



WINDOWS
Migrants arriving from Maharashtra and Raipur wait for transportation to their home town at Hatia railway station amid second wave of coronavirus pandemic in Ranchi on Saturday

Will there be night curfew in Telangana?

Govt exploring options to impose curfew

HANS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD: The State Government, which has been claiming that there will be no lockdown but will strictly ensure Covid restrictions like wearing masks, maintaining social distancing and not permitting huge gatherings at functions, has changed its stand by considering to impose night curfew across the State after the Nagarjuna Sagar by-election is over. According to sources, the government has begun a study on the impact of the night curfew on trading activity and the revenue loss the state may incur. It may be mentioned here that from May onwards, many functions particularly marriages are likely to take place and if night curfew is imposed it could have an impact on such functions. It will also affect the business of marriage halls, hospitality sector and allied services like catering and decorations. The government feels that night curfew would affect shopping malls, restaurants, retail business, super markets, vegetable outlets and to some extent liquor sales. It could lead to tipplers spending more time during the day to refurbish their stocks for the evening. Officials involved in the tax collections in the government are analysing the impact on the state economy if the night curfew was imposed. "Generally, liquor sales are high between 7 pm and 10 pm in all urban centres. The big towns witness hectic business activity between 7 pm and 9 pm. In case the government decides to have night curfew it could be between 10 pm to 6 am. The other option that is being examined is to impose night curfew in the identified towns where the number of positive cases is increasing every day. The Medical and Health department was compiling the data of corona cases in every urban body and based on the information, specific action plans, including imposing night curfew in the particular municipal areas would be prepared. In Hyderabad limits, the revival of containment zones is under consideration in case the positive cases are high in an area.

Trust, Reliability & Service
Synonymous with **Kapil Chits**

41
YEARS OF
PRINTED MANKIES

Visit Us: www.kapilchits.com

KAPIL CHITS

SMALL SAVINGS GROW BIG WITH **KAPIL**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

VACCINATION CLOSED

Certificates with PM's photo are in substantial numbers, sir. Only vaccine is out of stock!

Kejri rules out lockdown but hints at new curbs in Delhi

PURNA SINGH
NEW DELHI

AMIDST the increasing cases of Corona in Delhi, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said there is a need to remove age criteria and scale up the Covid-19 vaccination process, adding that there will be no lockdown in the national capital. "If we have enough doses and age bar is removed, we can vaccinate people within 2-3 months in Delhi. Currently, we have vaccine for 7-10 days. We need to remove age criteria and scale up vaccination. There will be no lockdown. New restrictions will be imposed soon," Kejriwal said. The Chief Minister also inspected the LNJ hospital to assess the situation there and check the laxities in the health system. Talking about the vaccination, he said that he had written



a letter to the Prime Minister for the speeding up of vaccination drive. The Chief Minister on Friday announced shutting of all schools and colleges in Delhi given the huge rise in coronavirus cases in the capital, along with other parts of the country. "Due to increasing cases of Covid-19, all schools, government and private, in Delhi are being closed for all classes till further orders," Kejriwal tweeted. Several states and Union territories including Delhi have announced new restrictions such as night curfews amid a new wave of Covid-19 that has pushed infection numbers to record highs. In order to further curb the spread of the pandemic, the AAP government imposed a night curfew in Delhi between 10pm and 5am till April 30.

MHA orders restart of Covid centre in Delhi Cantt

NEW DELHI: As Delhi is witnessing a massive spike in Covid-19 cases, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) after a meeting with top government officials has decided to reopen the Covid-19 centre situated in Cantt area, sources said on Saturday. Initially, the centre will have 500 beds which will be increased gradually. According to MHA sources, Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla on Friday held a meeting with all government top officers including Director AIIMS, officials from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Union Health Ministry and Chief Secretary Delhi where it was decided that government will reopen Covid-19 Centre at Delhi Cantt.



RSS chief Bhagwat tests Covid positive, hospitalised

NAGPUR: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat has tested positive for Covid-19. "He is admitted to a hospital in Nagpur", the organisation said. In a tweet by RSS in Hindi, it read, "Our Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Dr Mohanji Bhagwat ji has tested positive for Covid. He is currently having common symptoms of coronavirus and has been admitted to the Kingsway Hospital in Nagpur. He is undergoing a general checkup and exercising caution.

Happy Ugadi 2021

RAMRAJ

పంచులు • పుట్టిలు • బనయిస్తు

Available at company showroom & all leading textile shops

Jagan's focus shifts to Vizag capital

- Architect Bimal Patel's services to be utilised for the Capital
- Patel known for Central vista project of Delhi and Kasi Viswanath temple

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE State Government in all probability is likely to shift the executive capital to Visakhapatnam sometime in May. The government is



hopeful that by that time all the legal hurdles would be over and it would get a green signal from the courts to shift the capital to Visakhapatnam.

Continued on Page 4

Political storm over Bengal poll violence

KOLKATA

FIVE people were killed, including four in the firing by CISF personnel, during the fourth phase of polling on Saturday for 44 Assembly seats of West Bengal, triggering a political firestorm. Four people were killed as Central forces opened fire allegedly after coming under attack from locals, who "attempted to snatch their rifles", in West Bengal's Cooch Behar district, police said. The Election Commission ordered stopping of the voting exercise at the polling station number 126 in Sitalkuchi where the incident happened when polling was underway. "According to preliminary reports, four persons were killed as CISF personnel opened fire after coming under attack in a village. "A scuffle took place, and locals gheraoed them and attempted to snatch their rifles, following which the central forces opened fire. Further details are awaited," a police official said. The EC has sought a detailed report on the incident. According to official sources, the preliminary report submitted by EC's special police observer Vivek Dubey said a huge mob of around 350-400 people had gheraoed the central forces, following which they fired in "self-defence". The incident led to violence in the area where bombs were hurled, prompting central forces to baton-charge to bring the situation under control. In another incident, an 18-year-old voter, Ananda Barman, was gunned down outside booth number 85 in Pathantuli, also in Sitalkuchi, after clashes broke out between activists of the ruling TMC and the BJP.

4 TMC WORKERS KILLED IN CISF FIRING

THE BLAME GAME

Modi targets Mamata

BJP CONSPIRACY, ALLEGES TMC

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee indulged in a blame game after four people died in Central forces firing in Cooch Behar on Saturday during the fourth phase of polling in West Bengal. Both demanded that the incident be probed by the Election Commission (EC).

Condoling the deaths, Modi held Mamata Banerjee responsible for using violence as a means of protection and "stooping so low after watching her seat slipping away".

On the other hand, Mamata Banerjee said that the firing in Cooch Behar was a part of a larger conspiracy with other TMC leaders

adding that the role of Modi cannot be ruled out of it. "What happened in Cooch Behar is very saddening. My sympathies are with the families of those who died, I condole their demise. Didi and her goons are perturbed, seeing the people's support for BJP. She has stooped to this level as she can see her chair slipping away," Modi

said addressing a rally in Siliguri, which will go to poll on April 17. "Didi, this violence, the ways of inciting people to attack security forces, the ways of disrupting the election process will not save you. This violence cannot protect you from your 10 years of misdeeds," he added. Condemning the Cooch

Behar incident in which four TMC workers died, Mamata Banerjee said a conspiracy is going around under the instruction of Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Addressing a public meeting in Hingalgaon, she said, "CRPF has shot dead four people in Sitalkuchi (Cooch Behar) today. There was another death in the morning. CRPF is not my enemy but there is a conspiracy going around under the instruction of the Home Minister. Today's incident validates that."

"CRPF has killed voters standing in the queue. Where do they get so much audacity? BJP knows that they have lost, so they are killing voters and workers," added the CM.

Forces opened fire to save lives: EC

NEW DELHI: The clashes outside a polling station in West Bengal's Cooch Behar district this morning, in which four people died, took place after a local mob attacked security forces over a misunderstanding, the Election Commission has said, adding that the CISF personnel had to open fire to "save their lives and government property like EVMs". The election panel says the misunderstanding began when the central security forces were trying to help a sick boy near the polling booth in Sitalkuchi early this morning, when some locals thought the boy was beaten up by the Central Industrial Security Force personnel, and assembled nearly 300-350 villagers. "Due to the misunderstanding, the agitated mob attacked the CISF personnel detailed at the booth with deadly equipment and some of them even tried to snatch their arms and ammunition," it said.

Bengal records 76% turnout in 4th phase

KOLKATA: Voting for the fourth phase has ended with West Bengal recording voter turnout of 76.16 per cent till 7 pm across 44 constituencies in five districts. This phase of the elections witnessed an intense battle between 373 candidates in 44 constituencies of the state across five districts -- Cooch Behar, Alipurdwar, South 24 Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly. This phase will decide the electoral fate of high-profile candidates including Union Minister Babul Supriyo and West Bengal ministers Partha Chatterjee and Arup Biswas. The fifth phase of the Assembly elections will commence on April 17 and the counting of votes will take place on May 2. Accusing the BJP of giving false promises to the members of the politically significant Matua community on citizenship, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday claimed that those people have already been given all rights as citizens. Banerjee, also the Trinamool Congress supreme, claimed that if the saffron party is voted to power, it will keep the people of West Bengal in detention camps as it has done to "14 lakh Bengalis" in Assam.

TMC demands resignation of Amit Shah

KOLKATA: Condemning the killing of four party workers by Central forces in Cooch Behar amidst the polling for the fourth phase of West Bengal

Assembly elections on Saturday, the Trinamool Congress demanded the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah while terming the incident as a conspiracy hatched by the latter. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters, TMC MP Sougata Roy said,

"The firing took place because common people were resisting the effort by BJP hooligans to disrupt the voting. They are being encouraged by Central

Armed Police Force and we feel this is a conspiracy headed by Home Minister, we are demanding his resignation."

Continued on Page 4

India forms air bubble with Lanka

NEW DELHI

INDIA has established a bilateral air bubble arrangement with Sri Lanka for operation of special international passenger flights between the two countries, the Civil Aviation Ministry said on Saturday. With this, India now has such pacts with 28 countries, including Afghanistan, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, the Maldives, Nigeria, Qatar, the UAE, the UK and the USA.



Under an air bubble pact between two countries, special international passenger flights can be operated by their airlines into each other's territories under restrictive conditions.

"India has finalized an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka, making it the 6th such arrangement in SAARC region and the

28th in total," the Civil Aviation Ministry said on Twitter. "All the eligible passengers will be able to travel between the 2 countries in the near future," it noted. Scheduled international flights have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, special international passenger flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May last year and under bilateral air bubble arrangements since July.

Uddhav hints at lockdown

Weekend lockdown begins in Maha, Mumbai streets deserted

NEW DELHI

IN view of the alarming rise in coronavirus cases in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday hinted at the imposition of a strict lockdown in the State, some ministers and a senior



BJP leader who attended an all-party meeting said. Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said he would hold a meeting on Monday to work out a financial package for the sections of

people whose livelihood bear the impact, while his colleague Ashok Chavan stated the "nature, scope and duration of the lockdown will be finalised soon".

Continued on Page 4

STATE EGGS ON RED GRAM, COTTON FARMERS

To take up a campaign to convince farmers not to cultivate paddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA State government has decided to give top priority to cultivation of red gram, cotton and oilseeds in the ensuing rainy (Kharif) agriculture season.

Disclosing this at a review meeting, State Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy asked the senior officials to set a target to increase the cultivation of red gram in 20 lakh acres and cotton in 75 lakh acres.

The Minister who reviewed the positioning of the seeds for the Kharif and crop pattern following the directions of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, said the availability of increased water resources in Telangana had led to the increase in the extent of cultivation. However, there was a phenomenal growth of paddy cultivation in the State. During the ensuing agriculture season, he asked officials to take up a campaign in a big way to convince farmers not to cultivate paddy. Instead, take up cultivation oilseeds as they have good demand in the domestic and international markets. He stressed the need that the seed companies should make available seeds of oilseeds for farmers and asked the Agriculture Department officials to take the



message among the farmers in the coming two months.

As the State government set a target to increase the cultivation of red gram in 20 lakh acres and cotton in 75 lakh acres, he said steps should be taken to ensure that the 57 seed companies supply 1.7 crore quality cotton seed packets ahead of the beginning of the sowing of the Kharif season. The Minister directed the officials to take stringent action against the companies providing spurious cotton seeds.

Similarly, to meet the demand for the cultivation of oilseeds, he asked the officials to ensure

80,000 quintals of seeds made available to the farmers. For this, Niranjan Reddy asked officials to augment the required seeds from the Central, State seed development corporations, agriculture university and private companies. For the first time in the country, steps have been taken to supply quality seeds to the farmers with a QR code for seed traceability. About 22 lakh quintals of certified seeds will be made available to the farmers for cultivation of different crops to an extent of 90 lakh acres in the Kharif, he added.

As part of the action plan to

position the seeds, it was decided to make available the seeds in all the districts by May 15. Senior officials were asked to prepare an action plan by conducting a district-wise survey for the cultivation of the cotton crop. The District Collectors should rope in teams of Kalajatas to create awareness among the farmers, he said. State Seed Development Corporation Director Kesavulu, Joint Director Agriculture Balu, Deputy Director Agriculture Siva Prasad and representatives of the seed companies participated in the video conference.

Health Minister warns pvt hospitals for overcharging Covid patients

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

HEALTH Minister Eatala Rajender on Saturday warned the private and corporate hospitals for overcharging Covid-19 patients. He instructed the private hospitals to charge according to GO in which the slabs were fixed by the government last year. The Minister cautioned of strict action against private hospital managements if involved in such practices. The government had fixed per-day fee for isolation or quarantine in private hospitals at Rs 4,000 for normal cases, while the charges for ICU were Rs 7,500 and Rs 9,000 for ICU with a ventilator.

The Minister was speaking at the command control centre here at Koti, after meeting the private medical College managements. He has cleared that the government will provide oxygen, Remdesivir injections and medicines to private hospitals this time. The hospital should cooperate with space and manpower and this does not cost much to the management.

The Minister instructed the officials to provide up to 50 per cent of



beds in private medical colleges and hospitals to Covid-19 patients.

Managements should not bother infected patients for admission; treatment should be the priority as doctors instead of money, he added. Minister claimed that there are more than 14,000 beds available in private hospitals across the State. He reiterated people to complain if hospitals demand hefty fees or about negligence in hospitals. Officials team will make ran-

dom visits to check the situation and report to the government.

The Minister said that the State government has instructed the health officials at border districts of neighbouring states including Maharashtra and Karnataka to be alert as there is a continuous flow of people in these districts. On the instructions of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, all measures have been taken, beds and other equipment has provided in these

districts. Also, tests and vaccination has been increased here.

Speaking about the rapid spread of coronavirus in the State the Minister said that cases are surly increasing but there is no severity in the cases this time people should not panic as 97 per cent of infected are asymptomatic. He requested public to wear masks and to follow the guidelines to be safe. The virus will be reduced in the coming days as last year.

ECI scam: ED raids over ten locations in City

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted raids at ten places in Hyderabad on Saturday in connection with the ESI scam. Apart from the residence of Devika Rani a main accused in the scandal, the ED had carried out searches at the residence of Srinivasa Reddy, a relative of former minister Naini Narsimha Reddy and his Personal Secretary Mukunda Reddy.

A huge amount of currency notes, Jewellery worth over Rs 1 crore and property documents, bank cheques and other assets were seized from the accused. A raid at Srinivasa Reddy resident has become a sensation. It revealed that Navin Reddy was PA to Mukunda Reddy PS to Former Home Minister.

It is known that the ESI drug scandal caused a sensation in Telangana. The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) had registered a case against Devikarani, a former director, and arrested several others in this case. She was involved in the scam of creating fake bills for the purchase of drugs worth Rs 6 crore. However, after the arrest of Devika Rani, ACB recovered Rs 4.5 crore from her and handed it over to the court.

Chicken, mutton prices rise again

HYDERABAD: Chicken and mutton prices had risen as the consumption of non-vegetarian gone up since a week in the state particularly in Greater Hyderabad. To boost the immunity levels in the Covid-19 pandemic, people started consuming non vegetarian in big quantity.

As the gap between demand and supply widened, market prices increased suddenly, the poultry suppliers averred. Taking the advantage of growing demand for mutton, retailers increased the prices during the week-ends. In spite of the warning from government to sell mutton at Rs 700 per kg, sellers are fleeing the consumers by collecting Rs 800 to Rs 900 per kg. In case of chicken, prices are hovering around Rs 250 to Rs 280 per kg on Sunday. In the normal days, the price is around Rs 240.

In the previous years, chicken consumption during the summer was comparatively low. Since last year, the consumption of chicken was increased many folds as doctors and government suggested people to eat the bird meat to increase their immunity levels against the deadly virus. Goat and Sheep meat was also on high demand during corona. Earlier, sheep were imported from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh. Now, the demand for meat has also increased in those states and the agents from Telangana were buying live goat and sheep at higher prices.

The officials claimed that the State Animal Husbandry Department was taking measures to ensure adequate chicken and mutton are available in the markets in the crisis time and curb the spiraling prices of non vegetarian in the coming days, there is no relief to the consumers from the sudden price burden.

Covid helplines turn helpless as none picks up calls

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

EVEN as the Covid-19 cases are increasing in the city, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Covid-19 control room sports a deserted look as there are only two people working at the centre. There is allegedly no effort to popularise the toll-free numbers.

The Covid-19 control room was set up for emergency purpose for helping people in case of getting effected from coronavirus. People are in a panic mode after the surge in the Covid-19 positive cases in the city and when they turn up to the helpline of the city's civic body, they are not getting any information.

According to sources, usually three to four health wing personnel should be working in the Covid-19 control room in different shifts as it offers 24/7 services to assist the public on Covid vaccination and also complaints on sanitation. However, with successive holidays for the next few days, the staff have been missing from the centre.

A GHMC official said as of now they were getting only 15-20 calls per day as the number of calls were decreased compared to the past

BJP ridicules Sharmila's claims; says YSR rule mired in graft

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Telangana State unit on Saturday pooh-poohed the claim of former Chief Minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's daughter YS Sharmila claiming that people in Telangana wanted to bring Rajanna Rajyam in the State.

Addressing the media here on Saturday, State BJP vice-president NVVS Prabhakar said people in the State were amused at the political rhetoric and claims of Sharmila and her battle cry to bring Rajanna Rajyam in Telangana. He said the people in the State had not forgotten the vivid picture of Rajanna Rajyam, in which, looting and amassing wealth, corruption and irregularities were the order of the day. Several senior officials, leaders, even one of the Ministers in the YSR Cabinet had been doing rounds around the courts on charges of irregularities and corruption, he said. Even Sharmila's brother and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had been attending courts, he reminded.

Demanding the police to book a case against Sharmila for violation of the regulations imposed on the conduct of the public meeting, the former BJP MLA alleged that



setting up a new political party by her was as per the story, screenplay and direction of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. He said that Rajanna Rajyam had no relevance in Telangana. Further, the BJP leader found fault with YS Sharmila announcing to fight for 12 per cent reservation for Muslims in Telangana.

The BJP leader asked the Election Commission to take immediate action against the indiscriminate flow of cash and liquor ahead of the Nagarajuna Sagar assembly by-poll.

BJP slams midnight raid by cops on protest camp

HYDERABAD: Telangana State BJP chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar and Adilabad MP Soyam Babu Rao condemned the police attack on poor farmers and BJP leaders who were on a peaceful protest at Kondapelli village of Penchikala Pet mandal of Komaram Bhim Asifabad district.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, BJP State chief and Karimnagar MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar said it was unbefitting on the part of the police to attack innocent and poor women farmers and the party leaders. He said that BJP leader Palvay Harish sustained rib fractures in a midnight raid by the police on the protest camp, and another leader Satyanarayana had sustained serious injuries, he added.

Kumar said on the one hand, the State government was trying to snatch away the lands being cultivated by the poor farmers for years through the Forest Department. On the other, it was deploying police to conduct raids on the peacefully protesting farmers and BJP leaders. The BJP MP alleged that the State government remained a mute spectator when the TRS leaders grabbed lands worth crores of rupees around Hyderabad.

The Adilabad MP, condemning the police action, asked the State government, as to how could it send police to beat poor farmers for objecting to taking away their lands that they have been cultivating for years. Babu Rao said he had appealed to the State government on several occasions to resolve the issue of lands being cultivated by the poor people. But there was no response for the same, he added.

RTC employees cry foul over job security

Decry disciplinary actions by the corporation; say thousands lose jobs due to management's callousness

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IT has been over a year since the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao assured job security to the workers of the TSRTC but about 1,000 employees were either suspended or removed from the services for various reasons in the corporation during the year.

The union leaders are now questioning the job security circular stating that it is against the employees and there is no security for them. After the 55-day strike by the workers, the Chief Minister had a meeting with the employees in Pragathi Bhavan and announced that there would be no harassment to the employees and there would be complete job security. The management issued a circular in February on the job security. As per the circular, the responsibility of taking a ticket was

given to the passenger. The punishment was counselling by the depot manager, and deferment of increment. If there are more than three complaints, punishment of maximum up to other than removal from service, based on the merits of the case are deferment of increment and reduction in pay. According to trade union leaders in the corporation, the management is using the circular against the interest of the employees. The leaders said that in a year about 1,000 employees have come onto the roads without salaries because of the disciplinary action. On an average, there are 8 to 10 employees facing disciplinary action and they are either suspended or removed from the services. Many of the workers were sent to depot spare without giving duties.

The TSRTC Telangana Jathiya Mazdoor Union (TJMU) leader K Hanumanthu

Mudiraj said the authorities should first conduct inquiry and based on that action should be taken. However, the inquiry will never be in favour of the employees, he said. "In every depot, you will find five to six workers facing charges and are kept in depot spare. This is anti-employee circular. Earlier, the union leaders used to come to the rescue of the workers by giving representation and minimise the punishment but there is no scope for this now with the absence of the unions," said Hanumanthu.

Giving example, the union leader said seven drivers in Khammam were facing charges. Similarly, six employees were facing charges in Mancherla depot. Hanumanthu Mudiraj demanded that the government scrap the job security circular and implement the orders released by the Andhra Pradesh government.



Narayana students succeed in Maths Olympiad

HYDERABAD: Narayana School students have once again reigned with extraordinary results in IOQM 2021 Olympiad. Most number of selections from South India are from Narayana. With 12 selections (57.14%) from just Telangana region, this achievement is another feather in our crown. Another 3 selections from Andhra Pradesh, 2 from Karnataka, and 1 from Tamil Nadu from the South region.

Sindhura Narayana, Managing Director of Narayana Group, said that the result once again emphatically proved that the education system at Narayana is exceptional.

AS COVID -19 CASES SURGE

Tomar appeals to farmers to call off protest

NEW DELHI

AMID a spike in COVID-19 cases, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar Saturday appealed to the farmers protesting at Delhi borders to call off their long-running agitation, saying the government is ready for a discussion whenever they come with a concrete proposal. Thousands of farmers have been protesting against the three new agri-marketing laws for nearly five months now, braving the raging pandemic.

There has been no headway in the logjam over the issue since January 22, when the 11th and the last round of formal talks happened between the Central government and the protesting farmer unions. Tomar expressed concerns about the farmers' health and wellbeing as India witnessed a record surge of over 1.45 lakh coronavirus cases on Saturday. "Now in the second wave of pandemic, the entire nation and the world is following COVID-19 protocols. Even protesting farmers should follow the protocols. Their life is important for us," Tomar said.



Farmers block the KMP Expressway during their ongoing agitation against the three farm laws, in Ghaziabad on Saturday

"In the current COVID-19 situation, I urge them (agitating farmers) to call off their protest. The government is ready for a discussion whenever they come with a proposal," he told reporters. Stating that there is no "dissatisfaction" among the farming community across the country over the new farm laws, the minister said many farm bodies in fact are in the favour of these legislations, while some are opposing them.

"Ours is a democratic country, be it farmers or citizens, if they have any doubt, the government believes it is its responsibility to

clear doubts and find a solution," he said. The minister said the three laws were not drafted all of a sudden, but there was a long discussion in the past and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken it forward, he said.

He said that normally any protest continues if the government is not ready for talks. But this government has held with open heart 11 rounds of discussion with representatives of protesting farm unions, yet their agitation did not stop, he said. In these meetings, the government had identified their concerns and offered them a proposal to suspend the laws for 1.5 years and set up a committee to examine them.

"We proposed that a committee be set up to look into these laws and the MSP (issue) also. After the committee submits its report, the government will discuss. This proposal was welcomed across the country, but the protesting farmers rejected it without citing any reason," he said. Farmers could have resumed their protest had they found the proposed committee's recommendations unsatisfactory, he added. "We had told farm unions to come up with their own proposal and we were ready for discussion on that also," the minister said, asserting the government is ready for talks even today.

Tomar reiterated that he had appealed to the farmer unions in all 11 rounds of meetings to send back senior citizens and children from the protest sites in view of the pandemic. The minister also said the agitating farmers should understand that ordinary citizens are facing difficulty due to their sit-in protest at the border. Delhi, meanwhile reported 7,897 cases and 39 new fatalities Saturday. (PTI)

China slaps record \$2.78 bn fine on Alibaba

K J M VARMA
BEIJING

CHINA'S antitrust regulators on Saturday slapped a record fine of USD 2.78 billion on Alibaba Group, the world's biggest e-commerce company, for abusing its dominant market position as Beijing tightened the screws on the country's tech giants. Closing a months-long investigation that began last Christmas eve, China's State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) slapped a fine of 18.23 billion yuan (USD 2.78 billion) on Alibaba, headed by the country's top billionaire Jack Ma, setting a precedent for the ruling Communist Party to use the anti-monopoly rules to regulate tech giants. The SAMR said that it had made an administrative penalty decision under China's anti-monopoly law, ordering Alibaba Group to stop illegal activities and imposing a fine of 4 per cent on its 2019 domestic sales of 455.71 billion yuan, totalling 18.23 billion yuan. The market regulator concluded the four-month investigation, alleging that Alibaba has been abusing its market dominance since 2015 by prohibiting merchants from opening stores or participating in promotional activities on other competitive platforms, state-run CGTN TV reported. (PTI)



Eastern Ladakh: India, China agree to maintain stability on ground

NEW DELHI

INDIA and China have agreed at their 11th round of military talks to jointly maintain stability on the ground, and avoid any new incidents in eastern Ladakh. A day after the talks, the Indian Army on Saturday said the two sides agreed on the need to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols. "The two sides had a detailed exchange of views for the resolution of the remaining issues related to disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh," it said. "The two sides agreed on the need to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols," the Army said in a statement.

In this context, the Army said it was also highlighted that completion of disengagement in other areas would pave the way for the two sides to consider de-escalation of forces and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity and enable progress in bilateral relations. "The two sides agreed that it was important to take guidance from the consensus of their leaders, continue their

communication and dialogue and work towards a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest," it added. "They also agreed to jointly maintain stability on the ground, avoid any new incidents and jointly maintain peace in the border areas," the statement said.

The 11th round of Corps Commander-level talks took place at the Chushul border point on the Indian side of the LAC in eastern Ladakh. The parleys began at around 10:30 AM and ended at 11:30 PM. The border standoff between the armies of India and China erupted on May 5 last following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas in eastern Ladakh and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry. As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed withdrawal of troops and weapons from the North and South banks of Pangong lake in February in line with an agreement on disengagement. India has been insisting that a resolution of outstanding issues including in Depsang, Hot Springs and Gogra is essential for overall ties between the two countries. (PTI)

My remarks on CAPF did not violate model code: Mamata

NEW DELHI

DEFENDING her remarks on central armed police forces, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is learnt to have told the Election Commission on Saturday that she has the highest regard for CAPF but there have been serious allegations against them of intimidating and influencing the electorate to cast their vote for a particular political party.

Responding to a notice issued by the poll panel on Thursday, the Trinamool Congress chief denied the contents of the EC communication which sought an explanation over her "prima facie completely false,

provocative and intemperate statements" against the central armed police forces deputed on election duty in the state. Banerjee also urged the poll watchdog to rescind its notice, contending she has not violated the model code or the various sections of the Indian Penal Code.

She claimed that a girl was allegedly molested by an unidentified CRPF personnel in the early hours of April 6 at Ramnagar, under Tarakeswar police station and the matter was reported to the police which lodged an FIR. The TMC had complained with the state chief electoral officer. But till date, no tangible action has been taken nor an advisory or instruction

issued by Election Commission to the central forces in this regard, she claimed.

"I have the highest regard for the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) and commend and laud their contributions to the safety and security of the country," she said in her reply. But during the first three phases of polls in West Bengal, there have been serious allegations of CAPF resorting to intimidation of voters by exerting force, influencing the electorate to cast their votes for a particular political party, Banerjee is learnt to have alleged her reply. Her party has also lodged several complaints but only a few were redressed, she claimed. (PTI)



કપિલ ચિટ્સ તો
પ્રતિ બંધો એટો ષલુવૈનલ

નમ્મુકો મીડ ષલબડેન બંધો ષાલા બલમ્પૈનલ

“કપિલ ચિટ્સ” મી કલલકુ સોકારો.



Daily Covid cases cross 3,000-mark in AP

AMARAVATI

The daily load of fresh Covid-19 cases in the state increased beyond 3,000 after a five-month gap as the state logged 3,309 in 24 hours ending 9 am on Saturday, taking the overall positives to 9,21,906.

The state saw 12 deaths, the highest day count in more than five months, while 1,053 patients recovered from the infection.

The total recoveries now touched 8,95,949 and toll 7,291, a health department bulletin said.

The number of active cases rose to 18,666, it added.

Chittoor district registered the largest number of 740 new Covid-19 cases and three deaths in 24 hours.

The temple town of Tirupati alone accounted for 319 fresh cases, triggering panic as electioneering for the Lok Sabha by-election is now on.

So much so that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy announced on Saturday that he was cancelling his proposed election meeting in Tirupati on April 14 due to the spurt in coronavirus cases in both Chittoor and SPS



The State also reports 12 deaths, highest in one day in five months

The number of active cases rise to 18,666

Chittoor district sees largest number of 740 new Covid cases

Nellore districts, in which the Lok Sabha segment is spread over.

Guntur district added 528, Visakhapatnam 391, Kurnool 296, Srikakulam 279, Krishna 278, Prakasam 174, Nellore and Anantapur 133 each, Kadapa 124 and East Godavari 111 fresh cases in a day.

Vizianagaram reported 97 and West Godavari 26 new cases.

Two Covid-19 patients each died in Nellore, Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam districts and one each in Anantapur, Guntur and Krishna.

Srikakulam district reported Covid-19 deaths after a gap of more than three months.

TTD CLAIMS LORD HANUMAN WAS ‘BORN’ ON TIRUMALA HILL

TIRUPATI

An ‘evidence’ based book to ‘prove’ that Lord Hanuman was ‘born’ on one of the seven sacred hills of Tirumala, home to the Sri Venkateswara Swamy shrine, would be released on April 13, a senior official of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams said on Saturday.

The book with “astronomical, epigraphical, scientific and puranic evidence,” to prove that Lord Hanuman was born on the Tirumala hills would be unveiled by a committee of scholars on Ugadi, the Telugu New Year day, the official, who did not want to be named, told PTI.

However, Prof V Venkataramana Reddy, former director of National Mission for Manuscripts, said such a ‘quest’ on the ‘birthplaces of divinities’ was not proper, while chief priest of the hill temple, A V Ramana Dikshitulu declined to comment.

TTD executive officer K S Jawahar Reddy had constituted a high-level committee of scholars during last December to study and gather evidence to establish that ‘Anjanadri,’ one of the seven hills, is the birthplace

- A panel comprising scholars will release a book with ‘evidence’ on Ugadi day
- TTD EO Jawahar Reddy constituted a high-level committee of scholars in Dec last year to collect evidence to establish ‘Anjanadri, is the birthplace of Hanuman
- The committee has Prof Sannidhanam Sudarshana Sharma, VC Vedic University, Prof Muralidhara Sharma, VC of National Sanskrit varsity among others as its members



of Lord Hanuman.

TDP spokesperson N B Sudhakar Reddy, said there was “every possibility to believe that Lord Hanuman was born and raised on Tirumala hills.”

“Once, the hills were a dense rain forest and also close to Sri Lanka, which was then ruled by demon king Ravana who abducted Maa Sita,” he said.

The temple of Lord Venkateshwara is located on Venkatadri hill, the seventh and Narayanadri, Seshadri and

Garudadri are among the other hills of Tirumala.

Hanuman is also hailed as ‘Vayuputra’ and as son of Anjana Devi who did ‘tapas’ in the one of the seven hills of Tirumala and it was named after her as Anjanadri.

Hanuman is popularly known as ‘Sri Anjaneyaswamy’ in south India.

The committee of scholars comprises Prof Sannidhanam Sudarshana Sharma, vice-chancellor of Sri Venkateswara

Vedic University here, Prof Muralidhara Sharma, Vice-Chancellor of National Sanskrit varsity, professors Ranisadasiva Murthy, Janumaddi Ramakrishna and Sankaranarayana of the varsity.

Also, scientist Murthi Remilla, Deputy Director of State Archaeology, Vijay Kumar are members and the panel is led by project officer, higher Vedic studies, A Vibhishana Sharma who is also the convener, the official said.

SCS slogan only to cover up failures, BJP lambasts AP regional parties

- Party senior leader Sunil Deodhar claims Centre is giving Rs 8 lakh cr to the State on various counts, four times more than whatever it gets under SCS
- Accuses YSRCP govt of sponsoring religious conversions in a rampant manner
- Jana Sena leader Hari Prasad says all the officials belonging to one caste in Tirupati and Tirumala speaks volumes about the commitment of YSRCP govt to social justice

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

THE regional parties, be it the present ruling YSRCP or the previous TDP, rake up the Special Category Status (SCS) only to cover up their failures, alleged BJP national secretary and party AP co-incharge Sunil Deodhar.

Speaking at a meeting ‘Rajyadhikaram Lo Samajika Nyam’ (Social Justice in Politics), the senior BJP leader said that when Centre is providing four times more than the quantum of assistance and development initiatives than the SCS what is the need for SCS except to play cheap tactics to derive political mileage. A total of Rs 8 lakh crore is being provided, in-



BJP National Secretary and AP co-Incharge Sunil Deodhar addressing a meet on social justice in politics in Tirupati on Saturday

cluding air, railway, road, port infrastructure, schemes, Polavaram projects, Etc., to the state, he claimed.

Citing the delay in payment of salaries to employees and later paying partly, he said the state is facing a financial crisis resulting in losing its borrowing capacity also. After becoming the chief minister, Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy’s government borrowed Rs 1.5 lakh crore while the previous Chandrababu Naidu government left another Rs 1.5 lakh crore totalling a whopping Rs 3 lakh crore debt on the head of the people of Andhra, he said criticising the both the regional parties for pushing the state in the mire of debts.

Affirming that the BJP was committed to social justice, he reeled out details of the initiatives taken up by BJP government towards social justice and also empowerment by providing plum po-

litical posts to people belonging to weaker sections.

Turning his guns at YSRCP, he said rampant conversion activity was going on with the state itself acting in such a way sponsoring them and added that all top officials, including the home Minister are Christians.

In this connection, he criticised YSRCP Sullurpet MLA Sanjeevaiah who on Good Friday enacted crucifixion carrying a cross but he was elected from a reserved constituency on basis of holding SC certificate.

He said K Ratna Prabha was chosen as party nominee purely on merit, he said, adding that she was the first ever Scheduled Caste woman in the country to become chief secretary of a state, belongs to Hindu Madiga community capable fighting for the issues of the people, he said stressing on electing her in the crucial by-election

in the interest of the state.

But, Dr M Gurumurthy was rewarded with YSRCP party ticket only on the basis of his services as physiotherapist to Jagan, serving him during Padayatra and later his family, he said adding that he did Jagan seva not Jana seva got the ticket but it was not so with BJP nominee who served the people in various capacities and has concern for people.

Party Rajya Sabha member G V L Narasimha Rao said that the credit for constitutional status to National Commission for Backward Classes goes to BJP alone and informed that the government was implementing Rs 20,000 crore plan for fishermen community development revealing its commitment for the welfare of weaker sections.

Jagan Mohan appointed five deputy chief ministers to show that his party is keen on empowerment of weaker sections but even his party MLAs did not know the names of all the five, revealing the impact of their position which is only name sake to derive political benefits, he said.

Jana Sena Party senior leader Hari Prasad said in Tirupati all the key posts, including TTD chairman, EO, additional EO, SVU, SP-MVV vice-chancellors and SVIMS director all belong to one community revealing the YSRCP’s ‘commitment’ to social justice.

VIVEKA MURDER CASE

Hang me if proved guilty, says Adinarayana Reddy

- The BJP leader vehemently denies allegation of Vijayamma about his involvement in the crime
- Explains he only knew about the death through media as he was in talks with TDP chief Naidu over Assembly seats
- Points out Viveka daughter Sunitha’s charge that police have not included the names of YS family members Avinash Reddy and Bhaskar Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

BJP state vice-president C Adinarayana Reddy denied involvement in the murder of Y S Vivekananda Reddy though police added his name in the charge-sheet. Speaking to the media here on Saturday, he recalled the incidents on March 15, 2019, the day Viveka was murdered.

He said that he was in discussions with TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu on the seat allotment on March 14, 2019. He



BJP vice-president C Adinarayana Reddy addressing media in Tirupati on Saturday

came to know that Viveka died due to cardiac arrest through TV news the next day. After four hours, he came to know that Viveka was murdered.

He said many people suspect the involvement of their own family members in the murder. “How can cardiac arrest turned to be a stab in the heart? Who changed this script except their family members?” he said.

Recalling the allegation by Y S Vijayamma in her open letter about his involvement in the murder, he denied that and said that there was no need for him to do such things. Dr Sunitha, the daughter of Viveka, has expressed doubts on her family members only at a press meet in New Delhi. Saying that based on her earlier statement police have included his name in the

FIR, he said in the same breath, she expressed doubts over non-inclusion of the names of their family members Y S Avinash Reddy and Bhaskar Reddy in the FIR, he commented.

Adinarayana Reddy said, “The case was under the purview of a special investigation team and I am ready for it. Hang me if I am proved guilty.” Stating that law and order has deteriorated to its lowest ebb in the state, he alleged that police themselves were bringing red sanders logs and liquor bottles to the door-steps of BJP workers to implicate and them in false cases and threaten them. BJP state secretary T Nagabhushanam and Tirupati Assembly constituency in-charge Dr Parthasarathi were also present.

Industries Minister’s Twitter account hacked

AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy on Saturday said his Twitter account has been compromised and unrelated messages are being posted.

“Viewers and followers kindly note that my official Twitter ac-

count @mekapatigoutham has been compromised by some unscrupulous elements and they are posting unrelated and offensive material,” said Reddy.

He apologised to the general public and told them to ignore the fake tweets being fired from his hacked account.

TMC demands resignation of Amit Shah

Continued from P1

“Why did the Central Armed Police Forces fire? Where do they get this audacity of firing on common voters? That is the main question. This is a part of a conspiracy and we do not think that the Prime Minister is out of this conspiracy. This is an effort to intimidate voters,” added Roy. He said that the TMC workers will hold protests in every block and ward of West Bengal over the firing in Cooch Behar.

Violence erupted at a polling booth in Cooch Behar during the fourth round of polling. Trinamool Congress alleged that the Central forces opened fire twice at polling booths in Cooch Behar where people are casting their votes, killing four party workers. Official sources in Cooch Behar confirmed the death of four people in the district.

Following the incident, the Election Commission (EC) ordered the adjournment of the poll in PS 126 of Sitalkuchi AC, Cooch Behar based on an interim report from Special Observers. The EC will seek a detailed report from them and the Chief Election Officer by 5 pm on Saturday.

Continued from P1

As part of the preparatory works, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has hired the services of noted architect Bimal Patel, who played a key role in Central vista project of New Delhi and development of Kasi Viswanath temple premises in Varanasi.

Jagan’s focus shifts to Vizag capital

In a meeting held on Friday night, the Chief Minister reviewed the progress of development works in Visakhapatnam. Architect Bimal Patel participated in the meeting.

It may be recalled that Jagan had recently asked the officials to put the prioritised projects of Visakhapatnam on fast track. They include starting of works on the Bhogapuram airport,

beach corridor, diversion of Godavari waters from Polavaram to Visakhapatnam through pipeline and Metro rail project. The Chief Minister directed the officials to consider the beach

corridor project as first prioritised project and start the works on a war-footing. He said that the beach road should be developed as the best tourist spot on par with international standards.

He had directed the officials to develop connectivity between Visakhapatnam city and Bhoga-

puram airport. He said all the places should have easy access to the airport. He said the intermittent areas between Visakhapatnam city and airport should be developed.

The Chief Minister asked the officials to prepare plans integrating both the Metro and tram services.

SEB seizes ₹3 cr cash, 1.12 kg gold

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

SPECIAL Enforcement Bureau (SEB) personnel and Taluka urban police seized Rs 3.05 crore unaccounted cash and 1.12 kg gold ornaments in separate incidents at Panchalingala border check-post late on Friday. Briefing media at Ved Vyas Auditorium here on Saturday, district superintendent of police (SP) Dr Fakkeerappa Kagineelli said that one B A Chethan Kumar, a resident of Bengaluru, was carrying the amount to Chennai from Raipur in Madhya Pradesh state. Chethan, on the directions of one Arun Kumar, of Chennai, went to Raipur on March 28. From Raipur he went to Raigarh where he was handed over the huge amount, said the SP.

On April 8, he went to Bilaspur from Raigarh and after completion of work at Bilaspur, he came back to Raigarh and boarded a private travel bus to Hyderabad. From Hyderabad, Chethan again boarded a



SP Dr Fakkeerappa Kagineelli giving details of seizure of cash and gold ornaments at a press conference in Kurnool on Saturday

bus to Bengaluru with the cash. While the SEB Circle Inspector N Lakshmi Durgaiah and his staff conducted vehicle checking at Panchalingala border check-post, they detected the bag containing the cash. During investigation, Chethan said that the amount belonged to Ramachandra Medical College located in Chennai, the SP said. When the CI asked Chethan to provide valid documents pertaining to the amount, he failed to produce. With this, the CI seized

the entire amount and handed it over to Taluka urban police station. CI Vikrama Simha filed a case under Section 102 CrPC and took up investigation. The amount would be handed over to the Income Tax department personnel for initiating appropriate action, added the SP. He further said that in a span of two months, the SEB police seized Rs 8 crore cash, 25 kg gold, 12 kg silver and 500 grams of diamonds.

In a separate incident, at Pan-

chalingala check-post, the SEB personnel seized 1.12 kg gold ornaments during the vehicle checking. SP Fakkeerappa Kagineelli said two persons, Koppara Sreekanth and Koppara Nagasinga Rao, both residents of Banjara Hills in Hyderabad, were carrying the ornaments to Kurnool. According to them, the two are working as sales executives/logistics department at PMJ Gems and Jewellers in Hyderabad. Acting on the directions of Kushal Jain, the owner of PMJ Gems and Jewellers, 55 small golden ornaments, weighing 1.12 kg worth Rs 55.71 lakh were being taken to PMJ Jewellers at Venkataramana colony in Kurnool, said the SP.

While conducting vehicle checking at Panchalingala border check-post, the SEB CI N Lakshmi Durgaiah and his staff found the ornaments. As the duo failed to produce documents, the ornaments were seized and case was referred to Taluka urban police station for further action.

Uddhav hints at lockdown

Continued from P1

“Though no formal decision on a lockdown has been taken at the all-party meeting, the Chief Minister appears to be in favour of a strict lockdown,” State BJP president Chandrakant Patil said, while speaking to the media after the virtual meeting, in which the State’s Covid-19 situation was discussed for over two hours.

Meanwhile, on the first day of the weekend lockdown imposed across Maharashtra in view of the rising number of Covid-19 cases, streets wore a deserted look in many parts of Mumbai. Police set up barricades at places like Link Road near Ghatkopar bus depot. There were people lining up only in front of wine shops in certain places. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has permitted citizens, who are eligible to get the Covid jab, to travel only to the vaccination centres and back during lockdown. With all non-essential supply shops shut, S V Road near Andheri Station (West) was empty throughout the day. Places such as Andheri-Kurla Link Road or Dadar flower market, which witness heavy footfalls during the day, were empty on Saturday.

Onus is on we, the people, to rein in Covid

The opinion 'Do we care about Covid anymore? We better do' expressed by Ramu Sarma is a clear disquisition about today's indolent behaviour of our people and the health care taken by our ancestors. If I mention my views, it would be nothing but redundant. I do not feel shy to state a fact in olden days that women during their menstrual period were allotted a separate room and food, water and other frugal needs were exclusively supplied there itself. Washrooms were built outside the house. New-born babies were fed with breast milk and sometimes with luke-warm castor oil to set right the bowel function.

No medicines were used for every ailment. Kitchen kit is the best medicine box even today. Gout, bile and phlegm are evidently cured with Ayurvedic mixtures which used to enhance immunity power for longer period. But disbelief prevailed in present generation on applied scientific methods adopted by our illiterate grandmothers. Those days have gone into history.

Patients taking admission in corporate hospitals are now shifting to government hospitals following massive billings beyond their wallet weight. Created fears have abdicated many including learned from taking shots. Now vaccine shortage is another impediment. Adhering to safety protocols is a must even after taking two doses. Though we all know well that we have emerged from dust and finally merge with dust. In between there is long life to live with the great wealth of health.

The grimy ogress in the form of corona virus can easily be exorcised if people stand united with steadfast determination and perseverance. Are people joining on this platform? No. That is the reason for rising the virus uncontrollably. If people do not give up their slumber attitude, vaccines, lockdowns, fines, jails worshipping at temples, etc. can never safeguard us. As rightly pointed, one cannot throw responsibility on God for the misdeeds committed by us. How long we are in the jaws of shark of infatuation? Listen to their heart-rending wails. Let us make our own laws of surpassing safety records instead of looking for state laws.

N Ramalakshmi, Secunderabad

Vaccinate, don't play politics

The write-up by V Ramu Sarma on the rapid Covid spread across the country is apt and this should serve as an eye-opener to both the government and the people that more than vaccination, strictly following Covid norms can only help drive away the pandemic. But it should not be one-way because frequent political gatherings addressed by lawmakers in the run-up to polls have been flouting all rules and norms to the detriment of people by laying down restrictions over religious and private social gatherings. Agreed that vaccine drive straining led to many states complaining vaccine shortages even as second wave accelerates is irrational but at the same time one must understand that inoculating 130 crore people within a reasonable period is unattainable taking into logistics of availability of doses and every other aspect into account. The fact that India has administered just over 5 crore vaccine doses so far with many around the world hailed and acknowledged India's vaccination programme is appreciable, it is only short lived because the rising cases and corresponding increase in death cases explain that lot much need to be done to protect the entire population from virus.

For this, government turning a blind eye to political gatherings and not been strict to people violating the Covid norms but prompt in issuing regular bulletins prescribing placing curbs on guests to be allowed for social gatherings like marriage etc and official meetings is a recipe for disaster but still maintains silence over it confusing people who adhere to "chalta hai" attitude blissfully unaware of the consequences. Notwithstanding the fact that centre cannot take cover by vaccine rationing and night curfews amidst surging covid cases, even imposing lockdowns that badly hurts livelihoods of the poor and sagging economy only amounts to bad decision-making is not advisable by any yardstick.

Though the mass vaccination



Let's practice what we preach

Do we care about Covid anymore? We better do... by Ramu Sarma (THI 10 April) was indeed a timely call for we citizens and concluding lines "Let's wake up and follow the Covid protocols, protect ourselves and our family" should be our motto along with motivating fellow beings. We all should remember that when it comes to rules framed by rulers, it's one nation but two rules, the one to implement on us strictly and one for rulers who can do and act the way they want.

For the rulers, election, power is more important than saving the lives of voters and we can't help as the majority would not stand by few who would have wanted the elections to be postponed for six months or more so that the entire government machinery can focus on tackling the

beginning in early January this year on a war footing was a good attempt to defeat the pandemic, but as seen at present, Covid is outpacing the rate of vaccination, therefore, the government taking a cue from U.S. about the gamut of vaccine operation speed without funding for vaccine companies to ramp up production cannot serve the purpose. However, to the dismay of everyone, second wave grips the nation with a spike in daily covid-19 cases while predicting that it might reach the peak in second half of April has naturally sent shivers in the spine of everyone who were expecting the beginning of the end of covid-19 after it broke the backbone of economy of India resulting in immense sufferings to all sections.

Indeed the global focus to battle the new variants and study on double mutant are underway, what is more worrying is vaccination done is sluggish even in high-risk areas where global covid contact rate has risen sharply and daily count growing rapidly due to crowding in educational institutions, markets, public transport and public places etc.

Thus the surge in cases necessitating the government to revise vaccination guidelines by allow-



spread of the virus. Sadly instead of allowing a state like Maharashtra to tackle, a game is on to topple. Even our court has ruled that a single traveling in a car is obliged to wear a mask like a seat belt but not those seeking votes can move around any number of time

ing jabs for anyone over 45 years is a right step forward. But at the same time, what is prime need at this critical phase is flexibility to see more inoculation done within a short period and not playing politics and indulging in blame-game by parties to score brownie points in the local and state polls

along with large groups whether it's a public meeting, roadshows, door to door.

When asked by a journalist, a BJP spokesperson in West Bengal why they are not campaigning with mask, she promptly replies that people want to see their face and ask-

which are underway. Since how big and as to how long the second wave lasts is still unknown, therefore, preparedness is the only best weapon to defeat the pandemic. Therefore, it is all the more important that placing strict curbs on potent super spreaders besides masking, test-

ing them to remove it. Obviously, the leaders have no guts to ask the voter in turn to wear a mask. When the Country's Home Minister is asked why they are addressing a huge crowd, he has no qualm in saying we did not ask them to come, people are coming on their own.

Our leaders are only good at preaching and not practicing. When it comes to vaccination, instead of focusing on providing one for all, we are being made to be part of what is now called "Teeka Utsav" (Vaccine festival) and on the other hand, we are told its festivals with large gatherings is one of the many reasons for the spike in cases. It is time for people like us to remember there is no Gandhiji like a leader who practiced first before preaching, so let us wake up.

S Natarajan, New Delhi

Public distancing is a must

'Do we care about Covid anymore? We better do...by Ramu Sarma (April 10) has an epitome like saying, no pandemic can be controlled unless there is people's participation, and the survey he quoted that only about 40-45 per cent are wearing masks and the Govt allowed 100 per cent occupancy in cinema theatres, bars and pubs in full scale besides politicians are indulging in public meetings speak of our failures.

It's far from established scientific protocols that vaccine protocols are rushing through cutting short standardisation. In a year we've administered vaccine in two doses, without



the full trials and even two doses on doctor couple in Lucknow didn't prevent them get Covid again after they resumed their clinical practice.

It indicates that public distancing is the foremost rather than vaccine.

Dr T Ramadas, Visakhapatnam

Beware of asymptomatic status

This has reference to your thought-provoking article "Do we care about COVID anymore?" (April 10). It is clear that now the coronavirus has become more dangerous than before. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has denied the possibility of complete lockdown, but the worsening situation has also raised the concerns of the government. COVID-19 has severely affected the health system of the country and the number of patients reaching the hospital is increasing every day.

The pace at which second wave is spreading shows how new strains of coronavirus are making it difficult to contain spread. Asymptomatic Covid patients are a riskier lot. The second wave of coronavirus is said to have brought new symptoms of the infection. While the usual symptoms of COVID-



19 include fever, body ache, loss of smell and taste, chills, breathlessness, several studies are suggesting that red eyes, gastrointestinal conditions, and hearing impairment should not be taken lightly as they might also be a result of contracting the

virus. Majority of the patients in this second wave are asymptomatic. Earlier, the symptoms were visible in the patients and it was easy to identify and quarantine them. But identification of patients with no symptoms is

difficult without a test. The second Covid-19 wave is more infectious and is spreading at a faster pace as compared to the first wave that hit India last year. It is reported that even after receiving the vaccine, one could still get infected by the coronavirus variants. The AIIMS chief reassured that the vaccines would work against the new strains, albeit with a lower efficacy.

It is reported that India now has all three of the coronavirus variants that have caused a massive resurgence of cases globally — B.1.1.7, first discovered in the United Kingdom; B.1.351, dominant in South Africa; and P.1, from Brazil. One imagination fails to understand as to why the pandemic is spreading? This is because of negligence on part of the people.

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit, Ahmedabad

PAST AND PRESENT

Parenting of yore



N J RAVI CHANDER

PARENTING comes with its joys and travails. Recently I witnessed a modern-day mother struggling to rein in her two young children. Besides throwing tantrums at each other, the infants had messed up the room with toys and other paraphernalia. The mother found it a tall order in tidying up the place and reining in the tiny tots. While the kids' pranks annoyed the parent, it amused me. I remembered my late mother, Padmakumari, who performed the role of mother, wife and daughter-in-law with panache.

Back in the old days, the middle-class seldom hired a maid to tend to their children. There were no creches or playschools either where parents could admit their tiny tots. Joint families were in vogue, and parents entrusted the occasional or full-time babysitting duties to a spinster aunt or the grandparents. Family lore has it that a maternal grandaunt always travelled with her elder sister's family when the army regiment in which the latter's husband served moved from one place to another.

The affluent, however, hired full-time nannies, compensating them with food and a place to stay. Many of them came from small towns and villages, and seldom returned to their homes, integrating with the family.

For the women of yore, babysitting was both an art and a science, and they revelled in it. For my siblings and me, our mother, Padmakumari, was our only babysitter. Father, M N Jayaraman's eight to two job at a defence establishment and running errands for the family kept him engaged. My mother adopted a strange but effective strategy to keep us rooted when

doing her chores. She secured one of our legs to the cot with a string, scatter puffed rice and fried grams on a newspaper, and ran her errands. The snack became our favourite home-alone treat. A baby cradle made with a saree and a lullaby sung in the mother tongue would lull infants to sleep. Mothers would also adopt this ploy during train journeys with the breeze that wafted in from the windows, driving the infants to slumber.

An older child, considered to be beyond reproach, was also given the task of looking after his younger siblings. We would not dare to step out of the house without the permission of the family elders. As the eldest child, my job was to keep my younger siblings in a huddle or ensure they did not stray away.

I would secure the entrance and exit with a bolt or latch and keep them on a tight leash. We would entertain ourselves with some fun activities to stay together and keep our spirits high.

On a clear night, we delighted in counting the stars or listening to stories reeled off by the elders as we sat on mats spread out under a guava tree.

We were in dread of the slim bamboo cane that dad trained on his errant offsprings. As we grew up, we picked up the courage to toss the sticks into the conservancy lane when dad was not around.

A new cane would take its place, but only after a furious dad let off steam and warned that he would make the miscreant pay. Our teachers also did not hesitate to spare the rod and keep us disciplined. With corporal punishment outlawed in most countries, it is now easier to run a workplace than raise a teenager!



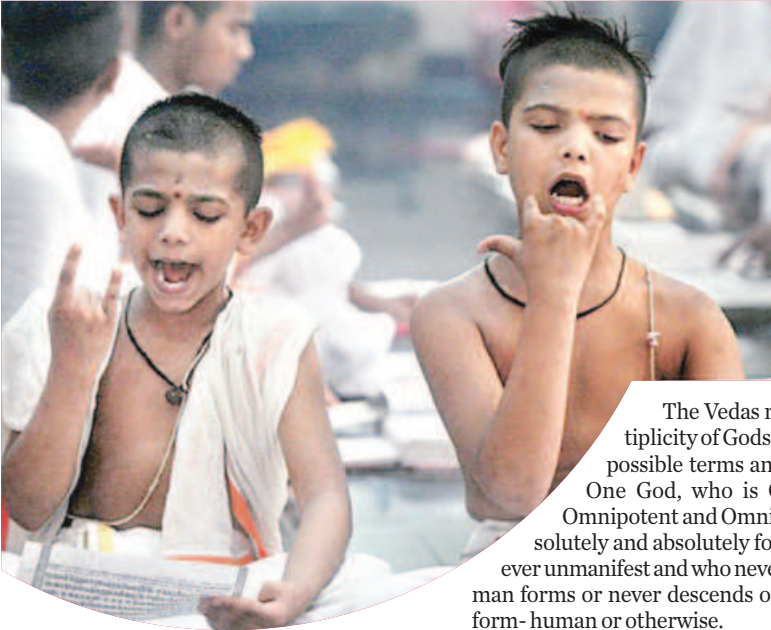
Naidu should stop being hypocritical

It is big political joke that I Chandrababu Naidu the undisputed Machiavelli of Telugu politics is criticising the present government of failure to get the special category status, for AP. It is undoubtedly like "Devil chanting Vedas." (If you can't fight for the state, quit posts, Naidu tells YSRCP MPs, THI, 10 April). In this regard, the people of AP are not forgetful, and they remember the political somersaults made by CBN very well during the crucial period from 2014 to 2019.

Having come to power, on the

promise of "SCS, as key for economic development," the CBN and his beloved BJP, have cruelly backstabbed the Telugu people and their aspirations. All lofty promises made for SCS were broken and even the statutory provisions of AP Reorganisation Act were not implemented thanks to the anti-AP policies of TDP- BJP combine. Now the ball is in the court of people and this is the right time to teach a moral lesson to the BJP and TDP on "promise keeping".

P H Hema Sagar, Secunderabad



Essence of Vedas and Upanishads

The Vedas reject the multiplicity of Gods in the clearest possible terms and speak about One God, who is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient and absolutely and absolutely formless, who is ever unmanifest and who never assumes human forms or never descends on earth in any form- human or otherwise.

In that sense, the Vedas are eternal. The Veda is divided into four great books: the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda and the Atharva-Veda. The Yajur-Veda is again divided into two parts, the Shukla and the Krishna. The division of the Vedas into four parts done by saint Ved Vyas is to suit the four stages in a man's life.

The Atharva Veda is the "knowledge storehouse of atharvaṅgas, the procedures for everyday life". The text is the fourth Veda, but has been a late addition to the Vedic scriptures of Hinduism according to some.

A legend has it that during the creation, the demons Madhu-Kaitabha stole the Vedas from Brahma, and Vishnu then took the Hayagriva form to recover them. The two bodies of Madhu and Kaitabha disintegrated into twelve pieces (two heads, two four arms and four legs).

The earliest list of the Seven Rishis is given by Jaiminiya Brahmana: Agastya, Atri, Bhardwaj, Gautam, Jamadagni, Vasishtha and Vishvamitra followed by Brihadaranyaka Upanishad with a slightly different list: Gautama and Bharadwaj, Shandilya and Jamadagni, Vasishtha and Kashyap and Atri, Bhṛugu. The word Brahmin translates to 'Supreme Self' or the first of the gods. Brahmin is the highest Varna in Vedic Hinduism.

Some say, Vedas came in 5000 BC and then Puranas came after that. According to modern research: Rigveda is the oldest of all Vedic scriptures. According to Vedic scriptures itself, all the Vedic scriptures are eternal and appeared from Supreme person. Each Veda consists of four parts: The Mantra-Samhitas or hymns, the Brahmanas or explanations of Mantras or rituals, the Aranyakas, and the Upanishads.

Upanishads are last bit of Vedas. However typically by Veda people mean Veda Samhita - assuming that's the spirit of the question, Vedas came much before Upanishads. For most authentic Vedas, one must rely only on person who is most learned scholar of Vedika Sanskrit, has devotion to Vedas, read it from a highly learned Sanskrit scholar, and devoted his whole life to Vedas learning and preaching. Swami Dayananda Saraswati perhaps tops among such holy persons.

An analysis of the material in the Vedas reveals that, all the four Vedas replete the references regarding various aspects of medicine.

The Atharva Veda is deemed to be an encyclopaedia for medicine and Ayurveda (the science of life) is considered as Upa Veda (supplementary subject) of the Atharva Veda.

India is the only country that has a caste system. Brahminical canon says the fourfold varna system is as old as creation. The Rig Veda says that the gods created it by sacrificing the primal Purusha. His mouth became the Brahmin, his arms, Kshatriyas, his thighs, Vaishyas, and his feet became Shudras.

Vyasa is a central and revered figure in most Hindu traditions. He is also sometimes called Veda Vyas the one who divided the Vedas into four parts. Yoga is mentioned in the Rigveda, and also referred in the Upanishads.

For any time period, for any civilisation, it is essential that people in the society should possess absolute knowledge for a meaningful and purposeful existence. No society, people or country can ever live without proper knowledge. The Vedas are a storehouse of knowledge from the God himself. They are the greatest body of knowledge ever known to mankind. They are eternal and hence are always relevant to the world. The World may undergo changes as per the times, but the ultimate Truth will not change. It is all pervading, omnipresent and omnipotent like the idea of God himself!

Due to the peculiar historical past that India had, the relevance and teaching of the Vedas became almost extinct. For centuries together, due to the rule of the invaders, we are fed with everything that is not ours. We were made to believe the trial-and-error method. We were taught that the present western civilization is the epitome of all human learning, knowledge, progress and understanding. We were made to study the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Mesopotamia but never about the Vedic culture, the most ancient, advanced, glorious and ever relevant culture that ever graced the planet.

We made to believe that science means modern science, history means the modern history; medicine means the modern medicine as they were evolved in the west. The emphasis till date is on the empirical data and knowledge but not the complete knowledge in its purest form.

The Vedas contain everything, spiritual, scientific and intellectual knowledge. From life and death to nature's secrets. Reading the Vedas with an open mind and understanding gives one answers to questions that have no answers from the modern knowledge. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are the essence of Vedas. Moksha is considered the highest goal of human life. Moksha is impossible without acquiring the knowledge of Absolute Reality. Vedas form the basis of our philosophical knowledge.

‘The Gopichand Factor’ flatters to deceive

VISHNU MAKHJANI

HERO or hurdle? That's the question one is left wondering after reading "The Gopichand Factor" (Westland) given author Abhijeet Kulkarni's praising sky high only the second Indian to win the All-England badminton title but also grudgingly admitting how he has been an impediment to the game while being the Chief National Coach for the past 14 years while simultaneously running his private training academy - leading to repeated charges of a huge conflict of interest.

"Only time will tell whether India can become a world badminton superpower like China, Japan and Korea in the near future. But the first two decades of this century have definitely transformed the country's most popular recreational sport into an aspirational career option.

"And the credit for that definitely goes to Gopichand and his band of racket-wielding champions," Kulkarni writes in the Introduction.

At the same time, "the mistrust between Gopichand and the BAI (Badminton Association of India) has currently reached a level where neither of them is willing to take a single step towards resolution, and that is threatening to derail the whole process. Things are unlikely to move in the right direction till one of the two budes," Kulkarni writes in the concluding chapter titled "Challenges And The Way Forward" of the 206-page book. It's true that Gopichand has won a host of awards, including the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna and the Padma Bhushan and that his academy has produced several badminton players including Saina Nehwal, PV. Sindhu, Sai Praneeth, Parupalli Kashyap, Srikanth Kidambi, Arundhati Pantawane, Gurusai Datt and Arun Vishnu.

But it also true that with Rio Olympics silver medalist PV Sindhu deciding to opt out of Gopichand academy and train with Korean coach Park Tae Sang at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium, the World Champion has followed in the footsteps of London Olympic bronze medallist Saina Nehwal, who too had walked out of the Gopichand academy a few years ago to train under U. Vimal Kumar in Bengaluru. Saina has since returned back to the city to train under Gopichand.

It has been on the cards that Sindhu would not train under Gopichand ever since she left for London to train there before returning in February. Although she has been saying all is well with Gopichand, there is no denying the fact there is not much of a good rapport between the coach and the player. Then, as is asked of any sport, where's the second line after the current crop of players are past their prime?

This has been beautifully catered for by the National Cricket Academy and the MRF Pace Foundation in the case of cricket because there is a clear separation between the trainers and the team selectors -- but not in the case of badminton, where both roles are combined in Gopichand.

Where is the second line of players, IANS asked Kulkarni in an interview.

"This is a question that I have raised many times in the past in my writing as well as my conversations with the authorities. In the last two decades, even I could have named half a dozen players capable of making the second line if groomed properly. But that did not happen," Kulkarni replied.

"We have had the likes of Siril Varma and Aditya Joshi becoming Junior World Number 1 but then they suffered injuries and are now struggling to find their footing again. While we understandably put in major amount of money and attention on our senior stars, there was a need to look after the juniors as well and that did not happen.

"For me, this is a typical flaw of our Indian system across sports. We are so happy that things are going smoothly in the present that we don't really give a proper thought to the time when things won't be going this good in the future. And it is difficult to pin the blame on either Gopichand or the BAI for this. I feel both could have worked together to create a better system to groom these juniors," Kulkarni maintained.

Thus, the major obstacle seems to be the continuing tussle between Gopichand and the BAI.

"It's quite a tricky question to answer. Things definitely began on a wrong note between the new BAI office bearers and Gopichand when they came up with the new constitutional amendment, which he felt was specifically targeted at him. Since then there have been attempts to sort out the differences on various occasions and some progress has been made.

"If you see the statements that Gopichand has given over the last one year, he is trying to make a case that as chief national coach he should have the freedom to implement a certain system regarding coaching and tournaments his way and then be held accountable for the Indian team's performances.

"The BAI obviously wants to spread the net wide, provide a level playing field to all those participating across the country when it comes to selection of coaches, players and even scheduling domestic tournaments. I think both are right in their own ways. The real need of the hour is to find a middle path that will continue to help India produce many more champion players," Kulkarni maintained.

But then, the lack of a proper coaching system and a vision for developing the next generation players is likely to haunt Indian badminton in the coming years. While senior camps are going on at the Gopichand academy, junior camps are now being held only before major tournaments and at separate venues. This means that the juniors rarely get to spar with their seniors unless they are part of the Gopichand academy or have access to quality training partners like at the PPBA (Prakash Padokone Badminton Academy) or some select centres in Bengaluru.

Kulkarni hedged on this, merely repeating that Gopichand had been demanding he be given the freedom to decide on coaching schedules and tournaments. But then, this is an issue that cannot be easily wished away. Even the Bombay High Court had taken note of the conflict of interest issue.



Ambedkar: A crusader of human rights and social justice

DR G LAKSHMISHA



THE life of Dr B R Ambedkar implies to be an apt example of this great quote of Buddha as Ambedkar all along his life stood for these values. His childhood was replete with oppression and dejection as consequence of untouchability. By realising the role of education in emancipating from these social evils, he reached the zenith of academic excellence.

Eventually his wisdom expanded to find the solution for the very cause of inequality and oppression in the society. He enchanted the principles of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity to liberate the masses from oppression. His love for humanity and human rights transformed him as a crusader to guide voiceless people of the country. On his birthday today, he is remembered as symbol of equality and social justice not only in India but also across the Globe.

If we take a bird's eye view of the life of Ambedkar, we realise that at every stage of his life, the practice of untouchability in Hindu society has haunted Bhim Rao. Though he was a better performer than his peers in studies from the school days, the caste tag kept on depriving him of the minimum privilege which the other caste children of his age groups enjoyed, be it at school or in the society. In schools, he was deprived of drinking water. He was not allowed to sit with the other children in the class.

He painfully recalls in the book 'waiting for visa' the struggles he along with his siblings had to face for availing public transport to travel from Masur railway station to Koregaon where his father was working. Then when he returned from abroad amidst his higher studies to obey the sponsored condition of Baroda king, irrespective of his educational qualification, he was restricted to availing any public accommodations owing to his caste.

On this incident he writes that 'for five years when he was abroad, the consciousness of untouchability was wiped out of his mind' but on return the situation was heart rending. Further, when he joined government office, the office staff including his clerks started looking



down on him through the caste lens. There was hardly any recognition for his knowledge in the caste prejudiced society. Instead, only caste based ill treatment was meted out to him at all stages.

The impact of these series of dispiriting incidents intensified his determination to root out the inhuman caste oppressions from the society.

Eventually, he succeeded in expounding the unnatural characteristics of the caste system on international forum at New York in 1916 by a thorough research on the caste system at the age of twenty.

Bhim Rao's thirst for knowledge was so much so that he was one among very few who has acquired the highest number of degrees covering almost all major subjects like Philosophy, History, Economics, Politics, Sociology and Law from the world famous universities. When he was in Columbia University at New York, his intellectual interest attracted him towards the then stalwarts of history, economics, philosophy and anthropology namely Prof. James Shotwell, Prof. Edwin Seligman, Prof. John Dewey and Prof. Alexander Goldeneiser who are reported to have greater impact on honing his original thought process and intellectual growth.

As the original thought process of Bhim Rao started expanding, his determination - to delve in to the problems



impeding the society from which he came from - also gained momentum. Finally his thoughts started publicising in the form of historic works like, 'Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development'; 'Ancient Indian Commerce'; 'National Dividend of India - A Historic and Analytical Study' etc. His unquenched intellectual thirst propelled him to join the London School of Economics where he did his PhD research on the subject 'The Indian Rupee'.

His work was later published as 'The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution'. The depth of Ambedkar's understanding on Indian economy was incredibly strong and demonstrative. In fact, based on his report that the 'Hilton Young Commission' recommended for the establishment of 'Reserve Bank of India' to ameliorate problem of Indian rupee. As a tribute to his legacy in economics, the contemporary economist and a Nobel laureate Prof. Amartya Sen regarded Ambedkar as his father in economics.

On social front, Ambedkar was a staunch believer of political and economic empowerment of depressed classes to achieve equality. The depressed & disadvantaged classes according to him was not only the untouchables but also the women, minority groups and tribals who had been stoically suffering due to religious

and customary practices in Indian society. His proposition of labour right, minimum working hours, maternity leave for working women, women safety at work places, Scheduled Tribes Commission under Article 342 of the Constitution are few illustrious examples of his comprehensive view on depressed & disadvantaged classes. Recognising the caste as the root cause for inequality and the main impediment for fraternity, he fought vociferously for political representation of the oppressed classes in the pre independent India which was culminated in Poona Pact reluctantly signed by him. Ambedkar internalised the democratic tenets of his professor in Columbia University Prof. John Dewey who believed democracy as way of life rather than simply a political system. He expanded and adopted Dewey's views in to the Indian context to empower the depressed class by expounding the democratic principles and convincing his opponents to embrace the fraternity as way for harmonious life.

On various occasions, he deliberated with the customary leaders and the colonial rulers against the systemic discrimination prevailing in the society and suggested the ways to overcome it. He could capture the imagination of depressed classes and marshalled the mass movements to unearth untouchability through his popular newspapers

like Mook Nayak, Bahishkrit Bharat and Equality Janta. His campaign against the archaic inhuman derogatory practice in the name of birth, purity and religion was recorded in the historic event like Mahad Satyagraha: opposing the regressive customs of depriving public water access to the untouchables.

His penchant for democratic ethos and social justice reached its pinnacle in the form of legendary constitution which makes Indian the largest democratic country in the world. The preamble which is acclaimed as the jewel set of constitution by the constituent assembly members opens up the vistas of ideals (sovereign, democratic, republic) and aspirations (Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity) which the state shall endeavour to achieve. In our Constitution, the essential components of world's finest statutes were judiciously converged to meet the country's present and future need for achieving the social justice through democratic institutions.

While his critics call constitution as just an amalgamation from all the available ones, but its novel strength is evident in continuing to keep the biggest and socio culturally diverse country intact and strong for seven decades and still on. In recognition of his achievements, leadership and authoring the Constitution of India, Columbia University conferred an honorary doctorate for his service as "a great social reformer and valiant upholder of human rights", on June 5, 1952.

Being the chief architect of India Constitution, Ambedkar always maintained that constitution should provide for individual to inculcate the spirit of scientific enquiry for the cultivation of mind to achieve the wellbeing of the society.

Through his speeches and writings we can discern that citizens should have religious freedom to choose their belief and faith. According to him, religion is not having a fixed meaning; but, it is a thought process that passes through many stages. Each stage is termed as religious thought. He believed that by birth no one knows his or her religion, upon exposure to the environment, he

or she start identifying with the belief system called religion. As the individual is capable of thinking, analysing, judging and adopting what is best for them, so the liberty should be to the individual to choose the religion as per their conscience and convictions.

Observing the role of religion in shaping the life of individual, he announced to renounce the Hinduism and explored various religious scriptures of the world before deciding to accept the Buddhism that profess reasoning, morality and equality as its principle. He believed that by embracing the teachings of Buddha, one can liberate themselves from the draconian clutches of untouchability and savour the fruits of equality.

Finally on 14th October 1956 he along with his 3,80,000 followers accepted the Buddhism at Deekshabhoomi Nagpur. Bhim Rao who hailed from a remote village with very humble background has become what his followers fondly call him as Baba Saheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar with unparalleled accomplishments that ignited the light of knowledge, equality, and fraternity among millions of Indians who have been suffering in the darkness of ignorance for centuries. In the year 1990, he was posthumously awarded with the highest civilian award 'Bharat Ratna' by the government of India. His depth of understanding of social issues is acclaimed across the world and termed him as greatest social reformer. In honoring his legacy of dedication to equality and social justice, the city of Burnaby in 2020, the Province of British Columbia in 2021 proclaimed 14 April as 'Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Equality Day'.

His strong conviction on reasoning and perpetuation of moral principle is more important than hero worshiping is evident from his famous statement "Men are mortal. So are ideas. An idea needs propagation as much as a plant needs watering.

Otherwise both will wither and die". In my opinion he is one of the finest soul who lived ordinary life while making extraordinary impact on the lives of millions of Indians in realizing the meaning and purpose of their life.

(The author is Joint Collector, East Godavari. The views and opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the organisation he is working for)

Nutraceuticals to boost economic growth

It is essential to establish parks in strategic locations of India to enable entrepreneurs in nutraceuticals to take up research

SANTOSH PATNAIK

WHAT is the status of nutraceutical industry in India?

Scientific nutrition has always been an arborvitae of India since 3300 BCE. Ayurveda is one of the most scientific ancient text on clinical nutrition and preventive health nutrition. This science took a backseat due to chronic exposure of India to foreign invasions that disrupted its progress. Meanwhile, in the early 1900s, the western world had begun to witness the newly found gold rush for vitamines. The discovery series were motivated by the principles of pharmaceuticals leading to molecular reductionist approach coupled with clinical validation methodologies. The discoveries of those times evolved into convergence of allied fields like biotechnology, agrotech, chemical engineering, pharmaceutical technologies and principles; thus fueling the onset of nutraceuticals the newly formed discipline with relatively lesser known long-term health impact but commands a unified global support that interprets to \$387 billion market.

Global nutraceutical market continues to grow at 8 per cent per annum with US commanding 60 per cent of the market share. Nutraceuticals is only going to get bigger with time as the want for preventive health turns into the need in current years. Nutraceutical sector is bound to be an integral part of any country's economic growth strategy.

How equipped is India to develop and deliver high quality, clinically validated nutraceuticals and what equity it has into the global market in the field of formulated products and ingredients?

Most of the Indian nutraceutical industry operates in cookie cutter model and has not evolved with times. India's exports in nutraceuticals is slightly below \$1.5 billion (ingredients and formulation combined). That's negligible equity into the global nutraceuticals market of \$387 billion. On other hand, India imports active ingredients and formulated nutraceuticals to the tune of \$2.3 billion. India has 108 large contract manufacturers in nutraceuticals, but none is able to tap into international projects. For India

Nutraceutical industry which is picking up in India slowly can contribute significantly in realising India's target to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2030 if the right encouragement to strengthen the ecosystem is given, opines **Amit Srivastava**, Chief Catalyst, Nutrifly India, a platform to create responsible nutrition businesses. Former CEO of Bio Valley Incubation Council at AP MedTech Zone, India's premier medical device manufacturing park coming up in Visakhapatnam, Srivastava, who is also promoting Nutrifly India Campaign, is confident of growth of nutraceutical industry. In an exclusive interview to **Bizz Buzz**, he said quadruple of growth is certainly worth a praise, but the question is who would deliver these numbers. "About 840 million citizens are calorific sufficient but malnourished. Subjecting absolute majority of population to stress in order to achieve \$10 trillion economy would open up the new unknown challenge of managing lifestyle diseases that would spiral up without much of controls. With the growing population, information access, increasing spend power, the emerging 'need' to stay healthy - the nutraceuticals in India is bound to have a robust growth for next few decades, he said



regulators distant from effective enforcements. This has resulted in some nutraceutical/syurveda companies indulging in deviated claims and practices bringing in loss of trust and disrespect to the industry.

Which State has taken lead in creating a vision for the promotion of the industry?

For nutraceutical parks to evolve, it is important that State Governments have vision and own up to host the ecosystem park. Telangana is taking huge steps in creating ecosystems for various components of healthcare including creating an incubation park for nutraceutical industry.

Are you happy with awareness level on patenting?

Awareness is negligible. People are learning out of accidents. There are two reasons for slow pick up viz. easy access to information and lackadaisical approach to patent. It's often not perceived as urgent in startup community. In 100 startup survey in nutra, 72 per cent were still planning to patent their work. The planning has no end date!

How do you see the future of Andhra Pradesh in general and Visakhapatnam in particular in R&D of nutraceuticals?

I am very bullish on the State of Andhra Pradesh and Vizag has potential to become nutraceutical hub of India. The reasons are strong pharma industry base, availability of trained manpower in pharma, phyto chemicals and food techs resources, port connectivity, proposed metropolis and IT hubs required for convergence technologies in Nutra. I had tried my best in my personal capacity to make Vizag the nutraceutical hub. I am still excited to do so. We have strong relation with education and research institutes in Vizag and support students by way of interns and employment. Some of the success stories in Vizag where Nutrifly Today has added value are Nanoveda, Akkrivis (Vizag), Esperer, EzeRx, Herbahive (Guntur), Sadgama Biosciences- Vizag. As Nutrifly Today grows larger, we will do our bit to support Vizag in becoming the nutraceutical hub of India.

Taj Tea launches new TV commercial

HANS BUSINESS

HYDERABAD

HUL's Brooke Bond has unveiled its new TV commercial (TVC) 'Fursat Waali Chai' of Taj Mahal tea, featuring the classical vocalist, Nirali Kartik.

The new TVC will also feature the soulful music created by Rag Asa Mand. The music lifts the film and highlights the theme of finding magic in solitude. This poetic amalgamation of classical music, a moment of



solitude, and an ever-deglitful cup of Taj Mahal tea are all things that arrest audiences' minds and create a sense of belonging in their hearts.

"For 30 years, Brooke Bond Taj Mahal has promoted Indian classical music through memorable and iconic advertising. Through our latest TVC, we urge people to steal moments from their hectic lives and revel in their own company. Nothing could evoke that feeling better than a cup of Taj Mahal tea and the soulful rendition of Asa Mand by Nirali Kartik," said Shiva Krishnamurthy, vice president, Tea and Foods (HUL). "This is a film for the senses. It is a romantic expression of every tea lover's alone time with their best cup of tea. Music runs through the blood of this brand and will always be a very carefully crafted piece. Nirali Kartik's voice and Prakash Varma's vision transport us to some magical moments in this film," said Harshad Rajadhyaksha and Kainaz Karmakar, chief Creative officer, Ogilvy India.

Plan to revisit world history unveiled

The Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Chairman of the Royal Commission for AIUla, has launched "The Journey Through Time Masterplan" for AIUla, Saudi Arabia to rejuvenate the history of the world. This masterplan will immerse visitors in 2,00,000 years of natural and human history. The master plan sets out a 15-year programme to sustainably develop the core historical area of AIUla, in north-west Arabia.

Key features of the plan are: Five districts spanning the 20km heart of AIUla will serve as waypoints on the Journey Through Time, from Old Town in the south to Hegra Historical City in the north, each shaped by the site's natural and cultural heritage. The districts will each focus on an existing heritage site and will be traversed by AIUla's ancient oasis. Fifteen new cultural assets including museums, galleries and cultural centres will serve as landmarks across each district. A 46km low-carbon tram line will connect AIUla International Airport to the five districts. It will mostly follow the route used by pilgrims on the Hijaz Railway. The Kingdoms Institute, a flagship component of the plan, will be a global hub for archaeological knowledge and research dedicated to the cultures and civilisations that have inhabited this area for more than 7,000 years.

The Journey Through Time Masterplan was developed under the leadership of the Crown Prince and the guidance of Prince Badr, the Saudi Minister of Culture and the Governor of the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), according to a media release.

The plan contributes to the advancement of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, opening a new chapter in the development of AIUla as a living museum while accelerating the growth of a diversified economy and vibrant community.

How to combat mental health crises

The stigma around mental illnesses can be best countered if we accept our complicity in creating the conditions which cause them



Viveck Verma

INDIA and the world today are grappling with mental illnesses on an unprecedented scale. The Economic Times reports that according to an estimate by the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental illness makes about 15 per cent of the total disease conditions around the world and the same estimate also suggests that India has one of the largest populations affected from mental illness. While there is a palpable conversation around mental health today, there is also a heavy reliance on quick fixes and superficial declarations and assurances. There is next to no discussion on consequential matters such as the labour and resources to be directed towards ailing people, policy changes by the government and building a communitarian culture where stigmas against mental illnesses are countered.

In 2020, as India witnessed several lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic and while only a fraction of the millions afflicted with mental health troubles sought help in a pre-pandemic scenario, therapy shifted online and became distant and inaccessible to many. News18 documented stories of individuals who complained about online therapy sessions being expensive for the service they provided. Government help lines were flooded with calls. While the pandemic did worsen the mental health statistics on the whole, it also highlighted our general lack of preparedness to deal with such crises.

The cultural dimension to the situation is equally significant. Social media is inundated with people's declarations of being available for help and support during difficult times for mental well-being and yet, these have amounted to a shallow impact in the absence of real effort and open conversations. Mentally healthy individuals, in a privileged position, create an insurmountable path to being 'normal', consolidating the divide, as an ailing individual, with his/her/their respective trajectories in life is less likely to feel safe in the company of 'normal' people. There are consis-



part of the normal lives we lead. Our everyday situations are the breeding grounds for mental illnesses and once we start looking at how societal normalcy itself produces stress and discomfort, people will be more likely to open up about signs of depression, anxiety and other problems.

We must alter our responses to mental health issues and put an end to patterns where individuals are called "deranged" and "lunatic". 'Madness' is culturally dubbed as shameful and that prevents an appropriate and sensitive examination of mental health distress. The stigma around mental illnesses can be best countered if we accept our complicity in creating the conditions which cause them. From that acknowledgement, we can build safe spaces for healing, reflection and empathy.

The next step is to build mechanisms for the nation-state and the society to cope with this enormous crisis. Greater funding and resource allocation must be demanded of governments, which should result in a larger number of people engaged in running mental health help lines and services. There should be consistent review of therapy and rules must be placed in order to protect individual privacy. Infrastructural changes are a must as well- Research Matters reported how a parliamentary questionnaire in 2019 revealed that India has only 43 government mental hospitals spread across 21 states and among the union territories, only Delhi has a solitary mental hospital, while smaller states like Uttarakhand have none. As citizens, we need to demand this situation to be remedied with greater diverting of resources to set up adequate mental health facilities across the country.

On the whole, there is a pressing need to move beyond our obsolete, insubstantial and misdirected efforts to counter mental health crises. An aware, sensitive, empathetic citizenry which invests in action and in walking the talk can be crucial in realizing positive changes in the mental health landscape of India.

(The author is founder, Upsurge Global, and Senior Advisor, Telangana State Innovation Council)

QUIZ NO. 168

HANS BIZ QUIZ

45 Years of Apple-1 Computer



- When was the first Apple computer, 'Apple Computer 1' and known later as the 'Apple I' released?
a) 13 April 1974
b) 12 April 1978
c) 11 April 1976
d) 9 April 1975
- Which Co-founders of Apple Inc designed and hand-built Apple's first computer, 'Apple I'?
a) Steve Jobs
b) Ronald Wayne
c) Steve Wozniak
d) All of the above
- Steve Wozniak perceived that repeating digits look attractive and may bring luck. At what price did 'Apple I' went on sale when it was released in the 1970s?
a) \$333.33
b) \$449.90
c) \$555.55
d) \$666.66
- The first 'Apple-1' computer was assembled in Steve Jobs' garage. How many pieces of 'Apple 1' computers manufactured till now?
a) 200
b) 83,000
c) 3,50,000
d) 1.5 Million
- There are just seventy-nine 'Apple I' computers that have been said to exist now. Less than five computers have been confirmed to be in working condition. How many Apple-1 computers were sold to date by Apple Inc?
a) 11, 16, 484
b) 2,17,894
- 24,138
d) 175
- In 2014, which of the below bought an Apple-1 computer for \$905,000 at auction?
a) Michigan Science Center, Detroit, Michigan,
b) The Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan
c) Computer History Museum, Mountain View, California
d) Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan
- Apple released an updated version of its desktop computer, the Apple-II, discontinuing the Apple-1. In which year the Apple-1 computers were discontinued?
a) 1977
b) 1979
c) 1981
d) 1982
- Identify the owner of the computer shop who convinced Jobs and Wozniak to sell prebuilt computers instead of selling the circuit board in parts that customers could assemble?
a) Paul Babbage
b) Paul Wesley
c) Paul Terrell
d) Paul Neumann
- Identify the Mountain View, California-based computer store that sold one-fourth of the Apple-1 computers?
a) Computer City
b) Byte Shop
c) ComputerLand
d) Early Tech Retail
- Apple-1 computers were built with the configuration - MOS 6502 @ 1 MHz CPU, 4 KB standard memory, Graphics - 40x24 characters, hardware-implemented scrolling. How much storage did Apple-1 offer?
a) 512kb
b) 456kb
c) 256kb
d) 128kb

The Hans Biz Quiz has been compiled by **Sunil Dhavala**, CEO, The Third Umpire Media. He had held senior management roles at Bertelsmann, NGC, Fox Broadcasting, Star TV and others. He is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

KEY

10B 9B 8C 7A 6D 5D 4A 3D 2C 1C



Indian Premier League

Strong SRH to take on Morgan-led KKR

CHENNAI

WITH pace bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar back in their ranks, SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH) will take on Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the third match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) at the MA Chidambaram Stadium here on Sunday night.

The Hyderabad franchise, though more powerful and well-rounded and having qualified for play-offs last year, have an inferior head-to-head record against their Kolkata counterparts.

SRH have won just seven of the 19 encounters between them and have lost 12.

However, man to man in all departments, they look far stronger than Eoin Morgan's KKR. David Warner and Jonny Bairstow have put up several century partnerships for SRH. Bairstow has been in great form and is already warmed up after success in the recent limited-overs series against India.

The return of India pace bowler Bhuvneshwar will strengthen their bowling attack, which already has the likes of Rashid Khan, Jason Holder and T Natarajan.

Bhuvneshwar missed a part of last year's IPL due to an injury. The right-arm pace bowler did well in the recent limited-overs series against England.

The SRH pace attack as well as spin attack will be a challenge for KKR who struggled with their batting in the last IPL season in the UAE.

KKR's hard-hitting all-rounder Andre Russell failed to get going with the bat and that had a massive impact on their batting.



A lot will depend on skipper Eoin Morgan, batsmen Shakib Al Hasan and Shubman Gill as well as Russell if KKR are to score big in the first match of the tournament against a strong SRH bowling line-up.

KKR's strongest point is their bowling, especially the spin bowling attack. They have also included Harbhajan Singh to Sunil Narine, Varun Chakravarthy, Kuldeep Yadav and Shakib.

Pat Cummins will lead their bowling and Russell mixes the deliveries well. It is their batting though which will have to rise to the occasion.

COVID 'negative' report must to witness IPL in Wankhede

MUMBAI: The Mumbai Cricket Association has asked its Apex Council members to produce a COVID-19 negative certificate in order to enter the Wankhede stadium, which will host 10 matches of the 14th edition of the Indian Premier League.

The first game at the iconic stadium in South Mumbai will be held on Saturday evening when Chennai Super Kings square off with Rishabh Pant led Delhi Capitals.

"Dear Apex Council members. As per BCCI's protocol, all the officials who would be attending the IPL 2021 matches at Wankhede Stadium are required to produce a Negative report of RT-PCR test conducted within 48 hours of the match day," MCA secretary Sanjay Naik, wrote in a note to all the members.

"The tests are mandatory even for those who have been vaccinated. The report will have to be produced at the time of entry to the stadium on each match day. "Hence you are requested to get yourself tested at your end and carry the negative report to the stadium on match day."

In the build up to the IPL, 10 groundsmen at the Wankhede stadium had tested positive for COVID, but most of them had later tested negative. Then two more groundsmen, and a plumber had tested positive for COVID-19. (PTI)

SQUADS

KKR: Andre Russell, Sunil Narine, Kuldeep Yadav, Shubman Gill, Nitish Rana, Tim Seifert, Rinku Singh, Andre Russell, Sandeep Warrier, Prashid Krishna, Rahul Tripathi, Varun Chakravarthy, Shakib Al Hasan, Sheldon Jackson, Vaibhav Arora, Harbhajan Singh, Karun Nair, Ben Cutting, Venkatesh Iyer and Pawan Negi.

SRH: David Warner (C), Kane Williamson, Virat Singh, Manish Pandey, Priyam Garg, Wriddhiman Saha, Jonny Bairstow, Jason Roy, Sreevats Goswami, Vijay Shankar, Mohammad Nabi, Kedar Jadhav, J Suchit, Jason Holder, Abhishek Sharma, Abdul Samad, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Rashid Khan, T Natarajan, Sandeep Sharma, Khaleel Ahmed, Siddharth Kaul, Basil Thampi, Shahbaz Nadeem and Mujeeb ur Rahman.

CHENNAI

I knew my role for RCB from time I was traded by DC, says Harshal

HARSHAL Patel was told well in advance that he will be death overs' 'pointsman' for Royal Challengers Bangalore, a role he played to perfection in the IPL opener against Mumbai Indians.

Harshal's career-best 5 for 27 was one of the two match-winning performances for RCB with the other coming from AB de Villiers. "When I was traded from Delhi Capitals, I was

told what role I will play for the franchise," the Haryana pacer said at the post-match press conference on Friday.

He was brilliant at the death and just like skipper Virat Kohli said, Harshal also knew that he is expected to perform the tough job for which he had planned meticulously.

"There were clear instructions that I will be bowling in the last two overs (he bowled 18th and 20th). That gave me a lot of clarity. It helped me prepare certain plans against batters and kept my preparations concise."

Harshal said that change of pace and

the slow yorkers have been his biggest strength. "The ball started reversing at one stage. It was important to bowl the Yorkers and slower balls," he said.

According to Harshal, he has been bowling those slower yorkers that got rid of Ishan Kishan and Marco Jansen, for almost two seasons now. "Just that when you don't get wickets of slow yorkers, people don't tend to see that. I always had the yorker but earlier couldn't take it into the game. He did a lot of simulation of bowling yorkers during training session to get it right during the match. (PTI)

Tourney director of U-17 Women's World Cup in India quits

NEW DELHI

THE tournament director of the Local Organising Committee for the FIFA U-17 Womens World Cup India 2022 and the AFC Womens Asian Cup India 2022, Roma Khanna, stepped down on Saturday citing personal reasons.

Khanna, who spearheaded the U-17 Women's World Cup bid and was later appointed its tournament director, also successfully led the bid for the AFC Women's Asian Cup to be hosted by India in January.

"Roma has been associated with the AIFF for 10 years. On behalf of the AIFF (All India Football Federation), I would like to thank Roma for her leadership and her contribution towards Indian football which included a variety of things including setting up the club licensing system in the I-League, heading venue operations across six cities during the FIFA U-17 World Cup in 2017, and successfully bidding for two women's football tournaments," said AIFF general-secretary Kushal Das.

Anshu, Sonam qualify for Tokyo Games; door shut on Sakshi

ALMATY (KAZAKHSTAN)

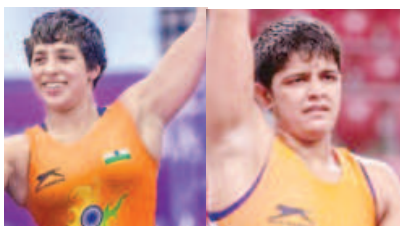
INDIA'S young wrestlers Anshu Malik and Sonam Malik produced impressive performances in the Asian Olympic Qualifiers here on Saturday to qualify for the Tokyo Games.

Anshu, 19, and Sonam, 18, making a steady transition from the junior to the senior circuit, joined senior pro Vinesh Phogat (53kg) in making the Olympics cut. India now have three women wrestlers, who will now fight for glory at the Summer Games.

Vinesh had qualified through the 2019 World Championship. Overall, India now have seven wrestlers who have qualified for the upcoming Games. Among men, Bajrang Punia (65kg), Ravi Dahiya (57kg) and Deepak Punia (86kg) have qualified in the men's free style event.

While Anshu was dominant in 57kg competition, Sonam's resilience eventually helped her secure the quota and shut the door on Rio Olympic medallist Sakshi Malik. Sonam announced her arrival by defeating Sakshi four times in recent trials, making the 62kg category her own.

Such was Anshu's dominance that she conceded only two points en route the final, winning all her three bouts by technical superiority. She began by beating Korean Jieun Um, then outsmarted Kazak wrestler Emma Tissina and in the semifinal she beat Uzbekistan's Shokhida



Akhmedova. Sonam edged China's Jia Long 5-2 before winning by technical superiority against Hsin Ping Pai of Taipei.

In the semifinal, she trailed 0-6 against Kazakhstan's Ayaulym Kassymova but reeled of nine points in a row to secure herself the quota. "She has shown that she is ready for the senior circuit. Look what she has done. People had said that she is still at the cadet level but the consistent victories against Sakshi has boosted her confidence," Sonam's personal coach Ajmer Malik told PTI.

"She does not lose confidence or hope now even after conceding points. We are proud of her," Ajmer, who runs Netaji Subash Chander Sports Institute at Village Madina in Sonapat district, said.

Seema Bisla lost all her three bouts to go out of race in 50kg while Nisha came close to securing quota in 68kg but threw away a 3-1 lead to lose the semifinal by technical superiority against Kyrgyzstan's Meerim Zhumanazarova. Meerim outsmarted the Indian with her 'fitley' (leg lace) attack. (PTI)

FC Goa's ACL qualification an important step forward for Indian football

GOA

INDIAN Super League (ISL) club FC Goa players feel Indian football has climbed several notches and that the team's qualification for the AFC Champions League (ACL) Group Stage is an offshoot of that success.

The Goan club will take on Qatar's Al Rayyan in the opening match on April 14 in Goa. FC Goa had created history by becoming the first Indian club to qualify for the AFC Champions League Group Stage by virtue of finishing at the top of the ISL table in 2019-20.

"It's a very important step for us. It's not going to be easy. We are not just representing Goa, we are representing the whole country," said goalkeeper Dheeraj Singh Moirangthem, who was part of India's FIFA U-17 World Cup squad in 2017.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, all Group E matches of the tournament will take place in Goa and the state will play host to some top teams such as last year's runners-up Persepolis (Iran), Al-Rayyan (Qatar), and Al-Wahda (UAE), besides FC Goa.



"It's a huge achievement for the state and the country. It's more like a national representation rather than a club or state. The entire nation will be watching us as one and so we ought to give it our all," said midfielder Brandon Fernandes.

Ishan Pandita, who recently made his India debut

but in the 1-1 draw against Oman in Dubai, says it's an opportunity to make the country proud. "It's a very special feeling. It's not only Goa that we're representing but the whole nation. It's a great opportunity that we have to show Asia and the world that India can play good football," said Pandita.

India team defender, Adil Khan feels it is a "pride and privilege" for the state to host such prestigious matches in such difficult times. "We hope all football fans will back us in all our matches as we give our all, not just for Goa, but for India too." (HANS)

Australia women make clean sweep of 3-match ODI series against New Zealand

MOUNT MAUNGANUI (NZ)

AUSTRALIA women's cricket team opener Alyssa Healy slammed a 39-ball 46 while Meghan Schutt took two crucial wickets as the visitors made a clean sweep of the three-match ODI series, defeating New Zealand women by 21 runs in a rail-curtailed D/N match in Mount Maunganui on Saturday.

The 31-year-old Healy, a veteran of 78 ODIs and 118 T20 matches, smashed six boundaries during her

50-minute stay at the crease after New Zealand won the toss and decided to bowl in a match reduced to 25-over-a-side due to soggy conditions. Thanks to Healy, who was declared 'Player of the Match', and Beth Mooney (28), the visitors put up 149/7 on the board with New Zealand's Leigh Kasperek taking 3/24.

The home team's reply faltered with opener Katey Martin out for 5, and New Zealand could not quite up the tempo, losing wickets at regular inter-

vals, finally managing 128/9. Earlier, right-arm fast bowler Darcie Brown, who is fast emerging as one of the most exciting talents in Australian cricket, became the country's 144th cricketer to receive an ODI cap. She only got one over to bowl and conceded six runs.

Brief scores: Australia Women 149/7 in 25 overs (Alyssa Healy 46, Beth Mooney 28; Leigh Kasperek 3/24) beat New Zealand Women 128/9 in 25 overs (Amy Satterthwaite 20; Megan Schutt 2/22, Georgia Wareham 2/25).