

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
VISAKHAPATNAM | MONDAY | 12 APRIL 2021



**WORLD | 5**  
**Suspicious blackout in Iran's plant**



**SPORTS | 6**  
**Dhoni is my go-to man: Pant**

**TABLOID**  
**Walk through your fear**



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

Vol. 36 No. 318 Established 1938 | 16 PAGES | ₹6.00

## WEATHER



Max: 33.8°C  
Min: 25.2°C  
RH: 74%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Mst.  
Max/Min temp.  
33/25 °C

## ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Phalguna Bahula  
Amavasya till 8.01 am  
Star: Revati till 11.30 am  
Varjyam: Nil  
Durmuhurtam: 12.42 pm to  
1.31 pm; 3.10 pm to 4 pm  
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am  
**HILIRI CALENDAR**  
Sha'ban 29, 1442 AH  
**PRAYERS**  
(ROYAL MOSQUE)  
Fajar: 5.50 am  
Zohar: 1.30 pm  
Asar: 4.45 pm  
Maghrib: 6.15 pm  
Isha: 8.15 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY 6.12 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.43 AM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 6.30 PM**  
**MOONSET TOMORROW 5.54 AM**

## COUNTER POINT



**I like polls with more phases... we are earning more money attending more election rallies!**

## SHORT TAKES

### PLA: India must cherish +ve trend

**Beijing:** With no forward movement at the latest round of Sino-India military talks on disengagement from the remaining areas in eastern Ladakh, the Chinese military has said that India should cherish the "current positive trend" of de-escalation and cooling down of tensions in the border area.

### Assam parties fly contestants away

**Guwahati:** After the AIUDF shifted prospective winning candidates to Jaipur in Rajasthan, fearing poaching by the ruling BJP, the Bodoland People's Front, a constituent party of the Congress-led grand alliance, has also shifted 10 of its 11 candidates in the recently held Assembly polls in Assam to a foreign location.

■ Full report on Page 4

### Chopper crash lands in Kerala

**Kochi:** A helicopter carrying NRI businessman M.A. Yusuff Ali, his wife and four others crash-landed at a marshy land near here on Sunday, police said. All passengers including Yusuff Ali, who is Chairman of Lulu Group, on board the chopper have been admitted to a hospital.

■ Full report on Page 4

## PANDEMIC | GLUM

## Thanksgiving tour



CJI designate Justice N.V. Ramana visits the hill shrine of Lord Venkateswara on Sunday morning along with his family members to offer prayers after his appointment as the Chief Justice of India. He would take charge of office on April 24. The judge was received by TTD chairman Y.V. Subba Reddy, executive officer Dr K.S. Jawahar Reddy and additional EO A.V. Dharma Reddy with temple honours. — DC

## Mamata provoked TMC violence on CISF: Shah

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, APRIL 11

Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday squarely held West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's recent "provocative speech" responsible for the violent mob attack on the Central paramilitary forces which, in turn, shot dead four villagers at a polling booth in Shitalkuchi of Cooch Behar during the fourth phase of the election a day earlier.

Asking the Trinamul Congress supremo to apologise for her instigation, he questioned her silence on the killing of a first-time voter, Ananda Burman of the Rajbanshi community, after linking him to the saffron party.

Rejecting Ms Banerjee's demand for his resigna-

## Model code is BJP code, alleges Didi

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, APRIL 11

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday described the Election Commission's Model Code of Conduct (MCC) as the "BJP Code of Conduct ... or BCC" after she failed to visit the aggrieved family of the four villagers who were shot dead by the Central paramilitary

forces at a polling booth at Shitalkuchi in Cooch Behar due to the 72-hour ban imposed by the EC on the visit of any political leader to the district.

The Trinamul Congress chief also called the killings a "mass murder" in a virulent attack on the EC and the BJP after speaking to the victims' relatives and standing by them during a phone conversation.

you should get ready since you will have to resign on May 2."

tion over the firing, Mr Shah said: "Didi has been constantly claiming: Amit Shah must resign. Didi, I will resign when the people ask me to. But

■ Page 2: Forces acted in self-defence: Shah

## Tika Utsav second big war against Covid-19, says PM

**New Delhi, April 11:** Asserting that 'tika utsav', a vaccination drive between April 11 and 14, marks the beginning of the another major war on Covid-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday made several suggestions on curbing the virus and urged them to focus on personal and social hygiene.

In a blog, he urged them to remember four things, including "each one, vaccinate one"— helping those getting vaccinated who are less educated and elderly and who cannot go for the job themselves, and "each one, treat one"— helping those who do not have the means or do not know about the facilities available for vaccination.

He also spoke of "each one, save one", saying emphasis should on wearing mask so as to save oneself and others too. He asked families and members of society to take lead in setting up micro containment zones if anyone gets the disease, saying it is an important way to fight Covid in a densely populated country like India.

"Our success will be determined by our awareness of the micro containment zone and by not leaving house when there is no need. Our success will also depend on whether we wear masks and follow other rules," he said, adding that it will also depend on getting those eligible for vaccine inoculated. — PTI

## EAST GODAVARI RUNS OUT OF VACCINE STOCK

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, APRIL 11

In a shocking development, stocks of Covid-19 vaccine were exhausted in East Godavari on Sunday — the very first day of 'Tika Utsav'.

Many people who thronged the vaccination centre went home disappointed as there was no stock of the vaccine. Officials told them more vaccines may arrive on Monday.

■ Full report on Page 3

## YSRC dare: MPs to quit if party loses in Tirupati

Min challenges TD MPs to follow suit; calls bypoll referendum

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

With just six days left for the byelection to the Tirupati Lok Sabha seat, political parties have started challenging each other on one issue or another to keep up the poll tempo. The latest is panchayat raj minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy's offer to the opposition Telugu Desam to treat the byelection as a referendum.

"Our 21 members of Parliament will put in their papers if the YSRC loses the Tirupati LS bypoll. Are your MPs ready to resign if we win the election," the minister questioned the Telugu Desam leadership.

Reacting to opposition leader Nara Chandrababu Naidu's remark on the YSR Congress failing to get Special Category Status for AP from the Centre, Ramachandra Reddy retorted whether that TD MPs had also failed to do so when their party was in power.

Speaking to mediapersons in Tirupati on Sunday, the minister said Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had put off his election campaign in Tirupati in view of a sharp

## BJP-JS manifesto vows to free TTD from govt

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

The joint election manifesto of BJP-JSP alliance for Tirupati Lok Sabha by-poll focuses on skill development, health, education, infrastructure, agriculture and fisheries sector, and employment to youth.

The manifesto gives priority to develop Tirupati as Hindu Dharma Kshetra, paying special attention to culture and arts.

In addition, it proposes to appoint a "Dharmacharya Mandali" to protect the sanctity of TTD assets. The scope of this

● The BJP-JS alliance proposes to free the TTD from clutches of the government. The board will instead function under the supervision of empowered seers.

mandali can be widened to cover religious institutions across the state, the manifesto says.

Importantly, it proposes to free the Devasthanams' board from clutches of the government. The board will instead function under the supervision of empowered seers.

The manifesto was

released by BJP state president Somu Veerajulu along with Jana Sena's political affairs committee chairman Nadendla Manohar.

Speaking to media on finer points of the manifesto, BJP leaders underlined the need to develop Tirupati as spiritual capital of the world, where there will be no scope for proliferation of other religions. They further said BJP is committed to developing Tirupati as a smart city by mobilising sufficient funds.

■ Page 2: BJP to protect traditional arts

increase in number of Coronavirus positive cases in Chittoor district.

He expressed confidence that the YSR Congress will win the byelection on basis of welfare programmes

introduced by the Chief Minister for downtrodden within the state.

"Benefits of these programmes have even reached doorsteps of beneficiaries in the state,"

Ramachandra Reddy pointed out. He underlined that thousands of crores have been earmarked for completion of irrigation projects in Rayalaseema on a war footing.

**GRT JEWELLERS**  
Since 1964

**USHER IN A PROSPEROUS BEGINNING WITH GOLD**

**SWARNA UGADI**

Begin anew this Ugadi and start the year on a sparkling note. Dazzle all year long with a stunning range of timeless jewellery and spectacular offers.

**Rs.50\* LESS**  
per gram on Gold Jewellery  
(Not valid on jewellery with VA less than 7%)

**25%\* OFF**  
on making charges for Silver Articles

**HDFC BANK**  
We understand your world

**UPTO ₹5000 CASHBACK\***  
on HDFC Bank Credit Cards.

\*Min. transaction: ₹50,000  
Offer - 2% cashback  
Valid till 18<sup>th</sup> April '2021. T&C apply.  
Discount not valid for UPI and Online transactions.

\*Offer does not apply to gold coins and bars. This offer cannot be combined with any other offers. Limited period offer. Terms and conditions apply.

**VISAKHAPATNAM**

Gajuwaka: 10-10-47/3, Main Road (GNT Road). Ph: 0891-257 1515.

Sampath Vinayaga Temple Road: 9-20-1/1, (Near Sampath Vinayaga Temple). Ph: 0891-253 1515.

21-1-3/4, Jawahar Street, (Opp. Municipal Corporation Girls High School), Salipeta, Kakinada. Phone: 0884-233 3515

Guntur | Tirupathi

Telangana | Karnataka | Tamil Nadu | Puducherry | Singapore

Shop online at: [www.orian.com](http://www.orian.com) | mail@grtjewels.com | **GRT LIVE** Shop from the comfort of your home

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 11

The Coronavirus infections are increasing in Andhra Pradesh for the past few days. On Sunday, 3,495 new infections were registered. Until recently, only 500 to 1,000 new cases used to be registered a day.

The state confirmed nine deaths due to Covid and 3,495 new infections for the 24-hour period ending Sunday morning. It was the highest single-day tally since October 23. As many as 31,719 samples were tested. A total of 1,542 crore

<b>SECOND WAVE</b>			
Chittoor registered highest number of cases in the state on Sunday.			
719	501		
Chittoor	Guntur		
405	306		
Vishakh	Krishna		

samples were tested in the state so far, with a positivity rate of six per cent.

Four new deaths were registered in Chittoor and one each in Guntur, Kurnool, Nellore, Prakasam and Srikakulam districts. The total number of cases in AP

state was 9,22,506. Of this, the total recoveries were of 8,94,252. AP has 20,954 patients as of Sunday and a majority of them were under home isolation.

Chittoor led the pack with 719 cases on Sunday followed by Guntur with 501,

Visakhapatnam 405, Krishna 306, Srikakulam 293, Prakasam 215, Anantapur 209, Vizianagaram 193, Kadapa 192, Kurnool 191, Nellore 190, East Godavari 41 and West Godavari 40 cases. East Godavari is on top with a total of 1,25,817 cases followed by West Godavari with 94,735 cases, Chittoor 94,160, Guntur 82,043, Anantapur 69,540, Nellore 65,013, Visakhapatnam 64,708, Prakasam 63,735, Kurnool 63,063, Kadapa 56,866, Krishna 52,817, Srikakulam 48,039 and Vizianagaram 41,970.



## SHORT TAKES

BJP TO PROTECT  
TRADITIONAL  
ARTS

FROM PAGE 1

Narasimha Rao underlined that the Centre has already established IIT, IISER, and Indian Culinary Institute, apart from developing all national highways connecting the holy city, as well as Tirupati railway station and international airport. He said they would give priority to protect traditional arts, such as Kalamkari and handicrafts that are widespread in the constituency. As part of this initiative, training will be offered to upgrade the inherent skills of artisans. In addition, trauma care centres will be established in the Tirupati Lok Sabha constituency.

The manifesto spoke about BJP-Jana Sena plans to improve market yards, storage points, including cold storages, providing irrigation facilities and financial assistance at low-interest rates to farmers, in addition to Kisan credit cards.

Development of Pulicat Lake in the Sullurpeta segment and fishing harbours in the Nellore region has also been included in the manifesto.

MALLADI  
CAMPAIGNS FOR  
GURUMURTHYDC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

Chairman of Brahmin Corporation Malladi Vishnu campaigned for YSRC nominee Dr Gurumurthy in different parts of Tirupati on Sunday.

During his interaction with voters, Vishnu dwelt at length on the welfare schemes of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, while appealing to them to cast their votes to Dr Gurumurthy in the ensuing byelection to Tirupati Lok Sabha seat. He rebuked TD leaders and TD chief Chandrababu Naidu for their utterances against Jagan and YSRC government.

POLAVARAM WILL  
RENDER VILLAGERS  
HOMELESSDC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, APRIL 11

All those who have been displaced from 192 villages because of Polavaram Project are living in fear amid insecurity. They are all worried that the villages would be submerged in June or July because of cyclones and floods. They appealed to the Union and state governments to provide a relief and resettlement package to them, before the completion of Polavaram Project. According to them, nearly 3.5 lakh people, from Schedule Tribe and Scheduled Caste, are facing a threat of their livelihood.

According to sources, the government completed 70 per cent of Polavaram project works by the end of December but only four per cent of the R & R package was implemented. The Chief Minister aimed at completing the project by the year-end.

As per the 2017 statistics, 5,08,874 persons have been displaced and the number may increase.

The state government had announced that 371 villages will be submerged due to the project and CCLA has given permission for providing R&R package to 164 villages. However, only 15 villages have been given partial R&R packages.

Indian Association of Lawyers state executive member Inapurapu Suryanaryana said that the Comptroller and Audit General (CAG) found fault with the project as there is no MoU between Centre and the state government on construction of Polavaram project and advised the state government to reach a truce with the Union Government for the sake of the project.

To avoid submergence problems, the Centre advised state governments of Odisha and Chhattisgarh to construct protection walls at eight and four places, respectively. But, either has obliged.

He said that the Union Government has also not taken any steps to have cases filed in the Supreme Court to be withdrawn by Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

SC, ST vigilance and monitoring committee district member Ayithabathula Rameswara Rao demanded the government to halt Polavaram project works till the completion of R&R package works to 371 villages.



Former chief minister and TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu addresses a large gathering at Rapur in Nellore district on Sunday.

— DC

TD chief accuses govt of  
ignoring Tri-City proposal

Naidu pointed out that the TD government had built 20,000 houses

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu accused the state government of ignoring his Tri-City proposal for developing areas between Tirupati, Nellore and Chennai, especially in terms of industries.

Addressing a public meeting at Rapur as part of his campaign in favour of TD nominee from Tirupati Lok Sabha seat Panabaka Lakshmi on Sunday, Naidu pointed out that the Telugu Desam government had also built 20,000 houses under housing-for-all scheme in Chittoor and Nellore districts. But the present government has not yet handed them over to the beneficiaries.

“Such is YSR Congress government’s affection towards poor and downtrodden,” he remarked sarcastically. He asked voters to support the Telugu Desam candidate in the ensuing election for resolving all their pending issues.

TD MPs Galla Jayadev and Kanakamedala Ravindranath, former Venkatagiri legislator K. Ramakrishna and others were present at the public meeting.

● **NAIDU** addressed a public meeting at Rapur as part of his campaign in favour of TD nominee from Tirupati Lok Sabha seat Panabaka Lakshmi on Sunday

BJP chief Nadda to address  
meeting at Tirupati todayDC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

Bharatiya Janata Party is making elaborate arrangements for taking out a huge procession from Renigunta Airport to Alipiri on Monday to mark the visit of its party national president J.P. Nadda for campaigning in the Tirupati byelection.

Nadda will also address a public meeting at Naidupeta on Monday evening, where the party is expecting a large turnout of people.

Addressing media in Tirupati on Sunday, BJP

MP C.M. Ramesh said apart from participating in the procession from Renigunta Airport and addressing a public meeting in Naidupeta, Nadda will also visit Tirumala to have darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

Launching a scathing attack against YSR Congress party, Ramesh observed that power has gone into the heads of ruling party leaders because the party has 151 legislators in the state.

The BJP MP appealed to people to teach a lesson to YSR Congress in ensuing byelection from Tirupati

Lok Sabha seat, so that its leaders could be taught a lesson.

Ramesh alleged that fake cases are being filed against persons who question anti-people policies of the state government.

Reacting to a question on Special Category Status (SCS) promised to Puducherry, the BJP MP claimed the Centre has provided it only a Special Union Territory status and not SCS. He pointed out that the Centre has instead released crores of funds for the development of AP.

PK quarantines  
self after Covid  
strikes his staffDC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 11

Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan has gone into quarantine after majority of his staff have contracted Coronavirus. He is, however, using the virtual mode to interact with party leaders and monitor campaigning in the Tirupati Lok Sabha byelection.

Party sources say the popular actor was to start his campaign for the bypoll on Monday along with BJP national president J.P. Nadda at a public meeting in Tirupati constituency. But he has cancelled it in view of the new development.

Jana Sena issued a statement on Sunday stating that several members of Jana Sena Party president’s personal team as well as security persons had tested Covid positive. Hence, doctors have advised Pawan Kalyan to self-quarantine as a precautionary measure.

As an ally of BJP, the actor had been actively campaigning for BJP candidate Ratna Prabha in the Tirupati Lok Sabha bypoll scheduled for April 17.

## ‘Oppn running out of issues’

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

Stating that the Opposition is running out of issues and seems confused in the campaign trail, YSRC has affirmed that the good governance of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will give a decisive win for the party in Tirupati.

On Sunday, minister for animal husbandry Seediri Appala Raju slammed Nara Lokesh for his tall

claims during Tirupati bypoll campaign that pensions would be increased and fuel rates would be decreased and for degrading the Physiotherapy profession of YSRC candidate Dr Gurumurthy.

He said that Naidu and other TD leaders have no issues to raise during the campaign and are confined to criticise the government regarding the ticket prices of the *Vakeel Saab* movie.

Referring to Jana Sena

chief Pawan Kalyan comments, the minister said Jana Sena has to question its ally BJP, which is in power at the Centre, regarding privatisation of Vizag Steel Plant, Special Category Status to Andhra Pradesh and bifurcation promises. Instead, he has been targeting YSRC only with political motives.

The minister said BJP leaders and Naidu are not raising their voice against the hike in fuel prices.

## IT WAS SELF-DEFENCE: SHAH

From page 1

Shah said: “In the fourth phase of polls, a very sad incident took place. Some unidentified people attacked a polling booth and tried to snatch the weapons of the Central armed police forces (CAPF) personnel. When the CAPF jawans opened fire in self-defence and to protect their weapons, four people were killed. What is more sad is the way the entire incident is being politicised.”

He was speaking to the media at Shantipur in Nadia district.

He added: “I saw

Mamatadi’s statement. A few days ago, at the same Shitalkuchi seat, Mamatadi gave a brazen speech asking the people to gherao and attack the CAPF. I want to ask her: ‘Isn’t her speech responsible for the death of the four? Would the four have dared to attack the Central forces had she not made the speech?’ Provoking them, you made a cause for firing.”

Mr Shah later claimed at a BJP rally at Basirhat South in North 24 Parganas: “Didi, you, sitting in a wheelchair, left anyway but it was because of you that the four youths died.”

YSRC fields MLAs to give  
tempo to bypoll campaignDC CORRESPONDENT  
KURNOOL APRIL 11

Seizing the opportunity to showcase their strength in Tirupati, ruling party MLAs here are sweating it out to ensure the victory of YSRC candidate Dr Gurumurthy.

YSRC has asked its MLAs from Kurnool to stay put in Tirupati till the elections are over. Finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy was also in Tirupati recently.

Panyam MLA Katasani Rambhupal Reddy said he

is camping at Sarvepalli for the past few days and plans to continue there till April 15. He visited five villages on Sunday and felt the people are solidly supporting the policies of CM Jagan.

Kurnool MLA Hafeez Khan is staying in Tirupati and taking the rounds of the constituency along with the candidate, looking after election-related activities. He claimed the pre-poll atmosphere is highly favorable to the ruling party. Nandyal MLA Silpa

Ravichandrda Kishore Reddy and his uncle and Srisailam MLA Silpa Chakrapani Reddy are also camping in the constituency for the past couple of days.

A leader said that when the TD was in power, Chandrababu Naidu used to depend on Allagadda leaders like Bhuma Nagi Reddy, who is no more, for money and muscle power during the elections in Tirupati. The Bhuma family has multiplexes and commercial units in Tirupati town, he said.

YSRC files case  
against DevineniDC CORRESPONDENT  
KURNOOL APRIL 11

YSRC Kurnool legal cell president Narayana Reddy has filed a case against former minister and TD leader Devineni Uma for allegedly showing a morphed video of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy at a press conference in Tirupati on April 7.

In the video, the CM is shown as not favouring Tirupati as a place of living. This, Narayana Reddy alleged, is intended to spread hatred against the Chief Minister and his government.

In the complaint filed with CID at Kurnool on Sunday, he said more than half of Chief Minister’s face is covered with his lips concealed. The CM is heard saying: “None of you will come to Tirupati for a stay even if I ask you. Heart specialists or highly educated people would love to stay in

● aThe complainant alleged that the video is fake and fabricated and was displayed at a press conference. He said the video was fabrication of CM’s speech wherein he is discussing the outcome of his meeting in Delhi.

Hyderabad, New Delhi or Bengaluru. No one will be interested to live in Bihar, Orissa or even Tirupati.”

The complainant alleged that the video is fake and fabricated and was displayed at a press conference. He said the video was fabrication of CM’s speech wherein he is discussing the outcome of his meeting in Delhi.

The complaint was addressed to Additional Director General of Police, CID, at Managalgiri through CID, Kurnool, which has registered a case against Devineni Uma under IPC sections 153 (a), 420 and 465.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy pays tributes to portrait of Mahatma Jyothirao Phule on the 195th birth anniversary at the camp office on Sunday.

‘Jagan fulfilling  
aims of Phule’DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 11

YSR Congress claimed that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is fulfilling the aims and objectives of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule by working for the development of suppressed communities. Minister for BC welfare Ch. Srinivasa Venu Gopala Krishna with legislators and leaders paid floral tributes to Phule during his birth anniversary programme in the YSRC central office in Tadepalli on Sunday.

Minister Venu Gopala Krishna said Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has been working towards fulfilling the dreams and aspirations of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. He said the Chief Minister had given recognition to 139 castes by setting up 56 corporations and appointing 672 directors for BCs. He said the Chief Minister had implemented all the welfare schemes despite the Covid-19 pandemic, and all the weaker

sections have come under one roof and supporting his leadership. He said the Chief Minister had become a role model by working to fulfil the aspirations of Phule. The minister said that the Chief Minister had chosen Dr Gurumurthy, who comes from an ordinary family, as the YSRC candidate for the Tirupati bypoll.

MLC Janga Krishna Murthy said that Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was a philosopher and social reformer and constantly worked for the betterment of the weaker sections. Taking his ideologies forward, the Chief Minister had been working for the welfare of all sections of the society, especially SC, ST, BC and minorities.

MLA Vidadala Rajini said Mahatma Jyotirao Phule had worked hard for the empowerment of women and likewise, the Chief Minister has been implementing many schemes and programmes for women’s welfare.

WHY DID CHIEF MINISTER CANCEL  
HIS MEETING, ASKS TULASI REDDYDC CORRESPONDENT  
KADAPA, APRIL 11

“Is the spread of Covid-19 the reason for the cancellation of the public meeting to be held by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in Tirupati on the 14th of this month or the fear of losing?”

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee Working President Dr N. Tulasi Reddy questioned. He was speaking at a

media conference in Vempalle, Kadapa district on Sunday. Nowhere does Covid-19 interfere with ministerial campaigns, tours, and meetings.

He questioned whether Covid-19 was interfering only with the Chief Minister’s public meeting. However, Tulasi Reddy said that the Chief Minister would tell the people the development the government has done.

ACID | TEST Major contenders are using the services of close to 500 of their respective top, second-rung

## Parties turn Tirupati Lok Sabha bypoll into battle royale

MD ILYAS | DC  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 11

The importance being given to the battle royale for the Tirupati Lok Sabha seat, for which the byelection is round the corner, can be understood from the fact that almost all the major contenders are using the services of close to 500 of their respective top and second-rung leaders for campaigning purposes.

The atmosphere is almost similar to the one witnessed during the 2017

Nandyal Assembly byelection when Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, then the Leader of Opposition, camped in Nandyal for a week. Similarly, TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu is camping in Tirupati.

Treating the byelection as a referendum on its administration, the YSRC government has pressed ministers, legislators and leaders into action.

Not to be left behind, the Telugu Desam has deployed 200 leaders and has mooted a volunteer system to attract voters

towards their party.

TTD chairman Y.V. Subba Reddy and ministers Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy and Narayana Swamy and other leaders took care of gram panchayat, municipal and corporation elections and provided landslide victories.

Jagan Mohan Reddy hoping for an overwhelming win has assigned ministers Perni Venkataramaiah alias Nani, P. Anil Kumar, Audimulapu Suresh, Mekapati Gautam Reddy, Kurasala Kannababu, Kodali Venkates-

wara Rao (Nani) and Balineni Srinivas Reddy to the seven Assembly segments of the Tirupati Lok Sabha constituency.

They have been coordinating with local MLAs and other leaders to ensure a massive for the party nominee Dr Gurumurthy.

The TD has deployed 200 leaders for campaigning, including Naidu, Nara Lokesh, K. Atchannaidu and others, who are highlighting government failures. BJP, hoping to do a Dubbak, has roped in big

guns, besides Jana Sena chief K. Pawan Kalyan. However, in what comes a major blow to their calculations, the actor-politician is in quarantine and there are hardly any days left for campaigning.

Meanwhile, leaders from Congress, Communist and other parties are also camping in Tirupati while the entire State is keenly awaiting the verdict at Tirupati.

Political analysts said that TD is following the volunteers system by appointing in-charges for

every 50 families and highlighting about YSRC’s corruption, failures and illegalities so that they would vote for their candidate Panabaka Lakshmi. They pointed out that TD has changed its strategy and is accusing the YSRC government of failure in the probe of Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy’s murder and alleging a possible involvement of YSR family in the murder hoping to distract voters from the ruling party.

The senior political analysts stated that chances

of YSRC winning Tirupati are bright but the ruling party has set a heavy target by hoping for a four to five lakh majority while it won the 2019 elections with a 2.28 lakh majority.

Ramachandra Reddy said that YSRC government is treating Tirupati byelection as a referendum. He said that the welfare activities and development programmes have drawn the appreciation of people, which was reflected in the recent local body elections.



## SHORT TAKES

## HOSPS RAIDED BY CID FOR MISUSE OF FUNDS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ANANTAPUR, APRIL 11

AP CID sleuths on Sunday raided at various APVP hospitals in the district following allegations over the misuse of funds and poor quality of machinery purchased in between 2015-18. The Kurnool CID inspector Hrishikesh and team inspected the area hospital of Rayadurgam in the district.

The team collected information from the medical officer Dr Majuvani. The CID circle inspector said the raids were being conducted following directions by the government to find out allegations of purchase of poor quality of material for the hospitals.

## TWO DROWN IN CANAL, SI FISHED OUT BODIES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 11

A police sub-inspector showed courage and humanity to fish out two persons' dead bodies from a canal on Sunday.

According to the reports, a few farm labourers worked in mango orchards in Vallabhaneni Satyam mango farm at Adavikothuru village in Reddygudem mandal in the Krishna district. After plucking mangoes for some time around 2 pm, they ventured into the NSP canal to take a bath. In the process, P. Venu, 23, and K. Vasu, 14, drowned in the canal. The fellow workers tried to rescue them but in vain and they passed the information to the police.

After two hours, the dead bodies were floating on the water, and none of the villagers dared to fish the bodies out of the canal. Reddygudem town Sub Inspector D. Anand Kumar, who rushed to the spot alone, entered into the canal and fished out the dead bodies.

## COPS CONTINUE SEARCH ON FORMER MLA

DC CORRESPONDENT  
SRIKAKULAM, APRIL 11

The local police continued to search former Amadalavalasa MLA and senior TD leader Kuna Ravi for the second day on Sunday. On Saturday, a posse of police personnel raided his house at Shantinagar Colony. The former MLA was not present at the house at the time of the raid.

It may be recalled that TD and YSRC workers clashed at Penubarti under Ponduru mandal in Srikakulam during the recently held MPSC elections. Ravi Kumar, a former government whip, found fault with the police for arresting TD activists and giving clean chit to the ruling party members. Enraged with the alleged partisan decision, Ravi Kumar allegedly abused the DSP who was present at the spot. The police filed a case against Ravi for abusing the senior police officer who was performing his rightful duties.

His wife Prameela said 80 police personnel surrounded the house and later entered the house to search the premises. She strongly condemned the searches.

Meanwhile, Srikakulam MP Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu strongly condemned the ruling party for filing a false and baseless case against the former MLA. He asked why the YSRC activists were let off and booked TD workers when they were victims of the attack during the Parishad elections.

He said the TD leadership would not keep quiet if the ruling party continued to attack their party workers.

## SUPER COPS Accused confessed to have taken away the idol

## 10 held for stealing Nandi idol

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, APRIL 11

The Chittoor police apprehended altogether 10 persons suspectedly involved in stealing of a Nandi idol from the Malleswara Swamy temple in Jagamarla village — at Palamaner mandal in Chittoor district. “One of them died in a road accident three days ago,” police said on Sunday.

Police said the accused confessed to have taken away the idol from the ancient temple premises on March 26. The police booked a case under Section 379 IPC

● The police booked a case under Section 379 IPC on April 4 based on a complaint from temple administrator S. Narasimulu.

● Police seized autorickshaw and three bikes

on April 4 based on a complaint from temple administrator S. Narasimulu.

“A team of the Palamaner police intercepted an autorickshaw at Jagamarla forest area and detained five persons following a tip-off on April 10. They confessed

they were part of the gang that stole the Nandi idol. They believed the idol carried a stock of diamonds. Based on the interrogation, we arrested five more persons,” police said.

SP Senthil Kumar said things happened this way: gang-member Aswarthama of Nagar Kurnool, Telangana state, roped in Hari of Yerpedu mandal to steal the idol. On March 21, the two visited the temple and five days later, on March 26, stole the idol and hid it in an agriculture field at Poyya village in Thottambedu mandal.

“On April 2, the accused broke open the idol but found nothing inside. To hide evidence, they broke the idol into pieces and dumped these in the Swarnamukhi river on the Tirupati-Naidupeta stretch,” police said.

After interrogation of the arrested, the police seized the auto-rickshaw and three motor-bikes and recovered the broken pieces of the idol.

However, one of the accused, Gopi who broke open the idol, died in a road accident three days back, the SP said.



Youngsters pick the garbage from the sands of Jodugudulapalem beach during a beach clean-up drive in Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

— K. MURALIKRISHNA

## East Godavari district runs out of Covid vaccine stock

Many people who thronged vaccination centre went home disappointed

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, APRIL 11

In a shocking development that is hurting the people of East Godavari, stocks of Covid-19 vaccine were exhausted on Sunday, on the very first day of “Tika Ustav”.

Many people who thronged the vaccination centre went home disappointed as there was no stock of the vaccine. However, officials comforted them saying that some quantity of the vaccine may arrive on Monday.

District medical officer K.V.S. Gowreeswara Rao said that on Sunday 3,50,000 doses of vaccine were given in two wards each at Kakinada and Rajamahendravaram.

According to sources, in the first phase, as many as 40,510 medical and healthcare workers have been vaccinated out of an anticipated 50,453. Around 21,732 medical and health care workers have been given a second dose of the vaccine from among 40,510. In the second phase, 40,447 employees of police, revenue, panchayat raj and municipalities have been given vaccines out of 71,177 targeted beneficiaries. Of them, 18,734 were given a second dose.

Rao said that nearly 30,730 employees from revenue, panchayat, police, municipal and sanitation workers would

## Anantapur district tops in Centre's vaccination

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ANANTAPUR, APRIL 11

Anantapur district has topped the state in vaccinating people against Coronavirus by crossing its target and vaccinating 105.69 per cent on the very first day, collector Gandham Chandrudu said. He pointed out that though the vaccination drive is for four days, district administration vaccinated 23,078 people at primary health centres, apart from ward and grama sachivalayams all over the district.

The four-day vaccination drive is part of centre drive of launching a massive vaccination programme all over the country for four days.

Anantapur district targeted to inoculate 21,835

● Anantapur district targeted to inoculate 21,835 people against Covid-19. But it went on to vaccinate 23,078 people across the district till Saturday night

people against Covid-19. But it went on to vaccinate 23,078 people across the district till Saturday night, the collector said. With this, he pointed out that around three lakh people in the district, including health workers, frontline staff and people above 45 years, have received their vaccine in the district.

Meanwhile, following increasing cases of Coronavirus, district administration is setting up additional beds in various

hospitals of the district. On Sunday, 209 new Covid-19 cases had been reported from different parts of the district.

After seven students of a residential school in Madakasira tested positive for the virus, medical teams are conducting tests on all students and staff, apart from villagers living in the area.

Official sources said 995 active cases are being treated either at hospitals or in home isolation in the district.

District medical and health authorities are making arrangements for treating Coronavirus cases at the super specialty hospital, Anantapur GGH (Government General Hospital) and District Area Hospital at Hindupur.

East Godavari district collector D. Muralidhar Reddy said that 3.30 lakh people have been given vaccines in the district while 85,000 have already taken the second dose.

Raja Sabha member Pilli Subhashchandra Bose, Kakinada MP Vanga Gita were present.

## 21 INFECTED PATIENTS SENT BACK TO VIZAG

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 11

Health officials in the Agency area sent back 21 people who were found Covid-19 positive to Visakhapatnam for further treatment and isolation. The officials said the patients in various groups and families came to Paderu after testing positive in Visakhapatnam hospitals.

“This is for the second time in a week’s time the health officials sent back patients to Visakhapatnam city,” said additional district medical and health officer Dr P. Leela Prasad.

On April 4, a family of four, who tested positive in Visakhapatnam and went to their native home in Paderu, were sent back to Visakhapatnam. The authorities in Visakhapatnam tipped off about the new arrivals to the superintendent of the district hospital in Paderu Dr B. Krishna Rao.

The superintendent immediately contacted the family and requested them to return to Visakhapatnam. They came back in their car.

## Kadapa to become plastic-free: Mayor

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KADAPA, APRIL 11

First amongst the several tasks that Kadapa Mayor Kottamaddi Suresh Babu has set for himself is to make the city plastic-free.

Accordingly, there is a blanket ban on the use of polyethylene covers less than 50 microns in thickness from April 1. Although he had declared war on plastic consumption in his earlier stint, he was unable to achieve complete success as the Telugu Desam was in power at the time. Devoid of official cooperation, the steps initiated by him in that direction did not bear much fruit.

But now, hopeful of complete support from the authorities, he is keen on successfully banning polythene covers and bags. In fact, a complete ban on disposable plastic items is in force in 50 divisions of Kadapa.

Municipal health engineering officers at all levels, ward secretaries, volunteers and corporators, including the commissioner of the corporation, are all participating enthusiastically with corporators spreading awareness about the merits of the move at the divisional level.

Authorities have issued clear instructions to sellers of plastic covers.



Kottamaddi Suresh Babu

Commissioner Sudanakoli Lavanna clarified in a meeting with wholesalers that plastic glasses, covers, plates, straws, spoons and single-use plastic equipment should not be sold. Although it was decided to ban the use of plastic in Kadapa city from August 15, 2014, there were some hurdles when TD was at the helm of affairs. However, now a robust action plan has been drawn up to rectify all existing loopholes.

Drainage canals in the city are clogged with plastic covers, glasses and other debris, making it difficult to drain properly. Overflowing drains and sewage are contributing to the increase in mosquito menace. Dust bins are being set up everywhere to prevent garbage from being dumped on roads and in drains. Municipal sanitation staff are conducting a door-to-door campaign urging people to keep wet and dry garbage separately.

## 580 get jab in Vizag as vaccine out of stock

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 11

The Visakhapatnam district medical authorities could give vaccination to only 580 persons on Sunday and there could be no inoculation till new stocks arrive.

“We have exhausted all the available stock and we will not be able to give a vaccine from Monday onwards till we get the new stocks,” said District Medical and Health Officer Dr P.

Suryanarayana. The district administered 3.07 lakh since the process began on January 17 through its wide network of 27 urban health centres, major government hospitals and private clinics and hospitals. Similarly, Srikulam administered vaccines to 2,060 persons and may not continue till they get a new stock of 30,000 doses. Vizianagaram closed the day with 900 health and frontline workers.

## Two lakh to get Covid-19 vaccine

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 11

Two lakh people in the Krishna district to get Covid-19 vaccine under the four-day Tika Utsav programme. Krishna district collector Amd Intiaz launched the Tika Utsav programme at VM Ranga School in the 46th division in Vijayawada on Sunday with Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Mayor Rayana Bhagyalakshmi.

Mr Intiaz said that positive cases are on the rise

across the nation and the vaccine is made available, and everyone should take vaccine shots to get protected from the vaccine.

He mentioned that every day about 50,000 people would be vaccinated during the Tika Utsav until April 14.

Collector Intiaz said that by imposing restriction and lockdown, we could contain the spread of the virus to some extent, however, the people should feel the responsibility to follow Covid-19 guidelines.



Thick smoke oozes out of Duvvada SEZ following a fire mishap near Gajuwaka in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. — DC

## Fire rages at scrap yard at VSEZ

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 11

A fire broke out at Pooja Scrap Industries in VSEZ in Visakhapatnam around noon on Sunday, but there were neither injuries to anybody or loss of life.

Commissioner of VSEZ K. Rama Mohan Reddy, who is on tour, directed his officials to control the situation. Joint commissioner Kiran Babu and others rushed to the spot and later

contacted the steel plant authorities, APSEZ, Ramky Pharma and another close-by industry to send the fire tenders.

As per the preliminary information, the cause of the fire in the unit was due to an electric short circuit due to a transformer trip, and the sparks fell on the waste paper lying in the unit which has ignited the fire and spread to the other area. The yard is stacked with old transformers.

**LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?**

**We have it for you**

**DECCAN CHRONICLE**

**TO-LET**

1300 Sft. OFFICE SPACE with Separate Steps, Location: First Floor, above LAKSHMI HYUNDAI Showroom, Ramatalkies Jn., Vizag. Cont: 9848193004

**JAGADAMBA** 4K DOLBY QUARTET SPEAKERS

DAILY 4 SHOWS

వకిల్ నాల్

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**FOR SALE PROPERTY**

**COMMERCIAL**

HOSPITAL BUILDING 1008s.yards, G+2 floors, 18 rooms, 100sft to 300sft, main centre, West Godavari Jan-gareddygudem. 8008162668 (HYMM/2122/C00327)

**C & F AGENCIES**

A BIG Business Opportunity. One Stop Solution All Under one roof construction related products. appointing Distributors Ap & Telangana for the following: bath cp fittings, home appliances, home automation, wires&cables, decorative paints. Don't Miss the Big Opportunity. Also appointing women business associates for exclusive home automation. Ph:7993775414/ 8688805414. www.automatem.in www.thrivikramimex.com (HYCL/2122/C00191)

**EDUCATIONAL CAREER/ENTRANCE COURSES**

✓ONE-SITTING / Fasttrack-Graduations (All), Post-Graduations (All), PG Diplomas, Polytechnic Diplomas, Secondary (10th) & Senior Secondary (12th), Provided Online results & Online verifications, Eligible for Private & Abroad. Ph:9912540011, 7337291133, www.hydercom.com (A/2021/IC00125)

**NOTICE**

Readers are advised to make appropriate enquiries while responding to advertisements in these columns. Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd. does not vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers. The Printer, Publisher, Editor and Owner of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd. shall not be held responsible / liable for any consequences, in case such claims are found to be false.

**For Advertisements**

Contact: 0891-2728282



SHORT TAKES

BJP WITHDRAWS SENGAR’S WIFE’S CANDIDATURE

**Lucknow, April 11:** The BJP on Sunday withdrew the candidature of former MLA and Unnao rape convict Kuldeep Singh Sengar’s wife from the Uttar Pradesh panchayat polls. The BJP had made Sangeeta Sengar a candidate for the district panchayat member from Ward No. 22 of Fatehpur Chaurasi, according to a list released by it earlier.

“The candidature of Sangeeta Sengar, the wife of former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar, who is a convict in the 2018 Unnao rape case, has been cancelled,” state BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh said.

Singh said the Unnao party president has now been asked to submit three fresh names for finalising a candidate.

He, however, exuded confidence that the BJP will emerge victorious in the four-phase panchayat elections, beginning April 15. Unnao will go to the polls on April 26.

Kuldeep Sengar was awarded life sentence by a Delhi court on December 20, 2019 for raping a 17-year-old girl in Unnao.

After his conviction, Sengar’s membership as an MLA was cancelled. Sangeeta had earlier held the post of the district panchayat chairperson. Earlier, BJP spokesperson Harishchandra Shrivastava had said names of all candidates were recommended by the district unit and were forwarded to the party headquarters through the regional unit.

NIA ARRESTS RIYAZ KAZI, CLOSE AIDE OF WAZE

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, APRIL 11

The National Investigation Agency on Sunday arrested Assistant Police Inspector Riyaz Kazi, a close aide of arrested API Sachin Waze, in connection with Mukesh Ambani bomb scare case and Mansukh Hiren murder case. Police has alleged Kazi is co-conspirator in Ambani case. A holiday court remanded Kazi to NIA custody till April 16.

According to sources, the probe agency suspects that Kazi destroyed important evidence like fake number plates and digital video recorder (DVR) of the society where Sachin Waze resides.

Kazi was seen in several garages where he got fake number plates made and later confiscated the DVRs from all the garages and destroyed them.

Meanwhile, the CBI on Sunday questioned two personal staffers of former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh in connection with the allegations of corruption levelled against him by former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh.

Those questioned by the CBI are Deshmukh’s personal assistant Kundan Shinde and personal secretary Sanjeev Palande.

PAWAR ADMITTED FOR GALL BLADDER SURGERY

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, APRIL 11

The NCP president Sharad Pawar on Sunday has been admitted to Breach Candy Hospital in Mumbai for a surgery of his gallbladder. He would be undergoing surgery on Monday morning for his gallbladder ailment.

In a tweet, NCP chief spokesperson and Maharashtra cabinet minister Nawab Malik said, “Pawar has been admitted in Breach Candy Hospital and as informed earlier, a surgery will be performed tomorrow to address his Gall Bladder ailment.”

Last month, the veteran politician had undergone an emergency endoscopy for the removal of a stone from his bile duct in the same hospital after he complained about abdominal pain. After conducting all the diagnosis, the main reason was revealed behind his abdominal pain was stone, which was developed in Gallbladder. The stone was removed through endoscopy. Post this, he was discharged from the hospital earlier in this month.

The doctors had then informed that the NCP chief would undergo a surgery after 15 days keeping in mind his other health parameters.

The doctors took the decision on surgery so that abdominal pain does not occur frequently. It was also decided then he would be re-admitted for the same.

BANGLADESH, A ROLE MODEL IN FIGHTING POVERTY: ENVOY

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 11

Bangladesh High Commissioner Muhammad Imran has said that his country has become a role model in the world in fighting poverty.

He was speaking at a cultural event recently organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Bangladesh High Commission in the Capital to celebrate “Mujib Barsho” and 50 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Bangladesh.

“Mujib Barsho” refers to the centenary birth anniversary celebrations of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman popularly known as Bangabandhu who successfully led the Bangladesh freedom struggle in 1971.

The Bangladesh High Commissioner also spoke about the close ties and connectivity projects between his country and India. He also spoke about the large number of tourists from his country visiting India every year as ties between the two neighbours gets even stronger, in what is seen as a “Shonali Adhyaya (golden chapter)” in bilateral ties. This comes even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Bangladesh just last month. The cultural event comprised a dance performance by the troupe from the renowned Srishti Cultural Centre in Bangladesh.

TIBETANS CAST VOTES TO ELECT NEXT SIKYONG

**Dharamshala, April 11:** Tibetans living in 26 countries including India on Sunday voted for the final phase of the general election for the Dharamshala-based parliament-in-exile to elect the next Sikyong (president), an official said.

Forty-five members of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), also called as Tibetan-parliament-in-exile, will also be elected by the voters, Wangdu Tsering, the chief election commissioner of the Tibetan election commission said.

There are around 1.3 lakh Tibetans living in exile in India and across the globe. The Tibetan government-in-exile will elect its head on May 14.

In the last phase of the polls to the post of the president of the CTA only two candidates — Pempa Tsering and Aukatsang Kelsang Dorjee — are in the fray, Wangdu Tsering said.

However, Pempa Tsering, the former chairman of Tibetan parliament, is the front runner.

During the first phase of elections, there were eight candidates contesting for the post of Sikyong. Pempa Tsering secured the maximum votes (24,488) followed by Dorjee (14,544). Sikyong is the head of the Kashag or Cabinet, part of the executive branch of the CTA, and the post was created by the Tibetan parliament in 2011 to provide democratic governance to exiled Tibetan community. — PTI



As India continues to record high Covid-19 cases, Union home minister Amit Shah holds a roadshow where a huge crowd gathered violating Coronavirus norms imposed by the Centre to control the spread of the virus, ahead of the 5th phase of West Bengal Assembly polls in Santipur of Nadia district on Sunday.

WB BJP chief warns of more Cooch Behar-style killings

Says those who think CAPF carry guns only for show have felt the heat

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, APRIL 11

A day after four people were shot dead by the Central paramilitary forces during a violent mob attack on a polling booth at Shitalkuchi in Cooch Behar during the fourth phase of the Assembly election in West Bengal, state BJP chief Dilip Ghosh called them *dushtu chhele* (bad boys).

Blatantly defying appeals by Union home minister Amit Shah and West Bengal governor Jagdeep Dhankhar to everyone to maintain peace in the remaining phases, the Midnapore BJP MP also threatened the public of a “repetition” of Shitalkuchi-style killings in the event of an “excess”.

On Sunday he told a party rally at Baranagar in north Kolkata: “Where did so many *dushtu chhele* come from? Those who were hit by the bullets at Shitalkuchi on Saturday

Gurung: Cooch Behar killings turning point in Bengal polls

**Darjeeling, April 11:** Asserting that Saturday’s firing by the CISF in Cooch Behar, which claimed four lives, will be a “turning point” in Bengal polls, Bimal Gurung, the chief of one of the two GJM factions, claimed that the BJP is set to face the wrath of voters in the next four phases of elections, especially in the northern part of the state.

Gurung reaffirmed that “statehood is a dream nurtured by every Gorkha” living in the hills, while also noting that the TMC’s

pitch for a “permanent political solution” and the overall development of Darjeeling and its adjoining areas sounds “very encouraging”.

Lashing out at the BJP for “deceiving the Gorkha jaati for 12 years with fake promises”, Gurung, who deserted the NDA and joined hands with the TMC in October last year, said he will teach the saffron camp a “lesson for life”, with Mamata Banerjee by his side.

The BJP had won the Darjeeling seat thrice since 2009 — with Jaswant

Singh, S.S. Ahluwalia and incumbent Raju Bista representing the seat respectively over the past 12 years.

Condemning the Cooch Behar incident, Gurung said, “Killing of innocent people — be it by the state police or the central forces — is not acceptable. What happened on the polling day is nothing short of genocide; the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would feel the heat in North Bengal. The party would be wiped out from the region.”

— PTI

forces will be posted at the booths. No one will be able to show red eyes. Otherwise, we will be there. If anyone crosses the limit, you have seen what happened in Shitalkuchi. Shitalkuchi will be repeated in places. So be careful.”

His warning came on the day Shah said at Shantipur in Nadia: “I appeal to the people to maintain peace and cast their votes for their favourite candidates in the remaining phases of the polls. I also urge leaders of all political parties for a peaceful conduct of the polls according to the EC guidelines.”

Dhankhar tweeted: “All must unitedly condemn and abjure violence that has no place in democracy. Pained and anguished at violence in Cooch Behar leading to the loss of lives. People in authority must show statesmanship & ensure respect for constitutional institutions & CAPF engaged in public duty.”

4 terrorists killed in encounters

Militants gun down civilian in Budgam

**Srinagar, April 11:** Militants on Sunday shot dead a civilian in the Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

The ultras fired on Nasir Khan near his residence in Buchipora in the Magam area of the central Kashmir district this

afternoon, a police official said.

He said Khan was rushed to a hospital, where he succumbed to the injuries.

The area has been cordoned off and a manhunt has been launched to nab the attackers, the official said.

— PTI

records, Bhat was active since 2017 and Ganie had joined the militant ranks in the year 2018.

Terrorists responsible for the killing of Army jawan have been neutralised within two days in Bijbehara encounter, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said. Arms and ammunition, including two AK series rifles, were recovered from the site. The IGP said one of the slain militants in the Shopian encounter was newly recruited into the militant ranks and security forces made sincere efforts to persuade him to surrender, but the other militants did not allow him.

“Parents also made appeals, but other terrorists didn’t let him surrender,” Kumar said.

He identified the slain militants as Aasif Ahmad Ganai and Faisal Gulzar Ganai — both residents of Chitragam Kalan.

— PTI



The helicopter in which UAE-based businessperson M.A. Yusuff Ali and his wife were travelling during an emergency landing on a marshy land at Panangad in Ernakulam of Kochi on Sunday.

— PTI

NRI biz man safe after copter crash

**Kochi, April 11:** A helicopter carrying prominent NRI businessman M.A. Yusuff Ali, his wife and four others crashed landed at a marshy land near here on Sunday morning, police said.

All passengers including Yusuff Ali, who is

Chairman of international retail group Lulu Group, his wife and two other passengers along with two pilots on board the chopper owned by the company have been

admitted to a private hospital here. “All of them are safe. They are currently under observation,” a top official of the Lakeshore hospital where they are treated said.

The incident occurred at Panangad area at around 9 am on Sunday, according to a statement issued by Lulu Group International.

“Yusuff Ali, currently in Kerala, was on a short trip from his home in Kochi to visit a relative at nearby hospital. Due to

AFTER AIUDF, BPF SHIFTS ITS CANDIDATES TO SINGAPORE

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, APRIL 11

After the All-India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) shifted prospective winning candidates to Jaipur in Rajasthan, fearing poaching by the ruling BJP, the Bodoland People’s Front (BPF), a constituent party of the Congress-led grand alliance, has also shifted 10 of its 11 candidates in the recently held Assembly polls in Assam to a foreign location. They are understood to be in Singapore.

It is significant that two days ago the 10-party Opposition grand alliance had flown out 20 candidates — 18 from the AIUDF and two from the Congress — to Rajasthan.

The only BPF candidate left in Assam is former minister Pramila Rani Brahma, who herself confirmed this development. “Yes, they have left on Saturday but I have no idea which country exactly they are visiting. I could not contact them,” Brahma told reporters.

Pointing out how one BPF candidate was lured to retire from the contest a few days before polling, a BPF party source said that their party chief decided to send them to Singapore on a pleasure trip. Sources said 16 members of the Council Legislative Assembly (MCLA) of the Bodoland Territorial Council also accompanied them.

Brahma, however, clarified that the MCLAs had plans to go on a foreign holiday after the month-long hectic election campaign. She also feared that the possibility of horse-trading could not be ruled out.

Asserting that the ruling BJP-led alliance was not going to get a majority in the Assembly polls, she said that given the past record of some BJP leaders, the Opposition can’t be complacent and be a silent spectator.

“We have to be cautious. We are trying to protect our candidates from the BJP’s anti-democratic activities,” Congress MLA and Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia told reporters.

RISKY | MOVE

Mega dam spanning Brahmaputra River to dwarf Three Gorges

Activists fear China’s super dam plan

**Beijing, April 11:** China is planning a mega dam in Tibet able to produce triple the electricity generated by the Three Gorges — the world’s largest power station — stoking fears among environmentalists and in neighbouring India. The structure will span the Brahmaputra River before the waterway leaves the Himalayas and flows into India, straddling the world’s longest and deepest canyon at an altitude of more than 1,500 metres (4,900 feet). The project in Tibet’s

Medog County is expected to dwarf the record-breaking Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River in central China, and is billed as able to produce 300 billion kilowatts of electricity each year.

It is mentioned in China’s strategic 14th Five-Year Plan, unveiled in March at an annual rubber-stamp congress of the country’s top lawmakers.

But the plan was short on details, a timeframe or budget. The river, known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibetan, is also home to

two other projects far upstream, while six others are in the pipeline or under construction.

The “super-dam” however is in a league of its own.

Last October, the Tibet local government signed a “strategic cooperation agreement” with PowerChina, a public construction company specialising in hydroelectric projects.

A month later the head of PowerChina, Yan Zhiyong, partially unveiled the project to the Communist Youth League, the youth wing of China’s ruling party.

Enthusiastic about “the world’s richest region in terms of hydroelectric resources”, Yan explained that the dam would draw its power from the huge drop of the river at this particular section.

Beijing may justify the massive project as an environmentally-friendly alternative to fossil fuels, but it risks provoking strong opposition from environmentalists in the same way as the Three Gorges Dam, built between 1994 and 2012. The Three Gorges created a reservoir

and displaced 1.4 million inhabitants upstream.

“Building a dam the size of the super-dam is likely a really bad idea for many reasons,” said Brian Eyler, energy, water and sustainability programme director at the Stimson Center, a US think tank.

Besides being known for seismic activity, the area also contains a unique biodiversity. The dam would block the migration of fish as well as sediment flow that enriches the soil during seasonal floods downstream, said Eyler. — AFP





IN BRIEF

Flood traps 21 Chinese miners

Beijing, April 11: Rescuers on Sunday were trying to reach 21 coal miners who were trapped by an underground flood in China's northwest, a state news agency reported.

The mine in Hutubi County in the Xinjiang region flooded at about 6:10 pm on Saturday, the *Xinhua News Agency* said. It said eight people were rescued. China's coal mines are among the world's deadliest, regularly suffering explosions and gas leaks despite repeated safety crackdowns.

Nasa delays Mars copter flight

Washington, April 11: Nasa has delayed by at least several days the first flight of its mini-helicopter on Mars after a possible tech issue emerged while testing its rotors, the US space agency said Saturday.

Ingenuity's trip, which is to be the first-ever powered, controlled flight on another planet, was set for Sunday but is now on hold until at least April 14. A high-speed test of the four-pound (1.8 kilogram) helicopter's rotors on Friday ended earlier than expected due to an alert of a potential issue.

No power, water in Saint Vincent

St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, April 11: Massive power outages struck the Caribbean island of Saint Vincent before dawn on Sunday, as officials recorded more explosive activity at a long-dormant volcano that launched into a series of eruptions.

After remaining quiet for nearly 42 years, La Soufriere rumbled back into life Friday, blanketing the island in ash and permeating the air with the stench of sulphur.

The eruptions prompted thousands to flee for safety, with around 16,000 people living in areas under evacuation orders. The country's National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) noted "another explosive event" early Sunday morning.

Blackout hits Natanz atomic site, Iran calls it 'N-terrorism'

Raises regional tensions as world powers, Tehran negotiate tattered N-deal

Dubai, April 11: Iran on Sunday described a blackout at its underground Natanz atomic facility an act of "nuclear terrorism," raising regional tensions as world powers and Tehran continue to negotiate over its tattered nuclear deal. Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran, stopped short of directly blaming anyone for the incident. Details remained few about what happened early Sunday morning at the facility, which initially was described as a blackout caused by the electrical grid feeding the site.



The Natanz atomic facility in Iran.

of this terrorist movement, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to seriously improve nuclear technology on the one hand and to lift oppressive sanctions on the other hand," Salehi said, according to state TV.

He added: "While condemning this desperate move, the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the need for a confrontation by the international bodies and the (International Atomic Energy Agency) against this nuclear terrorism." The IAEA, the United Nations' body that monitors Tehran's atomic

Israel: Will see Iran deal saves interests

Tel Aviv, April 11: Israel will work with Washington to ensure any "new agreement" on Iran's nuclear programme will safeguard regional security, Defence Minister Benny Gantz told his US counterpart Lloyd Austin on Sunday. The comments came as Austin made the first high-level US trip to Israel since talks resumed on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear accord, which the Jewish state fiercely opposed.

Gantz said "we will work closely with our American allies to ensure that any new agreement with Iran will secure the vital interests of the world and the United States, prevent a dangerous arms race in our region and protect the State of Israel".

Austin, the highest-level envoy from President Joe Biden's administration yet to visit ally Israel, said Washington would work

Underground newsletters aid Myanmar youth

Yangon, April 11: Myanmar youth are fighting the junta's internet shutdown and information suppression with an explosive underground printed newsletter they are secretly distributing across communities.

For 56 days straight there have been internet outages in coup-hit Myanmar, according to monitoring group NetBlocks.

The country has been in turmoil since democratically-elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi was ousted in a February 1 coup, triggering a mass uprising that has resulted in a brutal security crackdown and more than 700 civilian deaths.

Thirty-year-old Lynn Thant, not his real name, started the underground newsletter and gave it the edgy name Molotov to appeal to young people.

"This is our response to those who slow down the flow of information — and that's a threat to us," he said.

Thousands of readers across the country are downloading the PDF version of the publication and printing out and distributing physical copies

China vax found less effective

Beijing, April 11: In a rare admission of the weakness of Chinese Coronavirus vaccines, the country's top disease control official says their effectiveness is low and the government is considering mixing them to get a boost. Chinese vaccines "don't have very high protection rates," said the director of the China Centers for Disease Control, Gao Fu, at a conference Saturday in the southwestern city of Chengdu. Beijing has distributed hundreds of millions of doses abroad while try-

ing to promote doubt about the effectiveness of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine made using the previously experimental messenger RNA, or mRNA, process. "It's now under formal consideration whether we should use different vaccines from different technical lines for the immunisation process," Gao said.

Officials at a news conference Sunday didn't respond directly to questions about Gao's comment or possible changes in official plans.

But another CDC official said developers are working on mRNA-based vaccines.

Gao did not respond to a phone call requesting further comment. "The mRNA vaccines developed in our country have also entered the clinical trial stage," said the official, Wang Huaqing.

He gave no timeline for possible use. Experts say mixing vaccines, or sequential immunization, might boost effectiveness.

Chinese ships in SCS: U.S., Philippines show concern

Aboard a US Military Aircraft, April 11: Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on Saturday discussed with his Philippine counterpart China's recent positioning of "militia vessels" near the Philippines in the South China Sea.

Austin spoke by phone with Philippine Secretary

of National Defence Delfin Lorenzana while Austin was flying from Washington to Israel to begin an international trip. Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said Austin and Lorenzana discussed the situation in the South China Sea and the recent massing of Chinese vessels at Whit-

sun Reef, which has drawn criticism from Manila. China has said its vessels are there for fishing. Austin proposed to Lorenzana measures to deepen defence cooperation, including by "enhancing situational awareness of threats in the South China Sea," Kirby said.

LIVE RICH

FINANCIAL Chronicle

VISAKHAPATNAM | MONDAY | 12 APRIL 2021

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	49591.32	-0.31
Nifty 50	14834.90	-0.26
S&P 500*	4,128.80	0.77
Dollar (₹)	74.75	0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	102.40	0.11
Euro (₹)	88.89	-0.41
Gold (10gm) (₹)	46,257.97	0.20
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	63.18	-0.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.017	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.673	0.041

China approves third Sinopharm vaccine for trial

China has approved the third Covid-19 vaccine from Sinopharm Group Company to start clinical trials, the company said. The green light to begin testing comes after two inactivated vaccines from Sinopharm were approved and widely used both at home and in developing countries. The latest one is a recombinant vaccine that includes parts of the coronavirus's spike protein to stimulate immune response.



■ Packaging units face input shortage

Global producers ignore BIS mark

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, APRIL 11

The government's insistence on BIS certification on certain imported tin and steel products has led to a shortage in metal packaging materials.

The Steel and Steel Products Quality Control Order, issued on July 17, 2020 by the Ministry of Steel, has made BIS certification mandatory for imports of tinsplate and tin-free steel. Further, restrictions have been imposed on the import of various steel products like easy open ends and peel off ends used by the metal packaging industry, which has 10 per cent share of the \$50 billion packaging industry.

The restrictions have affected a large number of micro, small and medium enterprises involved in making products using tinsplate steel-sheets of steel

NOT BIG ENOUGH MARKET

- ▶ Steel ministry has made BIS certification mandatory for imports of tinsplate and tin-free steel
- ▶ Restrictions have also been imposed on various steel products like easy open ends
- ▶ But foreign suppliers have stopped shipping tin plates to India, leading to shortage

coated with a thin layer of tin that have specialised use in consumer products like cans, hairclips, pens.

"It is virtually impossible to force the international suppliers to go for BIS certifications as the procedure of BIS registration is highly cumbersome. Further, for the international suppliers of tin plates, India is a small market and hence they are not quite keen to get into lengthy bureaucratic and cost-intensive BIS certification procedures," says the Metal Container Manufacturers' Association (MCMA).

Since the order came into effect, foreign suppliers have stopped shipping tin plates to India and this has led to a shortage in the domestic market.

"There is a huge demand-supply gap for tinsplate and tin-free steel in India to the extent of 2.5 lakh tonnes per annum which is met through imports. Moreover, tin-free steel is produced only by one mill, Tin Plate Company, and that too once a quarter," said Sanjay Bhatia, president, MCMA.

The shortage has also led to rise in prices.

SBI makes ₹300 cr from zero balance a/cs

New Delhi, April 11: Several banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), have been imposing excessive charges on certain services provided on the zero-balance or Basic Savings Bank Deposit Accounts (BSBDA), a study by the IIT-Bombay has revealed.

The study observed that the SBI's decision to levy a charge of Rs 17.70 for every debit transaction beyond

four by the BSBDA account holders cannot be considered as "reasonable."

It highlighted that the imposition of service charges resulted in undue collections to the tune of over Rs 300 crore from among nearly 12 crore Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account (BSBDA) holders of SBI during the period 2015-20.

The second-largest public sector lender Punjab

National Bank, which has 3.9 crore BSBDA accounts, collected Rs 9.9 crore during the same period.

"There had been systematic breach in the RBI regulations on BSBDA by few banks, most notably by the SBI that hosts the maximum number of BSBDA, when it charged @ Rs 17.70 for every debit means (even via digital means) beyond four a month."

Term life policies could become costlier

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 11

Life insurers, including Life Insurance Corporation, could increase the premium on term life insurance policies by up to 10 per cent this fiscal. They are confident that a higher premium would not affect the demand for this product for various reasons.

"We expect up to 10 per cent hike in term life insurance in the near future. Even in the increased premium regime, women, who comprise half of the country's population, will continue to get it at cheaper rates, thanks to their better longevity rate than their male counterparts. Besides, the home loan borrowers, who often prefer the cost-effective term life in place of home insurance, will also continue to buy the product," said an official of a public sector insurer.

A significant rise in demand for term insurance has been observed of late, regardless of the cost.

"The increase in online term market is largely attributed to increasing awareness about insurance due to increased economic uncertainty during the coronavirus-led recession as well as mortality risk," said Gopal Kumar, an economist and actuary.

IBC: Recovery rate plunges after settlement of big cases

FALAKNAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, APRIL 11

Absence of high value companies led to a poor recovery rate for lenders from cases under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) during the December quarter of this fiscal. The recovery rate for Q3FY21 dipped to a low of 12.6 per cent, a steep fall from a high of 64.1 per cent reported in the March 2020 quarter.

In the past, the recovery rate in India used to be about 26 per cent. Post-IBC implementation, the overall recovery rate till date has improved to 39.8 per cent.

Of the total claims

which were settled via liquidation in Q3FY21, the realisable value was only Rs 20.3 crore, or around 21 per cent, of the total admitted claim amount of Rs 97.3 crore.

According to Sanjay Agarwal, senior director of Care Ratings, "The earlier quarters of the previous year saw resolution at a very high value for large steel accounts such as Essar Steel, Bhushan Steel, JPL Infratech. Similarly, there was a high value cement account (Binani Cement) getting resolved last year. The recovery rate was high for these steel and cement companies. This year, some of the companies that have been admitted

are weaker of the cases with legacy bad debt and so the recovery rate for lenders have fallen steeply."

Suspension of fresh bankruptcy proceedings due to the pandemic defaults also led to a slowdown in the number of cases getting admitted for Corporate Insolvency Resolution Processes (CIRPs).

For instance, the number of cases admitted slowed down in nine-month FY21 (283 cases) compared with 1,517 cases admitted in 9MFY20. The December-end quarter witnessed a drop of around 83 per cent compared with the previous year.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

CAIRN TO FOREGO \$500 MN IF INDIA PAYS PRINCIPAL



New Delhi, April 11: UK's Cairn Energy Plc has offered to forego \$500 million and invest that amount in any energy project identified by the government if New

Delhi agrees to honour an international arbitration award and returns the value of loss it incurred from being taxed retrospectively, sources said. The Scottish firm invested in the oil and gas sector in 1994 and made a huge oil discovery in Rajasthan. In 2006-07, it listed its Indian assets on the BSE. Five years later the government passed a retroactive tax law and billed Cairn Rs 10,247 crore plus interest and penalty for the reorganisation tied to the flotation. The state then expropriated and liquidated Cairn's remaining shares.

INFOSYS PLANS SHARE BUYBACK

New Delhi, April 11: Infosys said its board will consider a buyback proposal at its meeting on April 14. "The board of the company will consider a proposal for buyback of fully paid-up equity shares of the company at its meeting to be held on April 14, 2021." The company's board is slated to meet on April 13 and 14, to approve and take on record the audited consolidated financial results for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2021. In August 2019, Infosys had bought back 11.05 crore of its shares.

FRANKLIN 2ND TRANCHE SOON

New Delhi, April 11: SBI Funds Management (SBI MF) will distribute the next tranche of Rs 2,962 crore to unitholders of Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund's six shuttered schemes this week. SBI MF has already distributed Rs 9,122 crore to investors as directed by the Supreme Court earlier. "SBI MF would be distributing the next tranche of Rs 2,962 crore to unitholders," a Franklin Templeton spokesperson said.



**Regd No./VM-RNP/72**  
Printed and Published from Visakhapatnam  
by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of  
Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited at  
Deccan Chronicle Press,  
Survey No. 1/3A, Beach Road,  
Near Kailasagiri Rope Way,  
Sector-9, M.V. P. Colony,  
Visakhapatnam-530017.  
Phones: 2552333/2552334/2553806.  
Fax: 2755285. Grams: CHRONICLE.  
Editor: **Kaushik Mitter.**  
**RNI Registration No.44813/85.**

"However, Rishabh Pant is very smart. He is fearless and enjoys the game. He's very entertaining on the field and is very cool and calm as a captain. He's doing a fantastic job for the team." —PTI