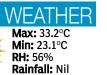
THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA KARIMNAGAR | TUESDAY | 1 SEPTEMBER 2020



Forecast: Cloudy sky. Rain likely. Max/Min temp. 33/23ºC



**CASES DEATHS** (+70,417)(+880)

65,427 36,84,339

827

covid19india.org STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS (+9)(+1,873)

TS: 1,24,963 (+10,004)(+85)AP: 4.34.771 3,969

CASES AROUND THE WORLD



8,52,488

worldometers.info/ coronavirus

#### ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana Tithi: Bhadrapada Shuddha Chaturdasi till 9.40 am Star: Danishta till 4.39 pm Varjyam: 12.26 am to 2.10 am **Durmuhurtam:** 8.33 am to 9.23 am; 11.06 pm to 11.53 pm Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** Muharram 12, 1442 AH **PRAYERS** Fajar: 5.01 am

> **Zohar:** 12.26 pm **Asar:** 4.37 pm Maghrib: 6.36 pm Isha: 7.44 pm SUNSET TODAY 6.29 PM

**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.02 AM MOONRISE TODAY 6.12 PM MOONSET TOMORROW 5.05 AM** 





my Black Cat security with this swadeshi dog!

#### BRIEF **Pak Army shells**

areas along LoC

Jammu: The Pakistan army

on Monday violated ceasefire by resorting to heavy firing and mortar shelling in forward areas along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said. The Indian Army retaliated befittingly.

"At 2115 hours today (9.15 pm). Pak Army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms & intense shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera sector", defence spokesman said. Pakistani rangers resorted to firing along the International Border in Jammu frontier,

he said. — PTI

NATION 4 **Sushant case: ED** 



WORLD 5 **NRI Pritam Singh is** 

Singapore's opp leader

SPORTS 8

**CSK** may part ways with Raina



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## GDP shrinks by record 23.9%

### Indian economy fares worst in world during April-June; ₹8.5 lakh crore worth business lost

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO | DC NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

India's economy saw its steepest fall in GDP growth in April-June 2020, the first quarter of this fiscal, as it contracted by 23.9 per cent — negative growth for the first time —

as coronavirus-related lockdowns weighed on the already-declining con-sumer demand and invest-

This is the sharpest contraction since Independence of the country and contrasts with 3.1 per cent growth in January-March quarter and 5.2 per cent expansion in the same period last year, official data released Monday showed.

The data showed that GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q1 of 2020-21 was estimated at ₹26.90 lakh crores, against ₹35.35 lakh crores in Q1 of 2019-20, showing a contraction of 23.9 per cent. India's economic activities were crippled after the nationwide lockdown imposed in March to tackle the spread

of Covid-19. The contraction of 23.9 per cent would mean the loss of nearly ₹8.5 lakh crore worth business during the April-June period. India's economic contraction is the worst among the G20 countries.

The data shows manufacturing has already entered recession as output fell 39.3 per cent in the June

ECONOMISTS, however, believe that India's economy may shrink by around 10 per cent in the current fiscal year.

quarter after falling 1.4 per cent in the earlier quarter. The positive news is that the farm sector's annual growth stood at 3.4 per cent in April-June, offering hope that the rural economy can support millions of migrant workers who returned to their villages during the lockdown peri-od. The data further showed that the manufacturing, construction and trade sectors reported massive slumps of 39.3 per cent, 50.3 per cent and 47 per cent respectively.
The BSE Sensex, which made a strong start and touched the 40,000-mark in the morning session, sur-rendered all gains and plummeted over 1,600 points from the day's high. It finally ended at 38,628.29,

down 839.02 points or 2.13 per cent. Chief economic adviser K.V. Subramanian said: "We are witnessing a Vshaped recovery as the economy unlocks e-way bills at 99.9 per cent vs August last year, despite local lockdowns. This will continue. Once the Unlock phase was undertaken, the decline has been progressively lower. The trend is of a V-shaped recovery. There is still residual uncertainty, that will persist till pandemic isn't brought under complete control." Economists, however, believe that India's economy may shrink by around 10 per cent in the current

fiscal year. Iscar year.
Icra's principal economist Aditi Nayar said, "As expected, GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and GVA (Gross Value Added)

plunged precipitously in the lockdown-ridden quarter of Q1 FY2021, both printing similar to our forecast of a 25 per cent contraction. Moreover, incoming data on the MSME and less formal sectors could manifest in a deeper contraction when revised data is released subsequently.'

### Lockdown impact steeper: Experts

Mumbai, Aug. 31: The June quarter GDP contraction at 23.9 per cent shows that the impact of the lockdown has been "way higher than anticipated", analysts said on Monday.

Some analysts expect the remaining three quarters in the fiscal to show negative growth as well. The Indian economy was facing challenges even before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The quantum of negative growth shows the

been way higher than anticipated," analysts at India Ratings and Research said. The situation would have been far worse but for the banking, financial services and IT and IT-enabled services sectors which continued to operate in the lockdown, they added.

Analysts at Care Ratings said growth in the rural and agricultural economy will not be sufficient to compensate for the decline in urban demand. -PTI

### **India foils China attempt** to occupy more LAC land

Chinese return after finding Indians at Pangong lake

PAWAN BALI | DC with agency inputs NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

In a major flare-up in eastern Ladakh, the Indian Army has thwarted an attempt by Chinese troops to transgress and grab land on the southern banks of Pangong Tso on the night of August 29-30.

This is an attempt by the Chinese to open a new front in Ladakh. Till now the standoff was in the "Finger" area on the northern bank of Pangong Tso but the Chinese PLA are now also looking to infiltrate into the Chushul

In a "pre-emptive move", the Indian Army has now occupied a few heights in South Pangong Tso to dominate the area sources said. The Army said in a statement on Monday that PLA troops had carried out "provocative military movements" to "change the status quo" on the night of August 29-30.

'Indian troops pre-empted this PLA activity on the southern bank of Pangong Tso Lake, undertook measures to strengthen our positions and thwart Chinese intentions to unilaterally change the facts on the ground," the Indian Army statement said.

It added that the Indian Army was committed to maintaining peace and tranquility through dialogue, but was equally determined to protect its territorial integrity.

A brigade commanderlevel flag meeting was held at Chushul to resolve these issues.

Army Spokesperson Col Aman Anand said troops from China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) "violated" the consensus arrived at during military and diplomatic engagements on the ongoing



A fighter jet flies in the skies of Leh in Ladakh on Monday.

standoff in eastern Ladakh, and carried out provocative military movements to change the

Initial reports say the Army got information that the Chinese had started building up forces to occupy Indian territory in Pangong Tso's southern banks. The Indian Army physically occupied the area as soon as the PLA tried its transgressions. There was no physical clash between the troops.

The Indian Army's "pre-emptive" move is days after Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat warned that India has "military options" to deal with Chinese transgressions in Ladakh if talks between the two sides at the military and diplomatic level don't yield any result.

Government sources said the top strategic and military brass including

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and the three service chiefs were briefed about the Chinese attempt

in detail.
The Chinese Army's Western Theatre Command accused India of crossing the LAC on Monday and of purposely launching "provocations"

It said: "China strongly opposes the acts and urges India to immediately withdraw the troops that have illegally crossed the LAC." In New Delhi, people familiar with the developments said India has taken the Chinese attempt "seriously" and the Army has further increased its deployment of troops and weaponry in and around southern and northern banks of the Pangong Tso

lake following the Chinese attempt. They said the attempt reinforced the assessment by the Army that China has not been serious in disengaging its troops from the friction points as it was still trying to change the status of the LAC in the new area.

The India-China military standoff in Ladakh will complete four months this week. The two armies are involved in a standoff in Pangong Tso, Hot Springs area and the Despang-DBO sector in Ladakh.

A series of military and diplomatic talks between India and China failed to persuade China to disengage its forces.

China has instead used this time only to bring its forces nearer the LAC, position heavy weaponry, build helipads and air defence systems and deploy missiles against India at new positions.

### SC fines Bhushan ₹1 for contempt

PARMOD KUMAR | DC

Lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan, held guilty of contempt for his tweets criticising Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde, former CJIs and the Supreme Court, was asked to pay a notional fine of ₹1 by the top court on Monday.

If he didn't pay the fine by September 15, he'd face jail for three months and a ban from practicing in the Supreme Court for three years, a three-judge bench ordered while saying that despite its repeated suggestions, Mr Bhushan had refused to tender an apology, showing both "adamance and ego" though his act of denigrating the judiciary was "very serious".

In a tweet on Monday afternoon, Mr Bhushan said that he had "gratefully accepted" the contribution for the fine from his lawyer. "My lawyer & senior col-

league Rajiv Dhavan contributed 1 Re immediately after the contempt judgement today which I grate-fully accepted," Mr Bhus-han tweeted with pho-tographs of him holding up a ₹1 coin. 'I propose to submit to

the order and respectfully pay the fine. I did not mean to disrespect the court with my tweets. I will pay the fine," he told reporters in the evening.
While passing the order,

Justice Arun Mishra, who was heading the bench, said, "In our considered view, the act committed by the contemnor (Prashant Bhushan) is a very serious one. He has attempted to denigrate the reputation of the institution of administration of justice of which he himself is a part.

Speaking for the bench, also comprising Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Krishna Murari, Justice Mishra said, "The court, from the very beginning,



I propose to submit to the order and respectfully pay the fine. I did not mean to disrespect the court with my tweets. I will pay the

— PRASHANT BHUSHAN

was desirous of giving quietus to this matter. Directly or indirectly, the contemnor was persuaded to end this matter by tendering an apology and save the grace of the institution as well as the individual, who is an officer of the court". "However, for reasons best known to him, he has neither shown regret in spite of our persuasion or the advice of the learned Attorney-" he added. General, Mr Bhushan's conduct,

Justice Mishra said, "Reflects adamance and Justice ego, which has no place in the system of administration of justice and in noble profession, and no remorse is shown for the harm done to the institu-tion to which he belongs."

Referring to Mr Bhushan releasing his second statement to the media even before it reached the court, the court said. "If we do not take cognizance of such conduct it will give a wrong message to the lawyers and litigants throughout the country. It then ordered the fine. The SC had on August

14, 2020, held Mr Bhushan guilty of the contempt of court for his two tweets which the court had said lowered its dignity and

### **ADANI ACQUIRES MUMBAI AIRPORT** FROM GVK GROUP

**DC CORRESPONDENT** HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Gujarat-based Gautam Adani-led Adani Group will take over the operations of Mumbai airport from Hyderabad-based GVK Group, both companies said in two separate announcements Monday.

Though financial details of the deal were not revealed, the Adani Group would take over the entire 50.5 per cent stake of the GVK Group and 23.5 per cent share-holding of two other foreign minority investors. As part of the deal, the Adani Group would take over the debt of GVK

Airport Developers Ltd. This deal marks the exit of the GVK Group, which operated presti-Mumbai Bengaluru airports, from the airport business in India. It had sold its stake in Bengaluru airport's operating firm to Hyderabad-born Indian-Canadian Prem Watsa's Fairfax India Holdings Ltd. The GVK Group now operates only one airport in Bali, Indonesia.

G.V.K. Reddy, chairman, GVK Group said, The aviation industry has been severely impacted by Covid-19, setting it back by many years and has impacted the financials of Mumbai International Airport Ltd. It was, therefore, important that we bring in a financially investor.

The Mumbai airport deal will catapult the Adani Group as the country's largest private airport operator, an objective set by the company a few months back in its annual report for fiscal vear 2020. The Adanis already run

six non-metro airports, built by the Airports Authority of India and has added Mumbai airport to its kitty.

### More non-Covid-19 treating doctors died

KANIZA GARARI I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

More doctors practicing in the non-Covid 19 sectors have died than those treating Covid-19 cases, Many of them were unable to understand when they contracted the virus and dismissed the ini-

tial symptoms. Data with the Indian Medical Association (IMA) shows that 188 general practitioners across the country were infected as they were the first point of contact with

patients, from March to May. These doctors were infected

as asymptomatic carriers could not be identified and only those with severe cases were tested. Their exposure rate was very high but protection was minimal. While the IMA repeatedly

pointed out that all asymptomatic carriers are suspect Covid-19 cases, the actual follow up was not done at the clinical level

■ Page 2: Most doctors were in 30-50 age group

END OF AN ERA

### Seven-day national mourning declared; funeral will be held today in Delhi Pranab Mukherjee, man for all seasons, dead

SANJAY BASAK | DC NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

Former President of India and stalwart of Indian politics Pranab Mukherjee, who was often called the "man for all seasons", died at the Army's Research and Referral Hospital in New Delhi on Monday after ailing for some weeks. He was 84. His son Abhijit Mukherjee announced the news of his death. He is survived by his son

Abhijit and daugh Sharmistha Mukherjee. Speaking about his long journey, Pranab Mukherjee once said: "I have seen vast, perhaps unbelievable changes during the journey that has brought me from the flicker of a lamp in a small Bengal village to

the chandeliers of Delhi.' Mukherjee's Pranab funeral will be held at the Lodhi Road crematorium in New Delhi on Tuesday. The government announ-



ced seven days of state mourning throughout the country, when the tri-

colour will be flown at halfmast and there will be no has just passed away in official entertainment.

Mukherjee, who was found to be coronavirus positive, was admitted to the Army R&R Hospital, where he also underwent surgery for a blood clot in

the brain. Mukherjee's condition, however, deteriorated over weeks and he was put on ventilator support.

"With a heavy heart, this is to inform you that my

spite of the best efforts of doctors of R&R Hospital and prayers, duas and prathanas from people throughout India," his son

Mukherjee was conferred the Padma Vibhushan in 2008 and the Bharat Ratna in 2019. His political career spanned nearly five decades. Mukherjee, who started as an election man-

pyramid when he became President in 2012. He served as President till

During his long political career, Mukherjee donned many hats. He served as external affairs minister, finance minister, defence minister, commerce minister, besides being leader of the Lok Sabha and Rajya

■ Page 4: Pranab's career defined by Gandhis

#### SHORT TAKES **LPF ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP** FOR STUDENTS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Lila Poonawalla (LPF) Foundation announced that it will offer merit-cum-need-based scholarships for girl students wishing to pursue undergraduate studies in engineering, starting from the 2020-21 academic year. The LPF which has for 25 years operated in Maharashtra is for the first time set to start operations in Hyderabad district.

Šcholarship forms will be available on the https://www.lpfscholarship.co m from Tusday. Details about the LPF can be found at https://www.lilapoonawallafoundation.com.

Meanwhile, the Sarojini Damodaran Foundation (SDF) has invited applications for its Vidyadhan scholarship programme from students coming from economically backward families with an annual income below ₹2 lakh. The students should have passed their Class 10 exam in 2020 with 90 per cent marks or 9.0 CGPA (75 per cent or 7.5 CGPA for students with disability) and studying for Intermediate in

Telangana state.
Eligible students can apply online by logging into www.vidyadhan.org till September 30. More details can be found at vidyadhan.telangana@sdfoun-dationindia.com or by contacting Lakshmi Tejaswini at

#### **EX-MINISTER THREATENS WORKERS, HELD**

**Hyderabad, Aug. 31:** A former Andhra Pradesh minister was arrested for allegedly threatening some canal construction workers with a gun in Nalgonda district, police said on Monday.

According to police, the incident happened on SUnday evening when G. Mohan Reddy reportedly objected to the works taken up in his farm land and took out his licensed weapon and allegedly intimidated the site engineer and other workers to stop the

In a video, which has gone viral on social media, the for-mer minister of undivided Andhra Pradesh is purportedly seen pointing the gun towards a man following an argument and later chasing another man who was appar-

ently shooting the video.
"The land was acquired by the government and compen sation was also paid to him. He had some grievance and entered into an argument with the site engineer and threatened him with the weapon to stop the work," Nalgonda superintendent of police A.V. Ranganath said.

Following a complaint, the former minister was arrested, the SP said. The police seized his weapon.

#### KTR ASSURES **MORE FUNDS FOR WEAVERS**

MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Minister K.T. Rama Rao on Monday said that the government may provided another installment of funds under the Nethanna Ku Chevutha' (thrift scheme) to help weavers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He said that during the lockdown the government had relaxed the mandatory lock-in period of three years. A total of ₹96.43 crore was given to handloom weavers and ₹13 crore to powerloom weavers which benefited

weavers, Rama Rao said. Appreciating the move, the weavers were appealing to the government to once again implement this scheme, he said during a review meeting on the handloom and textiles department. A decision will be

taken soon on this. He also held a review meeting on the Bathukamma sari distribution scheme and asked officials to complete the production of the saris soon and complete distribution by the second week of October. He instructed the handloom and textiles officials to issue guidelines to be followed by the collectors during the distribution

of the saris. He asked the officials to focus on the branding of TSCO handloom clothes. Rama Rao asked the officials for an action plan to set up show-rooms in different places of Hyderabad city. Later, he visited the Golconda Handicrafts

#### **Violation of Motor Vehicle Act**



Several garbage trucks of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation seen plying on roads without registration number plates.

### Victim: Man who helped file plaint also raped me

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T. I DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The case of rape of a woman allegedly by 139 persons, being investigated by the Central Crime Station (CCS), took a seri-ous turn with the victim stating on Monday that the man who prompted her to approach the police had also blackmailed and

exploited her sexually.

The victim alleged that the names of several innocent persons including film actors were put on the list of accused at the behest of the man, who she identified as Raj Sreekar. She said Sreekar runs an NGO and alleged that he encouraged her to lodge the police complaint. On August 20, the 25year-old woman lodged a complaint with the Punjagutta police alleging rape, harassment, threats and blackmail in which she named 139 persons and four others. The police registered a case and transferred it to the Central Crime Station of

Hyderabad, where a case

**S.A. ISHAQUI | DC** HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Governor Dr Tamilisai

Soundararajan led the

state in condoling the

death of former President

Pranab Mukherjee. In a message, she said, "A

message, she said, "A great visionary, a states-

man par excellence, a

great orator, a writer, a shrewd parliamentarian

and above all a great human being – all in one.

The passing away of this

great son of India is a loss

not only to India but

Condolences poured in

from ministers and Telangana Rashtra Samiti

(TRS) leaders. IT minister

K.T. Rama Rao recalled

that Mukherjee had played a key role in the formation of Telangana

Minister T. Harish Rao

said "we will remember

his immense contribu-

**COPS FIND NO** 

TRACE OF FOUR

DC CORRESPONDENT

special

despatched to neigh-

bouring states drew a

blank in their attempt to

trace the four Covid-19

positive prisoners who escaped from Gandhi

escaped from Gan-Hospital on August 27.

Somasunder, 20, and P.

Narsaiah, 41, and under-trials Md Abdul Arbaz,

21, and Md Javed, 35,

escaped from the prison

ward that is situated on

the second floor of the

teams

HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

**PRISONERS** 

humanity at large."

of the rank of deputy superintendent of police.

Even as the probe is underway, the woman along with leaders of the Porata Samiti (MRPS) held a press conference on Tuesday in the city.

Speaking to media, the victim said, "I was under threat of Raj Sreekar, who threatened to kill my parents and blackmailed me to lodge a complaint naming several persons including film actors. The film actors do not have any role in the atrocities perpetrated on me."
She alleged,

(Sreekar) raped me on multiple occasions and he exploited me. I was against naming innocent people, but he threatened me and beat me up. If anybody has my private videos and photos, please delete them.

Asked if the victim a complaint the alleged lodged against accused, CCS ACP K. Sreedevi said, recording the statements of the victim, further was re-registered for a action will be taken.

Leaders condole death

of Pranab Mukherjee

Dr Tamilisai

Soundararaian

Assembly

Jagadish

tions forever in the forma-

Pocharam Srinivas Reddy,

Council Chairman Gutta

Sukhender Reddy, ministers S. Niranjan Reddy, G.

Prashanth Reddy, A. Indrakaran Reddy, TRS

tion of Telangana state."

### **TS SAYS LOST** ₹8,000CR IN

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

The state government on Monday said the Centre has no option but to pay full GST compensation to states. It said the state had lost about ₹8,000 crore income during the past four months on account of lockdown to contain the Corona-

MPs from the state will the issue in Parliament and the TRS government, if necessary, will knock the doors of courts over the Goods and Services Tax (GST) issue, finance minister T. Harish Rao told reporters after a meeting with his coun-

terparts from five states. The Centre is trying to shy away from its responsibility of paying GST compensation in the name of 'act of God'. It is not fair for the Centre to tell states to borrow (to make up the GST loses)," he said.

The meeting was attended by the finance ministers of Punjab, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and West Bengal, heeidea Telhorage at the besides Telangana state, official sources said here on Monday.

#### chance. My wife is a gynaecologist and she tested negative. I quarantined myself in a different room and wore the mask **FOUR MONTHS** at home. It was important for me to protect her and others by wearing a mask always. sonal protection kits were I was under home treat- a must when seeing

FIRST PERSON

I tested positive for Covid-

19 on July 14 with a rapid antigen test. As a paedia-

trician and head of the

neonatology department in a hospital, I was con-

Since children do not

wear masks, it is clear that

they are the asymptomatic

carriers and it was bound

to pass on to their treating

I had the initial symp-

toms of fever, bodyache

and cough. The symptoms

made it clear that it was

Covid-19 despite my CT

scan showing that I was

I did not want to take a

seeing child

stantly

patients.

negative.

and healthcare workers DC CORRESPONDENT tion of anonymity, said, asymptomatic and symptomatic patients. This does not mean that PPEs and HYDERABAD, AUG. 31 Doctors and other healthother protective measures

Dr T.P. Karthik

ment of my pulmonologist

as the symptoms were mild and the medicines

worked but required com-

plete rest, sleep, eating healthily and drinking

enough water. Apart from

that, I checked my param-

eters regularly and report-

ed. This made medical

management easy.
I recovered in two weeks

but when I returned to

work it was clear that all

of us should practice

social distancing and per-

HCQ benefitted doctors

Never ignore early Covid symptoms

care workers have benefitcan be given a miss. We ed from taking hydroxy-chloroquine (HCQ) tablets every week for protection from Covid-19. These medhave to wear them and only enter then The impact of HCQs is ical personnel say that worrisome for those who have heart problems and diabetes. But if they are

soon. A senior doctor, on condi-

"We have been treating patients with HCQ and their outcomes have been good. As a preventive medicine, it has worked for those who have regularly taken it and done Covid-19 duties. Till the pandemic ends, there is no other option for medical work-

single positive case in my

hospital now.
I also went ahead and

donated plasma for my

friend's father. It is very

important that we register

and volunteer for this donation as it helps.
It is very important that

doctors and healthcare

workers not ignore their

bound to be a high viral

load. The earlier we seek

treatment better for us,

chances of becoming real-

Given the high workload,

it was a tough decision for me but I acted early. Many

doctors and healthcare

workers in the younger

age group are suffering as they ignored the early signs and it took a drastic

there

otherwise

ly very, very sick.

#### Senior paediatrician wins battle against virus with little care patients. This has helped **MOST DOCTORS** all of us as there is not a **WERE IN 30-50 AGE GROUP**

From Page 1

Dr Sanjiv Singh Yadav, Telangana state secretary Indian Association (IMA), said, Three reasons are noted for the death of these doctors. One, there was minimal protection in the beginning and the infectious nature of the virus was not taken seriously by many. Two the first few batches of Protective Equipment (PPE) kits were not of good quality. Third, use of face shields in non-Covid 19 practice was not fol-

and traumatic turn for lowed. many of them.

The writer is a senior Doctors in the age-group of 30-50 years have died, leading to alarm in the IMA. In Telangana state, paediatrician and chief neonatologist.
(As told to Kaniza 11 doctors have died and three in a serious condi-

Experts state that none of the doctors were asymptomatic; they did not act in time when there

were symptoms. Cough, cold, fever, diarrhoea and gastric prob-lems which were missed due to the high workload. Dr C. Vijay Kumar, sen-

ior pulmonologist at Apollo Hospitals, explained, "While wearing protective gear, we cannot even drink water. Some healthcare workers removed masks and face shields to drink water and contracted the virus. This makes it very important to follow the protocols of hand washing and wear-ing masks in hospital

A total of 87,000 healthcare workers have been infected with Covid-19 nationwide, of whom 2,006 are undergoing treat-

#### since March they have been taking HCQ along There are consultations for offering favipiravir for with multivitamins to surunder constant medical vive the high workload and care, those problems can be frontline workers the virus. but many doctors are scep-Prabhu Kumar Those who have been tak-Challagali, senior consulting HCQ, when tested positical. Their contention is ant, internal medicine, tive, were found to have less that HCQ has worked and till the caseloads come down they will stick with explained, "HCQ have worked as protection as we work in close quarters with viral load and recovered

Covid-19

# Fewer cases reported as testing drops on holiday

Covid-19 cases showed a significant drop on Sunday due to an equally steep fall in the number of people tested for the disease. The health department on Monday said fresh Covid-19 cases registered between Saturday and Sunday evening were 1,873, down from 2,924 the day before.

The number of Covid-19 determination tests fell to 37,791 from 61,148 on

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Chevella police arrested a 24-year-old man

On March 18, the Chevella police had recov-

ered the naked body of a

woman with her face dis-

figured at Thangadapally.

She was later identified as

Dawa Passi Sherpa, 37, a

native of Gangchun.

HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

March this year.

• FRESH COVID-19 cases registered between department said. As on Sunday evening. Saturday and Sunday evening were 1,873, down from 2,924 the day before. The number of Covid-19 determination tests fell to 37,791 from **61,148** on Saturday.

As per the Covid-19 bulletin issued by the health department, nine more persons lost their lives taking the toll to 827. The total Covid-19 cases stood at 1,24,963 of whom, 92,837

1 held for woman's murder

engineering student from

UP, on March 31. On

Tuesday, his cousin and prime accused in the mur-

der. Jaki Akthar. 24. who

works at a garment store

in Mumbai, was arrested.

said that Jaki, a UP native, met Sherpa, a mother of two, through

Facebook and developed a

friendship. In March, Jaki

The Cyberabad police

recovered, the

The probe led to the missing case was registerest of Akthar Bari, an tered at Sikkim.

Pelangana state, it said, had 31,299 active cases with 24,216 of these cases in home or institutional isolation. The number of cases in

GHMC area continued to be the highest in the state at 360. The other districts to register high number of cases were Karimnagar with 180, Ranga Reddy with 129, Khammam with 103, Nizamambad and Warangal Urban with 94 each, and Siddipet with 85

As she was pressing him

for marriage, Jaki brought her to the city

from Mumbai. He and

Akthar took her in a rent-

ed car towards Chevella,

strangled her and aban-

doned the body. "They searched on Google Maps

to find a route without toll

Mirzaguda. After killing

and

gates

went to Sikkim and and disfigured her face to brought Sherpa along prevent her identificawith him to Mumbai. A tion," police said.

### DOES ANY HOSP **RUN IN HERITAGE BUILDING, ASKS HC**

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA

HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Does any hospital function from a heritage build-

ing in any part of the world, the Telangana High Court asked the petitionwho want the Osmania General Hospital (OGH) to contin-General ue functioning from the heritage structure

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Chauhan and Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy was on Monday hearing a batch of four Public Interest Litigations (PILs) related to the heritage OGH struc-

The court observed that there are situations where hospitals are run from churches and temples, but it is rather rare that a hospital is located in a her-

itage building.

Justice Vijaysen Reddy
asked senior advocate V.
Satyam Reddy whether any hospital works out of

a heritage structure anywhere in the world.
Satyam Reddy stated that the building was constructed for the hospital

and was later placed on the heritage list. Since it is a heritage structure, it cannot be demolished and has to be protected. The hospital premises

has 16 acres of open land which can used for construction of a new building to house the OGH, senior counsel said.

Rachna, counsel, said that since the OGH building is notified as a heritage structure, it cannot be demolished going by the order passed by the High Court on the Erramanzil Palace.

The judges while going through the site map of the hospital premises observed that the structures and other information were not legible.

The High Court bench adjourned the hearing to September 8 and directed petitioners Advocate General (AG) B.S. Prasad to furnish a legible coloured site map.

#### Parliamentary party leader Dr K. Keshava Rao, Rajya Sabha member J. Santosh Kumar and others expressed shock at the demise of the former Presiden.

Pradesh Telangana Committee Congress president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, party MPs A. Revanth Reddy, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, former minister K. Jana Reddy, Geeta Reddy, CLP Leader Bhatti Vikramarka, MLC T. Jeevan Reddy and other senior leaders has expressed their deep grief

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, MPs D. Arvind and S. Bapu Rao also expressed their condolence along with party leaders D.K. Aruna, K. Laxman, K. Krishna Sagar Rao and Ponguleti

#### who allegedly murdered a over the demise of Sikkim woman and aban-Mukherjee. doned her body under a bridge at Chevella during

Sudhakar Reddy.

Reddy,

T. V.

### Villagers advised not to venture out before 6 am and return early

### More tigers seen in Adilabad forests

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS **DC** ADILABAD, AUG. 31

Sighting of tigers has increased in several areas Adilabad, Kumarambheem Asifabad Mancherial districts. It is said as the prey base of herbivores is less in the forest along the Penganga, some tigers are coming nearer to villages on the fringes of forests and tar-

geting cattle. Farmers are scared of the presence of tigers and avoiding their fields to water or apply pesticides

to their standing crops. Tiger sighting has been reported at Karanji in Bheempur mandal of Adilabad Khairguda in Tiryani mandal in Kumara-mbheem Asifabad district, and Mandamarri, Nennel and near Gollavagu project in Bheemaram mandal of Mancherial district.

Villagers of Karanji in Bheempur mandal said a tiger moving in the area killed a cow on Thursday night. They requested forest officials to take steps for ensuring the safety and security of people and of the presence of tigers and avoiding their fields to water or apply pesticides to their standing crops.

ONE OF the cattle belonging to Herakumre Isru died in the tiger attack. Isru said he was shocked on seeing the tiger attacking his grazing cattle. He ran for his life and alerted the villagers.

their cattle. Forest beat officer Keshav of Arli (T) visited the spot and confirmed

that it was a tiger kill. He also found pug marks of the tiger at the location on August 14. There are reports of

another tiger attacking cattle grazing close to the forests on outskirts of Mediguda-Kautala villages in Gadeguda mandal on Sunday morning. One of the cattle belonging to Herakumre Isru died in the tiger attack.

Isru said he was shocked on seeing the tiger attacking his grazing cattle. He ran for his life and alerted the villagers.

Villagers say when they

reached the spot, the tiger had disappeared from the Forest officials have

advised people not to venture out of their villages before 6 am and return early to their homes in the evening because of the movement of tigers. Tigers are migrating

from the Tippeshwar and Tadoba Andhari tiger reserve of Maharashtra. Their movement is high along the rivers of Penganga, Pranahitha and Godavari on Telangana state's borders with Maharashtra.

#### IN BRIEF Couple dead, daughter injured

Warangal: A couple died and their daughter escaped with injuries in a road accident after two bikes collided with each other at Damera mandal during the wee hours of Monday The deceased were identified as Tadem Srinivas, 45, and his wife Mamatha, 38, who were natives of Regonda in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district. They were returning home to Warangal from their village on a twowheeler when another twowheeler rammed into them near Damera on NH - 163. The couple fell on the ground and Srinivas died on the spot. The police shifted the injured mother and daughter to the MGM Hospital in Warangal. While the mother succumbed to injuries, the daughter is said to be out of danger. Police SI U. Bhaskar Reddy said the accident was caused by rash driving and three persons were travelling on the other two-wheeler at the time of the mishap. The trio, who too sustained injuries, have been booked and an investigation is on.

#### **Youth washed** away at Bogatha

Warangal: A 24-year-old youth is missing in the Bogatha waterfalls in Vajedu mandal. His body is vet to be recovered Gopinath, a native of Warangal along with his two friends, went to see the waterfall late on Sunday evening. Although the waterfalls has been closed for visitors since the outbreak of Covid-19, the trio was able to reach the falls through a path in the forest, from Gummadidoddi village, skipping the security. Unaware of the water-level, Gopinath ventured into the waters for a bath and got washed away in the flow. Local police SI K. Tirupati Rao said that they deployed fishermen to search for Gopinath's

### **Indur politicos**

remember Pranab Nizamabad: Following news of former President of India Pranab Mukherjee's death, political leaders in Nizamabad recollected their association with him, during his visit to Nizamabad in 2008. Rajya Sabha member D. Srinivas said that Pranab Mukherjee was

instrumental in the formation of separate Telangana state. "He (Pranab) reacted on suicides of youths during the agitation and initiated steps for realising separate Telangana," he said, adding that Mukherjee's death was a huge loss to the people

of Telangana. Mr Srinivas said that he had close rapport with Mukheriee and that he even invited Pranab for his 60th birthday celebrations in Nizamabad. For the convenience of Gulf migrant workers

Pranab Mukherjee sanctioned passport office in Nizamabad he said. Minister for roads and buildings, legislative affairs and housing V. Prashanth Reddy also expressed grief over the death of the former President.

#### Mini tank bund

will be ready soon

Nizamabad: Nizamabad Urban MLA Bigala Ganesh Gupta said that mini tank bund works at Raghunatha tank will be completed in six months. He said that people of Nizamabad would enjoy the tank bund soon. He also said that a pool will be constructed for immersion of Bathukammas in the town. The MLA, along with Mayor Dandu Neethu Kiran and municipal officials, inspected other developmental works in the town on Monday. He set the foundation stone for an open gym at Telangana Martyrs Memorial at Vinayaknagar. He also inaugurated public toilets in the town. Road divider works and plantation works at Rajiv Gandhi Chowrasta were also inspected. The MLA inspected Vinayakula Bavi at Vinayaknagar for immersion of Ganesh idols. He directed officials to make arrangements for smooth conducting of Shobha yatra and idols immersion.

#### **Driver, cleaner** die in mishap

Adilabad: The driver and cleaner of a van died when the van hit a container parked on NH-44 near Bhattisavargan on the outskirts of Adilabad in the wee hours of Monday. The driver and cleaner were identified as Mohd Pasha and Ifteyar of Hyderabad and the van was carrying biscuits to Maharashtra from Hyderabad. The container was on its way to Rajashtan from Hyderabad and parked on the national highway when one of its tyre was got punctured. the mishap occured as the lorry was



City Mayor Y. Sunil Rao shakes a leg with the revellers while taking Ganesh idol for immersion in Karimnagar on

### **Defects in DBR housing** put govt. in tight spot

### Youths filmed poor quality works on mobile phone

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM, AUG. 31

The defects in the construction of double bedrooms turned out to be a curse to the state government. Not just the quality wing but even the aspirants wanting to occupy them are looking into the discrepancies and trying to expose them. Instead of solving the problems, the government is trying to suppress the criticism against the project.
As part of the DBR hous-

ing, 50 houses are nearing completion Harichandrapuram in connections are yet to be given to the houses. Applications were invit-

ed from the eligible beneficiaries and 118 applications were received for the 50 houses.

Some of the aspirants who had applied for the houses found some defects and even shot them on their cell phones and this annoyed the higher offi-cials and asked the housing assistant engineer Yousuf Ali to file a case against three persons, including Boda Naresh and O. Rambabu.
The political parties and

other organizations found

taken by the government. es due to the low quality Lambada Ikya Vedika conconstruction works. venor Bhadru Naik said, "Instead of taking action against the contractors, the government is filing cases against the youth, who .exposed the construction defects"

Communist Party of India district secretary Potu Prasad said there are scores of complaints on the sub-standard construction of DBR houses and some of the houses even leaked during the recent rains, after the beneficiaries occupied the houses.

He said that about 100

On the other hand, the support of housing engineers to the contractor annoyed the beneficiaries. The engineer, in his complaint, alleged that the youth tried to create fear among the beneficiaries by taking up false cam-

Interestingly, the contractor tried to take up repairs after the video was played in the presence of police officials. The government was shocked at the unprecedented support to the youth from the society and tried to main-

### Teachers told to use cable services for online classes

**DC CORRESPONDENT** KHAMMAM, AUG. 31

The teachers in government schools were asked to display their subject online classes scheduled commence from September 1 on the notice boards of the concerned schools.

government The informed the teachers to take the help of local cable operators (COs) in fulfilling the task where the students did not have smart phones and internet facili-Every village in Khammam has cable network and teachers can avail these services in the

online class system. The additional collectors should talk to the cable operators and take help

from them in the task. Nearly 74,042 students from Class III to Class X in schools Khammam district are going to be participating in online classes.

The government asked the MEOs to provide Direct to Home televisions and smart phones to the students, as part of it.
The cell phone numbers

of the teachers should be provided to the students and the students were asked to attend classes without fail.

The students, who did not have smartphones, were provided DTH serv-The television and DTH facility should be set up in the concerned schools and gram panchayat offices. In such case, the teachers should ensure that the number of students was not more than three.

Collector R.V. Karnan said, "It is a new experience to the students and teachers and they should make use of it. The government wants to ensure that the academic year is not hit and the students, parents and teachers should understand it."

### **6 ARRESTED FOR KIDNAPPING BUSINESSMAN**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Petbasheerabad police on Tuesday arrested six persons who kidnapped a businessman and demanded a ransom of ₹4 crore. Those were: Hariprasad, 25, A. Mohan, 19, A. Shyam, 28, G. Rama

KUMAR | DC

amount

Retirement

KARIMNAGAR, AUG. 31

The district secretary of

the Centre of Indian Trade Union (CITU), Adla

Ramesh, on Monday demanded the govern-

ment to sanction the

Scheme (SRBS) to the retired Road Transport

Corporation employees

which are pending from

The retired RTC employ-

Service

Benefit

of

Shiva Shankar Varaprasad, P. Sanjeev, 27, and E. Rajashekar, 23. Police seized a car, one bike, two toy pis-

DCP P.V. Balanagar Padmaja said that on August 27, the gang kidnapped S. Ramakrishna Raju, who owns a chemical industry at Nacharam, when he was on the way to work from his house at Kompally. They conducted a recce for two days before the kidnap. The gang threatened Raju with toy pistols, blindfolded him and took him in their vehicle to the house of an accused at Medchal where they gave him B-Complex

### **MORE CASES** IN KHAMMAM, **BHADRADRI**

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM, AUG. 31

The Covid-19 cases witnessed a surge in the last three days in Khammam district. Nearly 1,502 Covid-19 positive cases were reported in the district, causing worry among the peeople.

About 568 cases were

detected on Monday, 324 cases on August 30 and 610 on August 29.

About 300 cases were reported in Khammam town only during the three days. Ashtagurthi in Khammam turned out to be a hotspot and 40 cases were registered there.

Bhadrachalam, about 72 cases were exposed in the holy town for the last three days. About 31 positive cases

reported on Monday, 14 on August 30 and 27 cases on August Aswaraopet and Aswapuram mandals in Bhadradri district witnessed a rise in cases with as many as 100 cases being reported in the last three days in both the mandals.

ment of the Corporation

and is not sanctioning the

saving amount to the retired RTC employees.

The government must

### reflects Covid-19 intensity Hospital alone , which has 250-bed capacity, 221 were occupied by Covid-19 patients.

the patients, doctors provided oxygen and ventila-

In Bodhan area hospital,

Covid-19 cases are getting reported from rural and urban areas equally districts. Around 88.4 per cent bed occupancy reflects the intensity of the spread of the virus in the district. in 48 centres Nizamabad dis centres,

For the last one week, more than 100 positive cases have been reported in Nizamabad district.

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC

NIZAMABAD/KAMAREDDY,

Covid-19 cases are on the

rise in undivided Nizamabad district for the last one week. People of

different age groups were affected with Coronavirus

and have been admitted

in either government or

Nizamabad

private hospitals.

On August 24, over 142 Covid cases were reported while on the next day, 136 were recorded and on August 26, 112 cases were registered. On August 27, the number stood at 129, on August 28, it was 113 cases and 140 on August 29, and on August 30, cases

registered were 94.
In Kamareddy district,
on August 24, 64 Covid-19
cases were registered and on August 25, 76 cases were recorded, August 26 55 cases were registered, 51 cases on August 27, 65 on August 28, 56 on August 29 and 25 cases on

In this context, bed occupancy is also increasing in Covid-19 hospitals located in Nizamabad, Bodhan, Kamareddy Domakonda

In Government General

Rise in bed occupancy

tor facilities too.

The district hospital at Kamareddy has 40 beds, of which 5 beds were occupied by Coronavirus positive patients and 34 are

of 22 beds, 9 beds are occupied by Covid-19 patients. Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) are being conducted res in district, including Government General Hospital, area hospitals, urban health community health centres and primary health centres.

On the same lines, Covid-19 tests are being conducted in 31 centres in Kamareddy including district hospital, area hospital, community health centres, urban and primary health centres. On the other hand, a few Covid-19 patients are approaching private hospitals in Nizamabad for treatment.

Symptomatic patients and their primary contacts are preferring Antigen Rapid Tests to know if they are infected. The district medical and

health department is working round-the-clockto treat the Covid-19 patients.
Speaking to *Deccan*Chronicle, noted surgeon
Dr Madhusekhar said that they were trying to boost up the morale of Covid-19 patients. More than the

#### **COVID CONTROL** patients. Based on the condition of ROOM SET UP FOR **PATIENTS, KIN**

DC CORRESPONDENT NIZAMABAD, AUG. 31

A control room was set up at Praja Nilayam in Morthad mandal headquarters to provide essential commodities to the Covid-19 patients and their family members.

Two in-charges for each mandal in Balkonda Assembly constituency were appointed to distrib-ute the essential comincluding modities, immunity boosters.

Bahujan Samaj Party leader Muthyala Sunil Reddy has taken initiative to supply the essential commodities to Covid-19 patients.

Rice, dal, oil, sugar, soaps, fruits, honey and other items are being supplied to the needy in 120 villages of the segment. Two mobile vans have

been kept available to shift the patients to hositals in Balkon Assembly constituency. Balkonda

"It is our responsibility to help the needy during the Covid-19 pandemic, he said on Monday.

infection, the patients are suffering from fear, which is leading to more compli-

cations, he said.
"We provided telemedicine to more than 100 patients in the Armoor area for Covid-19 treatment", he added.



Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao, along with other officials and public representatives, inspecting the Mamnoor airport.

### CM keen on resuming air services at Mamnoor

DC CORRESPONDENT WARANGAL, AUG. 31

Telangana state is leaving no stone unturned in its efforts to resume air travel services at the Mamnoor airport in Warangal, said minister for panchayat raj Errabelli Dayakar Rao.

He, along with district collector Raieev Gandhi Hanumanthu and local public representatives, inspected the airfield at Mamnoor on the Warangal-Khammam highway

Out of the 1,140 acres of land required for the airport, the minister said about 750 acres is available now and the remaining land would be purchased from farmers of surrounding villages.

"Air services were available at the airport since 1980 but remained nonfunctional ever since. It is a long standing demand of the Warangal people to have a functional airport here. Even the previous governments too neglected the issue a lot," he said. Reminding that the KCR government has repeatedly given representation regarding the airport to the central government, he said it led to a fresh sur-

vey.
"Apart from the avail-

able government land in the surroundings, we would be requiring about 250 acres which will be procured

Nakkalapally Gadepally villages. Tests are being conducted to see if the land being procured is feasible for an airport. The state government is ready to allot as much land required for the airport. The farmers who willbe parting with their land will be suitably compensated," he said. Government chief whip

Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar, Wardhannapet Aroori Ramesh inspected the airfield in Mamnoor.

### Dattatreya to inaugurate Chaitanya deemed to be varsity

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC

WARANGAL, AUG. 31

Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Bandaru Dattatreya, would virtualinaugurate Čhaitanya Deemed to be University September 2.

Addressing the media Monday, Chancellor of Ch.V. University, Purushotham Reddy said the inauguration was scheduled to be conducted in the month of April but was postponed due to the prevailing pandemic situ-

The virtual inaugural ceremony would also be attended by former minister Enugala Peddi Reddy.

"We have already tied up with a leading software company, Tata consultancy Services (TCS) to offer academic interphase programmes, B.Sc Computers Science with cognitive and Business Process Management. An MoU was signed to introduce these latest courses from this academic year only. The students who com-

pleting these courses will

get better opportunities to

get placed in different companies," he said. Mr Reddy said as per the

UGC guidelines, the university completed UG and PG final year examinations of all the courses successfully through 'At-Home-Exam' system. The PhD eligibility test was also held in the same mode and completed the admissions. The Chaitanya Group of

Colleges was declared 'deemed to be university' on November 29, 2019. This is only the second private institute to be given the status in the country.

parked beside the road without the dipper on.



of the CITU, staged a protest in front of the RTC regional manager office and submitted a memorandum to the office staff in Karimnagar district.

MONEY | BENEFIT ■ Each employee saved ₹2-₹5L during service

Pay SRBS amount to RTC staff: CITU

The retired RTC employees, along with the members

Retired employees have been waiting to take the money so that they can use it for some purpose

randum to the office staff in Karimnagar district. Speaking on the occasion. Mr Ashok said that many RTC employees saved around ₹2 to ₹5 lakh from their income in the SRB scheme hoping that the amount would help

and submitted a memo-

However, since 2018, the department has not beennot sanctioning the amount due to which retired RTC employees are facing a lot of hardships. He alleged that the RTC is using the money of retired RTC employees for

some other needs and is

boasting that it invested

the money for the develop-

intervene to resolve the issue of retired RTC employees and must sanction the SRB scheme amount immediately which his been pending for the last two years, he demanded.

The members of the association Punnam Ravi, P. Mallaiah, D. Rajamouli, G.R. Mallaiah Kumar, Shankar, M.S.S. Reddy, Shyam Sundar and L.B. Reddy were among those who submitted the memorandum.

#### SHORT TAKES **MAOISTS KILL ABDUCTED COP IN CHHATTISGARH**

DC CORRESPONDENT BHOPAL, AUG. 31

Suspected Maoists killed an assistant sub-inspector who was abducted by them at Mengapat under Kutru police station in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Bijapur on Sunday evening.

Body of Korsa Naigaiya (59), posted in Kutru police station, was recovered at Ketulnar nearly two km from Mengapat on Monday, a senior Bijapur district police officer said.

The slain cop had taken a fortnight's leave to visit his home in Dantewada in south Bastar and started for Dantewada on his bike on Sunday evening, police said.

He was abducted by Maoists at Mengapat, nearly five km from his place of posting at

His abduction came to light when the police found his bike abandoned in Mengapat.

"A search operation was launched by security forces to rescue him. His body was recovered at a deserted place in Ketulnar. A Maoist leaflet was found near his body",

In another incident, a Naxal was gunned down in an encounter with security forces under Pushav police station in district Chhattisgarh on Monday.

The slain has been identified as Ravi, member of Gabra Local Organisation Squad of CPI (Maoist).

### **SP STUDENT WING LATHICHARGED**

Lucknow, Aug. 31: Police on Monday lathicharged and detained Samajwadi Party student wing members protesting near the Raj Bhavan here against conducting the NEET and JEE Main amid the Covid-19 pandemic, police said.

Carrying placards with messages such as India united to postpone JEE and NEET, Satyagrah against exams during Covid-19' and 'Stop atrocities against students', the party workers were marching towards the Raj Bhavan when they were stopped by police.

As they insisted to move ahead, police used lathicharge to disperse them, and later detained them, a senior police officer said.

Samajwadi Party national spokesman Rajendra Chowdhury said police lathicharged peaceful protestors.

Other party leaders said holding medical entrance exam NEET and engineering entrance exam JEE Main amid a raging pandemic is not in the interest of students. It should be postponed till situation improves, said one of them.

While engineering entrance exam JEE Main has been planned from September 1-6, the NEET is scheduled to be held on September 13. Earlier on August 27, Samajwadi Party workers were lathicharged by police

when they were marching towards the Raj Bhavan in protest against the Centre's decision to hold these exams.

Party president Akhilesh Yadav had last week written an open letter against holding the two exams.

### **Pranab wanted 'Red Diary'** to be cremated with him

The diary is apparently the 'truthful account of his political journey' SANJAY BASAK | DC NEW DELHI AUG. 31 Mukherjee signed AP People teach parties a

A magazine once described him as "The man who knew too much."

Pranab Mukherjee, former President was the "veteran insider" in the corridors of power. The man, who apparently had "the memory of an elephant." Pranab, the treasure trove of political secrets was an avid diary

writer as well. His much talked about 'Red Diary' is apparently the "truthful account of his political journey." It is believed that this diary if ever published could stir hornet's nest in Indian politics.

In his e-book - Akothito Pranab (Untold Pranab), journalist and author, Goutam Lahiri wrote that Pranab Mukherjee had said, "My Red Diary will never be published. It will be cremated along with my body." There were speculations that he would eventually han-dover his 'Red Diary' to daughter

Sharmishtha.
Pranab Mukherjee's,
political journey began in
West Bengal in 1969, as the election agent for V.K. Krishna Menon, who was contesting a Lok Sabha by-election as an independent candidate.

In his 50-odd years, he was the ultimate insider. He had a vast network of key political players, cutting across party lines. He was not only close to the CPI(M) leader and the then West Bengal chief minister, Jyoti Basu but had often invited RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat to Rashtrapati Bhawan during his tenure as the President.

He had powerful allies and equally powerful ene-

The man, who was virtually "number two" during the rule of Indira Gandhi was expelled from the party by her son, Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv influenced by Congress leaders, like Arun Nehru, A.B.A. Gani Chowdhury, Balaram Jhakhar among the few not excluded Mukherjee from Union Council of Ministers but

later expelled him. He was told that Pranab nurtured the ambition of being the Prime Minister after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984.

Lahiri in his e-book recounts the details of this "misunderstanding." Lahiri writes, "Rajiv Gandhi (on his way to Delhi from Bengal) sought Pranab's advice on "who

after Indira". reminded Mukherjee that when Jawaharlal Nehru died in 1964 and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1966, the senior-most cabi-Nanda was appointed as

Pranab Mukherjee was

Reorganisation Bill

S.A. ISHAQUI I DC HYDERABAD, AUG 31

Former President Pranab Mukherjee had signed the AP Reorganisation Bill to Telangana state, after it was passed by Parliament on February 20, 2014. He had earlier headed the sub-committee on Telangana constituted by the UPA-1 government.

B. Vinod Kumar, former MP and Telangana State Planning Commission ice-chairman, Mukherjee had complete understanding of Telangana issue. He said Chief Minister K. Chandra-sekhar Rao had first met Mukherjee prior to the 2004 elections. Rao had gone to meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi for a pre-poll alliance, and she asked Mukheriee to talk to Rao. "After their one to one meeting Mukherjee KCR in my presence that he will ensure that Telangana is formed if

the UPA comes to power,"

Chronicle on Tuesday.

**BALU PULIPAKA I DC** 

It was some time early in

1999 that I first met

Pranab Mukherjee. I had

just been posted in New

Deccan

Pranab

Delhi as *Deccan Chronicle's* correspondent.

Duties included 'covering'

the Congress, the primary

opposition, while Atal Bihari Vajpayee was

Prime Minister.

24 Akbar Road, the
Congress headquarters,
soon became a regular

haunt and it was not very

long before I began getting

to know people there and

they me. Pranab Mukherjee, a redoubtable

senior Congress leader,

had a fairly smallish room

for his office in the build-

ing. The room may have

been small, but he never

stopped anyone from

number two in Indira Gandhi's cabinet. This apparently was distorted

and the coterie close to

Rajiv Gandhi indicated

that Pranab was pitching

This was the beginning of Pranab's fall during

However, hit by Bofors

scam, a revolt by V.P. Singh later forced Rajiv Gandhi to get Pranab back into Congress in

1988. Sometime before his

assassination, Rajiv in a

magazine interview had

told me about Pranab

confessed, "Things people

Rajiv Gandhi's tenure.

for himself.

HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

Vinod Kumar told *Deccan* 

He said Mukherjee was instrumental in including the Telangana issue in the Common Minimum Programme of the UPA-1

government.
When the TRS decided to leave the UPA-1, it was Mukherjee who tried to stop them as Telangana state would be a realty during the UPA tenure.

When the UPA sub-committee on Telangana, headed by Mukherjee, said that it would be able to finalise its report only after receiving responses from all political parties, Rao started consultations with all other parties, Kumar said.

"I used to hand over consensus letters collected from various parties and Pranab Mukherjee always appreciated our

Chief Minister, in his condolence message said, "the former President used to say that there was justice in the demand for a separate Telangana and he used to offer several useful suggestions.'

PRANAB Mukherjee

had a fairly smallish room

for his office in the build-

ing. The room may have

been small, but he never

entering it and having a

entering it and having a

One day, after the daily

media briefing, I wanted

to know more about some

facts and figures related to

the economy and the budg-

et. And the best person to

I had in the past squeezed into his room along with other 'well-established' Delhi journos

who knew him for a long

time. But this time was dif-

ferent. He did not know

me at all, I was still a greenhorn as far as 24

Mukherjee were wrong."
The content in the "Red Diary", if ever seen the

light of the day, could lift

the curtains, which even in his book, *The Coalition* 

Years Mukherjee refra-ined from doing. His book displayed cau-tion and actually is not a

tell-all memoir. Pranab

had been privy to all the

redefining moments in Indian politics ranging from creation and rise of

the militant Sikh leader,

Jarnail Singh, anti-Sikh

Babri Mosque among oth-

and demolition

explain was Pranab da.

stopped anyone from

quick chat.

quick chat.

lesson, Pranab had said more than anything else.

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS I DC HYDERABAD. AUG. 31

Pranab Mukherjee, then President, strongly believed that the beauty of Indian democracy was that the people teach befitting lessons to political parties and force their leaders to do mid-course corrections.

was excited when assigned to accompany him to Allahabad on Christmas in 2013 during his Southern sojourn. Paying rapt attention to his English heavy with the Bengali accent, I spent considerable time on board the President's aircraft and spoke with him on many issues.

On our return, we were told by his press secretary that Mukherjee was tired and would not interact with us. I insisted that we be allowed because it's a

rare opportunity.

He agreed on the condition that we do not discuss politics but little did the press secretary realise that Mukherjee was a politician to the core and would love to talk politics

Akbar Road was con-

cerned. I was apprehen-

sive but I clearly remember how warm and wel-

Mukherjee was as I asked

him if I could enter his

office. I also clearly recall how he ordered some

samosas for me as we got

As I told him I was hav-

ing some difficulty in

reading the country's budget and had questions.

He answered my questions

and we spent about and

hour or so discussing the

budget. And then he made

an offer I could not refuse.

"Come home tomorrow

Pranab Mukherjee

morning and I will teach

you how to read the budg-

had said. For me it was a

double delight. Pranab da

would get to know me a lit-

tle more. On top of that, I

down to business.

Pranab

'Pranab da taught me all about budgets'

coming

Referring to five, instead of three, elections between 1989 and 1999, Mukherjee said that politicians, accustomed to single party rule could not adjust to coalition politics.

The people forced them to

do mid-course corrections by continuing to give frac-

tured mandates.

The result, he said, was an unwritten understanding among the parties that stability should not be disturbed. From then on the country saw stable governments despite fractured mandates. "You people (media) even suggest-ed Constitutional amendments to ensure stability but people have their own

way of setting things right," he said smiling broadly.

I wanted his views on the highly sensitive issue of state bifurcation. He started saying that people and parties come together to resolve issues but his press secretary barged in

and said a strict no. Pranab then moved on to the simplicity of yester-

best teacher as far as read-

ing a government budget

and understanding it was

The next day I showed up

at his residence in the

morning, around 11 am if I recall correctly and he

spent the next two hours

explaining how a budget is

prepared, how to read and

understand the numbers

and what each 'head' of

And that was only the

first lesson. After that day,

I visited him at his house

several times to sit with

him and learn more about

country's economy and

He was a willing teacher

and I wish I was a better

student. Today, at his passing, I grieve the loss of one

of the best teachers I ever

budget preparations.

the budget meant.

concerned.

### Pranab's career defined by Gandhis

From Page 1

Mukherjee was born on December 11, 1935 at Mirati, a village (now in Birbhum district of West Bengal). He studied history, political science and

law at Calcutta University. His political journey began in 1969 when he became the election manager of V.K. Krishna Menon, who was contesting as an Independent. Indira Gandhi got him into the Congress and sent him to the Rajya Sabha. His rise under Mrs Gandhi was meteoric. At 47, he became India's youngest finance minister in 1982. He was one of the few leaders who stood by Indira when she imposed Emergency in 1975 and when she split the Congress in 1978.

After the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, he fell from favour as then PM Rajiv Gandhi and his coterie felt Mukherjee, as the seniormost Cabinet minister, saw himself as the rightful heir to the throne. Rajiv not only dropped Mukherjee from the Cabinet but also expelled him from the party. In his memoir *The* Turbulent Years: 1986-96, Mukherjee wrote that he was "shellshocked and flabbergasted". Mukherjee formed his

own political party -Rashtriya Samajwadi Congress — in 1986. In 1989, Mukherjee was recalled and he merged his outfit with the Congress. Rajiv Gandhi later said many things to him about Mukherjee were
"untrue". In Mukherjee's
words – "to return to the
question of why he (Rajiv) dropped me from the Cabinet and expelled me from the party, all I can say is that he made mistakes, and so did I. He let others influence him and listed to their calumnies against me. I let my frustration overtake my patience."
After Rajiv Gandhi's

assassination, Mukherjee returned to the government as external affairs minister under P.V. Narasimha Rao, while then RBI governor governor Manmohan Singh became finance minister. Once again he missed

the coveted throne when Sonia Gandhi chose Dr Singh to lead the UPA. Even if he was "upset",

MUKHERJEE HIT THE headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.

Mukherjee did not let that influence his work and in 2004-2014 he was heading most of the groups of ministers. groups of ministers. Speaking at the launch of Mukherjee's book *The Coalition Years*, Dr Singh said: "He (Pranab) had reason to feel upset but he respected me and we have a great relationship which will continue till we live." There were we live." rumours that it was Rahul Gandhi who took the final call. The Gandhi family also

seemed reluctant at first about nominating him for President. Some say the Gandhi family (post-Indira) "could never fully Pranab Mukherjee wrote: "She (Sonia) told me frankly, 'Pranabji, you are the most eminently suited for the office, but you should not forget the crucial role you are playing in the functioning of the gov-ernment. Could you suggest an alternative?

which virtually forced Sonia's hand. Mamata Banerjee, at a joint press conference with Mulayam Singh Yadav said their presidential nominees were A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Dr Singh and Somnath Chatterjee. Ms Banerjee revealed that Sonia Gandhi had proposed the names of Hamid Ansari and Mukherjee, which were "unacceptable" to them.

Realising they could not lose the presidential election, several meetings were held among UPA partners, and the Left proposed Mukherjee's name, which was seconded by others. Sonia endorsed his candidature. Mukherjee wrote in The

Coalition Years: "After briefing the meeting on the presidential election, Sonia Gandhi bid me an Thereafter, with a mischievous smile, she looked at me and said: 'Along with that, of course, I will miss some of his tantrums'."

Mukherjee hit the headlines in 2018 when he accepted an invitation to be chief guest at an RSS function.

### SSR case: ED grills Goa hotelier

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, AUG. 31

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday grilled Goa hotelier Gaurav Arya in connection with actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide and possible laundering of his money as per allegations of his father. Arya's name cropped up after some text messages on narcotics substances were allegedly shared Rhea Chakraborty, the main accused in the case, and

 THE ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE began questioning Gaurav Arya from 10.30 am at the agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of money and on the narcotics messages that were exchanged in 2017.

ly to grill Arya in connection with the drugs angle. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) meanwhile grilled Chakraborty for the fourth consecutive day on Monday.

The ED began questioning Arya from 10.30 am at agency's south Mumbai office to undergo scrutiny on whether there was any laundering of The Narcotics Control money and on the nar-Bureau (NCB) is also like-cotics messages that were

exchanged in 2017. The text messages were later shared with the NCB and the CBI by the ED. Arya has however refuted the

allegations saying he nei-

ther ever peddled drugs

nor spoke to Rhea till date. Enforcement Directorate earlier questioned Rhea, her brother Showik and two sisters of Rajput apart from his chartered accountant and other staffers

Meanwhile, the again summoned Chakraborty on Monday for questioning at their DRDO guest house in Santacruz. "Chakraborty and her brother Showik, Rajput's cook Neeraj Singh were questioned on Monday. They may be summoned again as the probe progresses," said an officer privy to the investigation.

On Sunday, Rhea was questioned for around nine hours. She along with some other accused in the case have been grilled by the ED on multiple occasions before the CBI took over the probe.

### It is double whammy for guest workers, entrepreneurs in Odisha

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC

The Covid-19 crisis had hit them hard. But their spirit always remained high and they had refused to surrender to economic challenges posed by the pandemic. However, the floods in the major river systems of Odisha have convincingly vanquished them.

So much so that many of them are staring at dark days ahead if the state government does not take care of

First-time rural entrepreneurs and guest workers who had undertaken agriculture activities in the coastal areas of Odisha have lost all their investments as the high floods in the major river system washed away their

dream projects. "I had invested nearly ₹5 lakh on raising a poultry farm. The birds had grown fully and I was about to sell them in the next few days. I was expecting a return of

including Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Birupa, Luna and Chitratopala were flowing above their danger marks by the evening on

nearly ₹7 lakh. Now, hope is completely shattered as the flood water in the Baitarani river system has washed away my poultry unit," said Rajanikant Satpathy, a poultry farm owner of Panasa village in Jajpur dis-

Dozens of poultry farmers in the adjoining areas have

lost their investments. Akshya Rout, a guest worker of Dharmasala in Jajpur district had returned from Surat in April after the nationwide lockdown was

announced. He had undertaken brinjal and other vegetable cultiva-tion in his two hectares of land after borrowing some money from the bank.

"I had grown various veg-

etables on two acres of land on the bank of Brahamni swirling water of Brahmani has destroyed it all. There is no trace even of the roots of the vegetable plants," said

A few other guest workers who had opened carpentry, pottery and iron furniture fabrication units also narrated similar harrowing sto-

"I was working as a mechanic in a textile unit in Bangalore. After I returned, I had opened a furniture fabrication unit with a savings of ₹2 lakh rupee. My unit was washed away in the Mahandi flood," said Tapan Kumar Swain of Banki in Cuttack district.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has assured all the affected entrepreneurs a compensation after the flood damage assessment exercise is completed by the district authorities.

Major rivers in Odisha, including Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Birupa, demolished," he said.

Luna and Chitratopala were flowing above their danger marks by the evening on Monday. Floods in the Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Budhabalanga, Kharasrota Subarnarekha in Odisha have ravaged almost all the

coastal districts.

The Chief Minister on Monday afternoon undertook an aerial visit of the affected areas and later reviewed the responses of various departments to mitigate the plights of the peo-

After the review meeting, he Chief Minister announced that all people hit by the floods will be provided with cooked food / dry food as long as they are in shelter. He also announced 50 kilograms of rice and ₹500 as immediate support to the families of the severely affected / submerged vil-

'One polythene sheet will be provided to each eligible family whose house has been

### **Chief inspection**



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inspects a flood-affected area with Army jawans near Hoshangabad district on Monday. He assured farmers that all possible measures will be taken to compensate for their losses. "Farmers should not get worried about the losses. The government is in action and all possible measures will be taken to compensate them through crop insurance scheme and RBC (revenue book code) provisions,'



BRIEF

#### **Nod to Amazon** drone delivery

San Francisco: Amazon on Monday said a freshly-issued **Federal Aviation** Administration certificate has cleared the launch pad for drone deliveries in the US. "This certification is an important step forward for Prime Air and indicates the FAA's confidence in Amazon's operating and safety procedures for an autonomous drone delivery service that will one day deliver packages to our customers," Amazon VP David Carbon said. "We will continue to develop and refine our technology to fully integrate delivery drones into the airspace," he said. - AFP

#### Chinese-born Oz journalist held

Australian journalist for CCTV-News, the English-language channel of China Central Television, has been detained in China, Australia's government said Monday. Australian officials had a consular visit with Cheng Lei at a detention facility via video link on Thursday, foreign minister Marise Payne said in a statement. They will continue to provide assistance and support to her and her family, Australia had been informed by Chinese authorities of her detention, but made its first public announcement on Monday. — Agencies

### 2 detained over

### **Rvanair security**

London: British counter-terrorism police were holding two men on Monday following a "security threat" aboard a Ryanair flight that led to fighter jets being scrambled to intercept it. Police said they a 34-year-old man from Kuwait and a 48-year-old man from Italy under terrorism laws late on Sunday at Stansted Airport after the flight from Vienna landed. Britain's Royal Air Force said it had launched two Typhoon fighter jets from a base in nearby Lincolnshire "to intercept a civilian airescorted safely to Stansted, it added. — AP

#### 2 die in UAE restaurant blast

Abu Dhabi: A powerful blast ripped through a restaurant in the UAE's capital here on Monday, killing two persons, police said. A number of people were injured in the explosion which took place at the fast food restaurant in a building on Rashid Bin Saeed Street, according to a news paper report. According to on-site investigations, the incident was caused by a misalignment in the gas container fittings following refuelling, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said. Emergency response teams evacuated residents of the building and cordoned off the area. — PTI

### **SUDAN, REBELS STRIKE DEAL TO END ROW**

Juba, Aug. 31: Sudanese leaders and rebel commanders agreed Monday on a historic peace deal, a crucial step towards ending 17 years of conflict in which hundreds of thousands of people were

Leaders of the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organisation of rebel groups from the western region of Darfur and the southern states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, raised their fists in celebration after inking the

Fighting in Darfur alone left around three lakh people dead after rebels took up arms there in 2003, according to the United Nations, with former government leaders accused of carrying out genocide and of crimes

against humanity. Conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile erupted in 2011, in the wake of South Sudan's independence, resuming two

decades of war. "I congratulate all in Sudan on reaching a historic comprehensive peace that addressed the roots of the problem and ended the war, God willing," said Gibril Ibrahim, commander of one of rebel groups, the Justice and Movement (JEM).

He paid tribute to all those killed or affected by the long years of war.

Sudanese paramilitary commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo — best known by his nickname "Hemeti", and who commanded fighters in the war - signed the deal on behalf of Khartoum.

### Israeli flight in UAE



US National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien speaks next to US Presidential Adviser Jared Kushner (centre) and Head of Israel's National Security Council Meir Ben-Shabbat (left) in front of an airplane of El Al at the tarmac of Abu Dhabi airport, following the arrival of the first-ever commercial flight from Israel to the UAE, on Monday. The US-Israeli delegation took off on a historic first direct commercial flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi to mark the normalisation of ties between the Jewish state and the UAE.

### Trump seizes on protests, **Dems slam him for tension**

Aides want Don to give aggressive message on law, order

Washington, Aug. 31: Democrats accused President Donald Trump of trying to inflame racial tensions and incite violence to benefit his campaign after he praised supporters who clashed with protesters during a deadly night in Portland, Oregon. and announced he will travel to Kenosha, Wisconsin, amid anger over the shooting of another Black man by police.

Trump unleashed a flur-ry of tweets and retweets the day after a man identified as a supporter of a right-wing group was shot and killed in Portland. The city has been the site of months of daily protests, and a large caravan of Trump supporters and Black Lives Matter clashed protesters Saturday night. Trump praised the caravan par-ticipants as 'GREAT PATRIOTS!' and retweeted what appeared to be the dead man's name along with a message to 'Rest in

peace' Trump also retweeted those who blamed the city's Democratic mayor for the death.

"The people of Portland, like all other cities & parts of our great Country, want Law & Order," Trump wrote Sunday. "The Radical Left Democrat Mayors, like the dummy running Portland, or the guy right now in his basement unwilling to lead or even speak out against crime, will never be able to do it!"

### State cops in Portland to probe clashes death

Portland, Aug. 31: State Police will return to Portland to help local authorities after the fatal shooting of a man following clashes between President Donald Trump supporters and counterprotesters that led to an argument between the president and the mayor over who was to blame for

Protesters were back on the streets for a demon-stration Sunday night out-

side a public safety building. Police declared an unlawful assembly and arrested 29 people. Two of those arrested had hand guns and others had knives and at least one had an expandable baton, police said.

Many wore helmets, gas masks, goggles and external armour. Police said some carried shields and reflective squares used to reflect police lights back

### 4 hurt in shooting at Kansas City club

Kansas City, Aug. 31: Investigators said the Four people were shot and shooting was related to an injured Sunday at a night argument that started club in Kansas City, inside the club and then Missouri, where a mass shooting occurred in January, police said.

Kansas City Police spokesman Sgt Jake Becchina said the latest shooting at the 9ine Ultra Lounge was reported around 2.30 a.m. Sunday.

summer American cities as under siege by violence and lawlessness, despite the fact that most of the demonstrations against racial injustice have been large-Trump has throughout ly peaceful. With about

remained stable. nine weeks until Election Day, some of his advisers see an aggressive "law and order" message as the best way for the President to turn voters against his Democratic rival, Joe

moved outside where sev-

One victim found at the

scene with several gun-

shot wounds was taken to

a hospital. Three others

arrived separately at hos-

pitals. All four victims

eral people fired shots.

#### New York, Aug. 31: The United States neared six million Coronavirus cases on Sunday, nearly a quarter of the planet's total, as

**NEAR 6 MILLION** 

**CORONAVIRUS** 

**CASES IN U.S.** 

nations around the world battle to contain

the raging pandemic. Global Coronavirus infections soared past 25 million, as countries tightened restrictions to halt the health crisis that has upended life for

most of humanity.

A million additional cases have been detected globally roughly every four days since mid-July, according to an AFP tally, with India on Sunday setting the record for the highest single-day rise in cases with 78,761.

The United States, had recorded 5.99 million cases of infection as of GMT Monday, according to Johns Hopkins University's tracker. The death toll is just over 183,000. The US hit five million cases three weeks ago, just 17 days after reaching four million, the tracker

The virus has hobbled the US economy and cast a shadow over President Donald Trump's once-promisre-election

### Merkel condemns 'shameful' virus stir 38,000 had gathered in Berlin on Saturday

### to protest restrictions to curb Coronavirus

Berlin, Aug. 31: German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday condemned as "shameful" an attempt by protesters angry at Coronavirus restrictions to storm Parliament, saying they had abused the right to demonstrate peacefully.

Several hundred people tried to get into the Reichstag building during a rally against Coronavirus rules in Berlin on Saturday.

"This right to demonstrate peacefully is of course a very valuable asset even during a pandemic," Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said at a government press

conference in Berlin.

However, he said their actions were "a clear

"The result was disgraceful images at the Reichstag which are unacceptable, anti-democrats trying to make themselves heard on the steps of our democratic Parliament,"

Police estimated 38,000 people, double the number expected, gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest at restrictions imposed to curb spread of Coronavirus, such as wearing masks and social distancing. Several hundred broke through barriers and a police cordon to climb the steps leading to the entrance to the Reichstag. They were narrowly prevented from

### Germany tells Russia to probe poisoning

Paris, Aug. 31: Germany on Monday urged Moscow to step up its efforts to investigate the apparent poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny who is currently being treated at a Berlin hospital in a coma.

Foreign minister Heiko Maas said in an address to French ambassadors that Europe needed "con-structive" relations with Russia for the sake of the continent's own security but it was clear now that "dark clouds" were hanging over bilateral ties.

entering the building by police, who used pepper spray and arrested several

Germany

"Of course we have the expectation that Russia should contribute more to clearing up of the Navalny case than it is doing at the moment," he said alongside French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian. Berlin's Charite hospital said on Friday there was "some improve ment" in Navalny's condition, but the 44-year-old remains in a medically induced coma and on a ventilator. Navalny fell ill after boarding a plane in Siberia earlier this month.

people. Merkel

Merkel praised as "quick-witted and brave" three police officers who were seen pushing back crowds from the entrance to the Reichstag alone until reinforcements arrived. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Monday invited the offi-cers to Berlin's Bellevue Palace to thank them for their work. He described the protesters' actions as 'despicable", adding: "We will not tolerate any antidemocratic smear campaign or disparagement of the Federal Republic of

Bundestag." About 300 people were arrested in scuffles with police, in front of the Reichstag but also outside the Russian embassy, where protesters pelted police with bottles.

Coronavirus restrictions in Germany has gathered pace in recent weeks with demos attracting a diverse crowd of conspiracy theorists, anti-vaxxers and farright or far-left activists.

Health minister Jens Spahn was spat on at the weekend as he tried to talk to protesters in Seibert condemned the incident, saying it was certainly not democratic

### China carries out forced medication on Uighurs

**Beijing, Aug. 31:** The government in China's far Xinjiang region is resorting to draconian measures to combat the Coronavirus. including including spraying detainees with acidic disinfectant, physically locking residents in homes, imposing strict quarantines of more than 40 days and arresting those who do not comply.

Furthermore, in what experts call a breach of medical ethics, some resiinto swallowing tradition-

Chinese medicine despite a lack of rigorous clinical data proving it works, according to government notices, social media posts, and interviews with three people in quarantine in Xinjiang. One middle-aged Uighur

woman said that when she was detained at the height of China's Coronavirus outbreak, she was forced to drink a medicine that made her feel weak and nauseous. She and others in her cell had to strip dents are being coerced naked once a week as guards hosed them and

their cells down with disinfectant, she said.

"It was scalding," recounted the woman by phone from Xinjiang, declining to be named out of fear of retribution. My hands were ruined, my skin was peeling."

The latest gruelling lockdown, now in its 45th day, comes in response to 826 cases reported in Xinjiang since mid-July, China's largest caseload since the initial outbreak.

The lockdown is especially striking because of its severity.

### Strike chief held in Belarus crackdown

Minsk, Aug. 31: Belarus' authorities on Monday detained the organiser of a strike at a top industrial plant, part of a methodical effort to stifle weeks of protests demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian leader of 26 years after an election the opposition denounced

President Alexander Lukashenko has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets and rejected the European Union's offers of mediation. After a ferocious crackdown on demonstrators in the first days after the August 9 vote that caused international outrage, his government has

avoided large-scale violence against demonstrators and sought to end the protests with threats and the selective jailing of

Anatoly Bokun, who leads the strike committee at Belaruskali, a huge factory potash Soligorsk, was detained by police and is facing a 15-day jail sentence on charges of organising an unsanctioned protest. The factory, accounts for a fifth of the world's potash fertiliser output, is the nation's top cash earner. Strike committee spokesman Gleb Sandras said authorities had managed to halt a strike that began two

### **200 PAKISTANIS STRANDED IN INDIA TO RETURN**

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUG. 31

At least 200 people stranded in India due to the Coronavirus lockdown will return to Pakistan on September 3, officials said Sunday.

Pakistan had sealed its border with India in March after a surge in number of Coronavirus infections. The people who had gone to India got stuck there as a result of the lockdown.

Pakistanis, stranded in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Delhi and Rajasthan, will return via Wagha border. The border between the two countries will be especially opened for them.

According to a source in the foreign office, their return was made possible because of the High Commission in

#### **SHARIF AT RISK IF EXPOSED TO COVID: REPORT**

DC CORRESPONDENT

Fresh medical reports of former PM Nawaz Sharif were submitted in Lahore High Court showed that he may be "at much greater risk than a normal person" if exposed to Covid-19.

Sharif, given his age and significant disease burden, falls in the category of patients who, if exposed to the virus.

### Lebanon's PM-designate vows reforms

**Beirut, Aug. 31:** Lebanese Prime Minister-designate Mustapha Adib vowed Monday to swiftly launch a reformist government and seek international financial assistance after the Beirut blast deepened a political and economic crisis.

In a televised speech after his nomination, Lebanon's former ambassador to Germany said there is "a need to form a

INDIA | ABROAD

government in record time and to begin implementing reforms immediately, starting with an agreement with the agreement International Monetary

Adib faces the nearly impossible challenge of embodying change after being picked by the political establishment. name

only emerged on Sunday to Hassan Diab,

government demic who holds a PhD in resigned in the aftermath of the deadly August 4 blast at Beirut port. The 48-year-old was born

in the northern city of Tripoli and is a Sunni Muslim, making him eligible to become Prime Minister under Lebanon's sectarian-based powersharing system.

His biography on the Berlin embassy website presents him as an aca-

political science. It says he has conducted "research and expert work in the areas of both human and state security, parliamentary oversight of the security sector, decentralisation and local democracy, and electoral laws" From 2000 to 2004, he

served as an adviser to Najib Mikati, a billionaire and former prime minis-

Indian-origin leader underlines need to focus on foreigners' living conditions

### Pritam Singh is Singapore's first Leader of Oppn

Singapore, Aug. 31: Pritam Singh, Singapore's Indian-origin politician scripted history on Monday when the citystate's Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the country's first Leader of the Opposition.

Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 it contested in the July 10 General Election, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's parliamentary history.

the first orders of business

As the House began proceedings on Monday, one of

ment by the Leader of the House Indranee Rajah on formally recognising Singh, 43, as the country's first Opposition leader.

Addressing Parliament, Singh underlined the need to focus on foreigners and their living conditions. He said how foreign workers are managed and accommodated needs to be improved.

Their (foreigners) presence gives Singapore a vitality that keeps us economically relevant and also provides jobs and opportunities to our fellow Singaporeans. Many of us

midst — regardless of race, language or religion — as our friends, Channel News Asia quoted Singh as saying.

It is precisely because we need foreigners to help power our economy that we need to pay more attention to the Singapore worker... some of whom feel excluded from (the) opportunities created in their homeland, Singh

The House passed a motion to double Singh's speaking time from 20 minutes — which is allotted to backbenchers — to 40 minutes, the duration allotted to office holders. Singh took the seat directly opposite Prime Minister Lee in the chamber. This is similar to the practice in other countries that formally recognise the role of the Leader of the Opposition, Indranee pointed out. Singh called on the Ministry of Manpower to publish the names of "recalcitrant" employers who do not give locals a fair chance in hiring and promotion. The MOM had recently placed 47 companies on the Fair Consideration Framework

(FCF) watchlist.

### promoted, goes viral London, Aug. 31: A school in India for 12

UK Sikh soldier gets

British Sikh soldier's promotion within the UK Army ranks has become a social media sensation after the news posted by his proud wife attracted thousands of messages and comments.
Corporal Chamandeep

Singh, a Punjab-born soldier in the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) of the British Army, attended a military

During this period, he read about another Indian soldier, Havildar Major Rajinder Singh Dhatt, and his heroic involvement in the Burma campaign of World War II. The story of

this Sikh war veteran. along with Singh's own father having served in the Indian Army, inspired him to move to the UK. -AF

### **Chronicle**

1 SEPTEMBER 2020

### As Covid-19 cases spike, go slower on 'unlocking'

s the Centre and states open up more sectors and allow the resumption of further activities from Tuesday, September 1, as India begins the "Unlock 4.0" phase, it is important not to forget how the pandemic is spiralling across the country, with daily coronavirus cases crossing 80,000 Sunday, the highest anywhere in the world. The last week of August witnessed a huge spurt in cases, and not just in Maharashtra and some southern states but also Delhi, that earlier seemed to have the numbers under control. And while there has also been a considerable increase in the number of tests per day, which is likely to rise, there is no hard evidence to say the rise in infections detected is primarily due to the increased testing – as health officials and the govern-

One really wonders how the Centre and state governments are confident that this is the right moment to open more activities. Schools/colleges will remain shut till September 30, but the authorities have decided to go ahead with the JEE and NEET exams for medical and engineering admissions, which will expose thousands of students across the country to the risk of contracting the virus. Also, teachers and some students from Classes 9 to 12 might be called to schools for "guidance" from later in September, the first time most will come into physical contact with each

other since March – which again appears to be an avoidable step.

Most important, the government's decision to allow the resumption of Metro rail services – even if in a staggered manner – appears premature. To allow public transport buses (with 20 people allowed and with seats spaced out; or taxis or autos, with two/three passengers) is one thing, but the Metro trains carry thousands of passengers travelling in close proximity, not to mention the thousands who will collect at Metro stations even if the capacity on the trains is restricted. All this creates a situation which might facilitate the spread of the virus. A serious rethink needs to be done prior to September 7, when Metro services are set to resume, and it should be permitted only in those areas where the Covid-19 pandemic is completely under control. That, unfortunately, is not yet the case in any of India's major metropolises

From September 21, social, religious, political, academic and sports functions can be held with up to 100 people, and weddings and funerals (now allowed with lesser numbers) will be permitted with 100 people. This, in our view, is also premature, and should wait till things stabilise further. The festival season is fast approaching, and it is vital to set strict norms now to ensure that low-key celebrations are held which will not endanger people's lives. There is, of course, the counter-argument: that we must "learn to live with Covid" till a vaccine is found and distributed, which might take up to a year, and that people cannot put off economic and other activities indefinitely. The lockdown that India imposed in March was one of the world's harshest – which severely hurt a lot of people and its benefits remain debatable. But now we might be swinging to the other extreme – rapidly opening up activities without considering all the conse-quences. We need to find a balance – and move a little slower.

### Trouble for NRC 'rejects'

The stalemate in the process of preparing the Supreme Court-mandated National Register of Citizens in Assam has put the lives of 19 lakh-odd people who were excluded from it in serious trouble. The process mandates that each excluded person should be issued a rejection slip which can be challenged in the Foreigners Tribunal, which is empowered to declare a person non-citizen. The failure to issue the slips has stalled the entire process. As a result, those affected face difficulties in matters of their normal life such as finding a job, getting married, going on a foreign tour and contesting polls. The government blames it on Covid-19, which made most government departments other than those involved in the containment of the pandemic non-functional for months

The very process of preparing the NRC was riddled with serious issues. It was at first perceived as an attempt to exclude Muslims who had migrated to Assam from other parts of the country. Serious discrepancies such as members of the same family getting different status were reported as soon as the list was published. The BJP, which had all along called it a tool to 'eliminate infiltrators', changed its stand after discovering that a third of those excluded were Hindus. The party's Assam unit called for the verification of the list but it looks next to impossible after reports said the basic data of the NRC has been lost.

Citizenship is the primary identity of a person, and its denial, rightly or wrongly, compromises the very right to life. No government has the right to keep a decision on it pending for long. The government must admit that it had not thought through the process and hence the present mess. It must either cancel the entire exercise or fast-track it. This is not an issue for which it can blame an act of God.

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# Is another global eco crisis now inevitable?



peaking at the London Business School recently, former Reserve Bank governor Raghuram Rajan warned that the global economy was "slowly slipping" into the Great Depression-like lems of the 1930s and that central banks must sit together and define the new "rules of the game" to find better solutions. Dr Rajan, who was earlier IMF's chief economist, was one of the few to have predicted the 2007-08 financial crisis. The essential problem

we must confront is how to rectify a world economic system that has gone hopelessly wrong and resembles nothing like what was envisaged in early 1940s. To understand the situation we are in, imagine living on an island as a part of a small group, in which people are assigned specific vocations and tasks. In this system one person makes clothes, another shoes, someone pots and food and someone else prints money to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. The shoemaker exchanges his goods with another for money which he uses to pay for food or whatever. Since everybody in this system can produce as much as possible, the person who prints the money will be best off among all as he can buy whatever he wants and pay for it with his own money. Take this one step further. Producers who hold more paper than they need then start leaving it with the person who prints them to hold.

In 2019, world GDP was about \$88 trillion, and the per capita GDP was \$11,400. In the past 10 years, world GDP growth declined from 3.13 per cent to 2.47 per cent. In 1960, WGDP was \$11.35 trillion (constant 2010). It was just \$1.1 trillion in 1900 and took 50 years to

grow fourfold to \$4.01 trillion. The big leaps began after 1971 when US President Richard Nixon unilaterally delinked the US dollar from the international gold standard. In 2000, it scaled \$51 tril-

The total world mer-

chandise trade in 2019 was \$19.5 trillion, with China (without Hong Kong) the biggest player, accounting for \$5.31 trillion, with a trade surplus of \$422 billion. The top five global traders account for 50.6 per cent of world trade. The EU's share is \$4.49 trillion and the United States' is \$3.91 trillion, also accounting for about a quarter of world trade. The most preferred global currency is the US dollar. Total world reserves in 2019-Q2 was \$11.8 trillion, of which 61.8 per cent was held in US dollars, 20.5 per cent in euros, 5.7 per cent in yen and 1.8 per

cent in Renminbi. Almost all these reserves are held by individual countries form of bonds, mostly earning very small or even zero interest rates. This is like money deposited in a bank, but it's really money lent to the issuing country. As the reserves are mostly in US dollars and euros, the issuing countries have little reason to hold much of them as reserves. The total US reserves are about \$132 billion. Contrast this to India's \$535 billion (including \$35 billion in gold) and China's \$3,300 billion.

1995, economies held around 67 per cent of total foreign exchange reserves, with 82 per cent of these being allocated reserves. By 2011, the picture had been flipped on its head: emerging and developing countries held 67 per cent of total reserves.

The purpose of sharing these three world economy snapshots is to offer a

The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when US **President Nixon** delinked the dollar from the gold standard.

we have come to this pass. A situation where the rest of the world invests in the US, so that it can splurge on itself. When it's short, it can just print more dollars, which the rest of us lap up quite happily. Every time the US goes into convulsions due to its innate profligacy and economic mismanagement, the world economies go into a tailspin as the US is the world's biggest importer and it's where the world keeps its money. Now let's turn to how the sys-

tem actually works.
Countries like China
and India produce goods and services at low cost for consumption in the US, which in turn pays them in dollars, that they deposit in American banks. Since money can't sit still, this money in then lent to Americans, who today have the highest per capita indebtedness in the world, to splurge on houses, cars, flatscreen TVs and computers, that mostly they can often ill-afford. In effect, the rest of the world is plying the US with cheap credit, encouraging it to splurge even more. But there is no global regulator to caution the US on its profligacy or force it to mend its ways.

At the July 1944 Breton Woods Conference, in the last phase of World War II, Lord Keynes had in mind an elaborate scheme that called for the

reserves in 2019-Q2 was \$11.8 trillion, of which 61.8 per cent was held in US dollars, 20.5 per cent in euros, 5.7 per cent in yen and 1.8 per cent in Renminbi.

**Total world** 

establishment of an international reserve currency called "bancor", administered by a global central bank, but this had to be shelved in the face of American obduracy. This central bank would be vested with the possibility of creating money and with the authority to take action general backdrop on how

to ensure balanced trade. As outlined by Keynes, countries with payment surpluses should increase imports from the deficit countries, thereby ensuring foreign trade equilibrium.

But the United States, as a likely net exporter and creditor nation, and eager to take on the role of the world's economic powerhouse, thwarted the Keynes plan. The American delegates seemed more concerned about inflationary pressures in the post-war economy. Its delegate, Harry Dexter White, argued that an imbalance

was a problem only of the deficit country. White's determined obduracy is now under a cloud after he was unmasked as a Soviet spy. Did he scuttle "bancor" at Moscow's insistence to ensure the crisis we now are living through? The international system was unilaterally abrogated in 1971 when President delinked the dollar from the gold standard. In the absence of a standard and a useful regulatory function for the IMF, the great private banks were given a licence to run amok. We now reap the bitter harvest. With the

US dollar as the world's preferred currency, the US and its profligate citizens have an apparently endless access to easy credit to satiate their sundry appetites. Ironically, the ever-rising annual US trade deficit is the de facto

> many economies, like China, the Asean countries and even India. The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in

engine of growth for

the Chinese economy.

#### **LETTERS**

#### COVID-19

Asymptomatic people also carry heavy load of Coronavirus which is viral and all groups are susceptible (State over-reported asymptomatic nos, DC, Aug. 31). Hence, Covid testing must be done by the government in all the localities.

N.S.R. Murthy Secunderabad

#### **MUHARRAM SAFETY**

From the outset, the way of viewing the Muharram procession in the context of Covid-19 protocol is a failure (Mourners ignore Covid, DC, Aug. 31). But the alternative way of looking at this event is that the Shia community and the police have shown great teamwork. Media should learn to appreciate police leadership in maintenance of order and as well the management of the Muharram procession.

Mansoor Dashti Secunderabaa

How was the Muharram procession allowed to be taken out, flouting all orders in view of Covid pandemic? Is there no rule of law in our city? When Ganesh pandals banned and the few that were allowed were conducted with such discipline and care, how could the Muharram procession take place with so many thousands, throwing to the winds all the rules? Vinod Sreebhashyam

#### **BRAHMIN GROOMS**

It is unfortunate that Brahmin girls are not willing to marry purohits and archakas (Girls hesitate to wed Brahmin priests, DC Aug. 31). They must realise that majority of their forefathers were purohits,

Dr O. Prasada Rao Hyderabad

#### Five die in **Calcutta firing**

CALCUTTA, AUGUST 31 Five persons were killed and five others seriously injured in police firings at three places in North Calcutta today.

Two most serious incidents were at Bidhan Sarani and Girish Chandra Avenue both in



people when a police picket was

attacked with bombs near Star Theatre At Girish Chandra Avenue in the Bagbazar area. A police vehicle was subjected to heavy brickbats and bomb attacks. Teargassing proving ineffective police opened fire from revolvers killing two people and injuring four others.



Aakar Patel

'Unlock' rules are illogical: If flights allowed, why not trains?

rom Tuesday, September 1, we will have Unlock 4.0. I have lost track of what this track of what this means and I do not think anybody really understands it. What the Indian government has done is try and manage the spread of Covid-19 by keeping things shut. If India forces people to stay away from one another by denying them access to services, it will stop or slow the spread of the infection.

This has produced rules that, as I said. I do not really understand. For instance, the airlines have been operating since May, and have been flying for more than three months now. Flights are allowed to be flown at full capacity, with the middle seat occupied. However, the Indian Railways is still by and large largely shut, and has been shut since the lockdown began. From running 17,000 trains daily, it today runs only 230 special ones. What is the logic of not having trains run when planes are allowed to run full? Air passengers cannot maintain the six-foot separation on their seats so it seems illogical to allow people to fly but not travel by train.

The benefit to the stopping the spread of Covid-19 is uncertain but

Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

the damage to the economy is visible. Reports from Surat last month said that the production of textiles was less than 25 per cent of normal and the big reason was the lack of labour.

More than 30 lakh people had left Surat and its surrounding industrial zones in April and May, according to a report in the Hindu Frontline magazine published on July 31. There is almost no way for these people to return to their jobs even if they wanted to now come back. There are reports that mill owners and other businesses have begun flying labourers back. But why not just open the Railways? This has not been explained to us.

Delhi's Metro will reportedly open this week with 50 per cent capacity (again note the difference with airlines), while Mumbai's local trains, the city's lifeline and its artery, have stayed shut. I saw a very moving note from journalists to the chief minister asking that those who were not accredited with the government to be allowed to use the trains because it was too expensive for

them to take taxis everywhere. Schools and colleges will remain shut but exams will continue to be held. Again, this makes no sense to me. If we are asking all schools and colleges to do online classes, why are we then asking students to gather in masses to take their exams?

We are told that cinema halls will have to stay shut as it won't be feasible to run shows with only 25 per cent capacity due to physical distancing norms. But a movie is about as long as a flight and the seats are equidistant in both. What is the thinking behind the decision to disallow movie halls, a very large sector of the entertainment industry and its employment, from opening? It all seems slightly eccentric to

me, and I suspect that some of this is

instance, restaurants were allowed to open but not bars. Why? There is no standard format in a restaurant's seating, as we know. And the same is true for bars. The only reason seems to be that the government in some way looks down on those who drink. In Unlock 4.0 bars, will be allowed

touched with the moralism that we

see in the Prime Minister. For

to serve liquor over the counter but not inside. Meaning the bar will be turned into a liquor store and the employment that its waiters and cooks and other staff would have otherwise got is not available even today, in September, more than five full months after the lockdown began.

Some of the confusion has then come from the Centre versus State differences. Apparently, the opening of gyms is allowed by the Centre but many of the states are not letting them do so.

In other nations, the lockdowns have been mostly voluntary. In India, it has been like a curfew. Even today, the Mumbai police can confiscate your vehicle if you cannot show a "good reason" for being out. What is a "good reason" is left for the

We have one nation one tax, but we do not have the free movement of people. Those going from one state to another state must fill out some application and ask for permission which may or may not be given.

police to determine of course.

As I said at the beginning, India has tried to slow or stop the spread of Covid-19 through denial of services. Has it worked? I don't think so. India is the only large nation along with Argentina whose numbers have continuously and without a break risen from March. The only way of stopping the spread of Covid-19 is good individual behaviour at the mass level. But we have Union ministers in meetings wearing their masks on their chin instead of covering their mouth and nose. How can such people communicate good behaviour to the public? They simply cannot. And so we have the endless tweaking of rules, all leading to failure as is visible in the numbers, with bureaucrats being kept busy making funny and illogical rules for 1.0 and 2.0 and 3.0 and now 4.0.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist

TUESDAY | 1 SEPTEMBER 2020 | KARIMNAGAR

# quick

<b>INDICATORS</b>		%
Sensex	38,628.29	-2.13
Nifty 50	11,387.50	-2.23
S&P 500*	3,505.94	-0.06
Dollar (₹)	73.60	-0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.93	0.50
Euro (₹)	87.50	0.10
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,638▲161	0.30
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	45.84	0.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.078	-0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.723	-0.006
* As of 9:30 PM IST		

### Trai gives Voda Idea time till Sept. 4 to reply

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has granted additional time till September 4 to Vodafone Idea to respond to its showcause notice on the firm's priority plan, a source said. Trai had slapped a showcause notice on Vodafone Idea over its paymore-for-priority-treatment mobile plan, saying the tariff offer "lacks transparency", is "misleading" and not in compliance with regulatory framework.

### Vedanta ties with SBI for ₹10,000 cr syndicated loan



Vedanta Ltd said it has tied up with State Bank of India for a long-term syndicated loan facility worth Rs 10,000 crore. A syndicated loan is offered by a group of lenders. SBI has given a commitment of Rs 5.000 crore as a lender. Hindustan Zinc, a subsidiary of Vedanta, said in a filing to the SE. The facility end use stipulates refinancing of near-term debt maturities of Vedanta and for capital expenditure.

#### Cyient to acquire Oz consulting firm IG Partners

Cyient said it has agreed to acquire Australian consulting firm IG Partners, a move that will help the Indian IT firm expand its end-to-end offerings for the local and regional resources sector. The rationale for the acquisition is gaining access to decision makers with global mining majors, acceleration in Cyient's mining strategy and positioning Cylent as a digital transformation leader in the market, the company said.

### L&T completes divestment of Schneider arm

**Engineering and construction** giant Larsen and Toubro on Monday said it has completed the strategic divestment of its electrical and automation business to Schneider Electric. The move will see India becoming the third largest country in terms of revenues for Schneider Electric. With this, about 5,000 employees of L&T's electrical and automation business will be integrated with



#### ■ Sebi's new margin rules sour sentiments

### Border clash, GDP worries fell stocks

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD** MUMBAI, AUG. 31

Market benchmark Sensex fell more than 1,600 points intra-day on fresh China military buildup and unconfirmed reports of clashes in the Ladakh region. This unexpected development together with fear of a likely sharp fall in the first quarter GDP growth, scheduled to be announced after market hours, led to profit-taking in the market.

The selling pressure may increase on Tuesday, with contracting - 23.9 per cent in the June quarter.

'Indian Army informed that Chinese troops violated the earlier agreement and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo on the nights of August 29-30," reports said.

Sameet Chavan, chief analyst-technical and Angel derivatives. Broking, said, the sell-off was triggered mainly by the news of India-China clash once again taking place at the border. This resulted in a massive liquidation in the market by continued selling in the remaining part of the day.

New Sebi rule for margins in equity trading coming into effect from September 1 also played spoilsport in the second half of trading, as the market regulator has declined an extension being sought by the broking community. Sensex and Nifty-50 final-

STOCK MARKET IN AUGUST 39000 38000 38,628.29 37000 11600 11400 36,939.60 11200 11000 **NSE Nifty** 3 4 5 6 7 10 11 12 13 14 17 18 19 20 21 24 25 26 27 28 31

ly closed more than 2 per cent down after strong early morning gains pushed the Sensex above the 40,000 mark.

The Sensex closed 839 points down at 38,628.39, recovering partly from the day's low of 38,395.89 and the Nifty-50 closed at 11,387.50, down by 260

Investors lost more than Rs 4.55 lakh crore in a day as the broader market fell more, with the BSE Midcap Index down 3.79 per cent and the BSE Small-cap Index down 4.73 per cent.

All sectoral indices closed down by 2 to 4.5 per cent except the IT index, which was down over half a per cent. Sectoral heavyweight banks and financials fell heavily with the BSE Bankex Index plunging 3.29 per cent and the Nifty Bank, by 3.14 per

Deepak Jasani, head of retail research, HDFC Securities, said, "The change in margin system securities pledgerepledging could undoubtedly bring disruptions in volumes of daily trading, as there is insufficient preparation and validation by the participants in this system, viz. exchanges, depository Clearing depositories, participants, Clearing Corporation, brokers and

#### **SWEDEN MOVES CLOSER TO MAKING FOSSIL-FUEL-FREE** STEEL

HANNA HOIKKALA & JESPER STARN

A Swedish joint venture that hopes to rewrite the rules of steel production took a major step forward on Monday.

Hybrit, an initiative run by steelmaker SSAB AB, iron ore producer LKAB and energy supplier Vattenfall AB aims to remove fossil fuels from the steelmaking value chain by replacing coking coal with hydrogen and clean energy.

The project is now starting test operations for the production of fossil-free sponge iron

- something that SSAB's chief executive Martin Lindqvist sees as a "milestone" given the industry accounts for 7 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions globally and 10% Sweden, he said.

The Hybrit project aims to reduce CO2 emissions to 25 kg per tonne of steel from about 1.6 tonnes by using hydrogen to prodirect reduced iron (DRI) as a feedstock, along with scrap, to make the metal. Electrolysing water from renewable energy sources will generate

the hydrogen. Product launch in a 'big, commercial scale' is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and will target "the automotive industry and others, Lindqvist said in an interview. —Bloomberg

### Norway fund drops Page Inds. over human rights breach risk

GWLADYS FOUCHE & TERJE SOLSVIK
OSLO, AUG. 31

Norway's \$1 wealth fund said it had excluded Taiwan's Formosa Chemicals and Fibre, Formosa Taffeta and India's Page Industries from its portfolio, saying they posed an "unacceptable risk for violation of

human rights". The world's largest sovereign wealth fund sells holdings before announcing such exclusions to avoid excessive market moves

Formosa Chemicals and Fibre declined to comment. An official reached by telephone at Formosa Taffeta said the company was closed for the day. Page Industries was not immediately reachable for comment.

In recent years, the fund, which operates under guidelines established by the Norwegian parliament, has focused on working conditions in textile factories in Asia, excluding companies it thinks pose an ethical risk to its investments. Set up in 1996 to preserve

Norway's oil revenues for future generations, the fund holds around 1.5 per cent of globally listed shares and its decisions are often followed by other investors.

At the end of 2019, NBIM held a 0.84 per cent stake in Formosa Chemicals & Fibre, valued at \$144 million, and a 0.64 per cent stake in Formosa Taffeta valued at \$12.2 million. The stake in Page

Industries at that time stood at 0.42 per cent, with a market value of \$15.4 million.

The fund said in the statement that its management will also scrutinise oil firm PetroChina's work, engaging in active ownership in the hope of boosting the company's

PetroChina had been under observation for possible exclusion since 2017 and had not responded to inquiries from the fund's ethics watchdog, the Council on Ethics, Norges Bank said.

anti-corruption practices.

The board of the Norwegian central bank, which manages the fund, ship" was therefore appro-

### Singapore's Atlantis launches digital bank

New Delhi, Aug 31: Singapore-based fintech company Atlantis on Monday said it has entered the Indian market with the launch of its digital bank, Neo-Bank.

Eyeing the \$15.7 billion global millennial banking Atlantis has industry, launched Neo-Bank for Gen Z and millennials, a

company release said.
The financial value of

millennials to the banking system is expected to increase by almost 80 per cent in the next five years to more than \$27 billion from the current \$15.7 billion in revenue that millennials contribute.

The company believes that customer-first intelligent systems and design will drive the future of neo-banking, it said. Neo banking is an online concept where there are no physical branches of a bank and customers transact all services digitally.

The bank is looking to sign up not more than 3,000 users in the first three months as it aims to create a personalised experience for each of its users.

Currently, it accepts a new user either through a waitlist or an invite from an existing member.— *PTI* 

### NGO supports FPOs to create millet value chain in Odisha

New Delhi, Aug 31: NGO Rise Against Hunger India (Rahi) on Monday said it has launched a project to create an end-to-end value chain for millet farmers in Bargarh district, Odisha and is supporting five Producer Farmer Organisations (FPOs).

Bengaluru-based Rahi is helping 800 farmers under these five FPOs to improve yield through agri-tools, equipment and other inputs, it said. This kind of rural proj-

ects will bring resilience in the rural farmers who are now left with no option but to migrate to the cities, it added. "As part of its Covid-19

response, a few projects have been launched. One of the projects, focused on creating end to end value chain for millets, has been initiated in Bargarh, Odisha," the NGO said in a statement.

For the past few years, some farmers have shifted from paddy to finger-millet cultivation and it is now receiving wider accept-

ance in the area.

Rahi said FPOs have become a common vehicle to share resources and inputs and they also provide an assured market platform in the absence of which an individual farmer would be subject to the whims and fancies of private vendors.

Farmers are expecting 80-100 per cent growth in production and 100 per cent increase their income per acre of land. With an assured income, the farmwill have better resilience with dependence on migrant income, it added.

In the past, Rahi programmes were carried out Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya to create value chains for pineapple and

banana farmers. Currently, Rahi is working in four tribal villages of Bhil tribes in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh to create an end-to-end value chain for goat farmers. "Hunger and lack of income is the biggest enemy for the rural poor," Rahi executive director Dola Mohapatra

### RBI announces measures to cool yields, boost liquidity

**FALAKNAAZ SYED** 

Heeding to banks' longpending wish-list, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday allowed banks to park new government bonds acquisition made from September 1, 2020 upto March 31, 2021 under the 'held to maturity' (HTM) category up to an overall limit of 22 per cent of their deposits against the existing limit of 19.5 per cent, thereby allowing an additional purchase capacity of approximately Rs 3.6 lakh crore for banks without worrying about fluctua-

tion risks over this period. In addition, the RBI also announced a slew of measures to cool bond yields and maintain market stability at a time when more than 50 per cent of the Rs 20-lakh crore plus (Centre and states combined) borrowing programme will be

coming up. Among the other measures, the RBI also announced two more tranches of special open market bond operations, or 'Operation Twist,' and



additional term repo operations of Rs 1 lakh crore at a floating rate basis. The RBI also reiterated that it "remains committed to use all instruments at its command to revive the economy by maintaining congenial financial conditions, mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and restore the economy to a sustainable growth while preserving macroeconomic financial stability."

The yields on government bonds have risen in the last one week on two concerns—the RBI MPC minutes released last week while did not say anything new, yet led to consternation on the future course of inflation.

Secondly, concerns on fiscal deficit and future borrowing programme of the government impacted sentiment as it is assumed that there would be a lot of government paper coming nto the market. The GST debate has only heightened such expectations. As a result, the 10-year gov-ernment bond rate rose up to 6.15 per cent.

The 5.79% bond closed at 6.08 per cent on Monday while the 5.77 per cent bond at 6.12 per cent. Suyash Choudhary, head

fixed income at IDFC AMC said, "It is also true that more than 50 per cent of the Rs 20 lakh crore plus (Centre and states combined) borrowing programme is still ahead of us. To that extent one can argue that the announcements today were a "must have" if markets were to continue to behave in an orderly fashion... reinstatement of orderly functioning now allows participants to start deploying risk capital with more confidence to take advantage of what are quite attractive valua-

### Core sector output contracts 9.6% in July



**FC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUG. 31

With the phase-wise implementation unlockdown, production in the country's eight core sectors has shown a slight improvement, contracting to -9.6 per cent in July against the -12.9 per cent contraction in June. This is the fifth consecutive month of contraction for core industries, according to government data released on Monday. The data on the core

eight sectors-coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricitycomes ahead of the government further easing restrictions on the movement and assembly of people in September in a staggered fashion.

The eight sectors collectively have a 40 per cent weightage on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Aditi Nayar, principal economist at Icra, said that based on the available trends for the core sector, auto production and merchandise exports, "we expect the contraction in the Industrial Index of Production to ease to 7-11 per cent in July 2020 from 16.6 per cent in June 2020".

The production of 8 core sectors had expanded by 2.6 per cent in July 2019, the release said. Output of all sectors showed contraction in July except the fertiliser segment.

### Fiscal deficit past full year target in four months

New Delhi, Aug. 31: India's federal fiscal deficit in the four months ena July stood at 8.21 lakh crore (\$111.7 billion), or 103.1 per cent of the budgeted target for the current fiscal year, government data showed on Monday.

Net tax receipts were Rs 2.03 lakh crore while total expenditure was at Rs 10.5 lakh crore, the data showed, indicating the government had stepped up its spending to combat the impact of the coronavirus.

The deficit is predicted to cross 7.5 per cent of GDP in the 2020-21 fiscal year that began in April, private economists said, from initial government estimates of 3.5 per cent. mainly due to a sharp economic contraction triggered by the pandemic.

### Emirates got \$2 billion of virus funding

ARCHANA NARAYANAN & LAYAN ODEH

Dubai's government has put \$2 billion into Emirates since March to help its flagship airline sustain operations during the coronavirus pandemic.

The state indicated earlier in the year it was committed to providing financial support to the world's largest long-haul carrier. "Any further support will be subject to the airline's requirements and will depend on the impact and duration of the ongoing Covid-19 situation," according to the document.

Emirates was particularly hit by the pandemic as its business model is built around the biggest category of jets—Airbus SE A380s and Boeing 777s—carrying passengers between all corners of the globe. — *Bloomberg* 

### Demand for online doctors creates a \$39-bn titan

lead M3 Inc, an online provider of medical infor-mation and services backed by entertainment giant Sony Corp.

What followed was a flurry of acquisitions that turned the Tokyobased company into a \$39 billion global behemoth. M3 now has about 40 subsidiaries and affiliates, including MDLinx Inc. in

M3 helps pharmaceutical companies, doctors and their patients access information online over its platforms, removing the need for in-person visits -- something that proved important in the time of Covid-19. Its

shares have almost doubled this year, surging the most of any company in the Nikkei 225 Stock Average and taking the fortune of Tanimura to \$1.2 billion, according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

"Online doctor capabilities are in the spotlight with Covid, as people are staying home," Jefferies Japan Ltd analyst Hiroko Sato said in an interview. "It's really a theme stock."

A rush by smaller pharma companies to digitalize marketing materials after the coronavirus outbreak helped boost sales, with inquiries skyrocketing. M3's operating profit climbed 26 per cent in the quarter ended in June. The company's name stands for "the three Ms cine by "making full use of the power of the Internet," according to its website.

of US medical portal site WebMD. MDLinx was acquired in 2006 and Doctors.net.uk in 2011. M3, which gets about three-quarters of its revenue from Japan, also has units in China, India and France. One of its US subsidiaries was selected to take part in Moderna Covid-19 vaccine study.

The pandemic has produced vast wealth gains amongst both tech and

Bezos has amassed more than anyone else, with his fortune hitting \$200 billion, while Tencent Holdings Ltd's Pony Ma and Jiang Rensheng, the chairman of vaccine maker Chongqing Zhifei Biological Products Co, have added more than \$11 billion each. While M3 said in its

earnings report that Covid-19 disrupted some of its business, it always has Sony to lean on. The entertainment giant unveiled a \$100 million relief fund to help tackle the outbreak in April and funnelled some of that

cash toward M3.

"Sony and M3 will be able to bring unprecedented ideas to the medical co Tanimura said. community,'

- Bloomberg



**RICHARD MACAULEY** 

Two decades ago, Itaru Tanimura ended a 12-year run at McKinsey & Co to

the US and Britain's Doctors.net.uk.

Its acquisition-spree started in 2002, when M3 bought the Japanese unit of Medicine, Media and Metamorphosis," and its goal is to change medi-

Tanimura, 55, is president and holds a 2.9 per cent stake in M3. Sony owns about a third of the company. M3 declined to comment for this story, while Sony didn't respond to phone calls and an email seeking comment.

#### SHORT TAKES **Root returns for**

**ODIs, misses T20s** 

Manchester: England announced on Monday they had recalled several World Cup winners for their upcoming whiteball series against Australia but Test captain Joe Root has again been omitted from the

Twenty20 squad. Fifty-over world champions England have been fielding separate red and white ball squads in a season hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

But with all six Tests spanning two series wins against the West Indies and Pakistan now completed, England have recalled some of their multi-format players for next month's limited-overs matches against

Australia. Root was the third-highest run-scorer at the 2016 T20 World Cup but has not played a T20 international for over a year, despite still wanting to feature

in the format. He has, however, hit scores of 64 and 65 for Yorkshire in this season's Twenty20 Blast.

#### **Birdie bomb lifts** Rahm to victory

Washington: Jon Rahm drained a swinging 60-foot birdie putt at the first playoff hole on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour BMW Championship over world number one Dustin Johnson. Spain's Rahm, ranked second in the world behind Johnson, was in the right rough off the tee at the first playoff hole, the 18th at Olympia Fields near Chicago. His second shot rolled to the back of the green, leaving him what could have been a tough two-putt for par. "Never did I think I'd be making

another 50-, 60-footer - couple of breaks in there, too - to end up winning it," said Rahm, who gave a roaring fist pump as the putt dropped.

Johnson's tee shot was also off course, but ricocheted off a tree to settle in the fairway. The American found the middle of the green, but his birdie attempt settled inches from the cup. — AFP

#### **Oly flame out on** display in Tokyo

Tokyo: The Olympic flame is going on display in Tokyo, just a short walk from the new National Stadium where it was supposed to be burning a month ago. The flame arrived in Japan from Greece in March and has been largely hidden away in Tokyo since the Olympics were postponed until next year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The flame was unveiled on Monday at a small ceremony with Yoshiro Mori, the president of the Tokyo Olympic organising committee, and Yasuhiro Yamashita, the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee. The flame will be on display beginning at the new Japan Olympic Museum for at least

### **Ewan takes Tour**

the next two months. — AFF

**Stage 3 honours** Sisteron, France: Australian

Caleb Ewan timed his effort to perfection to win the third stage of the Tour de France in a bunch sprint at the end of a 198-km hilly ride through the Alpine foothills on Monday. Sam Bennett looked in control but the Irishman had probably underestimated the headwind and settled for second place as he watched Lotto-Soudal fastman Ewan whizz around him to snatch his fourth stage win on the Tour. Italian Giacomo Nizzolo took third place. France's Julian Alaphilippe retained the overall leader's yellow jersey. — Reuters

#### Live on TV

CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE Jamaica Tallawahs vs Trinbago Knight Riders from 7.30 pm; Guyana Amazon Warriors vs Barbados Tirdents from 3 am

(Tuesday) on Star Sports 1, 2, HD CRICKET

England vs Pakistan third T20 from 10.30 pm on Sony Six, HD **TENNIS** 

US Open matches from 8.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

Bouts from 5.30 am (Tuesday) on

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Editor: Aditya Sinha

# SURASH SHOT!

### CSK might part ways with their star Raina

New Delhi, Aug. 31: His exit from the IPL attributed to personal reasons this season, all-rounder Suresh Raina's stint with Chennai Super Kings seems in jeopardy even next year as the fran-chise might part ways with him before the 2021 edition.

The CSK camp based in Dubai reported 13 Covid-19 cases, a development which an IPL source said, played a role in the recentlyretired India player's exit from the event. However, it has now emerged that the team management was not happy with the 32-yearold's "conduct" during the quarantine time, something which infuriated CSK owner and former BCCI president N. Srinivasan.

"In CSK, the norm is that the coach, captain and the manager get suites. However, Raina also gets a suite in any hotel that the franchise stays. It's just that his room didn't have a balcony," a source said.

"It was an issue but I don't think big enough to warrant a comeback (to India). There could be something more than just the scare of rising Covid-caseload," the source added, alluding to a speculated breach of the biobubble by Raina.

He said given the sit-uation, Raina could well be gone for good now not only this season but also the next IPL scheduled in April, 2021. Is there a possibility of Raina coming back, thereby changing circumstances? "He is unavailable this season and that is clear from the official statement issued by the CSK. Now there are certain things that have not gone down too well with the top peo-

ple," the source said.
"It looks highly improbable that someone who has retired and likely won't play any cricket will come back for CSK. Maybe, he will be back in auc-



AB de Villiers (centre) of the Royal Challenger Bangalore during a training session in Dubai.

tion and someone else might pick him." CSK is punting heavi-

ly on young Ruturaj, expecting that he will come good once he completes the quarantine and rejoins the training session after two negative tests.

"CSK has not yet asked for an official replacement Raina...they are undecided," the source said.

On the speculated bio-bubble breach, the source said an apology from Raina will have little impact given that the team is looking ahead. "I don't know about the apology part but CSK will now be eyeing to prepare Ruturaj looking at the future and Dhoni and

Five Star Lyon ladies leap for joy

Dhoni should bat at No. 3: Gambhir New Delhi, Aug. 31: Mahendra Singh Dhoni should be batting at numfrom the game for the last

ber three for Chennai Super Kings now that Suresh Raina has pulled out of the Indian Premier League, feels former India opener Gautam Gambhir.

Raina pulled out of the IPL due to "personal reasons" and Gambhir thinks that Dhoni, who has been away from the game for over a year, should try and play as many balls possi-

"It will be a good opportusaid Gambhir said on Star Sports' show.

one year, so he would end up getting a lot more balls to face and then he can actually play the anchor innings as well which he has been doing for India for the last couple of years," the two-time IPLwinning skipper said.

**GANGULY SEES** 

HIGHEST IPL

TV RATINGS

president

Pune, Aug. 31: Bullish about the IPL's success as a TV-only event, BCCI

Ganguly on Monday said

he expects the T20 extrav-

aganza to shatter viewer-

againza to shatter viewer-ship records this year. The IPL begins on September 19 and will be played across three cities in the UAE — Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah.

"Crowds will watch it on

television... they (the broadcasters) are actually

expecting the highest rating of IPL this season

because they believe if

(people) don't turn up in the ground, they will be

actually watching on their television sets.

There is a positive in everything," Ganguly

said while delivering an

online lecture as part of the 'Symbiosis Golden

Ganguly also said hold-

ing the IPL was important

to ensure a sense of nor-

malcy amid the pandem-

ic. Asked how cricketers would feel about playing

in front of empty stands,

Ganguly said, "...because of the COVID and infec-

tion, you don't want peo-

ple to be too close to each other, but very soon you

will see there will be 30

per cent people in the ground with social dis-

"They are properly test-ed and allowed to enter

the ground. But I think

that is going to happen

added referring to the possibility of IPL's later

matches being opened for

fans depending on the

to bring life back to nor-

mal. This will go on for another five-six months

till the vaccine comes and

I am sure everything then

will be back to normal,"

..it is actually an effort

Covid-19 situation.

he asserted.

over a period of time,"

tancing.

Jubilee Lecture Series'.

Ganguly

Gambhir said that Dhoni can come at one down as there are batsmen who can play the finishing game. "So, MS Dhoni at No. 3

and then they have got depth with Kedar Jadhav, Dwayne Bravo, Sam Curran, all those guys they can come in," Gambhir

#### Fleming will rejig their nity for M.S. Dhoni to come strategy accordingly," and bat at No. 3," Gambhir the source added.



ball final in San Sebastian, Spain, on Sunday. Lyon won 3-1 to win their fifth straight Champions League.

### Chess players deserve better: Anand

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, AUG. 31

The first online chess Olympiad that witnessed an anticlimactic finish due to a global internet outage has triggered controversy after India and Russia were declared joint winners. Russian grandmaster Daniil Dubov didn't mince words when he termed the event a "circus" and said "don't just call it an Olympiad and it

was a failure.' The controversial ending, however, didn't stop the Indian team from celebrating their maiden Olympiad gold by organising an online meeting

where each member of the side spoke about the

During the final, India's Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh were disconnected from the host server. Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand said the global internet outage wasn't India's fault. "We did nothing wrong. We were ready for anything. We were ready to play two games or even six games. Fide looked at the big picture," he said.

There was a hint of disappointment when Anand spoke about the lack of recognition for chess players in the past few years. "There's been a drop off

Sports Ministry towards chess players. mean at a personal level obviously. Just that institutionally, we no longer get the awards for international competitions," said

Anand. The veteran player from Chennai feels the issues in the All India Chess Federation could be a reason for the awards snub. "I think some of it might be due to various issues they have brought up pertaining to the code of conduct and so on. And our federation has had some difficulties. But it would be nice to reset this," he said.

Anand said the best way

not by writing long letters to the editor but by having results like the Olympiad success. "I hope that this result will have a positive impact and that they will look at chess as did years ago. Several years ago they had recognised this as one of the sports where we do incredibly well... and that

we have a good team. And I hope this will have an impact and we will once again start coming in for Arjuna and Dronacharya awards," he added. Grandmaster

Harikrishna said it's the responsibility of the federation to take up this

of the chess players have won an Arjuna Award or Dronacharya Award for several years. But these are not the reasons why chess players are playing the game. These are however small things that the govt and federation can take up," he noted.

Terming it a golden moment for the Indian chess fraternity, Koneru Humpy said Sunday's success would motivate many youngsters to pursue chess professionally. "We always talked about winning a medal at the Olympiad. I am happy that it has finally happened," she added.

# Sandeep is out of Hyd, goes to Goa

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 31

After A. T. Rayudu and G. H. Vihari, Hyderabad has lost one more good cricketer to another state — top order batsman Bavanaka Sandeep has decided to play for Goa in the Ranji Trophy from this year. The 28-year-old received his no objection certificate from the Hyderabad Cricket Association on Monday. The left-handed batsman

is believed to have lost faith in the administrators, selectors and others who call the shots in the HCA after being overlooked many a time, including being dropped from the side despite doing well. He currently has the best batting average in the team. He was also miffed at not

being pitched for South Zone teams despite good performances. Former India player and Hyderabad captain Rayudu was instrumental in wean-ing Sandeep away from the HČA, it is reliably learnt. Sandeep is currently in Dubai for the IPL with the Sunrisers Hyderabad team, which he made this



**Bavanaka Sandeep** 

- he averaged 87 with a strike rate of 140 last sea son.

18-year-old

Sandeep announced his arrival with a bang in Ranji Trophy, scoring a century (144) on debut against Jharkhand in November 2010 after Hyderabad was shot out for humiliating 21 by Rajasthan in the previous match, triggering an over-haul of the team. He has scored 3,631 runs in 58 first class games since, averaging 44.82 with seven centuries, including a double ton, and 21 fifties. A part-time left-arm spinner, Sandeep also has 12 wick-

ets against his name.

**US OPEN** | TENNIS

year after impressive shows in Twenty20 match-



Angelique Kerber of Germany returns a shot during her women's singles first round match against Ajla Tomljanovic of Australia on the first day of the US Open tennis championships at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on Monday in New York City. Kerber won in straight sets at 6-4, 6-4.

## Kerber cruises

Aug. 31: York, Former champion Angelique returned to action for the first time in seven months and beat Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4, 6-4 on Monday to reach the second round of the U.S.

The 17th-seeded German, who entered the match having not competed since the fourth round of the Australian Open, overcame a shaky start on serve and got better as the 88-minute match at Louis Armstrong Stadium wore

Kerber, a three-times Grand Slam champion who triumphed at Flushing Meadows in 2016, traded breaks with Tomljanovic through the first four games of the match and then found her footing to

take over the match. The German southpaw converted all three break point chances to pull ahead 5-4 and then went on to serve out at love to grab the first set.

In the second, Kerber settled into a groove and broke her opponent twice before sealing the win on her third match point when a Tomljanovic fore-

hand sailed long. The US Open is the first Grand Slam to be contested since the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown global tennis in March.

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic sets out on his quest for an 18th Grand Slam title at the US Open with his world number one standing enhanced in the latest ATP rankings released on Monday. The Serb headlines the opening day at Flushing Meadows where he faces Damir Dzumhur Herzegovina. — Agencies

### **OLYMPIC GOLD'S THRILL**

New Delhi, Aug. 31: champion Abhinav Bindra says the thrill — the biggest of his life — lasted merely two seconds after his gold at Beijing Games where relief was the first and only emotion he felt despite scripting history. A web series titled *The* Finish Line has been conceptualised to relive eight defining moments of Indian sports through the athletes themselves. And Bindra was the first guest

to fature on the show hosted by ace squash player Saurav Ghosal. "It was the greatest emotion that I had felt. I was very happy as this moment was the biggest thrill of my life, that

thrill lasted for two sec-

onds and that's it," Bindra said on the show, recalling the moment 12

years later. "The greatest emotion I felt at that moment was the feeling of relief because, throughout my journey, I have been very obsessive with my goal All my eggs were in one basket, certainly not the way I promote to young athletes. It was a huge amount of relief that, what I had set out to do in my life, I was able to achieve that," he said.

Bindra remains India's individual gold medallist at the Olympics and he came tantalisingly close to adding another podium finish at the 2016 Rio Games, only to miss out by a point.