

Womenia

Hustle for that muscle

HAILING from a Marwari community, Disha has had her own challenges but ended up being what she always wanted to be.

Disha is a strong believer of the saying, 'The sweat is the footprints towards a better you'. Along with being a post graduate in Finance, she is also a dance choreographer, fitness instructor and an entrepreneur owning 'The DMK'.

Disha shares, "Ever since my childhood I was motivated by my father to exercise and stay fit. He always made sure I had some activity to do which led me to playing sports in school and also becoming the Sports Captain. I have also played sports at the state level. But my life changed completely when I took up CA - 1.5 years of difficulty, monotony, and studying for almost 16 hours every day made me realize this is not where my happiness lies. It was then that I decided to get certified in Zumba and found my inspira-

counting. One of the main reasons I've grown the way I have and made my mark in the industry is because of the vibe I carry while I am teaching, the ease of learning, and the personal touch I give to each event."

Hyderabad always feels like home

Disha shares that one of the main reasons that she had such a beautiful journey is because it was in Hyderabad - the city of pearls that treats every human like a pearl. She adds, "Despite the fact that I am not originally from Hyderabad, this city

or time to relax which was the same in every household. There were kids and teenagers who did nothing productive and ate all day. Her clients used to tell Disha, how they missed working out during pandemic. She adds, "Seeing all this around me lead to the 14 days challenge for women which aimed at helping women

and season 9 is just about to begin. Apart from this, I also have an initiative called the 'FITTRIP'. This aims at bringing various fitness coaches under one umbrella to help people."

Stereotype linked with the industry

One of the biggest challenges for Disha when she entered the industry was her age and gender; being expected to get married.

"When I entered the industry,

try, it was very difficult for me to survive as I con-

stantly was under parental and societal pressure and had no in-depth knowledge. Another challenge was the decision of taking up a career in fitness itself as I had no one to guide me and didn't know anyone who did this before to look up to. Getting underpaid was a challenge too as it disappointed me and lowered my morale. Despite all these challenges I am on a mission to change as many women's lives as I can, not just physically but mentally and spiritually. I want to help them build confidence in themselves so that they can win the world. Apart from this I will continue educating myself in the field of fitness so that I can help as many people as possible. I am also aiming to start and establish a business that will help people and generate employment. Getting recognized as a known choreographer in India is at the top of my bucket list," ends the fitness freak.

"I am on a mission to change as many women's lives as I can, not just physically but mentally and spiritually. I want to help them build confidence in themselves."

- Disha Methi Khandelwal

tion." According to Disha, people used to come up to her saying that she has helped them in some way and that satisfaction of helping people kept her going. She still takes up courses to gain more knowledge and help more people.

Sharing about her journey so far, she says that it was no less than a roller coaster filled with ups and downs.

She adds, "Initially, when I made a choice to switch to fitness and Zumba, a lot of people said a lot of things, even my parents had a tough time accepting what I was doing. There were a lot of questions raised and my credibility was questioned but here I am today doing what makes me happy, trying to help people around me and make a difference. I started choreography at a young age by teaching little kids. One event led to another and till date I have pulled off 45 successful events and still

has accepted me so beautifully for who I am that I cannot be associated with any other place. It accepts every individual for who they are and the kind of appreciation my work gets here, I cannot think of any other place where it could be the same. I am not a person who loves travelling but from the few places I have visited, Hyderabad feels like home. This city is so calm and welcoming that anyone can feel the warmth and belonging. It accepts you for you and helps bring out the best in you."

The fitness challenges

Disha always sawher mother working 24*7 with no time for herself

Zoo is actually short for Zoological Garden, and is mostly used to refer to the modern concept of a zoo. Prior to this the term menagerie was used, coming from a long history reaching back all the way to the ancient world. The oldest collection of this sort was found during an archaeological dig in Hierakonpolis Egypt in 2009. The animals they had there included an impressive array of hippos, elephants, baboons, wildcats, and hartebeests.

Zoo Lovers' Day

ZOO Lovers Day is a great excuse to get your family together and go for a trip to see the exotic animals of the world! Zoos have a long history, bringing strange new animals from the far flung and mysterious regions of the world straight into the heart of civilization. Where else can you see prowling lions, playful monkeys, and majestic elephants outside of the depths of the Savannah? Well, or main street London when Harrod's still had a zoo section.

There are so many great ways to celebrate this wonderful holiday. You could sign up to volunteer at your local zoo, taking in the exotic animals they keep there in a first-hand experience. You could simply take a tour there and have a picnic on the green in sight of the gorillas and the giraffes.



become fitter. When I introduced the 24 days challenge, I honestly did not think it would get such a massive response but here I am with season 9 starting soon. The 14 days challenge was an initiative at the beginning of the pandemic that impacted around 100+ people and I might have another season soon. 8 seasons of the 24 days challenge have completed successfully with women loving the change it has brought in them

THE past one year has been extremely difficult for people. While the pandemic brought much-needed focus on health and hygiene, it also created a lot of confusion among people about what is good for health and what is not.

Dr Kirti Sabnis, Infectious Disease Specialist, Fortis Hospital said, "A steep rise in demand for immunity-boosting supplements and alternate medicines, which apparently strengthened the immune system, was seen. From vitamin C and Zinc to protein supplements, most companies touted their version of a cure as best to protect people. WhatsApp group chats, social media platforms & family discussions were flooded with home remedies, recipes and Kadhas to boost immunity. The most googled health topic in 2020 was "how to increase immunity", a clear indication of people wanting to adopt any and everything that would give them protection from COVID19. With the growing number of cases, the number of variants, and double mutations being found, it is certain that no supplements and kadhas can protect us from the virus.

Can home remedies really harm us?

The answers lie in the fact that there is no proper evidence that says a particular remedy can be adopted in one way or the other. While there will be some science attached to it, the scientific value is never measured. Also, nobody knows which remedy may suit one person or the other. Therefore, the most dangerous aspect

Still hooked to home remedies to beat Covid-19?



of home remedy intake is that it is undertaken without expert monitoring, and without knowing the right dosage or frequency, as it is never prescribed by a doctor.

Here are some remedies that were adopted fervently but did more harm than good:

Drinking kadha's

Common ingredients used to make kadha include black Pepper, Cinnamon, Turmeric, Giloy, Ashwagandha, Cardamom, and Ginger. While these are good stimulants during winters, these items create immense heat in the body. Excessive consumption of these can be harmful and cause problems like nose bleed, persistent acidity, lead to mouth ulcers and black stools. While making

kadhas, one has to be extremely careful about the quantity of herbs & spices that are being used to make it, these can long-term effects too.

Excessive intake of Zinc & Vitamin D & C supplements

Zinc was commonly consumed in the past year. There is some evidence that Zinc can help curb the virus, but again, we do not have enough evidence to verify the quantity of supplement consumption. High levels of Zinc, can lead to a depressed, rather than a strengthened immune system. FDA has also warned consumers that Zinc nasal sprays can lead to loss of smell! Vitamin-D toxicity is developed when there is excess intake. High amount of Calcium in your blood (Hypercalcemia) can cause nausea, vomiting,

weakness, and frequent urination.

Overconsumption of Ayurvedic health supplements

While these are powerful herbal remedies used to bolster immunity and enhance longevity of a person; these cannot be the only shield against COVID19. Also, they cannot be consumed disproportionately. These time-tested supplements should be taken as prescribed; overuse may cause persistent digestive issues and erratic bowel movement.

Untested immunity-boosting powders

Most immunity-boosting powders available in the market may have Steroids. Excessive Steroids intake can weaken your immune system, leading to more sickness

teracts inflammation and Turmeric is one of the most powerful blood purifiers there is!

Herbs and spices

I say spices are the real fighters of any virus. Cooked in a good fat like cow's ghee, these are true immune boosters. May it be digestive aid cumin, flue combating mustard or congestion relieving pepper corns, spices have many benefits.

Nuts, seeds and coconut

To fight and recover an infection, you need good quality fat, protein, vitamins and minerals all found in nuts and seeds. Opt for a mix of nuts and seeds for a healthy snacking option.

Cow's ghee

Organic Desi cow's ghee is my choice for a cooking medium as it soothes a sore throat and is a carrier for phytochemicals.

Try opting of whole foods and are organically grown. Take my advice and incorporate these foods in your diet and shield yourself from any virus!

and an increased risk of serious health problems!

Steam inhalation:

While steam inhalation is said to be an age-old home remedy for the common cold, it can't help in fighting a virus-like COVID 19. Moreover, steam can cause swelling of the eyes, redness of the eye, dry eye, continuous watering of the eye, etc. It can also affect the skin, and may even burn it when overexposed to steam. It also causes skin on the face and neck to become dry, leading to fungal or bacterial skin infections

Bathing with disinfectants

As soon as the pandemic hit us, people began to wash food with bleach, applied household cleaning or disinfectant products to bare skin, and intentionally inhaled or ingested the cleaners. Some even started bathing with disinfectants. There is enough evidence that states that inappropriate use of disinfectants can cause poisoning!

Here is what you can do to build natural immunity:

- Eat a healthy diet with fruits, nuts, and vegetables
- Avoid processed foods
- Drink eight glasses of water a day
- Include physical activities to your regular regime
- Get 8-10 hours of good sleep
- Have a stress-free home environment
- Try to have a good amount of exposure to sunlight every day
- Stay hygienic and wash your hands
- Get vaccinated

TWEET PATROL

SHILPA SHETTY KUNDRA
@THESHILPASHETTY
Necessity is the mother of invention. So true, when young kids are stressed about their future. Kudos to our PM @narendramodi ji for taking up 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' virtually, owing to the pandemic.



Boost your immunity during pandemic

WITH a surge in Covid19 cases immunity is of utmost importance. While everyone during the pandemic wishes to lose weight, having proper immunity is as important as getting fit.

It is time to buckle up, and boost your immunity promoting foods. You are probably overwhelmed with many social media forwards on what to eat. Don't worry here I have cut out the clutter and assembled a list of foods that will keep you fighting fit.

Water

Drink plenty of water and fluids throughout to keep your throat moist. I suggest you also add on fluids like soups, rasam, herbal teas, warm water to keep you hydrated and flush out the mucus.

Lemon

Give your virus fighting cells a boost with a heavy dose of Vitamin C. The simplest way is by squeezing lemon over all your meals.

Leafy

greens

Did you know that the simple coriander that garnishes our meals is packed with anti-oxidants? Tulsi or holy basil, prescribed by traditional Indian medicine, is a good source of anti-oxidants. Don't forget Neem leaves that make for a strong immune increasing tonic.

Seasonal fruits

I truly believe that there is no better way of getting instant energy and fiber than eating a seasonal and local fruit. Fruits help flush out toxins and provide antioxidants.

Vegetables

When I say eat your vegetables, I do not mean only the green kind. In fact, include a range of colors on your plate as each has a different kind of anti-oxidant which take up your immunity. Remember: half your plate should be filled with vegetables at any meal.

GGT

As essential as GST is for the economy to work so is Garlic, Ginger and Turmeric (or GGT) for the body. Garlic helps kill infectious bacteria, Ginger coun-



Naini Setalvad

Mukhtar Ansari denied food, water during transfer to Banda jail

LUCKNOW

GANGSTER-TURNED-POLITICIAN Mukhtar Ansari's brother alleged on Wednesday that inhuman treatment was given to him while being transferred to Banda jail from Punjab, saying it could have been better had he been shot dead at a road crossing. The Uttar Pradesh government, however, said a team of doctors of the Banda Medical College examined Mukhtar Ansari at the jail and no immediate health issues were found by it.

"Inhuman treatment was meted to Mukhtar while being shifted from Punjab to Banda

jail. In over 15 hours journey, he was not given water and food on the way and was also denied medical aid. Due to this, he became unwell and reached Banda jail in a semi-unconscious state," Afzal Ansari, the BSP MP from Ghazipur, told PTI. Afzal Ansari, however, did not elaborate on how did came get to know about the treatment meted out to his brother during his transfer to the Banda jail.

"The Yogi Adityanath government has left behind Britishers by such acts. Contrary to the jail manual, Mukhtar has been kept in isolation barrack. Those who have to protect laws are creating terror.



The Supreme Court will hear on Friday the plea of the wife of gangster-turned-politician



Mukhtar Ansari seeking directions to the Uttar Pradesh authorities to ensure that her hus-

band's life is "protected" in the state besides being accorded fair trial in cases against him.

The Uttar Pradesh government in an statement issued here said, "Undertrial Ansari was brought from Punjab's Ropar jail at about 4.50 am to Banda prison gate by a special team and he finally got entry at 5 am. All his belongings were checked and no objectionable items were found. A team of Banda Medical college doctors did his check-up and found no immediate health issues."

ADG, Prison Anand Kumar has given strict instructions for round-the-clock security of Mukhtar Ansari, who is also

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) MLA from Mau. Elaborate arrangements have been made inside the prison, where he will be kept in barrack number 16, which will be under 24-hour camera surveillance, the statement said, adding the entire Banda jail is covered with CCTV cameras and is being monitored by senior officers from jail head-quarter command centre in Lucknow.

For outer security of the jail, additional force of PAC has been deployed and Banda city magistrate has been made incharge jail superintendent for administrative and security arrangements, it said. Two new deputy

jailors have been deputed and additional head jail warden and jail warden have been made available to the prison, the government statement said.

Afzal Ansari also claimed that the blood-sugar level and blood pressure of Mukhtar Ansari, who has diabetes, have increased and alleged that the jail administration is not accepting the request to provide him a doctor. "Instead of treating him, he was being administered injection to put him to sleep," Afzal Ansari alleged. He further claimed that his brother was kept in the ambulance for over one-and-a-half-hours even after reaching the Banda jail.

RAINS SCALE DOWN U'KHAND FOREST FIRES

DEHRADUN

FOLLOWING scattered rainfall in Uttarakhand, forest fires across the hill state on Wednesday slowly began to scale down after creating havoc for the past one week.

Scattered rains occurred at a number of places on Tuesday night and early Wednesday morning which in turn helped in extinguishing a number of the blazes, said Man Singh, the nodal officer of the state forest department on forest fires.

"Rains occurred last night at number of places and we expect these fire incidents to come down," said Singh.

Amidst severe drought and raging forest fires, the Met Department on Tuesday had predicted rains for the next one to



two days.

Indian Air Force's helicopter participated in firefighting operations to douse the fire spread at three places in Uttarakhand. According to officials, Seventy-five new forest fires were reported

from across the state in which 105.85 hectares of the green cover was gutted.

Forest fires were doused in Bariargadh and Sarkyana in Kirti Nagar range and Khirsu in Pauri district on Tuesday, Chief Con-

IAF battles blazes, 75 new fires reported

servator of Forest Garhwal S K Patnaik, under whose supervision the exercise was carried out, said.

The Indian Air Force's (IAF) MI-17 helicopters moved to the Kirti Nagar forest division of Tehri district to control the fires by spraying water collected from Shri Kot dam in buckets with a capacity of 5,000 litres, officials said. The firefighting operation lasted three-and-a-half hours, he said.

However, in the Kumaon region, IAF helicopters could not be utilised as bad weather prevented them from taking off, the officials said.

As many as 414 forest fires have been reported from Uttarakhand in April so far and 645.3 hectares of forests destroyed, they said.

Man held for blackmailing ex-girlfriend

NEW DELHI

A 23-year-old man was arrested for allegedly blackmailing his ex-girlfriend for money by threatening to upload her private videos and photos on social media, police said on Tuesday.

A senior police officer said the complainant alleged that someone had hacked her Facebook account through which she shared some private videos and photos with her ex-boyfriend.

The woman stated that she had already paid Rs 15,000 to the blackmailer but he demanded Rs 15,000 more from her following which she lodged a complaint with the police, the officer said.

During investigation, the police analysed the mobile phone of her ex-boyfriend, Shubham Sharma, a resident of Gali Arya Samaj, and ap-

prehended him on Monday, the officer added. Interrogation revealed that Sharma was under debt and after the woman broke up with him, he used another phone number to contact her.

He told her that he had hacked her Facebook account and downloaded her private videos and photos. He threatened to upload the content on social media if she refused to give him money, the officer said. The victim discussed the matter with Sharma and gave him Rs 15,000 which he was supposed to give to the blackmailer. The accused later demanded more money from her following which she lodged a complaint. Three mobile phones, four sim cards and one pendrive containing the videos and photos were recovered from his possession, the police added.

Boy mistakes bomb for ball, suffers injuries in blast

LUCKNOW

A 12-year-old boy suffered injuries after he picked up a crude bomb, mistaking it for a ball, from a garbage heap and then threw it away, causing an explosion.

The incident took place on Tuesday evening when the boy, Sachin, was returning home from coaching classes with his friends. His father Ram Khelawan told police that, "Sachin spotted a ball like object wrapped with twine, lying in the heap of garbage and picked it up."

Ram Khelawan said Sachin lobbed the ball-like object on being reprimanded by his mates.

"As soon as he threw it away, it exploded on hitting against the ground and my son was also injured," he said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, central zone, Somen Barma said a case had been registered against unidentified persons for causing hurt to someone by one's negligent act and Explosive Substances Act. He said, "Police also checked CCTV cameras installed near the garbage dump to find out who dumped the crude bombs."



UP man set on fire, blames ex-girlfriend

BAREILLY

A 26-year-old married man was allegedly set on fire for stalking a woman in the Bahedi area of Bareilly.

The victim has been admitted to a private hospital in a critical condition, said police.

According to police reports, the man was reportedly in a relationship with the woman but when she learnt that he was married, she ended the relationship.

The victim, however, continued to stalk her and on Monday night, he tried to enter her house.

The woman told the police that the man set himself afire after she refused to meet him.

Police, meanwhile, have registered an FIR against the woman

and her family under section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code.

Bareilly Senior Superintendent of Police Rohit Singh Sajwan said, "We were informed by a caller that the man had set himself afire. Immediately, a police team was sent to the village and the victim was rushed to a hospital."

"The incident took place outside the house of a 20-year-old woman, who is said to be his ex-girlfriend. The man and his brother claimed that he was set on fire by the girl's father and brother. The allegation is denied by the girl and her family."

He further said that the matter was under investigation and action would be taken later.

Allahabad HC asks Yogi to consider night curfew in UP

PRAYAGRAJ

THE Allahabad High Court has asked the Uttar Pradesh government to consider a night curfew situation as the state witnesses a surge in the number of coronavirus cases.

The court also asked the government to consider vaccination for all.

The court directed the state government to ensure Covid protocols are followed in nomination and campaigning in the ongoing Panchayat elections.

The directive has been given by a bench comprising Chief Justice Govind Mathur and Justice Siddharth Verma.

The court has ordered the police and district administration to make sure people wear masks.

The court directed that all citizens should be vaccinated and that officials should visit from house to house to vaccinate people.

The court has also asked the state government to consider crowd control in late evening celebrations as well as imposing a night curfew.

Bar employee gang-raped, accused yet to be nabbed

GURUGRAM

A 24-year-old bar employee, who was returning home after a late night shift was allegedly kidnapped and gang-raped by five persons when she took a lift in their car from the Mehrauli-Gurugram (MG) road, the police said on Wednesday.

The incident happened in the early hours of Monday.

According to the police, the three accused, who gave her a lift, allegedly took her to Jhajjar district, 50 kms away, where two other men joined and all five allegedly took turns to rape her. The victim was allegedly held captive and sexually assaulted till morning.

The accused then threw her out of the car somewhere in Farukhnagar (Haryana) and rode away from the spot. A police team rescued her around 6.35 a.m. on Monday after she called for help.

The 24-year-old victim resides in Delhi and works in a Gurugram bar.

In her police complaint, the victim told the police that 'around 3 a.m. after a late night job shift she was on her way back to home and was waiting for transport on the MG Road opposite Sahara Mall'.

"The three culprits came in a car,



stopped near me. I told them I had to go to Dwarka Mod, and they agreed.

"They told me that they too are going towards Dwarka Mod. When I asked the driver about the other two persons in the car, he said they will get down at IFFCO Chowk. So I boarded the cab. They, however, instead of heading for Delhi, took the cab on the expressway. When I asked where they were taking me, they threatened and molested me. One of the accused told me that they were in the Patoda village in Jhajjar district and took the car to the field and raped me. They then dumped me on the road and sped away," she said.

"They were calling each other Pankaj, Manoj and Vicky and I am not aware the name of others," she told the police.

Bird flu returns, 100 birds found dead in HP

SHIMLA

THE wildlife officials on Wednesday informed that around 100 migratory birds have been found dead in Pong Dam Lake in the last two weeks after the outbreak of a second wave of bird flu in Himachal Pradesh.

In early January, bird flu had first been confirmed among migratory waterbirds at Pong Dam Lake Wildlife Sanctuary. It had left around 5,000 birds died in a month. It was contained in early February but has now resurfaced since late March beginning with the discovery of a dozen bird carcasses in the sanctuary on March 25, they added.

Chief Wildlife Warden Archana Sharma said the National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD) in Bhopal has confirmed the presence of H5N8 avian influenza among the samples of the dead birds.

This strain is different from the previous outbreak when H5N1



had been detected among the migratory birds, she said adding that both these strains are highly pathogenic.

Highly pathogenic subtypes of the avian influenza virus are known as highly contagious among birds and especially deadly for poultry.

Earlier this year, when bird flu outbreaks were reported across India, most of the states including neighbouring Haryana reported the H5N8 subtype of the virus, a strain that has not been known to infect humans.

As of Tuesday, 99 birds have been found dead at Pong Dam lake

during this resurgence, she added.

Like the previous outbreak, most of the victims are bar-headed geese, she said adding that the dead birds also include nine grey-lag geese.

The outbreak has so far been confined to two adjoining forest beats and bird fatalities are higher

during days of adverse weather because that is when the geese tend to flock together instead of flying out, leading to more transmission of the virus, she added.

An international Ramsar site with an area that extends up to 220 square kilometres during the wet season, the Pong wetland becomes home to flocks of migratory waterfowl each winter when wetlands in Europe, north and central Asia become frozen. A bird census in the sanctuary in February revealed the presence of over one lakh migratory waterbirds of 51 different species at the lake, including over 40 thousand bar-headed geese.

With the onset of summer, the migratory birds are now flying back to their parent wetlands, she added.

Many of the birds currently present in the lake are those which have flown from Rajasthan and other parts of the country, stopping here on their northward journey, she added.

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK			
(A scheduled commercial bank)			
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The below mentioned borrowers have failed to repay the loan and redeem the gold ornaments within the stipulated time in spite of several reminders. The Gold Jewellery/ ornaments pledged under the said loan accounts by the below listed borrowers will be sold in public/ Online/ private auction at our Branch premises on 16-04-2021 at 10.30 AM. Those willing to participate are requested to contact the branch. The Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any bid without assigning any reason whatsoever. Please note if the auction does not get completed on the same day, the same will follow the subsequent days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to nominee/ legal heir. The Borrower are hereby notified to pay the upto date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of auction, failing which the pledged gold ornaments will be sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost. For any queries and terms and conditions contact branch. For details of branch address visit www.janabank.com .			
Sr. No.	Loan Account No.	Name of Borrower/Co-Borrower	Gross Weight of Pledged Gold Ornaments
1	30208730003022	Lucky Verma / Motilal Verma	2.55
2	30208730003071	Manjeet Hukam Chand / Hukam Chand	33.70
3	30208730003111	Sachin Sharma / Padam Kumar Sharma	14.74
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Ground Floor, Building No. 54/9, New Railway Road, Near Idbi Bank, Gurgaon-122001, India.			
4	30418740000544	Mithlesh / OMPRAKASH BHATI	71.46
5	30418730000936	Manish Panchal / Kanwar Pal	72.41
6	30418730000949	Asha Rani / Madan Lal	16.17
7	30418730001123	Renu / Subhas	46.68
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., GF & 1st Floor, Tower 115, 2A /15, NIT Faridabad, Faridabad-121001, India.			
8	31268730000293	Deepak D / Lal Singh	28.21
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., No. 14/78, 1st Floor, Model Town, Saini Market, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar -124507, India.			
9	31288730001337	Amita Na / Jamma Das	28.88
10	31288730001923	Rinku Na / Babulal	14.25
11	31288730002008	Rohit / Neeki Ram	49.80
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12	32038730000511	Anju / MEHAR SINGH	24.93
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., 2nd Floor, SCO-216F, Sec-124, Behind ICICI Bank, Urban Estate, Karnal -132001, Haryana.			
13	32058730000847	Vicky Vicky / Jogender	24.11
14	32058730000899	Manjeet Manjeet / Balwan Singh	10.75
15	32058740000123	Amit Kumar / Ram Gopal	14.75
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Ground & 1st Floor, SCF-197, CUE, HUDA Complex, Rohtak-124001, Haryana, India.			
16	33688730001801	Ashok Kumar / Gurmjeet Singh	17.20
17	33688730002228	Rajinder Kumar / Pritam Singh	28.28
18	33688740000340	Jaswinder Kaur / Randhir Singh	128.36
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Ground Floor, Property No. 68/10/2, Kapali Muchan Road, Chota Bus Stand, Bilaspur, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana-135102.			
19	34038730003320	Ajay Kumar / Late Ram Pravesh	14.87
20	34038730003409	Jyoti Yadav / Late Bawani Prasad	30.39
21	34038730003412	Jyoti Yadav / Late Bawani Prasad	58.52
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Ground & 1st Floor, Property Bearing No. Khasra No. 1621/2, Schedule Road No-3, Delhi Mathura Road NH-2, Mauja Anangpur, Faridabad District, Faridabad-121101, India.			
22	45238740000023	Shammi S / Jagmal	19.55
23	45238740000121	Devender Kumar / Khota Singh	33.17
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Gf & 1st Floor, No 3123/C and Part of Property No 3089, Mohalla Rambas Rewari, Rewari-123401, India.			
24	45268730000035	Yograj Singh / Roshan Lal	61.52
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Ground Floor, Sco No-97, Sector-16, Faridabad -121002, Haryana, India.			
25	45288730001094	Rekha I / Raju	29.86
26	45288730001105	Sanjay Giri / Lakhmi Chand	33.28
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27	46088730002436	Narinder Kumar / Lal Chand	45.25
28	46088730002462	Surender Singh / Jai Singh	50.56
29	46088730004034	Mangli Devi / Om Parkash	54.79
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Place: Haryana		Sd/- Authorised Officer	
Date: 08.04.2021		Jana Small Finance Bank Limited	

Covid returns: Even God can't help these incorrigibles

Around this time last year there was total confusion and people were in a state of panic. No one knew how to face or handle the new unique coronavirus. It started spreading fast and many people lost their lives. To break the chain, Prime Minister Narendra Modi came with weird ideas like banging thali with spoon and lighting of lamps etc and finally the Centre announced total lockdown which had given a major jolt to all, particularly the poor and the middle class people. All industries suffered major losses due to the shutdown. Country's economy was estimated to contract by 6.9 per cent in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. It was like jumping from frying pan into fire for all sections. Moreover, restrictions to people's movement not only severely affected incomes and consumption.

Despite all these, when the second wave knocked the doors of people around mid March, no one took it seriously. They started feeling that the coronavirus was dead and gone and with the process of vaccination having begun, they need not worry anymore about it. While this was the attitude of the people which has led to their reluctance to use masks, maintaining social distance and washing hands frequently, the State governments too blinked in implementing the health protocols and we are seeing how the cases have surged in the last two weeks and how again Covid-19 deaths are being reported. The Centre and respective State governments were busier in poll campaigns and were playing all their cards up their sleeves to win seats but gave a damn when it came to hammering into the minds of the people that corona

is very much alive and co-existence will continue for at least another year or so. Though India is a country where we don't even stop when the traffic signal turns red unless there is a cop around, it is shocking that the governments took for granted that since people who had faced the pandemic last year bravely would adhere to self-discipline and would follow the protocols and left it to the people to chose to live safe or die. But we being what we are, refused to learn lessons and started even saying that there was no need for any protection since God is great and he will take care of us. Whether it is Mathura or Tirupati or Vijayawada or East Godavari or even Golden Temple in Amritsar, people are seen moving around without masks. In Mathura, even now majority of the people are not wearing masks. There is no

social distancing in temples or Holi celebrations or in temples. Even temple authorities say, "Kanha hamare saath hai kuch nahi hoga." In Tirupati town, not only people even lawmakers are not using masks or maintaining social distance. Till a couple of days ago, the Golden Temple also did not insist on anyone using masks, there were no arrangements for hand sanitisation or social distancing. Only now as the cases started increasing and the Central teams had to rush, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and district administration officials, SGPC president Jagir Kaur and Deputy Commissioner Gurpreet Singh Khaira, Commissioner of Police Sukhchain Singh Gill, SDM Vikas Hira and municipal corporation officials met and decided to implement the health protocols strictly. People in this great country apparently don't believe that 'prevention is better than cure'.



Two tragic tales of families hit by mindless terrorism

S RAVI

Two incidents reported recently have brought into sharp focus the trail of death and sorrow that mindless terrorism leaves in its wake. One is about a Kashmiri father pleading that his son, a soldier in the Territorial Army, be declared a martyr while the other is of a helpless wife appealing for the release of her husband being held captive by Naxal extremists.

The second incident pertains to the Central Reserve Police Force jawan, Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, from Jammu, who is missing after the recent Sukma-Bijapur border encounter between armed forces and Naxals.

Several jawans killed were from the Commando Battalions for Resolute Action (CoBRA) unit, while others were part of the Bastariya Battalion of the CRPF and the District Reserve Guard. The only one missing is 35-year-old Manhas. Even thorough combing of the area has not yielded any result giving rise to the speculation of his being held captive by the Maoists. In fact, confirming the hostage crisis are several claims by local journalists that they received calls stating that Manhas is in Naxal custody.

Meenu Manhas who spoke to a TV journalist over the phone was told to send a video appealing to Naxals to release her husband. Meanwhile, Meenu has appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, to secure her husband's release.

"I want to request Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah to bring back my husband. Wherever he is, I appeal to you to bring him back. If he is safe, bring him back somehow. I request Modi to bring him back like he brought Abhinandan from Pakistan," she said.

Continuing, she broke down in tears and said: "I last talked to my husband on Friday at 9:30 pm. He told me that he was going for his duty and will talk to me the following day. No one is giving us any information. We have called the control room but they assured us that we will be given information soon. But it has been two days now. We are relying on the news for now. I appeal to PM Modi to ensure his freedom."

It is ironic indeed that while jawan Manhas hails from Jammu, another heartrending scene takes places unfailingly each day in Kashmir.

Cut to Shopian in Jammu and Kashmir where the onset of dawn sees 56-year-old man Manzoor Wagay walking with a shovel and a spade in hand. No, he is not on his way to earn his daily bread. Instead he heads for fields and orchards located in proximity to dig for hours. All to find the body of his 24-year-old son, Shakir Manzoor, abducted by terrorists and mercilessly killed later.

Returning home so far empty handed for the last eight months since August last year, he never loses hope. He is back to digging next morning.

Shakir was a jawan in the Territorial Army, who was abducted, tortured and killed by terrorists.

It was during Eid celebrations that tragedy struck Wagay and his family on August 2. Wagay's son Shakir, a rifleman with the 162 Battalion of TA, had come home to rejoice during the festival but tragedy struck when returning back to his unit in Balpora, terrorists intercepted his car and abducted him at gunpoint. Torturing him for hours they dumped his body unceremoniously. Just because he was a duty-abiding armed personnel serving his nation!

Even though the slain jawan's blood-soaked clothes were found three kilometres away from his home, his body was not. And from that day onwards, uncertainty has loomed over the father and family.

Following Shakir's abduction a few days later, an unverified audio clip surfaced in which a terrorist, identifying himself as Abu Talha, claimed that he had killed Shakir. Interacting with the press persons, Vijay Kumar, the Inspector General Kashmir, had said: "Talha who was later killed during one of the encounters had claimed that after snuffing out Shakir's life, he buried his body somewhere nearby. But till we have not been able to find his body."

This devastating news broke Wagay but also left him distraught. Not wanting his courageous son to be declared as missing, Wagay started his unending search to trace the body of his son. While officially he is considered missing till such time Shakir's body is recovered, Wagay insists on Shakir being recognized and remembered as a martyr.

Making a heartfelt request, Wagay says: "I appeal to people to help me trace the body of my son. My heart says he lies buried within a radius of seven-eight kilometres from home."

Preferring to sit at the entrance of his house on his return in the evening, Wagay stares vacantly at Shakir's photograph, hoping against hope that his son's body is found, to give a finality!

Take a journey into yourself

TALKING OF MANY THINGS



Dr Mohan Kanda

“Life”, said Helen Keller, the deaf and dumb political activist and author, “is either a daring adventure or nothing”. All of us, at one time or other, have experienced the feeling of being grabbed by wanderlust, the urge to see new places, meet new people and experience exotic sensations. Human beings, and animals, alike, have recognised from times immemorial the value of travel.

And, thanks to the annihilation of distance by modern means of travel, travel nowadays is much faster, and cheaper too. Having conquered the challenges of travel by land, water and air, mankind has not succeeded in making more than a good beginning in the exploration of outer space, referred to as ‘the last frontier’ in the fictional fantasy of yesteryear ‘Star Trek’.

Travelling gives us the opportunity to disconnect from the compulsions of daily life, a chance, as it were, to get away from it all. What is more, upon return, one realises the value of what one had left behind. It has been said that you never know the value of what you have, until you lose it. Travel is also a wonderful way of relaxing and recharging one's batteries so that one can come back invigorated, to the daily routine. Being dropped into a new environment engages a dormant part of your mind and gets those synapses firing again.

The interaction with different cultures, diverse traditions and distinctive lifestyles also serves to broaden one's mind and allows one's authentic self to surface. What is more, the exposure broadens the vistas of one's knowledge and widens the perspective. In a manner of speaking, it kicks you out of the comfort zone and forces you, for better or worse, to try new things! It is like acquiring a new set of mental filters, and being ready to take on the next big project or challenge. “The more you know”, as the saying goes, “the more you know how little you know!”

The importance of travel in adding to the roundness of one's personality, as a result of the journey one makes into new worlds one has not earlier been exposed to, recognized in many ways. In ancient times, for instance, kings and princes took to what was called ‘Desatana’, not only as a measure of understanding the mood of the people and the conditions in which they lived, but also to broaden the horizons of their outlook.

In a similar manner, IAS officers are taken on ‘Bharat Darshan’. The incorporation, in the mid-service training of IAS officers, of a capsule involving foreign travel, serves a similar purpose, an experience no less valuable for coming at a late stage in service.

I, myself, have found that extensive travel has added to my ability to develop a cosmopolitan approach to food, clothing, hobbies etc. According to the great travel writer Pico Iyer, “Travel is not really about leaving our homes, but leaving our habits.” In addition, I have found that I feel liberated from the inevitable sense of ennui that one experiences sometimes, the feeling of being stuck with what one is doing and wondering what the purpose of life is all about.

The exposure to different places, people and ways of life a great solution for resolving the



According to the great travel writer Pico Iyer, “Travel is not really about leaving our homes, but leaving our habits.” In addition, I have found that I feel liberated from the inevitable sense of ennui that one experiences sometimes, the feeling of being stuck with what one is doing and wondering what the purpose of life is all about. The exposure to different places, people and ways of life a great solution for resolving the dilemmas which the youth would usually face, when having to decide on their educational paths, professional careers or their lives in general. And it can be a surprising and rejuvenating solution. Which is probably why Mark Twain advised people to ‘explore, dream and discover’

dilemmas which the youth would usually face, when having to decide on their educational paths, professional careers or their lives in general. And it can be a surprising and rejuvenating solution. Which is probably why Mark Twain advised people to ‘explore, dream and discover’.

Immanuel Kant never so much as left his village. Still, he wrote with a depth on political philosophy which only the widest exposure could have provided. Similarly, William Shakespeare was never known to have travelled much. Still his plays display a knowledge of life that even the

most extensive travel cannot provide. He wrote, for instance, about a biscuit becoming crisp on account of exposure to salt air – an experience only travel could have provided!

Travel can, very often, have the effect of dispelling illusions about one's quality of life, either personal or professional. It is all a question of the benchmark against which comparisons are made. In my service, for instance, I always found that comparison with one neighbouring state provided a feeling of satisfaction, if not pride. On the other hand, a similar exercise with an-

other neighbour caused disappointment, if not frustration. It would be labelling the obvious to state that, either in terms of personal health, professional satisfaction, or economic status, one can experience a similar feeling of elation, or sorrow, depending on the benchmark chosen.

A hard day at work suddenly doesn't seem so bad when you see people in developing countries toiling in sun-scorched fields from morning to dark, or begging for a drink of water seeing different social classes creates compassion and really makes you feel more blessed and content. Large portions of the world's population, for instance have to deal with daily threats such as hunger, disease, and landmines.

Until you visit a place, and form your own opinions, your understanding only comes from what you were taught in school, read in books, or newspapers, or came across on the electronic or social media, which may or may not be the complete truth. It is almost as though one has pressed into service a kind of life reboot! “To travel is to take a journey into yourself” – said the legendary Hollywood crooner and comedian of yesteryear, Danny Kaye.

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

LETTERS

Collective responsibility

The second wave of Covid 19 is spreading at a faster pace than last year and the Health ministry has given the alarm that the next 4 weeks is very critical. Now who is to be blamed for such a situation? The public and the authority in one way or the other are responsible for such a situation. As lockdowns came to an end and strict prohibitions and orders were lifted the public began to flout the norms to be followed. Further, the vaccination drive gave the people a false sense of safety and security that “if the remedy is ready why fear the fatal malady?” The election campaigns in some states saw leaders, party workers and all completely forgetting and ignoring covid protocol, their only aim being to amass votes rather than caring for the safety of the people. Protocol during religious festivals and congregations were simply flouted in order to appease the religious sentiments of the people.

Now the Central Government has stressed on people's participation to control the second wave of the deadly virus and definitely people's participation is vital to control the second wave as harnessing the pandemic spread is possible only with each and every individual's support and help. As lockdowns only break the economical spine of the nation the only other alternative is to follow the norms and safety measures faithfully and get along with the chores of day today life keeping in mind that negligence and irresponsibility is equal to welcoming peril to oneself, the society and the nation as a whole.

M Pradyu, Kannur

II

All the life sustaining activities, like inhale - exhale; ingest - digest etc, in life are repetitive. Successful activities when repeated are successful again. Restrictions on gatherings during March and July period of 2020 brought down C19 spread significantly. Boosting up of healthy and desirable fear against communicable diseases like TB, ARC, STD etc was successful to some extent but C19 is a pandemic of gigantic proportion. The idea ‘Healthy fear for Corona’ mission is a risky proposal. Better to act now. It's collective responsibility.

G Sivaramakrishna, Hyderabad

Please credit other BJP leaders too

The Chenab Bridge is indeed an engineering marvel and we all should feel proud of Railways and the Engineers. Sharing the news of the completion of arch closure of Chenab bridge, the Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, ended his tweet “Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision connect India has inspired the Railway family to scale new heights” without realising that it was late Atal Bihari Vajpayee soon after Kargil visualised a bridge to connect the valley and it was during BJP rule the foundation stone in 2004 and it had to cross various hurdles both natural and contractual dispute before Narendra Modi became Prime Minister in 2014.

While I have nothing against Railway Minister praising his boss, why ignore Vajpayee and other PMs who were equally responsible for taking forward

this project which has now reached its final shape. The final stage took longer than envisaged during the present PM's rule due to unique terrain. Strangely, ever since Modi became PM, the use of “Bharat Sarkar” which was the norm earlier, has been replaced with “Modi Sarkar” except in the official communication. So much about the government which claims “nation” first.

N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

End freebie culture from now

In present day India, politics and freebies have become an undivided bond. Political parties across the country are implementing various welfare schemes. In budget of many States more allocations are going for the implementation of welfare schemes. In this case, governments are unable to spend ample money on other development activities. In some states governments are promising to provide unemployment allowance to the unemployed. Schemes like these not only become over burden to the governments but also make the people especially youth lazy.

The more govts implement free schemes for the people the more the people become lazy and indolent. These schemes provide only temporary relief for the people. Instead of these free schemes, govts must concentrate on providing free and quality education, govt hospitals with adequate facilities and skill development programmes for the unemployed. Then the people can stand on their own feet.

Madras High Court once gave a verdict on freebies, that these schemes may spoil the integrity of democracy. And Supreme Court in 2013 in the case of Subrahmanya

Balaji versus the State of Tamil Nadu gave a verdict that ruling parties get advantage in elections with these free schemes and further added these are against fair elections. Govts must remember that if they provide fish for the hungry it only satisfies them for that day but if govts make them learn how to fish then they live on their own for lifetime.

K Manoj Kumar,

Huzurabad, Karimnagar

Stop litigating for everything

One wonders why the political parties in AP, are resorting to legal battles at every drop of the hat and wasting the time of judiciary? (HC stays MPTC, ZPTC, polls, THI, 7 April). It gives us the concerned citizens a strong feeling that the principal opposition parties like TDP, INC, BJP, JSP parties, having failed to win the political battle with the government of the day, are resorting to question, the every decision of the GOAP, in AP High court. Evidently, it is undemocratic, as it is done with malafide intention to create hurdles for the smooth functioning of the government.

Stalling and staying of the government decisions is causing heart burning to the people of the state, as it is denying the fruits of development to the people who have voted for the party in power today. Besides this, the honourable High court is fully engrossed 24/7 in these politically motivated cases only, thereby causing delay to the routine disposal of cases. Hence the opposition political parties, should sportively refrain from the legal battles in the interest of people and allow this progressive government to function smoothly.

P H Hema Sagar, Secunderabad

No lockdown, no curfew, clarifies Health Minister

Pointing out that the situation is under control, Health Minister Eatala Rajender said tests are being ramped up, facilities augmented and vaccination drive expedited. He called upon people to avail of govt facilities and avoid spending huge amounts at private hospitals



HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IN a big relief to the common people who are jittery following rumours of possibility of lockdown in wake of unabated surge in Covid cases, the State government on Wednesday clarified that there would be no lockdown or curfew in Telangana.

Addressing a press conference, Health Minister Eatala Rajender, admitting the second

wave of corona in the State, said that the cases were increasing across the State, including Hyderabad and that more than 95 per cent of cases were asymptomatic, which could be cured by home isolation.

On the mortality rate, the Minister observed said that the death toll of Covid-19 was as low as people were heeding precautions and were readily undergoing treatment after testing positive.

The Health Minister assured that the testing had been ramped up in the State and rapid test facilities were being widely accessible with tests now being conducted at primary health centres.

While testing is satisfactory, tracking is also not a big deal as the health department is strictly adhering to the 'trace, test and treat' guideline issued by the Centre. Tests would be increased to 1 lakh, if required, he said. Speaking of the vaccination programme, Eatala stated that around 56,000 people were being vaccinated daily, and the number would be increased to 1.5 lakh per day soon. Both tests and vaccinations would help Telangana become Corona-free State, he stressed.

The government has made available as many as 11,000 beds and adequate ventilators are provided for. Manpower would

be augmented if necessary. All leaves for medical and health workers have been cancelled till the situation becomes normal.

While isolation centres are set up in all major hospitals in districts, patients in home isolation would adequately be monitored by the health workers and provided kits.

All the major government hospitals like Gandhi Medical College will work as usual Covid-19 test tests and vaccination will be carried out by them. The Health Minister called upon the people to avail of facilities available at government hospitals instead of spending huge amounts at private hospitals.

Eatala also urged the private hospitals not to charge exorbitantly, and feel responsibility towards patients and save lives at low costs on humanitarian grounds.

1,914 new cases registered, the highest in seven months

- As many as 285 persons recovered, taking total recoveries to 3,03,298. There are 11,617 active cases, of whom 6,634 are in home isolation
- Five persons died of coronavirus on Tuesday in the State. With this, the total number of deaths due to corona reaches 1,734 in the State

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA witnessed massive surge in Covid-19 cases as the daily count crossed 1,900, the highest in seven months. Rapid spread of corona pandemic is continuing in the State, causing much concern in the government circles. As many as 74,274 corona tests were conducted in the State on Tuesday till 8 pm and 1,914 persons tested positive. It was a jump of more than 400 cases over the previous day.

The corona bulletin released by the health department said that five persons died of corona on Tuesday in the State. With this, the total number of deaths due to corona reached 1,734 in the State.

As many as 285 persons recovered from corona, taking the to-



tal number of persons recovered to 3,03,298. There are 11,617 active cases in the State. Of them, 6,634 persons are under home isolation. In Greater Hyderabad limits, 393 persons tested positive on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the Centre has warned that the four weeks are very critical and hence people should be very careful and take all precautionary measures. The Centre said that it is in the hands of the people to check the rapid spread of second wave of corona. Stating that corona is spreading very fast in all the states, it said that the people should actively participate in the fight against the dreaded disease by following the guidelines and all eligible people taking the vaccination compulsorily.

The Centre made it clear that it is not possible at present to vaccinate all the people above 18 years of age. All those who are

above 45 years of age must take the vaccination, it said.

The Covid-19 positive cases reported from the districts included 29 from Adilabad, seven from Bhadradi, 393 from areas under GHMC, 68 from Jagtial, 13 Jangaon, five from Bhupalpally, 12 from Gadwal, 64 from Kamareddy, 80 from Karimnagar, 48 from Khammam, 21 from Asifabad, 36 from Mahabubnagar, nine from Mahabubabad, 37 from Mancherla, 23 from Medak, 205 from Medchal Malkajgiri, six from Mulugu, 18 from Nagarkurnool, 40 from Nalgonda, eight from Narayanpet, 104 from Nirmal, 179 from Nizamabad, 23 from Peddapalli, 32 from Siricilla, 169 from Rangareddy, 76 from Sangareddy, 42 from Siddipet, 31 from Suryapet, 25 from Vikarabad, 17 from Wanaparthy, nine from Warangal Rural, 60 from Warangal Urban and 25 from Yadadri.

ENABLING & EMPOWERING

T-Hub picks 30 start-ups for Lab32 programme

More than 300 start-ups from across the country applied for the current batch

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

T-HUB on Tuesday announced the launch of the fifth edition of Lab32, its flagship pre-acceleration programme under which 30 start-ups will receive goal-oriented consultation from leading experts on business goals like revenue growth, customer acquisition, market expansion and product roadmap.

T-Hub is a startup catalyst established in November 2015 as a public-private partnership between the Telangana government and three premier academic institutes - International Institute of Information Technology-Hyderabad (IIIT-H), Indian School of Business (ISB) and National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (NAL-SAR). "Lab32, the pre-acceleration programme, aims at preparing start-ups for rapid growth, making the investment ready. The idea is to increase and strengthen India's innovation ecosystem, connecting entrepreneurs to each other and to the mentors, investors and corpo-

rates for mutual benefiting collaborations," said Ravi Narayan CEO of T-Hub

Start-ups from cities like Bengaluru, Patna and Noida are part of the programme along with start-ups in the rural innovation space with social impact. The selected start-ups offer innovative solutions in key industries such as media, SaaS, Health-tech, E-commerce, Social commerce, Blockchain, Agri-tech, Rural commerce, Robotics, Enterprise IT, food-tech, Mobility, and Ad-tech.

More than 300 start-ups from across the country applied for the current batch and were evaluated by the startup innovation team of T-Hub. The startups were selected based on their technology component, market readiness and the maturity of founders who had a clear business roadmap.

In the first month of the Lab32 programme T-Hub will conduct a pre-programme assessment to understand the requirements of the start-ups in detail followed by consultant connections. The



“Lab32, the pre-acceleration programme, aims at preparing start-ups for rapid growth, making the investment ready. The idea is to increase and strengthen India's innovation ecosystem, connecting entrepreneurs to each other and to the mentors, investors and corporates for mutual benefiting collaborations”
– Ravi Narayan
CEO, T-Hub

start-ups will then undergo rigorous training and consultation sessions by professional trainers, advisors and subject matter experts, based on the needs of the start-ups. The programme will also include a series of workshops for marketing and product design tracks. The pre-acceleration programme will run until June 2021 and will continue with its hybrid model launched last year owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key Polavaram works to be completed before rains

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy said filling gaps in the cofferdam and completing the approach channel are very essential in Polavaram project and directed the officials to focus accordingly.

The Chief Minister, during a review on irrigation projects said excavation works of soil and concrete in spill channel should be expedited before onset of rainy season at Polavaram and added that the next 45 days are crucial and works should be done efficiently at a brisk pace and be completed on time.

The officials said the works of filling gaps in cofferdam would be completed by May and added that approach channel works are progressing at a brisk pace and will be completed by May. On rehabilitation and re-settlement (R&R) works of the project, the Chief Minister said that there should be no problem for funds to priority projects. He said the government has been taking all possible steps along with the release of funds for completing the projects, including Polavaram on time.

During a review on priority projects, including Nellore barrage, Sangam barrage, Okw Tunnel-2, Veligonda head regulator-1, Veligonda head regulator-2, Tunnel-2, and other works in the Veligonda project, Vamshadara Nagavali link and Vamshadara Phase-2, stage-2, the officials said Nellore barrage and Sangam barrage would be completed by May



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy reviewing priority irrigation project at his camp office on Wednesday

- Chief Minister in a review on priority projects, orders authorities to speed up cofferdam and spill channel works
- Asserts that there will be no problem for funds as the govt is taking all steps along with the release of funds for completing priority projects, including Polavaram
- Asks officials to give priority to Mahendra Tanaya, Madduvalasa Phase-2, Tarakarama Sagar projects too

and added that chemical pouring works of Okw Tunnel 2 are at a brisk pace and would be completed by August. They said the tunnels would be ready to carry a total of 20,000 cusecs of water by August.

The officials said the works of Tunnel-1 of Veligonda project are completed and that of Tunnel-2 would be over by December and added that steps are being taken to release water through the

Veligonda Tunnel-1 by September.

They said Vamsadhara-Nagavali, Vansadhara Phase-2, stage-2 works will be completed by July. The Chief Minister directed the officials to focus on construction of Neradi barrage and to focus on resolving the issue with Odisha regarding the construction.

The Chief Minister said priority should be given to Mahendra Tanaya, Madduvalasa Phase-2,

Tarakarama Sagar projects. Reviewing Rayalaseema, Palnadu Drought Mitigation projects, the Chief Minister said to prepare an action plan to move forward regarding the projects.

Chief secretary Aditya Nath Das, irrigation secretary J Shyamala Rao, finance principal secretary S S Rawat, engineer-in-chief C Narayana Reddy and other senior officials were present.

3 die of diarrhoea, dozens hospitalised

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

AT least three people succumbed to diarrhoea and 40 to 50 people are being treated at various hospitals in Nandyal and Adoni divisions due to contaminated drinking water. According to information, some residents of Gorukallu village in Panyam mandal had fallen sick after consuming water supplied by the gram panchayat on Tuesday night.

Two villagers, Uppari Hussain, 65, and Yella Kittiah, 35, died at Santhiram hospital in Nandyal while undergoing treatment.

The villagers complained of vomiting and diarrhoea after consuming the water by the panchayat.

Nandyal sub-collector Kalpana Kumari rushed to Santhiram hospital and enquired about the health condition of the people admitted there. She also visited Gorukallu village and inspected the situation and spoke to the bereaved family members.

HYDERABAD

GLOBAL leader in medical technology, Medtronic on Wednesday opened its expanded facility here, which is the company's largest research and development centre outside the US.

Minister for IT and industries KT Rama Rao inaugurated the 1,50,000 sft facility named Medtronic Engineering & Innovation Centre (MEIC) which has come up at BSR Tech Park at Nanakramguda.

KTR noted that Medtronic joined the marquee list of companies that have made Hyderabad their second largest home out of their headquarters. The list includes Amazon, Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, Uber, Salesforce and Novartis. He said the Medtronic facility will give a boost to Telangana's med tech plans and cement Hyderabad's position med devices hub of India.

The minister claimed that Hyderabad's position as the life sciences capital of the country and world is getting strengthened with each passing day. While Hyderabad and Telangana's contribution in vaccines and pharmaceuticals is unmatched, the city is also emerging as the medical devices capital of India.

KTR pointed out that in 2017 Telangana commissioned the country's largest med devices park which today has more than 40 companies setting up their



units at Sultanpur near Hyderabad. He said innovation and R&D holds the key to accelerating growth of the sector. He called for adopting India for world approach considering the small size of the local market.

He said Hyderabad emerging as hotspot of med tech innovation is benefiting from progressive government policies, abundant talent pool and extraordinary infrastructure. "It is a matter of pride that in the life sciences sector alone Hyderabad is serving more than 1,000 global innovators," he said. He said that Medtronic's footprint in Hyderabad serves as a testimony to the city's growing R&D prowess. He hoped that the company would also consider Telangana for establishing a large manufacturing base in future. "We are on the path to realise dream and vision of growing life sciences industry to over \$100 billion by 2030. We believe that the med devices sector will play an important role in this," he said. He urged the Centre to consider

providing incentives and continued support to companies that would engage in development of medical devices.

Last year, the company had announced that it would invest Rs 1,200 crore over the next five years to expand their current R&D centre for Medical Device Software and Engineering Solutions. The Centre aims to recruit 1,000 employees.

The setting up of new R&D facility is a purposeful step to create synergy by supporting Medtronic's businesses globally, in various therapy areas; including respiratory intervention, remote patient monitoring and digital health, surgical robotics, electrosurgical generators, cardiac rhythm and heart failure, and navigation, amongst others. S Aparna, Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India, Joel Reifman, US consul general, Hyderabad, and Geoff Martha, Medtronic the chairman and CEO, joined the event virtually.

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Head Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.: 10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.				
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS				
The below mentioned borrowers have failed to repay the loan and redeem the gold ornaments within the stipulated time in spite of several reminders. The Gold Jewellery ornaments pledged under the said loan accounts by the below listed borrowers will be sold in public/ Online/ private auction at our Branch premises on 16-04-2021 at 10.30 AM. Those willing to participate are requested to contact the branch. The Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any bid without assigning any reason whatsoever. Please note if the auction does not get completed on the same day, the same will follow the subsequent days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to nominee/legal heir. The Borrower are hereby notified to pay the upto date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of auction, failing which the pledged gold ornaments will be sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost. For any queries and terms and conditions contact branch. For details of branch address visit www.janabank.com .				
Sr. No.	Loan Account No.	Name of Borrower/Co-Borrower	Gross Weight of Pledged Gold Ornaments	
1	30868730000728	Venit Saini / Subhash	5.28	
2	30868730000741	Mursalin M / Munna	11.42	
3	30868730000882	Isarar / Montayaj	9.98	
4	30868730000919	Arjun Singh / Dharmal Singh	39.04	
5	30868730001197	Guddu G / Lala	28.75	
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., No.65, 65(1-2) Ground Floor, Purwa Bali, Ganesh Pur, Pergana And Tehsil-Roorkee, Haridwar District-247667, India.				
6	46168740000089	Atul Kapoor / Anil Kapoor	46.14	
7	46168740000113	Praveen Kumar / Ishwar	13.10	
Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Ground Floor, No.74, Rajpur Road, Shri Ram Arcade, Dehradun-248001, India.				
Place: Uttarakhand			Sd/- Authorised Officer	
Date: 08.04.2021			Jana Small Finance Bank Limited	

Oxford halts vaccine trial on kids; ‘1 in 3 survivors has neuro issues’

AstraZeneca sends legal notice to Adar Poonawalla’s Serum Institute over vaccine delays

LONDON

A trial of the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine on children in the UK has been paused even as the country’s medicines regulator probes a possible link of the vaccine with rare blood clots in adults, the media reported.

The trial, which started in February, is evaluating whether the vaccine generates a strong immune response in those aged between 6 and 17. While the trial has been paused, Professor Andrew Pollard from the University of Oxford ruled

out safety concerns with the trial itself, the BBC reported on Wednesday. What the scientists are waiting for is more information, said the report.

“Whilst there are no safety concerns in the paediatric clinical trial, we await additional information from the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) on its review of rare cases of thrombosis/thrombocytopenia that have been reported in adults, before giving any further vaccinations in the trial,” Pollard was quoted as saying by the BBC.



UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that Britain should continue rolling out the AstraZeneca vaccine despite concerns about occasional reported cases of blood clots. One in three people who survived Covid-19 have been diagnosed with anxiety and mood disorders, within six months of infection, according to a large study published in the science journal The Lancet Psychiatry.

For the study, researchers from the University of Oxford in the UK looked at 14 neurological and mental health disorders in 2,36,379

Covid-19 patients mostly from the US. The findings showed 34 per cent were diagnosed with a neurological or psychiatric condition within six months of infection.

The most common condition was anxiety (17 per cent) and mood disorders (14 per cent).

Neurological diagnoses such as stroke and dementia were rarer, but people among admitted to intensive care, 7 per cent had a stroke and almost 2 per cent were diagnosed with dementia.

Meanwhile, Adar Poonawalla’s Serum Institute of India (SI), the

maker of vaccine Covishield in India, has reportedly been served a legal notice by AstraZeneca over vaccine supply delays.

The news emerged a day after Mr Poonawalla admitted in an interview to NDTV that existing production capacity to manufacture Covishield, one of the two vaccines being administered in India, is “very stressed, to put it frankly”. He also said the government’s pause on major Covishield shipments to other countries and the ‘first claim’ deal with India were difficult to explain abroad, where the vaccine was

sold at a substantially higher cost per dose.

“The globe needs this vaccine and we are prioritising the needs of India at the moment and we are still short of being able to supply... to every Indian that needs it,” Poonawalla said. Last week the centre said there was no outright ban on the export of vaccines.

Poonawalla said the SI, which produces between 60 and 65 million doses per month presently, has so far given around 100 million doses to the centre and exported 60 million.

WINDOWS



Farm workers dump tomatoes at roadside near a farm in Sehore district of MP on Wednesday. High production of the vegetable has brought its price to a very low level, compelling farmers to dump it

CBI allowed to grill Waze

Mumbai: Special National Investigation Agency court extends NIA custody remand of Sachin Waze till April 9. The court also allowed the Central Bureau of Investigation to interrogate Waze in NIA custody and directed the CBI to coordinate the timings of the interrogation. The CBI had approached the special NIA court in Mumbai seeking permission to question Waze in connection with its preliminary enquiry into the allegations of corruption against former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh. The NIA had also sought his custody for four more days.

Journalist-RTI activist killed

Pune: A 49-year-old journalist of a local weekly was allegedly kidnapped and killed in Rahuri town of Maharashtra’s Ahmednagar district, the police said on Wednesday. Rohidas Datir was allegedly abducted from the College Road area where he was travelling on his two-wheeler on Tuesday afternoon and his body bearing multiple injury marks was found in the same locality late at night, sub-inspector Ganesh Shelke of Rahuri police station said. The victim used to run a weekly in Rahuri and was also an RTI activist, the official said.

Kerala: IUML worker killed

Thiruvananthapuram: A Muslim League worker died in violence that broke out after the conclusion of polling at Kuthuparamba in Kerala’s Kannur district. As soon as the voting ended in Kerala on Tuesday night, violence broke out at Kannur -- the strongest bastion of the CPM -- between the Left workers and members of the Indian Union Muslim League that led to the death of an IUML worker, while his brother is being treated at a hospital in Kozhikode. The incident occurred at Kuthuparampu. There were reports of friction existing before the polling day and on Tuesday it increased after the voting time got over.

QUAID NAJMI
MUMBAI

BARELY six months after they returned, thousands of migrants working in Mumbai and Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) are now repacking their bags to go back home as Maharashtra is in the grip of a tsunami-like Covid ‘second-wave’.

With night curfews, stringent day-time restrictions and a weekend lockdown imposed across the state, migrants from different parts of India are in a state of semi-panic, as daily new infections in the state soar in half-lakh-plus range.

A majority of them, especially the skilled and semi-skilled workers, were brought back from their homes in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Gujarat, Telangana, Odisha with great difficulties by their employers after the phase-wise Unlockedown that started in August 2020. They were employed in the lakhs of small or medium industries, small factories, workshops, warehouses, hotels, restaurants, delivery chains, big and small offices or commercial establishments, and even large retail outlets or shopping centres and in farmlands in rural areas.

Barely had they settled down in the



past six months or so, the spectre of yet another ‘mega-migration’ stares at the migrant workers in the state, though there are no hysterical reac-

tions so far.

The Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, Aam Aadmi Party and others have slammed the Maha Vikas Aghadi government for the semi-lockdown scenario which is playing havoc with the peoples’ livelihood.

“Last year, the migrants experienced first-hand the tortures of fleeing to their small towns or villages surmounting great hurdles. This time, they are mentally better prepared and are planning to clear out before the situation worsens,” Dharavi Leather Goods Manufacturing Association Working President Rajesh Sonawane told IANS.

Sonawane said that migrant crowds are swelling at various railway stations in the MMR with many resorting to hiring touts to get them confirmed tickets to board the outbound trains.

The Dharavi Garments Manufacturers Association spokesperson and Congress BMC Municipal Corporator Haji Babbu Khan said that this year, the Covid situation appears many times worse than in 2020.

“Last year, the people were left to fend for themselves and somehow survived. There were helping hands who gave them food, shelter, medicines. This year, that is missing as even the NGOs and charitable organisations

have exhausted their resources. Now, the situation is grimmer than 2020,” Khan told IANS. Sonawane, Khan and others say that while 80 per cent of Dharavi’s estimated migrant labour force had returned by October, now more than half of them are preparing to return over the next few days or so.

A Mulund hotelier C.D. Shetty said with the current norms permitting only home delivery of parcels, the employees are facing an uncertain future again and want to return to their homes.

“We don’t want them to go back and are ready to care for them, but for how long Without income, how can we keep

bearing the expenses with absolutely no relief or financial help from the government,” rued Shetty.

Refuting reports that migrants are allegedly thronging major railway termini to flee the state, Central Railway Spokesperson Shivaji Sutar said “this is far from the truth”.

“There is no panic booking of any kind. The crowds seen at the stations are people with routine bookings, the extra trains deployed are part of the restoration process on since June 2020 and we have achieved nearly 75 per cent so far, and the regular summer specials are introduced to cater to the annual holiday rush,” Sutar told IANS.

8 CREMATED ON 1 PYRE

Lucknow turns into hotspot, vax hesitancy rises as top docs infected KGMU Vice Chancellor tests +ive even after taking 2nd dose of vaccine

MUMBAI/LUCKNOW/AMRITSAR

EIGHT bodies of Covid-19 victims were cremated on one pyre due to shortage of space at a makeshift crematorium in Maharashtra’s Beed district, a civic official said on Wednesday.

Since residents had opposed the cremation of bodies of COVID-19 patients at crematoriums in Ambajogai town, local authorities had to identify another place away from there to perform the victims’ last rites and the space there was limited, he said.

“As residents objected to the cremation of COVID-19 victims in the crematoriums which we currently have, we identified a separate space on Mandwa road, nearly two km away from the town,” Ambajogai Municipal Council’s chief officer Ashok Sabale told PTI.

The new makeshift facility has limited space, he said.

“As a result, we had to set up one large pyre and cremate eight bodies on Tuesday. It was a big pyre and the bodies were kept at a certain distance from each other,” the official said.

Lucknow is turning into the biggest Covid hotspot in Uttar Pradesh.

After 40 doctors in the King George’s Medical University (KGMU) tested positive for Covid on Tuesday night, 11 employees of the Axis Bank in the posh Hazratganj locality tested positive for the virus on Wednesday.

As the corona scare gets bigger, vaccine hesitancy is also on the rise since most of those who have tested positive in the medical facilities had re-



A health worker takes swab sample of a passenger sitting inside a train for covid-19 test, as coronavirus cases spike across the country, in Patna on Wednesday

ceived the vaccination. KGMU Vice Chancellor, Lt Gen Dr Vipin Puri (retd), has tested positive for Covid for the second time in nine months. He had tested positive in August last year. He took the second dose of vaccine on March 25 last.

Dr Sandeep Tewari of KGMU said: “During last four days, around 40 doctors, including Medical Superintendent Dr Himanshu, have tested positive.”

Most of the doctors have tested positive despite taking both the doses of vaccine.

Around 20 doctors of the General Surgery Department have tested positive, as well as nine doctors of the Urology Department and three doctors of the Medicine Department have been tested positive.

With Punjab witnessing a surge in coronavirus cases, Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Wednesday announced extension of night curfew to the entire state and ordered a ban on political gatherings.

Anmol Ambani, the eldest son of industrialist Anil Ambani, has lashed out against a new round of lockdowns being imposed amid the surge in cases, saying such restrictions do not concern health but control and that they destroy the very backbone of the society and economy.

The 29-year-old former executive director of Reliance Capital Ltd in a series of tweets lambasted the new semi-lockdown rules hurting small businesses and daily wage earners.

Amit Shah promises rapid industrialisation

SINGUR/HOWRAH/KOLKATA

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah held a series of colourful road shows in three districts of south Bengal on Wednesday, promising rapid industrialisation if BJP is voted to power and predicted a massive victory for his party.

Shah claimed the BJP will win between 63 to 68 seats out of 91 constituencies for which elections have been held in the first three phases of the eight-phase West Bengal assembly elections. Asserting that Mamata Banerjee’s departure is assured, he said at Mallick Fatak in Howrah, “She is such a big leader, so her departure should also be with a big margin.” The home minister also promised to wipe out hooliganism and political violence if his party came to power.

Women voters will become the deciding factor in West Bengal’s South 24 Parganas district during the state’s fourth phase Assembly elections for 44 constituencies on April 10.

Cumulatively the number of female voters in the district’s 11 constituencies are more than their male counterparts. In six of them, Sonarpur Dakshin, Sonarpur Uttar, Jadavpur, Tollygunj, Behala Uttar, Behala Dakshin, women have an edge over their male counterparts.

The total number of female voters in these 11 constituencies are 15,70,392, while the number of the male voters is 15,66,161.

The Jadavpur constituency with the highest gender ratio of 1,068, has 1,54,239 female voters against 1,44,420 males.

This is closely followed by Behala Paschim that has a gender ratio of 1,054 with 1,60,502 female voters against 1,52,237 males.

With a gender ratio of 1,051, the high-profile Tollygunj constituency has 1,37,995 female voters against 1,31,355 male voters.



Protestors during a demonstration, demanding to stop the elections in view of coronavirus pandemic in Kolkata on Wednesday

‘Win or lose, I will work for Palakkad’

Thiruvananthapuram: In what was a totally different almost one month experience, far away from all engineering activities, 88-year-old ‘Metroman’ E.

Sreedharan, who faced a stiff poll battle at the Palakkad Assembly constituency, on Wednesday said for the rest of his life, he will work in the constituency. “Win or lose, I am now going to be stayput in Palakkad. Even though I had left this town a long time back, from now on, I will be here. I will open an office also as my work will be for this constituency,” said Sreedharan.

Metroman was pitted against young two-time Congress legislator Shafi Parambil, who is also the president of the Youth Congress and C.P. Pramod of the CPM.

Eight returning officers removed

Kolkata: Returning officers of eight constituencies in Kolkata that will go to the polls in the last two phases of the West Bengal assembly election were removed by the Election Commission on Wednesday. The 8 constituencies where new officers have been appointed are: Chowringhee, Entally, Bhowanipur, Beliaghata, Jorasanko, Shyampukur, KSHIPUR-Belgachia and Kolkata Port assembly segments. Chief Electoral Officer Ariz Aftab described the transfer of the eight returning officers “as a routine move since they had held their posts for more than three years”. Sources in the poll panel said complaints were received against the officers for allegedly favouring the ruling Trinamool Congress.

TN parties in calculation mode a day after polling

Chennai: Political parties of Tamil Nadu, especially the Dravidian majors are in calculation mode with permutations and combinations on the poll outcome.

Parties have started trying to decipher who will benefit from the 71 per cent voting that took place on April 6. While in 2011 and 2016, AIADMK-led front had benefited from the higher percentage, DMK leadership dismissed this and was of the opinion that the front would win a comfortable majority. While almost all national level opinion polls have predicted a landslide for the DMK front, political observers and election analysts prefer to be modest and vouch for a win for the DMK but not with a huge majority.

DMK leader Duraimurugan while speaking to IANS said, “It will be DMK all the way and as a political worker who has been in the grassroots level across Tamil Nadu, I could easily find a wave in favour of the DMK. We will win with a huge majority and the results will surprise our opponents.”

However political observers begged to differ. C. Rajeev of Centre for Policy and Development Studies, a Think tank based out of Chennai while speaking to IANS said, “It is a close neck and neck fight. While at the superficial level we could find a wave in favour of the DMK, I think it is confined to the urban centres, and rural Tamil Nadu seems to have preferred the AIADMK. The anti-incumbency factor is much less during the Edappadi K Palaniswami regime and this might have worked in favour of AIADMK at the grass-roots in rural areas. Whoever wins it is a close contest.” Of the 6.29 crore eligible voters of Tamil Nadu, 4.51 crore had cast their votes and this was a welcome sign as far as election amidst Covid is concerned.



Supporting farmers, teacher commits suicide

ROHTAK

A teacher allegedly committed suicide here by consuming poison on Tuesday in support of the farmers protesting against the farm laws, police said.

Shortly before his death, Mukesh uploaded a video on social media, expressing his solidarity with the farmers who are protesting against the Centre’s farm laws.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Kisan Union has laid the foundation for a ‘martyr memorial’ at the agitation site on the Ghazipur-Ghaziabad (UP Gate) border to pay tributes to the farmers who died during the course of the protest against the Centre’s three agri laws. Bharatiya Janata Party leader Priyamvada Tomar resigned from the party on Wednesday in support of the farmers’ agitation. She also resigned as member of the Uttar Pradesh Women’s Commission ahead of the panchayat polls in the State.

In just 6 months, Mumbai migrants ready to pack-up again

TODAY'S QUOTE

One-stop solution for vehicle scrappage

“MAHINDRA & Mahindra's (M&M) agreement with automotive and steel recycling JV MMRPL is a step towards one stop solution for customers who wish to scrap their old vehicle. While the scrappage policy will take effect in some time, we are ready to help the customers who intend to discard their vehicles


— Veejay Ram Nakra, CEO (Automotive Division), M&M



STARTUP FUNDING

Groww raises ₹615 cr for expansion

INVESTMENT platform Groww on Wednesday said it has raised \$83 million (around Rs 615 crore) in a funding round led by Tiger Global at a valuation of \$1 billion. The funding round also saw participation of existing investors - Sequoia India, Ribbit Capital, YC Continuity and Propel Venture Partners.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	75.3	South	
Euro	89.54	African Rand	5.9
UAE Dirham	20.9	Hong Kong Dollar	11.01
Thai Baht	2.61	Japanese Yen	0.78
British Pound	104.07	New Zealand Dollar	52.99
Australian Dollar	57.47	Saudi Riyal	21.86
Canadian Dollar	59.8	Swedish Krona	9.96
Swiss Franc	81.04	Singapore Dollar	56.8

DELHI THURSDAY 8 APRIL 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Vivo signs up Virat Kohli

Smartphone maker Vivo India announced Virat Kohli, Indian cricketer, as its brand ambassador. With the association, Vivo aims to reach the millennials and technologically driven consumers. A 360-degree marketing approach will characterise Vivo's collaboration with Virat Kohli. Vivo's association with IPL has helped them connect with their consumers along with expanding pan India. "I am really looking forward to this association. Vivo, as a brand, has established itself as one of the leading players in the Indian smartphone market with its consistency towards delivering innovative technology," said Virat Kohli. Collaborating with someone as effervescent as Virat is a great way to better connect with our young consumers. Along with Aamir Khan and Sara Ali Khan, we wish to widen our brand reach, said Nipun Marya, Director-Brand Strategy, Vivo India.

Coca-Cola's CSR move

Sri Sarvaraya Sugars, bottling arm of Coca-Cola, along with Rajahmundry Municipal Corporation (RMC) jointly launched 'Swachata Hero Initiative' a citizenship movement, to drive awareness on plastic waste management. Aligned to the 'Swachh Bharat Mission', the initiative is a step towards strengthening the national agenda of responsible waste segregation and management through citizen involvement. Under the initiative, kiosks and selfie booths have been set up along with collection vans in 50 wards of RMC. In the first phase, which spanned over 35 days, the initiative successfully collected five tonnes of plastic waste.

Citroen new model every year

GLOBAL automotive manufacturer Stellantis group's Indian arm PCA Automobiles India Private Limited is planning to launch one new model every year for the next four to five years and will ship out those vehicle platforms, a senior official said on Wednesday. Launching the company's first vehicle for the Indian market, Citroen C5 Aircross, a sports utility vehicle, Roland Bouchara, Senior Vice President (sales and marketing), PCA Automobiles, told the media that the company plans to launch one new model every year for the next four-five years. Bouchara said the company will export the vehicle platforms out of India, but not the vehicles. Group company PSA AVTEC Powertrain Pvt Ltd with its 3 lakh units per annum production facility in Hosur ships out gearboxes to Europe, said Saurabh Vatsa, Senior Director (marketing and PR operations).

Comedk's initiative

Comedk and Uni-Gauge combine said it would conduct UGET 21 entrance examination on June 20. The entrance test will be held for admissions to BE/B Tech, for colleges affiliated with the Karnataka professional colleges and Uni-Gauge member universities. The exam will be conducted online in over 150 cities across India, with over 400 test centres and expects over 80,000 students to appear and applications will be closed on May 20, 2021. "Over the years, we have seen an increase in the number of students taking the entrance test from outside Karnataka. While there was a decline in admissions due to pandemic in 2020, we see that as an aberration and anticipate that this year will see a distinct increase in student interest, due to easing of restrictions," said Dr Kumar, Executive Secretary, Comedk.

RBI keeps key rates unchanged

In FY22's first policy, the apex bank sticks to accommodative stance

MUMBAI

THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday kept key interest rates unchanged at record lows while pledging to buy Rs 1 lakh crore of government bonds this quarter to cap borrowing costs in a bid to support an economy facing a resurgence of the pandemic.

In the first monetary policy of the 2021-22 fiscal, the central bank stuck to its accommodative stance as long as necessary, amid concerns of rising infections that could derail the nascent economic recovery. RBI's key lending rate, the repo rate, which was cut by a total of 115 basis points last year to soften the blow from the pandemic, will stay at 4 per cent while the reverse repo rate or the central bank's borrowing rate will be unchanged at 3.35 per cent.

Governor Shaktikanta Das said the six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) voted unanimously "to continue with the accommodative stance as long as necessary to sustain growth on a durable basis and continue to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the economy while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward."

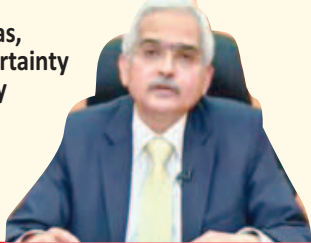
RBI POLICY TAKE

- Lockdowns could delay return to normalcy
- Liquidity will continue to remain in surplus
- Upside, downside pressures on inflation

4% Repo rate
3.35% Reverse repo

“The recent surge in infections has, however, imparted greater uncertainty to the outlook and needs to be closely watched as localised and regional lockdowns could dampen the recent improvement in demand conditions

— Shaktikanta Das, Governor



Just as the economy started to recover after being pummeled by the pandemic and the lockdowns, India is witnessing a record jump in Covid-19 infections, threatening the nascent recovery. "The recent surge in infections has, however, imparted greater uncertainty to the outlook and needs to be closely watched, especially as localised and regional lockdowns could dampen the recent improvement in demand conditions and delay the return of normalcy," he said.

The Governor announced a second market G-sec acquisition programme or G-SAP 1.0 wherein RBI

committed to open market purchase of government securities. In April-June, it is committed to buy Rs 1 lakh crore bonds, with first debt purchases starting from April 15. RBI had bought Rs 3 lakh crore of bonds in the last fiscal (2020-21) and planned similar or more spending in the financial year April 2021 to March 2022.

Das reiterated that the banking system liquidity will continue to remain in surplus even after meeting all requirements of the financial market segments and productive sectors of the economy. An accommodative stance implies a rate cut in the future if the need

arises to support the economy. This is the fifth time in a row that MPC has decided to keep the policy rate unchanged. RBI had last revised its policy rate on May 22, 2020, in an off-policy cycle to perk up demand by cutting interest rates to a historic low. He assured that RBI is committed to ensuring ample system liquidity in consonance with the accommodative stance of MPC. "When I say ample liquidity, I mean a level of liquidity that would keep the system in surplus even after meeting the requirements of all financial market segments and the productive sectors of the economy," he said. The Reserve Bank will of course continue to do whatever it takes to preserve financial stability and to insulate domestic financial markets from global spillovers and the consequent volatility, Das added.

Das further said that to nurture the still-nascent growth impulses, it is felt necessary to support the continued flow of credit to the real economy. Accordingly, liquidity support of Rs 50,000 crore for fresh lending during 2021-22 will be provided to All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs).

GDP forecast retained at 10.5%

The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday retained the economic growth projection for the current financial year at 10.5 per cent, while cautioning that the recent surge in Covid-19 infections has created uncertainty over the economic growth recovery. In its last policy review, the RBI had projected a GDP growth rate of 10.5 per cent for FY'22. Taking various factors into consideration, it said, "the projection of real GDP growth for 2021-22 is retained at 10.5 per cent consisting of 26.2 per cent in Q1, 8.3 per cent in Q2, 5.4 per cent in Q3 and 6.2 per cent in Q4."

The RBI said that though the firms engaged in manufacturing, services and infrastructure sectors were optimistic about a pick-up in demand, "consumer confidence, on the other hand, has dipped with the recent surge in Covid infections in some states imparting uncertainty to the outlook." RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das that the increase in interna-



tional commodity prices since the February monetary policy and recurrence of global financial market volatility like the bout experienced in late February accentuates the downside risks. Das however stated: "Growth is of paramount importance now and RBI will do whatever it takes to sustain the fledgling recovery by ensuring ample and assured liquidity and cheaper funds to oil the wheels of the economy". He noted that global growth is gradually recovering from the slowdown, but it remains uneven across countries and is supported by ongoing vaccination drives, sustained accommodative monetary policies and further sizable fiscal stimulus.

Interoperability among PPIs allowed now

MUMBAI

MAKING its displeasure on prepaid payments instruments (PPIs) issuers not adopting interoperability, the Reserve Bank on Wednesday said it will make it mandatory for such companies to make provisions for letting their customers transact with others after doing a full-KYC (know your customer).

The central bank also doubled the maximum balance a single account in a payments bank can carry to Rs 2 lakh at the end of the day. Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said prepaid payments instruments (PPIs) were given the option to become interoperable, wherein customers of one company can send funds to customers of other PPIs or



banks, in cases where a full KYC is done. "Despite the passage of two years, migration towards full-KYC PPIs, and therefore interoperability, is not significant. It is, therefore, proposed to make interoperability mandatory for full-KYC PPIs and for all acceptance infrastructures," Das said. To incentivise the migration of PPIs to full-KYC, it is proposed to increase the limit of outstanding balance in such PPIs from the current level of Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh, he added. Das said the RBI has been stressing on interoperability to optimally utilize the payment instruments like cards and wallets and also given the constraint of scarce acceptance infrastructure like point of sale devices, ATMs, QR codes, bill-payment touch points.

Relief for ECB borrowers

MUMBAI

RESERVE Bank on Wednesday said unutilised External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) proceeds drawn down before March 1, 2020, can be parked in term deposits with banks in India prospectively up to March 1, 2022, in a relief to borrowers who could not utilise the proceeds due to lockdown.

Under the extant ECB framework, borrowers are allowed to place ECB proceeds in term deposits with banks in India for a maximum period of 12 months. "In view of the difficulty faced by borrowers in utilising already drawn down ECBs due to Covid-19 pandemic induced lockdown and restrictions, it has been decided to relax the above stipulation as a one-time measure, with a view to provide relief," the RBI said in its statement on developmental and regulatory policies. Accordingly, unutilised ECB proceeds drawn down on or before March 1, 2020, can be parked in term deposits with AD category-I banks in India prospectively up to March 1, 2022, it said. The central bank will be issuing guidelines in this regard separately. Meanwhile, the RBI said the Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index) will be published annually in July for the financial year ending previous March.

G-SAP for orderly G-Sec market on the anvil

The endeavour through the programme will be to ensure congenial financial conditions for the recovery to gain traction, says RBI

MUMBAI

RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday said it is putting in place a secondary market government securities acquisition programme or G-SAP 1.0 for this financial year to enable an orderly evolution of the yield curve.

According to the central bank, the endeavour through the programme will be to ensure congenial financial conditions for the recovery to gain traction. Under the programme, which will be for the current financial year, RBI "will commit upfront to a specific amount of open market purchases of government securities with a view to enabling a stable and orderly evolution of the yield curve amidst comfortable liquidity conditions," Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the monetary policy.

For the first quarter of 2021-22, RBI will conduct a G-SAP of Rs one lakh crore and the first purchase of government securities for an aggregate amount of Rs 25,000 crore will be conducted on April 15, Das said.

"The positive externalities of G-SAP 1.0 operations need to be seen in the context of those segments of

the financial markets that rely on the G-Sec (Government Securities) yield curve as a pricing benchmark," he noted. He also said that extension of Held-to-Maturity (HTM) dispensation opens up space for investments of more than Rs 4 lakh crore.



According to him, RBI will continue to deploy its regular operations under the LAF, longer-term repo/ reverse repo auctions, forex operations and open market operations, including special OMOs, to ensure liquidity conditions evolve in consonance with the stance of monetary policy and financial conditions are supportive for all stakeholders. LAF is Liquidity Adjustment Facility while OMO refers to

Open Market Operations. The central bank also announced that it will conduct 14-day Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR) auctions of longer maturity as indicated in the Revised Liquidity Management Framework announced on February 6, 2020. The amount and tenor of these auctions will be decided based on the evolving liquidity and financial conditions, RBI said. "This is a part of RBI's liquidity management operations and should not be read as liquidity tightening. In fact, by paying a higher rate of interest on liquidity absorptions through the VRRR auctions, RBI is indirectly expanding liquidity," Das emphasised.

While laying out the liquidity management strategy for 2021-22, Das said RBI's endeavour is to ensure orderly evolution of the yield curve, governed by fundamentals as distinct from any specific level thereof. "Our objective is to eschew volatility in the G-Sec market in view of its central role in the pricing of other financial market instruments across the term structure and issuers, both in the public and private sectors," he said.

PNB inks health pact with Medcover

HYDERABAD

PUNJAB National Bank (PNB), on World Health Day signed an agreement with Medcover Group Hospitals for extending concessional and discount benefits to all customers of PNB, employees and their families.

Ashutosh Choudhury, General Manager and Zonal Head (TS, AP and Karnataka), said: "PNB has been a torchbearer for several customer-care concerns and the tie-up extending medical benefits, concessions to all its customers is first of its kind in the Industry, strongly reflecting the 127 years old Swadeshi Banks' philosophy on inclusive growth."

Maresh, Business Head, Medcover Hospital said that very soon operations in Karnataka and Maharashtra will commence and the agreement with PNB shall also be extended to all upcoming centres.

MEIL makes India's first hydraulic rigs

HYDERABAD

CITY based Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited (MEIL) achieved another milestone by manufacturing rigs for the oil and gas sector with indigenous know-how. The rigs designed with advanced hydraulic technology begun operations in the Kalol oil field near Ahmedabad, Gujarat, on Wednesday, P Ramesh Reddy, vice-president, MEIL, said.

These rigs made with 1,500 HP capacity can easily drill oil wells to a depth of 4,000 meters (4 kilometers) from the surface. These rigs can work for the next 40 years. MEIL has taken up rig manufacturing as part of the Centre's Make in India initiative, he added.

MEIL has bagged the order to manufacture and supply 47 drilling rigs worth Rs 6, 000 crore in a tendering process from ONGC in 2019. It has deployed the first rig of this order in an oil field near Ahmedabad

Deploys the first rig in an oil field in Kalol near Ahmedabad



PART OF MAKE IN INDIA INITIATIVE

and successfully commenced the operations. The remaining 46 rigs are in various stages of manufacturing.

This is for the first time manufacturing rigs on such a large scale in the private sector as part of the 'Make in India' initiative. Out of these rigs, 20 are work-over rigs, and 27 are land drilling rigs. The work-over rigs are used to extract the deposits from already drilled oil wells

and enhance productivity and repair the well. Ordinary oil rigs do not serve this purpose. The state-of-the-art land drilling rigs used to drill deep into the earth to existing oil reserves. These rigs can dig from 1,500 meters to 6,000 meters depth. The regular rigs can dig up to only 1,000 meters.

Of the 20 work-over rigs, 12 are automated with a capacity of 50 MT, and four are with a capacity of 100

MT. Another four are with 150 MT capacity rigs. Of the 27 land drilling rigs, two are mobile hydraulic rigs with a capacity of 1,500 HP each, while 17 are with a capacity of 1,500 HP AC VFD each. The other six rigs are with a capacity of 2,000 HP each. MEIL has designed two more rigs with a capacity of 2,000 HP each. These 2000 HP capacity rigs can drill up to 6,000 meters (6 km). This is the first time such capability rigs have produced in India. Of the total 47 rigs, the first rig is fully operational in the Kalol oil field in Gujarat, and the second rig drilling operations will begin in a few days. The preliminary preparations for this already began. Of the 46 rigs currently under manufacturing, two rigs are in the assembly stage in the Rajahmundry oil field in Andhra Pradesh. MEIL will supply the rest to ONGC-related oil fields in Assam, Tripura and Tamil Nadu.

Union Bank wins 2 awards

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

UNION Bank of India has won 'Best Strategy in HR' and 'HR Oriented CEO' awards conferred on G Rajkiran Rai, Managing Director and CEO, at the Apex India HR and Business excellence awards 2020.

The awards recognize the excellent work carried out by the bank by adopting best practices and its quest to provide a completely digital employee experience.

The Apex India Foundation, Delhi, honors individuals and organizations for their outstanding contribution towards HR good practices and business excellence through its annual award program with a thorough selection process by an elite jury of notable personalities.

Stuck into this never-ending nightmare: Maxwell on bio-bubble challenge

CHENNAI

BIG-HITTING Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell says being continuously confined to bio-bubbles can become a "nightmare" and cricketers are leading a "difficult lifestyle" right now to ensure that they continue to do their job.

Maxwell, who had his share of problems with mental fatigue in the past, admitted

that adjusting to such a life amid the COVID-19 pandemic is definitely taking a toll on players around the world. "It's very difficult (to move from one bubble to other)...you being sheltered from people outside your bio-secure bubble and you get stuck into this never-ending nightmare where you are living the same day over and over again," he said in an interview posted by his IPL

Talking about the upcoming IPL, Maxwell says he couldn't care less for all the chatter around his hefty price tag despite underwhelming past performances



franchise Royal Challengers Bangalore on its YouTube channel. "You almost tend to forget how to have a normal conversation with the outside world. That can be very hard mentally and is a

massive challenge. But it's great to be back playing and to be able to do our jobs and entertain people. But it's still a difficult lifestyle at the moment," he said. "It does put a strain on a lot of relationships as well. You need your support networks to get you through those tough times." Talking about the upcoming IPL, Maxwell said couldn't care less for all the chatter around his hefty price tag de-

spite underwhelming past performances as he is excited about living a long-cherished dream of playing alongside Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers. Despite poor outings in the last two IPLs, Maxwell managed to earn big bucks again in this year's auction when RCB signed him for a whopping Rs 14.25 crore. RCB will take on Mumbai Indians in the tournament-opener in Chennai on Friday. (PTI)



Hyd girl shines

HANS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD girl Y Sai Dedeeppa entered into singles semi-finals of AITA One lakh women's tennis tournament is going on at Bengaluru. In the quarter finals, Dedeeppa defeated Avishka Gupta of Jharkhand with the score of 6-2, 6-4. In the semifinals Dedeeppa will play with Veda Varshitha of same state. In the doubles partnering with Avishka Gupta of Jharkhand lost to Snigdha (KA) - Veda (TS) with the score of 1-6, 6-4, 6-10 in the quarters.

Rajat Kumar, Aishwaria Payyan win



HYDERABAD

THE Netplay Sports Telangana State Squash Closed Championship 2021 concluded on Wednesday at Gamepoint, a multi sports centre at Madhapur, Hyderabad. This tournament was conducted under the aegis of Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) and Telangana Squash Rackets Association over two days and featured multiple individual events.

The event attracted squash players from across the state and featured well fought matches with many of the ties going to the wire. Rajat Kumar won the Men's cate-

gory by beating Tushar Kothari in the final. Aishwaria Payyan emerged victor in the Women's category.

The tournament was conducted in multiple categories including Girls Under 13, Boys Under 13, Boys Under 17, Women, Men, Men over 35 and Men over 45. Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary IT and President, Telangana Olympic Association was the chief guest and gave away the prizes. The event was presided by Vishnu Raju Nandyala, President, Telangana Squash Rackets Association. A Jagannathan Rao, President, Handball Federation of India was the special guest.

Harbhajan floors Karthik with his work ethic

MUMBAI

HARBHAJAN Singh's childlike enthusiasm at 40-plus has floored Kolkata Knight Riders vice-captain Dinesh Karthik, who said the veteran off-spinner's dedication and interest at this stage of his career is a testament to his character.

After going unsold in the first round of IPL auctions earlier this year, Harbhajan, who also played for Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians in the past, was bought by KKR for Rs 2 crore, a move that had raised many eyebrows. But Karthik said the veteran of 700-plus international wickets has overwhelmed everyone by his work ethic in the last one week after he joined the IPL side here. "He has been coming to practice sessions early, much ahead of all other players, and he has been



doing it consistently. I think he is a different man now from whatever little I have seen of him this week," Karthik told KKR website on the sidelines of a practice match at the DY Patil Stadium.

"Picking him I think wasn't easy, considering that he has been around for so long. But the amount of interest and intensity he has shown in the last one week is just fabulous." Having made his Test debut way back in

1998, Harbhajan is gearing up for his 23rd professional season. Karthik said Harbhajan has even been attending optional training sessions, where he is batting his heart out. "Even in a practice game that starts at 7pm, he comes at 4 o'clock. He was batting before that, he bowled to Shakib (Al Hasan) and (Eoin) Morgan, and then did his stretching again before getting into the practice game.

"He is bowling in the match and also fielding all 20 overs. That's about as much as you can ask for from a man of his stature. He has achieved everything, yet to show this kind of interest at this stage of his career speaks volumes of him as a character. I am sure he will do a great job for KKR," Karthik said. KKR will take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in their opening match of IPL 2021 in Chennai on Sunday. (PTI)

Olympic-bound tennis ace Sania included in TOPS after gap of four years

NEW DELHI

INDIAN tennis star Sania Mirza was on Wednesday included in the government's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), four years after she opted out of the programme. Sania was selected in the TOPS during the 56th meeting of the Mission Olympic Cell here. The 34-year-old multiple Grand Slam winner had opted out of the scheme when she was selected last in 2017 because of an injury breakdown which had led to a lay-off. "Yes, Sania has been selected in the recent TOPS list," a Sports Authority of India source told PTI. Sania has already qualified for the Tokyo Olympics based on her protected ranking before she took a break from the game due to pregnancy. Sania is currently ranked 157th in the world but as per WTA rules when a player takes a lay-off from the game longer than six months on account of injuries or pregnancy, they can apply for a "special ranking" (also sometimes known as a "protected ranking"). The special ranking of a player is their world ranking after the last tournament they played and in Sania's case, it was the China Open in October 2017. She was ranked world No. 9 at that point. So, Sania currently has a special ranking of 9th and has already qualified for the Tokyo Olympics. The special rankings were introduced by WTA because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sania was inactive for two years due to pregnancy and only made her return to the court last year following the birth of her son at the season-opening Hobart International WTA event. She partnered Ukrainian Nadiia Kichenok to win the women's doubles title. (PTI)



BUENOS AIRES

THE Indian men's hockey team made a positive start to its tour of Argentina, beating the reigning Olympic champions 4-3 in the first practice match here. Nilakanta Sharma (16th minute), Harmanpreet Singh (28th), Rupinder Pal Singh (33rd) and Varun Kumar (47th) were the goal scorers for India late on Tuesday night. Dragflicker Leandro Tolini (35th, 53rd) and Maico Casella (41st) scored for the home team.

"It was a very good practice match, intensely fought by both teams. It is always nice to come up with a win against a team like Olympic Champions Argentina as it amplifies our confidence levels," India coach Graham Reid said of the win. Both teams were slow to get off the blocks in the first quarter, but it was India who picked up pace



in the second quarter. Shilanand Lakra was the creator of India's first goal as his immaculate assist found Nilakanta inside the circle and the striker put the ball past Argentina's goalkeeper to hand the visitors lead. India, thereafter, pushed the hosts on the backfoot with persistent attacks. Argentina replied to India's aggressive show by securing a penalty corner soon but experienced custodian PR Sreejesh made a brilliant save to keep the hosts at bay. Dilpreet Singh then earned India a penalty corner in the 28th minute and Harmanpreet made no

mistake to hand his team a 2-0 lead with a powerful strike. Argentina made a strong comeback in the third quarter as they scored in the 32nd minute via Tolini, who was spot on while converting a penalty corner. But India were quick to respond as they won a set piece in the 33rd minute through Jaskaran Singh and this time the seasoned Rupinder was bang on target to give the tourists a 3-1 lead. Argentina, however, reduced the margin again with another goal in the 42nd minute through Casella. Soon after the Argen-

tines earned another penalty corner but young India goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak came to his side's rescue. India put up a resolute fight to maintain their lead in the final quarter. In the 47th minute, Dilpreet earned another penalty corner for India and this time Varun, who has returned to the squad after recovering from a hamstring injury, sent the ball crashing into the Argentina net. Though Argentina pulled another back in the 53rd minute through Tolini, the visiting team put up a spirited defence to end the game in its favour. (PTI)

PERFORMING AS 'ONE UNIT'

Indian women's football team ready for Belarus challenge

NEW DELHI

DESPITE the loss in their last friendly against Uzbekistan, the spirits are running high in the Indian Women's Team dressing room, having put out a strong display against a side that is placed more than 10 spots above on the FIFA Women's Rankings.

India are all set to play against Belarus on Thursday, April 8, 2021, at the AGMK Stadium in Tashkent, a match that kicks-off at 4.30 PM IST. "Belarus maybe a couple of spots below us on the FIFA Rankings, but they are used to playing against strong European sides, and their level of competition is high. But our girls are getting fully prepared for the game, and I'm sure they will go all out," India head coach Maymol Rocky said on the eve of the match.

India's custodian, the experienced Aditi Chauhan believes that the team has taken on a lot of positives from the game



against Uzbekistan despite the loss and are confident of a good showing against the Eastern European nation. "We are very excited about our game against Belarus. We've taken lots of positives in the game against Uzbekistan. We know the things that we are doing well. We just need to work on certain areas," said Aditi. "We are very confident to be going and stepping up against Belarus, against a very strong side, and I'm sure that the entire squad is up for it."

Coach Maymol Rocky lauded the girls despite the late heart-break as the home side ran away

with the win in the end. "It was a heartbreak against Uzbekistan, but if I consider all the recent matches, I think this was one of the best performances that we put out. Uzbekistan were under pressure in the second half, and we went all out for this game," said Maymol. The Indian Women's Team has been training together since December, 2020, in their long-term preparation for the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022, and with a number of players joining from the U-17 side as well, the team seems to be moving forward together. "The youngsters that are com-

ing in for the team, they will definitely be good, and if they give their 100 per cent, we will definitely be in a better position for the Women's Asian Championship 2022," said Maymol. Aditi Chauhan feels that this time spent together has helped build the squad into one unit. "It has been a very long time which had its ups and downs. But it's great that the team has come together even stronger. We have been playing with each other as one unit, and you can see that in the matches also," she said. "We have a few players who have joined us from the U-17 team, and it's great to have the young blood. To fight for any position, it's always good to have that competition in the team. That's how we grow. For the youngsters, it's important for them to understand how competitive it is at the senior level. I think it will help them prepare themselves better for the future," said Aditi.

Nethra Kumanan, first Indian female sailor to qualify for Olympics

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AFTER a gap of 19 years an Indian sailor qualified for the Olympics and became the first female sailor ever in Indian sailing history to do so. Nethra Kumanan has virtually qualified for Tokyo Olympics in the laser radial class of the Asian Olympic qualification championships here on Wednesday. The 23-year-old sailed wonderfully well on the penultimate day to finish races nine and ten in first and second positions respectively.

Nethra has 18 nett points while her nearest Asian competitor Stephanie Norton of Hong Kong is in fourth place with 41 points. Even if Norton finishes first in the final race -- all sailors in all classes get double points -- on Thursday, and if Nethra doesn't complete the race, Norton will end up getting two points, which is not enough to prevent the Indian from making it to the quadrennial event. Nethra, who has made it to Tokyo with a race to spare, said: "On the one side it's been a



dream-come-true moment for me and on the other side, it's just one step/race tomorrow (Thursday) to finish." She said coaching under Hungarian coach Tamas Eszes for the last one-and-a-half years at Gran

Canaria in Spain has proved to be invaluable. "In Grand Canaria, I trained with a lot of quality international sailors that helped me a lot," said the World Cup bronze medallist, the first Indian woman to do so.