





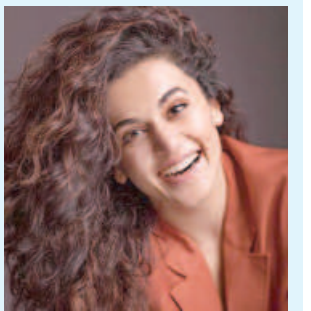
# Womenia

TWEET PATROL



**TAAPSEE PANNU**  
**@TAAPSEE**

If you don't need a refill or the cylinder anymore please return and help save a life



BEAUTY FUNDA

## Skincare must haves every mom deserves

Mother's day is around the corner and all one can think about is pampering the mother's in the best possible way. There are few skincare products all mothers must have to maintain the health of their skin and resolve the skin concerns. After the age of 30 one should start the anti ageing product application and by 40 the skin turnover rate gets slow and demands more care. Rajat Mathur Education at Kiehl's India suggests on mother's day to explore healthy skincare with efficacious products for targeted solutions. Below mentioned products as must have's for all mothers to combat wrinkles, dark circles, sun tanning and other major skin issues.



### A gentle cleanser

A gentle yet hydrating cleanser is the first product one should own in order to get rid of the day's dirt and debris, and nourish and hydrate the skin. From the moment you wake up to the moment you go to sleep, your skin takes a major beating. Mother's who do not put makeup even they should use a gentle cleanser in the daily routine. Cleansing clears the pores and allows the moisturiser to penetrate into your skin for maximum effectiveness.

### Sunscreen

Sun rays do more damage than we can imagine. Proper use of sunscreen reduces the chances of ageing. Sun damage from UV rays causes photo aging of the skin, which is discoloration which leads to fine lines, sagging and wrinkles. A good sunscreen improves the resilience of the skin. A non-greasy sunscreen offers not only sun protection but also pollution protection.

### Face serum with Retinol and Hyaluronic Acid

Retinol and Hyaluronic Acid are the two most important ingredients for preserving and repairing multiple aspects of skin aging. Even a small amount can do wonders, it neutralises the effects of external skin-aging stressors for youthful, radiant skin, works on the skin's strength and immunity building. Retinol corrects sun damage and improves skin texture and discoloration by increasing cell turnover. It penetrates 8 skin surface layers deep, nourishing the skin. And give more youthful-looking skin.



## Strengthen a parent-child relationship

**One-on-one time with your child can strengthen the parent-child bond, builds up your child's self-esteem, and lets them know that they are special and valued**

The most important relationship to a child is the one they develop with their parent or caregiver. Children learn about the world around them through a positive parent-child relationship. As they are growing and changing, children look to their parents to determine whether or not they are safe, secure, and loved. It is also the foundation from which they will build their future relationships.

You can build a positive parent-child relationship by being in the moment with your child, spending quality time together, and creating an environment where they feel comfortable to explore. There is no secret handbook or guaranteed approach to get this relationship right, and you'll likely find hardships along the way. However, if you keep working on improving your relationship, your child will surely blossom.

Here are some positive-parenting techniques that can help you strengthen the relationship between you and your child:

Show your love

Human touch and loving affection is needed at every stage of our lives for healthy emotional and neurobiological development. It is important that your child receive gentle, loving touch (i.e., hugs) from you several times throughout the day. Treat every interaction as an opportunity to connect with your child. Greet them with warm expressions, give eye contact, smile, and encourage honest interaction.

### Say "I love you" often

It is often implied that we love our children, but be sure to tell them every day, no matter what age they are. Even when your child is being difficult or does something you don't like; this can be an excellent opportunity to remind them that you love them unconditionally. A simple "I love you" can have a major impact on your long-term relationship with your child.

### Set boundaries, rules, and consequences

Children need structure and guidance as they grow and learn about the world around them.



Talk to your children about what you expect of them and make sure they understand. When rules are broken, make sure to have age-appropriate consequences in place and be consistent with them.

### Listen and empathise

Connection starts with listening. Acknowledge your child's feelings, show them you understand, and reassure them that you are there to help with whatever they need. Try to see things from your child's perspective. By listening and empathising with your child, you will begin to foster mutual respect.

### Play together

Play is so important to a child's development. It is the tool through which children develop language skills, express emotions, foster creativity, and learn about social skills. Additionally, it is a fun way for you to strengthen your relationship with your child. It does not matter what you play. The key is to just enjoy each other and commit to giving your child your undivided attention.

### Be available and distraction-free

Setting aside just 10 minutes a day to talk to your child, without distractions, can make a big difference in establishing good communication habits. Turn off the

TV, put away your electronic devices, and spend some quality time together. Your child needs to know that you believe they are a priority in your life despite the many distractions and stressors that come your way.

### Eat meals together

Eating together as a family can often lead to great conversation and bonding time with your child. Encourage everyone to put their phones or other devices away and simply enjoy each other's company. Meal time is also a great opportunity for you to teach your children the importance of a healthy and balanced diet, which also affects their overall mental health.

## Ekta Kapoor opens up about 'The Married Woman'

Content Czarina Ekta Kapoor has produced content that was ahead of its time, she is also known for presenting opportunities to budding talents. She has given several actors the breakthrough they needed but what's an unsung fact about her is that she has believed in budding writers too.

Recently, Ekta Kapoor shares her take on giving opportunities to budding writers, "I need to hear the story. First of all, I don't read it easily. I like stories being told, I believe in that very old school way. I believe when a writer narrates a story it gets a life of its own. Many a times, when I've liked the idea I get a writer to the core and I've probably liked the story-telling and the way the writer's empathy towards his character comes through. I remember these writ-

ers they came in and they were new Gujarati writers with no body of work again, one of them was a worker in the bank and 'Kyuki Saas' came out of it. So, I don't believe in the concept of body of work."

Stressing enough over the fact that body of work doesn't matter to her as long as the material brought on board by the writer is worth telling to the audiences. She has all the expertise in examining a story and picking the right one for her viewers, she knows them really well too.

Her recent production release "The Married Woman" on ALTBalaji gained a lot of praise and appreciation from all over for its impactful performance, brilliant storytelling and unconventional writing. It is just commendable how Ekta Kapoor manages to get it right every time.



**I believe when a writer narrates a story it gets a life of its own**  
— Ekta Kapoor

### NEWS ROUNDUP

## Jacqueline's initiative YOLO Foundation to create and share stories of kindness

Actress Jacqueline Fernandes on Tuesday announced her initiative YOLO Foundation, to create and share stories of kindness in everyday life. YOLO stands for You Only Live Once.

Jacqueline has tied up with several NGOs that cater to different needs in society for her venture. She has set up a platform to provide relief and help to the needy. "We have this one life, let's do whatever we can to make a difference in this world!! I am proud to announce the launch of the YOLO Foundation, an initiative to create and share stories of kindness," she wrote on Instagram.

"In these challenging times, the Yolo Foundation has partnered with several NGOs to help in whichever way we possibly can. Watch this space to know how you can contribute and make a difference to the lives around you #staysafe #spreadlove #helpothers @rotibankfdn @rahosafein @mumbaipolice @thefelinefoundation," she added.

Jacqueline will provide one lakh meals this month in association with an NGO called the Roti Bank. That apart, partnering with the Feline foundation, the actress has taken initiative to help stray animals. She will also distribute masks and sanitisers to frontline workers.



## International midwives' day

It's clear to anyone who gives it half a thought that women did not always give birth in hospitals, and in fact, they most commonly would give birth in their own homes under the guide of an experienced woman. There were those who specialized in the birthing process and who helped it come to fruition naturally, and those women were called Midwives. International Midwives' Day serves to remind us that the female body is perfectly capable of giving birth and carrying a child to term without some of the invasive methods employed by Obstetricians and other practitioners.

The history of Midwifery goes back to prehistory, though there are records all over the world of midwife traditions. These women are those who made a study of the birthing process and the vital role it plays in perpetuating the species and its cultural significance. While it's true in



ancient days their practices were based heavily in experience and superstition, today's midwives are just as capable and competent at seeing a woman to term as the more commonly used OB/GYN's and Obstetricians.

While there are men who specialize in midwifery, thousands of years of tradition has rendered this field of medicine almost exclusively a woman's art. So much so, in fact, that in order to be a midwife in ancient Greece you had to have given birth

yourself, making it an exclusively female practice. It is this history that led to the division between Midwifery and Obstetricians, a split that took place in 17th Century Europe. While the practice of midwifery fell off for a while in the past couple hundred years, there is a rising movement towards home birth that is making this practice more relevant than ever.

International Midwives' Day celebrates these intrepid men and women and the part they play in a happy home and healthy birth.

One of the best ways to celebrate International Midwives' Day is by learning about Midwifery and the role it plays in homebirthing. If you know a midwife or one helped you give birth to your child, be sure to send them a thank you card or call them and tell them you appreciate them. Midwives tend to care very deeply about the children they help bring into the world, and love updates!





# Delhi riots: Bail to man for ‘humongous delay’ in witness statement

NEW DELHI

A Court here has granted bail to an accused in two cases pertaining to north-east Delhi riots in February last year, noting that the police recorded the statement of public witnesses and recovered the weapon after a “humongous delay” with no plausible explanation.

Additional Sessions Judge Vinod Yadav granted bail to 30-year-old Deepak Kumar on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 20,000 and one surety of the like amount on conditions that

he shall maintain peace and harmony in the locality and not indulge in any kind of criminal act. “Admittedly, the applicant is not seen or visible in any CCTV footage,” the sessions judge noted while granting the bail, adding that the complainants did not specifically identify Kumar in their initial complaints made to the investigating agency and named him only in their supplementary statements.

The judge noted, “Even the statements of other public witnesses namely Jai Ram and Ab-

dul Nadir have been recorded in the matter after the lapse of considerable period of the date of incidents and no plausible or cogent explanation in this regard has come from the side of prosecution for this humongous delay.” The court also alluded to a Supreme Court case last year, wherein it was categorically held that if statements of witnesses are delayed by substantial time, particularly when the witnesses were available with the police, then it casts a doubt upon the prosecution story and the accused becomes



entitled for bail.

The judge also observed that the recovery of ‘danda’ [large stick] was done after a lapse of considerable period of time and from an open space. The accused cannot be made to incarcerate in jail for infinity merely on account that other persons, who were part of the riotous mob, have to be identified and arrested in the matter as charge sheets have already been filed and trial is likely to take long time. “Keeping in view the aforesaid facts, I am of the considered opinion that applicant

deserves bail in both the aforesaid matters,” the judge remarked. Kumar had been named in two FIRs. The first FIR was registered on March 2, 2020 on the complaint of one Nishara, who claimed that on February 25, a riotous mob armed with lathis, sarias vandalized and burned her rented house and looted some gold jewellery. Later on, two more complainants Qamar Jahan and Naushad also approached the police with similar complaints and their complaints were clubbed with the same case.

# HELP DESKS FOR COWS IN EVERY UP DISTRICT: YOGI

LUCKNOW

AMID the prevailing pandemic, the Yogi Adityanath government is taking forward its cow protection agenda and has issued directives to set up help desks for protection of cows in every district.

The state government has also issued instructions that all the cow shelters (gaushalas) must strictly follow the Covid-19 protocols, and has made the usage of masks and frequent thermal screening mandatory.

The cow shelters will also be equipped with all the medical equipment’s such as oximeters and thermal scanners for cows and other animals as well.

According to the government spokesman, destitute cows, in large numbers, are being provided shelter in the gaushalas. The government is also rapidly increasing the number of the existing cowsheds and cow shelters to deal with stray cattle menace.

According to the official data, there are over 5.268 cow protection centres which have, till now, ensured the well-being of as many as 5,73,417 cattle in the state.

About 4,64,311 cows in both,



villages and cities, have been kept at 4,529 temporary cow shelters. Of these, 40,640 cows are in 161 Kanha Gaushalas and 10,827 cows in 407 Kanji houses.

Apart from this, 171 large cow-conservation centres / cow sanctuaries have been constructed in the state, which have provided shelter to as many as 57,639 cows.

The fodder bank model, developed by the state government, is ensuring timely fodder through 3452 Fodder Banks which are

feeding lakhs of stray cattle in Uttar Pradesh amid the covid crisis.

Under the Mukhya Mantri Besahara Gau-Vansh Sahbhagita Yojana, the UP government also made a provision of giving a financial assistance of Rs 900 per month to every farmer taking care of stray cattle. So far, a total of 85,869 cows have been provided to 44, 651 beneficiaries.

In addition, the well-being of over 1,05,380 cows has been en-

sured by 533 registered cowsheds and 377 functional cow shelters, whereas, a total of 47, 040 cows have been preserved in about 304 unregistered cowsheds.

In view of the current Covid situation, a total of 700 help desks for the welfare of cows have been set up across the districts of Uttar Pradesh. With this, 51 oximeters and 341 thermal scanners have also been provided to ensure better animal care and testing.

## Family killed in car accident

SHAHJAHANPUR

FOUR members of a family and their driver were killed and another person sustained serious injuries when the car in which they were travelling rammmed into a tree. They were headed to Shahjahanpur from Bareilly on Monday evening, when it happened, according to police.

The deceased have been identified as Ram Naresh, 55, his wife Jamuka Devi, 50, son Kaushalendra, 35, elder brother Hiralal, 60, and driver Vijay, 35. All of them died on the spot.

Ram Gulam was injured in the accident, police said. Superintendent of Police (rural) Sanjeev Bajpai said that Jamuka Devi, a resident of Ladaua village, was having difficulty in breathing and was being taken to a hospital in Bareilly after her condition deteriorated.

A relative of Ram Naresh, employed at a hospital in Shahjahanpur, had asked him to get Jamuka Devi admitted there and assured that oxygen would be arranged.

The car met with the accident on the Bareilly-Delhi Highway, police added.

The bodies of the deceased have been sent for autopsy while the injured person has been admitted to a hospital, he said.

## Ensure uninterrupted supply of oxygen, Punjab CM urges Modi

CHANDIGARH

PUNJAB Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Tuesday sought immediate intervention of both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to ensure uninterrupted supply of medical oxygen to the state.

He sought additional allocation of 50 metric tonnes (MT) liquid medical oxygen (LMO) from a nearby source and 20 additional tankers, preferably conducive to rail travel, for timely evacuation of LMO from Bokaro.

The Chief Minister sent separate letters to Modi and Shah as the number of Covid patients on varying levels of oxygen support in the state went up to 10,000.

Expressing concern over the imminent loss of lives due to oxygen shortage across the state, the Chief Minister said with the mounting caseload he was un-

able to increase Level 2 and Level 3 beds due to oxygen availability constraints.

The state was facing the prospect of shortage of oxygen beds, he said, pointing out that the government of India had expressed its inability to even allow Punjab’s local industry to undertake commercial import of LMO from Pakistan through the Wagah-Attari border, which is geographically proximate.

Further, despite an assurance that “adequate supply would be ensured to us from alternate sources, I regret to point out that this has not happened”, said Amarinder Singh.

The total allocation of LMO from outside the state is currently 195 MT, of which 90 MT is from Bokaro in eastern India. The balance 105 MT comes from LMO facilities in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

## Main accused in mob violence wins panchayat poll in UP

BULANDSHAHR

YOGESH Raj, the main accused in the 2018 Bulandshahr violence in which two persons, including police inspector Subodh Kumar Singh, were killed, has won the zila panchayat election in the district.

Yogesh Raj, a former Bajrang Dal worker, defeated Independent candidate Nirdosh Chaudhary by 2,150 votes.

He was on bail while he was contesting the elections.

“Earlier I have worked with many organisations but for some work such as farmers’ issue, pension for widows, etc you have to enter politics. You cannot complete this work without being a politician. I had contested from ward number 5 and won by 2,150 votes,” Yogesh Raj told reporters.

Talking about the 2018 violence, he said that two people had died in the incident but he has not been charged with their murder. “In Syana violence, two people died and I express my condolences to both of their families but I am just accused of instigating the mob and I am not accused of murder,” he said.

The villages of Chingrawati, Mahav and Nayabans were the epicentre of the violence in 2018.

## Himachal to rope in MBBS students in fight against Covid



SHIMLA

AMID rising Covid cases and an overwhelmed health infrastructure, Himachal Pradesh has run into an acute shortage of medical professionals, including doctors and paramedics for emergency Covid-care duties in the State.

As a response to the emerging crisis, the state government has decided to employ 4th and 5th year MBBS students, apart from five other categories including 3rd year nursing students for Covid duties with immediate effect.

Other categories listed in the notification issued by the state secretary, Amitabh Awasthi, include all contractual medical officers, junior and senior resident doctors, laboratory lab staff and General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) third-year students.

However, what has irked the medical students is the meagre remuneration of Rs 3,000 per month fixed for the contractual doctors, junior and senior resi-

dent doctors and medical students.

For other categories, the remuneration has been fixed at Rs 1,500 per month for their service in the Covid-care facilities at medical colleges and hospitals. The fund to remunerate the medical staff has been allotted out of the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) fund.

“We don’t have a problem in working at the Covid-care facilities but Rs 100 per day is highly ridiculous as even daily wages for the unskilled labour is between Rs 320 to Rs 355 depending upon the area of work”, said a final year MBBS student.

Only two days back, the central government had also decided to deploy medical interns and MBBS doctors on pandemic duty in order to augment the availability of the doctors and paramedical staff. The government will give preference in jobs to those healthcare workers who will offer at least 100 days service in treating Covid-19 patients.

## Varanasi begins crackdown on medical stores for overcharging

VARANASI

THE Varanasi police have started a crackdown on medical stores that are overcharging buyers for medicines and critical instruments like oximeters amid a shortage triggered by a huge demand.

Ambulance services that are overcharging are also falling in the police net. According to Varanasi Police Commissioner A. Satish Ganesh, the police received information about medicines and medical instruments being sold at higher prices. Inspector Lanka, Mahesh Pandey, sent a local native to buy an oximeter at one medical store. The man was charged Rs 1,400 for an oximeter, much higher than the maximum retail price printed on the packing. Ganesh said the receipt given by the shopkeeper mentioned only the amount with no details of the oximeter, brand name, maximum retail price and other details. When the police team entered the shop and started seeking details of the oximeter, the shop owner failed to give a satisfactory reply following which a case was registered against him.

The chief medical officer (CMO) was also asked to initiate appropriate action against the shop owner. Earlier on Friday, one Haider Ali alerted traffic police on its helpline number about being overcharged by an ambulance driver for ferrying his patient from Kabir Chaura to Bhojpur.

# Covid-19: HC dismayed over lawyer’s wrong statement, recalls order

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court Tuesday took strong note of a wrong statement made by an advocate without any authority on the basis of which a judicial order was passed relating to a plea to provide COVID-19 medical facilities to lawyers.

The high court cautioned the advocate about such conduct in future and said it was dismayed that he appeared in the matter without any authority and made a statement.

It recalled its order passed on Monday asking a non-operational private hospital here to handover its keys to the Bar

Council of Delhi (BCD) to inspect and make necessary arrangements for making it functional for providing COVID Care facilities to lawyers and their families. During the hearing, advocate Yashvardhan S Soam claimed that he was representing Rockland Hospital in Dwarka and offered to handover keys of the non-operational institute to Bar Council of Delhi to inspect and make necessary arrangements for making it functional for providing COVID Care facilities to lawyers and their families.

However, on Tuesday, an application was filed on behalf of the the hospital, which is now



known as Medeor Hospital after being taken over by another entity in 2016, submitting that advocate Soam had no authority to appear on behalf of the hospital.

Advocates Abhishek Singh and Prateek Singh, representing Medeor Hospital, said they are seeking modification of the May 3 order as the other lawyer had

misrepresented the hospital and made a false statement on their behalf. Allowing the plea, the high court recalled its May 3 order to the extent that it asked the hospital to handover keys to BCD chairman and senior advocate Ramesh Gupta.

“Advocate Soam who appeared for Rockland Hospital (on May 3) went on to say he had keys and will handover to BCD Chairman Ramesh Gupta. Now it has been transpired that he had no authority to state so or offer the keys to Gupta. “We are dismayed that without any authority lawyer appears and makes such a statement. We have cautioned him not to indulge in such

conduct in future,” a bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said.

When Soam tried to explain his conduct, the court questioned him saying how can he make a statement without any authority and that he should not have done so. During the hearing, senior advocate Rahul Mehra for the Delhi government, said on Monday evening he got to know that this young lawyer had no authority to make the statement. He said people are just coming here in the hearing without authority and are making any statement. The court was hearing a petition by advocate Manoj Kumar Singh, represented through

senior advocate Ramesh Gupta, seeking appropriate direction for setting up COVID health facility for the exclusive use by advocates registered with BCD and their family members. He said he has again requested the Delhi government to attach the guest house, shortlisted by the lawyers, with a hospital having ICU hospitals. He said BCD has the arrangement of medical and paramedic staff, medicines and ambulances and has also acquired 100 cylinders and they only require Delhi government’s help in refilling oxygen in them. The court has listed the matter for further hearing on May 6. PTI SKV SKV



# The world needs Gates Foundation

Divorce is the last thing to discuss during the Covid pandemic. But it becomes news if that divorce is concerned with not only one of the richest persons of the world but the biggest philanthropists of our era- Bill Gates and Melinda Gates. After 27 years of marriage, the couple has announced their divorce, saying “we no longer believe we can grow together as a couple. After a great deal of thought and a lot of work on our relationship, we have made the decision to end our marriage,” the pair tweeted.

What is at stake due to the separation of the power couple is not only a huge amount of personal wealth but also the fate of their charitable organisation-Gates Foundation. According to Forbes, Bill Gates is the fourth wealthiest person in the world with a net worth of \$124 billion. It is to be seen how this wealth is going to be distributed. Interestingly, Bill Gates amassed such net worth from technology giant Microsoft, which he has founded. But, currently, shares of the software-maker may

not be more than 20 per cent of his assets.

Over the years, Bill Gates has shifted much of his stake into the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Gates's biggest asset is Cascade Investment, a holding company he created with the proceeds of Microsoft stock sales and dividends. The entity has bought stakes in real estate, energy, and hospitality as well as stakes in dozens of public companies. It has to be seen how this wealth is distributed between the couple. However, what will be important for the world to understand the changes that may come to the operations of Gates Foundation post this separation.

The couple established the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000 that primarily focuses on public health, education, and climate change. In 2019, the foundation had net assets of more than \$43 billion. Between 1994 and 2018, Bill and Melinda Gates pumped more than \$36 billion into the foundation. Amid the pandemic, Gates Foundation has also committed billions of dollars to

wards public health. Its grants included around \$1.75 billion to vaccine initiatives and research for the Covid-19.

After the divorce, it is to be seen how the operating structure of the Gates Foundation change. The foundation, however, has come up with a statement assuring continuity and stability. In a statement, a spokesperson of the foundation said the couple will remain the co-chairs and trustees of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Apart from the overall direction of Gates Foundation, the Gates along with ace investor Warren Buffett - are behind the 'Giving Pledge' movement, which calls on billionaires to commit majority of their wealth to good causes. It is to be seen how the movement gets shape in the coming days. This is the second high-profile divorce among the world's richest people in recent years. In 2019, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos announced his separation from his wife MacKenzie Scott.

While divorce is purely a personal affair, which should be treated with dignity, such high-profile separations have impacted the functioning of many institutions. Therefore, the world is likely to take interest in this event for quite some time.

# ‘Autonomous research best safeguard against bad governance’

VISHNU MAKHIJANI

Professional studies and surveys for gathering social data is an essential service towards sustaining democracy, and making fair, enlightened governance and genuine development possible.

Autonomous and transparent research is the best safeguard against inadvertent or deliberate bad governance. Scientific, non-partisan research is truly the third eye of governance, writes N. Bhaskara Rao, a pioneer of social research in India, in a new book which he argues that if the impressive recent mantras about development and progress are also backed by applied social research, India can reach new heights in democracy, development and governance.

“Research methodologies based on field surveys in any specific context require consideration of certain important factors in order to ensure reliability of their results, Rao, the Founder Chairman of the Centre for Media Studies (CMS) and of Marketing and Development Research Associates (MDRA), writes in “The Third Eye of Governance” (Speaking Tiger), adding these include, apart from intelligent, scientific sampling, the credentials of the researchers and their familiarity with the respondents.

Pointing to the lacunae that exists in the system, he says “there is an urgency in the country to reverse the trend of the past decade so that independent research, assessment, and evaluation of public policies is not on an extinction course” in the book, which is sub-titled: “The Rise of Populism, Decline in Social Research”.

Lamenting that most public news media today “are either sponsored or supported or at function at the behest of an interested stakeholder”, Rao says data and statistics in the context of governance “must acquire their sanctity back”.

“All this is possible only when we have a national policy on ‘research culture’. The policy should specially indicate a space for social science research, more specifically in our national pursuits and the trajectory of democracy, development, and governance,” the author maintains.

The researchers, he asserts, should not have any links with those in power, “so that they are not, or are not perceived to be, biased either willingly or due to any coercion”.

Other factors also need to be factored into the process, for instance, “the competitive scenario in the political campaigns which may result in ‘band-wagoning’. There is also the possibility in some cultures of respondents being reluctant, for reasons ranging from fear to suspicion, to share with strangers their opinions on sensitive issues, especially political issues”. “They may not give clear answers to questions, or may even give answers contrary to what they feel or believe. And yet, such responses are routinely taken more seriously than they should be,” Rao contends.

Admitting that the much needed corrections, revamping, and renewing cannot be done by the government alone, the author says “governments must be concerned and take initiatives more seriously, with a holistic outlook”. Holding that the government’s ‘Control and command’ view is the very antitheses of a healthy research culture, Rao says civil society and active citizens too have stakes to ensure that research in the country plays an objective and proactive role.

“In fact, they should be more involved in the social audit of research, particularly social research in the country in specific contexts. The role of mass media and social media is unique and is a double-sword. It can save research from its fall from sanctity and credibility.

“The professional bodies, associations, and councils must ensure that they do not come under moral questioning. They should take proactive initiatives such that there is no government intervention in research practices. They must have certain restraints regarding professional standards, ethical concerns, and in bringing transparency to any conflicts of interest,” Rao maintains.

Thus, he writes, a three-pronged effort is needed to restore and revive research to its pride in India’s growth path.

First, the role and relevance of research needs to be reiterated and made evident to decision-makers at the highest level. They should become sensitive to criteria for research and to what or how independent research is different from sponsored or supportive research.

Second, some transparent regulatory mechanism is essential in the research architecture of the country, not through government control and centralisation but by combining voluntary and self-discipline obligations such as professional validation, social audit by independents, etc., and in a balanced manner.

Third, promotional campaigns for inculcating research culture or understanding data sensitivity are crucial. Awareness of basic desirability to identify the virtues of research, data, statistics, and analysis is important. This has to be the responsibility of multiple stakeholders, not just of the government. In a democracy, Rao writes, the role and relevance of research is as significant as any of the pillars of the state, particularly the Fourth Estate. “When research culture is ingrained in a society, the ‘We, the people’ credo of the Republic of India is consolidated in reality,” the author states.

“Transparent and independent research can be a reminder of the vibrancy of the institutions of the state, and government agencies and institutions can reliably and credibly implement policies,” he adds.

Thus, the present government, should, “in its own interest, restore the healthy tradition of Independent India’s early decades and facilitate, support, and sustain good and impartial research. The leaders at the top should express their belief in research and not only acknowledge-which they rarely do-but also share the knowledge gained from impartial research findings. They should welcome independent research inputs for important national schemes and policies, while pointing out any deficiency in research as and when it comes to their knowledge”, Rao writes.

The government should also not depend on any one source for research, particularly when evaluating major schemes like MNREGS, Mudra, or Swachh Bharat. “The government can identify specialist agencies for research within the government or outside to assign a particular responsibility based on their expertise and experience. The government should also not put all its bets on any one source or research methodology” as “over-reliance on one method of getting feedback backfires. We need to develop alternative ways of measuring the same thing,” Rao writes.

He also depreciates the phenomena of fake news sweeping across the country today “with rumours swaying and sweeping people’s sentiments”. “Is word of mouth relied on more now, despite the proliferation of mass media? Has the agenda setting moved from mass media to social media and to rumours? This situation is because there is greater concern with image, ratings, news management, and consensus building than with motivation, persuasion, and involvement.

“Instant ‘surveys’ are sweeping all across the country rather than KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices) studies on experiences or beliefs or behaviours. Instant surveys have gained more traction as they fit into the round-the-clock news model. Only an in-depth social research unfolds the psyche and yields lasting options,” Rao maintains.

The book leaves you with a sobering thought: “Why is the learning of lessons from what the Tata Foundation did in 2018 to promote credible and reliable research in public policies limited only to the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, or to Wipro or Infosys? Such funding and parameters for research on public policy formulation should also be emulated by other foundations in the country.”

Is anyone listening?  
(Vishnu Makhijani can be reached at vishnu.makhijani@ians.in)

# Combating the infodemic with digital civility

## MOOT POINT



Dr Ramu Suravajjula

It is the worst of times, the epoch of incredulity, the season of darkness, and the summer of despair! News about the tragic death or serious condition of our near and dear is devastating us every day unlike before.

Wealth, status and prestige are getting defeated hands down.

All hell broke loose, literally, with the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. It has pushed almost every family into untold fear and deep depths of despair. Even as the political masters shifted their attention to elections and devotees to holy rivers, the monster virus rose from the ashes only to create piles of ash from the heaps of dead bodies of the hapless citizens who lost their fight for a hospital bed, or an oxygen cylinder or a suitable injection on time.

The unintelligible virus has posed a serious challenge to the entire human race that takes pride in achieving unbelievable technological revolution and scientific advancement. Indiscriminate misuse of the same technology, alas, is discreetly causing enormous damage to the societal health.

Imagine this. Your neighbour tells you that Covid-19 spread can be tackled by eating bitter gourd curry along with the seasonal mango pickle (Aavakaaya) in every meal for 12 days. A close friend meets you to suggest that a particular concoction should be consumed at 5 am every day. Another gentleman says that black masks you use are prone to attract more virus. At the same time, your close family member sends you a video that gives graphic detail of coronavirus' spread in lungs based on the imagination of a money-spinning YouTuber.

Your son forwards an astrologer's clarion call: stop using any medicine from today as celestial adjustments wiped out the virus yesterday at 11.42 pm. Your colleague, at the same point of time, strongly suggests you to consult a particular babaji who firmly claimed to have cured 20,000 Corona patients so far only with his touch. A morning walker gives you a solid reason to believe that one in every family is bound to die due to the virus till August.

This is what is exactly happening every minute to you, me and everyone. A friend, a well-wisher, a subordinate, a relative, a member of your housing society et al bombard you with such information sans scientific back up 24 by 7. The ‘information sharing’ is done through a little device we always carry, i.e. mobile phone. The deluge of information in the form of contradictory suggestions, dichotomous observations and diametrically opposite view points on every issue has been hitting us every minute

through this cute machine. Mediocracy is ruling the roost and it is flowing through our smart phones. We read these messages and watch videos eyes glued to the small screens and assimilate the received information without knowing the fact that they have a telling impact on our body and mind.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is struggling hard to deal with infodemic, a portmanteau of “information” and “epidemic” that typically refers to a rapid and far-reaching spread of both accurate and inaccurate information about something. Too much information including false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during the outbreak has become as serious issue as the deadly virus itself.

The information we spread through social messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Messenger etc, and social networking platforms like Facebook, Twitter etc, without verifying the veracity can cause huge impact on receivers. WHO says that infodemic is causing confusion and risk-taking behaviours that can harm health. More importantly, it also leads to mistrust in health authorities and undermines the public health response.

With the rapid growth of digitisation, information is travelling very fast and it is getting amplified like the virus. Health officials say that infodemic can intensify or lengthen outbreaks when people are unsure about what they need to do to protect their health and the health of people around them. A cross-regional statement on Covid infodemic, signed by 132 nations, observes that the spread of disinformation, fake news and doctored videos foment violence and divide communities.

Here is a classic example. A politician in Karnataka held a press conference to announce that just two drops of lemon juice in the nose can increase oxygen saturation in the body and prevent Covid-19 infection. A man from Andhra Pradesh claimed that he would pay Rs.50,000 to those who can prove that the lemon therapy failed to yield desired result. A 43-year-old teacher from Raichur, carried away by the so called lemon therapy, poured lemon juice into his nose the other day. After puking, the teacher died on his way to the hospital. WHO and other scientific establishments, in their websites, stated that there is no scientific evidence of lemon juice being able to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

A doctor saab, who is releasing his videos on daily basis during the pandemic, asks people not to go for CT scans, while another self-claimed medical practitioner contradicts the widely popular method of Covid prevention, vapour inhalation. Lakhs of videos made by all and sundry are getting circulated on Covid-19 based on unscientific assumptions and dangerous imaginations. Fake news on lockdown resulted in



Too much false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during the outbreak has become as serious an issue as the deadly virus itself. Imagine this. Your neighbour tells you that Covid-19 spread can be tackled by eating bitter gourd curry along with the seasonal mango pickle (Avakaya) in every meal for 12 days. A close friend meets you to suggest that a particular concoction should be consumed at 5 am every day. Another gentleman says that black masks you use are prone to attract more virus. At the same time, your close family member sends you a video that gives graphic detail of coronavirus' spread in lungs based on the imagination of a money-spinning YouTuber. This is what is exactly happening every minute to you, me and everyone

a mad rush to grocery shops. A mischievous feed on a fruit vendor of a particular community impacted the business of many fruit vendors of the same community. Another case in point is, alleged irregular menstrual cycle as a Covid vaccine side effect. Experience sharing on this may help researchers but a sweeping declaration or a blanket comment on this on social media can create doubts in the minds of all women.

Pandemic time quackery is not a new phenomenon. During the 1889-1892 Russian Flu and the 1918-1920 Spanish Flu, researchers observed bogus claims but conspiracy theories and false representation touched new heights with the availability of smart phones and data. People should realise that the text messages, photographs and videos circulated by us may create fear, anxiety, stress and worry among the receivers. In turn, they would weaken immune system and can cause cardiovascular damage, gastrointestinal problems like ulcers. It can further lead to accelerated aging, and even result in premature death. Constant stress makes it harder to control ailments.

Hence, mobile manners is very important for all of us. We all should become responsible communicators and we should be accountable for the information we generate and share. Since information is power, George Byron rightly said that a drop of ink

may make a million think. A mobile message can make a million shiver in fear.

Social media can be best utilised to seek or extend help, highlight an issue, and share pure information. It is the best platform to share jokes or comedy videos to provide fun for the fear-filled people. Folks, time to be digitally disciplined and civilized.

Here are panchsstras for the best use of our mobile phones during pandemic time.

- 1) Realise the fact that whatever you transform through your mobile has magical power on the minds of the receivers
- 2) You are responsible-socially, morally and legally- for the material you generate or forward
- 3) Don't write or forward anything outside your area of expertise. When you are commenting on the issues of other domain, better mention that it is purely “my opinion”
- 4) Develop the habit of fact-checking. Check the veracity of every material (text, photo, graph or video) if it sounds abnormal, unbelievable or hyper in nature.
- 5) Discuss the issue of ‘digital civility’, ‘on-line discipline’ and ‘mobile manners’ with your family members, friends and others for a healthy and harmonious virtual world.

(The author is a senior journalist, journalism educator and communication consultant)

## LETTERS

### BJP didn't lose, they won

THIS is in reference to Mr Sambasiva Rao Choda's letter regarding the points 'Here is why BJP lost'. BJP lost? Sorry it didn't lose. They have expanded their footprint to places where they were nowhere. They retained what was already in their kitty, that is Assam. Bengal with no MLAs they have reached 70+.

DB Dayal, Bangalore

### How will DMK 2.0 be?

THE outcome of Tamil Nadu elections is as predicted in many pre poll surveys. The coming back to power by DMK is not because they have a good track record and it is rather in spite of their not having such a history. Their last regime was marked by power cuts, water scarcity, land grabbing and religious tensions. The judgement is still awaited in telecom scam case. However the people have voted the party since one more term cannot be given to ADMK and due to TINA (There Is No Alternative) factor.

Splitting of votes by parties like Makkal Neeti Mayyam, AMMK, Naam Tamizhar has helped DMK a lot. In spite of their continuous Hindu bashing the party has won in most temple towns and it is clear the electorate is generally more concerned about macro level issues only and are willing to support the party on relative merits. The new government should take all people along and should not please one sect

against another. M K Stalin has very long experience and he should drop the controversial promises in the party manifesto. Priority should be given for Covid control, education and creation of job opportunities and freebies can wait. It should be understood that it is not the sixth term for the party but being first in post Karunanidhi era it is first government of DMK 2.0.

M Raghuraman, Mumbai

### Right move to reduce caseload

THE Centre's decision to allow MBBS students, BSc, and GNM-qualified nurses for Covid duties is a step in the right direction. The Prime Minister Office has stated that medical and nursing students can be utilised for providing services like teleconsultation and monitoring of mild Covid-19 cases after due orientation under the faculty supervision. The medical personnel completing one hundred days of Covid duties will be given priority in forthcoming regular government recruitments as well as financial assistance. Hope that the decision will reduce the caseload on the existing doctors and nurses who are treating Covid patients.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, Satna (MP)

### Controlling corona spread into rural India

MORE than half of India's population lives in villages. The corona epi-

demic has hurt the villagers more financially than health. This is the reason why the villagers call corona a disease of the rich. Now the corona is slowly spreading all over. Businesses of lakhs of people have been stalled due to repeated lock-downs and government restrictions. People are returning from the cities to the village after becoming helpless and unemployed. Due to which the cases of corona in rural areas have also increased rapidly. The State-central government's entire focus on corona management is focused on metros and cities. Most villages do not even have medicines to fight corona, from specialist doctors to infrastructure facilities. At the same time, the bitter truth is that only one or two private doctors in the village treat every disease. The same is a medical hospital in some villages. If the corona epidemic spreads quickly in the villages, then the government will not be able to stop the villages from getting evacuated. If there is a bad situation about oxygen and beds in the big hospitals which claim big facilities in the cities, then the primary health centers of small villages can be estimated.

At the same time, social distancing and adherence to corona rules in villages is becoming a hindrance for people because there is a huge problem in the villages since summer and one has to bring water from several kilometers away. Governments should pay special attention to the villages regarding Corona's growing transition. Therefore, the local administration needs to find a place for a temporary hospital of 30 to 40 beds in all villages so that

in case of rapid increase in the villages, treatment to the infected people primarily can be provided before reaching the cities.

Mahesh Kumar, Sidhmukh (Rajasthan)

### Forget politics, handle pandemic

IT looks that most of the assigned lands have been taken by ruling and the opposition leaders if it is the case why we need to survey only those assigned lands, but the present government has to survey assigned lands of Telangana state and due justification has to be done. It should not be on any individual (Eatela Rajender). We know many other MLAs, cabinet ministers and prominent business corporates also received many allegations and we have seen in few of our TV channels as well.

If the government feels that it is justifying why we need to be partial, people will appreciate it if it is done impartially by surveying all assigned lands. Hope the present government should concentrate on health issues as the spread of double mutants is intensified further and we need to appreciate the neighbouring state imposed partial lockdown. We need to safeguard the people of Telangana first as a priority basis. Hope the present state government will act wisely.

Kanagiri SN Prasad, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com



# Lack of blood donors makes Thalassemia patients suffer

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

COVID times are proving to be tough for Thalassemia patients.

With 15 new cases of Thalassemia patients being registered every month, the number has gone up to 2,895 on May 2, 2021.

"Blood donation is the only major support we need right now to keep the patients stable," says an expert from the Thalassemia and Sickle Cell Society (TSCS). The government, people and all welfare organisations should come together to support thalassemia patients by organising blood donation camps.

Hyderabad doctors find it's the tough time to deal with the thalassemia patients as the blood donations have come down due to the pandemic. To treat all the Thalassemia patients in Hyderabad, the city needs 50 units of blood everyday and the TSCS is able to collect only 20 units per day. "There's a shortfall of 30 units per day," said a doctor.

"The pandemic is the only reason for low blood donation. Right now I have only 15 units of blood in hand and I don't know how to

- Every month at least 15 new Thalassemia cases are registered in Hyderabad
- 60% decline in blood donations
- 2,895 Thalassemia cases registered at TSCS as on May 2, 2021 in Telangana
- TSCS observes 60% decrease in number of blood donors in the last two months
- 60% of Thalassemia cases falls under Thalassemia major category
- Males more affected with Thalassemia with 58.60 % of cases whereas 41.40 % of women affected



Thalassemia is a genetic blood disorder. These patients have low hemoglobin which might lead to a severe anemia. Hemoglobin is found in 'Red Blood Cells' which helps in carrying 'Oxygen' to every individual body part. When there isn't enough hemoglobin in the 'Red Blood Cells', oxygen cannot be supplied to all parts of the body. This way organs starve for 'Oxygen' and couldn't function properly. Patients who are affected by Thalassemia should go through regular blood transfusions for survival, usually every 2 to 3 weeks

support thousands of patients. As the vaccination for above 18 has begun, the blood requirement will be higher in the next few months. Hyderabad currently has 2,895 patients whereas the average cases per year was only 1200," said Dr Suman Jain of Thalassemia and Sickle Cell So-

ciety.

"Around 40 patients are being treated each day and 30 donors donate at our society but due to the pandemic the number of blood donations declined in the past few months resulting in low recovery rate. With a 60% decline in donations, TSCS could com-

pensate for around 20% of the blood shortage by calling donors directly and requesting them to donate or conducting blood donation camps. If the government plans for exclusive blood camps and campaigns, it will definitely help thalassemia patients," Suman said.



## Second Oxygen express reaches Hyderabad

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE second Oxygen Express to Hyderabad on Tuesday reached Sanathnagar Goods Complex with about 60.23 metric tons of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) filled in 4 tankers. These tanks were earlier sent in empty condition from the Sanathnagar Goods Complex on April 29.

"The Second Oxygen Express was transported from Angul, Odisha for a distance of 1334 kms in a short period of around 31 hours with the train travelling at an average speed of 43 kmph from its starting station. To ensure that the train reaches the destination at the fastest possible time, railways have created a green corridor route for uninterrupted and fast movement of

these oxygen special trains," said senior officer, SCR.

Gajanan Mallya, General Manager, SCR complemented the officials for focused action in running the oxygen express trains and prompt delivery of the LMO without any detention. Also advised all the divisions to be attentive and proactive to meet the needs of running the oxygen express trains.

## Man complains against 'Vakeel Saab' makers

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

A man, whose phone number was flashed in a scene in the Pawan Kalyan-starrer 'Vakeel Saab' has approached the Punjagutta police and filed a complaint stating that he was flooded with calls because his phone number was shown on the screen.

The complainant, Sudhakar, in his complaint stated that the producers of the movie had used his mobile phone number 'illegally'

during a scene in the film following which he was getting numerous phone calls causing mental agony. He further stated that, in the movie during a scene, his phone number was mentioned below an image and the ones who watched the film have noted down the phone number and called him due to which he is facing a lot of mental stress and trauma causing inconvenience to him and to his family. Apart from it some callers are also using vulgar language and abusing him, said the com-

plainant. He further went on to allege that the producers used his mobile phone number without seeking his permission and demanded a case be registered against them for causing inconvenience and defaming him.

M. Niranjana Reddy, Inspector of police, Punjagutta, said, "We have registered a complaint from the person and are seeking legal opinion in this matter. Once the legalities are completed we will take necessary action accordingly."

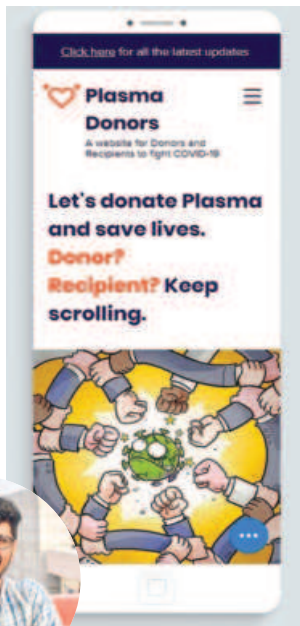
## Student bridges gap between blood donors, recipients

'Within a few days, around 1,000 patients and 100+ donors registered on the website'

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

WITH the rapid increase of Covid cases in the city and simultaneously the demand for plasma have also been increasing day by day and family members of Covid patients who are in need of plasma are using various platforms to get in touch with the donors. Keeping in mind the crisis situation, a fourth year engineering student Aditya Bhamidipati has developed a website 'Covidonors.co.in' that would connect potential donors with compatible patients who are in need of plasma.

Speaking with The Hans India, Aditya Bhamidipati, 21, a student from Gitam University, said: "Since cases are increasing day by day the need for plasma is on the rise. As for plasma donation there is no such platform where people can approach for a donor whereas for other Covid resources that includes oxygen cylinders and beds



there are many platforms. So I thought why not develop a website only for plasma. On April 28, I developed a website name as Covidonors.co.in, basically this website will bridge gap between the donors and the pa-

tients. This website will have a database of verified donors, which could help to connect them to the patient directly."

As to handle the data and make calls, a few friends Khoushik, Sushanth and Vishwanath, also engineering students voluntarily came onboard to handle the website. "This website is user-friendly and once the people click on the website the people can find two buttons one is donate plasma and other is require for plasma, when someone click on the donate plasma, it would take you to Google form where the recipients details are provided and when you click on require for plasma it would give you a list of donors," he said.

"As soon as this website link was posted on a social media platform dozens of requests for plasma donors came up and within a few days, we have over 1,000 patients and 100+ donors registered. Main aim of developing this website was to link the donors directly to the patients without involving a third party," added Aditya.

## New Electronics Policy aims at making State a global hub

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

The state Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Andhra Pradesh Electronics Policy 2021-24, which facilitates the creation of world-class electronics manufacturing infrastructure, improvement of Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) considerably through various process reforms, and offering a host of incentives aimed at reducing the cost of doing business in the state. The policy is envisaged to transform the state into a global hub for electronics manufacturing by focusing on the entire manufacturing value chain, assembly operations, electronics components manufactur-

ing, research and development (R&D), semiconductor and display fabrication, according to G Jaya Lakshmi, principle secretary, information and technology, electronics and communications (IT, E&C) department.

In a statement, Jaya Lakshmi said the electronics manufacturing industry is among the fastest growing sectors domestically, with the market size expected to reach USD 400 billion from the present USD 104 billion, by 2025. The new policy envisages tapping a majority of new investments in the sector flowing to India and other South-east Asian countries, into Andhra Pradesh and thereby develop the state into a mature elec-

tronics manufacturing ecosystem.

She said the salient features of the policy framework include the promotion of a world-class greenfield Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC), YSR EMC, being developed in Koppurthy in Kadapa district, introduction of a Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme in the greenfield clusters which dovetails with Government of India's schemes and incentivises Electronics manufacturers who expand their operations in Andhra Pradesh and increase their production which also leads to higher employment generation in the state.

The principle secretary said Andhra Pradesh expects to ben-

efit greatly from this first-of-its-kind incentive scheme at a state government level and envisions creating at least 39,000 direct jobs in the electronics manufacturing sector. Most of those jobs are expected to be women workforce as has been seen in the electronics industry in the past, and hence the policy will also aid in empowerment of women through financial independence.

Jaya Lakshmi said the IT, E&C department is currently engaging with several major electronics manufacturers for establishing their facilities in the state, with a potential of generating upwards of 20,000 direct jobs.



## CONTRIBUTING HER BIT TO THE COVID-HIT

Head of Narisena Global Women Forum and Women Welfare Service Organisation Latha Chowdary Botla says the recently-rolled out initiative is receiving an overwhelming response from home-confined patients as it provides relief to them to a great extent

Says the objective of the programme is to help Covid patients recover as quick as possible by feeding them a nutritious yet tasty meal

RANI DEVALLA  
VISAKHAPATNAM

HOW about treating yourself to a wholesome meal, especially when in home isolation?

Sounds good, right? You can actually get home-cooked meals delivered at your doorstep and that too free of cost.

From juices to salads, greens to dal, rotis to vegetable curry and papad or a packet of fryums, the meal can be rounded off with a fruit and a dessert as well.

In a step to help Covid patients recover fast, Latha Chowdary Botla, head of Narisena Global Women Forum and Women Welfare Service Organisation, serves meals without compromising on nutritional value and delivers them to their home.

Hyderabad-based Latha says that Vizag holds a special place in her heart. An anchor, a television artiste and an actor, the entrepreneur donned several roles before working a few years as an event manager in the US. Through her NGO, she



Head of Narisena Global Women Forum Latha Chowdary Botla

continues to enhance the livelihood of several women.

The recently-rolled out initiative is receiving an overwhelming response from home-confined patients as it provides relief to them to a great extent. Most of them were largely dependent on curries points that pack steaming hot food in paper-thin plastic covers.

Serving three portions a day — breakfast, lunch and dinner — Latha says that the team leaders of the forum are extending unconditional support to the endeavour. "Food is prepared fresh in one of the leaders' house, following safety protocols. Our objective is to help Covid patients recover as quick as possible by feeding them a

nutritious yet tasty meal," she explains.

Currently, food is being supplied within the city limits of Vizag. "Very soon, we are going to introduce a similar concept in rural areas as well because the situation there is even worse," she says.

At present, Narisena Global Women Forum is delivering meals in Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam. Going forward, the forum intends to spread its wings to Guntur and Bengaluru.

With some getting hospitalised and a few others preferring home isolation, the



A platter of meals being served to a Covid patient availing home isolation

endeavour intends to ease out the process of serving daily meals to those confined to their homes. To an extent, it also controls the spread of the virus as the frequency of stepping out of the home will be reduced by the family members of the Covid-affected patient.



# ITBP centre under-utilised due to lack of O<sub>2</sub>, medicines

## Officials involved in running of the centre say the hands of doctors and paramedics are tied

NEELABH SRIVASTAVA  
NEW DELHI

Opened a week ago to tackle the rise in coronavirus patients here, the ITBP-run care centre has been able to operationalise only 350 of its 500 sanctioned beds due to a shortfall in the required quota of oxygen and a lack of medicines, officials said on Tuesday.

The second wave of the coronavirus has put huge pressure on the country's health system, with several states reeling under a shortage of beds, oxygen, medicines and equipment. Official data accessed by PTI showed that as on Sunday, only 350 oxygen beds (out of the total 500) were operational at the Sardar Patel COVID Care Centre (SPCCC). The data also showed that the facility in south Delhi's Chattarpur area was getting

less than half of its sanctioned quota of liquid medical oxygen at 2.99 metric tonnes, instead of 6.55 metric tonnes.

The SPCCC, which is being run by the medical wing of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), began operations on April 26 on the premises of the Radha Soami Beas after the Centre, on the request of the Delhi government, sanctioned its establishment to cater to COVID-19 patients. Officials involved in the running of the centre said the hands of ITBP doctors and paramedics are tied as required oxygen is not available. Besides this, there are also other issues such as shortage of medicines, they said.

The overall functioning of the centre is also dismal as only 309 beds are occupied, as per data tabulated till the first half of Tuesday. Data also showed that since its



operationalisation last week, 720 COVID-19 patients were admitted to the SPCCC, which has no intensive care unit (ICU) or ventilator bed facilities. Out of these, 301 patients have been discharged on grounds like leave against medical advice (LAMA), discharge on request (DOR) and discharge upon treatment.

Fifty-seven patients were referred to hospitals that can handle serious cases, while over 50 patients have died at the centre till now, the data showed. "LAMA and DOR are those categories under which family members or caregivers themselves seek discharge because they do not find the centre suitable. They either get a proper hospital bed or take their patients out for a better chance somewhere else," a senior officer involved in the operations of the COVID care centre said. "We have already written to the Delhi government to provide us

the allocated quota of medical oxygen so that all 500 beds are operationalised and patients are treated in a better and streamlined manner," the officer said. The ITBP last week had issued an official statement saying that the "Delhi government has been requested to increase oxygen supply so that admissions are increased (at the SPCCC)." "There is a huge influx of patients demanding admission but our capacity is limited by supply of oxygen," the statement had said. Family members of some patients alleged that there is also lack of basic medicines, food and medical care at the centre. "I shifted my relative as he was not getting proper care and no one was checking on him. Also, he was getting serious with depleting oxygen saturation and the centre does not have ICU or ventilator beds to treat serious patients," the man's family member said.

## WINDOWS

### Amma canteen vandalised

Chennai: An Amma Canteen, the AIADMK's celebrated subsidised canteens for the poor, has been vandalised. "Today we got a message, Amma canteen was vandalized in Chennai. We got to know that two people were involved in this. These two are just ordinary DMK cadres, they don't hold a post in DMK. We ourselves gave a complaint about these two and they were arrested," Ma Subramanian, DMK MLA. The concept of the Amma canteen named after the late J Jayalalithaa is to provide cheap, nutritious, local food to the poor.



A young couple shows victory sign after receiving the first dose of vaccine at Radha Soami Satsang, India's largest vaccination centre, in New Delhi on Tuesday

### 'Pawar to work for Oppn unity'

MUMBAI: Against the backdrop of the results of the West Bengal assembly polls wherein the TMC romped home by defeating its challenger BJP, the NCP said its chief Sharad Pawar will try to form a united front of opposition parties, especially of regional outfits. NCP national spokesman and Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik referred to the statement of TMC chief Mamata Banerjee who reportedly said that the unity of the Opposition is necessary. "Sharad Pawar was also trying to unite all opposition parties before the Bengal elections. In the next few days, Pawar will work for the unity of opposition parties, especially of regional parties," Malik said.

## PM expresses concern over violence in Bengal

KOLKATA

As different political parties accuse each other of indulging in post-poll violence in West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday held a meeting with the top administrative and police officers of the state and took stock of the situation, PTI reported. The CM's meeting comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi dialed Governor Jagdeep Dhankar earlier in the day and expressed "serious anguish and concern" over the "worrisome" law and order situation in the state. Chief Secretary Alapan Bandopadhyay, Home Secretary H

K Dvidevi, Director General of Police P Nirajayan and Kolkata Police Commissioner Soumen Mitra, were present in the meeting with CM Mamata. Hours after the results were declared, political violence erupted across the state Monday, with at least eight people reportedly killed.

The BJP has claimed that six of its workers were among those killed, accusing the TMC of attacking and vandalising several of its offices, including one in Nandigram where the party's candidate Suwendu Adhikari defeated Mamata. Adhikari's car was also attacked in Nandigram.

# Assam: No Muslim member in treasury bench, Oppn has 31

GUWAHATI

For the first time in 50 years, the treasury bench of the 126-member new Assam Assembly will not have any Muslim member even as 31 members from the community, the second-highest in 38 years, have been elected in the recently concluded elections. In this year's elections, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party put up eight Muslim candidates, the Congress fielded 17, while the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) nominated 19 Muslims and a Hindu candidate.

Of the 31 Muslims elected to the new House, the second-highest after the controversial 1983 elections during the height of the Assam agitation, 16 are from the Congress and 15 from the AIUDF.

In the outgoing House, the NDA comprising BJP,

Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and Bodoland People's Front (BPF), had 86 members with Aminul Haque Laskar being the Muslim representative.

Laskar, 55, who was the Deputy Speaker in the Assembly, could not retain his Sonai seat in the Bengali-dominated Barak Valley where he was defeated by Karim Uddin Barbhuiya of AIUDF by a margin of 19,654 votes.

The AIUDF was one of the main allies of the Congress-led 10-party 'Mahajot' (grand alliance) that won 50 seats against the 75 seats won by the BJP led alliance. Jailed anti-CAA activist and prominent peasant leader Akhil Gogoi, the president of the newly floated Rajior Dal, won the remaining seat from Sibsagar as an Independent candidate. The Congress and the AIUDF won 29 and 16 seats, respectively, improving their 2016 performance by three seats each.



Akhil Gogoi

Meanwhile, some supporters of Akhil Gogoi walked up to quarter number 53 in the MLA complex in the city and put up a paper plaque bearing his name. The quarter was occupied by AGP leader Brindaban Goswami, who was denied a ticket this time.

Activist Gogoi, is in jail since December 2019 on charges of sedition and inciting violence during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act movement, has won from Sibsagar, once a communist bastion that the Congress took over in 2001.

Among the enduring images that come up when one speaks of Akhil are of him standing on the steps of a bus requisitioned by police to take protesters into custody as he shouts slogans decrying the government for its acts of omission or commission, or of him being surrounded and led by the police, again, for another stint in jail, or of leading siege on institutions

found committing wrong, or of him waving a sheaf of papers that reply to RTI queries and which reveal wrongdoings...He has been a thorn in the government's flesh protesting against land swap deal with Bangladesh, big dam projects in the Northeast or disinvestment in the PSUs before taking up the cudgels against CAA, which in his view would destroy the Assamese identity by giving citizenship to 1.90 crores post-1971 Hindu Bengali migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh.

It was this track record that health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had in mind when, while welcoming him, advised that Gogoi should function within the constitution and refrain from burning tyres on the roads. His supporters would perhaps want him to remain the Akhil Gogoi they have known and even gone to jail with, the quintessential protester.

# Army's Base hospital facing O<sub>2</sub> shortage

## Fight Covid, don't build PM's house now: Priyanka; US flights with aid to India delayed

NEW DELHI

The Indian Army's Base hospital in Delhi is facing shortage of medical oxygen following a substantial cut in its supply by the Delhi government, military sources said.

The authorities in the hospital said that though there was no immediate shortage of oxygen, the cut in the daily quota may result in serious difficulties in treatment of Covid-19 patients at the facility. The Base hospital, with a capacity of 450 beds, was recently designated as a COVID-19 facility. The sources said the issue of shortage of oxygen at the hospital has been taken up with authorities concerned in the defence ministry and steps are being taken to augment supplies. One of the sources said that the cut in oxygen supply was around 50 per cent of what the hospital was getting earlier. "There is no need to panic as the hospital was trying to bridge the gap in oxygen supply," said a source.

Slamming the Centre over its Central Vista project, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said that at a time when people are grappling with the shortage of oxygen and vaccines in the country, it would be better if the government deploys all resources in saving lives instead of building a new house for the PM Modi

Her attack on the government came over reports that the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) has informed a government-appointed expert panel that the construction of the prime minister's residence under the ambitious Central Vista project will be completed by December 2022.

India's total tally of cases crossed the 2 crore mark with 3,57,229 infections being reported in a day, while the death toll increased to 2,22,408 with 3,449 new fatalities, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Tuesday.

The production of Remdesivir has gone up nearly three times to 1.05 crore vials per month as the government works hard to enhance the availability of the antiviral drug in the country. Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Mansukh Mandaviya said.

United States Air Force flights that were scheduled to leave for India with essential life-saving supplies have been delayed till Wednesday due to maintenance issues, the Pentagon said on Monday. We just received word from USTRANSCOM that the flights for India are "delayed until at least Wednesday due to maintenance issues", a Pentagon spokesperson said.



Health workers wearing PPE kit stand outside the Covid-19 care train coach, at Ajni Railway Station in Nagpur, on Tuesday

## India's Covid-19 tally crosses 2-crore mark

### India produces 1.05 cr Remdesivir vials

### Centre slams report on aid being unused

NEW DELHI: The Centre reacted to media reports of foreign aid lying unutilised in Delhi. "A media report alleges that while the 1st consignment of COVID19 assistance arrived in India on April 25, 2021, Centre took 7 days to frame SOP of distributing these life-saving medical supplies. The story misrepresents factual information and is totally misleading." Meanwhile, more than four lakh beneficiaries, belonging to the age group of 18-44 years have been vaccinated till date since the third phase of the vaccination drive commenced on Saturday, informed the government on Tuesday morning. 4,06,339 people were vaccinated across 12 states and union territories as on May 3.

### UP cop quits after being denied leave

JHANSI : A PPS (Provincial Police Service) officer, Manish Sonkar, posted as Circle Officer Sadar in Jhansi, has tendered his resignation, saying that he was denied leave to look after his wife who is Covid positive. The couple has a young daughter and no one to look after her. Sonkar told reporters that he tendered his resignation to the SSP Jhansi, Rohan P. Kanay but did not elaborate the details. SSP Jhansi, however, said that he was initially informed about the matter on WhatsApp and later on, he received the hard copy of the resignation which he forwarded to his superiors. The officer had reportedly sought six days' leave to be able to look after his child and ailing wife but he was assigned the Pan-chayat poll counting duty in Badagaon.

### Fauci: Army can help build hospitals

WASHINGTON: Terming the situation in India very desperate, America's top public health expert Dr Anthony Fauci has suggested the government marshal all its resources, including the armed forces, to immediately build makeshift field hospitals, and urged other countries to help with not only materials but also personnel. Fauci, who is the Chief Medical Adviser to US President Joe Biden, also called for a nationwide lockdown, not necessarily for six months but for a few weeks to break the continuity and transmission of infection. Dr. Fauci's suggestions and dire assessment of India came as the number of new Covid infections in India officially passed 2 crore, almost double the number three months ago.

### DU loses 15 teachers, staff due to Covid

NEW DELHI: As the national capital reels under a devastating second wave of the pandemic, even Delhi University — one of the largest universities in the country — has been badly hit by Covid-19.

The university, which has 91 constituent colleges, has lost nearly 15 faculty members and senior administrative officers to the virus in the past few weeks. This includes Joint Registrar Sudhir Sharma, who succumbed to Covid on 30 April.

Furthermore, according to university officials, a large number of DU staff and teachers have either tested positive for Covid or are recovering from it.

They added that in the exam branch, nearly 70 per cent of the staff is battling the virus at this point.

Meanwhile, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday once again attacked the Narendra Modi government for its inaction as "many innocent people" continued to lose the battle against Covid and said a crime has been committed against India.

He said the only way to stop the apocalyptic march of the pandemic was an immediate complete lockdown with the protection of NYAY scheme for the vulnerable sections.

"Government of India (GOI) doesn't get it. The only way to stop the spread of Corona now is a full lockdown - with the protection of NYAY for the vulnerable sections. Government of India's inaction is killing many innocent people," he tweeted.

In another tweet, lamenting at the government he said, "I just want to make it clear that a lockdown is now the only option because of a complete lack of strategy by GOI. They allowed, rather, they actively helped the virus reach this stage where there's no other way to stop it. A crime has been committed against India."

Rahul Gandhi, who is a Lok Sabha MP from Kerala's Wayanad has been critical of the central government over the handling of Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

## Kangana's Twitter account permanently suspended

Mumbai/New Delhi: Twitter on Tuesday permanently suspended Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut, saying she had repeatedly violated its rules on "hateful conduct and abusive behaviour". The 34-year-old actor's handle @KanganaTeam now displays the message: account suspended. A Twitter spokesperson said in a statement that Ranaut's account has been "permanently suspended for repeated violations".

It, however, did not specify the tweet(s) that triggered the action. Ranaut, known for her often inflammatory tweets, had posted several messages following the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress'

win over the BJP in West Bengal and incidents of post-poll violence. Calling for President's Rule in the state, she also blamed Banerjee for the violence and called her unpublishable names. "We've been clear that we will take strong enforcement action on behavior that has the potential to lead to offline harm," the Twitter spokesperson said.

"The referenced account has been permanently suspended for repeated violations of Twitter Rules specifically our Hateful Conduct policy and Abusive Behaviour policy. We enforce the Twitter Rules judiciously and impartially for everyone on our service," the statement added.







# Stranded Aussie players may stay in India or go third country



SYDNEY

AUSTRALIAN players stranded at the postponed Indian Premier League (IPL) will either stay back in India or move to a third country as Cricket Australia (CA) and Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) on Tuesday made it clear that they would not seek exemptions to their national government's norms.

The Australian government has suspended all flights from India till May 15, leaving around 9,000 Aussies, including cricketers and former cricketers in IPL, stranded in the country that is reeling under the pandemic with fresh Covid-19 cases between 3.5-4 lakh being reported daily.

"CA and the ACA respect the decision of the Australian Government to pause travel from India until at least May 15 and will not seek exemptions," said their joint statement on Tuesday. While

three of the Aussie players in IPL – Adam Zampa, Kane Richardson (Royal Challengers Bangalore) and Andrew Tye (Rajasthan Royals) – left for Australia before the government imposed flight ban, the remaining cricketers stayed back. Umpire Paul Reiffel decided to return but could not as his flight via Qatar too were cancelled. Commentator Michael Slater had to escape to Maldives and lashed out at the government that was not allowing entry to its citizens from India.

The statement added that the two Aussie bodies back Indian cricket board's decision to postpone IPL with the CA being in direct contact with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to ensure safe passage to players.

"CA and the ACA understand the decision of the BCCI to indefinitely postpone the 2021 Indian Premier League for the safety and

wellbeing of all participants," the statement said.

"CA is in direct contact with the BCCI as they work through plans to ensure the safe accommodation and repatriation of Australian players, coaches, match officials and commentators back home to Australia."

On Tuesday, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison backtracked on the possibility of jailing those arriving to Australian shores from India following heavy criticism back home. Earlier on Tuesday, BCCI had announced the postponement of IPL through a statement. The decision was made after more Covid-19 positive cases emerged in the IPL bio-bubble following those on Monday. "The Indian Premier League Governing Council and BCCI in an emergency meeting has unanimously decided to postpone IPL 2021 season, with immediate effect," said a BCCI statement.

"The BCCI does not want to compromise on the safety of the players, support staff and the other participants involved in organising the IPL. This decision was taken keeping the safety, health and wellbeing of all the stakeholders in mind," it said.

The BCCI confirmed that all players will return to their families after it emerged that SunRisers Hyderabad's (SRH) Wriddhiman Saha in Delhi and Delhi Capitals' (DC) Amit Mishra in Ahmedabad tested positive on Tuesday. On Monday, Chennai Super Kings (CSK) bowling coach Laxmipathy Balaji and Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) bowlers Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier, had tested positive along with the ground staff at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. That forced three teams – KKR, CSK and DC to go into isolation. However, more positive cases on Tuesday made it impossible for the league to continue. (IANS)

# Madrid Open: Barty through to final after beating Swiatek

MADRID

WORLD No.1 Ashleigh Barty won the battle when the last two champions of the French Open

clashed and she beat Poland's Iga Swiatek 7-5, 6-4 in the third round of the Madrid Open.

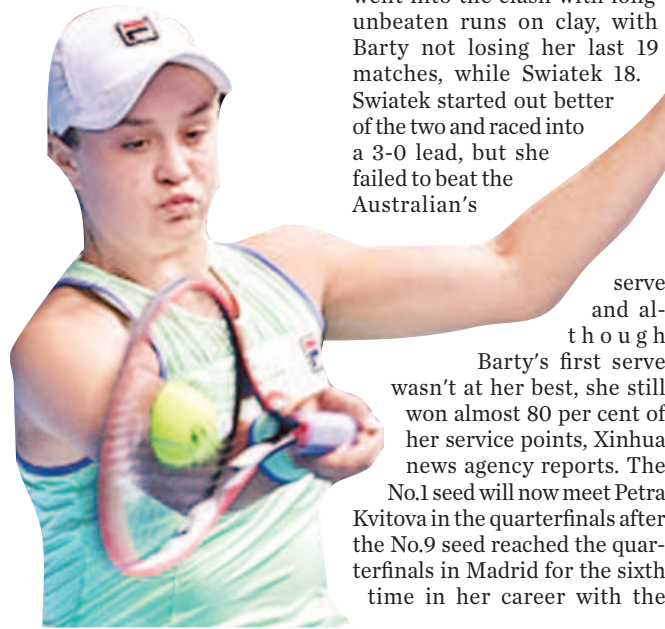
Barty won in Paris in 2019 and Swiatek in 2020 and both players went into the clash with long unbeaten runs on clay, with Barty not losing her last 19 matches, while Swiatek 18.

Swiatek started out better of the two and raced into a 3-0 lead, but she failed to beat the Australian's

three-time winner taking a 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 win over Veronika Kudermetova, while No.8 seed Belinda Bencic moved into the last eight after injury forced her rival, Ons Jabeur to retire trailing 7-6(2), 4-3.

On the first day of the men's competition, Russia's Aslan Karatsev opened his debut Mutua Madrid Open campaign on Monday by hitting 24 winners on his way to a 7-5, 6-4 victory against Ugo Humbert, which set up a second-round tie against No.7 seed Diego Schwartzman.

British number one Daniel Evans beat Jeremy Chardy in a marathon 7-6(6), 6-7(7), 6-2 match, which lasted two hours and 46 minutes. Lloyd Harris continued his excellent form against Top-20 ranked opponents with a tense, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6(5) win over Bulgaria's No.13 seed Grigor Dimitrov.



# India's Pro League hockey games vs Spain, Germany postponed

The Indian men's hockey team's preparations for the Tokyo Olympic Games suffered a major blow on Tuesday as its upcoming FIH Pro League away matches against Spain and Germany were postponed due to "international travel restrictions affecting India because of the Covid-19 pandemic".

While India were supposed to play Spain on May 15 and 16, their matches against Germany were scheduled on May 22 and 23. "FIH, Hockey India as well as the Hockey National Associations of Germany,

Spain and Great Britain -- since the matches initially planned in London on May 8-9 were also postponed -- are currently looking at all potential options to rearrange these matches at a later date," an FIH statement said.

The FIH expressed sympathy to the Indian hockey community, as well as their families and friends in times of Covid. "At this very hard time for India, a country so much linked to the history as well as the current development of hockey, our thoughts are with all Indian people," it said.

The Manpreet Singh-led India team had recently returned from a successful tour of Argentina, where they had defeated the reigning Olympic champions in both the Pro League games and also won two of the four practice games in Buenos Aires.



# PCB launches support policy for cricketers during pregnancy



LAHORE

THE Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday announced its "Parental Support Policy" wherein women cricketers will be allowed to opt for non-playing roles during pregnancy and "be entitled to take 12 months of paid maternity leave" after childbirth.

The aim of the policy is to "motivate champion professional cricketers in their journey to parenthood" and facilitate their return to the game while "balancing their parental responsibilities with the demands of their cricketing career".

The PCB said in a statement that apart from 12 months of paid maternity leave, the players will be guaranteed a contract extension for the following year.

"The PCB believes that a player's right to pursue the game on a professional level should not be limited because of their pregnancy or responsibilities as a new parent. Upon conclusion of the maternity leave, the player will be reintegrated into cricket-

ing activities and provided adequate medical and physical support in respect of their post-childbirth rehabilitation," the PCB said.

"If a woman player is required to travel for crick- eting activities, the PCB will support the player by allowing her to travel with a support person of her choice to assist in caring for her infant child, with the travel and accommodation costs to be shared equally," the PCB said.

"Male cricketers, who are expectant or new fathers, will also be entitled to 30 days of paid leave," the statement said.

PCB chief executive Wasim Khan said, "The PCB has a duty of care towards its cricketers. It is appropriate that we have a player-friendly parental support policy so that our professional cricketers can feel fully supported during an important stage in their lives, without worrying about their careers."

"Now that we have (a) maternity leave policy, I am hopeful that it will attract more women and girls to take up the sport," he added. (IANS)

# Uncertainty looms over T20 World Cup in India

NEW DELHI

UNCERTAINTY looms over India hosting the T20 World Cup this year after the Indian Premier League (IPL) was postponed on Tuesday following rising Covid-19 positive cases in four out of the eight competing teams, and all over India.

The IPL bio-bubble was supposed to be tight and impenetrable despite the rising number of Covid-19 cases across the country. However, the emergence of positive cases in half of the IPL teams has put question marks over the Indian cricket board's

ability to put up a safe bio-secure environment. The World Cup is scheduled to be held in October-November in India.

Although the tournament is still five months away and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) feels there is still time, the forced suspension of the tournament is unlikely to go down well with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and the other national cricket boards.

An ICC recce team that was supposed to visit India during the IPL cancelled/postponed its programme due to the pandemic. A top BCCI official last week confirmed that the UAE

has already been kept as a standby venue for the T20 World Cup.

"It would be the UAE. We're hoping again that it would be done by the BCCI. So, we'll take the tournament there, but it'll still be done by the BCCI," Dhiraaj Malhotra, General Manager (Game Development), told BBC's Stumped podcast last week.

India is witnessing a surge in Covid-19 cases with daily fresh cases in the range of 3.5 to 4 lakh. Apart from that, India is also reporting around 3,500 deaths a day.

If the situation doesn't improve going forward, other

cricket boards too may be reluctant to send their teams. Even while the IPL was underway without any reported Covid-19 cases, some Australian players and commentator Michael Slater left the bio-bubble to return home.

If the T20 World Cup doesn't happen in India, it will be the first time India will be hosting an international tournament or a series outside the country. The BCCI has hosted the IPL abroad twice previously -- in South Africa in 2009 and in the UAE in 2020. It also hosted part of the 2014 IPL edition in the UAE.

There had been talks to

hold the IPL in the UAE this year also, but a section of the BCCI did not agree to it and instead decided to host it in India. On Monday, two players of the Kolkata Knight Riders team – Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier – and the bowling coach of Chennai Super Kings, Laxmipathy Balaji tested positive while on Tuesday, a player each from SunRisers Hyderabad (Wriddhiman Saha) and Delhi Capitals (believed to be Amit Mishra) tested positive. Besides, two members of support staff of the CSK also tested positive. (IANS)

# Maradona case a 'trial by media', says lawyer

BUENOS AIRES

AN investigation into the death of Argentine football legend Diego Maradona has become a "trial by media", a defence lawyer said. Maradona died of a heart attack aged 60 last November, less than a month after undergoing surgery in Buenos Aires to remove a blood clot on his brain.

A report leaked to the media last week said the former Napoli star's medical team had acted in an "inappropriate, deficient and reckless manner," adding that he was not given the appropriate care, Xinhua reports.

The report, written by a medical committee appointed to probe the circumstances of Maradona's death, was submitted to prosecutors in Buenos Aires on Monday.

"The evidence that was leaked, as well as the audios and witness testimony, the extracts, including edited audios and chats, involve less than half of the defendants. Is that not striking?" Vadim Mischanchuk told reporters.

"It would seem there is an



intention to produce a trial by media, a trial prior to the delivery of justice, and that is not good at all."

Investigators have said they are trying to determine whether there was negligence on the part of doctors and

medical staff.

An initial autopsy found that Maradona had died from "acute pulmonary edema secondary to exacerbated chronic heart failure with dilated cardiomyopathy". Results of a second autopsy, published in

late December by the San Isidro public prosecutor, revealed Maradona was suffering from problems related to his kidneys, heart and lungs.

Following his brain surgery on Nov. 3, Maradona's personal doctor Leopoldo Luque

said the former attacking playmaker required treatment for "abstinence".

He did not provide further details of the condition, but Maradona had previously battled drug and alcohol addiction.

Luque and psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov both had their homes and workplaces raided by police in the days after Maradona's death as part of the investigation.

Argentine media has reported that a psychologist, two nurses, and two medical coordinators are also under investigation. No charges have been filed in the case so far.

Maradona, widely regarded as one of the greatest footballers of all time, shared the award for FIFA's Best Players of the 20th Century with Brazilian legend Pele.

The Argentine's passing prompted mourning worldwide, particularly in his homeland, where he was revered for leading the national team to the 1986 World Cup title. (IANS)