 million rural residents across the country by the end of July. — *AP*

MANY ALLOWED TO BYPASS CLIMATE RULES

Washington, Aug. 24: Thousands of oil and gas operations, government facilities and other sites have won permission to stop monitoring for hazardous emissions or otherwise bypass rules intended to protect health and the environment because of the Coronavirus outbreak, *The Associated Press* has found. The result: Approval for less environmental monitoring at some Texas refineries and at an army depot dismantling warheads armed with nerve gas in Kentucky, manure piling up and the mass disposal of livestock carcasses at farms in Iowa and Minnesota, and other increased risks to communities as governments eased enforcement over smokestacks, medical waste shipments, sewage plants, oilfields and chemical plants. The Trump administration paved the way for the reduced monitoring March 26 after being pressured by the oil and gas industry, which said lockdowns and social distancing during the pandemic made it difficult to comply with pollution rules.

States are responsible for much of the oversight of federal environmental laws, and many followed with their own policies. *AP*'s two-month review found that waivers were granted in more than 3,000 cases, representing the overwhelming majority of requests citing the outbreak. Hundreds were approved for oil and gas companies. *AP* reached out to all 50 states citing open-records laws; all but one, New York, provided at least partial information, reporting the data in differing ways and with varying level of detail. Almost all those requesting waivers told regulators they wanted to minimise risks for workers and the public.

4 yrs on, Amatrice remembers Italy's earthquake dead

Rome, Aug. 24: Bells rang out before dawn Monday in the Italian town of Amatrice to honour the nearly 300 people killed four years ago in an earthquake that remains an open sore with so little rebuilt. The 6.0 magnitude quake cost 299 lives when it razed much of Amatrice and pummelled the neighbouring villages of Accumoli and Pescara del Tronto in the rugged, hilly region early on August 24, 2016.

On Monday church bells sounded at exactly 3:36 am, the moment the quake struck the sleeping villages, as the names of the dead were read out, Italian news reports said.

In Rome Italian President Sergio Mattarella voiced his "solidarity with all the victims and their families... on a dramatic night which also displaced more than 40,000" people whose homes, work places or schools were hit.

But Mattarella said "the work of rebuilding the destroyed localities is unfinished and continues with difficulty," particularly because of bureaucracy.

In a press release, he called on the Italian state to "demonstrate determination and efficiency at all levels." The Italian daily *La Repubblica* recently published an official report saying that as little as eight percent of rebuilding work had been done in the last four years.

The majority of work still in the pipeline "is still far from being completed or has not even started," the paper reported.

"To date, only 186 public interventions have been carried out, out of the 2,347 planned, that is to say a miserly 7.92 percent," the paper said.

Private projects, however, were further along, it added. Examples of slow progress include schools, where out of 250 planned projects, 75 have not yet started and 144 others were still in the planning stages. None of the nine hospital projects and none of the 126 municipal projects have begun, the paper added.

Regarding housing, "only seven out of 311 rebuilds have been carried out," it said. — *AFP*

Half of world's oceans hit by climate change

Pacific, Aug. 24: The world's oceans have turned into a veritable sponge for our emissions, and new climate models suggest we've soaked them right through.

Since the 1950s, our planet's vast bodies of water have absorbed roughly 93 percent of the energy entering the climate system, and while most of that heating has been observed near the ocean surface, rising temperatures are now permeating even the deepest parts.

Real-world data on the deep ocean is hard to come by, but a new estimate, based on recent measurements and nearly a dozen climate models, suggests climate change has already impacted up to about half (20 to 55 percent) of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Ocean basins. What's more, in just six decades, these human-induced changes in temperature and salinity could very well spread to 80 percent of the world's oceans. "We were interested in whether the levels of temperatures and salt were great enough to overcome natural variability in these deeper areas," explains climate scientist Yona Silvy from Sorbonne University in France. "That is, if they had risen or fallen higher than they ever would during the normal peaks and troughs."

Using temperature and salinity measurements

● **SINCE THE 1950s, our planet's vast bodies of water have absorbed roughly 93 percent of the energy entering the climate system, and while most of that heating has been observed near the ocean surface, rising temperatures are now permeating even the deepest parts.**

from the deep ocean and plugging these into 11 current climate models, the team simulated ocean and atmospheric circulation over the years, with and without the contribution of human emissions.

During the second half of the 20th century, Silvy and her colleagues found human-induced warming was responsible for most observed ocean changes — "statistically" and "unambiguously" different from what would occur naturally. Because heat and salt impact ocean density and circulation, this could have widespread implications. "This affects global ocean circulation, sea level rise, and poses a threat to human societies and ecosystems," says Silvy. Most of the time, heat and salt from the surface of the ocean are transported relatively slowly. — *Agencies*

Storm Laura hammers Haiti, Dominican Republic, kills 12

Brought torrential rainfall, flooding, cut off villages, left many in dark

Port-Au-Prince, Aug. 24: Two hurricanes are expected to slam into the US Gulf Coast in the coming days, forecasters said Sunday, as Tropical Storm Laura killed at least 12 people when it struck Haiti and the Dominican Republic. US media said twin hurricanes were unprecedented in the Gulf of Mexico since records began 150 years ago.

Tropical Storm Marco strengthened into a hurricane with winds of 75 miles (120 kilometres) per hour, and is forecast to hit the state of Louisiana on Monday. Tropical Storm Laura hammered Haiti and the Dominican Republic with heavy rain, killing at least 12 people — 9 in Haiti and three in the Dominican Republic.

It was set to become a hurricane on Tuesday that could hit the US coastal region on Wednesday. The US National Hurricane Center said Storm Laura was "bringing torrential rainfall and life-threatening flooding" to Haiti, which shares Hispaniola island with the Dominican Republic. The storm killed three people in the Dominican Republic's capital Santo Domingo, said Juan Manuel Mendez, head of the country's Center of Emergency Operations.

A woman and a child died at home, while a young man died when a tree fell on his home, Mendez said. The storm has flooded houses, cut off remote villages and left more than one million Dominicans in the dark, Mendez added.

In neighbouring Haiti, a 10-year-old girl was among the nine dead, authorities said. They said some homes were flooded and evacuations were underway.

With brown water up to their knees, some residents tried to save what they could from their flooded homes, while street traders saw their goods washed away. "I didn't know there was bad weather forecast. We don't even have electricity in my neighbourhood so I couldn't follow the news on the radio," said Sony Joseph, trembling with cold.

The Atlantic storm season, which runs through November, could be one of the busiest ever this year, with the Hurricane Center predicting as many as 25 named storms. Laura is the 12th so far.

Haiti, a country of 11 million, has seen a relatively low incidence of Covid-19 — with just over 8,000 cases and around 200 deaths to date — but authorities urged caution to prevent further spread in the aftermath of Storm Laura. "Wear your masks and respect distances, especially in temporary shelters," Interior Minister Audain Fils Bernadel said at a briefing Saturday.

"With Covid, we have considerably less capacity in our shelters." Storms



People walk in a flooded street in the neighbourhood of Pétienville, Haiti, during the passage of Tropical Storm Laura on Sunday. — *AFP*

Offshore oil and gas production crimped by approaching storms

● **THE INTERIOR Department said that based on company reports at midday, 114 platforms had been evacuated. That is 18% of the staffed platforms in the Gulf, but they account for 58% of Gulf oil production and 45% of its natural gas output.**

Oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico was slowed Sunday by the approach of two storms that led companies to remove workers from more than 100 offshore platforms.

The Interior Department said that based on company reports at midday, 114 platforms had been evacuated. That is 18% of the staffed platforms in the Gulf, but they account for 58% of Gulf oil production and 45% of its natural gas output.

Energy companies are also moving drilling rigs used to explore for oil and gas. Hurricane Marco is closer to the Gulf coast, but forecasters are more concerned about Tropical Storm Laura, which is expected to reach hurri-

cane status before slamming the coast around midweek.

A spokesman for Norway's Equinor said Sunday that workers were taken off the company's Titan platform, and production was stopped.

Over the last few days, Exxon, Chevron, BP and Shell also began evacuating some platforms and drilling rigs. A Shell spokesman said workers will be screened for Covid-19 before returning to offshore facilities.

Operators in the Gulf often evacuate offshore workers when the forecast calls for hurricanes or tropical storms. The impact on production is usually short-lived.

Patrick DeHaan, an analyst for SeaBuddy, said gasoline inventories are high, and the storms are unlikely to move pump prices unless refineries on land are damaged.

"Gasoline demand is weakening seasonally, and along with Covid-19, demand is running around

15% below last year," he said. "There is likely enough breathing room that even if a few refineries had to slow production of gasoline down, there should not be much if any impact to retail gasoline prices in the region or nationally."

The Gulf Coast is home to many major refineries that are near sea level. In 2017, Hurricane Harvey stalled over Houston, dumping so much rain that flooding knocked out nearly one-fourth of the nation's refining capacity. That led to gasoline shortages, panic buying and long lines at service stations throughout Texas.

Offshore, the Gulf accounts for a little less than one-fifth of US oil production. — *Agencies*

3 years after Harvey, some in Houston still waiting for help

Houston, Aug. 24: Some Houston residents say they endured difficult, often hazardous living conditions while waiting months, even years for help from the city to fix flood-damaged homes after Hurricane Harvey. Sleeping in a closet because it was the only space that didn't reek of mold.

Dealing with rodents and roaches that would come in through warped or rotted flooring. Couch surfing at 67 years old until patchwork repairs made a home temporarily

habitable. Those were just some of the things people dealt with as they waited for help they say never came, despite submitting — and resubmitting — paperwork.

Three years after Harvey, some Houston residents feel angry and abandoned as their repair efforts were bogged down by a city programme they described as slow and bureaucratic. The programme has finished rebuilding less than 70 homes since it started January 2019. Some residents, like

70-year-old Doris Brown, turned to nonprofits and the state. They also formed a group — the Harvey Forgotten Survivors Caucus — to bring attention to their plight.

"We have a right to be angry. We past angry now. We mad as hell," said Brown, whose home had to be rebuilt because of mold. City officials admit the repair programme's progress has been slow but blame this partly on the Texas General Land Office, or GLO, which oversees the funding. — *AP*

Big Calif. wildfires rage on as death toll reaches 7

Scotts Valley (US), Aug. 24: Three massive wildfires chewed through parched Northern California landscape Sunday as firefighters raced to dig breaks and make other preparations ahead of a frightening weather system packing high winds and more of the lightning that sparked the huge blazes. There were hundreds of other wildfires burning Sunday across the state and nearly 250,000 people were under evacuation orders and warnings. The death toll from the fires reached 7 after authorities battling a big fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Francisco announced the discovery of the body of a 70-year-old man in a remote area called Last Chance. He had been reported missing and police had to use a helicopter to reach the area of about 40 off-the-grid homes at the end of a windy, steep dirt road north of the city of Santa Cruz. The area was under an evacuation order and Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department Chief Deputy Chris Clark said the discovery of the man's body served as a reminder of how



The LNU Lightning Complex fire continues to spread in Fairfield, California. — *AFP*

important it was for residents to evacuate from fire danger zones.

"This is one of the darkest periods we've been in with this fire," he said. California over the last week has been hit by 650 wildfires across the state, many sparked by more than 12,000 lightning strikes recorded since August 15.

There are 14,000 firefighters, 2,400 engines and 95 aircraft battling the fires. The Santa Cruz fire is one of three "complexes", or groups of fires, burning on all sides of the San Francisco Bay Area. All were started by lightning.

Fire crew made slow progress battling the blazes over the weekend, which

included a break in the unseasonably warm weather and little wind. But the National Weather Service issued a "red flag" warning through Monday afternoon for the drought-stricken area, meaning extremely dangerous fire conditions including high temperatures, low humidity, lightning and wind

gusts up to 65 mph (105 kph) that officials said "may result in dangerous and unpredictable fire behaviour". A fire in wine country north of San Francisco and another southeast of the city have with-

in a week have grown to be two of the three largest fires in state history, with both burning more than 500 square miles (1,295 square kilometres). The wind countryfire has been the most deadly and destructive blaze, accounting for five deaths and 845 destroyed homes and other buildings. Three of the victims were in a home that was under an evacuation order. Officials surveying maps at command centres are astonished by the sheer size of the fires, said Cal Fire spokesman Brice Bennett. "You could overlay half of one of these fires and it covers the entire city of San Francisco," Bennett said Sunday.

In Southern California, an 11-day-old blaze held steady at just under 50 square miles (106 square kilometres) near Lake Hughes in northern Los Angeles County. — *AP*

Firefighters dig in ahead of high winds

Scotts Valley (US), Aug. 24: Three massive wildfires chewed through parched Northern California landscape Sunday as firefighters raced to dig breaks and make other preparations ahead of a frightening weather system. At the CZU Lightning Complex fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains, south of San Francisco, authorities said their effort was hindered by people who refused to heed evacuation orders and those who were using the chaos to steal.

Santa Cruz County Sheriff Jim Hart said 100 officers were patrolling and anyone not authorised to be in an evacuation zone would be arrested. "What we're hearing from the community is that there's a lot of looting going on," Hart said. He said eight people have been arrested or cited and "there's going to be more".

He and county District Attorney Jeff Rosell expressed anger at what Rosell called the "absolutely soulless" people who seek to victimize those already victimized by the fire. Among the victims was a fire commander who was robbed while helping coordinate efforts on Saturday. Someone entered the commander's fire vehicle and stole personal items, including a wallet and "drained his bank account", said Chief Mark Brunton, a battalion chief for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire).

"I can't imagine a bigger low-life," Hart said, promising to catch him and vowing "the DA is going to hammer him". The Santa Cruz fire is one of the "complexes", or groups of fires, burning on all sides of the San Francisco Bay Area. — *AP*

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,799.08	0.95
Nifty 50	11,466.45	0.83
S&P 500*	3,420.46	0.69
Dollar (₹)	74.31	0.71
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.24	1.55
Euro (₹)	87.81	0.72
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,668.348	0.67
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	44.99	0.64
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.221	0.082
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.627	-0.013

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Happiest Minds Tech proposes ₹110 crore IPO

Bengaluru-based IT services firm Happiest Minds Technologies has received market regulator Sebi's approval to float initial public offer. The offer comprises a fresh issuance of shares worth ₹110 crore and an offer for sale of up to 3.56 crore equity shares, according to the draft red herring prospectus. Its promoter Ashok Soota was also the founding CMD of Mindtree. Prior to this, he was the vice-chairman of Wipro.

Facebook to pay \$118 m to France in back-date tax



Facebook's French subsidiary has agreed to pay more than 100 million euros (\$118 million) in back taxes, including a penalty, after a ten-year audit of its accounts by French tax authorities, the company said on Monday. France, which is pushing hard to overhaul international tax rules on digital companies, has said the big tech groups pay too little tax in the country where they have significant sales.

Centre extends driving licence's validity to Dec. 31

The government has extended the validity of expiring driving licence and other motor vehicle documents until December 31 in view of rising Coronavirus cases in the country. This is the third such extension after the earlier advisories issued on March 30 and June 9. Earlier, the validity was extended till September 30. The government said this step aims to help out the citizens in availing transport-related services.

Vietnam tech firm sues TikTok for copyright

Vietnamese technology firm VNG is suing TikTok saying it does not have adequate licences for the songs being used in its videos, sources said on Monday. VNG is accusing the Chinese company of using audio tracks owned by Zing, a VNG subsidiary, without the company's consent, sources said. A petition seeks damages from TikTok and demands that it ceases use of Zing's music. — Reuters

Printed & Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press at Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd., #563/9/D&9/E, Behind Andhra Bank Pet Basheerbagh, Kompally, Ranga Reddy Dist. Editor: T.Venkatram Reddy, RNI Reg No.APENG/2008/24282. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle ® is prohibited.

Kalyan Jewellers plans ₹1,000-cr public issue

■ DRHP filed; promoter to offload shares worth ₹250 cr SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 24

Kalyan Jewellers has filed a draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with SEBI to raise ₹1,750 crore through an Initial Public Offering, which could be one of the largest IPOs in the jewellery retail segment. The IPO comprises of equity shares of face value of ₹10 each of Kalyan Jewellers aggregating up to ₹1,750 crore, comprising a fresh issue of ₹1,000 crore and an offer for sale of ₹750 crore, comprising up to Rs 250 crore by promoter T.S. Kalyanaraman and up to ₹500 crore by Highdell Investment, a portfolio company of Warburg Pincus. The net proceeds from the fresh issue will be utilised towards working capital requirements and for general corporate purposes. The Kerala-based company now has a pan-India presence with 107 showrooms across India as well as 30 showrooms located in the Middle East as of June 30, 2020. Promoters currently hold 76 per cent stake in the company while rest of the 24 per cent is held by Warburg Pincus. Warburg Pincus had invested Rs 1200 crore in Kalyan Jewellers in 2014 and had pumped in another Rs 500 crore in 2017. In FY20, revenue from operations of Kalyan Jewellers stood at ₹10,100 crore, of which 78.19 per cent was from India and 21.81 per cent was from the Middle East.

PNB to raise funds via market

New Delhi, Aug. 24: The country's second largest state-owned lender Punjab National Bank on Monday said that it does not envisage approaching the government for capital support rather it intends to raise funds from the market, which seems to have appetite for the public sector banking space. The bank has shareholders' approval for raising ₹14,000 crore, comprising ₹7,000 crore of the equity alone, from the market to meet COVID-related impact and finance growth, Punjab National Bank managing director S.S.

WE ARE confident of going to the market with respect to Tier II and Tier I bonds during Q2 and Q3 while we are looking at the end of Q3 or during Q4 for QIP (qualified institutional placement),”

S.S. MALLIKARJUNA RAO, Chairman, PNB

Mallikarjuna Rao said in a virtual interaction. “As on today, it does not appear (approach government for capital). If you look at market appetite also there is intent to contribute to public sector space in general,” he said. This is evident from the recent issuance of Tier II bonds of Bank of Baroda and PNB as coupon rates were reasonable, he said.

“There is an appetite in the market. So, unless we test in the market, it would not be appropriate for us to think of government for contribution... We are confident of going to the market with respect to Tier II and Tier I bonds during Q2 and Q3 while we are looking at the end of Q3 or during Q4 for QIP (qualified institutional placement),” he said. — PTI

Aug. deals at 10-year high

New York, Aug. 24: Companies raised the most funds in global equity and debt markets for August in a decade as homebound bankers spend their summer fixing deals off the back of trillions of dollars of stimulus worldwide to fight the pandemic. Companies have raised \$65.5 billion through IPOs and high-yield bond issuances globally so far in August, the highest for that month in at least 10 years, according to Refinitiv data. They raised \$98.6 billion in July

and \$126.5 billion in June, which was the highest in 20 years. It comes as governments and central banks have made at least \$15 trillion of stimulus available to help economies withstand the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic. The fact that bankers and investors were working during the traditional August holiday month, due to coronavirus travel restrictions, also made it easier for deals to be executed, corporate advisors said. “The liquidity in

financial markets is the key point driving the number of deals we have seen in August,” said Rishi Jalan, Citigroup's co-head of Asia debt syndicate, noting the pandemic had helped speed up the corporate deal process in some ways. “People have adapted to the current environment. Roadshows have been turned into calls and investors are making themselves available quickly, people are engaging with deals at short notice,” he said. — Reuters

Stamp duty cut to boost realty

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 24

In order to boost real estate transactions during the festive season, some of the states are planning to cut stamp duty rates and registration charges. Maharashtra and Karnataka are mulling a reduction in stamp duty and registration charges this festive season beginning with Ganesh Chaturthi, according to Anarock Property Consultants. Stamp duty charges in Karnataka are five per

cent for properties costing more than ₹35 lakh, 3 per cent for properties priced between ₹21 lakh to ₹35 lakh and two per cent for properties up to ₹20 lakh. A lower stamp duty for affordable properties was announced in the last state budget and it might be extended to properties above ₹35 lakh as well. In Maharashtra, stamp duty charges are five per cent in key cities like Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur and Nashik and six per cent in others. A 2-3 per cent reduction in rates

will result in significant savings for homebuyers. Stamp duty rates in other major states largely hover anywhere between 5-8 per cent, but states like Delhi, UP, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana offer relaxation of 1-2 per cent in stamp duty for women buyers. “To ease inventory pile-up and cost overruns, many players have already topped off discounts with added incentives such as booking amount refunds, statutory fees waivers, cash-back

schemes, easy payment structuring and assorted freebies. A stamp duty rate cut could push sales into the green during the festive season,” said Anuj Puri, chairman, Anarock Property Consultants. In previous unprecedented times of extreme market stress – such as post structural reforms like demonetisation and Real Estate Regulatory Authority – some state governments had given concessions to boost their sluggish real estate markets.

Four SBI MDs vie for bank's chairman post

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

With the tenure of incumbent chairman of State Bank of India (SBI) Rajnish Kumar ending on October 7, the government has reportedly scheduled a virtual interview for the post on August 28. As per a top source in the finance ministry, all the four managing directors (MDs) of the bank will appear for the interview on August 28. “Earlier, three candidates – the bank's managing directors Arijit Basu, Dinesh Khara and SC Setty – were asked to attend the interview. After Ashwani Bhatia, who has

FOUR SBI managing directors are in the race for the chairman's post. The bank will also a new vacancy for an MD post after Arijit Basu retires in the end of October though he is also vying for the chairman's post.

recently resigned as SBI MF MD, took over as fourth SBI MD on August 24, he was also told to appear for the interview,” the source said. “Although all the aspiring candidates have been intimated by the concerned authority over telephone, no official communication for the inter-

Mittal hints at hike in mobile data tariff

New Delhi, Aug. 24: Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal on Monday hinted at an increase in mobile services prices in the next six months, saying that data at low rates is not sustainable for the telecom industry.



He said that 16 GB data consumption a month for ₹160 is a tragedy. “You either consume 1.6 GB of capacity per month either at this price point or you may prepare to pay a lot more. We are not wanting \$50-60 like the US or Europe but certainly \$2 for 16 GB a month is not sustainable,” Mittal said at an event. Mittal also said that the average revenue per user (ARPU) is expected to cross ₹200 in six months on digital content consumption. ARPU is the

measure of revenue generated per user for a telco. “We need a ₹300 ARPU in which you will still have lower end at ₹100 a month with decent amount of data. But if your consumption is largely around watching TV, movies, entertainment and depriving other vital special services networks, then you need to pay for that,” Mittal said at the launch of a book written by Bharti Enterprises execu-

tive Akhil Gupta. Airtel reported an increase in the ARPU to ₹157 in the first quarter ended June 30, 2020. The rise in ARPU came after the tariff hike by Bharti Airtel in December 2019. Mittal said that while telecom operators have served the nation during the difficult times, the industry needs to invest in 5G, more optical fibres, submarine cables etc. “Businesses which are not in telecom, also need to adopt digital. You should see solid ARPUs building up in the next 5-6 months for the industry to be sustainable. We are down to 2-3 players now. India is a very price conscious market. In six months time, we should be crossing the mark of ₹200 for sure and ₹250 would be ideal,” Mittal said.

Markets get boost from global cues

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, AUG. 24

Despite a higher number of new Covid-19 cases being reported across the world, market indices in the country moved up to a six-month-high owing to positive global cues, government announcement providing GST relief to smaller businesses, measures for unlocking of the economy and measures to protect domestic chemicals industry.

CONTINUING RALLY in the broader market has brought midcap and small-cap indices closer to their one-year high. BSE SMALL-cap index gained 1.57 per cent closing at 14,855.09 while the 52-week high is 14,946.21. BSE Mid-cap index gained 0.44 per cent to close at 15,019.07 while the 52-week high is 15,930.78.

The Sensex gained 0.95 per cent or 364.36 per cent to close at 38,799.08 and the Nifty-50 gained 0.83 per cent or 94.85 points to close at 11,466.45. Nifty Bank index gained 2.39 per cent due large gains for HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank both of which rose more than 2.5 per cent. Shrikant Chouhan, executive vice-president, Equity Technical Research, Kotak Securities said, “Global cues helped the Indian market to close in positive territory with the exceptional strength shown in US futures, Hong Kong and European markets. News of a stimulus package later in the week helped boost the overall sentiment.” The FDA approved the emergency use of anti-

body-rich blood plasma from recovered patients on Covid-19 patients which had a positive impact on global markets. Continuing rally in the broader market has brought midcap and small-cap indices closer to their 52-week high levels. BSE Small-cap index gained 1.57 per cent closing at 14,855.09 while the 52-week high is 14,946.21. BSE Mid-cap index gained 0.44 per cent to close at 15,019.07 while the 52-week high is 15,930.78. “Farm prospects have soared with rains most well-spread in three years. Early onset and good distribution of the southwest monsoon has paved the way for robust kharif output, raising hopes in hinterland.”

RUPEE CLOSES AT 5-MONTH HIGH AGAINST DOLLAR

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, AUG. 24

Sustained foreign fund inflows, global dollar weakness and absence of regulatory intervention helped the rupee to strengthen to a five-month high and close considerably stronger by 53 paise against the US dollar on Monday. At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened lower at 74.91 against the US dollar but regained strength as the session progressed. It oscillated between a high of 74.31 and low of 74.91 during the day and finally closed at 74.32, gaining 52 paise over Friday's close. This is the highest closing level since March 18 when the unit had settled at 74.26. The dollar index was down 0.35 per cent at 92.92. So far in August, FIIs this month have invested ₹45,000 crore in the domestic market. Exchange data showed that overseas investors bought ₹410.16 crore shares on a net basis on Friday. Darshit Purohit of IFA Global explained, “Till now the rupee was moving in a narrow range as the RBI was regularly intervening by buying dollars. But today the RBI was absent.”

MS to train faculty in quantum space

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

Microsoft Corp. on Monday said that it will train the Indian teaching faculty in quantum computing skills through a training programme called ‘Train the Trainer’. The programme would be organised by Microsoft Garage in collaboration with Electronics and ICT Academies at Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, and National Institute of Technology, Patna. “This programme will train 900 faculty from universities and institutes across India through E&ICT Academies at

Insti-tutes of National Importance such as IIT Kanpur, IIT Guwahati, IIT Roorkee, MNIT Jaipur, NIT Patna, IIIT-D Jabalpur, and NIT Warangal, equipping academics with the required skills to start building their quantum future,” Microsoft said. Quantum computing applies the properties of quantum physics to process information. Quantum computers will enable new discoveries in healthcare, energy, environmental systems, smart materials, and beyond. Microsoft is bringing the capabilities to develop for this quantum future, to the cloud with Azure Quantum.

Sovereign funds rethink on real estate

London, Aug. 24: The Covid-19 pandemic has forced sovereign wealth funds to think the previously unthinkable. With prime office blocks lying empty around the world, hotels half-vacant and retailers struggling to stay afloat, the funds are retreating from many of the real estate investments that have long been a mainstay of their strategies. Sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) invested \$4.4 billion in the sector in the first seven months of 2020, 65% down from the same period a year ago, accord-

ing to previously unpublished data provided to Reuters by Global SWF, an industry data specialist. The nature of property investments is also shifting, with funds increasingly investing in logistics space, such as warehousing, amid a boom in online commerce during the pandemic, while cutting back on deals for offices and retail buildings. Such shifts in behaviour can have seismic effects on the global real estate market, given such funds are among the largest investors in property and

THE NATURE of property investments is also shifting, with funds increasingly investing in logistics space, such as warehousing, amid a boom in online commerce during the pandemic, while cutting back on deals for offices and retail buildings.

market specialists IPE Real Assets. A big question is whether the changes are structural for the funds, for which property is an asset-class staple at about 8% of their total portfolios on average, or a temporary response to a huge, unexpected and unfamiliar global event. “Real estate is still a big part of sovereign wealth fund portfolios and will continue to be so,” said Diego López, managing director of Global SWF and a former sovereign wealth fund adviser at

PwC. “What Covid has accelerated is the sophistication of SWFs trying to build diversification and resilience into their portfolio – and hence looking for other asset classes.” Sovereign funds have been more bearish on property than public pension funds, another big investor in the sector, Global SWF found. While they have outstripped the pension funds in overall investment across most industries and assets this year, by two to one, that ratio is reversed for real estate. — Reuters



SHORT TAKES

Bhutia name for Sikkim stadium

New Delhi: A floodlit, 15,000-capacity stadium in Sikkim, to be named after Indian football great Bhaichung Bhutia, will be inaugurated once the pandemic subsides. The stadium is in Namchi, which is 25 kilometres away from the maestro's birthplace in Tinkitam. "It's our tribute to one of the best Indian footballers. Even after hanging his boots, Bhaichung Bhutia has been a role model to many and will continue to inspire footballers of India, let alone Sikkim," Sikkim Football Association president Menla Ethenpa was quoted as saying by the All India Football Federation (AIFF). "We can't repay for what he has done for Indian football. But a stadium named after him might be a small homage towards the great footballer," he added. This is going to be the first-ever stadium in the country to be named after any footballer. — PTI

VAR set for Asian Champs League

Kuala Lumpur: VAR will make its debut in Asia's Champions League next month, officials said on Monday, as the competition gears up to restart following a six-month coronavirus hiatus. Video Assistant Referees have been introduced in competitions worldwide from the Premier League to the 2018 World Cup, but their decisions have often sparked controversy. The technology will be used from the quarterfinal stage of this year's Champions League, the top Asian club competition, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said in a statement. The quarterfinals for West Zone teams take place on September 30 and for East Zone sides on November 25, with a single-leg final on December 5. The AFC said the decision showed its "commitment to ensure Asian refereeing continues to set new benchmarks". VAR was used in Asian football for the first time in the quarterfinals of the 2019 Asian Cup. — AFP

Kovac draws 1st Monaco game

Paris: Former Bayern Munich coach Niko Kovac's first game in charge of Monaco saw his new side rally from 0-2 down to draw 2-2 against Reims in the French league. A short drive away along the French Riviera to Nice, striker Amine Gouri scored two fine goals on club debut in a 2-1 win against promoted Lens on Sunday. Kovac was fired by Bayern last November despite leading the German giant to a league and cup double in his first season. But they parted ways following a humbling 1-5 loss to Eintracht Frankfurt and he may have been fearing a similar result after Monaco leaked two goals inside the first 21 minutes. Reims striker Boulaye Dia put the visitors ahead after five minutes at Stade Louis II. Then things got even worse when forward El Bilal Touré dribbled to the edge of the area and beat goalkeeper Benjamin Lecomte with a fine shot. Defender Axel Disasi pulled a goal back in first-half stoppage time and center half Benot Badashile equalised in the 55th minute. — AP

TRINBAGO KEEP WINNING STREAK

Tarouba: Trinbago Knight Riders produced a superb batting display to record a comprehensive 19-run win over Barbados Tridents to maintain their unbeaten run in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) T20 tournament here. Put in to bat, Colin Munro (50 from 30 balls) started the assault with a fifty while Darren Bravo (54) and Kieron Pollard (41) continued it, sharing an unfinished 98-run stand as Trinbago piled up a massive total of 185 for 3. In reply, Johnson Charles gave the Barbados Tridents a chance as he scored 52 in 33 balls with three sixes and four fours and made a major contribution to the opening stand of 68 with Shai Hope (36 in 38 balls). But the rest of the line-up could not continue the charge as wickets fell at regular intervals. Skipper Jason Holder (34) and Ashley Nurse (21) added 45 runs in four overs between the 16th and 20th overs, but it wasn't enough in the end. — PTI

RIGHT ON THE MONEY

Bayern beat cash-rich PSG for Champions League

Lisbon, Aug. 24: Kingsley Coman headed Bayern Munich to a sixth European Cup title, scoring against boyhood club Paris Saint-Germain to seal a 1-0 victory in the first Champions League final to be played without fans.

While Bayern won their first final since 2013 on Sunday, PSG have yet to lift the European Cup despite more than \$1 billion being spent on players in nine years. More than \$500 million was spent on Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Angel Di Maria but PSG looked far from formidable or threatening against the Bavarian giants who felt more assured on European club football's biggest stage.

As the costly front three were frustrated in front of goal, it was instead a winger who was born in Paris and started his career at PSG who inflicted the blow. The 24-year-old Coman ghosted in at the far post unchecked by the PSG defence and was ready to meet a cross from Joshua Kimmich in the 59th minute. It was Bayern's 43rd goal of a perfect European campaign that has seen Bayern become the first team to win all 11 Champions League matches.

It capped an incredible transformation this season under Hansi Flick, who emerged from the shadows in November, with a promotion to the top coaching job with Bayern fourth in the Bundesliga.

The season is now over — three months later than planned due to the Coronavirus pandemic pause in play — with Bayern treble winners just as they were in 2013. The European Cup joins the Bundesliga trophy — won for an eighth successive season — and the German Cup.

Super Six in Europe

Bayern joined deposed champion Liverpool as six-time champions of Europe, only behind AC Milan (seven) and Real Madrid (13). It was the first final to end 1-0 since Real Madrid beat Juventus in 1998 which was also the last final to feature teams who qualified as domestic champions.

And when the final whistle blew, Neymar was in tears, embraced by Bayern rival David Alaba.

PSG's footballing superstars were subdued, not that they lacked chances to take the lead. Neymar struck at Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer in the 18th. He did spark the move that saw Herrera and Di Maria combine but the Argentine could only strike over.

And an interchange between Herrera and Mbappe before halftime ended with a weak shot from the French forward.

Paris fans riot, arrested

Meanwhile in Paris, police arrested 148 people as PSG fans clashed with officers and smashed cars and store windows after the club lost the Champions League final in Lisbon. Hundreds of fans were also fined for not wearing masks, a Paris police spokesman said on Monday.

Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin wrote on Twitter that 16 police officers were injured in Sunday night skirmishes. Police did not have estimates on injuries among fans.

Riot police burst into a bar close to the Champs-Elysees to aggressively remove people, because some were not wearing masks, or were failing to keep social distancing amid Coronavirus concerns.

Riot police used tear gas to disperse fans gathered outside the club's stadium. PSG beamed the match on two giant screens at Parc des Princes, with 5,000 fans allowed inside in keeping with the maximum allowed for games as part of virus protection measures. — Agencies



Bayern Munich goalkeeper and captain Manuel Neuer lifts the Champions League trophy after the German side beat Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 in the final at the Luz Stadium in Lisbon, Portugal, on Sunday. — AP

Paris discard is Munich ace

Lisbon, Aug. 24: Kingsley Coman spent a decade at Paris Saint-Germain, coming up through the club's academy and making four senior appearances, but it was his goal which condemned the French giants to defeat in Sunday's Champions League final.

The 24-year-old Coman headed the only goal in Bayern Munich's 1-0 victory in Lisbon, inflicting a devastating blow on his boyhood club in their first appearance in the final of European football's premier competition.

Coman's match-winning turn served PSG another reminder, this the most painful of all, of the stream of talented academy products to leave in recent years, including Adrien Rabiot and current Lyon striker Moussa Dembele.

Teenager Tanguy Kouassi also snubbed the capital club in favour of Bayern this summer, while France Under-21 winger Moussa Diaby left for Bayer Leverkusen on a five-year deal last year.

Coman undoubtedly has few regrets over his departure as a raw teenager in 2014, winning two Italian league titles with Juventus before a trophy-laden spell in Germany.

In all, he has nine league winners' medals — five more with Bayern and two while at PSG.

"It's an incredible feeling, lots of happiness and a bit of sadness for Paris, they had a great run," Coman told French broadcaster RMC Sport after Bayern were crowned Europe's top team for a sixth time.

"My heart was 100 per cent Bayern because I'm 100 per cent professional but I'm not going to lie, to see Presnel (Kimpembe) like that, to see our team like that, gave me a little bit of heartache," he added.

Injury nightmares

Coman's compassion towards Kimpembe in particular stems from their time at PSG, where the pair formed a strong friendship after joining the club in their youth.

They lived together for a year



Bayern Munich's French forward Kingsley Coman (left) celebrates scoring the match-winning goal as teammate Thomas Mueller (right) runs in to congratulate during the Champions League final. — AFP

● Kingsley Coman's match-winning goal served the cash flush Paris Saint-Germain another painful reminder of the stream of talented academy products to leave in recent years, including Adrien Rabiot and current Lyon striker Moussa Dembele.

while part of the academy and even go on holiday with each other.

The pacy winger has endured his fair share of injury troubles and missed much of 2018 after twice rupturing ankle ligaments, ruling him out of the World Cup squad in Russia as a result.

While convalescing from the second of his ankle setbacks in the autumn of 2018, he even mentioned the possibility of

retiring were injuries to continue to plague him.

He again missed time this season, starting just half of Bayern's 34 Bundesliga games and was no guarantee to start the final after playing bit-part roles in their wins here over Barcelona and Lyon.

Bayern coach Hansi Flick gambled Coman could be the difference maker, and his decision to start the Paris-born player ahead of Ivan Perisic

was rewarded handsomely.

"Perhaps he's finally stepped out of (Franck) Ribery and (Arjen) Robben's shadow this season. Kingsley has incredible talent and he showed tonight that he can also score goals," said Flick.

Under contract in Bavaria until 2023, Bayern sporting director Hasan Salihamdzic has tipped Coman to "become a true great at Bayern in the future".

Sunday's goal and his role in the club's sixth European triumph — and second treble after 2013 — will ensure he is forever remembered fondly in Munich and leave PSG to ponder what might have been. — AFP

COACH FLICK IS OVERJOYED AT CRAZY TREBLE

Lisbon, Aug. 24: Bayern Munich head coach Hansi Flick hailed the "crazy" development of his treble-winning team in the ten months since he took charge after the German giants won Sunday's Champions League final.

The squad celebrated by launching Flick into the air after lifting the trophy which was sealed with a second-half header from winger Kingsley Coman, a product of the PSG academy.

"I am proud of the team. When I saw the headlines in November, all I read was that nobody is afraid of Bayern anymore," said Flick, who took charge when Niko Kovac was sacked.

"The development since then has been crazy," he added.

"We deserved to win, because of the second half. You could already see in training at our winter camp in January that something big was growing. The team just has this overwhelming will to win," Flick said.

This is Flick's first job in Germany's top flight yet in his first season he has steered Bayern to an eighth Bundesliga title, lifted the German Cup and now the Champions League.

He has emulated legendary Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes who landed the only other treble in the club's history back in 2013.

Having been assistant coach to Joachim Loew when Germany won the 2014 World Cup, Flick has now achieved the pinnacle of domestic football and wished Bayern fans could have been in Lisbon.

"It's a pity that the fans couldn't be here with us today, perhaps they can come back again in the future, but a game like this without supporters is not the football that we know," admitted Flick. — AFP

\$500m STRIKE FORCE NEYMAR, MBAPPE FAILS

Lisbon, Aug. 24: Neymar and Kylian Mbappe sat side by side on Paris Saint-Germain's bench after the 0-1 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final. While Mbappe stared at the field in despair, Neymar cried and covered his face. It wasn't the ending they had hoped for.

PSG must go for yet another year without the Champions League title after lacklustre performances by Neymar and Mbappe. The French team's biggest stars had disappointing performances after helping PSG to reach the final of the top European club tournament for the first time.

PSG paid big money — a combined 402 million euros (\$474m) on the pair in 2017 — to sign them in its bid to finally win the Champions League, but they couldn't come through in the decisive game.

Both Mbappe and Neymar failed to capitalise on first-half chances that could have changed the story of the game, and neither was effective in the second half when PSG needed to come back from a goal down.

Mbappe had one of the best scoring opportunities just before halftime with a close-range shot, but the ball was weakly struck for an easy save by Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer. Neymar had enjoyed his best chance with a dangerous run into the area in the 18th minute, but his shot was stopped by Neuer. Mbappe earlier had a couple of chances from inside the area but couldn't get the ball past Bayern defenders. — AP

Maverick Doncic beats buzzer

Miami, Aug. 24: Luka Doncic wasn't about to let a sprained ankle slow him down, nailing a game-winning three-pointer at the buzzer to lift the Dallas Mavericks to a 135-133 overtime play-off win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday.

The 21-year-old Slovenian phenom, who was playing with a tender ankle and missing his offensive sidekick Kristaps Porzingis, finished with 43 points, 17 rebounds and 13 assists to level the first-round NBA Western Conference play-off series at two games each. "This game was from another planet," said Mavericks coach

Rick Carlisle of Doncic's heroics.

Doncic made a basket with 50 seconds left to tie the score 130-130 then gave Dallas a two-point lead with a spinning move to the basket with 19 seconds remaining.

He capped his triple-double with a 27-foot step-back jumper from the left side as time ticked down, sparking a wild celebration on the floor in the NBA's quarantine bubble in Orlando, Florida.

"I can't explain the emotions I had when I saw the ball go in. When I saw the whole team coming towards me that was one of the best feelings I have ever had as a player," Doncic said.

While Dallas levelled their series, Boston became the first team to reach the second round with a 110-106 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers.

Kemba Walker scored 32 points and Jayson Tatum added 28 and 15 rebounds for the Celtics, who swept the Eastern Conference first-round series 4-0.

He sees the game in 6G, says coach

Mavericks coach Carlisle heaped praise on Doncic. "He sees the game in 6G, not 5G. He is a very special player," he said.

Trey Burke added 25 points, Tim Hardaway scored 21 and Seth Curry chipped in 15 points for

Dallas, who led by 12 with nine minutes remaining in the fourth quarter.

Meanwhile, the Celtics' Walker, who arrived in Boston after eight seasons of frustration with the Charlotte Hornets, was basking in his first NBA playoff series win.

With their backs against the wall, Joel Embiid and the 76ers kept it close and trailed by just two points late in the third quarter before forward Tobias Harris took a hard fall under the basket, his head slamming the hardwood.

But the Celtics closed the third quarter on a 12-0 run that effectively ended the 76ers' hopes. — AFP



Luka Doncic (third from right) of the Dallas Mavericks celebrates his winning three-point basket with teammates during overtime of Game Four of the NBA basketball first-round playoff series against the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday. — AP

SHORT TAKES

Future Group out as IPL sponsor

New Delhi: Retail conglomerate Future Group, which is currently going through a restructuring phase, has pulled out of BCCI's central sponsorship list for the Indian Premier League. Future Group has been forced to pull out as the company is reportedly on the verge of a takeover and has suffered losses due to the prevailing hostile economic climate in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. "Yes, Future Group has pulled out of IPL central sponsorship and that's the reason their logo has been removed from the IPL website. At this point of time, I won't like to elaborate on the development," a BCCI veteran confirmed the development. "Future Group has been in bad shape since the start of Covid-19. It was bound to happen that they wouldn't have been able to spend ₹40 crore to be a part of BCCI's central sponsorship pool. Hence, the pull-out is not a surprise," the source said. — PTI

Rain halts James' 600-wkt chase

Southampton: England pacer Jimmy Anderson was frustrated in his bid to reach 600 Test wickets after seeing another catch spilled off his bowling on the fourth day of the third and final Test against Pakistan on Monday.

Pakistan was 41-0 in its second innings and trailing by 269 runs when more rain arrived at the Rose Bowl, prompting an early lunch to be taken.

The stoppage extended well into the afternoon because of a wet outfield, increasing Pakistan's chances of avoiding defeat.

It was a solid morning session for Pakistan openers Shan Masood (13) and Abid Ali (22), except for when Anderson — on 598 career wickets — found the edge of Shan's bat in the fifth over and the ball flew to wicketkeeper Jos Buttler.

Inexplicably, Buttler failed to get a glove on it, the ball hitting his midriff and bouncing to the ground.

The 38-year-old Anderson is looking to become the first fast bowler to reach 600 wickets. — AP

Dustin Johnson wins British Open

New York: Dustin Johnson seized the World No.1 ranking in emphatic style on Sunday, firing an eight-under par final-round 63 to win the US PGA Northern Trust by 11 strokes. Johnson finished with a 30-under par total of 254 at TPC Boston, with Harris English a distant second on 265 after a closing 69.

Johnson's 22-under third-round total had given him the largest 54-hole lead on tour this season — five strokes — and he was quick to build on it on Sunday.

He set the tone with an eight-foot eagle putt at the second, set up by a magnificent seven-iron over the water. He tapped in for birdie at the fourth and rolled in a four-foot birdie at the fifth.

Birdie putts of 10 and 13 feet at the seventh and eighth saw him make the turn five-under for the day, and he rolled in another four-foot birdie at the 12th. The only thing that slowed him was a weather delay. — AFP

HUMPY HIT BY NET PROBLEM AT OLYMPIAD

Chennai: Indian players Vidit Gujrathi and Koneru Humpy have been offered hotel rooms in their respective cities to play the remaining matches of the FIDE Online Chess Olympiad after internet and power failures affected their performance against Mongolia in the sixth round.

India on Sunday became the first team to qualify for the quarterfinals after they topped Top Division pool 'A' with a stunning 4-2 win over China. Though the Indian team, led by Gujrathi, has been on an unbeaten run, it was held to an unexpected 3-3 draw by lower-ranked Mongolia in the sixth round after Gujrathi and Humpy suffered setbacks due to internet and power supply problems. — PTI

India on Sunday became the first team to qualify for the quarterfinals after they topped Top Division pool 'A' with a stunning 4-2 win over China. Though the Indian team, led by Gujrathi, has been on an unbeaten run, it was held to an unexpected 3-3 draw by lower-ranked Mongolia in the sixth round after Gujrathi and Humpy suffered setbacks due to internet and power supply problems. — PTI

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2018-20
Printed and Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Plot No. 9 Alwal Village, Valahalli Nagar Taluk, Medchal Malkajgiri Dist. Telangana and Published at 36, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-37. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Aditya Sinha

MANKAD NOT A JOKE

Vinoo's name unfairly used for run out, feels Karthik

Abu Dhabi, Aug 24: Senior India wicketkeeper-batsman and Kolkata Knight Riders captain Dinesh Karthik finds it extremely unfair that the legendary Vinoo Mankad's name is used in a negative manner for a dismissal which is absolutely legal.

Mankad, during the 1948 Tour of Australia, ran opposition batsman Bill Brown out at the non-striker's end after he backed up too far despite repeated warnings. The Australian media outraged over it and called it "Mankading" even though Sir Don Bradman found the dismissal to be perfectly legal.

"There are two issues I have with this 'Mankad' run out. First is the implementation of it. Second is the name 'Mankad' run out," Karthik said.

"All the way from Don Bradman to Sunil Gavaskar, everyone has said it's completely within the rules. The ICC and MCC have also taken a stand that it is okay. So I don't see the reason why bowlers or any team that does it is looked at in a negative way.

"The person who did it first time was Vinoo Mankad. Interestingly, he was alert enough to do that dismissal. But more importantly, nobody remembers the batsman who got run out. It was Bill Brown," he pointed out.

Karthik's comments have significance because of Delhi Capitals coach Ricky Ponting's recent comments that he would have a chat with Ravichandran Ashwin and advise him that the dismissal is against the 'Spirit of the Game' referring to the India spinner running out of Jos Buttler during the last edition.

Karthik said the dismissal should not be called 'Mankading', especially when the ICC and MCC call it just a run out.

"If Mankad was the first person who did that run out, Bill Brown was the first person who got run out for being silly and walking out of the crease. Why is it that people remember Mankad and not Brown?" he asked.

Karthik suggested that the TV umpire should be called in to check whether the batsman is backing up too far and if so then that particular run should be disallowed. — PTI



Kings XI Punjab's captain Ravichandran Ashwin runs out non-striking batsman Jos Buttler of the Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match last year.

Ashwin bats for free ball if batsman leaves crease

New Delhi, Aug 24: Senior India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on Monday suggested the introduction of a "free ball" for bowlers if non-striker's back up too far, sticking to his stand that there was nothing wrong with running such batsmen out.

Ashwin ran out Jos Buttler during an IPL match between Kings XI Punjab and Rajasthan Royals in 2019 when the Englishman left the non-striker's end much before the delivery was bowled, triggering an age old 'spirit of the game' debate.

While what Ashwin did was well within the rules of the game, his new IPL team coach Ricky Ponting of the Delhi Capitals doesn't agree with this particular mode of dismissal.

"Make it a free ball for the bowler. If the batsmen gets out of that ball, the batting team will be

Make it a free ball for the bowler. If the batsmen gets out of that ball, the batting team will be docked 5 runs. Free hit adds to the drama for a batter, let's give a chance to the bowlers too.

— R. ASHWIN on Mankad debate

docked 5 runs. Free hit adds to the drama for a batter, let's give a chance to the bowlers too," Ashwin tweeted in response to Dinesh Karthik's assertion that it was unfair to link the dismissal to spirit of the game or call it 'Mankading' as it is permitted by laws of the game.

"As of now everyone watches the game hoping that 'the bowlers will get smacked today'," the off-spinner said.

His suggestion is similar to the concept of free hit, which allows the batsmen to score the maximum without the fear of being dismissed if the bowler delivers a front-foot no ball.

When a Twitter user asserted that the game is primarily for batsmen, Ashwin retorted, "Then take the run out on your chin and stay in!!!"

What followed after Ashwin's tweet was a discussion on his timeline with former India cricketers W. V. Raman, S. Badrinath, Rohan Gavaskar and commentator Harsha Bhogle providing their opinion on the issue.

"I think the rule should be simple and take away any subjective element like 'normal delivery position' and just say 'non-striker stays in till the ball is released'," Harsha Bhogle said. — PTI

Dhoni & Co. bond over virtual gaming

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, AUG. 24

Forced to spend a week inside the four walls of their luxurious hotel rooms upon arrival in Dubai, Chennai Super Kings have found a way to connect with each other — through virtual gaming.

All IPL franchises have landed in the UAE for the 13th edition of the league, starting on September 19, but players and officials are currently on a week-long self-isolation to adhere to the bio-bubble protocols laid out by the

BCCI. During every IPL, Chennai Super Kings set up a 'team room' packed with a TT table, PlayStation and other indoor games, but now that the players can't step out of their individual rooms, virtual games such as PUBG and Call of Duty are keeping them entertained. It's no secret that M.S. Dhoni loves combat games and football.

A CSK official said the players are slowly getting used to the new normal. "The first few days have been really challenging as we have to ensure that players follow all protocol

and at the same time keep themselves occupied. The rooms here don't have balconies which means they are totally cut off from each other," he said.

While a few led by Dhoni and his close friend Monu Kumar Singh connect through online gaming, some others kill time reading books and binge-watching movies and shows on OTT platforms. Shane Watson spends his time planning and shooting content for his vlog — T20 Stars.

The official said all players have been given customised indoor workouts

for the quarantine period. "For the first week, the hotel has provided small workout equipment in every room. Players have to train twice a day. The team trainer gives them feedback through videos," the official added.

Three-time champions Chennai Super Kings are staying at Taj Dubai, overlooking the spectacular Burj Khalifa.

The 55-member contingent, including their marketing and social media teams, are staying in a separate block with no access to outsiders. The BCCI has allotted two offi-

cials from the Anti Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) per franchise.

With the hotel providing South Indian food throughout the day, CSK are feeling very much at home.

"There is a set menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The food tray is left outside their room. The players are also ordering in their choice of food," the CSK official further added.

Senior players and coaches have been allotted suites that come with a fully-equipped kitchen.



Sofia Kenin runs to the net during her match against Alize Cornet of France at the Western & Southern Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York on Sunday. — AFP

Grigor in top gear, women's big 2 fall

New York, Aug. 24: Two months after barely being able to walk while ill with Covid-19, Grigor Dimitrov played a professional tennis match at the Western & Southern Open and — while the result was not what was most important — he won.

He said he arrived in New York, the site for both the Western & Southern Open and the US Open, just one day before taking the court for what turned out to be a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Ugo Humbert.

The women's draw saw some big names exit on Day Two at the hard-court tournament: No.1 seed Karolina Pliskova, No.2 Sofia Kenin and 2017 US Open champion Sloane Stephens. Pliskova, the 2016 U.S. Open runner-up who will be the top seed when the Grand Slam tournament begins on August 31, lost 7-5, 6-4 to Veronika Kudermetova; Kenin, who won the Australian Open this year, was upset by Alize Cornet 6-1, 7-6 (7); Stephens was beaten by Caroline Garcia 6-3, 7-6 (4).

Dimitrov had tested positive for the Coronavirus in June while participating in exhibitions series in Croatia and Serbia organised by Novak Djokovic, who also got Covid-19. — AP

BOPANNA AND PARTNER OUT IN FIRST ROUND

New York, Aug. 24: Back in action after five months, Rohan Bopanna and his Canadian partner Denis Shapovalov lost in the opening round of the Western and Southern Open men's doubles event but not before making it as tough as possible for Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos here.

Bopanna and Shapovalov lost 4-6, 6-7(1) to 2019 US Open runners-up in the first round match of the tournament, which is a build-up to the US Open. It was the first competitive match for Bopanna since the Davis Cup tie against Croatia in March, alongside veteran Leander Paes.

Djoker out of doubles

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic pulled out of the doubles event citing neck pain. He remained in the singles draw. Djokovic was supposed to play doubles with Filip Krajinovic, presumably to only get some extra court time ahead of the US Open. — AP

COVID MAY HAVE CAUGHT UP WITH SPRINTER BOLT

Kingston, Aug. 24: Eight-time Olympic and 11-time world champion former sprinter Usain Bolt on Monday said he is awaiting results of a Covid-19 test that he underwent during the weekend and has gone into self-quarantine as a precautionary measure.

Bolt posted a short video on his Twitter page, addressing widespread speculation that he has tested positive for the dreaded virus after birthday celebrations on August 21 during which social distancing norms were reportedly not followed. "...Social media says that I am confirmed Covid-19. Did a test on Saturday, trying to be responsible, stay in and stay away from my friends," he said.

"Also I have no symptoms, so I am going to quarantine myself and wait on the confirmation to see what is the protocol from the Ministry of Health," said Bolt, who holds the world record in 100m and 200m events, winning consecutive gold medals in 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay events from 2009 to 2015. — PTI

Ageing young, Anderson is a history in making



Hemant Kenkre Silly Point

'Pakistan are faced with a mountain to climb,' screamed a news headline post the second day's play of their third and final Test match against England. The mountain in this case referred to the mammoth 583 runs that the hosts had put up thanks to a dedicated effort by Zak Crawley who notched up his first Test hundred (a workmanlike 267 runs) in his eighth Test appearance.

More than the mass of runs that the Pakistanis will face (this is written

before the third day's play) the real mountain they will need to ascend is a tortuous terrain that goes by the name of James Michael Anderson. The 38-year old Lancastrian is currently standing on an achievement that will further his name in the history of Test cricket. Just four wickets from getting to the mark of 600 Test scalps, the fit, six footer will use every trick in his book to seal his deal with history over the next two days.

Playing in and against

England has been considered a major yardstick that tests a batsman's proficiency. And, over the last decade, playing the team in their back yard with Anderson in the eleven is a different ball game. When India last toured the British isles in 2018, skipper Virat Kohli was faced with two major tasks. The first being winning the Test series and the second being getting Anderson, his tormentor in the 2014 series, out of his way.

Just four notches from standing tall, atop a major peak, Anderson has come a long way from his rather humble beginnings in international cricket. For someone who was thrown directly into the deep end against Australia to make his debut in a One Day International in 2002,

Anderson has come a long way overcoming many personal hurdles. For starters, the 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' swing, from great to the ordinary on many occasions, had people wondering which avatar will step on to the field earlier in his career.

From starting his journey in international cricket alongside relative unknowns like Robert Kirtley and Craig White as fellow seamers, Anderson's rise to the top, bowling in tandem with current partner Stuart Broad has been remarkable. With 1107 Test wickets between them, this combination has been a major challenge for international batsmen to contend with in the longest format of the game. The impact these two have had

on English cricket over the last decade has been tremendous.

They say fast bowlers hunt in pairs. Anderson and Broad will go down in the annals of cricket as a lethal pair akin to Fred Trueman and Brian Statham of the old. Watching them speak to one another before the start of an over, where they dissect the batsman's weakness and exchange notes goes to show how solid the understanding between the two British homies is. Complementing each other is the hallmark of a great pair.

From Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson to Andy Roberts and Micheal Holding, cricket fans have been privileged to watch these greats keep challenging the greatest batsmen of

their time.

When Trueman passed (what was, in August 1964) an unbelievable achievement of 300 Test wickets getting Neil Hawke caught at slip by Colin Cowdrey against Australia at the Oval, he was asked if his record would ever be broken. "Aye, but whoever does it will be bloody tired," quipped the Yorkshireman who was known for his legendary quotes throughout his career.

Just two years away from 40, one wonders for how long Anderson will continue being England's go to man in Test cricket.

The way one is watching him bowl in the current series against Pakistan it looks like Anderson still has the mojo to keep ticking on like a Swiss watch.

The spring in his step is still as sprightly as it was when he started out. So are the tricks with the ball which flummox the best in the business.

His agility in the field is comparable to men much younger to him.

For a fast bowler/seamer, getting past the 600 mark in Test cricket is an amazing achievement.

With the top three slots of maximum Test wickets staying with spinners, Anderson is poised to become the first of his category to get in to the exclusive club. When England tours India (for a five-Test series) in February 2021 one does hope Indian fans will get an opportunity to see this magnificent warrior display his wares in the sub-continent for the last time.