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 to return home.



# Womenia



**BIPASHA BASU**  
**@BIPSLUVURSELF**

Prayers for all  
Humanity is the  
need of the hour  
Folded hands



TEJAL SINHA

The saying ‘Age is just a number, and your talent will never fail you. It has no expiry date’, goes well with the journey behind the viral dancing dadi.

Ravi Bala Sharma, is known as the dancing dadi on Instagram hails from Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh. She comes from a family with music background and was always inclined towards music. Bala shares, “My father was a musician and I have learnt from his vocal and instrumental i.e., tabla. Dance has always been my hobby.

I have learned the basics of Kathak and used to perform during the family functions. After I got married, I opened a small music coaching center. During the same, I applied for a government teachers job and was appointed as a music teacher in Delhi Government School in 1993 and got retired in 2019. My son who is an actor leaves in Mumbai. After the death of my husband, I came here in Mumbai to stay with my son. Since it was a new place, had my own difficulties. That was when I started making these videos.”

Though dance was a passion

for her since childhood, it had to take a backseat as the focus shifted to her career and family. During her childhood days, she always wanted to get into acting like Hema Malini and Madhuri Dixit. However, the family that she belonged to, this was not possible as her dad who was the only bread owner had to look after all her brother and sisters.

“For the last 30 years, family and career have been my priorities. But now that I am retired, I thought it was time to revisit my passion. Lockdown was a turning point in my life where I made my first video and that got viral. After this my kids also started motivating me to make such videos where I could show my love for dance through the 30-seconds video,” shares the mother of two.

Making these dance videos was never a part of the list that Bala wanted to do. It was during an online competition when she uploaded her first ever dance video which went viral. Bala as of now has around 128k followers on her Instagram.

She adds, “I never knew that there would be such a huge positive response on my video. Since viewers liked what they saw of a childhood passion, I thought why not make the most

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Sharma

of it? That’s when I decided to make more videos. My kids also motivated me to go ahead and follow what my heart says.”

Her videos have not only won hearts of her fans but also celebrities such as singer and actor Diljith Dosanjh, Bollywood choreographer Terence Lewis and filmmaker Imtiaz Ali. For Bala it was a dream come true to receive compliments, loving and sharing her videos on social media. She believes that never in her dreams, she thought that such huge personalities would share her video on their Instagram page.

“This moment was the biggest and unexpected award in my life. I think I have proved that age is just a number and you can get recognition at any stage of your life,” she adds.

For Bala, dancing is a way to stay fit both mentally and physically. She believes that it is very important to have a positive attitude in life, especially for those who are in their 60+. Reiterating that age shouldn’t set a bar to what one can achieve, the 62-year-old believes one should be at liberty to pursue whatever makes them happy

“Most people of my age talk about joint pains, cholesterol and many other age-related diseases. I think having a positive outlook is the key to fighting such ailments. Be it drawing, painting, or cooking, doing what you have a passion for is such an enriching experience. For many people, I am a source of motivation, a ‘Rockstar Dadi’. Hearing such comments is a fulfilment in itself. There might be people who think that I have always been happy and things have always been easy for me. That’s not true. I have faced my share of hardships and had to overcome them. To that end, my passion, my dancing helped a lot,” ends Rockstar Dadi.

## Have a healthy glowing skin

BEAUTY FUNDA

Skin care is not just the use of products to cleanse and moisturize the skin. Normal skin tends to not have oily or dry patches and it is well balanced. Such skin looks radiant and smooth with minimal blemishes. People with oily skin on the other hand need to be a little careful as the excess oils and impurities can clog the pores that can lead to breakouts. Those with dry skin are prone to dry skin patches that can get irritated. Pores generally feel tight and skin is stripped off of its radiance, making it look lifeless.

### Period skin is real

Everyone’s skin suffers from periods when nothing is working. But masks balance skin quickly, clays reduce oil, and gels calm redness.

### Kick dryness at night

If you wake up with dry skin, change your bedtime routine, not the morning one. It’s easier to head off dryness at night than to reverse it the next day.

### Cleansing cloths shouldn’t be your first line of defense

Face wipes may be more convenient than old-school cleansers, but don’t rely on wipes to detox skin if you live in a city where pollution is high.

### Multi-mask

You don’t have to use one product on your entire face. Try glycolic acid on the T-zone to minimize breakouts and thick creams elsewhere.

### Take your time when applying products

When layering, let each product absorb for two or three min-



utes so it’s not counteracted or diluted by the next one you put on.

### The sun is responsible for fine lines

Ninety percent of fine lines are caused by sun exposure, which

makes sunscreen the ultimate ingredient for younger-looking skin. Use an SPF 30 or higher daily.

### NEWS ROUNDUP

## Rakul suggests barley water to beat summer heat

Actress Rakul Preet Singh on Monday shared her recipe to beat the summer heat. Rakul reveals that she resorts to barley water, which not only helps her stay cool during the scorching months but has its numerous health benefits, too. She shared the health tip on Instagram along



with a post where she poses with a glass of barley water. “Thinking how to beat the summer heat? Let barley water come to your rescue. A cool drink suggested by my super cool nutritionist Munmun Ganeriwal, it will rid you of all summer woes; be it bloating, acne or any digestive issue. Ise kehte hai: chota naam, bada kaam,” Rakul wrote. The actress appears alongside Arjun Kapoor in the latest music video “Dil hai deewana”, which released on Saturday. Composed by Tanishk Bagchi with vocals by Darshan Raval and actress-turned-singer Zara Khan, the song is pitched as a party track. Arjun and Rakul are also set to appear in Kaashvi Nair’s OTT film “Sardar Ka Grandson”.

## What’s up with Tisca Chopra?

SUKANT DEEPAK

Tisca has written, directed and produced the short film ‘Rubaru’ and is back from Rajasthan where she was shooting a web-series for Hot Star.

She is currently collaborating with her husband for writing some web series and developing a script, a crime drama that which she plans to direct by the end of this year.

But that’s not all. Tisca Chopra has also written her second book ‘What’s Up With Me’, published by Westland Books. “I just can’t sit still,” she smiles.

Calling the book, which is an attempt to demystify mensuration, a ‘lockdown baby’, Chopra recalls, “When Vidhi Bhargava from Westland called and asked me to do the book, I was apprehensive if I would be able to take out the time. However, I realised that as opposed to the West, not much was available to read about the topic in South-East Asian countries. Shouldn’t we have something where there is a very clear and precise discussion

about menstruation? Sadly, it is something everybody is so hush-hush about. And I felt that there is a need for making it a commonplace thing, because it is just basic biology.”

Her second book after ‘Acting Smart’, this actor, filmmaker and producer feels that for her the process of writing is akin to her work on screen in many ways.

She shares, “As an actor, directly or indirectly, I am talking to some people. Some of them whom I can imagine and some who I believe will enjoy this. I am hiding a little something here. will they find it? That is the sort of communication that I feel the people would notice. Most who follow my work are the ones looking for nuance. They find hidden little gems that one puts here and there. And I find that very interesting. I think it comes out of that sense. Writing is the same thing, but through words. Ultimately, it is about finding a connection.”

For someone who is known for her diverse roles, it is the first five minutes of narration

that guides her instinct towards signing the dotted line.

She adds, “Also what matters is the energy of the people who are doing it are they looking to make a project, or really invested in the story. For me, the story has always been important. It is like, I should want to tell that story. To a large extent, you have to be in love with the idea.”

Chopra, who produced and co-wrote the popular short film ‘Chutney’ feels not enough respect is given to the format.

“Considering there were many wanting to make a short film with a phone and a camera, it used to be taken very lightly. A couple of films changed that narrative. And ‘Chutney’ was one of those films. It had been made very professionally, with professional actors and shot with a professional camera. To my mind, certain films lend themselves to a shorter format. However, that does not mean that they have to be given less respect,” adds the actor.

The actor, who recently fin-

ished shooting for a web-series for Hotstar has not taken kindly to the government’s recent decision to regulate OTT platforms. “The move to regulate anything is always a choke-hold on the tellers, on the makers. I am not a big fan of that. Frankly, I have always felt that certification is the way, not censorship. What gives anybody the right to say, ‘We know better what we should see?’ rather than us ourselves. So, that’s a problem for me. It has always been. And it always will be.”

Collaborating with her husband, Sanjay Chopra, a pilot with Air India who is also writing a series for Netflix, being produced by Sajid Nadiadwala, she says, “He is writing another one for Voot. And there is another one which is a collaboration with another wonderful producer. I sit with him sometimes. There are times when he calls me and asks - ‘Okay, where should we go with this?’ When I am stuck with a particular script, I ask him. We also write together sometimes.”





# Thousands queue up outside liquor vends in Delhi after lockdown

NEW DELHI

LONG, serpentine queues were seen outside liquor shops in Delhi soon after Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's announcement of a six-day lockdown on Monday, with tippers braving the sun for hours and occasionally breaking into heated arguments.

Many lost patience as the mercury climbed and some even tried to jump queues, leading to minor disagreements and altercations at some places. An association of liquor companies, meanwhile, came out with a statement urging the Delhi government to start home delivery of alcoholic beverages in the

city, on the lines of Maharashtra, to ease the rush.

Waiting for his turn in one such queue in south Delhi, Ravinder Saxena said he wanted to stock up as he believed there are chances that the lockdown will be extended further. "Liquor helps keep negative thinking out of your mind," he said, while waiting for his turn. "There are many people at the shop, and I will try to buy at least six to eight bottles for myself," Saxena added.

Earlier in the day, Kejriwal announced a six-day lockdown from 10 pm on Monday till 5 am on April 26, which he said was necessary to deal with the rising number of COVID-19 cases, as



the city's health system was stretched to its limits. The national capital's health system is stretched, although it has not

collapsed yet, the chief minister said, adding that despite around 25,500 cases coming up every day, Delhi's health system is still functioning. Bharat Sharma, a resident of Dilshad Garden, said the moment he came to know about the lockdown, he reached the local liquor shop along with a friend.

"We waited for more than one hour and somehow managed to get three bottles," he added. With similar reports from across the city, the Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC) issued a statement saying, "What we saw today was panic reaction from the public, driven by their memory of lockdown extensions

last year.

For lakhs of people all over India, alcohol is part of regular consumption basket that they do not wish to be deprived of. "While we hope that the public and shopkeepers in Delhi adhere to COVID-appropriate behaviour, steps to reassure public would help. Decision of Maharashtra to allow home delivery of liquor, for example, has helped contained panic reaction to lockdown there. We urge the Delhi government to think of such steps," Vinod Giri, CIABC director general, said in the statement. A lot of people waiting in the queues said they bought liquor at almost double the rates last year and wanted to

avoid a similar situation this time.

"During the last lockdown, we bought liquor bottles at doubled rates from the black market. Now, there is another lockdown, and seeing the current situation, one cannot say for how many days it will last," said Jagdish Samora of Malviya Nagar while standing in a queue at a liquor shop. "I will buy six whiskey bottles," he added. Announcing the lockdown in the city earlier in the day, Kejriwal said it was necessary to prevent the health system of Delhi from collapsing under the increasing number of patients as there is an acute shortage of medicines, beds, ICUs and oxygen.

## KGMU turns Covid hospital

LUCKNOW: Bowing to mounting pressure, the King George's Medical University (KGMU, one of the premiere Covid hospital in the state, has decided that the Trauma Centre will continue to function as usual while the KGMU has been converted into a Covid hospital. KGMU Vice-Chancellor Lt. Gen (retd) Dr. Bipin Puri said, "Since we do not know which patient will be Covid positive, we will convert the ground floor as a holding area where RT-PCR test will be conducted on patients. Till their report comes, they will receive emergency treatment in the holding area. If positive, they will be shifted to Covid hospital, otherwise they will be shifted to the department concerned in the trauma building." The government had initially decided to convert the entire KGMU as a Covid hospital from April 19, stating that only cardiology and gynaecology emergencies will be addressed by it. However, sources said that both PGI and Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) hospital have informed the government that they did not have expertise to deal with trauma cases. The KGMU authorities also stated that trauma patients after stabilization had to be shifted out to departments concerned for further treatment which will now be a problem as all wards will have Covid patients. Besides, converting a trauma centre into a Covid facility would make it out of bounds for emergency patients.

# Punjab imposes stricter curbs as Covid cases rise

CHANDIGARH

AS Covid-19 cases continue to rise rapidly in Punjab, Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday ordered stricter restrictions beginning on Tuesday, including extension of night curfew timings from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m., closure of all bars, cinema halls, gyms, spas, coaching centres with restaurants and hotels to be open only for takeaway and home delivery.

Rates for RT-PCR and rapid antigen testing (RAT) by private labs have been reduced to Rs 450 and Rs 300, respectively, with additional charges for home collection of the samples, in a bid to promote increased testing.

Gatherings of more than 20 persons, including for weddings and cremations, have also been banned across the state, with approval of the district administration needed for all gatherings of more than 10 persons, except for cremations.

The new restrictions, which also include closure of all malls, shops and markets on Sunday, coupled with the ones imposed earlier, will remain in effect till April 30, announced the Chief Minister, directing the Police De-



partment to strictly enforce the restrictions, taking support of civil society organisations where needed.

All weekly markets have also ordered to be shut down.

Chairing a high-level virtual meeting to review the Covid sit-

uation in the state, the Chief Minister also ordered that all people flying into Punjab should have a negative RT-PCR report not more than 72 hours old, else they would have to undergo RAT testing at the airport.

He also ordered that people who have attended large gatherings anywhere -- religious, political and social -- to be mandatorily home quarantined for five days and tested as per protocol.

The Chief Minister directed the Transport Department that number of people in buses and taxis and autos be restricted to 50 per cent of the capacity.

In a bid to check inbound travellers, the Chief Minister also directed that rapid antigen testing booths should be set up at bus stands and railway stations and all passengers checked. All eligible persons should be also vaccinated.

The Chief Minister also ordered postponement of the recruitment exams for patwaris and directed the Medical Education Department to hold online examination for the first, second and third year MBBS, BDS, BAMS and 1st year nursing students.

He also reiterated his appeal to all religious, social and political leaders to desist from organising large gatherings, encourage vaccination and motivate people for Covid appropriate behaviour, especially wearing of masks and avoiding gatherings.

## Cases on the rise in high-rise apartments

GURUGRAM

AS the number of Covid-19 cases are increasing in Gurugram, high-rises are emerging as new hotspots in the millennium city.

An indication of this is a sharp rise in containment zones which have gone up from 94 to 119 which include upscale condominiums and high rise apartments, according to a containment zones list released by the district administration.

The data reveals the trend of rising coronavirus cases in residential complexes in the city.

As per the containment zones list, there have been increasing number of cases in residential complexes in various areas of the city, including Orchid Petals Sector-49, Nirvana Country Sector-50, Uniworld Garden Sector-47, Vatika City Sector-49, BPTP Tower Society Sector-57, Vipul Belmonte Sector-53, Emerald Estate Sector-62, Mapso Casabella Sector-82, Exotica DLF Phase-5, JMD Garden Sector-33, DLF Princeton Estate, Carlton Estate, Wellington Estate and others.

Gurugram reported 2,401 fresh Covid cases on Sunday. The district has 81,725 patients and 69,151 of them have recovered from the illness.

Gurugram now has 12,196 active cases and 11,423 of them are in home isolation. Also, 378 people have lost their lives so far, according to the daily health bulletin.

There is a rising concern among residents with regard to house helps coming in the housing societies for work.

However, in view of the spike in covid-19 cases, the managements of these societies have also issued notices to fellow residents in which they have restricted entry of maids, part time helpers, visitors, property dealers coming to see apartments, labour for renovation work and outsiders. Also, daily essential items are delivered inside these condominium through their guards.

Apart from this, the district administration also issued directions to various Resident Welfare Associations (RWA's) of high rise societies to take necessary steps to prevent infections of Covid-19.



## DRDO hospital to have uninterrupted oxygen supply

LUCKNOW

A makeshift hospital being set up by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) in Lucknow is likely to have their own oxygen supply with the help of a technology that is used in the light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas fighter jets.

This is the first time that the self-sustainable oxygen generation technology for fighter pilots would be used in makeshift hospitals in Uttar Pradesh. Union Defence Minister and Lucknow MP, Rajnath Singh, had sent a team of DRDO officials to the state capital last week to start the process for setting up of hospitals at Haj House and Golden Blossoms resort.

The makeshift hospital is being set up at Avadh Shilpgram.



The hospitals that are likely to get ready by next week would have nearly 250-300 beds each and would be run by the doctors, nurses and support staff of Armed Forces Medical Services.

According to sources, DRDO has developed a medical oxygen plant as a spin-off technology of the 'On board oxygen generation system' (OBOGS) of the LCA Tejas.

A senior official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said: "This technology can provide medical grade oxygen round-the-clock at a high flow

rate catering to at least 50 ventilator ICU beds. This technology will be used to activate oxygen plants at Covid hospitals."

The technology, which has been developed by DRDO's Defence Electromedical and Bio-Engineering Laboratory (DEBEL), breaks down molecular components of the atmospheric air to provide continuous oxygen to the pilot within the aircraft for long duration and in high altitude flights.

Once set up, the technology would help in continuous supply of oxygen to critical Covid patients, refilling of oxygen cylinders and eradicating logistical problems related to cylinder transportation from one point to another, thereby reducing the increasing burden on the demand for oxygen in Covid hospitals.

## Northern Railway celebrates World Heritage Day

World Heritage Day is observed every year on April 18 to preserve the human heritage and recognize the efforts of the organizations working for it. World Heritage Day is a collective effort of the communities in the world to do the needful. This day is celebrated to maintain the legacy and save the rich heritage which has been given to us by our ancestors.

To commemorate and celebrate the glorious heritage history, Northern Railway performed the following activities on the World Heritage Day on 18th April 2021:

Radio broadcast of "Baba Bhalku ki Amar Kahani" - a story on Kalka Shimla Heritage Railway line, written and narrated by renowned author Sh Sanjeev Jaiswal (Retd. Director/RDSO)



was aired on 18.04.2021. Live broadcast on all India Radio of story 'Baba Bhalku ki amar kahaani' on KSR section was simultaneously relayed on the public address system of Barog station. Rail users and villagers in the vicinity of the station applauded the efforts and enjoyed the story.

Northern Railway Heritage

Wing launched a special website (developed in-house by NR HQ) for conservation and proliferation of the great legacy of the Northern Railway. This website will act as a bridge for the new generation to understand the Glorious past of Railways which has contributed to the development and prosperity of this country.

## Remdesivir hoarder tests positive in police custody

KANPUR

PRASHANT Shukla, one of the three arrested with 265 vials of Remdesivir last week, has tested positive for Covid-19.

The police had arrested Prashant and two others, including Mohan Soni and Haryana resident Sachin Kumar, on charges of black marketing of Remdesivir vials.

As per protocol, the accused were tested after being arrested. "Prashant, one among them tested positive for the virus. As a precautionary measure, we have asked our men to undergo Covid test," said ACP Vikas Kumar Pandey.

The police official said, "Once we received the test results of the accused, we immediately shifted him to a Covid care facility."

STF sources said that they have been trying to crack the



nexus to curb black-marketing of Covid vials. There were inputs that of the 265 Remdesivir injection vials were supposed to be supplied to local medicine dealers, besides Haryana resident Sachin Kumar.

"We are zeroing in on the local pharma distributors, and expecting an early breakthrough. It also came to light that the injections were sent to Kanpur resident Mohan Soni by one Apoorva Mukherjee of West Bengal, who is associated with a pharma com-

pany. As Mohan was supposed to take back his Rs one lakh from Apoorva, the latter instead had sent him vials against the cash," senior police official informed.

The Kanpur unit of Special Task Force (STF) had, on Thursday, arrested three persons with 265 Remdesivir injections meant for sale in black market.

Remdesivir is a key medicine, used in the treatment of coronavirus. Taking advantage of the shortage, some people have been selling the vials at high prices.

AS Covid cases are rising in the national capital, tragic scenes emerge from Delhi's largest Covid hospital LNJP, where family members have to wait for long for the bodies of their near and dear ones at the mortuary of the hospital.

An IANS photo journalist saw an ambulance with bodies piled up inside it and almost 6 to 8 dead bodies were ferried for the funeral.

A person waiting at the morgue said, "He is helpless as the pandemic has hit hard without giving any time."

Scores of women, men are seen waiting outside the LNJP hospital and crying for their loved ones. Some are speechless, unable to say anything as they have lost at least a member of their family.

NEW DELHI



After the ambulance drove off, the family members rushed towards the cremation ground where the last rites have to be performed.

Mohan (name changed), who lost his father due to Covid said he has lost faith in the system and the situation is pathetic as

people have been left to their own devices.

On Sunday, Delhi recorded the biggest jump in its daily Covid tally with 25,462 fresh cases and a positivity rate of nearly 30 per cent, which means almost every third sample being tested in the city is

turning out positive.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said that Delhi's health system has reached an alarming stage, as only 100 beds are available in hospitals.

The situation has become so worse that at present Delhi is not able to take any more Covid-19 patients in the government hospitals. "I won't say Delhi's health system has completely collapsed but yes, we are at an alarming stage. So the Delhi Government has decided to impose a week long curfew which will come into effect from today 10 pm (Monday), Kejriwal said.

The Chief Minister's announcement came after an emergency meeting to review covid-19 situation between Lt. Governor Anil Bajjal and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.



## NASA’s functioning, inscrutable

NASA shocked everyone on April 16 when it selected Elon Musk’s SpaceX to build spacecraft that would land astronauts on the moon for the first time since the last Apollo mission. NASA had in fact opted for three companies for the contract for this stage. The award to SpaceX for the “human landing system” (HLS) marked another major victory for the hard-charging company that zooms it to the top of the United States’ aerospace companies.

This also means that SpaceX is one of the space agency’s most trusted partners. In winning the \$2.9 billion contract, SpaceX beat out Jeff Bezos’s Blue Origin, which had formed what it called a “national team” by partnering with aerospace giants Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman and Draper. SpaceX also won over Dynetics, a defence contractor based in Huntsville, Alabama. In other major programs, NASA has chosen multiple providers to foster competition and to ensure it has redundancy in case one can’t deliver. But when it came to revisiting the moon, NASA placed its trust entirely in SpaceX. But, why did NASA do it? It sounds insane.

But the HLS described the contract as “NASA’s partnership with SpaceX to help achieve the Artemis mission and look forward to continuing our work toward landing astronauts on the moon, to prepare for the next giant leap towards Mars.” The Artemis programme is a US government-funded international human spaceflight programme that has the goal of landing the first woman and the next man on the Moon, specifically at the lunar south pole region, by 2024.

The programme is carried out predominantly by NASA, U.S. commercial spaceflight companies contracted by NASA, and international partners including the European Space Agency (ESA), the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), Canadian Space Agency (CSA), the Italian Space Agency (ASI), the Australian Space Agency (ASA), the UK Space Agency (UKSA), the United Arab Emirates Space Agency (UAE), the State Space Agency of Ukraine, and the Brazilian Space Agency (AEB).

NASA is leading the programme but expects international partnerships to play a key role. Long-term goals include establishing an expedition team and a

sustainable presence on the Moon, laying the foundation for private companies to build a lunar economy, and eventually sending humans to Mars.

This could be called a truly international effort of the world to explore and conquer the outer world to understand it better. In December 2017, President Donald Trump signed Space Policy Directive 1, authorising the lunar campaign. Artemis draws upon ongoing spacecraft programmes including Orion, the Gateway, and Commercial Lunar Payload Services, and adds an undeveloped crewed lander. The Space Launch System will serve as the primary launch vehicle for Orion, while commercial launch vehicles are planned for use to launch various other elements of the campaign.

NASA requested US\$1.6 billion in additional funding for Artemis for fiscal year 2020, while the Senate Appropriations Committee requested from NASA a five-year budget profile which is needed for evaluation and approval by Congress. In February 2021, the Biden Administration endorsed the Artemis programme. With its Artemis programme, NASA aims to land the first woman and the first person of colour to land on the moon. Here is the difference this time around. NASA wants to return to the moon in a sustainable way.

## April 2003: US in Iraq, Vajpayee’s Pak initiative and Worldview India

SAEED NAQVI

APRIL 2003 was the cruellest month for the people of Iraq, a month of reflection on Pakistan by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and a rare opportunity for Worldview India, a dedicated group of Indian journalists who helped lift the mist from the historic events that month.

Americans had occupied Iraq, by April 3. Vice President Dick Cheney, the real author of the operation, was eager to declare victory on April 9. It was to be a spectacular media event. After all, Cheney had embedded 300 plus journalists with the forces.

The choreography was audacious. In a prepared statement, Dick Cheney would declare victory on Global Media. This statement would be interspersed with images of an ecstatic, popular upsurge pulling down the statue of Saddam Hussain at Firdous Square. Cheney’s talking head would alternate with the slow fall of the statue. Cheney would never have dreamt that all the back-channel tricks that had gone into the manufacture of the memorable spectacle would be exposed.

For the first time in the history of Indian journalism, Worldview India had posted camera units/cum reporters in Baghdad, Najaf, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Amman, Lebanon. Some of these reporters happened to be in a Palestine hotel, witness to the real story -- the one the world was not supposed to know.

Contrary to the narrative of a popular uprising toppling the statue, the Americans had to think on their feet: they had to improvise the iconic images because the popular upsurge had simply not materialised. US marines were mobilized to ‘lasso’ the neck of the statue and have it pulled down by cranes. CNN, premier cheerleader for the occupation, has to this day incorporated a video of the statue as a lasting symbol of Americans replacing a “brutal” dictatorship with democracy.

As we know from the experience of various “colour revolutions”, camera angles can amplify a handful of people (in this case the workers of Palestine hotel) into a revolution on the march. True, the sole superpower can arrange for a statue to be pulled down, but how does it show images of crowds celebrating Saddam Hussein’s fall?

1991-92 Shia uprising in Najaf and Karbala encouraged by operation Desert Storm was harshly put down by Saddam Hussein. The only images of the damaged shrine of Imam Hussain was brought to the world by a TV crew led by this reporter. The Shia refugees from this almost unreported conflict had been settled in a vast ghetto on the outskirts of Baghdad. It was named, like much else in Iraq those days, as Saddam City. It dawned on Cheney’s team that one group of people thrilled at the “fall of Saddam” were actually the inmates of the nearby ghetto, teeming with disgruntled Shias.

A deal was struck with the controversial cleric, Muqtada Sadr. Saddam city was renamed “Sadr” city. That is when celebrations erupted on the streets of Baghdad. Crowds from Sadr city trampled on posters of Saddam Hussein and beat it with their sandals. American romance with the Shias of Iraq burgeoned. On March 20, 2005, Thomas Friedman of the New York Times recommended Grand Ayatullah Ali Sistani for the Nobel Prize. Sistani remains the blue-eyed Ayatullah because he differs with Tehran on the clergy’s role in governing the state.

Cheney’s contrivance of a quick victory in Iraq was matched by the energetic diplomacy of the US embassy in New Delhi. They persuaded South Block to participate in the American victory by taking over the administration of Iraq’s Kurdish North. A powerful cabinet minister like Jaswant Singh found the American blandishment tempting. Prime Minister Vajpayee, as much a statesman as a skilful politician, rather than rubbish his cabinet colleagues, went into one of his extended spells of deep reflection.

He called up his friend A B Bardhan, Secretary General of the CPI. “Are you supporting Indian occupation of Kurdish Iraq?”. Vajpayee taunted. “Not at all” exclaimed Bardhan. “But I see no protest”. Vajpayee continued. The Prime Minister was looking for signs of street restiveness on the issue to cite in opposing the idea. The source for this exchange was Bardhan. Vajpayee did not deny it.

This was a period of extraordinary tension between India and Pakistan. After the 2001 December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament, the two militaries were in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation. On April 18, Vajpayee landed in Srinagar and, without a hint to his cabinet colleagues, held out his hand of peace to Pakistan. “An awesome power has arisen”. Regional quarrels have no meaning now. Conflicts in the region would have to be composed. The January 4, 2004 Indo-Pak summit in Islamabad followed.

Vajpayee found the “sole superpower” moment forbidding. Hence his quest for regional peace. Narendra Modi’s crawl towards a regional entente is dictated by a different set of circumstance. The burgeoning China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan togetherness in the vicinity makes a friendly US look too distant.

Journalists of Worldview India remember April of 2003 for the kind of journalism Indian journalists have never practised before or since. The idea was to cover the war and the occupation of Iraq from an Indian perspective. The western media would of course cover the occupation comprehensively, but from its own perspective. Indeed, the embedded journalists would be part of the war effort. This would not be the Indian perspective, unless New Delhi accepted the proposition that it was India’s war too.

Indian media houses are tone deaf on such issues. For coverage of foreign affairs, they have deals with Reuters, BBC, CNN, FOX News and so on -- so much for atmanirbharta or self-sufficiency. A word of gratitude is owed to S Y Qureshi, Director General of Doordarshan, for having grasped the significance of the project. He fought the resistance in the system. The standard argument against covering foreign affairs was familiar. “Foreign affairs have low TRP ratings”.

Let Qureshi bear witness. Amitabh Bachchan’s Kaun Banega Crorepati had the highest ratings until Worldview India’s one-hour prime time reporting from the Gulf by dedicated reporters pipped it to the post.

## Poll-thirsty leaders want votes, not voters!

### DYING WAIT FOR MEDICATION AND DEAD FOR CREMATION



Madabhushi Sridhar Acharyulu

It is sad that the elections are the priority of parties. They want votes but not their health. Leaders do not bother about dead waiting for cremation, while living are waiting for beds in hospitals, which are waiting for medicines and oxygen. Telangana High Court was sarcastic in commenting that the government was harping on checking international passengers but was “beautifully silent” on its measures to control persons entering State through bus stations, railway stations and private vehicles. The Chief Justice Hima Kohli specifically wanted to know if the government had issued any circulars to check footfall at cinema halls, banquet halls, malls and public places witnessing large congregations of people.

Chief Justice said that “it was a desperate situation and required desperate action by the State... Sorry for being tough, but it is a question of life and death of people”. Justice B Vijaysen Reddy asked the AG if the government had any problem in restricting the number of people thronging pubs and bars. The judge asked the government over hospitals not admitting persons who tested positive for coronavirus unless their condition was critical.

The Courts can only remind the duties of the government and explain the rights of the patients but cannot monitor the ICUs and hospitals like a Government. Private hospitals are fleeing the patients who terrorised with covid. There is shortage of oxygen, vaccine, ICU beds, injections of Remdesivir and above all the will and efficiency in the Centre and state governments in fighting the covid.

Every government and party is busy with fighting elections of some level. All leaders like sages in Kumbh Mela are not bothering about their role as virus spreading agents. One incident in MP has moved its High Court, is worth referring here.

#### Patient tied down to cot

Social media can be the platform for change and smart phone could be the instrument. On June 6, a viral video showed that an 80-year-old man was tied to the hospital bed, at Shajapur’s City Hospital, after he and his family were unable to clear hospital bills for treatment of Covid-19. The old man’s family alleged that the hospital administration tied his legs and hands to bed after he failed to pay Rs 11,000. “We had deposited a bill of Rs 5,000 at the time of admission but when the treatment took a few more days, we did not have the money to pay the bill,” said his daughter.

Based on this video, Senior Advocate Ashwini Kumar wrote a letter, which was taken note of and sent to MP High Court for suo moto notice. The Madhya Pradesh Government woke up and registered an FIR against that hospital, just to report to the High Court that ‘strong action’ is being taken. Chief Minister has promptly made a public statement that action will be initiated.

Meanwhile the hospital became human-



itarian and waived of the entire balance fee. It claimed that he was tied because he was having convulsions because of electrolyte imbalance.

Then the High Court tried to educate the Government about the right to health of the people etc. There are umpteen number of judgments from our guardian of human rights – the Supreme Court- for the High Court judgement to remind the State governments about their Constitutional responsibilities. We have anyway, a wonderful provision in Ambedkar’s Constitution- Article 21 meaning of which was expanded to include the right to health and issued several directions. The Bench of Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq and Justice Atul Sreedharan stated:

“The right to health can be secured to the citizens only if the State provides adequate measures for their treatment, healthcare and takes their care by protecting them from calamities like Coronavirus....Article 38, Article 39(e), Article 41 and Article 47 in Part-IV of the Constitution of India as well as the fundamental right guaranteed vide Article 21 of the Constitution of India deal with potent and substantive contents of the right to life which in its broad sweep also includes right to good health.”

Court reminded “The right of the citizen to adequate healthcare emanates from the dignity and sanctity of the human life which belongs to all of them. Health, besides being a fundamental right, is a basic human right, which no popular government can afford to neglect. Health has its own prerequisites of social justice and equality and that it should be accessible to all....It includes the ability to obtain all kind of healthcare services including prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of diseases, management of health disorders, diseases and illness as also the management of other health impacting conditions. Such health care should not only be accessible but also be conve-

niently affordable to all the citizens. The core obligation of the State in securing the right to life to all its citizens is non-negotiable.”

Appreciating the efforts of state, the court cautioned that the State’s efforts should also reflect on the ground and the benefit thereof should reach the common man and so, the Court opined that it needs to work hard towards that aim and goal.

The Court also noticed the newspapers of the State during last week have been replete with the reports of incidents where either the patients are allegedly not being admitted or are being allegedly exploited by exorbitant charges by the private hospitals. Consequently, playing the role of a catalyst by reminding the State of its duties, for reassuring the people to continue to have faith in the system so as to revive their confidence, the Court issued many directions to MP. They relevant for all states.

- The States shall ensure continuous and the regular supply of oxygen and Remdesivir not only to all the government hospitals, city hospitals, district hospitals but also to the private hospitals/nursing homes, which may give indent of their requirement of oxygen as well as Remdesivir in advance.
- Reactivate all the hospitals as Covid care centres
- Strengthen/augment all the district hospitals and city hospitals, to cater to the medical needs of middle class/lower middle class and poor/below poverty line families.
- Rationalise the rates charged by the private hospitals/nursing homes and private pathological labs/ diagnostic centres for treatment/tests.
- Display the data of the availability of normal beds, ICU beds, and ventilators on their websites in all the government hospitals and private hospitals/ nursing homes on a real-time basis.

- Ensure all the private hospitals/nursing homes, chemists/medical shops to display the rates of Remdesivir per vial, separately for generic and branded injections, and all of them should be mandated not to charge more than the prescribed rates;
- Create Covid Command and Control Centres and publicise easy access phone numbers for the Covid patients and their family members/attendants to use, complain and redressal.
- Ensure the RT-PCR and Rapid Antigen Testing by the government Laboratories as well as duly approved private pathological labs/diagnostic centres.
- Increase per day testing number of Covid infected persons for their early detection so as to prevent further spread of Coronavirus.
- Assure the test reports to concerned patients positively within 36 hours from the time of collection of sample.

Lastly, noting that this being a national calamity and a country-wide problem, the Court observed that the Central Government should consider stepping in to arrange the Oxygen firstly, by diverting the available stock of Liquid Medical Oxygen from the Steel Plants and other industries located in different parts of the country and secondly, if that is not sufficient, by importing the Oxygen.

The Court pointed out that the Remdesivir injection was being sold in the black market and certain arrests have also been made. “The Central Government should also consider to step in to ensure increase in the production of Remdesivir and till such time it is not done, it should consider procuring the Remdesivir by importing it”, the court said. This is the major crisis of the entire country including Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

(The writer is Professor of Law, Bennett University and former Central Information Commissioner)

## Prevent Covid spikes with increased ventilation and reducing crowds

DR K NAGAIHAH, PROF G SRIMANNARAYANA AND PHANIRAJ G

THE Covid spread occur mainly in the indoor poorly ventilated spaces with crowding including offices, cars, buses, malls, gyms, hospitals etc. The indoor air quality in such spaces needs to be improved by ventilation and allowing fresh air. Specific interventions are needed for air conditioning especially with regard to increasing the air changes per hour to take in outside air more frequently. The CO2 could act as a proxy for estimating the level of aerosols. If CO2 levels are above 1000 ppm then immediate measures have to be taken to ventilate and take in more outside air. If the indoor air reeks of body odours, perfumes, garlic and tobacco odours then it implies that the air is high in aerosols and one needs to avoid and evacuate from such spaces

The Covid surge in India has reached alarming proportions in the second wave with unprecedented case and mortality numbers. The variants and double mutant that are more transmissible and cause severe disease are said to be fuelling the massive surge. The spread of Covid as per the WHO and several health or-

ganisations are fomites, droplets, aerosols and close contact. However dominant transmission is via aerosol route as the recent review article in The Lancet by Jose Jimenez et al has reiterated. Looking at several cases around the world including the Church choirs, bars, gyms, hotels, restaurants and contact tracing data prove beyond doubt that aerosol transmission is the main route of spread. The famous Science Journal study by Laxminarayan et al on Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu based on the contact tracing data has pointed out that the shared transportation was the major contributor in the first wave.

The latest CDC advisory has stated that the transmission by fomite is very low and that it is unnecessary to concentrate on obsessive cleaning of surfaces. However, the aerosol transmission route was very well studied during the first wave around the world and were covered in several science journals like Nature, The Lancet etc. It is high time we focus on the aerosol transmission and devise methodologies to reduce the infections.

The droplet are defined as aqueous particles containing virus, saliva and mucous emitted from the respira-

tory tracts of the patients and usually more than 100 micrometers wide. The droplets fall to the ground with gravity. The aerosols are fine respiratory virus particles along with envelope emitted from the pharynx of the Covid patients when they cough, talk, sing or breathe. The particles up to 100 micrometers wide and linger in air for hours unlike the droplets. It is high time we address the aerosol transmission and prevent the surge of cases in India.

The Covid spread occur mainly in the indoor poorly ventilated spaces with crowding including offices, cars, buses, malls, gyms, hospitals etc. The indoor air quality in such spaces needs to be improved by ventilation and allowing fresh air. Specific interventions are needed for air conditioning especially with regard to increasing the air changes per hour to take in outside air more frequently. The CO2 could act as a proxy for estimating the level of aerosols. If CO2 levels are above 1000 ppm then immediate measures have to be taken to ventilate and take in more outside air. If the indoor air reeks of body odours, perfumes, garlic and tobacco odours then it implies that the air is high in aerosols and one needs to avoid and evacuate from such spaces.

The corridors, common areas and elevators in high rise apartment buildings are dark and narrow harboring aerosols. It is advisable to avoid such spaces and to wear a mask. The ventilation in the common spaces has to be improved by opening windows and using industrial grade fans. The capacity limits have to be fixed in elevators. It has to be borne in mind that aerosols linger in the air even when the patient has left.

The aerosol spread in the cars, buses and shared transportation need special attention. It is imperative that the drivers and passengers wear masks and open windows especially when they are not from the same household. The outside air mode has to be switched on instead of recirculation mode. The epidemiological studies on buses in China has proved that recirculated air was the reason behind the spread in the bus among passengers who were sitting few aisles away.

In India AC luxury buses are widely used it is imperative that more outside air be pulled.

The crowding in indoor spaces have to be reduced. The number of people attending the weddings, parties and functions have to be restricted. To aid people to

remember and watch out for aerosol transmission and to avoid SSE, we propose a Triple A (AAA) D system. Area: Avoid crowded spaces with too many people hanging around

Activity: Minimise talking, singing, shouting, exercise and dancing in crowded areas

Air quality: Avoid places with poor ventilation, high carbon dioxide (CO2) concentration and little air circulation, especially when air reeks of body odors or strong smells, including those of garlic, tobacco or perfumes

Duration - Do not spend long time in the above situations

We need to understand the spike in Covid is primarily because of aerosol transmission of virus from patients to people and that the outdoor spaces are better than indoors. We can prevent the spikes with increased ventilation and reducing crowds in indoor spaces where the rate of viral transmission is very high.

(The authors are Chief Scientist, CSIR-IIT, Hyderabad, retired Professor, Dept. of Chemistry, Osmania University, Hyderabad and an IT Professional in Boston, USA respectively.)



# TRS may face rebel trouble in ULBs polls

**NOMINATIONS EXCEED NUMBER OF SEATS IN CIVIC BODIES**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THERE has been a rebel trouble for the TRS in the municipal elections with many aspirants, who could not get tickets, have either filed nominations or are looking at different options like contesting as independents or seeking Congress or BJP support.

Some of the leaders, who got indications of not getting tickets, are making beeline to other parties. During the last few days, several leaders of TRS in Khammam have joined Congress and a few leaders joined BJP in Jadcherla municipality. There were several sitting corporators among those who joined Congress in Khammam Corporation.

In many divisions/wards, there were more than two candidates of TRS. In the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation alone 704



TRS leaders have filed nominations but only 66 are likely to be in the field. In Siddipet Municipality, which has 43 wards, the TRS leaders have filed over 200 nominations. The party faced a similar situation in Jadcherla, which has 27 wards and here 63 TRS leaders have filed nominations. The leaders are hoping that they would be lucky to get the B-

Forms and become the contestant. The leaders said that as per the rules the candidates can submit the B-Forms till the last date of withdrawal, which is April 22. It may be mentioned here that nearly 100 leaders, including a few sitting corporators had joined Congress party in Khammam. The corporator from Division 41 K Saritha joined the Congress

party in the presence of CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka. Similarly, a few leaders joined BJP in the presence of party leader DK Aruna.

However, the party leaders said that the issue would be sorted out as the ministers have entered into the scene and pacifying the dissatisfied leaders. The ministers, including T Harish Rao, E Dayakar Rao, Satyavathi Rathod and V Srinivas Goud have already started parleys with the leaders in their respective districts. "Only those with B-Form will be in the contest and remaining will have to withdraw their nominations. We are confident that there will be no problem with the unhappy leaders," said a TRS leader. There was similar trouble even during the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections but the party leadership made the leaders fall in line, the TRS leader recalled.

# KCR not doing enough to contain virus: Bandi

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA State BJP chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar lashed out at Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao for not doing enough at a time the second wave of the deadly virus spreading fast.

Criticising KCR for not even holding a review meeting when people are succumbing to the deadly virus in the State, Sanjay said that the TRS supremo has been taking rest in the farmhouse, fielding Medical and Health Minister Etala Rajender to pick a fight with the Centre.

He took exception to the State Government's negligence over the shortage of medical oxygen and Remdesivir injection in Telangana and alleged that an artificial shortage is being created as the demand for the Remdesivir injection is going up. Further, the companies and distributors have been selling the Remdesivir injection at exorbitant rates, he said. Though the State Government is in the know of all these happening, it is not taking nec-



essary steps to address the woes of the problems, he added.

The Karimnagar MP said that the Centre has slashed the rates of Remdesivir injection to make it affordable for all.

Similarly, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been reviewing on a daily basis with the industries, railway and medical and health ministries to ensure that the medical oxygen is available to meet the demand. The railways are gearing up to improve the availability of medical oxygen across the country. However, the artificial shortage of Remdesivir injection in Telangana was due to the poor sup-

ply and distribution channels, he pointed out.

He urged the State Government to at least now conduct a high-level review on the issues faced by the government hospitals, medical staff and medicines.

Further, he accused that people are taking the Covid lightly as the State government is trying to project the number of Covid cases and mortality rates low. And, attributed that the attitude of the State government is allowing lenience among people. He said that the chief minister has not motivated people asking them to get vaccinated themselves. It exposes how the State Government has left the public health of people to their fate.

The BJP MP said that there is a shortage of staff in government hospitals. Yet, the contract and outsourcing staff have been discharging their duties courageously in these troubled times. However, the State Government has not provided them with N-95 masks, he said. He urged people to follow the Covid guidelines and not to venture out unless it is necessary.

# Secretariat staff on edge as 4 succumb to Covid



- Section officer Santakumari of Panchayat Raj and an employee of Home Dept are the latest victims

- Panchayat Raj Minister Ramachandra Reddy urges employees to get Covid jab at the exclusive centres set up for them
- TDP chief demands the govt to allow work from home to Sectt staff

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

AP Secretariat employees are expressing concern over increasing corona positive cases and deaths in the Secretariat. So far, four secretariat employees have died of Covid-19, the latest being a section officer Santakumari of panchayat raj department and an employee of home department who succumbed on Monday morning.

Earlier, a section officer of general administration department G Ravikant and assistant secretary of finance department Padma Rao died of Covid. It may be noted that Covid tests were conducted to 200 employees of the AP Secretariat recently when several people were found to be positive. This surge in number of cases has been ringing alarm bells among the employees.

AP Secretariat Employees Association president Venkatrami Reddy, who is in home isolation with Covid symptoms, demanded the government to permit work from home facility for secretariat staff amidst the present Covid pandemic. He told The Hans India that as the

e-office facility is available, the government should consider the plea of employees keeping in view their safety.

Meanwhile, minister for panchayat raj Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy observed a two-minute silence in his chamber at the Secretariat on Monday to condole the death of employees. He appealed to employees to take precautionary measures to prevent spread of coronavirus and get vaccinated in the vaccination centres set up for the employees exclusively.

TDP national president and Opposition leader in Assembly N Chandrababu Naidu expressing concern over the death of Secretariat employees with Covid-19, said it reflects the dangerous situation in the state. He demanded that the government extend assistance to the family members of those deceased, including G Ravikant, Padma Rao and Santakumari.

Naidu urged the government to implement work from home for employees and initiate measures to protect the health of the Secretariat employees.

**State sees 27 deaths, highest since Oct '20**

**5,963 new infections reported in 24 hours**

AMARAVATI

AS many as 27 people succumbed to Covid-19 in the state on Monday, the highest toll in a day after October 20, even as the state registered 5,963 fresh cases.

After 1.57 crore tests, the gross Covid-19 positives in the state rose to 9.68 lakh, a health department bulletin said.

In the 24 hours ending 9 am on Monday, 2,569 coronavirus-infected persons recovered, pushing the total recoveries to 9,12,510.

The overall toll climbed to 7,437, it said. The state now has 48,053 active cases, the highest after October 8. As the percentage of active cases increased to five, the overall recovery rate dipped further to 94.3 per cent.

Once again, Chittoor district reported 1,182 fresh cases in a day, followed by Guntur 938, Srikakulam 893, East Godavari 626, Visakhapatnam 565, Nellore 491, Kurnool 434 and Prakasam 280.

Krishna, Anantapur and Kadapa added 156-189 new cases while Vizianagaram and West Godavari reported 19 each.

Krishna district saw six fresh Covid-19 fatalities, Chittoor and Nellore four each, Guntur, Kadapa, Kurnool, Prakasam, Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam two each and Anantapur one in a day.

Meanwhile, the state Covid Nodal Officer Arja Srikanth said in a release that 35,465 patients are currently in home isolation, while 7,535 were admitted in hospitals across the state and another 16,68 in Covid Care Centres. Of the total, 3,665 patients were on ventilator support.

He said 126 Covid hospitals were being readied in the state with 17,000 beds and 2,000 ventilators.

# Vidya Deevena benefits 10.88 L



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy releasing first instalment of Jagananna Vidya Deevena into accounts of students' mothers at camp office in Tadepalli on Monday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on Monday released the first instalment of Jagananna Vidya Deevena of Rs 671.45 crore directly into the mothers' accounts of 10.88 lakh students.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the scheme has been designed to make education accessible to the poor and the needy in the state adding that the real wealth which can be given to the future generation is education, which alone can eradicate poverty and change their lives.

As promised during the 3,648 km padayatra, the government had released Rs 4,207.85 crore for the fee reimbursement for the year 2019-20, besides clearing Rs 1,880 crore dues of the previous TDP government for 2018-19. He also pointed out that none of the previous governments has reimbursed the fee arrears in such a large scale.

Further, the Chief Minister said that the state government was committed to the education sector and thus rolled out schemes like Jagananna Goru Mudha, Amma Vodi, Vasati Deevena to ensure that no family runs into debts for the sake

of getting educated their children. So far, a total of Rs 4,879 crore has been spent under Vidya Deevena benefitting 10.88 lakh students.

Previously the money was paid directly to college owners, but from now on it is being credited into the accounts of mothers as they could have better supervision on the facilities in colleges and students' wellbeing, which would also improve accountability from college managements. If any problem arises with college management or with Vidya Deevena, beneficiaries were advised to call on 1902 toll-free number.

- Chief Minister releases Rs 671.45 cr as first instalment into the accounts of students' mothers
- Says no family should incur debt on account of children's education
- The remaining three tranches will be released in July, December and Feb

Under Vidya Deevena, fee reimbursement will be credited into mothers' accounts in four instalments, where the government has released the first tranche on Monday and the second will be released in July, third in December, and the fourth tranche in February next year.

Last year, around 10.11 lakh students were benefited and this year the number increased by 77,000, benefiting 10.88 lakh students, said the Chief Minister.

Deputy Chief Minister Dharmana Krishnadas, education minister Audimulapu Suresh, BC welfare minister Chelluboina Venugopalakrishna, principal secretary higher education K Satish Chandra, principal secretary BC welfare G Anantaramu, principal secretary IT G Jayalakshmi, APSCE chairman K Hemachandra and other officials were present on the occasion.

# TTD extends time limit for ₹300 tickets

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUMALA

- Now the ticketholders can have darshan in 90 days since the day they booked the ticket
- The decision has been taken after many devotees inform that they are not in a position to have darshan in view of rising number of Covid cases
- Pilgrim rush at Tirumala comes down after the cancellation of issuing of offline Sarvadarshan tokens

THE devotees who booked Rs 300 special entry tickets online for darshan from April 21 to April 30 can avail darshan in 90 days from the date of the booking of the tickets online. After many devotees informed TTD that due to spike in Covid they were not in a position to travel to Tirumala for darshan, the authorities have decided to extend the time limit to 90 days to enable the Rs 300

darshan ticket holders to have a darshan of the Lord.

As the coronavirus cases are increasing phenomenally across the country for the past 10 days, TTD has taken some important decisions in view of pilgrim health and safety, including the cancellation of issuance of offline sarvadarshan token s being issued daily in Tirupati down the hills for free darshan in Tirumala temple and also insisting that the devotees scrupulously follow the Covid

guidelines for safety. It also urged the devotees to postpone Tirumala visit if they are suffering from fever, cold, etc.,. Meanwhile, the pilgrim rush to Tirumala temple drastically fell down after the cancellation of offline SSD free darshan token which was 22,000 daily, coupled with spike in cases in many states more so in the south, including Tamil Nadu, AP, Telangana, Karnataka from where more number of devotees arrive for darshan of Lord Venkateswara and also in Maharashtra where the Covid cases were reaching alarming proportions.

# Second wave stalls economic growth

**STATE REVENUES HIT HARD FOR PAST ONE WEEK**

PATAN AFZAL BABU  
HYDERABAD

THE second wave of corona may bring economic woes back in Telangana as the commercial activity was slowing down in the State for the last one week.

Revenues generated through taxes and liquor sales were declining under the impact of corona scare. The government worried that the current financial crisis would aggravate if the trading activity goes down further in the coming weeks. Top officials of the Commercial Taxes and Excise and Prohibition department told The Hans India that Hyderabad was bearing the brunt of deadly virus as the city witnessed business slowdown after people stopped coming to the city from districts

to make purchases. Officials said that business activity mainly sale of goods in the malls, retail and wholesale markets has gone down by 25 to 30 per cent in the State capital for a week. Footfall in the big shopping malls and multiplex was also reduced by 50 per cent in just four days. Weekend business in the entire city also registered low. The visit of people to restaurants and bars and other eatery centres also declined sharply during the weekend. "People fear they may get infected by the corona virus and are not venturing out of their homes. This trend will affect commercial activity in the coming days," said a senior official of the Commercial Taxes department. Consumption of fuel was also reduced by 20 per cent after the movement of people between districts and Hyderabad was restricted.

Excise officials said that liquor sales in Hyderabad were low this summer. The State capital was contributing 70 per cent of the total liquor revenues. Under the impact of corona, liquor sales were reduced by 30 per cent in Hyderabad which created a big dent on the State revenues.

"Normally, the Government earns Rs 500 crore revenue on a single day through taxes which includes VAT on fuels, liquor sales and Motor Vehicle Taxes. Now, it was around Rs 350 crore to Rs 400 crore," the official said. The only relief is the property registrations and sale of automobiles recorded a positive growth even during the crisis time. Officials of the Stamps and Registration and Transport department were instructed to ensure the revenues generated from the two wings are not affected in the pandemic time.

# Teachers want summer holidays

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana State United Teachers' Front (TSUTF) demanded that the State Government declare summer vacations and release promotions and transfer schedule.

In a statement on Monday, TSUTF president K Jangayya and general secretary Chava Ravi said that SSC examinations have been cancelled and students are not in a position to pay attention to online classes as the government has decided to promote lower classes without examinations to the upper

**Urged government to take up transfer, promotions and recruitments**

classes. However, teachers are attending schools every day. Against this backdrop, the TSUTF leaders said that it would be reasonable to declare summer holidays for schools and complete teacher transfers and promotions.

As the State Government prepares to launch an innovative education scheme from the next academic year,

TSUTF state president and general secretary urged the State Government to fill the vacancies of Headmasters and School Assistants through promotions in the intervening free time before the reopening of the schools.

The teachers union leaders asked the Education Minister to release the schedule for conducting teacher transfers, promotions and inter-district transfers through web counselling and to conduct Teacher Recruitment Test (TRT) to fill the vacancies in line with Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's announcement in the Assembly on March 22.



# Remdesivir not magic bullet, does not reduce mortality: Experts

‘It is of no use if given early in mild and asymptomatic patients and also if administered too late’

NEW DELHI

Amid a steep spike in COVID-19 cases leading to increased demand for medicines for treating coronavirus, top health experts in the government on Monday said anti-viral drug remdesivir is "not a magic bullet" and does not reduce mortality.

Addressing the media, AIIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria said remdesivir should only be given to patients hospitalised with moderate illness, who had a fall in oxygen saturation and have infiltrates on chest X-rays or CT-scan.

"Remdesivir is not a magic bullet and this is not a drug that reduces mortality. We may use it as we don't have a very good antiviral drug. It has a limited role and we should be very careful in its usage," he

said. "In major studies, remdesivir was shown to be useful only in those hospitalised patients with falling oxygen saturation and having infiltrates on chest X-ray or CT-scan.

It was of no use if given early in mild and asymptomatic patients and also if administered too late," Dr Guleria said. NITI Aayog member (Health) V K Paul said that remdesivir is not to be used in home settings and not to be procured from chemist shops. Data from studies so far have shown that remdesivir does not have any effect in reducing the mortality in COVID-19, he said in support of Dr Guleria's remark.

"The health ministry in its 'Clinical Management Protocols for COVID-19' has recommended the use of remdesivir on COVID-19 patients in a moderate stage of the illness. The drug has been included as an 'in-



vestigational therapy' and recommended only for restricted emergency," Paul said.

Guleria also said studies have shown that plasma therapy has a limited role in COVID-19 treatment and is of not much use. About the drug tocilizumab, he said the drug is required in less than 2 per cent of COVID-19 patients because it is only for cytokine storm. "It is to be given in the later stage of illness among those who have very high inflammatory markers and whose condition is worsening despite steroids, remdesivir and anti-coagulants."

"A majority of patients who have a mild COVID-19 or are asymptomatic will improve with just symptomatic treatment," Guleria asserted, adding the one drug that did show any benefit was steroids, but when to administer it is very important.

"Recovery trial showed that steroid has a harmful effect if given in an early stage of the disease before there is a fall in oxygen saturation." As for antiviral drug favipiravir, Guleria said the data for its utility in treating COVID-19 is not very strong. It has no effect on mortality and there is not much evidence to show that it is useful. It is not recommended for use in the National Clinical Management Protocol for COVID-19, he said. "So, it is important to understand that by giving treatment when it is not required you may be doing more harm. I appeal to everyone to please follow protocols and give treatment in a rational manner," Guleria said. Paul, over new research findings that COVID-19 spreads through air and not through droplets, said, "It is a dynamic situation for new learning."

## WINDOWS

### ‘Protect scribes family members’

RAIPUR: The President of Raipur Press Club, Damu Ambedare has appealed to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel to provide financial assistance to the family of the deceased journalists affected by Corona and provide proper treatment to journalists across the state. Ambedare told the Chief Minister that many journalists died during pandemic. "Financial assistance is required with special sensitivity to their families. A large number of journalists have been infected and are continuously getting infected while performing duties during the Corona disaster. Their rapid and proper treatment is also required."



Medic collects swab samples for Covid tests, amid the rise in cases across the country, in New Delhi on Monday

### Judge dies of Covid-19

NEW DELHI: A 47-year-old district court judge succumbed to COVID-19 at a government hospital here on Monday. Kovai Venugopal, who was a judge at the Saket Family Court, died at 11 am at the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Naryan Hospital. According to the court sources, he was admitted to the hospital on Sunday and was being treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) ward. Saket Bar Association secretary Dhir Singh Kasana alleged that the incident was a result of "negligence on the part of the government".

# CENTRE ENDS WARRIORS INSURANCE

Delhi CM announces six day lockdown; Army steps in to help oxygen supplies reach hospitals

DELHI/LUCKNOW/MUMBAI

Amidst the raging second wave of coronavirus in India, the Centre has decided to withdraw the insurance scheme of Rs 50 lakh for the healthcare workers who die on the Covid-19 duty.

In a letter, the Union health secretary has informed the states about the conclusion of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package, an insurance scheme for healthcare workers who die in the line of Covid-19 duty. The scheme was launched to provide a safety net for healthcare workers so as to ensure that in case of any adversity due to the coronavirus pandemic, their families are taken care of. However, a circular sent out by the health ministry last month states that the insurance scheme concluded on March 24 while only 287 claims have been processed so far.

The letter states that 287 claims had so far been approved/paid by the insurance company under the scheme. However, according to the Indian Medical Association, at least 736 doctors have died due to the Covid-19 virus. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday hit out at the government over the issue of insurance cover for health workers in the country.

"Government of India (GOI), you are utterly ungrateful," Gandhi said in a tweet, citing a media report claiming that India's health workers are left without government insurance cover as the second wave of COVID-19 hits the country.

In a tweet, the health ministry, however, said that a new dispensation will be provided to cover the "corona warriors". For this, the ministry is in talks with the New India Assurance, it said.

In an attempt to curb the spread of Covid in the national capital, the Delhi Government has announced a weeklong lockdown starting from 10 pm on Monday night to 5 am next Monday. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that in the duration of lockdown all essential services with regard to food, medicine, etc would continue.

The Allahabad High Court on Monday ordered a complete lockdown in five cities in Uttar Pradesh till April 26. The five cities are Lucknow, Prayagraj, Kanpur, Varanasi and Gorakhpur. All these cities have been reporting a high virus load. Responding to a Public Interest Litigation, the bench, comprising Justice Siddhartha Verma and Justice Ajit Kumar, directed the state government to strictly enforce the curbs.



A worker sorts cylinders filled with medical oxygen at a plant, as coronavirus cases surge across the country, in Prayagraj on Monday

## Kumbh virtually ends as key akhadas pull out

### Allahabad HC orders lockdown in 5 UP cities

### Police post shut as 7 cops test +ve

SAMBHAL: A police station in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal district was shut down after seven cops posted there tested positive for Covid-19.

The infected police officers and other staff have been placed under home quarantine and the Hayat Nagar police station has been sealed for the next 48 hours for sanitisation and disinfection.

Sambhal SP (city) Chakresh Mishra said, "After test reports of seven policemen posted at Hayat Nagar police station found them Covid positive on Sunday, the police station has been sealed for the next 48 hours during which a massive sanitisation and disinfection exercise would be carried out on the premises."

### JD(U) MLA dies of Covid in Patna

PATNA: Mewalal Choudhary, former Bihar Education Minister and Janata Dal (United) MLA, died on Monday morning due to coronavirus.

Choudhary tested positive for Covid-19 three days ago and was admitted to the Paras hospital in the state capital. He was suffering from a severe lung infection due to Covid-19. He had contracted the illness for the last few days and as there was no sign of recovery, his family members admitted him to Paras hospital.

He was elected from the Tarapur Assembly constituency after winning the 2020 Bihar Assembly election following which he was made the state Education Minister in Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's cabinet.

### Manmohan Singh admitted to AIIMS

NEW DELHI: Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was admitted to the AIIMS for treatment after testing Covid positive on Monday.

He has been admitted to the Trauma Centre, said sources.

Wishes came in as the news spread. "Dear Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji, Wishing you a speedy recovery. India needs your guidance and advice in this difficult time," Congress leader Rahul Gandhi tweeted.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, in a tweet, said: "Just got the news that former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Ji has tested positive for COVID. Sir, our thoughts and prayers for a speedy and full recovery."

### Own the crisis, don't pass the blame: Surgical strike hero's advice to PM

MUMBAI: Surgical strike hero Lt Gen (Retd) DS Hooda tweeted on the gravity of the situation that India is in:

"We are in a full blown corona crisis. Three suggestions for the national leadership from my experience.

1. Accept the existence of the crisis.
2. Own the crisis. Don't pass the blame.
3. Overreact in resolving the crisis. Don't underplay it.'

Lt Gen Hooda is the distinguished former General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Indian army's Northern Command under whose command Indian Special Forces conducted the September 2016 surgical strikes across the Line of Control in Pakistan after the Uri terror attack.

Lt Gen Hooda was also appointed by then Congress president Rahul Gandhi to prepare a task force and a vision document on national security in 2019.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh assured the Madhya Pradesh government that services at Army hospitals in the state will be made available to civilians during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Chief Minister's Office said.

Singh's assurance came after Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan spoke to him over phone about opening the Army hospitals in the state for the general public, an official in the CMO said. Senior Army officials will meet the chief minister in this connection, he said.

Meanwhile, crowds at the ghats of Ganga in Haridwar have thinned down drastically after the key 'akhadas' of seers began pulling out of the Maha Kumbh, citing the surge in coronavirus numbers.

Many spots on Monday wore a deserted look, an unimaginable sight during the Haridwar kumbh mela which will formally close only on April 30.

There is hardly any crowd now at the bathing ghats where droves of sadhus and common devotees had gathered for a dip in the river on the shahi snan' of April 14, defying Covid-19 norms like social distancing.

Most of the devotees have already left and the akhadas have been winding up their camps one after another.

## 30% health workers in Lucknow test +ve

LUCKNOW

MORE than 30 per cent of the health workers in Lucknow have tested positive for Covid.

These include doctors, nurses, technicians, ward boys and administrative officials at major Covid hospitals.

With this, the Covid services at various hospitals have been adversely affected.

A senior doctor at the King George's Medical University, where 40 doctors had tested positive in a day, said, "The disease is so infectious that every time a

team goes on 14-day Covid duty, nearly one-fourth of them return with the infection."

He said that while many of them are under home isolation, some with comorbidities have been admitted to hospital.

At Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences, at least 600 out of 2,000 staff members are Covid-positive.

"Around 30 per cent of the staff is infected. The non-Covid team are also getting infected while identifying Covid patients," said RMLIMS spokesperson Dr Shrikesh Singh.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during a roadshow in support of party candidates in South Dinajpur district on Monday

## Every third minute, 1 person dies in Maha

MUMBAI

MAHARASHTRA, the worst-hit state in the country battling the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic, adds more than 2,000 infections to its tally every hour, according to a report published by the Hindustan Times.

The analysis also shows one person succumbs to Covid-19 every third minute on average. Maharashtra continued to record a spurt in daily cases of the coronavirus disease as the state added 68,631 new patients according to the daily

health bulletin by the state health department.

It was the first time that the state recorded such a huge spike in a single day, which has pushed its tally to 38,39,338.

The state also reported 503 fatalities, pushing the death toll to breach the 60,000-mark to 60,473.

Out of the latest additions, 8468 new cases were reported from Mumbai city alone and 53 died due to Covid-19 in the span of 24 hours. The death toll in Mumbai has now reached 12,354.

# Elderly couple sues Air India for providing stale meal

NEW DELHI

A petition by an elderly couple on Monday in the Delhi High Court has sought a compensation of Rs five lakh from Air India alleging that in their 16 hour long flight the national carrier was without sufficient food and medical supplies.

Taking serious note of the plea of the couple, both senior citizens, who have also sought a direction that the airline return the ticket fare as there was lack of proper service by it, Justice Prathiba M Singh said "It is scary if this has happened". The high court issued notice to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Air India, Airport Authority of India (AAD) and GMR Aerocity, which runs IGI airport,

seeking their stand on the petition which narrated the ordeal of the couple during the 16 hour long flight from New Delhi to San Francisco on November 11, 2020. They claimed they were provided one hot meal, which was also stale, during the entire course of the journey despite informing the cabin crew that one of them was diabetic and required proper meals.

The couple - Nivedita and Anil Sharma -- in their petition filed through advocate Suruchi Mittal have claimed that they had to sustain themselves fruit drinks whenever they felt their sugar levels plummet and it was only thanks to food offered by a co-passenger that they were able to sustain themselves during the flight. They have contended that the airline "has no business to carry



400 plus people on a long haul flight without having sufficient food, water and basic amenities including basic and emergency medicine". They have also contended that the airline cannot unilaterally decide that they will serve only one meal without informing the passengers who normally do not carry food on flights and therefore, "endangering their health and life" in such "casual and lackadaisical manner".

They have sought refund of the ticket cost of Rs 2.25 lakh each and a compensation of Rs five lakh for securing their booking allegedly by making false representations and for not complying with airworthiness requirement, as mandated by DGCA Civil Aviation Requirements, with regard to medical supplies in the aircraft to help counter

and tackle emergencies onboard. The petition has claimed that not even necessary medications like anti-diarrheal or oral rehydration solution medicines were available in the aircraft for the 16 hour long flight.

The other issues raised in the plea are lack of a proper responsive or functional grievance redressal mechanism, for complaints which risks the health and safety of passengers and non-availability of club carts or wheelchairs at IGI airport to ferry aged or ailing passengers like the petitioners. The petition has sought a direction to the ministry, DGCA, the airline and the airport authorities to constitute an independent committee to review quality and quantity of food served to passengers depending on flight duration.



## TODAY'S QUOTE

### Startup India to support budding entrepreneurs

“THE idea behind Startup India scheme is to ensure adequate availability of funds, particularly to startups with good ideas in different fields. I do hope that this scheme will support our domestic entrepreneurs and their business ideas that often cannot take off due to the absence of critical capital at an early stage.

— Piyush Goyal, Union Minister



## HALLMARKING

### GJC urges govt to extend deadline

THE All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) has urged the government to extend the deadline for implementation of mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery to June 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and lack of infrastructure.

## FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	75.59	South	
Euro	90.93	African Rand	6.05
UAE Dirham	20.98	Hong Kong Dollar	11.07
Thai Baht	2.64	Japanese Yen	0.8
British Pound	104.96	New Zealand Dollar	54.36
Australian Dollar	58.81	Saudi Riyal	21.94
Canadian Dollar	60.56	Swedish Krona	10.26
Swiss Franc	82.67	Singapore Dollar	57.36

DELHI TUESDAY 20 APRIL 2021

## BIZ BRIEFS

### L&T completes 75 years

LARSEN & Toubro has completed platinum jubilee of one of its oldest businesses, Construction and Mining Machinery Business (CMB). The business has supplied over 60,000 units of various equipment in India during its 75 years association with the construction and mining industry. These machines have been used to create landmarks of exceptional design and have significantly contributed to the growing infrastructure of the nation. SN Subrahmanyam, CEO & MD, Larsen & Toubro said: “L&T has a legacy of pioneering critical equipment needed for nation Building and has been at the forefront of indigenous development of engineering design and manufacturing capabilities. We are delighted that our Construction & Mining Machinery Business has been fulfilling the formidable needs of mining and construction sectors with innovative equipment.”

### Motherland's unique t-shirts

MOTHERLAND, a pop culture, subculture and counterculture platform has added latest collections that include unisex clothing, super snacks, everyday objects and lifestyle supplies such as Goa forever t-shirt, a nod to the thrilling life and instances of Goa is Motherland's newest drop, next is Chandrayaan mother-landing on the moon is a landmark mission for the Indian space agency and a symbol of national pride which is a tribute to the mighty Chandrayaan. It is a limited-edition t-shirt. Bharat India men's polo t-shirt is a tribute to mighty India and encourage the youth to fly the flag in style. This unisex T-shirt features intricate embroidery on navy blue the classic Motherland Bharat India design on the front and a tricolor on the back.

### New medical innovation

EXPERTS opined that Laparoscopic surgery has emerged as the best alternative to treat and manage hernias. This technique is safe, effective, efficient, and less painful than a normal surgery. There is a need to raise awareness on these benefits as also the risk factors that can cause hernia. A hernia is a tear in the muscle or tissue that allows part of the insides to bulge out. It can be a bulge of an internal organ or the intestines. Dr Koorapati Ramesh, General and Laparoscopic Surgeon, Koorapati Laparoscopic and Fertility Centre, said: “Various types of hernias can have different causes. In general, a hernia starts with pressure on an organ or your intestines. There are minimally invasive surgeries available now which can improve outcomes for people with hernia.”

### Dairy Day's new range

DAIRY Day has introduced a new range of 500 ML ice cream cakes into the market. These 100 per cent vegetarian eggless ice cream cakes come in four new flavours of red velvet, choco mocha, choco fantasy and honey almond. Red velvet ice cream cake is a perfect treat for your special ones, it has ice cream sandwiched between layers of red velvet cake. Choco mocha ice cream cake, a coffee connoisseur's delight, unites the flavour of coffee with ice-cream and cake. M N Jaganath, co-founder, Dairy Day, said: “Ice-cream cake is a treat for cake and ice cream lovers alike. Dairy Day ice cream cake offers consumers the delightful combination of both the desserts which will give them a delectable experience.”

## BLACK MONDAY

# MARKETS IN TAILSPIN AS COVID-19 CASES RISE

Sensex plunges 883 pts, Nifty tanks 258 pts; investors lose ₹3.53 lakh cr

## MUMBAI

THE Sensex plunged 883 points while the Nifty crashed below the 14,400-level on Monday as the worsening Covid-19 situation in the country triggered an across-the-board selloff.

Fresh lockdowns announced by some States have stoked concerns over the economic recovery, while another sharp drop in the rupee also weighed on risk appetite, traders said.

After crashing over 1,469 points in early trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex pared some initial losses to close at 47,949.42, down 882.61 points or 1.81 per cent. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty tanked 258.40 points or 1.77 per cent to finish at 14,359.45.

PowerGrid was the top loser in the Sensex pack, slumping 4.17 per cent, followed by ONGC, IndusInd Bank, Kotak Bank, L&T, Bajaj Finserv, Asian Paints and M&M. Only Dr Reddy's and Infosys managed to end in the green, rising up to 1.58 per cent. “Domestic equities, which were looking resilient for last couple of days, fell sharply on sharp spike in Covid-19 cases across the country and enhanced economic restrictions imposed by several states.

Announcements of wider mobility



## MARKET CRASH

- Losers: PowerGrid, ONGC, IndusInd Bank, Kotak Bank
- Gainers: Dr Reddy's, Infosys
- BSE realty, capital goods, finance indices plunge 3.96%
- Broader BSE midcap, smallcap indices skid 1.93%
- Healthcare index closed higher

## Rupee tanks 52 paise against \$

THE rupee plunged by 52 paise to close at 74.87 against the US dollar on Monday as fresh lockdown measures by some States to control spiralling cases of Covid-19 unnerved investors and stoked fears of forex outflows. Losses in the domestic equity markets also weighed on the rupee which was the worst performer among Asian currencies on Monday, analysts said. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened lower at 74.80 against the greenback and touched a low of 75.05 in day trade. Weakness in the US dollar and losses in crude oil, however, capped the rupee's fall and the local unit recovered some of the losses to close at 74.87, registering a fall of 52 paise over its previous close. On Friday, the rupee had settled at 74.35 a dollar.

restriction by Rajasthan and Delhi governments dented investors' sentiments,” said Binod Modi, Head Strategy at Reliance Securities. Barring pharma and IT, which remained

resilient, all key sectoral indices witnessed sharp correction. Financials and automobiles witnessed steeper correction. Notably, volatility index soared by over 11 per cent, which does

## APSEZ clocks ₹5,425-cr turnover

SANTOSH PATNAIK  
VISAKHAPATNAM

ANDHRA Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Multi-Product Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) at Atchutapuram, about 50 km from here has clocked a turnover of Rs 5,425 crore during 2020-21 recording growth in exports by 22 per cent over the previous year. The SEZ comes under the jurisdiction of Visakhapatnam SEZ (VSEZ), Duvvada. SEZs in AP, Telangana and Chattisgarh are under the jurisdiction of VSEZ set up by the Ministry of Commerce. APSEZ has attracted investment from ferro alloys, pharma and chemical units.

VSEZ Development Commissioner A Rama Mohan Reddy told Bizz Buzz that APSEZ has put up an impressive show during the 2020-21 notwithstanding the challenges posed by Covid-19 pandemic. APSEZ achieved a turnover of Rs 4,441 crore during the previous year. He said in the past five years the exports have increased by 236 per cent. APIIC Multi Product SEZ was notified as multisector SEZ by the Ministry of Commerce on April



12, 2007 in an area of 782 hectares, which is looked after by the AP State-owned developer APIIC.

It comprises processing area of 759.44 hectares, non-processing area 23.16 hectares. After allotment of an area admeasuring 264.38 hectares, the remaining land has been earmarked for basic amenities and allotment of plots for new units in future. At present, the zone has 18 units out of which, 12 are functioning. One unit, Tuf India

Limited, is under rapid revival stage. The remaining five units are under different stages of implementation. Reddy said the 12 manufacturing units located in the zone are producing ferro alloys, pharma, chemicals and bulk drugs and engineering items. Rain CII Carbon (Vizag) Limited is under active implementation stage with an investment of Rs 650 crore.

## Jubilant Pharma completes studies using oral Remdesivir

NEW DELHI

JUBILANT Pharmova on Monday said its arm Jubilant Pharma has successfully completed studies using a novel oral formulation of Remdesivir used for treatment of Covid-19 against the available injectable formulation of the antiviral drug in India.

Jubilant Pharma has successfully completed “safety and pharmacokinetic/absorption studies in animals and healthy human volunteers in India using a novel oral formulation of Remdesivir against the commercially available injectable formulation of Remdesivir,” Jubilant Pharmova said in a filing to BSE. Jubilant has sought authorisation for additional studies for this novel oral formulation from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI), it added. “Jubilant is hoping to provide an affordable, more convenient, easy-to-administer and potentially effective treatment option for Covid-19 patients.

## SC stays proceedings in Amazon Future case

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Monday stayed the ongoing proceedings before the Delhi High Court in the case related to the amalgamation of Future Retail Ltd (FRL) with Reliance Retail. A bench of Justices R F Nariman, B R Gavai and Hrishikesh Roy posted the matter for hearing on May 4 and directed that all pleadings be completed in the matter.

Amazon had moved the apex court on April 8 challenging the Delhi High Court's division bench order that had vacated a stay on Kishore Biyani-led Future group proceeding with its Rs 24,713 crore asset sale to Reliance Industries.

Prior to this, FRL had moved the division bench of the high court against its a single judge's order upholding the Singapore's Emergency Arbitrator's (EA) order restraining FRL from going ahead with its Rs 24,713 crore deal with Reliance Retail to sell its business.

The division bench had granted Future a reprieve from a March 18

single-judge order that restrained it from taking any steps to sell assets to Reliance. The petition by the US based e-commerce giant has sought a stay on the March 22 order of the division bench, terming it ‘illegal’, ‘random’, ‘inequitable and unfair’. Amazon and Future have been locked in a bitter legal tussle after the US firm dragged Future Group to arbitration at SIAC in October last year, arguing that the latter had violated their contract by entering into the deal with rival Reliance.

Amazon had invested in Future Coupons in August 2019 with an option of buying into the flagship Future Retail after a period of three to 10 years. The Future group had however moved the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) seeking regulatory approvals to the Rs 24,713 crore deal with Reliance. Amazon had filed a plea before the high court (single judge) for enforcement of the October 25, 2020 Emergency Arbitrator (EA) award by Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) restraining FRL from going ahead with its Rs 24,713 crore deal with Reliance Retail.

## Macrotech lists, 6% down in debut trade

NEW DELHI

SHARES of Macrotech Developers on Monday made a tepid market debut and closed with a discount of nearly 6 per cent from the issue price of Rs 486. The stock listed at Rs 439, registering a decline of 9.67 per cent from the issue price on BSE. It further tumbled 13.34 per cent to Rs 421.15. It closed at Rs 463.15, falling 4.70 per cent.

In traded volume terms, 3.33 lakh shares were traded at the BSE and over 1.10 crore units on the NSE during the day. On NSE, it debuted at Rs 436, lower by 10.28 per cent from the issue price. It closed at Rs 457.95, lower by 5.77 per cent. The initial public offer of realty major Macrotech Developers was subscribed 1.36 times earlier this month. Macrotech Developers, erstwhile Lodha Developers, fixed a price range for the Rs 2,500-crore offer at Rs 483-486 per share.

## Automakers fear dent in sales as Covid surges

Lockdowns make it physically not possible to deliver

NEW DELHI

LEADING automobile companies like Maruti Suzuki India (MSI), Toyota Kirloskar Motor and Honda Cars fear dent in sales as Covid-19 cases surged across the country.

The country's largest carmaker MSI stated that the auto sales were correlated closely with economic growth and also (being a discretionary purchase) with the consumer sentiment. “The Covid-19 situation deterioration is obviously a negative for customer sentiment and thus has a negative impact on sales,” MSI Executive Director (Sales and Marketing) Shashank Srivastava said when asked about the impact of second wave of the pandemic on the company's sales. Lockdowns make it physically not possible to deliver cars but even the deterioration in Covid-19 situation without lockdown also psycholog-



ically dents consumer propensity to buy, he noted. Similarly, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) Senior Vice President Naveen Soni acknowledged that localised restrictions have impacted order flow and delivery schedules.

“We will be able access trends and define numbers only by the end of the month depending on the

severity and extension of the restrictions. As of date, we have had a good number of pending orders that had to be carried forward from the month of February and March to April. Therefore, we are striving to meet the customer demand in spite of the local restrictions and lockdowns,” he noted. On manufacturing operations, Soni said the

company continues to cautiously proceed with vehicle production. “Our immediate focus is to fasten and streamline the demand and supply processes with more accuracy and manage production, along with faster deliveries making it easier and convenient for customers by reducing the delivery time,” he added. Well-being of the employees as well as dealer and supplier staff are sacrosanct and the automaker has already reintroduced monitoring systems which were in place including submission of a self-declaration health form, Soni said.

“As responsible corporates, we are continuously monitoring the situation carefully and will take accurate actions, as and when required. More importantly, this time we have precious lessons from last year to learn, unlearn and reflect upon,” he noted. Honda Cars India said it is keeping a close look at the emerging situation.

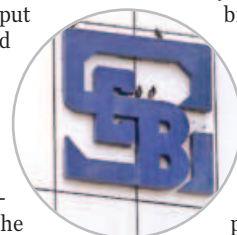
## Sebi to auction PVP Ventures property

Property has been attached in the recovery proceedings

NEW DELHI

MARKETS regulator Sebi on Monday said it will auction a property of PVP Global Ventures at a reserve price of Rs 22.55 crore on May 12, to recover dues.

The property to be put on sale is a vacant land situated in Telangana, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a notice. “The said properties standing in the names of Arete Real Estate Developers Private Limited and Expressions Real Estates Private Limited were attached in the recovery proceedings, as offered by the said entities along with no objection for realisation of the dues from Prasad V Potluri and PVP Global Ventures Private Limited,



through sale thereof,” Sebi noted.

The regulator has engaged Quirk Realty Ltd to assist it for the sale of the property, through e-auction platform, C1 India. In the notice, Sebi has invited bids by May 10, from the intending bidders along with an

amount equivalent of 10 per cent of the reserve price as earnest money deposit (EMD) for the sale of the property. The online auction will take place on May 12, between 11 am and 12 pm.

The intending bidders should make their own independent enquiries regarding the encumbrances, litigations, attachments, acquisition liabilities of the asset in respect of the property put on auction, prior to submitting their bid, as per the notice.



INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

# Chahar vs Ashwin key battle in Mumbai-Delhi face-off



CHENNAI

THE finalists of the last edition, both Mumbai Indians (MI) and Delhi Capitals (DC) have taken the early initiative this season and climbed to the top half of the points table and are just behind Royal Challengers Bangalore, who sit at the top.

While DC are second, MI are third, making Tuesday's clash a very interesting one.

Both teams are full of power-packed players with great batting depth. They are also well-matched in their bowling attack, possessing world-class bowlers.

While both teams have lost one match each out of the three they have played, MI have managed to hang on despite their famed power-packed middle order not doing well.

Their battle with DC's India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will be the one to watch out for. Ashwin's tight bowling had helped DC keep Punjab Kings under 200 in Sunday's match which DC overhauled easily.

While the action in the middle overs between Ashwin and Mumbai Indians batting could

be the highlight of Tuesday's match, it will also be interesting to see two quality spinners battle out against each other.

The experienced Ashwin has bowled reasonably well without doing anything spectacular. Mumbai Indians leg-spinner Rahul Chahar has been among wickets and helped MI win both their previous two matches.

Chahar took four wickets against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and then took three wickets against SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH) to help his team win despite having put up below-par totals.

A big challenge for Delhi Capitals will be to adjust to the slow MA Chidambaram Stadium where they will be playing for the first time this season. MI have played all their three matches at the venue.

SQUADS

- Delhi Capitals**  
Rishabh Pant (captain/wicketkeeper), Shikhar Dhawan, Prithvi Shaw, Ajinkya Rahane, Steve Smith, Sam Billings, Shimron Hetmyer, Ishant Sharma, Kagiso Rabada, Anrich Nortje, Umesh Yadav, Tom Curran, Avesh Khan, Lalit Yadav, Pravin Dubey, Ripal Patel, Lukman Hussain Meriwala, M Siddharth, Marcus Stoinis, Axar Patel, Ravichandran Ashwin, Chris Woakes, Vishnu Vinod (wicketkeeper), Aditya Tare (wicketkeeper).
- 
- Mumbai Indians**  
Rohit Sharma (captain), Adam Milne, Aditya Tare, Anmolpreet Singh, Anukul Roy, Arjun Tendulkar, Chris Lynn, Dhawal Kulkarni, Hardik Pandya, Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper), James Neesham, Jasprit Bumrah, Jayant Yadav, Kieron Pollard, Krunal Pandya, Marco Jansen, Mohsin Khan, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Piyush Chawla, Quinton De Kock (wicketkeeper), Rahul Chahar, Saurabh Tiwary, Suryakumar Yadav, Trent Boult, Yuvraj Singh.

## Made a conscious effort to improve my strike rate: Dhawan

MUMBAI

SHIKHAR Dhawan smashed a match-winning 92 off 49 balls against Punjab Kings on Sunday and the southpaw said he made a conscious effort to improve his strike rate during the knock.

Dhawan, who smashed back-to-back hundreds in the IPL last season, is no more a certainty in India's T20 playing XI and is competing for an opening slot alongside Rohit Sharma in the World Cup later this year.

"It was a conscious effort from my side. I knew I have to improve on that (strike rate). Started taking more risks. Not afraid of changes, always open towards it. Not scared of getting out as well," said Dhawan, who

batted at a strike rate of 187.86, after the six-wicket win over Punjab Kings.

The left-hander said he has also been working on his stroke play. "I have worked on a few shots. My slog shot has improved a lot. It was there earlier as well, but now I play it more freely. I'm more relaxed, having played for so many years. I don't take things for granted." Delhi Capitals skipper Rishabh Pant said he has started to enjoy captaincy.

"Coming from a loss, winning the next match was important. Have already started enjoying captaincy. But we were under pressure at the start, the wicket was not doing much.

"Bowlers did a good job keeping them to 195. He (Dhawan) has a lot of experience. You

can talk to him about anything, how we can set the field, there are many stuff you can talk about. End of the day, what he's giving to the team is commendable," Pant said.

Punjab skipper K L Rahul, who turned 29 on Sunday, said they put up a decent total but defending at Wankhede is always tough. "Right now it looks 10-15 runs short, but I think 190-odd looked good. Me and Mayank thought 180-190 would have been great on this wicket.

Shikhar batted well, so congratulations to them. "When we come to Wankhede, bowling second is always a challenge. We prepare for such conditions. It does get difficult against these quality batters. I'm not saying that because I'm on the losing side," he said.

Bowlers try to bowl with the wet ball, but it's always difficult to do that. I asked the umpires to change the ball a couple of times (as it was wet), but the rule book doesn't allow that," Rahul said. (PTI)



POINTS TABLE

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Tied	Net RR	Pts
1 RCB	3	3	0	0	+0.750	6
2 DC	3	2	1	0	+0.453	4
3 MI	3	2	1	0	+0.367	4
4 CSK	2	1	1	0	+0.616	2
5 RR	2	1	1	0	+0.052	2
6 KKR	3	1	2	0	-0.633	2
7 PBKS	3	1	2	0	-0.967	2
8 SRH	3	0	3	0	-0.483	0

## India Open postponed

NEW DELHI: The India Open Super 500 tournament, one of the last three qualifying events for the Tokyo Olympics, was on Monday postponed due to raging COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

The USD 400,000 India Open was scheduled to be held behind closed doors in the national capital from May 11 to 16. "Considering the current challenges, BAI is left with no option but to announce the postponement of the tournament for the time being," Badminton Association of India (BAI) general secretary Ajay Singhania said at a virtual press conference.

"Several rounds of discussions were held with BWF as well as the Delhi government and other stakeholders and accessing the safety of players and officials BAI needed to take this decision."

With Covid cases rising, many top players, including Olympic champion Carolina Marin, former world champion Ratchanok Intanon and Denmark's duo of Anders Antonsen and Rasmus Gemke had withdrawn from the Olympic ranking event.

The last edition of the India Open too was cancelled after it was initially postponed from March to December.

Syed Modi Super 300 event, which was slated for November 17 to 22, was also cancelled in the revised calendar. (PTI)

## Spurs sack Mourinho

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur manager Jose Mourinho was sacked on Monday less than a week before he was due to lead the club in the Carabao Cup final against Manchester City.

"The club can today announce that Jose Mourinho and his coaching staff Joao Sacramento, Nuno Santos, Carlos Lalin and Giovanni Cerra have been relieved of their duties," a statement on the Spurs website said, reports Xinhua.

Spurs chairman, Daniel Levy, said, "Jose and his coaching staff have been with us through some of our most challenging times as a club. Jose is a true professional who showed enormous resilience during the pandemic. On a personal level, I have enjoyed working with him and regret that things have not worked out as we both had envisaged. He will always be welcome here and we should like to thank him and his coaching staff for their contribution."

Mourinho leaves with Tottenham seventh in the Premier League table with 50 points from 32 games and struggling to qualify for a place in Europe next season.

MONTREUX (SWITZERLAND)

PLAYERS at the 12 clubs setting up their own Super League could be banned from this year's European Championship and next year's World Cup, UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin said Monday. Ceferin spoke following a UEFA executive committee meeting held only hours after the English, Italian and Spanish clubs announced the project that threatens to split European soccer. "They will not be able to represent their national teams at any matches," Ceferin said.

"UEFA and the footballing world stand united against the disgraceful self-serving proposal we have seen in last 24 hours from a select few clubs in Europe that are fueled purely by greed above all else," UEFA's 55 member federa-

## UEFA could ban Super League players from Euro 2020, WC

tions are gathering for an annual meeting on Tuesday, including 24 nations that are playing in Euro 2020.

"My opinion is that as soon as possible they (the clubs) have to be banned from all our competitions, and the players from all our competitions," Ceferin said.

Three of the 12 rebels — Chelsea, Manchester City and Real Madrid — are scheduled to play in the Champions League semifinals this month. Earlier, the 12 clubs planning to start the breakaway Super League told the leaders of FIFA and UEFA that they have begun legal action aimed at fending off threats to block the competition.

The letter was sent by the group to Ceferin and FIFA President Gianni Infantino saying the Super League has already been underwritten by funding of 4 billion euros (\$5.5 billion) from American bank JPMorgan Chase. Currently, teams have to qualify each year for the Champions League through their domestic leagues, but the Super League would lock in 15 places every season for the founding members. The seismic move to shake up the sport is partly engineered by the American owners of Arsenal, Liverpool and Manchester United, who also run franchises in closed U.S. leagues — a model they are trying to replicate in Europe.

UEFA warned the Super League clubs, including Barcelona, Real Madrid and Juventus, that legal action would be taken against them and said they also would be barred from existing domestic competitions like the Spanish league and the Premier League. "We are concerned that FIFA and UEFA may respond to this invitation letter by seeking to take punitive measures to exclude any participating club or player from their respective competitions," the Super League clubs wrote to Infantino and Ceferin in a letter.

"Your formal statement does, however, compel us to take protective steps to secure ourselves against such an adverse reaction, which would not only jeopardise the funding commitment under the Grant but, significantly, would be unlawful." (AP)

## India assured of 4 medals on 6<sup>th</sup> day of boxing youth Worlds'



KIELCE

THE 2019 Asian Youth Champion Vinka and Alfiya Pathan are among the four Indian women boxers who advanced into the semi-finals on the sixth day at the AIBA Youth Men's and Women's World Boxing Championships in Kielce.

Gitika and Poonam are the other two boxers who entered into the last-4 stage and have secured at least a bronze medal.

All four boxers put up scintillating performances in their respective quarter-finals bouts. Panipat boxer Vinka blanked her Colombian opponent Camilo Camela 5-0 in the 60kg category, while the 2019 Asian Junior Champion Nagpur's Alfiya (+81) also registered a comfortable 5-0 victory against Hungarian boxer Reka Hoffmann.

Playing in the 57kg category, Poonam notched up an easy 5-0 win against Nazerke Serik of Kazakhstan to progress in semi-finals.

Gitika (48kg) produced another strong show as she dominated her opponent Romania's Elisabeth Ostan from the word


go with precise punches and swift movement that saw the referee stopping the contest just after the first round and declaring Haryana boxer Gitika as the winner of the contest. Another Indian woman in action Khushi (81kg) lost her last-8 bout against Busra Isildar of Turkey.


In the men's section, Manish (75kg) and Sumit (69kg) made their way into the quarter-finals in their respective categories with identical 5-0 victories against Jordan's Abdallah Alaarag and Ladislav Horvath of Slovakia respectively in the pre-quarterfinals. Meanwhile, Akash Gorkha (60kg) and Vinit (81kg) couldn't progress further as they suffered defeats in their respective last-16 bouts.

Rajasthan boxer Arundhati Choudhary (69kg) alongside Naorem Babyrojisna Chanu (51kg) and T Sanamacha Chanu (75kg) will be seen in action on seventh day as they will play their quarter-finals while among the men, Ankit Narwal (64kg), Vishal Gupta (91kg), Bishwamitra Chongtham (49kg), Sachin (56kg), Manish (75kg) and Sumit (69kg) will fight for a place in the semi-finals. (ANS)

## Challenging outing for racer Rabindra at Monza

MONZA (ITALY): India's Akhil Rabindra and his French team-mate Hugo Conde faced a tough test in the European GT4 Championship, retiring in Race 1 and finishing 13th in the second at the Monza circuit in Italy. The Indo-French pair is competing in the 'Silver category', driving the Aston Martin Racing V8 Vantage GT4 for AGS Events Racing Team. Rabindra, an Aston Martin Racing (AMR) Driver Academy product, finished Race 2 in 50:34:074 sec. "We are not happy with Sunday's result, especially after what we could have achieved on Saturday (qualifying and Race 1 day). It's fortunate that we could not convert our P11 position in the qualifying to better results, but we are confident that we will have better outcomes in the races ahead," said Rabindra, who is the only Asian participating at the European GT4 Championship this year. "Saturday's crash was quite a big one, and all credit to our team that our car was ready just in time for Race 2."





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