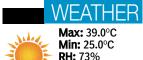
THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM | MONDAY | 19 APRIL 2021



Forecast: Humid. Max/Min temp. 39/25 QC

Rainfall: Nill



Israel relaxes rule to



SPORTS 8

**ABD, Maxwell fire RCB** to third win

**TABLOID** 

'False Positive' costs archery team dearly



Vol. 25 No. 348 Established 1940 | 16 pages | ₹6.00

#### **ASTROGUIDE**

Plava: Uttarayana Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Saptami till 11.57 pm Star: Punarvasu full day Varjyam: 5.55 pm to 7.39 pm Durmuhurtam: 12.40 pm to 1.30 pm; 3.10 pm to 3.59 pm **Rahukalam:** 7.30 am to 9 am **HIJRI CALENDAR** 

Ramzan 6,1442 AH **PRAYERS** (ROYAL MOSQUE) Fajar: 5.25 am

**Zohar:** 1.30 pm Asar: 5.00 pm Isha: 8.30 pm

**SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.44 AM** SUNSET TODAY 6.19 PM **MOONRISE** TODAY 10.04 AM MOONSET TOMORROW -.







You used to hoard pulses and onions? I am hoarding Covid vaccines and medicines!

#### **India, Pak FMs**

crossover in UAE

Dubai: The foreign ministers of India and Pakistan made crossover visits to the United Arab Emirates this weekend, after it was revealed the Gulf nation has been mediating between the hostile neighbours. "Good to be in the #UAE." Pakistan's Shah Mahmood

Qureshi tweeted late Saturday. His Indian counterpart Subrahmanyam Jaishankar visited Abu Dhabi on Sunday.

#### **APRIL EDITION OF JEE-MAINS POSTPONED**

New Delhi: Engineering entrance exam JEE-Mains scheduled to be held from April 27-30 has been postponed in view of the Covid-19 situation. Union education minister Ramesh Pokhrival 'Nishank' said on Sunday. According to an official order by the **National Testing Agency** (NTA), "looking at the pre-sent situation of COVID-19 pandemic and also taking into account the safety and well being of candidates and examination functionaries, it has been decided to postpone JEE-(Main) April session". "The revised dates will be announced later on and at least 15 days before the examination

the order said. - PTI

wear mask in public

deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle

### Cops see ex-DGP 'ploy' on CM Singh's tips to PM

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

AP police have alleged that under suspension IPS officer A. B. Venkateswara Director once General of Police, had pressurised his subordinates into falsely implicating Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and his family in the Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy murder case.

Addressing a press conference here on Sunday, DIG (technical) Pala Raju charged that for 15 days after the murder of

 PALA RAJU, DIG (technical) charged that for 15 days after the murder of Vivekananda Reddy, former DGP Venkateswara Rao was monitoring the entire investigation.

• HE DIDN'T pass on to then Kadapa SP and others important information he had on the murder

Vivekananda Reddy, Venkateswara Rao was monitoring the entire investigation. During the period, he did not pass on to then

Kadapa SP and other officials important information he had on the murder, despite playing an important role in the investigation.

The DIG said the under suspension former DGP now writing a letter offering information on Vivekananda's murder to CBI amounts to holding back information and not passing on the same to his succeeding officer, nor giving it to Special Investigation Team that investigated the case. This is in violation of All India

told the assembled media. It may be recalled that Venkateswara Rao had recently levelled allegations against top brass of AP police as well as top government officials with regard to murder of Jagan Mohan Reddy's uncle. The suspended officer further wrote a letter to CBI about reluctance of officials in receiving information regarding murder Vivekananda Reddy.

Service rules, Pala Raju

■ Page 2: Why 2 years to part with info, ask cops

**COASTAL AP,** 

**SRIKAKULAM TOP** 

VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 18

North coastal Andhra is witnessing a surge in Covid-19 cases, with Srikakulam district regis-

tering 912 cases, the second highest in AP after Chittoor with 1,171 cases

in the last 24 hours. Visa-

khapatnam saw 551 cases

■ Page 3: Officials urge

curbs to contain Covid

and Vizianagaram 349.

DC CORRESPONDENT

# on fighting Covid

Invoke CL to let more firms make vaccine

New Delhi, April 18: Former prime minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggesting five measures to battle the Covid-19 crisis, including ramping up vaccination and boosting

the supply of medicines.

In a letter to the prime minister, the veteran Congress leader said one must not look at absolute numbers but the total percentage of the population that has been vaccinated.

Invoking compulsory licensing provisions for drug manufacturers and giving some flexibility to states to define categories of frontline workers who can be vaccinated even if they are below 45 years are some of the steps mooted by him. "The key to our fight against Covid-19 must be ramping up the vaccination effort. We must resist the temptation to look at the absolute numbers being vaccinated, and focus instead on the percentage," he said in his letter.

He said some states may want to designate school teachers, bus, three-wheeler and taxi drivers, municipal and panchayat staff,

### VSP liquid oxygen to reach Maha, MP

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC

The Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited will be sending 97 tonnes of liq-uid medical oxygen (LMO) to Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, now facing severe shortage of the life-saving gas due to the abnormal increase in Covid-19 positive cases.

"We have received an indent for 97 tonnes of liquid medical oxygen, which will be sent

through road tankers placed on the flat wagons. Initially, we will be sending for 10 days and later the quantum will be decided based on our stock posi-tion," said a senior RINL officer. The wagons would be arriving in Visakha-patnam on Monday.

He said the supply would not be stopped to AP government, a pre-condition before agreeing to supply to Maharashtra.

> Page 3: VSP biggest oxygen producer in AP

and possibly lawyers who licence. This, I recall, had have to attend courts as frontline workers, and they can then be vaccinated even if they are below 45 years. "I believe this is the time to invoke the compulsory licensing (CL) provisions in the law so India to do so as well. that more number of companies are able to produce the vaccines under a

happened earlier for medicines to deal with the AIDS disease," he said. Citing Israel's example, which has invoked the compulsory licensing, he

■ Page 2: Be transparent on Covid orders, says Singh

said there is a case for

### 5 lakh frontline staff in AP to get jab **SURGE IN NORTH**

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

State administration has

geared up vaccinate almost half a million healthcare and frontline workers against Coronavirus from Monday.
Andhra Pradesh Covid

nodal officer Dr. Arja Srikanth pointed out that already five lakh workers have been vaccinated. Vaccination of all the remaining people in this category will start from Monday. A user-friendly applica-

tion data from every cor-

BHAGWAN PARAB and SHAHAB ANSARI | DC

The conflict between the

Maharashtra government

and the BJP over the sup-

ply of the Remdesivir

drug reached a flashpoint

after the Mumbai police,

in a late Saturday night

drama, detained a direc-

tor of the Daman-based

pharma company for allegedly storing a huge

quantity of the drug.

Furious BJP leaders have

accused the state govern-

ment of harassing the

The Mumbai police detained and questioned

the director, whose identi-

ty has not been revealed,

of Daman-based Bruck

Pharmaceuticals, after it

got information that thou-

sands of vials of Remdesivir used in Covid-

19's teatment were to be

Denying allegations lev-

elled by the BJP leaders,

the police said it only "questioned" the pharma

firm executive because of rampant black marketing

of the drug. The director

was questioned for about

45 minutes at the Vile

DCP Manjunath Shinge

clarified in a statement: "We got information from

our network that a huge

quantity of Remdesivir

made in Daman is being

stored in Mumbai and

will be transported out of

**CLEAN I CHIT Evidence on record ignored in Ashok Babu's favour** 

AP tax staff helping TD MI

Parle police station.

flown out of the country.

Remdesivir suppliers.

#### **AP GETS SII'S 2 LAKH VAX SHIPMENT**

VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

AP government received

BJP enters Mum.

row on remdesivir

tion has been developed to online monitor and capture individual vaccinaDC CORRESPONDENT

two lakh Covishield vaccine doses from Serum Institute of India (SII).

The state has eight lakh vaccine doses and from Monday the doses will be administered across the state through PHCs, CHCs, area hospitals and

Dr. Srikanth said Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has ordered that vaccination of all healthcare and frontline workers be given top pri-ority. All medical officers

**CENTRE PLANS** 

**CRACKDOWN** 

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Union home ministry

is coordinating with

police departments of all

states and Union Terri-

tories to crack down on

those indulging in hoard-

ing and over-pricing of

essential medicines like

remdisivir, Covid vaccines, and oxygen cylin-

Source said a team of officials has been set up in

the ministry, which is in

constant touch with all

state police forces. The

ministry has also assured

states that paramilitary

forces can also be provid-

ed for their assistance to

check misuse of medi-

Page 3: Pandemic's scale

the country by air cargo." He added: "There is a

shortage of this medicine

and its export was stoppedt. Hence, we acted

and called the owner of

the pharma firm to ques-

tion him about where the

medicine has been stored

in the city. We acted in

good faith for the larger

interest of the public.

is massive, say officials

cines and vaccines

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 18** 

district Covid hospitals and a few designated private hospitals. AP has kept the essential

stocks handy following the surge in cases. The stocks include 4,75,331 VTMs, 8,07,562 PPE kits, 6,34,580 N95 masks, 23,89,050 triple-layer masks, 13,41,215 gloves, 4,26,096 home isolation kits and 46,565 remdesivir injections will use the latest applica-

tion to enter details of individuals getting vacci-

■ Page 3: Unvaccinated FLWs, HCWs to be listed

### **RAHUL CANCELS** HIS RALLIES TO

New Delhi, April 18: Congress leader Rahul cases in the country.

The Congress has been critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah for holding rallies amid the in coronavirus

Senior Congress leader P. Chidambaram has accused the PM of shocking callousness for holding big rallies in poll-bound Bengal amid the rise in Covid-

Gandhi on Sunday cancelled all his public rallies in poll-bound West Bengal following a rapid rise in Covid-19 other politicians to

situation, I am suspending all my public rallies in West Bengal. I would advise all political leaders to think deeply about the consequences of holding large public rallies under the current circumstances," he said

crowd of the sick and the dead for the first time," he said in another tweet in Hindi, appa rently referring to the large crowds at Bengal rallies of BJP leaders.

## FIGHT COVID

He also advised all

think about the consequences of holding large public rallies. "In view of the Covid

on Twitter.
"One has seen such a

cases in the country.

### amazon Unlocking infinite possibilities for a digital India SUMMIT

We thank the 60,000+ small businesses & entrepreneurs for attending Amazon Smbhav Summit 2021 and partnering with us in helping unlock infinite possibilities for a digital India.

2.5 MILLION of the 10 million

jobs created of the 1 million

incremental jobs pledged by 2025



\$3 BILLION worth global exports enabled

of the \$10 billion

pledged by 2025



Presenting three new initiatives as part of our commitment to building a brighter digital India

**Amazon Smbhav Venture Fund** 

\$250 million towards digitization of small businesses, agri-tech innovations and health tech

**Spotlight North East** 

To boost the local economy, create jobs, accelerate financial inclusion, empower women and tribal communities

**Enabling** local shops

1 million offline retailers and neighbourhood stores to be digitally enabled by 2025 through Local Shops programme







Visit www.amazon.in/smbhav to know more

Pledges represent Amazon's intent and do not constitute legal obligations. Any use of or reliance on the above information by you is at your own risk, and Amazon will



commercial taxes department (CTD) have gone all out to safeguard the interests of Telugu Desam MLC P. Ashok Babu, a bitter critic of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS I DC

Senior officials of the AP

VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

Ignoring all evidence available on record, the

CTD gave a clean chit to

Ashok Babu in a Lokayukta

case. State GST commis-

even wrote to its registrar to drop further action on a complaint filed against the

Making things embarrassing for the ruling dispensation, the CTD on Saturday illegally transferred the complainant in the case, B. Meher Kumar, GST officer and president of the AP Commercial Taxes NGOs Association. Meher approached the Lokayukta against the TD MLC after the YSR Congress took the

reins of the government.

"Transfer of the complainant along with four others is a clear case of witch hunting because he questioned the previous conducted senior officials into Ashok Babu's case and approached the Lokayukta against them," alleged K.R. Suryanarayana, president of the AP Government Employees Association. The transfer of Meher Kumar and others to any district other than Krishna is a clear violation

of the Presidential Order,

he pointed out. Inquiries revealed that Ashok Babu had applied for voluntary retirement just before filing his nomination paper as MLC during the Naidu regime. There were allegations about his wrong claims of education qualification and pending criminal cases but the then inquiry officer looked the other way and a gave clean chit to Ashok Babu.

Page 2: Clean chit facilitated retirement

#### SHORT TAKES

#### **SEER'S APPEAL** TO AP, TS ON **RAM NAVAMI**

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 18:

Seer of Sarada Peetham Swroopandendra Swami has appealed to the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to stop public celebrations of Ram Navami in all the Ram temples in both states beginning from April 21 in view of the surge in the Covid cases across

the two states.

He appealed to the chief ministers to regulate the village festivals celebrated in a big way after the Ugadi through the endowment departments.

#### **BOGUS VOTES USED FOR BIG MARGIN: CONG**

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, APRIL 18

Naveen Kumar Reddy Rayalaseema Porata Samiti convener and Congress senior leader, said that the YSRC had gained national attention, as the Chief Minister had wanted, by bringing thousands of outsiders to cast bogus votes during the Tirupati Lok Sabha constituency byelection in an effort to garner a record victo-

Speaking to mediapersons, Naveen Kumar said the whole country was shocked to see thousands of people flocking in buses to Tirupati with fake voter ID cards and casting bogus votes on Saturday

#### **KAKANI BLAMES** TD, BJP FOR LOW **VOTER TURNOUT**

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, APRIL 18

YSR Congress's Nellore district convener and Sarvepalli legislator Kakani Govardhan Reddy blamed the leaders of Telugu Desam (TD) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the steep decline in voter turnout in the Tirupati Lok Sabha by-election held on

Saturday.
The YSRC MLA slammed the TD and BJP leaders for intimidating voters standing in the queue line at polling stations.

#### **CLEAN CHIT FACILITATED** RETIREMENT

The clean chit facilitated the retirement of P. Ashok Babu from service and contesting the Legislative Council elec-

Meher Kumar approached the Lokayukta stating that Ashok Babu had wrongly claimed that he was a graduate and had mentioned in his election affidavit his pending criminal cases while the department had concluded that there were no pending cases. Meher Kumar also produced evidence to establish that Ashok Babu was engaged in political activity including campaigning for the Congress against the BJP in the Karnataka Assembly elec-

#### **BE TRANSPARENT** ON COVID ORDERS. **SAYS SINGH**

FROM PAGE 1

Singh said the Centre should publicise vaccine dose orders placed and accepted for delivery over the next six months. He said the government should indicate how vaccine supplies are to be distributed to states.

"If we want to vaccinate a target number in this period, we should place enough orders in advance so that producers can adhere to an agreed schedule of supply," he noted.

The former PM said the government should indicate how this expected vaccine supply will be distributed across states based on a transparent formula.

He suggested that the central government could retain 10 per cent for distribution based on emergency needs, and states should have a clear signal of likely availability so that they can plan their rollout. Noting that India has emerged as the largest vaccine producer in the world, he said at this time of a public health emergency, the government must proactively support vaccine producers to expand their manufacturing facilities.



Members of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant employees union and JAC members take part in a rally in protest against the privatisation move on Visakhapatnam Steel Plant and new farm laws by Central Government during Rythu Karmika Sankaravam on the beach road in Visakhapatnam

### **BKU's Tikait backs protest** against VSP privatisation

#### Modi govt is working for a few private industrial houses: Farmer leader

DC CORRESPONDENT

National president of All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) Ashok Dhawale and Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) spokesperson Rakesh Singh Tikait have pledged support to ongo-ing agitation against pri-vatisation of Visakhap-stram Stool Plant atnam Steel Plant.

Addressing a press conference in Visakhapatnam, both the leaders, who are here to address a public meeting at RK Beach, said it is time trade union leaders of Andhra Pradesh protected the

**POLICE WARN** 

**DC CORRESPONDENT** 

Police authorities have

warned people who are

online from clicking "pink links" on their

WhatsApp or Gmail accounts, lest they be defrauded of money

Issuing the warning,

Kadapa superintendent

of police Karur Karunapati Nagendra

Kumar Anburajan point-

ed out that such cyber

crimes are mainly hap-

pening over dating websites. People in leisure or solitude are being

drawn to these websites

for viewing of videos or

to get into conversa-tions. The same thing could happen through

Anburajan said clicking the "pink links", which also offer online

shopping experience, could lead to cybercrimi-

nals extracting personal information of people.

Talking on phone with

an unidentified person and sending money to

their account could also

lead to massive loss for

Cybercriminals could

also access personal

photos or videos and use

them to blackmail peo-

The SP advised people

against visiting dating

or similar websites. He

said police department

has recently received numerous complaints

cheated or being threat-

ened to part with their

money. He further asked

people not to share their WhatsApp numbers or

mail IDs with strangers,

who may also offer fake

investment schemes through messages on

If anyone is being

cheated or threatened in

such a manner, they may

lodge a complaint with

the police station.

social media.

about people

the gullible.

ple for money.

OLX too.

from their accounts.

KADAPA, APRIL 18

**AGAINST** 

steel plant, failing which Modi government will gain courage to privatise major industries across the country.

Ashok Dhawale accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of being on a mission to privatise all public sector undertakings, including ports, airports, educational and health institutions. "Even during Covid pandemic period, the top 140 corporate housthe top 140 corporate houses made 596 billion dollars. People in all states are agitating against Modi's policies that enrich private players," Dhawale stated. Speaking on the occa-

Fishing ban

 Ashok Dhawale accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of being on a mission to privatise all public sector undertakings, including ports, airports, educational and health institutions

 AIKS Punjab president Balkaran Singh charged that Narendra Modi is out to privatise even water, air and land

sion, BKU national spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said over one lakh farmers, while agitating and land. "Modi is run-

for minimum support price, have strongly opposed privatisation of VSP and other PSU industries in the country. He said Visakhapatnam Steel Plant belongs to people of Andhra Pradesh, as it came into existence on lands given by local farmers. "Modi government is working for a few private industrial houses and has

no interest in the welfare of people," Tikait remarked. AIKS Punjab president Balkaran Singh charged that Narendra Modi is out to privatise even water, air

ning the government on lines of East India Company, which exploited the nation for centuries. Singh pointed out.

Former minister and farmers' leader Vadde Sobhanadeeswara Rao said the Prime Minister has sold 23 public sector undertakings for serving just Ambani and Adani families in the country. He asserted that privatisation of VSP will be stopped with firm determination of people. Trade union leaders Ch. Narsinga Rao, Mantri Rajasekhar and D. Adinarayana were present

# State govt acts against former intel chief ABV

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL. 18

Andhra Pradesh govern-ment has on Sunday initiated disciplinary proceedings against suspended IPS officer A P officer Venkateswara Rao.
Orders to this effect have
been issued by Chief
Secretary Aditya Nath Das through GO RT: 767 under Rule 8 of All India Services (Discipline & Appeal) Rules, 1969. The GO directed

Venkateswara Rao to submit within 30 days a written statement of his defence and state whether he desires to be heard in person.

If no written statement is filed or he does not appear in person before competent authority or otherwise fails or refuses to comply with provisions of Rule 8, action will be taken against him based on the material available on record on ground that he has no explanation to offer. The order stated that the IPS officer violated norms by choosing to comment on the state of departmental proceedings against him, which are pending as of today,

stating that during the course of investigation, ACB threatened witnesses, reports have been submitted with false information, and forged e-file created to implicate him in the case with a mala fide intention.
The GO further said

that under Rule 7 of AIS (Conduct) Rules, 1968, no member of the service shall anonymously, pseudonymously or in his own name or in name of any other person or in any communication to press or in any public utterance make any statement of fact or opinion, which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any current or recent policy or action of the central or a state government.

The order said the act of Venkateswara Rao is totally unbecoming of a government servant and amounts to misconduct under Rule 3 of the All India Services (Disciplinary & Appeal) Rules, 1969, and is in violation of rule 7 of the AIS (Conduct) Rules, 1968, Hence disciplinary proceedings have been started against Venkateswara

# 'Why 2 years to part with info?'

FROM PAGE 1

Pala Raju, former Kadapa SP Rahul Dev Sharma, superintendent of police when Vivekananda was murdered. Ammireddy, a representa-tive of IPS officers' association, have refuted these allegations of the former DGP.

The DIG (Technical) said for 15 days after the murder, Venkateswara Rao was running the entire investigation. "Why didn't he use entire important information that he had on the murder when he was an active part of the investigation? While leaving the investievery single detail to his successor. Why didn't he do that? For three months after the murder, the then government was in power. The case had been with us for nine months after the present government took over. Since the last one year, it has been with the CBI. What made Venkateswara Rao take more than two years to come out with this infor-

mation," Pala Raju asked. Questioning the manner in which the former DGP's letter has been made public and its tim-



G. Pala Raju

ing, the DIG alleged that when Venkateswara Rao was investigating the case, he pressurised then SP Rahul Dev Sharma and other officers to implicate the then Leader gation, it is mandatory of Opposition and pres-for any officer to disclose ent CM and his family in vivekananda case. "Even today, if he (Venkateswara Rao) actually wants to provide evidence, he could do so in a sealed cover to the CBI Why has he approached media," Pala Raju asked indicating that the for-mer DGP's intentions are

> Pala Raju pointed out that Venkateswara Rao's allegations against IAS and IPS officials in an earlier case related to illegal purchase of protection equipment later turned out to be baseless.

#### **LOKESH WRITES TO JAGAN SEEKING CANCELLATION OF SSC EXAMS**

suspect.

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL. 18

Telugu Desam sought cancellation of SSC and Intermediate exams in AP. TD national general secretary Nara Lokesh on

Mohan Reddy to cancel the exams in view of spurt in Corona cases. Mr Lokesh in his letter

said that India and AP are well in the middle of a second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic with mortal-Sunday wrote a letter to ity rates on the rise, hos-Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan pital beds filling up.

### Central armed police forces would safeguard the strongrooms: Giridhar

### Ms shifted to strongrooms in Tirupati

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, APRIL 18

state government a few days ago.

FATE | SEALED

The Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), Voter-Verified Paper Audi Trails (VVPATs) and other units pertaining to Saturday's Tirupati Lok Sabha byelections received from Chittoor district polling stations were kept in the strongrooms at S.V. Arts College here on Sunday. Although polling ended

by 7 pm on Saturday, it was only by Sunday morning that some of EVMs and VVPATs reached Tirupati. The machines were kept in strongrooms in the presence of candidates and representatives of various political parties. They

were sealed in the presence of election observer Dinesh Kumar Giridhar Lal, district election officer and collector M. Harinarayanan and AROs.

Fishing harbor seen packed with huge numbers of mechanised fishing vessels as they were anchored in

Visakhapatnam on Sunday. The two-month ban on fishing off the sea on mechanised boats was imposed by the

Giridhar Lal also reviewed the scrutiny of the polling process with the DEO, municipal commissioner P.S. Girisha, SPs S. Senthil Kumar and Ch. Venkata Appala Naidu and joint collector Veerabrahmam, polling officials and representatives of contestants.

Addressing officials, Giridhar Lal said that the central armed police forces would safeguard the strongrooms. He said the byelection process Saturday went on smoothly and the arrangements were good, as he himself had inspected 15 polling stations. He also said scrutiny with sectoral authorities was mandatory to secure EVMs in strong rooms.

He inquired into the complaints received in the last 48 hours. Assembly segment-wise Chandramouliswar Reddy (Tirupati-), Srinivas (Srikalahasti) and Chandra Sekhar (Satyavedu) presented records from their respective sectoral authorities.

EVMs and VVPATs from Sullurpeta, Gudur, Venka-tagiri and Sarvepalli segments were kept in strong Government college in Nellore. Returning officer **DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

BJP demanded the cancellation of Tirupati MP byelection and conduct a repoll due to the sheer violation of norms in various forms. BJP AP president Somu Veerraju on Sunday said that YSR Congress pressed bogus voters into action in Tirupati by-election polling and ministers violated election code and

the Election Commission

election. Mr Veerraju deplored

that democracy thrown to air in Tirupati MP by-election as major votes are bogus votes in the 60 per cent polling registered in Tirupati polling. He alleged that BJP lodged a complaint with the SP over bogus votes but he did not respond which gave a chance for continuation of bogus voting. He

BJP demands repolling

should conduct repolling objected to the wanderi for the Tirupati MP by- of minister Peddired of minister Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy in Tirupati during polling and further conducting of press meet terming it as violation of election code of conduct. Mr Veerraju alleged that the police department showed bias towards ruling YSR Congress as they never responded to the polling violations in Tirupati. He said that BJP lodged a complaint with ECI.

and Nellore collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu, assistant returning officer

and Dr M.N.

K. Dinesh Kumar, joint col- Harendira Prasad were present when the strong rooms were being sealed.

Fear of another

lockdown looms

MD ILYAS | DC

Business

on Sundays.

second wave.

districts.

low suit.

ness timings.

VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

on trade timings by

reducing business hours

and closing shops by 6 pm

with a complete closure

Government officials

have started measures

like closing parks, walk-

ing tracks, gymnasiums

and swimming pools to contain the spread of a

However, these restric-

There has been a steep

hike in positive cases for

the past 10 days. What

earlier was around 200-

300 new positive cases

every day has now increased to a staggering

5,000 to 7,000 cases every

day. As many as 6,582 new

positive cases and 22 deaths were registered on Sunday reflecting the grim situation in all 13

measure, the Vijayawada Chamber of Commerce

and Industry and Guntur Chamber of Commerce

have decided to close all

affiliated entities by 6 pm

till April 30. Other associ-

ations and chambers in the state are likely to fol-

Presidents of the two chambers K. Vidyadhara

Rao and A. Aanjaneyulu

said that the Covid-19 sit-

uation is very alarming. They conducted meetings

with business, commerce

and trade organisations

and decided to cut busi-

Locals in several vil-

lages are imposing lock-

precautionary

tions are worrying the public about a possible

lockdown in the state.

SHORT TAKES

#### **VONTIMITTA BRAHMOTSAVAMS IN EKANTAM**

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, APRIL 18

The annual Brahmotsavams in Sri Kodanda Ramalayam at Vontimitta in YSR Kadapa district will be celebrated from April 21 to 29 in Ekantham in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. As the Covid-19 cases are on the rise, keeping in view the safety of the devotees, TTD has decided to conduct the Vontimitta Sri Kodandarama Swamy Brahmotsavams in Ekantham this year also.

#### UNVACCINATED **FLWS, HCWS TO BE LISTED**

#### FROM PAGE 1

The nodal officer pointed out that once each medical officer logs in with his or her user name and password, list of unvaccinated FLWs and HCWs will be available to them, along with their names and mobile numbers. SMS alerts will be sent to each such frontline and healthcare worker's phone to arrive for vaccination as per the date and time allotted.

Dr Srikanth said this is part of the state government's initiative to take care of its frontline workers, so that the sec-ond wave of Coronavirus pandemic can be dealt with effec-

#### **OFFICIALS URGE CURBS TO CONTAIN COVID**

FROM PAGE 1

Senior medical officers and a few NGOs appealed to the government to impose restrictions to contain the spread of the virus in the region. They said fishing harbours, shopping malls, cinema halls and tourist spots were seeing huge gatherings with many not using masks and sanitisers nor maintaining social dis-

As a measure to contain the rush at the fishing harbour, the department of fisheries has offered ₹10,000 to country boat owners to stop fishing. This is on par with what is paid to motorised and mechanical boars during fishing holiday period.

'This would prevent crowd ing in the market as well as improve the breeding of fish in the sea," said joint director Phani Prakash. He said not many people were seen in the fishing harbour on Monday as most of the boats were anchored due to the twomonth fishing holiday that came into effect from April 15.

Elected representatives also announced that they would not be meeting people physically. Anakapalle MP Dr K. Satyavati and MLA Gudivada Amaranath on Sunday appealed to the people not to visit their camp offices or homes due to the spread of Covid. Both the leaders announced that the petitioners could call them over phone for redressal of grievances or send mails.

Visakhapatnam West MLA and TD leader P.V.G.R. Naidu (Ganababu) also announced restrictions. He said a box has been kept at his main gate where people could drop their petitions and call him for urgent matters.

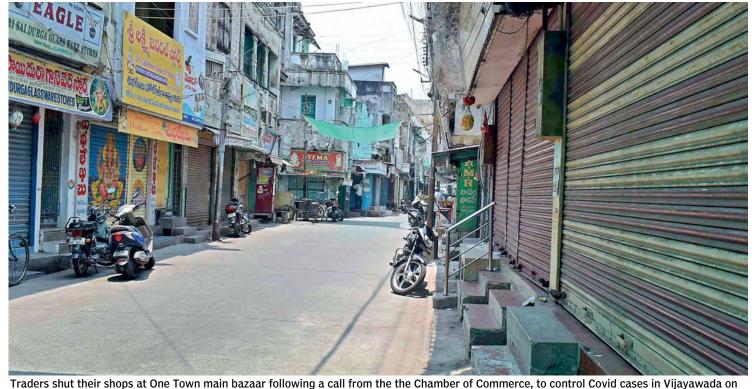
#### **WOMAN DIES, HOME GUARD INJURED**

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, APRIL 18

woman Chikatla Ramalakshmi, 35, died and a home guard Koppanathi Gangadhar was injured when an RTC bus hit his bike near Turangi area under Karapa police station limits.

According to Karapa police, when Gangadhar was going to Rajamahendrayaram on bike. Ramalakshmi asked a lift to go Ramachandrapuram. While both were going on bike, the RTC bus hit the bike from backside. Ramalakshmi died on the spot and home guard was admitted in Government General Hospital. Karapa Sub-Inspector D.Rama Rao registered a case.

Rajamahen-Meanwhile dravaram Urban District Superintendent of Police Shemushi Bajpayee said that all the sub-divisional police officers, Circle Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors should sanitize their offices in view of Covid-19 pandemic and every police personnel should wear masks without fail.



### **Cloistered classrooms** exposing kids to virus

Kurnool district reports 729 positive cases, three deaths

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC KURNOOL, APRIL 18

The sudden spike in Covid-19 cases in the district, particularly among schoolchildren, can only be addressed by the district administration if they devise newer and more workable containstrategies. On Sunday, 729 positive cases and three deaths have been reported.

Health minister Alla Nani directed district medical and health officer Ram Giddayya to monitor Corona cases in Kasturba school at Adoni where 53 students tested positive while a school in Kodumur reported six more cases. The school was cleed for a week and was closed for a week and students have been quarantined, said the DMHO.
The DMHO said most of

the positive cases are reported from urban areas like Nandyal, Adoni and Kurnool and that too from educational institutions. The spread of the virus is very fast among students as schools are not maintaining physical distance norms due to cramped classrooms. In private colleges run

Chaitanya and Narayana managements, it has been noticed that class sections have been canceled and all students of a particular class are accommodated in a single lecture hall. Lack of teaching staff and cost-reduction initiatives are mak-

#### **Authorities identify 11 pvt** hospitals for Covid-19 care There are cases wherein

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, APRIL 18

Health authorities Kadapa have identified 11 private hospitals in the for treating contracting district patients Coronavirus.

These will be in addition to four government hospitals, apart from Fatima Medical College, Kadapa RIMS, Proddatur District Hospital and Pulivendula Area Hospital, which are already treating Covid-19

The 11 private hospitals identified had treated Corona patients last year too when instances of the virus had peaked. The private Covid hospitals include Madan Multi Specialty Hospital, Harsha, Shreyan Hospital, and Specialty Hospitals in Proddatur, Mohan Hospital, Komma Super Specialty Hospital, Rama Srikara Hospital, Thirumala, Palla Hospital, City and Kadapa Hospitai in Kadapa.

ing schoolchildren vulnerable, district education officials said. The DMHO who spent most of Sunday on video and phone conferences with medical and

A total of 1,000 beds have been set apart for Coronavirus patients in all these hospitals

A total of 1,000 beds have been set apart for Coronavirus patients in all these hospitals. Further, five Covid Care Centres have been set up at Haj House in Kadapa, AP Carl in Pulivendula, Government Polytechnic College in Proddatur, Minority Polytechnic College in Rayachoti and Covid Care Centre in Horticulture University at Anantharajupeta near Railway Koduru.

collector Chevuru Harikiran has put district authorities on high alert following a surge in cases during the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic.

Last year, persons diagnosed with Coronavirus exhibited symptoms of fever, cold, cough, loss of and odour. apart from respiratory issues. collector added.

health officials said pro-posals like declaring holi-

days for schools were also

He said, "The situation

is dangerous and needs

under consideration.

some surgical measures to protect children.' A total of 39,500 doses of Covishield and 6,500

Covaxin have arrived, he

will immediately put them required

no symptoms are being

exhibited in the second

wave till the situation gets

worse. The severity of

corona disease is increas-

ing day by day as compared to last year. Cases had increased by 2.3 per

cent last week. But these

have now risen to 6.2 per

Harikiran advised people to remain vigilant and

take all precautions. Relatively healthier per-

virus can remain in home

isolation while taking medications. The collector

said chances of recovery

in home isolation are

more than 90 per cent.

However, if the fever does

not go down for 4-5 days, oxygen saturation is less

than 94 per cent, and there

is difficulty in breathing,

such people should imme-

diately go to the nearest

Covid hospital Doctors

sons who contract

#### **RDT HOSPITAL TO EXCLUSIVELY TREAT COVID**

DC CORRESPONDENT ANANTAPUR, APRIL 18

RDT (Rura Development Trust) Hospital at Bathalapalli headquarters would be converted into a full-fledged Covid hos-pital from Monday fol-lowing the rise of Covid-19 positive cases across the district and surrounding Karnataka

areas.
Although, some beds
were earmarked for Covid patients, the disadministration sought that the entire RDT hospital be changed to a Covid hos-pital, which was duly accepted by RDT director Mancho Ferrer.

The Covid-19 hospital will formally be launched by district col-lector Gandham Chandrudu.

The DMHO,
Dharmavaram DRO and
RDT Hospital special
officer have been directed to make all necessary arrangements at RDT hospital to treat Covid patients.
The district adminis-

tration has set up teams with medical experts and officials of other departments to trace contacts of positive

On Sunday, about 305 positive cases were reported in the district. Chandrudu said that

vaccinations start on Monday with priority being given to NREGA labourers, particularly workers aged over 45 years and who have job cards and are in service.

#### Self-lockdown was imposed in villages of Kollipara mandal, People across the state are in the grip of fear about another lockdown Pedaravooru, Angalakuduru and Kathevaram and all due to the huge surge of Covid-19 positive cases. shops, hotels and restauassociations rants downed shutters. like the Chamber of Commerce have already imposed self-restrictions

down restrictions voluntarily. For instance, selflockdown was imposed in villages of Kollipara mandal, Pedaravooru, Angalakuduru and Kathevaram and all Angalakuduru shops, hotels and restaurants downed shutters. The task force committee meeting approved the appeal of locals and imposed restrictions till April 27 and shops would be allowed to open only from 6 am to 11 am.

Municipal Guntur Corporation commissioner, Ch. Anuradha said that parks, gymnasiums and swimming pools would be closed from Monday. She attributed and the rise to people's neglect of Covid norms.

Private employees Purini Vijayabhaskar and Sk. Rahim said that many are in the grip of a lockdown fear. Several offirequesting anonymity, opined that total lifting of restric-tions and allowing cinema halls, malls, bars and liquor shops to stay open till night has worsened the situation. They opined that restricting business timings and closure of public gathering places could help avoid lockdown situations.

Officials said that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy during a review meeting on the Corona situation recalled the impact of lockdown on society and called for an increase in vaccinations, testing, tracing and

### Surge in Corona cases continues

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 18

The huge surge in the Covid-19 new infections continues in AP State as 22 new deaths due to Covid-19, the highest daily toll since October. with 6,582 new infections registered on Sunday. Chittoor's cumulative infections tally has crossed the one-lakh mark and it was the second district after East Godavari to witness onelakh Covid infections in

The total Covid-19 cases of the state increased to 9,62,037 and the toll reached 7,410. As many as 2,343 patients have recovered in the past day and the number of active Covid-19 cases were 44,686. The recovery rate further dropped to 94.58 per cent and the number of recoveries stands at 9,09,041.

the pandemic.

As many as 35,922 samples were tested in the past day and their positivity rate was 18.32 per cent while the overall positivity rate of the 1.567 crore samples was 6.14 per cent. The Chittoor district

registered five new deaths, while Krishna and Nellore reported four deaths each. Kurnool district reported three, Anantapur and Guntur reported two each and Visakhapatnam Vizianagaram reported

IN 24 HRS 6,582 infections deaths

**TILL DATE IN AP** 

9,62,037 Total cases;

7,410 Total deaths

one death each in the past 24 hours. The Chittoor district

reported the highest single-day tally of 1,171 new infections, followed by Srikakulam with 912, Guntur 804, Kurnool 729, Nellore 597, Visakhapatnam 551, Krishna 465, Vizianagaram Prakasam 314, Anantapur 305, Kadapa 203, East Godavari 100 and least number of 82 new cases registered in West Godavari on Sunday.

The East Godavari district is on top with a total of 1,29,312 cases followed by Chittoor with 1,00,254, West Godavari 95,139, Guntur 86,570, Anantapur 71,453, Visakhapatnam 67,935, Nellore 67,600, Kurnool 66,125, Prakasam 65,985, Kadapa 58,313, Krishna Srikakulam 51,788 and Vizianagaram is on the last place with a total of 43,537 Covid-19 cases.

#### VSP biggest oxygen producer in AP FROM PAGE 1 This is for the first

The requisition came Central from the Coordinating Committee based at New Delhi.

Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is the biggest producer of oxygen in the state. Last year, it supplied 4,000 tonnes to meet the needs of Covid patients in Andhra Pradesh.

"This year we resumed supply to the AP government and so far we sent 198 tonnes of LMO," the official said. This is for the first time

that the concept of transporting tankers on rail roads is introduced. Reports said Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra governments had approached

the ministry of railways

to explore whether LMO

tankers could be moved by the railways. The railway authorities immediately explored the technical feasibility of transportation of LMO, through roll on-roll off (RO RO) service with road

tankers placed on flat wagons. Due to restrictions of height of road over-bridges (ROBs) and overhead equipment (OHE) at certain locations, out of the various specifications of road tankers, the model of road tanker T 1618 with height of 3,320 mm was found feasible to be placed on flat wagons

time that the concept of transporting tankers on rail roads is introduced. Reports said Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra governments had approached the ministry of railways to explore whether LMO tankers could be moved by the railways.

The railway authorities immediately explored the technical feasibility of transportation of LMO, through roll on-roll off (RO RO) service with road tankers placed on flat wagons.

with height of 1290 mm. In order to ensure that parameters of transportation are tested, trials were conducted at various locations.

It was decided that the tankers would be organised by the transport commissioner, Maharashtra. These empty tankers would be moved from Kalamboli/Boisar, rail-way stations in and near Mumbai and sent to Jamshedpur, Vizag, Rourkela and Bokaro for loading of liquid medical

### **Covid-19 cases in Chittoor** district cross 1-lakh mark

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, APRIL 18

The Chittoor district, which has been witnessing a steep spike in the number of Covid-19 positive cases for the past few days now had crossed the 1-lakh mark with the addition of 1,171 fresh cases, reported in the last 24 hours as on Sunday.

According to the health bulletin released by the district administration, the tail-end district of AP so far recorded 1,00,254 cases, out of which 7,856 are active after the discharge of • 7,856 are active after the discharge of 91,480 patients and 918 deaths till date

33,000 cases added in August last year

The virus spread in the

to add 10,378 patients and breach the 10,000 mark on July 31 last year and later it took only 17 days to

91,480 patients and 918 deaths till date.

district was rather slow initially, but it picked up pace in the mid of July and further skyrocketed in the month of August, last year. The district had recorded its first positive case on March 24, 2020 and it took nearly four months come near the 25,000-The district witnessed its worst-ever spike in cases in August last year, which added nearly 33,000

cases to the total. After a brief lull, now the case load reached the 1 lakh mark. The temple city of Tirupati has been continuously taking the top spot in the district and it has recorded 373 cases in its urban limits and 160 cases in rural limits in the last 24 hours as on Sunday.

### FRUITS OF I LABOUR Price of palm fruit had shot up to ₹17,000 per tonne in April Farmers happy as oil palm prices shoot up

DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, APRIL 18

Oil palm farmers are a happy lot this season as a tonne of fruit is fetching ₹18,000. The price hike is being attributed to increase in prices of crude palm oil, which has touched ₹113 per kg. Price of palm fruit, which was ₹8,000 per tonne last year, went up to ₹9,000-₹10,000 in January this year. The same had shot up to ₹17,000 in the first week of April.

Andhra Pradesh pro-

duces 15 lakh tonnes of palm fruit per year. Palmolin factories in the state purchase the fruit from farmers depending on international market prices of crude palm oil. Palm gardens in the state are spread over more than two lakh acres, majority of them being in East and West Godavari districts.

While palm farmers are a happy lot currently, they had faced great hardships from 2014 to 2019, as the Central government had lifted import duty on palm oil products. Prices of the

The had lost ₹100 crore due to variation in prices of the fruit. However, after YSRC came to power, Chief Minister Jagan released ₹84 crore to palm farmers for recouping their loss to an

fruit had thus decreased drastically. However, the Central government has now imposed import duty on palm oil. This is helping farmers in getting a good price for their pro-

Palm Oil Farmers' Association Satti Rama Reddy said palm fruit farmers had suffered a lot during the five years of Telugu Desam rule. They had lost ₹100 crore due to variation in prices of the fruit. However, after YSRC came to power, Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy released ₹84 crore to palm farmers for recouping their loss to an extent.

Rama Reddy expressed happiness that palm fruit are currently

Former president of encouraging. He hoped the Palm Oil Farmers' same price trend will consame price trend will continue during the peak season too. He pointed out that in the past, Central government used to announce market intervention prices, but it is no more doing it. A palm garden owner

Bikkina Visweswara Rao recalled that white fly disease had infested palm fruit gardens during the past four years, which led to the yield falling to nearly one-fourth. This was the other reason palm farmers were getting low prices. SHORT TAKES

#### **RAIPUR HOSPITAL FIRE: PROBE** ORDERED

Raipur, April 18: Authorities have ordered an investigation after five Coronavirus patients died in a fire at the Covid-19 ward of a private hospital in

Chhattisgarh's capital city Raipur, police said on Sunday. Raipur collector Dr S. Bharathi Dasan has ordered an investigation into the incident. Officials have been directed to conduct safety check at Coronavirus hospi-

The fire broke out at Raipur's Rajdhani hospital on Saturday, police said. "Five Coronavirus patients died in the incident. One was charred to death and the others died due to suffoca-tion," a police official said, adding a case of negligence will be registered against the owners of the hospital.

A supervisor saw smoke coming out of the ward and informed the hospital authorities, who alerted the police. The fire brigade and hospital staff rescued the other patients. "The fire broke out in the Covid-19 ward of Rajdhani Super Speciality Hospital located at Pachpedi Naka under Tikrapara police station at 4.30 pm and was brought under control by the firefighters in 20 minutes," tikrapara station house officer Sanjeev Mishra said.

When the fire broke out, there were around 30 patients in the ward, Mishra said. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel expressed grief over the incident and announced a compensation of ₹4 lakh each to the families of

#### **CENTRE NOD TO BOOST MEDICAL OXYGEN SUPPLY**

New Delhi, April 18: The Centre has sanctioned installation of 162 pressure swing adsorption (PSA) plants in public health facilities in all states, the health ministry said on Sunday, as demand of medical oxygen goes through the roof amid spiralling Coro-

navirus cases in the country.
The PSA plants manufacture oxygen and help hospitals become self-sufficient in their requirement for medical oxygen, while also reducing the burden on the national grid for its supply of medical oxy-

A total of 162 PSA oxygen plants have been sanctioned by the government for installation in public health facilities in all states, the ministry tweeted. "These will augment medical oxygen capacity by

Thirty-three of the 162 PSA plants have been installed five in Madhya Pradesh, four in Himachal Pradesh, three each in Chandigarh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand; two each in Bihar, Karnataka and Telangana; and one each in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Mahara-shtra, Puducherry, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, it said.

Fifty-nine more PSA plants will be installed by April-end, while 80 more will be installed by May-end.

#### **BSY IN HOSP FOR COVID, STABLE** AND RECOVERING

Bengaluru, Karnataka Ćhief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa who is undergoing treatment for Coronavirus at a private hospital is now stable and recovering, his office

said on Sunday. "The Chief Minister who was admitted in a hospital on Friday for Covid treatment is being monitored by a team of expert doctors. The health of the Chief Minister is stable and he is recovering," the office of the Chief Minister

tweeted on Sunday. Yediyurappa is spending his time in the hospital reading his favourite books and is in touch with officials to give them necessary directions, the tweet further said.

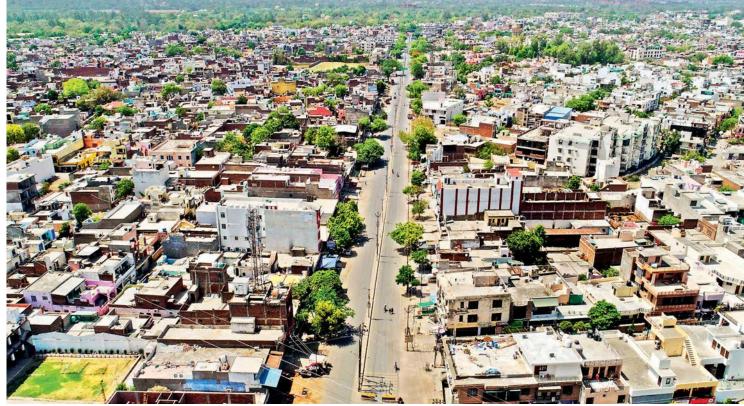
The Chief Minister had fever on Friday and when he got himself tested, the report came positive for Coronavirus. Accordingly, he got admitted

to the hospital. This is the second time Yediyurappa contracted Coronavirus.

This was despite the fact that the Chief Minister took the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine.

He was supposed to chair an all-party meeting on Sunday to take a stringent measure in view of rising Coronavirus

cases in Bengaluru. However, the meeting has been postponed to Monday and revenue minister R. Ashoka will now preside over the meeting.



City streets wear a deserted look during weekend lockdown to curb Covid-19 cases in Agra on Sunday.

### With 2.71 lakh new cases, India sees highest ever rise

States running out of beds, oxygen, drugs; govts scrambling to save lives

VINEETA PANDEY | DC with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

With 2,71,204 new cases, India saw the highest ever daily spike of Covid-19 on Sunday. The daily positive ty rate in the last 12 days has doubled from 8 per cent to 16.69 per cent and the death in the last 24 hours due to the virus was 1,570. As states are running out of hospital beds, medical oxygen, and several life saving drugs, the union and state govern-ments are scrambling to save lives.

Railways is gearing up to transport Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) and Oxygen Cylinders through "Oxygen Express" via green corridors to ensure fast movement of these trains. This came after Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra state governments approached the Ministry of Railways to explore whether Liquid ing passengers. It is Medical Oxygen (LMO) tankers could be moved

curfew ends on Monday but traders in Chandni Chowk have decided to pull the shutters down till Sunday. Delhi government has filed FIR against four airlines under DDMA Act

**BIHAR IMPOSES** 

**NIGHT CURFEW** 

**ALL OVER STATE** 

Bihar Chief Minister

Nitish Kumar on Sunday imposed new

restrictions including a

statewide night curfew

from 9 pm to 5 am to control the surge in

According to the state

government's directives,

all educational institu-

tions. religious places,

malls, cinema houses

and parks have been

Offices and shops have

also been asked to follow strict Covid-19

guidelines and close

The decision to impose

new restrictions was taken after a high-level

meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish

after his meetings with

the health ministers and

administrative officials.

Kumar said "the deci-

sion has been taken to

control the surge in

Government and private

offices will be open till 5 pm. Market places and

mandis have also been

asked to close after 5 pm.

Bihar government has

also decided to provide

one month salary as a

bonus to all health work-

ers who have been work-

ing for the safety of peo-

Officials said that the

steep rise in cases across

the state has prompted the Bihar government to

impose new restrictions

ple across the state"

in the state.

reporters

Coronavirus.

shut till May 15.

after 5 pm.

Kumar.

Briefing

Coronavirus

NAYYAR AZAD | DC PATNA, APRIL 18

Delhi oxygen quota given to other states: Kejriwal

official has rejected Kejriwal's claims as "blatant lies" and said there was no

panic situation in industries minister Piyush Go-

yal urging him to ensure

700MT of oxygen on daily

basis and restore supply of 140MT of oxygen by a sup-

The output of INOX, one

of the major suppliers to Delhi hospitals, has been

"diverted" to other states

which has already started causing "critical shortages", he charged in the

plier INOX.

'uninterrupted" supply of

New Delhi, April 18: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said Delhi is facing an "acute shortage" of oxygen for Covid-19 patients and alleged that the quota of the city has been diverted to other states

to other states.
The Chief Minister's remarks came hours after he wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his help in enhancing the number of hospital beds and immediate oxygen supply for patients in Delhi.

A central government

expected that the Delhi government may extend the weekend curfew for In Delhi, the weekend few more days as huge surges in daily cases continue. The decision in this regard is expected after a meeting between Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Lieutenant Governor

Anil Baijal on Monday.

Maharashtra minister Aditya Thackeray said the state is preparing for a third wave though it cannot be determined now if it will be as strong or ures in his constituency weak. "We have come to Varanasi and Congress the genuine belief that leader Rahul Gandhi under-reporting is not going to help...Now we are preparing for the third wave. We have five lakh

oxygenated.

Thackeray. Prime Minister Narebeds, 70 per cent of them

ndra Modi on Sunday held a review meeting to see Covid containment measannounced to suspend all his election public railies Meanwhile, facing acute shortage of Covid-19 vac-cines, Odisha government

Commerce Ministry said

that the allegations made by the Delhi CM are "bla-

According to official fig-ures, Delhi hospitals received 254 MT of med-

ical oxygen on April 16 and 612 MT on April 17. As of April 17, the daily demand of oxygen from Delhi was 197 MT. The total stock at INOX and

Goyal Gas, Linde, Air Liquide for Delhi is 311 MT and the total stock

tant lies"

position of oxygen in the capital is 700 MT. — *PTI* 

place adequate protocols at the 154 mandis (wholesale markets), the state government has started special camps to inoculate all stakeholders and has so far vaccinated more than

days, family welfare director Bijay Panigrahi said. Only 56,472 people were given jabs at 465 session sites on Saturday against 91,195 who had been vaccinated in 781 centres on Friday, he said. The state has so far vaccinated

on Saturday halted its innoculation drive in over 1,000 session sites including in the hotspot Nuapada district, a senior health department official said.

The states vaccine stocks will be exhausted in two

49,58,447 people, the health department official said.
Panigrahi said that the vaccination drive could not be taken up in rural Odisha due to the scarcity of Covishield vaccines. Covaxin is being administered in Bhubaneswar, while it is Covishield in

the rest of the state. More than 6,000 people have been vaccinated against Covid-19 at 'man-dis' in Punjab during the ongoing procurement of crops, according to an offi-

cial statement on Sunday. In addition to putting in

### TN imposes night curfew from April 20, full lockdown Sundays

R. MOHAN & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, APRIL 18

It's back to basics again in the fight against Covid-19 in Tamil Nadu. Curfew at night (10 pm to 4 am) and a total Sunday lockdown have been ordered to kick in from Tuesday, April 20. The decision to try and clamp down was taken after a lengthy meeting at the Chief Minister's residence on Sunday.

In a statement released late evening, the government spelt out the measures it will be putting in place to try and stem the tide of the Coronavirus that has been infecting close to 8,000 people a day in its second wave before exploding past the 10,000-mark

**STALIN URGES MODI TO SUPPLY 20L** DOSES OF VACCINE FOR TAMIL NADU

Chennai, April 18: DMK president M.K. Stalin on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to direct officials to send 20 lakh Covid-19 vaccine doses "requisitioned" by the Tamil Nadu govern-ment immediately and ensure supplies commensurate with the state's population.

of rapid In view increase in the number of people getting infected by

caseload to 9.91 lakh and

total fatalities to 13,113.

on Sunday when 10,723 new cases pushed the Covid-19, 'universal vaccination' is the need of the hour to protect lives, the DMK chief said in a letter to the Prime Minister and appealed to him to "take a policy decision swiftly over it

Tamil Nadu would need more vaccine doses than allotted now to accomplish effective vaccinations, break the cycle of infection and flatten the curve, he said.

The night curfew will be total with autos and taxis also banned. In normal times, autos and taxis are

expected to ply only for medical emergencies and to serve train and air travel passengers. There will be strict SoPs on public transport on working days. State Board exams for Class 12 have also been postponed and classes can be held only online and summer camps are banned.

Inter-district and interstate transport will not be allowed either and only persons driving in an emergency will be allowed on the road. Of course, essential services like the carrying of milk and making newspaper deliveries and hospital emergency service vehicles will be allowed Transportation of petrol, diesel and LPG will also be

### MP: Row over death of 10 in govt hospital

CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, APRIL 18

Ten Covid-19 patients died reportedly due to lack of oxygen in a gov-ernment hospital in Madhya Pradesh, trigger-ing on outerw

ing an outery.

The incident took place in the medical college hospital in Shahdol late on Saturday night.

While six potions died

While six patients died around midnight on Saturday, four others passed away in the early morning.

"Six people admitted in the ICU died last night. The deaths were not due to lack of oxygen. There were 62 patients in the ICU. Overall, there were 255 Covid-19 patients in the Covid hospital last night. Out of them, 155 were on oxygen", Milind Shiralkar, dean of the medical college hospital

said on Sunday.

The hospital has its own oxygen plant. He, however, said the

oxygen pressure was going down in the system since Saturday evening. He has reported the matter to the local administration and sought liquid oxygen pillars to resume

however, claimed some patients in the ICU were seen gasping for oxygen when the pressure in the oxygen supply system had gone down.

oxygen supply to the sys-

tem. However, no provision of liquid oxygen pillars was made till two in the

Oxygen was supplied to the patients through oxygen cylinders, he added. The dean said a probe was ordered into the inci-

Kin of the deceased, however, claimed some patients in the ICU were seen gasping for oxygen when the pressure in the oxygen supply system

had gone down. "I watched my brother dying due to lack of oxy-gen in the ICU", Ravi Kumar Jaiswal whose brother was admitted in the ICU told visiting

reporters.
State medical education minister Vishwas Sarang denied that lack of oxy gen had caused the death of ten Covid-19 patients in Shahdol medical college hospital.

### 14-day quarantine must for Kumbh mela returnees

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC with agency inputs **BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 18** 

Apparently worried over the sudden surge in Covid-19 cases across Odisha and Delhi, the state governments on Sunday made 14-day quar-antine mandatory for Kumbh Mela returnees.

Several thousands of people, most of them from western Odisha, had visited Kumbh mela at Uttarakhand.

"The whole country is number cases. Spurt in the numper of cases in the neighbouring states specially Chhattisgarh is affecting the border districts of Odisha," said director of public health Niranjan Mishra.

"As Kumbh mela has ended, it is expected that many participants will may worsen the situation. A list of the returnees has been prepared and it has been sent to all the district administrations. All the returnees have to stay in compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Even the quarantine period is mandatory for the returnees with Covid-19 negative certificates,' said Mishra.

"If situation gets out of control in these states, the migratory Odias working there will be forced to return to the state. Odisha government is preparing a master plan to deal with any kind of eventualities," added Mishra.

Meanwhile, Delhi residents who have visited the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar or are planning to do so will have to undergo compulsory 14day home quarantine on their return and upload their details on an official

Management Disaster Authority said in an

The order issued on Saturday said those who visited Kumbh from 4 April onwards or those who plan to do so till end of the religious congrega-tion at Haridwar on April 30 will have to upload their personal details, ID proof and dates of departure and arrival back to Delhi at the website www.delhi.gov.in.

"All residents of Delhi who have visited or are going to visitKumbh 2021 witnessing a surge in the at Haridwar, shall be number of Covid-19 required to compulsory home quarantine themarrival to Delhi," said the order issued by Vijay Dev, chief secretary and chairperson on executive committee of DDMA.

If a person returning from Haridwar Kumbh fails to upload his particulars on the Delhi governreturn to the state and it ment portal, he will be sent to institutional quarantine centre for 14 days by district magistrates concerned, the order said.

Violators of the DDMA order will be liable to be proceeded against under the Disaster Management Act 2005 and other legal provisions, it added.
A total of 1,701 people

had tested positive for Covid-19 in the Haridwar Kumbh Mela area from April 10 to 14 confirming fears that one of the world's largest religious gatherings may contribute further to the rapid rise in Coronavirus

A majority of the 48.51 lakh people who took part in the last two royal baths (shahi snan) held on the occasion of Somwati Amavasya on April 12 and Mesh Sankranti on April 14 were seen openly violating norms like wearing of face masks and social

SEVERE | SHORTAGE | Gujarat reported 10,340 new Covid-19 cases and 110 deaths on Sunday

### Guj Dy CM admits shortage of beds, health infra

Gujarat deputy chief min-Nitin Patel on Sunday admitted that the present requirement of beds and other healthcare facilities in the wake of the spike in Coronavirus cases is more than the administrations'

capacity. Patel, who handles portfolio, said the state governhealth ment is adding more facilities and beds at regular intervals to accomodate

Ahmedabad, April 18: more patients, it fell short of demand.

"Over 9,000 new Coronavirus cases are emerging Gujarat everyday. Though we are adding new facilities and beds at regular intervals, it falls short against the demand as the inflow of Coronavirus patients is much higher," Patel told reporters at civil hospital campus here.

"Requirement for beds and other healthcare facilities in the present situation is higher than the

health department and administration's capacity. In view of the spike in cases, we are adding more beds to accommodate the

patients," he said. Commenting on the long queue of ambulances car-Coronavirus patients outside the civil ĥospital, Patel said it is the government's obligation to save each and every patient turned away by

other hospitals. "Long queues happen because other hospitals

refuse to admit patients. Such patients then come to us for treatment. Such queues are not a pleasant sight, but it is our obligation to save each and every patient. Till they are admitted in the hospital, till they are in ambulance, we try to keep them alive by giving oxygen," he added. Gujarat reported 10,340 cases and 110 deaths on Sunday, the highest oneday case count and death toll for the state since the pandemic began.



A Covid patient receives primary treatment outside Kanpur LLR Hospital in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday. -PTI

**HIGHEST DAILY** 

**SPIKE OF 6,000** 

Islamabad, April 18:

Pakistan on Sunday reported its highest sin-

gle-day Coronavirus spike

this year with over 6,000

new cases and about 149

deaths, as the country

struggled to speed up its vaccination programme.
The previous highest

surge was recorded last

year on June 20 when the

country reported 6,825

infections and 153 deaths.

The country on Sunday reported 6,127 new cases,

pushing the country's

infection tally to 756,285.

The death toll rose to

16,243 with 149 more fatalities. The government announced that it will

start vaccinating people

in the 50-59 age group from April 21. -PTI

**SUNDAY BLESSING** 

Vatican City, April 18:

Pope Francis says he is

happy to be back greeting the faithful in St Peter's Square for his traditional

Sunday noon blessing aft-

er weeks of lockdown me-

asures. Italy later this

month will start gradually

lifting some anti-pandem-

ic restrictions, allowing,

for example, outdoor din-

ing at cafes and restau-

rants in areas of the coun-

try where the Covid-19

outbreak has been show-

ing signs of improvement.

A couple of hundred

people, including nuns

and families, standing a

safe distance apart in the

vast square, turned out to

see the pope speak from a

window of the Apostolic

POPE BACK TO

**IN-PERSON** 

**CASES IN PAK** 

IN BRIEF

#### **Afghan mosque** hit kills eight

Jalalabad, Afghanistan, April 18: Eight members of the same family were gunned down in an attack on a mosque in eastern Afghanistan, officials said Sunday. The shooting happened on Saturday night in the city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province, and was believed to be over a land dispute, the province's governor Zaiulhaq Amarkhil said.

Five brothers and three of their male cousins were killed. The incident is under investigation but initial information shows a land dispute has caused the incident," Amarkhil said. Fareed Khan, a spokesman for Nangarhar police, confirmed the attack.

#### 4 cops sprayed, hospitalised

Sacramento (US), April 18: Four Sacramento police officers were hospitalised with injuries after they were sprayed with a liquid irritant during protests Saturday night, police

told KCRA TV. The demonstrators had gathered at the state Capitol down-town to protest the police shooting deaths of Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center, Minnes ota, and Adam Toledo in Chicago. Protesters met at the Capitol Rose Garden after 8 p.m. and began marching around the downtown area later in the night, KCRA reported.

Demonstrators briefly sat in the streets in the Lavender Heights area before marching back toward the Capitol. The protest ended about 11 p.m.

#### Syria prez poll on May 26

Damascus, April 18: (AP) Syria's parliament speaker announced Sunday that presidential elections in the warravaged country will be held on May 26.

Speaker Hammoud Sabbagh said the window for nominations will be open for 10 days starting Monday. Syrians abroad will vote May 20, he said. The election is widely expected to give President Bashar Assad a fourth seven-

It is unclear whether any candidates will run against him but any such runs would be symbolic.

The United States last month warned Assad that the Biden administration will not recognise the result of its presidential election unless the voting is free, fair, supervised by the United Nations and represents

all of Syrian society.
Syria has been in the throes of civil war since 2011.

#### **JIHADISTS KILL FIVE NIGERIAN SOLDIERS**

Kano, Nigeria, April 18: Five Nigerian soldiers were killed, four injured and dozens missing when IS-aligned iihadists attacked a military base in northeast Nigeria's Borno state, two military officers told AFP Saturday.

Fighters from the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) on Friday dislodged troops from a base in Kamuya village, 35 kilometres (22 miles) from regional district

Biu after a gunfight. "The terrorists killed five soldiers and injured four others in the attack on the Kamuya base," a military officer told AFP. The insurgents sacked the base, forcing troops to withdraw in disarray, said a second military officer, who gave the same toll.

"So far 41 troops have returned while 58 are still missing and are presumed to have escaped the attack," said

the second military officer. Search and rescue operation was ongoing to "locate the missing soldiers", the officer added. Kamuya is the home village of Nigeria's former army chief Lieutenant-General Tukur Buratai which has been repeatedly targeted by jihadists, prompting the setting up of a base to end the attacks. ISWAP has focused on targeting military installa-tions and troops since it split from mainstream Boko Haram in 2016 and rose to become a

dominant group.

More than 20 people were killed following days of attacks on the town of Damasak this week where the militants burnt offices of international aid agencies and several homes. The attacks have forced 65,000 residents to flee into neighbouring Niger, according

The 12-year jihadist conflict has killed 36,000 people and displaced around two million from their homes in Nigeria's northeast. The violence has spread to neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

### Masks off as Israel vaunts virus win

Marks key milestone as the country vaccinates its way out of a Coronavirus nightmare

**Jerusalem, April 18:** Israelis stepped into the streets without masks on Sunday for the first time in a year, a key milestone as the country vaccinates its way out of a Coronavirus nightmare.

"It's very strange but it's very nice," said Eliana Gamulka, 26, after getting off a bus near the busy Jerusalem shopping boulevard of Jaffa Street and removing her face cover-'You can't pretend that you don't know anyone any more," she smiled.

With over half the population fully vaccinated in one of the world's fastest anti-Covid 19 inoculation campaigns, the health ministry announced on Thursday that masks would no longer be required in public outdoor spaces.

For Gamulka, a project manager, the good news came at the perfect time: just two weeks before her wedding. It will be "very nice to celebrate with everyone, now without masks," she said. "The pictures will be great! I'm very relieved. We can start living again.'

The vaccination of close to five million people has sent Israel's Coronavirus caseload tumbling from some 10,000 new infections per day as recently as mid-Jan., to around 200 cases a day. That has allowed the re-opening of schools, bars, restaurants and other indoor gatherings although masks are still required in indoor public

And even before Health Minister Yuli Edelstein's announcement came into effect, punters in the popular bars of Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market were mask-free and smiling on Thursday evening.

Yet on Sunday, office worker Ester Malka said she wasn't quite ready to let down her guard. "We're allowed, but I'm still afraid, I got used to (wearing a mask)," she said.

'I feel like it's part of my life. We'll see what hapnens when everyone has taken them off. If it goes well for a couple of months, then I'll remove mine."

Israel just months ago had the world's highest infection rate, a Coronavirus outbreak that left people dead among

But the Jewish state sent its coronavirus caseload tumbling after striking a deal for a vast stock of Pilzer/BioNTech jabs.

In exchange, it agreed to pay above market price and share data it gathers on the recipients, using one of the world's most



A woman walks along a closed vaccination centre in the city of Nice, France, on Sunday, amid the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. The centre closed due to a lack of candidates for the proposed vaccination.

sophisticated medical data

Since Dec., some 53 percent of Israel's 9.3 million people have received both doses of the jab, including population aged over 20.

As recently as Jan. it was registering 10,000 cases per day. But as the effects of mass vaccination kicked in, by March it was able to implement a gradual reopening.

"There's no better adver-tisement for Pfizer," said Shalom Yatzkan, a computer programmer who had been in quarantine after catching the virus.

"I was sick for three days, I had neck pains and felt weak," he said as he walked through central Jerusalem. "I just hope the new variants don't catch up with us."
Another Sunday land-

mark in Israel's exit from Coronavirus restrictions was the full resumption of the country's educational system, without restrictions on the numbers of pupils in classrooms.

Speaking at a Jerusalem high school, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed the "festivity" of the day for the schools, while warning of complacency. "We're not done with the Coronavirus yet, since it can return," he said, stressing the need to obtain "millions more vaccinations"

or later, we'll need another vaccination (dose)," he said. The situation in Israel is in stark contrast to the occupied West Bank.

### Canada records second case of rare blood clot

Toronto, April 18: Canadian health authorities said Saturday the country has recorded a second case of rare but serious blood linked AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine, but still recommend the shot for use.

The patient, who lives in the western province of Alberta and received a version of the AstraZeneca vaccine supplied by the Serum Institute of India, "has received treatment and is recovering," Canadian health authorities wrote on Twitter.

Canada reported its first case of blood clotting associated with low platelets on Tuesday in a Quebec

BLOOD CLOT formations linked to the Astra-Zeneca vaccine "remain very rare" and Canada still believes that the vaccine's benefits "outweigh the potential risks".

woman who received the same shot.

Blood clot formations linked to the AstraZeneca "remain very vaccine rare" and Canada still believes that the vaccine's benefits "outweigh the potential risks," Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada said. Canada's health au-

tor the use of all #COV-ID19 vaccines closely and examine and assess any new safety concerns."

At the end of March

would "continue to moni

Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunisation (NACI) recommended suspending the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine in people under the age of 55 while it evaluated the risks. Health Canada said that limiting the use of the vaccine to certain populations was not necessary for the moment.

After a slow start, Canada's vaccine campaign is gaining momen-

Alexei Navalny

#### 'ÇONSEQUENCES' IF NAVALNY DIES, WARNS U.S.

Washington, April 18: US National Advisor Jake Sullivan warned Sunday that Russia will face "consequences" if hunger-striking Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny dies.

Jailed opposition leader Navalny, President Vladimir Putin's most prominent opponent, was arrested in Jan. upon returning to Russia after recovering from a near-fatal poisoning attack he says was orc-

hestrated by Moscow.
"In terms of the specific measures we would undertake, we are looking at a variety of different costs that we would impose, and I'm not going to telegraph that publicly at this point," Sullivan told CNN.

"But we have communicated that there will be consequences if Mr. Navalny dies." The 44year-old Russian began a hunger strike on March 31 to demand proper medical treatment for back pain and numbness in his legs and hands.

On Saturday, Navalny's doctors said his health had rapidly deteriorated and demanded prison officials grant them immediate access.

'Our patient can die any minute," cardiologi-Yaroslav Ashikhmin said, pointing to Naval-ny's high potassium levels and saying he should be moved to intensive care. Both France and Germany on Sunday joined a growing interna-tional chorus of protest at Navalny's treatment.

Sullivan said the White House had told the Kremlin that Moscow would be "held accountable by the international community" for what hap-pens to Navalny while in Russian custody. US President Joe Biden said that Navalny's situation was "totally unfair." but he is facing criticism for not bringing up the ais sident's treatment in a phone call to Putin last week or being more forthright in his public comments.

### 80K Germans remembered

Berlin, April 18: Germany is paying tribute on Sunday to the nearly 80,000 people it has lost to the Coronavirus, even as the country struggles to get a grip on another rise in infections.

President Frank-Walter Steinmeier will lead memorial event with other top officials at Berlin's Konzerthaus concert hall. His office says it is also dedicated to the

bereaved who could not accompany their relatives when they died and for whom important and comforting rituals of mourning were not possible.

Germany's confirmed death toll from Covid-19 stood at 79,914 on Sunday, an increase of 67 over the previous day. That is the fifth-highest total in Europe, after the UK, Italy, Russia and France. Germany had a compar-

Washington, April 18: Influential American law-makers and Sikh commu-

nity leaders have sought a

thorough investigation into the mass shooting at a

FedEx facility in the US

state of Indiana as a potential hate crime that

killed eight people, including four Sikhs.

Indian-American Congr-

essman Raja Krishnamoo-

rthi on Saturday called for

anti-Sikh motivations in

the incident that took

place late Thursday night.

and Sikh communities

continue to mourn, and as

the rest of our country

mourns with them, inves-

tigators must also deter-

mine if this mass shooting

was a hate-motivated attack.

While the Indianapolis

investigation of potential

deaths in the pandemic's first phase, but saw much higher infection levels in the fall and winter. In Jan., more than 1,000 deaths per day were reported at times in the country of 83 million people.

atively small number of

Infections have increased again over the past two months as a more contafirst detected in Britain took hold. Germany has facilities.

reported 3.14 million cases since the pandemic began. Chancellor Angela Merkel is trying to get a bill through parliament that would mandate an emer-

gency brake in areas where there are more than 100 weekly new cases per 100,000 innabitants. The nationwide rate stood at 162 on Sunday. It would gious Coronavirus variant require the closure of stores, cultural and sports

### Sikhs seek probe into shooting ONE KILLED IN OMAHA MALL

### B'desh arrests hardline leader of Islamist group

of an Islamist group was on Sunday arrested in Bangladesh on charges of instigating deadly violence in the Muslim-majority country. A joint team of police and detectives raided an Islamic seminary in Mohammadpur area of the capital Dhaka on Sunday and arrested Hefazat-e-Islam Joint Secretary General Mamunul Haque, who has been in the limelight due to some recent controversies, officials said. Metropolitan Dhaka

Police (DMP) Joint Commissioner (Detective Branch) Mahbub Alam said that 47-year-old Haque was arrested around 12:30 pm. Teachers and students of the seminary initially staged protest and tried to obstruct the raid. However, Haque was detained from a room on the first floor of the building, officials said. Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Deputy Commissioner Harun-ur-Rashid said that Hague and other Hefazat leaders had been accused in several cases, including attacks on law enforcers and police stations and vandalism. These cases

are being investigated. He had been watched for some time now, said the senior officer. The Hefazat leader has been sued in several cases filed over violence in Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in Dhaka and following his confinement with a woman at the Sonargaon reso-

Dhaka, April 18: An A joint team of police influential hardline cleric and detectives raided an Islamic seminary in Mohammadpur area of the capital Dhaka on Sunday and arrested Hefazat-e-Islam Joint **Secretary General** Mamunul Haque, who has been in the limelight due to some recent controversies, officials said.

> TEACHERS AND students of the seminary initially staged protest and tried to obstruct the raid. Haque was detained from a room on the first floor of the building, officials said.

HAOUE AND other Hefazat leaders had been accused in several cases, including attacks on law enforcers and police stations and van-

rt. DB officials said Haque is also an accused in a number of cases. Earlier, the Hefazat

leader made the headlines by his controversial remarks regarding sculptures. He is also accused of threatening the government in the past. In Nov. last year, he demanded an immediate halt to the installation of a sculpture of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the capital's Dholaipar. The Islamist group is yet to issue any statement over Haque's arrest but one of

anonymity said the group planned to face the cases constituting a strong lawyers' panel.
Dozens of Hefazat lead-

ers and activists have been arrested in recent weeks after the hardline Islamist group waged anti-government protests. Officials said Haque and fellow Hefazat leaders were likely to be charged for instigating violence during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bangladesh tour last month and ruthless demonstrations in 2013 when several other people were killed as the group was demanding a blasphemy law. Seventeen people were killed and scores injured in violence in different parts of Bangladesh during the prote-

sts in late March. Meanwhile, a local court in Dhaka on Sunday pla-ced Hefazat-e-Islam Dhaka city President Junayed Al Habib and its Assistant Secretary General Jalal Uddin on seven-day Uddin on seven-day remand each in a case lodged over the group's 2013 violence in the capital. Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Shahinur Rahman passed the order as police produced them before the court and pleaded to place them on 10-day remand in the case lodged with the capital's Paltan police station. Separate units of police arrested Junayed from the capital's Baridhara area and Jalal from the Mohammadpur

area on Saturday.

Washington, April 18: Nasa's Ingenuity Mars Helicopter could make its

mini-helicopter's trip will mark the firstever powered, controlled flight on another planet. and will help Nasa reap invaluable data about the conditions on Mars.

'Nasa is targeting no earlier than Monday, April

Wisconsin shooting claims three lives

Kenosha, April 18: A shooting at a tavern in Wisconsin killed three people and seriously injured two others early Sunday, a sheriff's department offi-

cial said. The shooting happened at Somers House Tavern in the Village of Somers, Kenosha County Sgt. David Wright said. The suspected shooter was not immediately captured. Wright said the shooting appeared to be a "targeted and isolated incident," and authorities didn't believe the general public was in danger.

ing to determine the identities of the people who died. The two people who were wounded were taken to area hospitals, Wright said. The road leading up to the tavern remained closed early Sunday as officials investigated the latest in a string of recent shootings. Last month, four people were killed at an office shooting in California, eight people were fatally shot at massage

Officials were still workbusinesses in the Atlanta area, and 10 died in gunwere fired. fire at a supermarket in

**SHOOTING** Omaha (US), April 18: A shooting at a Nebraska mall left one person dead and another wounded as terrified shoppers ran for cover. Authorities believe the shooting at Westroads Mall in Omaha was an isolated incident, and not a random attack. Police determined the suspects had fled the scene after searching the mall, according to Omaha police Lt. Neal Bonacci. Officers

first gave the "all clear" around 1 p.m. — about an hour after multiple shots

**Mission equal to Wright Brothers' 1903 flight** 

Boulder, Colorado. — AF

### Nasa Mars copter flight 'today'

first flight over the Red Planet as soon as Monday, the US space agency reported, following a delay of more than a week due to a possible technical issue.

Ingenuity Mars Helicoreported Saturday. autonomous

that feat.

pter," the space agency Data will return to Earth "a few hours following the autonomous flight,"

19, for the first flight of its

A PIECE of fabric

from that plane has

Ingenuity in honour of

been tucked inside

which would take off at approximately 3:30 am (0730 GMT), Nasa said. Ingenuity's first trip was

initially set for last Sunday, but was delayed after a potential issue emerged during a high-speed test of the fourpound (1.8 kilogram) helicopter's rotors.

Nasa calls the unprecedented helicopter opera-tion highly risky: The flight is a challenge because the air on Mars is so thin — less than one percent of the pressure of Earth's atmosphere.

The helicopter arrived on Mars attached to the underside Perseverance rover, which

touched February 18. After the helicopter's flight, Ingenuity will send Perseverance technical data on what it has done, and that information will be transmitted back to Earth.

The helicopter mission is be the equivalent on Mars of the first powered flight on Earth — by the Wright brothers in 1903 in Hawk, Carolina. A piece of fabric from that plane has been tucked inside Ingenuity in honour of that feat.

-AFP











### **Chronicle**

19 APRIL 2021

### Vital shortages hit India amid Covid's 2nd wave

rime Minister Narendra Modi's call to the people concerned to use the entire national capacity in the production of vaccines against Covid-19 comes at a time when poor anticipation and planning coupled with a lackadaisical approach of the government he heads have started having a telling impact on the pandemic situation in the country. For more than a year, the world has been under the grip of the fear the micro-organism has unleashed, but the nation which the government and the Prime Minister have been tom-tomming as the pharmaceutical hub of the world is now facing a shortage of everything that the healthcare workers need to fight the virus and save lives — hospital beds, antiviral life-saving drugs, vaccine, oxygen, intensive care units and ventilators. This, despite the fact that the government has set up a dedicated fund — PM-Cares to promote initiatives to fight the virus.

The nation has no idea whether the government was, like most people in India, thinking if the pandemic had vanished, given the very little effort it was seen to be taking to face an exigency like the one we are facing now. There was little or no extra investment made to augment healthcare infrastructure in the country in the

invest in health infrastructure, ban gatherstate or otherwise, to enforce Covid-appropriate behaviour

interregnum or to step up production capacities **The government must** of the same materials, which we now face a shortage of. That the government has learnt little from the past is reflected from the fact that even the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the national trade ings and work with union belonging to the Sangh Parivar to which every institution, Mr Modi's BJP belongs, has cautioned about the reverse migration of guest workers from the towns and cities to the villages, in anticipation of another nationwide lockdown. It is stating the obvious that the government did not show as much alacrity as the guest workers did about

planning for the future in the face of a pandemic attack. It must not also go unsaid that the government had been busy plucking the low hanging fruits from the beginning of the corona fight. It started with the premature show of gratitude to the healthcare fraternity even before they started the real fight. Even the Indian Air force was dragged into the farce of showering flower petals on them from the skies when, on earth, they were fighting the virus with their back to the wall, with little availability of infrastructure and consumables. The government missed no chance to advertise the world's largest vaccination programme with little idea about the number of people it will have to vaccinate or the quantity of vaccine it would require or how to produce and distribute the same. Today, the vaccine manufacturers are running pillar to post seeking financial help to augment production capacity but the government does not seem to understand it at all; we heard no firm and immediate commitment from the government till

But it's not all lost as yet — the government must launch massive investment programmes in healthcare infrastructure, put its foot down firmly and ban all social, religious and political gatherings that can turn superspreaders, and work with every institution, state or otherwise, to enforce Covid-appropriate behaviour. Every rupee, every action and every moment count now.

#### Don't recoil from scrutiny

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, in a majority vote, has expressed concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in India. It has pointed out that "human rights defenders and journalists in the country lack a safe working environment" and commented on "concerns about the difficult situation faced by Indian women and minority groups, caste-based discrimination". This could not have come as sweet music to the ears of the rulers who seem convinced that vaccine diplomacy and a presence in Quad as a counterbalance to China in the difficult time of the pandemic proves that India enjoys a

pride of place in the international community.

The EU stance on India's recent human rights record only adds to concerns already expressed by US freedom watchdogs and the UN. While an ostrich-like posture is easy enough to adapt on foreign perceptions of what ails Indian democracy now, a moment's reflection might show what the reality is. Dispassionate observers have signalled that India has been guilty of demonising its minorities, subverting institutions, intimidating journalists and social media executives, criminalising dissent and whimsically controlling the Internet. The incarceration of so many who opposed the CAA and the harsh treatment meted out to those supporting the months-long farmers' protest by lending their voices to global social media criticism are symptomatic of contempt for a dissenting opinion, be it from celebrities, academics and media-persons.

It is paradoxical that while we seem to crave international attention and pat our the back when we come in for praise ny. Beyond reflection, there is a need to accept criticism, understand the reasons why and act on it to move away from an undemocratic path. Corrective action can begin even in a small way by looking first at why a few elderly academics and activists are in prison for interminable periods without even getting a trial, which in the Indian system inflicts inordinate delays and is the equivalent of extended imprisonment. It is no democracy which shows no inclination to support the right to dissent and, on the contrary, throttles it.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER

K. Sudhakar

**DECCAN CHRONICLE** offices are located at:

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

Visakhanatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony,

Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285 Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph. 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-

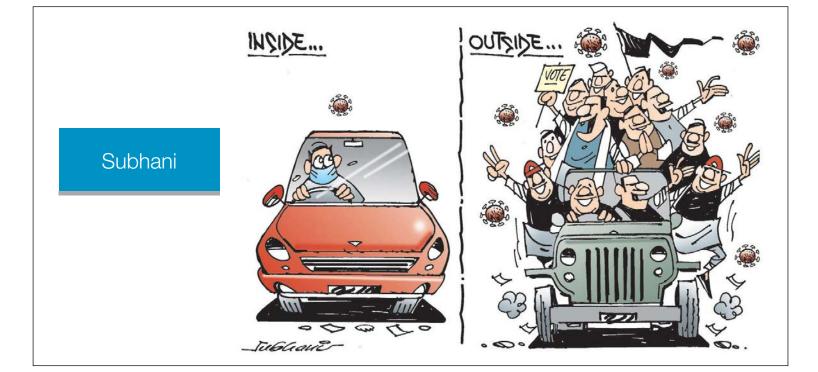
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph. 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904

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

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

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

Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08



### Ideology or competence: What do the voters want?



Sanjaya Baru

Sanjayovacha

here are many Murphy's Law. The most popular one states that if something can go wrong, it will. Among the many versions the oldest one is attributed to a British merchant, engineer and owner of ships, Alfred Holt, who told his fellow engineers in 1877: "It is found that anything that can go wrong at sea generally does go wrong sooner or later." That proposition became popular as Murphy's Law when an American aerospace engineer, Edward declared: "Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong." From the sea to space, engineers devised systems that could be as failsafe as possi-

forewarned Murphy's Law. As an analyst of Indian political, economic, social and governance systems I have long held the view that in India Murphy's works with a ning can go wrong, invariably goes wrong. The unfortunate downside to that reality is that most Indians have come to accept a certain degree of incompetence in most systems. Given the generally high level of citizens' tolerance for incompetence, it rarely becomes

an election issue. Politicians are voted in and voted out for a variety of reasons, ranging from their charisma, caste, community, power and so on, but rarely have they been voted out for incompetence. The Indian voter has come to live with power outages, limited access to drinking water, uncollected garbage in the neighbourhood, inade-quate law and order, difficulty in securing access to education and healthcare, and so on. Rarely have any of these become issues that determine the outcome of elections. I cannot recall the last time a politician went to the polls campaigning on a platform of competence, rather than loyalty or grievance based on caste, community or some other

So, why should it surprise anyone that the voter has come to terms with the incompetent management of the Covid-19 pandemic and that this is not a defining issue in the ongoing elections to state legislatures? Caste and commu-nal identity, allegations of corruption and nepotism seem to ignite political passions more during elections than the competence or incompetence of con-tending candidates in handling a pandemic.

India is no exception. Consider the fact that in the United States, Donald Trump secured more votes in the 2020 election compared to the 2016 election even though every medical professional in the United States will vouch for the tion's response to the Covid-19 pandemic was incompetent".

Trump's incompetence did not defeat him. The unity of non-white voters finally

For all his continued

popularity, at least as

shown in the opinion polls, the fact is that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been at the head of an incompetent administrative response to the pandemic. One can argue about the relative responsibility of the Centre and the state governments and which of the states have responded more competently, one can differ on how one would define competence, but what is very clear is that the question of competence or incompetence in governmental response to the pandemic has not yet become a political issue. In part this could be because, as the old adage

sab nangey hain. In short, all political parties in government across different states have been equally guilty of an incompetent response. Many public health experts believe Kerala is an exception, but it is interesting that the Left Front's competence in dealing with the pandemic has not been an overt political issue in the recent elections.

As more and more evidence mounts up of administrative and political incompetence in dealing with the pandemic, it remains to be seen if Indian voters will just shrug their shoulders, throw up their hands, point to the gods above and quote Murphy's Law. Or, will they hold their elected representatives and governments accountable? In the last two years more doctors and nurses have died fighting the pandemic than soldiers in fighting the nation's enemies. While politicians become all patriotic when it comes to the death of soldiers and demand votes in the name of nationalism, why don't the deaths caused by incompetence stir voters' emotions? There have been many

examples of competent crisis management in the past and they stand to the present incompetence in dealing with the pandemic. As chief minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi took great pride, and rightly so, in his govern-ment's handling of the Kutch earthquake in 2001. Why has the same Gujarat state been so incompetent in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic? Will Gujarat's voters now punish their government for its incompetence?

Covid-19 mismanagement reveals either administrative incompetence or the fear of professionals to speak their mind to politicians in power. Either way, the citizen pays the price.

The Indian administrative system was built on the assumption that a meritocratic and technocratic bureaucracy would compensate for the lack of experience in governance of an elected political leadership. This assumption worked as long as the civil service was willing to speak its mind and politicians in power were willing to listen to them. When civil servants and professionals in government are either scared to speak their mind or have little to contribute and politicians imagine they know everything on anything, one ends up with

incompetent response to administrative challenges. For all its lack of democracy, the Chinese Communist Party has created an internal merit-based bureaucracy that allows political leaders to rise to the top only after proving their administrative and governance credentials at every step of the power ladder. The Chinese people have sacrificed democracy at the altar of meritocracy and the Communist Party of China has for long functioned like the Indian Administrative Service, creating a "mandarinate", so to speak. This has made China's response to Covid-19 crisis more pro-

fessionally competent. In India political power and administrative competence has widened with an increasing number of elected politicians taking charge of day-to-day functioning of the government and an increasing number of civil servants either abdicating their responsibilities or doing the bidding of politicians in office without consideration for the merits of a policy or a decision. All this gets revealed in times of a crisis. Covid-19 mismanagement reveals either administrative incompetence or the fear of profes sionals to speak their mind to politicians in power. Either way, the citizen pays the price.

The writer is an economist, a best-selling author and former adviser to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. His latest book is India's Power Elite: Class, Caste and a Cultural Revolution.

#### **LETTERS**

#### **TIRUPATI BYPOLL**

The TD is bereft of ideas to defeat the YSRC. Hence, as is its wont, the leadership of TD has apparently concocted stories of poll irregularities. In fact, given an opportunity, the TD would have resorted to all those 'things' in any election. The voter turnout was too low because of Covid. The YSRC, having swept local body polls, is confident and need not resort to any irregularities

**Govardhana Myneedu** Vijayawada

#### **VACCINE DEATHS**

There must be a proper investiga-tion and research into all deaths after Covid vaccination, however negligible the number may be. They should not be declared "mere coincidence" without it being ruled out beyond a reasonable doubt. No sooner than a death occurs after inoculation, the authorities deny the role of vaccine for the unfortunate event. To avoid fomenting any vaccine hesitance among masses, the authorities tend to hasten in declaring the vaccine as safe, which is unscien-tific. Actor Vivek's case is the per-fect example. He was reported to have been vaccinated on Thursday and unfortunately got a massive heart attack the next day and succumbed. The thrombotic phenomena is one of the adverse effects of Covishield, though a rarity, for which some European countries are worried. When a heart attack is resultant effect of thrombosis, e rationale ties to rule it out as the cause in this case?

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao



BOMBAY, APRIL. 18 Air India's first Boeing 747, Emperor Ashoka arrived here this morning on its delivery flight to the tumultous welcome of thousands of citizens at Bombay airport led by the airline Chairman J.R.D. Tata and State Governor Ali Yavar Jung.

The quiet giant 346-seater piloted by Capt. D. Bose and escorted by two IAF MIGS in formation flight and another MIG in the lead, touched down on the Bombay airport at 8.26 a.m.

Anand K. Sahay Far & Near



The idea behind capturing power in any kind of way: fair or foul

he BJP may or may not win the Assembly elections in Assam. In West Bengal, its chances may be considered to be less bright than in Assam on account of the structural makeup of the state, notwithstanding the pre-Partition communal politics rampant in undivided Bengal. But winning a poll fair and square is not the metric any longer. We have seen popular verdicts being overturned in state after state to the BJP's benefit.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his principal operative, Union home minister Amit Shah, the saffron party's new *sutra* is to form a government in a state through any means. The capture of power is evidently crucial for erecting a scaffolding — a formal platform — for the systematic spread of ideas in the public realm through unrestrained heavyduty propaganda, the rapid dissemination of communal politics through enabling instruments of State power (the police and the bureaucracy), and the unleashing of policy with a communal slant.

The last indubitably means going out of the way to disadvantage and

"other" those who are not the majority, leading to the making of such patently unjust policies — which defy the idea of equality before the law the new normal in a sharp deviation from the political tradition whose roots were laid over 70 years ago.

The Westminster system of party politics, which is enshrined in our Constitution, has been stood on its head in the post-Atal Behari Vajpayee BJP. When the BJP fails to bag the numbers in an election, it simply sets up a trade mart in which MLAs become the commodity. The gomashtas, or middlemen, and auctioneers

are out in strength.

When elected legislators on party tickets other than BJP fail to take the bait (offered in the form of incentives), the punitive element kicks in and various agencies of the Central government raid and begin so-called investigations against the BJP's opponents. The law courts simply watch helplessly. The Election Commission has little to say. The governors of various states frequently don the garb of apparatchiks. The Speaker is happy to receive instructions remotely.

The RSS is the ideological mentor of

the BJP and several dozen allied organisations that are the repository of the notion of the "Hindu Rashtra (the idea that the land mass of India in its present political geography as well as in its mythological connotation is the natural home of the Hindus of

the world, where all others must

resign themselves to the fate of being

less equal). The RSS lays claims to being exalted. Its propagandists and adherents have prided themselves on being seekers of a higher morality and ethical conduct in the family, society, and the "nation", the last being an expression which in its most recent manifestation in India has been so thoroughly weaponised as to cause unease among "citizens" — namely, those Indians who are not swayed by their religious identity alone in the running of public affairs and policymaking.

It was expected that the self-appointed custodians of the "culture" of the Hindus would object to such weaponisation in the interest of political hygiene and harmony in society. They have not done so.

When after an election, newly elected MLAs of non-BJP parties are pursued with serious intent to switch sides so that the BJP may unfairly get to form the government and make a mockery of the people who voted for them and against the BJP, a small hint from the top levels of the RSS leadership may have done wonders. It would have worked as a discouraging factor. But the RSS top brass have little to say. The inference is that they approve of dishonourable conduct in the interest of making an ideological conquest.

Whether it is an election to a panchayat, a district board, a trade union, a social club, a professional association — and not just the state or national legislature — the BJP uses every trick in the book to "capture" the body. Only then can it pass rules, regulations, laws, to influence civil society as well as the government.

More, only then does it gain the formal legitimacy and the authority to direct the making of budgets and play the lead hand in the disbursal of funds to its favourite schemes and outfits. The stamp of approval is thus gained to promote unworthy communal agendas. The general media tomtoms this, rather than interrogate the

Awestruck by the energy brought to bear by the BJP to win all elections, big or small, some commentators have urged other parties to emulate the saffron party's methods. This is misconceived advice. It leaves out of account the fundamental proposition — that the BJP is unlike any other party that we know.

It sanctions the use of majoritarian force (which may be unseen), rather than the commonly understood constitutional methods. Ordinary civil society sometimes transforms into uncivil society under its gaze. This is a phenomenon that is anathema to a democratic order.

In both Assam and West Bengal, the political actors in the fray, as well as the general public, need to remain alert to the "capture" and "takeover" syndrome. A successful takeover bid may be expected to give rise to the unbridled spread of communal fires in (fragile) border states. The Congress and the Left parties have given little evidence of understanding the parallelogram of forces at work, especially in West Bengal. They may live to rue the











# quick

**INDICATORS** 48,832.03 0.06 Nifty 50 14,617.90 0.25 S&P 500\* 4,185.47 0.36 Dollar (₹) 74.35 0.76 Pound Sterling (₹) 102.46 0.85 89.06 0.77 Gold (10gm)\* (₹) 46,431▼9 0.00 Brent crude (\$/bbl)\* 66.82 0.18 IN 10-Yr bond yield 6.088 -0.02 US 10-Yr T-bill yield\* 1.578 0.048 \* As of Friday/Saturday

#### Steel prices may take 2 yrs to cool down: JSPL MD

Steel prices might take at least two years to cool down as its demand is consistently increasing. In the current financial year, the demand for steel in India is also expected to exceed the production numbers, Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) managing director V. R. Sharma told PTI. While the demand in FY22 will be in the range of 140-150 million tonnes, the country's production is expected to be somewhere around 125 mt, he said.



### ■ Govt holds 93% stake in Pune-based bank, may sell 51% now **BoM seen as first selloff pick**

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

With the bank privatisation process gaining speed, state-owned lender Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged out to be the first strong candidate for the government's proposed disinvestment plan. Weighing in all options, both Niti Ayog and the finance ministry officials have already discussed the pros and cons of privatisation, a top finance ministry source

government is actively looking for ways to elicit strong interest from investors for staterun banks that are up for privatisation. Though we have shortlisted four public sector banks, initially we received huge response



investors for Bank of Maharashtra," the source

There is a wide media speculation that the four PSBs shortlisted are Bank

India, Indian Overseas and the Central Bank of India. It is also expected that the government is considering mid-sized or small banks for the first round of privatisation, and may later go with large banks for divestment. Bank

Maharashtra stock moved up nearly 70 per cent from mid-February when an agency report named the lender among the privatisation candidates. Last Tuesday, the BoM stock moved up nearly 20 per cent with high volumes on renewed market buzz about its privatisation.

Attempts made by Financial Chronicle to reach out to the bank's MD & CEO A.S. Rajeev proved futile. He had earlier told the media that BoM would aim at growing at 10 per cent per annum and that only Rs 1,000 crore loan book now against Rs 15,000 crore in 2016 were required to be restruc-

The government currently holds 93 per cent stake in the Pune-based BoM. Additionally, LIC holds 4 per cent. The remaining 3 per cent hold-

ing is with the public. The government is likely to divest 51 per cent in the current round and reap tion in the balance 42 per cent holding in later years.

As per a report by Denofwealth, Pune-based corporate giant Bajaj Group, which has a significant presence in the financial sector, could be a strong aspirant for the BoM buyout. Besides, two other corporates that are also reportedly throwing their hats into the ring are Tata Capital and Catholic Syrian Bank.

### Future's board approves debt recast plan

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, APRIL 18

Future Retail's board has approved a resolution plan to restructure the existing secured financial debt from the bankers. This has been permitted under a Resolution Framework for Covid-19 related stress announced by the Reserve Bank of India.

The resolution plan, already approved by the lenders, is subject to the approval of the expert committee under the chairmanship of K. V. Kamath.

The debt raised through the non-convertible deben-tures also will be restructured. The company has received the written consent of all the holders of the NCDs to amend the terms and conditions of the NCDs as per the resolution plan.

Debt from 28 banks and financial institutions, including working capital demand loans, term loans, cash credit, short term loans, NCDs, purchase bill discounting limits, other working capital loans and unpaid interest which became overdue will be restructured

According to the company, the pandemic has deeply impacted the longterm business viability and led to significant financial stress across the industries. "The debt burden has become disproportionate relative to the cash flow generated by the company owing to the multiple lockdowns since the pandemic surfaced, posing sig-

Madrid, April 18: Lionel

Messi scored twice, including a stunning solo

goal, as Barcelona blew

away Athletic Bilbao to

win the Copa del Rey on

Saturday, consigning their

Messi lifts in Barcelona

colours but if this was to

be a final flourish, the 33year-old crafted a fitting farewell. "It's very special

to be captain of this team

where I have spent my

whole life and very special

to be able to lift this cup,'

His first goal, and

Barca's third, started with

the Argentinian in his

own half before a charg-

ing run down the right

and a surge forward into

the penalty area gave him

the chance for a simple

With the club's new pres-

ident Joan Laporta in the

crowd, Ronald Koeman's

first title as Barcelona

coach should also signifi-

cantly boost his chances of

in charge

astating best.

Messi said.

remaining



nificant financial stability Hence, the restructuring of the debt is crucial and essential," it said in a stock exchange filing.

As per the plan, repayment of short term loans, term loans, NCDs, overdue working capital loans (converted into Working Capital Term Loans) will be extended up to a maximum of two years. Interest during the moratorium period between March 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021 shall be converted into Funded Interest Term Loan, which shall be payable by December 2021. Cash Credit will be continued at a reduced level based on bank assessment.

All securities created on the company's assets shall continue to operate in favour of the lenders in the ranks assigned originally, exception being extension of charge on movable fixed assets being extended to working capital consortium lenders as a part of the restructuring. All nenal interest and charges, default premiums, processing fees unpaid since March 2020 to implementation date will be waived off fully.

### Global jewellery brands fear inventory delay

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, APRIL 18

After a robust March quarter, international jewellery brands are now worried about "inventory delay" due to the surge in Covid-19 cases in India. They fear the delays could impact their full year

Jewellers, in its quarterly update, said that it has evaluated the impact of inventory delays related to recent Covid-19 surges in India and other parts of

"At this time, the company believes it has mitigat-

impacts; however, if the duration and magnitude of these inventory slow-downs intensify, there could be future negative impacts on the company's full year guidance," Signet cautioned.

Signet had posted stronger-than-expected conversion and average ticket values in the first quarter and also upped its full-year revenue guid-

Similarly, French luxury goods Louis Vuitton's watches and jewellery division recorded revenue growth of 138 per cent in the March quarter com-



pared to the same quarter of 2020 and 80 per cent compared to that of 2019. Russian diamond miner Alrosa too saw demand from end consumers for diamond jewellery showing robust growth across

key markets like the US and China owing to Valentine's Day and Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year and improved consumer senti-

This robust demand had reflected in the March exports of cut and polished diamonds, which grew 123.55 per cent compared to the same month

However, chances of disruption in exports cannot be dismissed. Bharat Diamond Bourse was closed in the first week of April due to rising Covid cases in Mumbai. "BDB has been closed and if Mumbai port is also

closed, then it can affect the exports," said Prakash Pincha, chairman, eastern region, Gems and Export Jewellery Council. Promotion frequency of

flights too can hit exports. According to an indus-try insider, the diamond certification process is causing the current delay in shipments and the backlog is swelling owing to fewer staff.

Part of the labour force in Surat's polishing units also have gone to their hometown to leave their family back there, fearing a lock-down, said Dinesh Navdiya of the GJEPC.

### GAMES

SHORT TAKES

#### **Srihari creates** national record

Tashkent: Ace Indian swimmer Srihari Natarai created a national record in 50m backstroke while winning his second gold of the Uzbekistan Open Championship here. The 20-year-old clocked 25.11 seconds to bag the top prize in the FINA-accredited Olympic qualifying event on

Saturday night. Indian swimmers enjoyed a rich haul of 29 medals - 18 gold, seven silver and four bronze - in the meet.

It was Srihari's third national record in two days as the Bengaluru swimmer had rewritten the national marks twice in 100m backstroke, his pet event, earlier this week. — PTI

#### **Krishna Poonia**

tests covid positive

New Delhi: Delhi Commonwealth Games gold medallist and sitting Rajasthan MLA Krishna Poonia on Sunday tested positive for Covid-19 and is undergoing treatment at a Jaipur hospital. The 43-vear-old Krishna, who became the first Indian woman to bag an individual gold in the CWG by winning the discus throw event in 2010, is now admitted at the Raiasthan University of Health Sciences hospital. "She had cough and mild fever and she took a test on Saturday but the virus could not be detected. Today, we went to RHUS and doctors there took a CT scan from which it was diagnosed for Covid-19," her husband Virender Poonia said. - PTI

#### **Federer confirms**

**French Open entry** Paris: Roger Federer confirmed

Sunday that he will play the French Open at Roland Garros this year having skipped the 2020 edition to recover from knee surgery. "Hi everyone! Happy to let you know that I will play Geneva and Paris. Until then I will use the time to train. Can't wait to play in Switzerland again," the 39year-old said on Twitter. Federer, a 20-time Grand Slam winner, captured Roland Garros for the only time in 2009. In March. Federer competed at the

Qatar Open in Doha, marking his

first tournament since the 2020

Australian Open. - AFP

### Nketiah saves Arsenal blushes

### Eddie scores last-gasp equaliser to earn a 1-1 draw against lowly Fulham

mer blow to Fulham's bid for Premier League survival as the Arsenal striker's last-gasp goal rescued 1-1 draw at the Emirates Stadium on Sunday. Mikel Arteta's side were

seconds away from a first ever home defeat against Fulham as they laboured to find a response to Josh Maja's second half penalty. But Nketiah pushed Fulham closer to relegation deep into stoppagetime when he tapped in after the visitors failed to

clear a corner. It was a major setback for third bottom Fulham, who are six points behind fourth bottom Burnley and fifth bottom Brighton with

just five games left. After losing their previous four matches, Fulham were on course to mark Scott Parker's 100th match in charge with a memo-

Instead, they slipped closer to an immediate return Championship.

Next up for Fulham is a west London derby at Saturday before a decisive clash with Burnley on May 8. Ninth placed Arsenal are

nine points adrift of the

top four and their best hope of reaching next season's Champions League is winning the Europa



Arsenal's Eddie Nketiah (right) scores against Fulham in an English Premier League match at the Emirates Stadium in London on Sunday.

Villarreal in the semifinals after cruising to a 4-0 victory at Slavia Prague in the quarter-final second leg on Thursday.

**FOR FULHAM** 

The Spaniard made five changes to the side that thrashed Slavia, with Gabriel Martinelli among those to come in as Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang absent with remained

malaria. Martinelli should have given Arsenal the lead

inside 40 seconds when he ran onto Alexandre Lacazette's pass and clipped his shot just wide. Martinelli threatened again with a low shot on the turn from Emile Smith Rowe's cross, but Alphonse Areola sprawled to his left

to make a good save. Arsenal thought they had taken the lead when Dani minute.

Ceballos looped his header past Areola from Hector Bellerin's cross.

But the Spaniard was denied his first Premier League goal after VAR ruled Bukayo Saka's toes were in an offside position in the build-up.

Saka hit the outside of the near post with a crossshot before Fulham received another helping hand from VAR in the 59th

#### **BLUES END CITY'S QUEST TO REACH FA CUP FINAL**

Chelsea ended Manchester City's quest for a historic quadruple of trophies as Hakim Ziyech's goal earned a 1-0 win to take the Blues into the FA Cup final on Saturday.

A damaging day for City also saw them lose Kevin De Bruyne to an ankle injury just over a week away from the League Cup final, where they face Tottenham, and the first leg of their Champions League semi-final against Paris Saint-Germain.

Chelsea were good value for another impressive win under Thomas Tuchel and will be favourites for the German's first silverware in English football when they face Leicester or Southampton May 15.

Tuchel could land an even bigger prize in the Champions League just months after replacing the sacked Frank Lampard in January.

His side showed they can get the better of City in what could be a dress rehearsal for the Champions League final should the English clubs see off PSG and Real Madrid in the last four.

Barcelona colours opponents to a second but if this was to be final defeat in two weeks. a final flourish, the The cup was won and 33-year-old crafted lost in a whirlwind 12 minutes in Seville, which saw a fitting farewell. Barca score four times to clinch an emphatic 4-0 vicbeyond the summer.
"To win a title is importory, with Messi at his dev-It remains to be seen if his seventh Copa del Rev admitted afterwards. triumph is the last trophy

Messi wins Copa

crown for Barca

tant for me," Koeman Yet Laporta was noticeably evasive when asked about Koeman's future.

"He is doing well," he

It remains to be

Copa del Rev

seen if his seventh

triumph is the last

trophy Messi lifts in

said. Koeman took over a team at rock bottom, humiliated by an historic loss to Bayern Munich and wounded by the attempts

of Messi to leave the club for free. But this 31st Copa del Rey success for the club is a testament to progress made and Koeman will hope it not only helps convince Messi to stay but gives Barca momentum

now in a neck-and-neck title race in La Liga. "Despite the changes at the club and the young players, at Barca you have

to always fight for trophies," Koeman said.

#### **VERSTAPPEN EMERGES ON TOP IN CHAOTIC IMOLA RACE**

Imola (Italy), April 18: Max Verstappen kept his cool to claim a chaotic rain-hit Emilia Romagna Grand Prix on Sunday as seven-time Formula Ŏne champion Lewis Hamilton recovered from a rare mistake to sneak in second. Red Bull driver Verstappen muscled past pole sitter Hamilton on the first corner at Imola to set up his impressive first win of the sea-

I surprised myself. We worked really hard to make that better. In these tricky conditions we did a great job," Verstappen said.

Lando Norris in a McLaren took third for the Briton's second successive podium ahead of Charles Leclerc for Ferrari. The outcome of a compelling second leg of the Formula One season confirmed Verstappen's stature as a formidable obstacle to Hamilton's quest for an unprecedented eighth drivers' crown. After winning the season-opener in Bahrain and putting in the fastest lap on Sunday Hamilton leads Verstappen by one point ahead of the Portuguese Grand Prix next time out.

### **FIVE INDIAN BOXERS ENTER QUARTERS OF YOUTH WORLDS**

New Delhi, April 18: Five Indian boxers advanced to the quarterfinals of the youth world championships for men and women after clinching comfortable victories in their last-16 stage bouts in Kielce, Poland.

Among the women, Gitika (48kg) made the last eight on Saturday.

From the men's contingent. Asian silver-medallist Ankit Narwal (64kg). Bishwamitra Chongtham (49kg), Sachin (56kg) and Vishal Gupta (91kg) stood

just one win away from ensuring a medal for the country. However, the campaign ended for Nisha Gurjar

(64kg) after a 1-4 loss to Latvia's Beatrise Rozentale. Earlier, Gitika defeated Kazakhstan's Arailym

went pass Oliwier Narwal Poland's Zamojski 4-1, while Vishal out-punched Croatia's Borna Loncaric in his pre-Croatia's quarterfinal bout.

**Tashkent, April 18:** India's Jhilli Dalabehera clinched the gold medal in the 45kg category in a severely depleted twolifter field at the Asian Weightlifting Cham onship here on Sunday.

Jhilli, a junior world championship bronze medallist, lifted 69kg in the snatch and followed that up by 88kg in clean jerk for a total of 157kg to finish on top of the podium in all three categories of the gold level Olympic qualifier event which was postponed last year due to

However, 45kg is not a Olympic weight category. The silver medal went to Philippines' Mary Flor Diaz for her effort of

Jhilli lifts gold at Asian meet

135kg (60kg+75kg). With the win, Jhilli bettered her silver-winning performance in the last edition. However, it was an underwhelming per-formance as she had lifted 162kg (71kg+91kg) at the same event in 2019.

The other Indian in the fray, Sneha Soren finished third in group B of the women's 55kg event. The 20-year-old from Odisha lifted a total of

four-woman field. Her final standing will be determined after the end of the group A proceed-Jhilli's gold was India's

second medal of the tourmament as weightlifter Mirabai Chanu had smashed the world record in the clean and jerk category enroute a bronze medal on Saturday. The Olympic-bound Chanu lifted 86kg in snatch and a world record of 119kg in clean and jerk for a total of • RAJASTHAN ROYALS • ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE • SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

DECCAN CHRONICLE, RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM, MONDAY, 19 APRIL 2021

Shikhar Dhawan, DC Glenn Maxwell, RCB

KL Rahul, **PBKS PURPLE** Harshal Patel, RCB Rahul Chahar, MI **Avesh** 

#### Off the field

Khan, DC



Robin Uthappa's son Neale Nolan sports a CSK jersey.

#### Rohit bats for 'save corals' campaign

Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma has environmental issues very close to his heart, it seems. The cricketer came out on the field against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) on Saturday wearing shoes with "Save the Corals art on them. Against the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB), Sharma was seen wearing spikes with "Save the Rhinos" art, while in the second tie against the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on April 13, the stylish India player had "Plastic-free Ocean" art

#### Warner lambasts poor SRH batting

Sunrisers Hyderabad captain hit out at his side's poor batting after they lost their third successive match in this year's IPL. Warner and Jonny Bairstow had provided their side a platform with a quick 67-run opening-wicket partnership. But the batsmen that followed disappointed.

Manish Pandey, newcomers Virat Singh and Abhishek Sharma threw their wickets

"I don't know how to take that. Obviously disappointing. Two of us were set but it proves that if you don't bat deep, you can't win. If you get a partnership and if there is one person at the end, you can chase it down," said a disappointed Warner.

"These scores are very chaseable, it's just poor bat-ting. The guys need to play smart cricket in the middle The bowlers have been fantastic," added the left-handed

#### Murali undergoes angioplasty

Sri Lankan cricket legend Muttiah Muralitharan, who is part of the Sunrisers Hyderabad support staff in the ongoing IPL, has undergone an angioplasty at a private hospital in Chennai ESPNcricinfo reported that the champion off-spinner "had a stent fitted to unblock an artery, and will rejoin Sunrisers Hyderabad when

The 49-year-old is the leading wicket-taker in international cricket with 1347 scalps. Muralitharan represented Sri Lanka in 133 Tests.

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2021-23

Printed and Published by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of Deccan K. Sudnakar on benail of Deccarl Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Kaushik Mitter

## DHAWAN & ONLY

#### Shikhar's 49-ball 92 powers Delhi to 6-wicket win over Punjab

Mumbai, April 18: Delhi Capitals beat Punjab Kings by six wickets in the IPL here on Sunday. Mayank Agarwal top-scored for Punjab with 69 off 36 balls while his opening partner and skipper K L Rahul made 61 off 51 balls, taking them to 195

In response, Capitals chased down the target rather comfortably in 18.2 overs with Shikhar Dhawan scoring 92 off 49

Dhawan said: "It was a conscious effort from my side to increase the strike rate and I started taking more risks. I'm not afraid of changes. I'm always open towards changes and I make sure I give it a good try in the nets and then in the games. I've worked on the leg-side shots, coming in the crease, using the pace of the bowler."

Earlier, Mayank and captain Rahul stitched a century-run opening stand to guide Punjab Kings to a challenging 195 for four. Agarwal made 69 off 36 balls, while Rahul scored 61 off 51 deliveries as Punjab made a flying start to their innings.

Delhi Capitals skipper Rishabh Pant's decision to bowl after winning the toss backfired as the opening duo of Agarwal and Rahul took the attack to the opposition bowlers from the onset, hitting boundaries and sixes at

While Agarwal was the aggressor of the two initially, Rahul upped the ante after a relatively sedate start.

Agarwal and Rahul adopted an aggressive approach against debutant Lukeman Meriwala and Kagiso Rabada, taking their team to 94 for no loss in 10 overs.



Delhi Capitals opener Shikhar Dhawan plays a shot during the match against Punjab Kings in the IPL on Sunday.

Agarwal was looking dangerous during his 36-ball knock and ended up hitting seven boundaries and four hits over the fence. But DC dismissed both the batsmen in quick

comeback into the match. While Agarwal was the first to depart, slicing a Meriwala delivery straight Shikhar Dhawan at sweeper cover in the 13th over, Rahul succession to make a handed a simple catch to

Marcus Stonis at midwicket off Rabada. Rahul's knock was laced with seven boundaries

and two sixes. Chris Gayle (11) failed to make a mark, perishing soon in search of a maximum.

#### **SCORECARD**

Punjab Kings: KL Rahul c Stoinis b Rabada 61, Mayank Agarwal c Dhawan b Meriwala 69, Chris Gayle c sub (RV Patel) b Woakes 11, Deepak Hooda (not out) 22, Nicholas Pooran c Rabada b Avesh Khan 9, Shahrukh Khan (not out) 15. Extras (lb 6, nb 2) 8. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) FoW: 1-122, 2-141, 3-

158, 4-179. **Bowling:** Chris Woakes Meriwala 3-0-32-1, R. Ashwin 4-0-28-0, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-43-1, Lalit Yadav 1-0-11-0, Ávesh Khan 4-0-33-1. Delhi Capitals: Prithvi c Gayle Arshdeep Singh 32, Shikhar Dhawan b Richardson 92, Steven Smith c Richardson b Meredith 9, Rishabh Pant c Hooda b Richardson 15, Marcus Stoinis (not out) 27, Lalit Yadav (not out) 12. Extras (lb 2, nb 3, w 6) 11. Total (for four wickets in 18.2 overs)

FoW: 1-59, 2-107, 3-152,

Bowling: Arshdeep 3-0-22-1, Mohammed Shami 4-0-53-0, Jalaj Saxena 3-0-27-0, Jhye Richardson 4-0-41-2. Deepak Hooda 2-0-18-O, Riley Meredith 2.2-0-

Nicholas Pooran (9) failed yet again but Deepak Hooda (22 not out 13) and Shahrukh Khan (15 not out off five) provided the much needed big hits towards the end.

INTERNATIONAL

cricketer AB de Villiers

on Sunday said it will be "fantastic" to make an

international comeback

ahead of the upcoming T20 World Cup. The T20

World Cup is scheduled to

be held in India in October-November.

"If I can slot in, it will be

fantastic," de Villiers said after he played another

match-winning innings

for his franchise Royal

Challengers Bangalore in

The prolific batsman added he will be fine with

it even if he is not able to

going to communicate with South Africa head

coach Mark Boucher

towards the end of the

IPL.
"I am absolutely inter-

ested, with regards to my

form, my fitness, we have

to get the best 15 together,

we will plan accordingly. I

am speaking with Boucher towards the end of IPL," he added.

On Friday, Boucher had

hinted at de Villiers' pos-

sible international come-

Boucher, a former South

Africa wicketkeeper-bats-

man, has also revealed

about the conversation he

had with the RCB star

"I did chat to him before

"The conversation is

still very much open. AB

being the person he is, he wanted to perform very well at the IPL, to prove to

himself and everyone else

that he is still a very key

figure in world cricket and could dominate at that level," Boucher had

In May 2018, de Villiers

had announced his retire-

ment from international

cricket. He played 114 Tests, 228 ODIs and 78

he went to the IPL,"

ahead of the IPL 2021.

Boucher had said.

back.

said.

make a comeback. De Villiers, 37, said he is

the IPL here.

April Versatile South African

COMERACK

Chennai,

**ABD GAME FOR** 

#### +0.750 0 4 +0.453 0 +0.367 +0.616 0 2 +0.0523 2 0 2 - 0.633 2 0 2 - 0.967

**POINTS TABLE** 

# CSK, Rajasthan in battle royale

Mumbai, April 18: Threetime champion Chennai Super Kings and Rajasthan Royals would look to build on their first wins and gain momentum when they clash in the Indian Premier League (IPL), here on Monday. The two sides bounced back after losing their opening fixtures with wins, albeit in contrasting Matches

while the MS Dhoni-led CSK had it easy against Punjab Kings, the Royals scraped through against Delhi Capitals in the final over. Both teams would be eyeing a second win to give their campaign a boost.

CSK hit back superbly

after a chastening defeat to Capitals with Deepak Chahar putting his hand up with a four-wicket haul to break the back of the Punjab batting line-up, setting up a six-wicket victory.

Skipper Dhoni would have been happy with the bowlers' performance after they had been taken to the cleaners by Prithvi Shaw and Shikhar Dhawan in the opener.

Chahar, in particular, came up with a fine spell, which helped CSK restrict its opponent to a below par 106 which the batsmen down much trouble.

The Super Kings will expect Chahar to continue the good work while also hoping that Sam Curran, Shardul Thakur and the

others also step up.
Also, South African pacer
Lungi Ngidi is out of quarantine and could be drafted into the playing XI to give more teeth to the CSK pace

England all-rounder Moeen Ali was in the thick

Live on TV Chennai Super Kings vs Rajasthan Royals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

**HEAD to HEAD** 

CSK 14 RR

**FOR THE RECORD** 

Suresh Raina's 609 runs at an average of 29.00 in 21 innings is the second most against Rajasthan in after AB de Villiers (648). Deepak Chahar who has claimed

48 wickets at an average of 25.10 in 45 innings needs just two wickets to become the sixth bowler to complete to wickets for CSK. LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

Rajasthan beat CSK by 16 runs at

 Rajasthan beat CSK by 7 wickets at Abu Dhabi. STATS: S. PERVEZ QAISER

of action in the win over Punjab and that should please the CSK think-tank. He picked up a wicket with his off-spin and batted flu-

Faf du Plessis made an unbeaten 36 despite not being at his fluent best and would hope to build on the knock while the likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad and Ambati Rayudu need runs to get their confidence back. Suresh Raina's presence has certainly boosted the CSK batting unit and his form will be crucial in the long run. He will be keen to get a big score after returning to the IPL with a fifty. Dhoni didn't bat in the game against Punjab.

Rajasthan Royals allrounder Chris Morris during a

### **ROTATING STRIKE CRUCIAL ON SLOW TRACKS, SAYS LAXMAN**

Chennai, April 18: Sunrisers Hyderabad mentor VVS Laxman rued that his batsmen could not rotate the strike when getting boundaries was tough against Mumbai Indians bowlers on a tough Chepuk wicket. Chasing a modest 151-run target, SRH could manage only 137 in 19.4 overs as their batsmen struggled to score runs in the middle overs on Saturday.

"That's (taking singles and twos) a very important skill especially on these kind of wickets because it is not easy to hit through the line. You can't rely on

just boundaries and sixes,' "It's very important to keep the dot-ball percent-age low, and the only way you can do it is by manipulating the field by rotating the strike. That is one aspect of the game which

kind of wickets. "Unfortunately we were not able to do that especially when Rahul Chahar was bowling and even when

is very important on these

It's very important to keep the dot-ball percentage low, and the only way you can do it is by manipulating the field by rotating the strike.

— VVS LAXMAN SRH mentor

other fast bowlers were

bowling in the middle

overs. Laxman said as the ball

got old in the second half of the innings, playing aggressive was challenging. He also stressed the importance of using the powerplay. "The ball was just stopping on the wicket and it is two-paced. And also the spinners are extracting turn along with bounce. That is one of the aspects we definitely discussed. If you see the way Jonny Bairstow and David Warner capitalised on the powerplay, that will be very important going forward especially when you are

playing on slow tracks.

#### RCB's AB de Villiers during his unbeaten 76 against Kolkata Knight Riders in Chennai on Sunday. RCB make it three in three

Chennai, April Glenn Maxwell was good but AB de Villiers was better as Royal Challengers Bangalore bested Kolkata Knight Riders by 38 runs in their IPL match here on Sunday. Batting first, De Villiers' master class and Maxwell's counter-attacking half-century propelled RCB to an imposing 204 for four. In reply, KKR were stopped at 166 for eight as RCB regained the top spot in the pecking

RCB smashed 56 runs in last three overs, including 21 in the final six deliveries, thanks to de Villiers 34-ball 76 not out.

Maxwell blazed away to 78 off 49 deliveries, hitting nine boundaries and three maximums before the genius from South Africa strode in and struck the same number of fours and sixes as his teammate from Australia.

The Knight Riders were off to a brilliant start with leg-break bowler Varun leaving Chakravarthy RCB in early trouble at 9/2 with the big wickets of skipper Virat Kohli (5) and Rajat Patidar (1) in

#### **SCORECARD**

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Virat Kohli c Tripathi b Varun 5, Devdutt Padikkal c Tripathi b Prasidh Krishna 25, Rajat Patidar b Varun 1, Glenn Maxwell c Harbhajan Singh b Cummins 78, AB de Villiers (not out) 76, Kyle Jamieson (not out) 11. Extras (nb 3, w 5) 8. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 204.

FoW: 1-6, 2-9, 3-95, 4-148. Bowling: Harbhajan 4-0-38-0, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-39-2, Shakib Al Hasan 2-0-24-0, Pat Cummins 4-0-34-1, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-31-1, Andre Russell 2-0-38-

Kolkata Knight Riders: Nitish Rana c Padikkal b Chahal 18, Shubman Gill c sub (DT Christian) b Jamieson 21, Rahul Tripathi c Mohammed Siraj b Washington Sundar 25, Eoin Morgan c Kohli b Patel 29, Dinesh Karthik Ibw b Chahal 2, Shakib Al Hasan b Jamieson 26. Andre Russell b Patel 31. Pat Cummins c de Villiers b Jamieson 6. Harbhaian Singh (not out) 2. Varun Chakravarthy (not out) 2. Extras (w 4) 4. Total (for eight wickets in 20 overs) 166.

FoW: 1-23, 2-57, 3-66, 4-74, 5-114, 6-155, 7-161, 8-162. Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 3-0-17-0, Kyle Jamieson 3-0-41-3, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-34-2, Washington Sundar 4-0-33-1, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-24-0, Harshal Patel 4-0-17-2.

the second over. Opening the bowling for KKR, veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh bowled a tight line and length to stifle the RCB batsmen in his

After Chakravarthy lured Kohli to go over

with a tossed-up

first two overs.

cover

delivery that drifted away from the right-hander, Rahul Tripathi pulled off a sensational catch running back from extracover. The top batsman was nowhere close to the

Chakravarthy then went through the defence of shifted gears. - *Agencies* 

Patidar with one that darted back on landing.

Mixing aggression with caution, Maxwell Devdutt Padikkal revived the RCB innings after the early blows. While the young Indian

seemed content playing the second fiddle, the swashbuckling Australian counter-attacked in fine fashion and played the big shots with consummate The in-form Maxwell

upped the ante when he cleared his front leg to plonk Shakib Al Hasan over long-on for his first maximum in the sixth The one bowled by

Shakib turned out to be a productive over for RCB as they got 17 runs off it. Morgan's decision to take out both take Chakravarthy and Harbhajan at a time when they were bowling well

move. After reaching 45 for two at the end of the six powerplay overs, Maxwell

was baffling, but RCB did-

n't mind at all as they cap-

italised on the surprising

— Agencies