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Womenia

Skills for a happy relationship

Being in a relationship has its perks: you always have a designated cuddle buddy and someone to talk to about the Game of Thrones. But knowing that a relationship is only as stable and healthy as the people in it, you've made it your goal to #lovebetter this time around.

The thing is, even if you consider yourself a healthy partner there's always room for improvement! Since 100% of us aren't perfect and will either be in an unhealthy relationship or do unhealthy things, we wanted to share a few life hacks that will help you #lovebetter. Here are the top 5 skills to build a happy relationship

Empathy

Sometimes, arguments reach a stalemate because neither partner is willing to listen to what the other is saying. But listening to one another and trying to understand how each other is feeling doesn't mean changing your own ideas or even necessarily admitting you're wrong, it just means showing you partner you care about how they're feeling and that you're willing to make the effort to meet in the middle if necessary. Even if you've known your partner a long time, try to step into their shoes and recognize that they may see some things differently to you.

Communication

It's an obvious one, but bears repeating: communication is one of the most important skills in any relationship. Being able to clearly and consistently state how you're feeling will mean that those little niggles that might otherwise develop into something worse can be resolved early on. If you want to know how to



communicate better, you might like to read our top three tips on communicating with your partner. It also worth remembering that communicating doesn't just mean being able to make your own point well, but learning to listen to what your partner's saying too. Try to employ 'active listening' when you're talking together. Don't just wait for your turn to speak, but really listen to what they're saying. Repeat what they're saying back to them. And ask them to clarify things – don't always assume you know what

they mean immediately.

Conflict

People often think of arguing as inherently bad, but if there's no conflict whatsoever in your relationship, there's a good chance someone's holding something back. Differences between you and your partner are pretty much inevitable – it's how you deal with those differences that counts. Sometimes, it's a case of trying to argue better. Try to use a 'soft' start that focusses on your feelings instead of attacking your

partner – so, 'I'm so upset you forgot our anniversary', rather than 'how could you be so insensitive, you didn't even get a card!'. Try to avoid letting things spin out of control: don't say things you'll regret later or just trade insults. And be prepared to be forgiving: it's only when both partners are willing to let go of their desire to 'win' the argument that it can actually end.

Commitment

In a long-term relationship, commitment means being willing

to work on difficulties together, planning for the future together and clarifying and protecting the boundaries you've agreed on. This takes persistence and hard work – but the rewards are more than worth it. And in the short term, it can also mean committing from moment to moment. Even if you're on a first date with someone, it's important you're able to give things your full attention and show interest instead of wondering what else you could be doing or letting your mind get clouded over with doubts.

Love

The Ancient Greeks had 3 words for love.

Eros: This is erotic love. It means being attracted to each other. It's the spark that makes your relationship feel exciting and special.

Philia: This means friendship. It's the feeling of understanding one another, enjoying each other's company and having shared interests.

Agape: This means being prepared to go out of your way for the other person or put them first. It might be something small like helping them with a task even though you're really tired or something big like caring for them after surgery. A relationship with all three of the above will thrive. But if any one of them is lacking, you might find things more challenging. That doesn't mean you can't get there, but it might be worth thinking about ways you could focus more on what's missing. If you think you might need help with this – or any of the other relationship skills listed on this page – you might like to try Relationship Counselling.

BRIT Awards 2021: Taylor Swift to become the first female winner of Global Icon Award

Pop star Taylor Swift is to become the first female winner of the Global Icon award at the BRIT Awards. She will also be the first non-British recipient of the prize, which the Brits characterize as their highest honour. Only three other artists have been named Brits Icons – Sir Elton John, David Bowie and Robbie Williams. Hosted for a fourth time by Jack Whitehall, the show

will open with a performance from Coldplay. Other performers on the night include Dua Lipa, The Weeknd, Olivia Rodrigo and Headie One. Swift is not expected to perform at the ceremony, which will take place with an audience as part of the government's pilot scheme for live events.

Swift could walk away with two prizes on the night. She is also nominated for international female solo artist, an award she previously won in 2015. Her competition in that category comes from Ariana Grande, Billie Eilish, Cardi B and Miley Cyrus.

Announcing her Global Icon prize, the Brits said: "Taylor's career is unparalleled and her music and influence has resonated with millions of people all over the world. She's used her platform to highlight many issues globally and recently has been applauded for her work promoting acceptance of the LGBTQ community." The star recently scored her seventh UK number one, with a re-recorded version of her breakthrough album Fearless. It was her third chart-topping album in the space of just 259 days, after the surprise release of two lockdown albums, Folklore and Evermore. According to the Official Charts Company, she is the highest-selling artist of the year so far in the UK. Catch the most exciting BRIT Awards 2021 Sunday, 16th May, at 9PM only on Vh1 India.



INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY



Unfortunately, many people seem to think that the most important people in the healthcare system are the doctors, but this is simply not true. Ever the underdog, nurses play a key role in all of our medical institutions, being responsible for the welfare, safety and recovery of patients.

Nurses have an enormous amount of knowledge and many diverse skills they spend years perfecting and developing, all the time working in decidedly tough environments where extreme stress is just a part of the job. Nurses help bring new life into the world, care tirelessly for the sick and injured, and sometimes watch the patients they did everything to save pass away despite their best efforts.

On many occasions, it was a vigilant nurse who noticed a mistake in a doctor's prescription in time to save someone's life. Acknowledge the hard work, long hours, and emotional duress that are part of the life of every nurse on International Nurses Day.

International Nurses Day has been created so that we can pay honor and tribute to all of the nurses around the world and the incredible work they do. It is crazy to think about a world without nurses. Who would be there to care for us when we're not feeling well? Nurses bring so much to our lives, and the lives of the people that we love, and so it is only right that we have a day that honors them and recognizes all of their efforts!

Nurses have a very varied role and they are responsible for a number of different things in the workplace. This includes writing care plans for patients, assisting with evaluations and tests, setting up blood transfusions and drips, checking and administering drugs and injections, observing and recording the condition of

patients. They will also maintain patient records, mentor junior and student nurses, organise staff, and reassure patients and their relatives. This merely scratches the surface! From responding quickly to emergencies to planning hospital discharges and carrying out routine investigations, the list goes on! Nurses certainly have a huge role to play when it comes to the health and wellbeing of people all around the world. Because this day is all about celebrating nurses' endless contributions to society, take this opportunity to show a nurse who has taken care of you how much you appreciate him or her. As with most gestures of appreciation, whatever you decide to do need not be grand or cost much money. Sad as it is, many people neglect to thank their nurses at all, seeing them only as robots who only know how to follow the doctor's orders, so every little way to say a simple "thank you" will definitely make that nurse's day. If you are feeling especially grateful for the way a certain nurse took care of you (fed



you, brought you a blanket, cleaned vomit off of you, monitored your vital signs, made sure you were getting the right pills, changed your wound dressings, helped you get to the bathroom, let you cry on his or her shoulder, or any of the hundreds of other things nurses do), today is the day to show that gratitude. So take a trip down to the hospital with a box of chocolates, a nice bottle of wine, or anything else you think that particular nurse might like.



Head-to-Toe Beauty Tips for Eid

FLAWLESS FACE

This Eid, let your eyes do the talking and keep the rest of your makeup elegant and simple. After moisturizing, apply a shine-free foundation for perfect skin. Set the foundation by dusting a light loose powder and a bronzer to add warmth.

STATEMENT LIP

From hot pink to orange.. bright lips are on this season. Keep the rest of your makeup simple and wear a statement bold lip to add some personality to any Eid event.

- Pale Skin: Try cool shades to prep your complexion
- Olive/Dark Tones: Try warm shades to complement your skin tone
- If you prefer a softer option add a soft violet or burgundy hue with a lip gloss instead.

ON THE LASH

With so many new mascaras on the market, ul-

tra-long dark lashes are more popular now than ever.

Try priming your lashes with lash primer before applying your mascara for longer & more full lash this holiday season.

THE EYES

Coloured eyeliners and mascaras are big this season. Switch your usual black eyeliners with a coloured one for a trendy change. Using a coloured eyeliner with matching mascara can really make your eyes stand out.

BODY BEAUTIFUL

For silky soft skin this Eid, massage a body exfoliator that contains papaya.

After you've exfoliated in the shower. Mix half portion body moisturizer with half portion foundation. Rub it in. The foundation gives the effect of sheer even skin, while the massage gives you a glow.

SUJATA ASSOMULL

“Presence on social media also commands a certain responsibility” says fashion influencer Masoom Minawala Mehta

There is such a cloud around the term “influencers”; in today's digital world an influencer is a person who has a sizable following on social media and the leverage to influence the consumption habits of others. Many of them are just ordinary people who have the “smarts” to understand how to use the power of social media. Within fashion, these influencers often wield more power than many fashion editors. Though many of them have never worked in the industry and some of them do not even know the difference between a bishop and a butterfly sleeve, if it wasn't for google. The way they turn weddings and birthdays into branded celebrations, (aka “creative collaborations”) has raised many an eyebrow. But this is not the time for such judgments.

Love them or hate them, they are now part of the media world, with brands paying them the big bucks for endorsements, and with women turning to them for style advice. While they certainly don't influence me, the last couple of weeks have made me look at influencing in a new light. As the crisis in India took a catastrophic U-turn none of us expected, many influencers changed their approach to content. They used their platforms to put out relevant information and stopped all brand activities before any of the fashion publications or fashion brands did, putting this crisis at the center of their content.

One of the most followed fashion influencers in India is Masoom Minawala Mehta. Masoom started life as a blogger, Miss Style Fiesta, she now lives in Bel-

gium and is one of the more experienced digital content creators. She has been on the covers of magazines and has a voice that many global Indians listen to. While she was perhaps not a “first mover” influencer to respond to the current crisis in India she has been effective, which is what counts. From encouraging her followers to be Instagram warriors, to talking about how to

stay calm in a crisis; she even started her own crowdsourcing drive.

Now the thirty something fashion influencer has raised over Rupees 50 Lakhs for the Hemkunt Foundation (an NGO based on the Sikh principle of 'Welfare for All'), whose work at this time has been exemplary. Among their on-ground activities is opening an oxygen center in Gurgaon, that is open 24 hours and can assist up to 500 patients at one time for oxygen. Says the young influencer, “presence on social media also commands a certain responsibility”. She had hoped to raise about Rs 20 lakhs when she started her campaign just over a week ago, but the response has made Masoom want to set her bar even higher. “No one would be happier if we can touch one crore rupees. We have seen a great deal of support coming in not only from India but from across the world.”

Of course, every penny, paisa and cent matters right now, and her story is just one example of how this crisis has shown the resilience and the community spirit of India. Even with the current loss that many have suffered, all Indians, no matter where we live, lost someone that was near and dear to us. (Masoom herself lost her Nani this weekend to Covid-19). And sometimes the best way for us to cope, with the grief, anger or whatever emotion you are feeling is to do something. It could be lending a shoulder to someone; it could be using your social platform to amplify medical requests or it could be just staying home and keeping your family safe. We all have some influence, and how you exert it matters.

If you can and have the means to donate--- please do so--- just make sure it is the right platform, where the money is going towards what is needed at these times. And it does not matter whether it is a family member, friend, a celebrity or a social media personality who helps you verify this information, because at the end of the day we are in this together.



Varsities must ensure safety before holding online exams: UGC

NEW DELHI

AMID the current coronavirus crisis across the country, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has said universities must take care of the on-ground situation before deciding on holding online examinations.

According to the UGC, before conducting online examinations, the Covid-19 guidelines set by the state and Central governments should be strictly adhered



to. The safety of students and teachers must be given primary importance during the pandemic.

The statutory body has urged universities across the country to keep their campus premises safe from the pandemic. The UGC has said universities should encourage students and other staff to get vaccinated.

UGC Chairman D.P. Singh has written a letter to universities across the country over tackling

Covid-19. The letter said universities should remain united in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

In the letter addressed to all vice-chancellors of universities and principals of colleges, the UGC Chairman has said to overcome the Covid-19 crisis, higher educational institutions should be remain in touch with students, teachers, education staff, officials and their family members. There is a need to work collectively for

the physical, mental health and safety of all people, he added.

Meanwhile, the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has written a letter to Singh. "We request the UGC to review its decision for the terminal semester year students. We request that the deadline be extended for MPhil, PhD submissions similar to that during the previous year," DUTA said.

According to DUTA, "The families of the teachers who have

died in Delhi University (DU) should be granted jobs on compassionate grounds. Also the overall situation related to the death of teachers in DU has been apprised to the UGC."

DUTA President Rajib Ray has said pension and gratuity should also be given immediately to retired teachers. Additional funds should also be arranged for teachers and staff working on contract during the pandemic, he added.

RAJASTHAN DOOR TO DOOR SURVEY

7L SHOW FEVER, COLD AND COUGH SYMPTOMS

JAIPUR

AS Rajasthan has already crossed the mark of two lakh active cases, over 7 lakh patients in the state have been identified with the symptoms of fever, cold and cough during door to door campaign and medicines are being provided to them, said Secretary, medical and health, Siddharth Mahajan.

If the same rate of infection continues in Rajasthan, the Covid cases shall double in 26 days, said Mahajan during the Covid review meeting held on Monday night which was chaired by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Door to door survey is being done to check the infection spread in villages too, he added further.

Speaking on the occasion, Gehlot called MLAs and Panchayat Raj representatives to jointly ensure strict implementation of the lockdown to break the chain of coronavirus.

"Covid has entered the rural surroundings and is spreading at an alarming rate. The situation is worrying and hence we all need to follow Covid guidelines.

Leader of Opposition Gulab-



hand Kataria said that these are tough times and everybody needs to rise above politics to fight a war against Covid.

Meanwhile, Oil and gas company Vedanta Limited has started setting up a 100-bed field hospital for coronavirus patients in Barmer district of Rajasthan, according to a release.

The hospital, a part of the company's initiative of creating an additional capacity of 1,000 critical

care beds across 10 cities of the country, will be ready in the next a few days, it said. "The company has pledged Rs 150 crore to help the country in its fight against the rapidly spreading second wave of COVID-19. This is over and above Rs 201 crore that was spent by the Vedanta group last year," the release said. "The 100-bed state-of-the-art field hospital in Barmer will cater to COVID-19 patients. The hospital will be housed in air-

conditioned tents with full electrical support and designed specifically for COVID care. The critical care facilities will have 90 beds equipped with oxygen support while the remaining will have ventilator support," the release said. The company recently converted a girl's college in Barmer into a 100-bed COVID care centre in collaboration with the district administration and the Health Department.

Pharmacist caught red-handed selling pills at double rate

SHAHJAHANPUR

A medical store owner was caught red-handed when he was selling medicines at double prices in Uttar Pradesh's Jalaabad district, officials said on Tuesday.

The accused, Vikas Gupta, was caught doing so by Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDA) Saurabh Bhatt on Monday. "For the past few days, the administration has been getting complaints against him.

Centre, States doing everything possible to tackle crisis: Rajnath

LUCKNOW

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said the Centre and the state governments are doing everything possible to tackle the COVID-19 crisis, while asserting that only those who perform commit mistakes.

The Lok Sabha MP from Lucknow visited a 255-bed COVID hospital built by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) at the Haj House here. Speaking to reporters, Singh said, "The speed displayed by the Uttar Pradesh government in tackling the COVID cases should be praised. Mistakes can be committed by anyone. Only a person who performs will commit mistakes. But this is not the time for criticism, if anyone spots any loophole and offers suggestions, the state government will welcome it."

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accepted this pandemic as a challenge and the government is doing everything possible to tackle this challenge," he said, adding that many countries are helping India at this hour of crisis because of the good diplomatic relations forged by the prime minister. Singh also con-



veyed his condolences to the families of the Covid-19 victims.

"You may or may not have seen today's news. The World Health Organization (WHO) has praised the work of the Uttar Pradesh government. It is not a small thing," he said. In a tweet on Monday, the WHO said, "In #India's most populous state Uttar Pradesh, the state gov. has initiated house-to-house active case finding of #COVID19 in rural areas to contain transmission by testing people with symptoms for rapid isolation, disease management & contact tracing."

Singh said, "All the state governments and the Centre are doing everything possible to tackle this challenge. I want to reiterate that only a person who performs will commit mistakes and he should not be criticised, but should be given suggestions."

Agra's 'good Samaritans' extend help to reduce Covid agony

BRIJ KHANDELWAL
AGRA

NOT deterred by "sarkari" gaps and flaws in the Covid-19 containment strategy, a large number of volunteers and philanthropists in the Taj city have been extending a variety of services to comfort victims and their family members.

From temple trusts to gurdwaras and NGOs, all have been doing commendable service in the last fortnight to ease the tensions and fill in the gaps in services.

On Tuesday, shoe exporters association AFMEC opened its 250-bed hospital with adequate medical infrastructure. Pooran Dawar, the chief inspiration behind the ambitious project, said: "We have



managed to put together a full package of facilities backed up by trained staff of doctors and nurses, at our facility in village Seenghna, on the national highway. If there is need, we will add more beds. No one should go without medical

help."

A few days ago, the 130-year-old Kshetra Bajaaj Samiti, that runs the Taj Ganj electric and the conventional crematoriums, opened a facility for Covid-19 patients at the Nemi Chand Homeopathy

Hospital on the Agra-Firozabad road.

Ashok Goyal, the Samiti's chief functionary, also organised a day-long Yagna at the Shamshan Ghat to appease Lord Shiva. The Samiti has a fleet of vehicles to transport dead bodies to the crematoriums. Arrangement for Ganga water is also made for theobodies, along with provision of wood at fair cost. Due to the pressure, the electric crematorium run by the organisation had recently to add one more furnace.

The Help Agra pharmacy near the SN Medical College has been providing all kinds of medicines at fixed rates. Pharmacy's Gautam Seth said: "It is our constant endeavour to provide medicines and

other related material at reasonable rates, much lower than the market rates. The Covid-19 kit of medicines is available for a very reasonable cost. Since alternatives are available, there is no shortage of medicines and people are taking advantage of the services."

Several groups are running ambulances at government's fixed rates, while more than dozen societies and individuals are offering free food. Some people are providing home delivery of food to Covid-19 patients under home isolation.

A number of WhatsApp groups have come up to keep tab on oxygen supply and arrange for cylinders, said social activist Naresh Paras.

Refund process starts for Chardham tickets

DEHRADUN

UTTARAKHAND government has started the process of refunding money to the devotees, who booked helicopter tickets in advance for the Chardham Yatra in Kedarnath. This comes nearly two weeks after the state government postponed the pilgrimage in view of the massive surge in Covid-19 cases. The entire booking amount for helicopter services to Kedarnath temple, except Rs 200 taken from each pilgrim as processing fee, would be refunded, according to Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat's order last month.

Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN), a government undertaking, collects fare from the devotees on behalf of the helicopter companies through its website. GMVN Director Ashish Chauhan has written to the bank concerned, asking to start refunding money to their accounts. The Chardham Yatra to the four famous Himalayan shrines -- Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri -- was scheduled for this month and the advance bookings for helicopter services to the Himalayan temple had begun on April 2.

UP records 20,463 fresh Covid cases, 306 deaths



LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has recorded 20,463 fresh COVID-19 cases that took the total tally to 15,45,212, while 306 fatalities pushed the death toll to 16,043, officials informed on Tuesday.

However, the number of active cases in the state have come down by over 94,000 in the past 10 days, Additional Chief Secretary, Health, Amit Mohan Prasad said. On April 30, there were about 3.10 lakh active cases while currently the number stands at 2,16,057.

Of the 306 fatalities, Lucknow reported the maximum deaths at 23, Kanpur 16, Meerut 15,

Jhansi and Gautam Buddha Nagar 12 each, Agra and Azamgarh 11 each, Basti 10 and Varanasi 8, as per a health bulletin issued here. Meerut reported the highest number of fresh COVID-19 cases at 1,368, followed by 1,229 in Gautam Buddha Nagar and 1,154 in Lucknow, it said.

As many as 29,358 COVID-19 patients recovered from the infection in the past 24 hours, Prasad said. With this, the total number of patients recovered in the state has risen to 13,13,112, he added. So far, over 4.34 crore samples have been tested in the state, including more than 2.33 lakh samples that were tested on Monday.

Haryana CM opens 150-bed Covid care centre

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday virtually inaugurated a 150-bed Covid care centre at Baba Tara Charitable Hospital and Research Centre in Sirsa town. In the centre, ventilator beds have also been installed.

In his remarks after the inauguration, Khattar said the state quota of medical oxygen has increased from 152 to 282 metric tonnes

(MT). Besides, the demand for getting additional quota has also been made to the Centre. He said the state is supplying oxygen as per the requirement to all hospitals. Also an oxygen cylinder refilling facility is being made available to the patients staying in home isolation.

A portal has been made for this system on which not only patients are applying but also social organisations are getting themselves registered. Noting that earlier the infection was limited to urban areas,

but has started spreading in rural areas now, Khattar said that teams have been constituted to conduct door-to-door investigations in the villages.

To contain the virus in rural areas, the Chief Minister said 'theekri pehras' should be imposed in villages. Khattar also flagged off two tankers from the Chandigarh International Airport that were later airlifted by an Indian Air Force (IAF) cargo plane for bringing medical oxygen supply to Haryana.

Covid 2.0 a big challenge for Indian IT

AMID the pandemic, World Health Organisation (WHO) has announced the Indian Covid-19 strain as a global concern. This coupled with travel bans by many countries for Indian travelers is going to put the mobility of corporate professionals under check. This is no good news for India Inc, especially for export-oriented industries like IT services companies.

Staffers of Indian IT firms are considered as one of the most mobile corporate professionals. As the US market accounts for more than half of revenues for most Indian IT firms, sending Indian engineers to work on this onsite location is a usual practice. However, this has been severely curtailed from last year with the US administration imposing a ban till March of this year in the wake of the pandemic.

Though the Biden administration has not continued with the ban, Indian firms are less keen to send their staffers to foreign shores on the backdrop of

the raging second wave in the country. Meanwhile in India, IT firms are facing project delivery issues due to absenteeism. Unlike the first wave, the second wave of the pandemic is much widespread.

This has led to a situation where many employees are falling sick or their relatives are getting affected, resulting in absenteeism. If some team members report sick, others are under tremendous pressure for maintaining a smooth workflow. Though clients are empathetic to the situation in India, delays in project delivery can't be ruled out in the current circumstances.

The raging second wave is also likely to affect the onboarding of new employees and fresh engineering graduates. Though more than 95 per cent of IT employees are currently working from home with companies conducting virtual onboarding, the process is generally slow. Therefore, Indian IT firms will absorb the new hires, albeit slowly amid this pandemic.

India is currently reporting around four lakh cases per day. This is four times higher than the peak of the first wave. Though the central government has not imposed a lockdown, most States remain closed to contain the spread. So, the reopening of offices with some sense of normalcy coming back remains a far cry for now. Indian IT firms had earlier said that they would bring back employees in batches with the adoption of a hybrid operating model.

But this process is going to be delayed further with employees staying put at homes in the near future. Though there is no impact on productivity yet, fatigue of work from home is definitely setting in.

During the first wave of the pandemic, Indian IT firms have swiftly adopted the 'work from anywhere' model, ensuring a smooth workflow. Indian IT firms are also the first set of companies to recover among all the businesses. But the second wave is different. It is affecting the employees and their families, making the execution risk real. Under these circumstances, it is to be seen how the commentary of double-digit growth in the current fiscal plays out in the coming quarters.

An ocean of humanity and humility



MOOT POINT

Dr Ramu Suravajjula

TEACHERS are undoubtedly the most important members of our society because they are the creators of future generations. They are expected to give a purpose to students, impart knowledge, clarify doubts, help chase

dreams and inspire to succeed in life.

Broadly, teachers, based on my personal experience as a student as well as a teacher, are four major types: The duck-buck teacher, the howl-growl teacher, the whine-moan teacher and the jolly-pally teacher.

The first type (the duck-buck) teacher is a lazy bone avoiding teaching but involving in all other irrelevant things for personal gain or vicarious pleasure. Since being damn bored with teaching, they look at the calendar for holidays or strikes to bunk classes. Pandemic-forced holidays are most welcome. They are least bothered to update their last year's PPT and they prefer giving silly, useless assignments to the class to kill time tactfully. Fully focused on the monthly salary and a timely promotion, this type doesn't mind in encouraging students of their own community, region or religion. Well, they are into chit fund and real estate business for additional bucks by leaving the motto of the pious profession to the winds.

The second type (the howl-growl) teacher is a one-way communication specialist. They keep on announcing that they are 'very strict' and they expect 'pin drop silence' in the class. Sticklers for accuracy and punctuality, they focus on rules and syllabus scrupulously. Attendance is very important and deadline is sacrosanct. The kind of harsh and insulting words they use to admonish students directly fall under 'abuse' category but they go scot free. They are also called accent teachers because they give utmost priority to punctuations and pronunciations more than meaning. Every hour is designed in tune with the academic almanac letter and spirit. There is no space for creativity or out-of-the-box thinking and no questions are asked. Students get respect from this type of teachers based on the marks they can score in examinations.

The third type (the whine -moan) teacher is born to make complaints and comments on everything under the sun. Spreading negativity and injecting pessimism are the twin objectives of these masters. The park they frequent for a walk, the road they travel, the persons they meet, the colleagues they work with, the institute they belong to, the state and country they live in are in for a severe scrutiny in the

class. They vent out frustration coupled with venom in the form of a debate or discussion with an agenda. They project their viewpoint as the best and those who fail to think on those lines are dubbed as fools and useless.

The fourth type (the jolly-pally) teacher is very jovial and friendly come what may. They make learning a pure joy and every effort is made to encourage every student to participate in the class. They treat students with love and affection. Lesson is taught in a story form and students are encouraged to come up with alternative ideas or viewpoints. There is enough scope and space for students to play around and experiment. Ranks and marks are just numbers for this type of teachers. They don't mind spending time to create fun and frolic to cheer up the mood and boost up the morale of the students. These teachers act innocent and comedown to the level of the students to untap creativity and unleash hidden talent. Extracurricular activities are encouraged and this type of teachers exhibit their skills like mimicry or singing to create a jolly atmosphere. As a result, alumni remain in touch with them to seek guidance as well as to share good and bad developments in their careers and lives.

Prof Bandi Balaswamy, who passed away on May 7 after waging a 20-day long battle against Covid-19 in a hospital remains a classic example for the fourth type of teachers. He won the hearts of scores of students and colleagues with humanity, humility, understanding, compassion and knowledge. He lent a helping hand to solve their problems and patient ear to fix their issues, either on academic or personal front. A cool cucumber and fun-loving Professor, he was always willing to help students by going an extra mile at any given point. Prof. Balaswamy's hallmark is, bestowing the same amount of respect and love to everyone he met, a layman to an office boy to a student to a senior professor.

None of them ever watched Prof. Balaswamy yelling, frowning or cribbing in the department. Power didn't corrupt him. Even as the Head of the Department (July 2013- August 2015) and the Chairman of the Board of Studies (July 2008- 2012 and from September 2015-till date), his value system and character didn't change a bit. A multi-talented Prof. Balaswamy would imitate film stars and recite toughest dialogues from plays like 'Satya Harischandra' with aplomb.

Born in a poor Dalit family of Abbarajupalem village of Pedakurapadu mandal of Guntur district on June 30, 1970, he grazed cattle and worked as a daily wage worker to support his family. Having lost his father in his childhood, he realised the importance of education to come out of the distressing



conditions. He fought against the all odds to get BA (History, Economics, Politics) degree from Nagarjuna University in 1991. He was the college topper!

His dream to study in the University of Hyderabad, a Central University, came true when he got admission in M.A. in Communication through an entrance examination. He passed out MA in first division with a gold medal for his academic performance in 1993. He got Doctoral Degree (topic: Role of Communication in Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Medak District) in 2002. Till he qualified for UGC JRF and NET examination in 1993, he had to face financial hardships.

Prof Balaswamy is a teacher who was close to completing a silver jubilee in his career. He had started his teaching career at the Department of Mass Communication of Assam University, Silchar, on May 13, 1996. He joined OU in 2004 as an Associate Professor and became Professor in 2010. He used to claim that his knowledge was enriched in the company of stalwart faculty such as Prof.PL Vishweshwar Rao, Prof. Padmaja Shaw, Prof.Stevenson, Prof. Nageshwar and Prof.K.Narendar. He proved himself as a future leader of the department.

I have a memorable experience with Prof. Balaswamy. A few days before the submission of my PhD thesis on Ethics and Journalists, I wanted to give it up due to a stupid reason. On my way home, I accidentally met Prof. Balaswamy on the stairs of the Arts College. He sensed my mood and came my way to stop and ask me as to what happened. I explained my predicaments

and told him curtly that I want to terminate my dream project. "Sir (that is how he would address people), you worked on the topic for about seven years. Don't give up at this stage. Please come with me to my room. Let us sit together to fix the issues," he said with genuine love and affection. His soothing words and timely help did a world of good for me. Had I not met Prof. Balaswamy on the day, I would have ended up without a PhD. Many students have had similar experiences with him. During his stint as the Warden of Old P.G. Hostel (January 2005-2009) and NRS hostel (2009-2012), Prof. Balaswamy could solve issues on a priority basis. He demeanour and approach won applause from agitating students too. Even the leaders who were incensed by regional feelings during Telangana agitation couldn't see Prof. Balaswamy as an outsider.

The death of his childhood friend and classmate, Dr. P.Kennedy, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication, UoH, a day before was said to have a telling impact on recuperating Prof. Balaswamy. The sensitive professor perhaps couldn't bear the tragedy.

Prof. K Stevenson, Head of the Department, the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, rightly pointed out that the 'cellar', where the Department is located in OU's picturesque Arts College building, is not the same without him. However, Prof. Balaswamy remains immortal in the hearts of students and faculty forever.

(The author is a senior journalist, journalism educator and communication consultant)

Adult immunisation: Myth vs reality

IANSLIFE

While vaccinations remain the most effective prevention strategy to maintain immunity for a prolonged period, adult immunisation remains neglected.

Adult immunisation myths prevail as a result of inadequate awareness, lack of an established body of official recommendations and vaccine hesitancy, which contribute to reduced vaccine coverage across India. For instance, there are rising incidences of typhoid cases in India, despite the availability of vaccines and being universally recommended. This suggests adults need to be aware of immunisation as a preventive solution to effectively make use of it.

The first-ever adult immunisation recommendations by the Association of Physicians of India highlights the clear need for adult immunisation in India. Nirmal Kumar Ganguly, Former Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), said, "There is potential to increase adult immunisation coverage in India. To develop these evidence-based recommendations, we convened a panel of healthcare experts across speciality practices, ranging from Cardiology, to Pulmonology, Gynaecology to Nephrology. The result is a comprehensive body of knowledge outlining best practices and reliable information on adult immunisation in India. Through these recommendations, we hope to drive a paradigm shift to ensure adult vaccinations are increasingly suggested and adopted."

While vaccinations prevent infectious diseases, prolong and improve quality of life, emphasis on adult immunisation is low. The recommendations by the API will help increase the awareness and equip healthcare practitioners with evidence-based information to guide vaccine recommendation and administration. At Abbott, we aim to continue raising awareness to protect people from vaccine-preventable diseases, so they can live fuller and healthier lives, says Srirupa Das, Medical Director, Abbott India. It is important to stay informed and clear up common misconceptions around vaccines, so you can make the most of your immunisation conversation with your doctor!

Here are five common vaccine myths, and the facts to know to address them. Inputs from Abbott India.

Myth 1: Vaccines are for children

Fact: Vaccinations are recommended across various stages of life. As protective effects of childhood vaccines wear off over time, it is vital to remain up to date on booster shots. Rapid globalisation and increased frequency of international travel have raised the likelihood of adults contracting vaccine-preventable diseases, including influenza, Hepatitis A and B and more. These can lead to higher disease burden in adults, exacerbate comorbidities and are associated with higher rates of mortality in adults.

There are vaccines you should take as an adult even if you didn't take them as a child, like the Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DPT) vaccine, which is a booster shot recommended once every ten years.

Myth 2: Not all adults need vaccines

Fact: Vaccinations are an important public health strategy across the population, including healthy adults, and many vaccines are universally recommended. These include vaccines for influenza, typhoid and Hepatitis A and B, which have resulted in seasonal epidemics across India. There is also an increased need for certain vaccines, such as the Hepatitis B one, especially among at-risk populations, which include people with comorbidities, healthcare providers, geriatrics and pregnant women.

Myth 3: Vaccines cause unnecessary hassle and make me sick

Fact: Vaccinations are beneficial and can help avoid disease burden and negative complications in the long run, thus leading to better health outcomes so you can live a fuller, hassle-free life. Moreover, vaccines don't cause illness but short-lived side effects, including low-grade fever, aches or soreness, which are nothing to worry about -- in fact, it is the result of the body building an immune response to the vaccine.

Myth 4: It's better to get the flu naturally instead of taking a vaccine, which will weaken my immune system

Fact: Being exposed to the flu naturally means exposing yourself to a potentially serious disease with moderate to severe symptoms including fever, joint pain and cough among others. This can prompt worrying complications or even progress to pneumonia, respiratory failure or even morbidity, particularly for those at high-risk. Vaccination is a far safer option to protect yourself against preventable diseases and in fact, strengthens your immune system.

Myth 5: I took the influenza vaccine last year, so I don't need it again

Fact: Influenza viruses are constantly changing and so, WHO identifies and provides latest strain recommendations annually. Getting vaccinated every year is thus important to ensure optimal, sustained protection against rapidly adapting influenza viruses. This is vital especially considering in India where we have had pandemic outbreaks of influenza in various states, including Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat, in 2012, 2015 and 2017. Get your flu shot annually to keep yourself protected. What next: Get your vaccine checklist in place. Consult your doctor for more myth-busting, in-depth information so you can set a vaccination schedule in place and keep your health in check!

'China's population to stay above 1.4bn for a certain period'

CHINA'S population will stay above 1.4 billion "for a certain period in future", Ning Jizhe, head of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), said on Tuesday. "China's population will peak in future, but there remains uncertainty as to when specifically it will happen," Ning said. Based on the demographical trend in recent years, China's population growth will continue to slow down, Xinhua news agency quoted the NBS chief as saying at a media briefing here.

He noted that the growth will also be affected by such factors as the age structure, people's ideas on having children, government's population policies, the cost of childbearing and parenting, medical service and health conditions of the people. China's population on the mainland reached 1.4 billion, growing 0.53 per cent annually on average in the past decade, according to data from the latest national census, conducted in 2020, released by the NBS on Tuesday. The rate was slightly lower than the average annual growth of 0.57 per cent from 2000 to 2010, according to the NBS. "Data shows that China's population has continued to maintain slow growth in the past decade," Ning said.

The NBS data also revealed that people aged 60 or above account for 18.7 per cent of China's total population, 5.44 percentage points higher than the level in 2010 when the previous census was conducted. The total population of Chinese people on the mainland aged 60 or above has reached 264.02 million, including 190.64 million people aged 65 or above, or 13.5 per cent of the total population, it added.

"Data shows the aging of the Chinese population has further deepened, and we will continue to face the pressure to achieve long-term balanced population development," Ning said.

The census also found 63.35 per cent of the country's population was aged 15-59, and the proportion of Chinese people aged 0-14 reaches 17.95 per cent, 1.35 percentage points higher than the 2010 level.

China has conducted a national population census every 10 years since the 1990s.

The figure does not include Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan residents and foreigners who live in the mainland's 31 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities, according to the NBS. (IANS)

LETTERS

Centre forced into action by SC?

THE plea of the centre in Supreme Court that the 'wisdom of the executive should be trusted' is absolutely correct more so in the prevailing chaotic situation of inadequate vaccines / inadequate oxygen supplies, vis-a-vis different pricing of the vaccines etc to fight against the spread of Covid second wave in the country. But it is definitely a question in the minds of all people whether the central government as well as the state governments would have viewed and acted upon the situation so seriously had there been no involvement of Supreme Court or for that matter even high courts in this matter of vaccine distribution?

We are already seeing media reports that few States have already stopped vaccination due to inadequate supplies by the Centre, few states have also informed the Centre of their inability to supply oxygen to other States and some States have already banned patients from other States from entering into their area for different reasons. This is going to be a very disturbing trend in the near future in maintaining cordial relations between all states and UTs in the present pandemic situation prevailing in the country.

The Centre has to put a check on all such non-cordial attempts and take into account all such emerging new issues and announce a broad national policy involving the judicial system also if necessary, for effective and uniform implementation throughout the country whether it is in procurement and distribution of vaccines or in procurement and distribution of oxygen cylinders for that matter.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao, Hyderabad

Unfair blame on EC

THIS has reference to Madabhushi Sridhar Acharyulu's write up 'EC and its role as a superspreader'. The writer efficiently collected all available data by different sources that were heaped against the Election Commission of India, making it a villain for the spread of Covid, in its second wave devastation in the country. The Election Commission of India being singled out for criticism for the spread of the pandemic in its second wave in the country is highly unbecoming of the status of writer, who is generally viewed as level-headed and well informed and whose views and opinions are generally appreciated by all. The Madras High Court should not have needlessly commented on the Election Commission for paving the way for the spread of the pandemic. It was as if the Madras HC was itching to be in the picture, even unasked, in which it has no role to play. The Supreme Court did not remain a mute spectator to the misdeed-meanor of the lower court, and warned it accordingly, not to be irresponsible in such matters in future concerning the Election Commission.

Venkata Narasimhan K R, Madurai

Real versus reel

THE disaster of Akkal Neeadi Mayyam party founded by actor Kamal Hassan is not unpredicted. He was advised by his

ardent fans that cine charisma will not always give fruitful returns. The strong blow he was hit by Tamil voters turned him to wind up his show in politics. Strongly believing this code, Rajinikanth acted smartly and left ab initio from founding his political party. We know the fate of another actor Vijayakant. Pawan Kalyan may please make a note of it as he had gained bitter experience in 2019 elections. Playing in politics is not as easy as portraying a role on tinsel screen.

N Ramalakshmi, Secunderabad

Lockdown let-up

BENGALURU'S Director General of Police Praveen Sood's clarification that there is no bar on the use of vehicles to buy essentials between 6 am and 10 am must cheer citizens, more so the elderly, the sick and the infirmed. The strict lockdown barring people, except those employed in essential services, from plying their vehicles had come under fire from various quarters, including the Opposition Congress and JD(S). Reports of police excesses - caning and meting out harsh punishment - have also come in from several parts of the State. Stung by criticism, City Police Commissioner Kamal Pant ordered the police personnel not to use lathis but to initiate legal action.

N J Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

Govt should act faster

THE intensity of pandemic has increased and it is spreading faster than last time. The States have imposed strict restrictions and lockdown to break the raging Covid second wave. Due to shortage of oxygen, drugs, vaccine and beds, the

patients are facing terrible consequences during this mid summer. Medical infrastructure should have got increased in the past couple of months. The political war and debates on elections are given more priority than to save lives of the people.

Different welfare schemes are been introduced but the primary aspect of taking care of people is missing. It is essential and emergency for the people to meet the demands of hospitalisation. As the nation is fighting with covid crisis, the saviour and actor Sonu Sood has been rendering immediate help to the patients much faster than the government. The government has to respond quickly and react in order to rehabilitate the loss so far. Else the loss of lives will be more and more in future.

M Vinesh, Visakhapatnam

Invest in health infrastructure

THE act of Telangana government to stop ambulances with Covid-19 patients from Andhra Pradesh towards Hyderabad for medical treatment cannot be considered as an inhuman act but only exposes lack of proper medical facilities in AP and that hospitals in Hyderabad are jam-packed (TS blocks entry of Covid patients from Andhra, May 11). It is a shame, citizens of the country are struggling for quality hospitals even after seven decades of independence. It is an eye opener for our governments, which should invest in health care and education instead of wasting on freebies, statues, large building complexes and other non-productive activities.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao, Hyderabad

TS Agros to rope in agri grads to man ARSKs

- TS Agros crosses many milestones and registers Rs 123 crore turnover during the 19-20 FY
- To sell biodegradable bags for laddu prasadam at Tirupati

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

AGRICULTURE Minister S Niranjan Reddy said that the government has established 1,000 Agro Rythu Seva Kendras (ARSKs) across the State of Telangana to provide quality fertilisers, seeds, agriculture machinery under one roof to the farmers.

Speaking after inaugurating the Telangana State Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited (TSAIDCL) new office at Red Hills here on Tuesday, he said, that the TS Agros has registered a turnover of Rs 123 crore during the financial years 2019-20 introducing several innovative programmes. And, the ARSKs will help to provide the services to



farmers at their doorstep.

Also, steps will be taken to provide opportunities to the prospective agriculture and other science graduates to run the ARSKs more efficiently to conduct soil testing centres.

He said the State government has taken the initiative with the cooperation of NABARD, MANAGE and SLBC to further strengthen the ARSKs. Besides, to extend financial support to the same.

The TS Agros will provide N-

Ripe, a natural product, to all the consumers at the fruit markets for a carbide-free mangoes and bananas.

Niranjan Reddy said that the TS Agros has also been distributing 'Telangana Siri' CT compost and asked the farmers to use the compost of three bags for every six bags of fertilisers as per the Central government guidelines to increase the soil strength. He appealed to the farmers to liberally use the CT compost and efforts are on to

divert farmers to shift to organic farming.

The TS Agros has also initiated to provide biodegradable compost bags to replace the plastic bags polluting the environment. The TTD has also provided a counter to the TS Agros to provide biodegradable carry bags for the 'laddu prasadam'. Besides, efforts are on to encourage usage of these bags across the state, the minister added.

Niranjan Reddy said steps have also been taken to provide TS Agros's subsidy for farm mechanisation directly to the farmers through the ARSKs. That apart, youth will be encouraged to take self-employment extending cooperation to start Agro Karshak Petrol Bunks for the sale of petrol and diesel. The State government will always extend its cooperation to the innovative schemes and initiatives of the TS Agros, he added.

TS Agros MD Ramulu and TS Horticulture Director Venkatrami Reddy and senior officials were present.

HC sees ire at govt's failure in containing Covid spread

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana High Court on Tuesday expressed its anger over the State government for its failure in containing the spread of coronavirus. It also expressed its anger over the stoppage of ambulances from neighbouring Andhra Pradesh on Telangana border.

It wondered if it was an act of humanity to stop the ambulances during the pandemic times. It made these remarks while dealing with a batch of petitions filed on the issue of the containment of virus in the State. The Hyderabad, Cyberabad and Rachakonda police commissioners and GHMC commissioner appeared before the HC during the hearing of the case. The HC asked the State government on what basis of powers it stopped the

ambulances at the border. It said that night curfew was not being properly implemented in the State. It asked the State government as to why it was not regulating religious programmes in the State. It also said that there was no link between the claims of the State government and the conditions at the field level.

It said that the State government had not followed its orders on the issue and warned that it would initiate contempt of court proceedings against the State government if it did not obey its orders. Replying to the remarks made by the HC, advocate general of the State BS Prasad had said that the State cabinet would take a decision on the containment of Covid virus. The court asked the HC to take all the concerns of the HC to the notice of the State Cabinet.



Teegala fined for not wearing mask

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RANGA REDDY

FORMER Mayor of Hyderabad and ex-MLA Teegala Krishna Reddy has been fined Rs 1,000 for not wearing mask, on Tuesday. When the Saroornagar police were checking vehicles at Karimnagar Chowrasta, they stopped Teegala Krishna Reddy's car. Sub-Inspector Mukesh on noticing that Reddy was not wearing a mask, questioned him for which Krishna Reddy got into an argument with the police. Stating that rules were same for all, the SI imposed a fine of Rs 1,000 on Reddy and urged him to wear a mask and take other necessary precautions as the Covid cases were increasing in the State.

Farmers protest as mill owners refuse to buy crops

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RANGAREDDY

FARMERS staged a road blockade in Sardarnagar village of Shabad mandal protesting against the mill owners for not buying their crop and harassing them. As a result of the road blockade, the traffic came

to standstill and the vehicles were stranded up to over 2 km distance till Elikatta crossroad. Later, Kishan Congress chairman Challa Srikanth Reddy, Pulla Reddy and farmers demanded the agriculture and IKP officials to talk to the millers about the issue and make the millers buy their crops.



Power utilities exempted from lockdown

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE State government has exempted electricity companies from the imposition of lockdown as it is an essential service and has to maintain uninterrupted power supply especially during the pandemic period, informed Prabhakar Rao, Managing Director of TS Transco and Genco, in a press statement released on Tuesday.

Since uninterrupted power supply is the important necessity to the State in taking combative measures for countering Covid-19, detailed guidelines were issued to all the employees of the power companies.

All measures were taken to generate power required for the State and regular maintenance activities would be continued to ensure 24x7 power supply to all categories of consumers, he said.

While all the employees were directed to keep the identity cards readily available to attend to duties for hassle-free commuting, all the field engineers were directed to issue temporary passes to employees/vehicles of contractors attending to emergency duties and construction works.

BJP welcomes lockdown, urges govt to speed up vaccination

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE State unit of Bharatiya Janata Party reiterated that it would extend all cooperation to the State government in its efforts to contain the spread of coronavirus in the State.

Hailing the State government's decision lockdown to flatten the Covid curve, State BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Tuesday said that the Centre has given a free hand to the State governments to decide on lockdown. So far, almost all the States and Union Territories have imposed either full or partial lockdown, except Telangana. Though it was delayed, the State government has imposed a lockdown, to contain the virus spread. However, he suggested ensuring the lock-



down should not create any disruption to medical services and transportation of patients. Also, he asked to continue tests and treatment. Given the current scenario, it was proved that vaccination alone would deter the spread of corona, he said, urging the State government to speed up the vaccination programme during the lockdown.

The Karimnagar MP said that

the Centre had already dispatched the oxygen and Remdesivir injections needed to Telangana. He asked the State government to come up with a special nodal agency for the distribution of oxygen and Remdesivir injections to ensure that both the government and private hospitals do not face oxygen shortage. The BJP State chief asked the government to provide all necessary medicines for providing better treatment and asked to call the representatives of the private hospitals to hold talks and resolve their problems.

Adding that the BJP cadre during the earlier lockdown had provided food to the needy, he asked the cadre to continue the good work during the current lockdown by strictly observing the Covid guidelines.

VIT Business School gets AACSB international accreditation

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

VIT Business School (VITBS), Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) has been accredited by Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International, the top accrediting body for business schools globally. The AACSB, USA accreditation places VIT Business School among the prestigious global business schools that have received this recognition. It joins the league of 901 business schools across 58 countries that are AACSB accredited. VITBS is the 15th ac-

credited business school in India and 2nd in Tamil Nadu.

The business school that operates out of Vellore and Chennai campuses has achieved this coveted recognition. Dr G Viswanathan, Founder and Chancellor, VIT said, "It is a prestigious moment for Vellore Institute of Technology. We thank AACSB for recognising VIT Business School's academic rigor, research excellence, social, industrial and global connectivity. I congratulate Team VITBS, for achieving AACSB's global accreditation. The team shall strive to reach newer heights

in serving the students and society."

VIT Business School is one of the constituent schools of Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT). The business school has been offering business education for more than a quarter century now. VITBS that started as a Department of Management Studies in 1994 offers three programs namely BBA, MBA and PhD. It provides several opportunities for students to obtain a global exposure through different programmes like the credit transfer programme with University of Michigan, Dearborn campus.

3 IAS officials to ensure timely supply of O₂

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE state government appointed three senior IAS officials to coordinate with neighbouring states to ensure timely supply of liquid medical oxygen. Principle secretary of medical and health Anil Kumar Singhal said Karikalavalavan was appointed for Tamil Nadu, G Annataramu to Karnataka and AK Farida to Odisha.

These three officials will coordinate with the respective state governments to prevent delay in oxygen supply.

Speaking to media persons here on Tuesday, the principle secretary said the state government will ensure supply of Remdesivir injections adding that 22,399 vials were available in various government hospitals in the state. Arrangements have been made to provide telemedicine facility to 15,000 people per

Karikalavalavan, G Annataramu and Farida will coordinate with neighbouring States to prevent delay in oxygen supply

day and 3,496 doctors are rendering services to those who are in home isolation through tele medicine centres.

Referring second dose vaccination, Singhal said that to prevent overcrowding at vaccination centres, the government made arrangements to inform the people eligible for second dose through SMS or volunteers.

APMDC donates ₹100 cr to CMRF for Covid aid

AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation (APMDC) on Tuesday said it has contributed Rs 100 crore to the Chief Minister Relief Fund (CMRF) towards the

Covid-19 containment measures. About Rs 90 crore from District Mineral Fund and Rs 10 crore from APMDC was donated to CMRF, the state government said in a statement. The cheque was handed over to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan

Reddy by mines and panchayat raj minister Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy, chief secretary Aditya Nath Das, panchayat raj principal secretary Gopala Krishna Dwivedi and APMDC vice-chairman and MD V G Venkat Reddy.



Mines Minister Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy, officials of AP Mineral Development Corporation and Panchayat Raj hand over a cheque for Rs 10 crore towards CM Relief Fund, to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy at Tadepalli on Tuesday

VIT Business School gets AACSB International accreditation

VELLORE

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The business school that oper-

ates out of Vellore and Chennai campuses has achieved this coveted recognition. On achieving this accreditation, Dr G Viswanathan, founder and chancellor, VIT, said, "It is a prestigious moment for Vellore Institute of Technology. We thank AACSB for recognising VIT Business School's academic rigour, research excellence, social, industry and global connectivity."

VIT Business School is one of the constituent schools of VIT. It has been offering business education for more than a quarter century now. AACSB International is more than a century-old non-profit that promotes the cause of quality in business education.

Case registered against Naidu, now in Guntur

AMARAVATI

AN case was registered at Arundel police station in Guntur on Tuesday against former chief minister and TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu and others under Sections 188.505(1)B0 (2) IPC 54. DMA 2005 on the basis of a complaint lodged by an advocate Pachala Anil Kumar.

In his complaint, the advocate alleged that Chandrababu Naidu and his party leaders had spoken in the media about the second wave of coronavirus, particularly in Andhra Pradesh.

He said they said new N440K variant of coronavirus originated in AP and is 10 to 15 times more dangerous, it is spreading rate is

higher than normal virus and causes significant human losses. "It is irresponsible and erroneous statement about coronavirus which caused a great deal of agony and pain to the people.

The AP people are facing mental stress and the statements lead to more number of deaths," the complaint said adding that although the CCMB report specified that the N440K variant is not much dangerous, he Chandrababu Naidu deliberately intended to create panic in the minds of people in this pandemic situation by "spreading canards and distorted versions", which resulted in restrictions and discrimination of people coming from Andhra Pradesh.

Guj doctors warn against cow dung ‘therapy’ to boost immunity

New vaccine blocks novel Coronavirus, its variants in animals, claims study

DOCTORS in Gujarat have warned against a so-called ‘cow-dung therapy’, saying smearing of cow dung on the body does not give protection against coronavirus but may cause other infections including mucormycosis. A small group of people has been visiting a cow shelter run by Shree Swaminarayan Gurukul Vishwavidya Prathisthanam (SGVP) here to take the therapy, believing that it increases immunity against Covid-19.

The shelter houses over 200 cows. For the last one month, around 15 persons visit it every Sunday to apply cow dung and cow urine on the body.

It is then washed off with cow milk, said an SGVP official. Those taking the therapy include some frontline workers and people working at medical stores, he said.

Doctors, however, do not vouch for its efficacy.

"I don't know if this therapy would really help people. I

have never come across any research which suggested that application of cow dung on the body would increase immunity against coronavirus," said Dr Dileep Mavlankar, Director of the Indian Institute of Public Health, Gandhinagar. Dr Mona Desai, a senior doctor from the city, termed the therapy as "humbug and inauthentic".

"Cow dung is nothing but body waste. Applying cow dung and urine can never boost immunity or protect you from coronavirus. People should consult doctors and stay away from such therapies," said Dr Desai, chairperson of the women's wing of the Indian Medical Association (IMA). "Instead of proving helpful, cow dung would give you other infections, including mucormycosis," she said.

Mucormycosis, also called black fungus infection, has been observed among some COVID-19 survivors and can be fatal.



"Since cow dung also carries several fungi, they may enter into the body and infect you. I urge people to be little aware and not put their lives in danger," said Desai.

Meanwhile, a new vaccine candidate has proven effective in protecting monkeys and mice from the novel coronavirus and its variants that first emerged in the UK, South Africa and Brazil, as well as related bat coronaviruses that could potentially cause the next pandemic, according to a study. The finding, published in the journal Nature, is highly relevant to humans, the researchers said. The pan-coronavirus vaccine triggers neutralising antibodies via a nanoparticle composed of the coronavirus part. This part allows the vaccine to bind to the body's cell receptors, and is formulated with a chemical booster called an adjuvant, the researchers said.

"We began this work last spring with the understanding

that, like all viruses, mutations would occur in the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19," said study senior author Barton F. Haynes, from Duke University Human Vaccine Institute in the US. "The new approach not only provided protection against SARS-CoV-2, but the antibodies induced by the vaccine also neutralised variants of concern that originated in the United Kingdom, South Africa and Brazil," Haynes said. The induced antibodies reacted with quite a large panel of coronaviruses, he added. Haynes and colleagues built on earlier studies involving SARS, the respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-1.

They found a person who had been infected with SARS developed antibodies capable of neutralising multiple coronaviruses, suggesting that a pan-coronavirus might be possible.

WINDOWS

Three LeT militants killed

SRINAGAR: Three Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, police said.

Security forces launched a cordon and search operation at Vailoo in Komernag area of the district early on Tuesday following information about presence of militants there, a police official said. "During the search operation, as the presence of terrorists got ascertained they were given an opportunity to surrender. However, they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party which was retaliated leading to an encounter," the official said.



Bollywood actor and politician Shatrughan Sinha and his son after receiving vaccine dose at Dadar, in Mumbai on Tuesday

ED books Anil Deshmukh

MUMBAI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has registered a case of money laundering against former Maharashtra Home Minister and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Anil Deshmukh in connection with alleged corruption and misuse of office case. A senior ED official related to probe told IANS, "A case of money laundering has been registered under PMLA against Deshmukh." The ED action comes almost a fortnight after the CBI booked the NCP leader into the allegations of misuse of office and corruption on April 24.

7 school children, one teacher killed in Russia

MOSCOW

AT least seven school children and one teacher were killed on Tuesday and many more wounded after a lone teenage gunman opened fire in a school in the Russian city of Kazan, the mayor's office said, prompting a Kremlin call for tighter gun controls. Two children could be seen leaping from the third floor of the four-storey School Number 175 to escape as gunshots rang out, in a video filmed by an onlooker that was circulated by Russia's RIA news agency.

Calling the attack a big tragedy

for the whole country, Rustam Minnikhanov, the head of the wider Tatarstan region, said there was no evidence that anyone else had been involved.

"We have lost seven children... four boys and three girls. And 16 people, 12 children and four adults, are in hospital," Minnikhanov told state TV.

"The terrorist has been arrested. He's a 19-year-old who was officially registered as a gun owner."

Footage posted on social media showed a young man being pinned to the ground outside the school building by a police officer.



A Canada goose escorts goslings as they swim across a pond at MacRae Park on Monday

Srinagar's Dal Lake gets floating ambulance service to fight Covid

SRINAGAR

THE Covid-19 pandemic has brought forth many acts of kindness from strangers across India who have overcome their own hardships in order to help others. Such an act of kindness came from Kashmir's Srinagar recently where a man who has recently recovered from coronavirus has started his own Covid-19 ambulance service. But the ambulance service started by Tariq Ahmad Patloo is no ordinary service. It is a floating ambulance service, meaning it provides boat ambulances in Srinagar's Dal Lake.

It was in August last year when Patloo himself tested positive for Covid-19. The apathy and stigma he had to endure during his recovery made him start the water ambulance service so that no one else had to face his plight after testing positive. Earlier in April

Considering the situation at hospitals and homes due to rising cases, Patloo has set up this facility for people, which has PPE kits, stretchers and wheelchairs

this year, Patloo, a boatman himself, turned his 'shikara' into a water ambulance.

"Considering the situation at hospitals and homes due to rising cases, I've set up this facility for people, which has PPE kits, stretchers & wheelchairs," Patloo

told ANI. Last year, Patloo had contracted fever after attending his aunt's funeral.

Patloo said that after his recovery in 2020, his own community had refused to ferry him to hospitals or back to his house boat from the banks of Dal Lake for fear of contracting Covid-19.

"I had to quarantine myself for 20 days at home and every time I needed to visit the hospital, many shikara-wallas (boatmen) turned me down. I was shunned by my own community and neighbours," Patloo had said.

With several spots for tourism being thrown open in the Spring season in the Valley, Srinagar saw a spurt in cases amid the second wave of Covid-19. As many as 131 Covid-19 cases were recorded in the Valley on May 25, the day the Tulip Gardens were opened to public in Srinagar.



TODAY'S QUOTE

Godrej Consumer Products gets new MD

I am delighted to be welcoming Sudhir Sitapati as MD & CEO to Godrej. His significant experience and passion for building sustainable and profitable brands and businesses aligns very strongly with our purpose at GCPL. Sudhir's values-based leadership style also makes him a great fit with the Godrej culture.

— *Nisaba Godrej, Chairperson, Godrej Consumer Products*




PROFIT

Siemens Q4 net up 90% at ₹334 cr

Siemens on Tuesday posted an over 90 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 334.4 crore for the March quarter, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The consolidated net profit of the company stood at Rs 175.7 crore in the quarter ended March 31, 2020.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	74.1	South	
Euro	90.08	African Rand	6.03
UAE Dirham	20.57	Hong Kong Dollar	10.86
Thai Baht	2.59	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.63	New Zealand Dollar	53.91
Australian Dollar	58.11	Saudi Riyal	21.52
Canadian Dollar	61.25	Swedish Krona	10.13
Swiss Franc	82.12	Singapore Dollar	56.39



DELHI WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

KFin invests in Artivatic.ai

KFin Technologies has announced its investment in Insurtech startup, Artivatic.ai. This partnership will help KFin-tech venture into the Insurtech space as the firm looks to diversify beyond offering registry services to mutual funds, corporate, pensions amongst other asset classes. Artivatic.ai will utilise the funding to broaden the product portfolio, explore new business horizons and expand its footprint across India. Sreekanth Nadella, Chief Executive Officer of KFin Technologies, said: "KFin prides itself as a hyper-scale backbone for financial services management across asset classes. Expanding our portfolio of services into insurance had been in the works, and our investment into Artivatic.ai is the first step in that direction."

YFLO Hyd holds meet

Ficci YFLO Hyderabad organized an interactive session on 'A tribute to the Health Workers - Our Front-line Heroes'. To mark this occasion, Ficci YFLO Chairperson Deepthi Reddy virtually felicitated Sangita Reddy, Joint MD, Apollo Hospitals, Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman AIG and Dr Aparna Reddy, child pulmonologist, Rainbow Hospital, for their extraordinary contribution. Deepthi Reddy shared her views and planning for coming days. She intends to help out all those searching for job opportunities as well as guiding them towards the right path in terms of health and wellbeing mentally and physically.

24Mantra's new range

24 Mantra Organic's has launched organic honey infusions which include ingredients such as tulsi, neem, turmeric and ginger. While honey is highly acclaimed for its rich antioxidants and some nutrients, it also offers other beneficial effects on heart health, lowering of cholesterol, suppressing cough etc. This benefits immune system, lowering high blood pressure, throat infections, allergies and antiseptic properties. All products are available in 250-gram bottle. The products are available at e-commerce sites like Amazon, Flipkart, Bigbasket etc. N Balasubramanian, CEO, 24Mantra Organic, said: "Providing a wide basket of pure, healthy food to consumers has been the mainstay of 24Mantra. With growing awareness and adoption of organic and healthy food among consumers, the new range of honey infusions is packed with a variety of health benefits".

FAITH seeks govt support

FAITH has made a request to Finance Ministry, RBI and Tourism Ministry for urgently taking up measures targeted at tourism jobs and businesses protection. It has been repeatedly reaffirmed through all government data whether that of GST, RBI or of income tax that tourism, travel and hospitality continues to be the worst hit sector during 13 months period since the time pandemic has struck and is also likely stay that way for much of the foreseeable period. The three measures proposed are: waiver or compensation for fixed statutory liabilities because there has been literally no tourism business due to full or partial shutdown of all other segments of tourism, secondly direct benefit transfer of basic pay and Credit of SEIS dues for 2019-20.

MOODY's SLASHES FY22 GDP FORECAST TO 9.3%

Global rating agency says 2nd wave will hamper economic recovery

NEW DELHI

MOODY's Investors Service on Tuesday slashed India's growth forecast for the current financial year to 9.3 per cent saying that the second wave of coronavirus infections hampers economic recovery and increases risk of longer-term scarring. Moody's, which has a 'Baa3' rating on India with a negative outlook, said obstacles to economic growth, high debt and weak financial system constrain sovereign credit profile.

The US-based rating agency had in February forecast a 13.7 per cent economic growth for the current fiscal (April 2021-March 2022). As per official estimates, the Indian economy contracted 8 per cent in the previous fiscal ended March 2021. "India is experiencing a severe second wave of coronavirus infections which will slow the near-term economic recovery and could weigh on longer-term growth dynamics. "The surge of the virus, which has been driven by a highly contagious variant, has put significant strain on India's healthcare system with hospitals overrun and medical supplies in short supply," Moody's said.

Stating that the second wave of coronavirus infections hampers economic recovery and increases risk of longer-term scar-



- Moody's earlier projected 13.7% upswing
- Covid surge hit healthcare system hard
- Negative impact only in April quarter

ring, Moody's said the reimposition of lockdown measures will curb economic activity and could dampen market and consumer sentiment. However, it does not expect the impact to be as severe as during the first wave. Unlike the first wave where lockdowns were applied nationwide for several months, the second wave 'micro-containment zone' measures are more localised, targeted and will likely be of shorter duration. Businesses and consumers have also grown more accustomed to operating under pandemic conditions.

"As of now, we expect the negative impact on economic output to be limited to the April-June quarter, followed by a strong rebound in the second half of the year. "As a result of the negative impact of the second wave, we have revised our real, inflation-adjusted GDP

growth forecast down to 9.3 per cent from 13.7 per cent for fiscal 2021 and to 7.9 per cent from 6.2 per cent in fiscal 2022," Moody's said. Over the longer term, Moody's expects growth to be around 6 per cent. "The credit profile of India is increasingly constrained by obstacles to economic growth, a high debt burden and weak financial system. Policymaking institutions have struggled to tackle and contain these risks, exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic," it added.

It said mutually reinforcing risks from deeper stresses in the economy and financial system could lead to a more severe and prolonged erosion in fiscal strength, exerting further pressure on the credit profile. India began the third phase of its vaccination campaign for those aged 18-44 on May 1, making the vaccination available to the

entire adult population. However, as of early May only around 10 per cent of the country's population had received at least one dose of the vaccine.

"A shortage of vaccines and logistical difficulties in reaching a large rural population (about two-thirds of the population) complicate the vaccine roll-out," Moody's said. It added that the international community has recently contributed to India's vaccine efforts with increased medical and vaccine supplies to help address shortfalls.

"The spread of the virus and the rate of vaccinations will have a direct impact on economic outcomes," Moody's expects the renewed surge in the virus to contribute to a marginal shortfall in revenue and a redirection of spending toward healthcare and virus response relative to what the government budgeted in February. It expects a wider general government fiscal deficit of about 11.8 per cent of GDP in current fiscal, compared with our previous forecast of 10.8 per cent.

"We expect the combined impact of slower growth and a wider deficit to drive the general government debt burden to 90 per cent of GDP in fiscal 2021 (April-March 2022), gradually rising to 92 per cent in fiscal 2023," Moody's said.

Granules India net up 38%

NEW DELHI

HYDERABAD-based drug firm Granules India on Tuesday reported a 38.15 percent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 127.56 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2021, on account of robust sales. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 92.33 crore for the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, Granules India said in a regulator filing.

Consolidated revenue from operations of the company stood at Rs 799 crore for the quarter under consideration. It was Rs 600 crore for the same period a year ago, it added. For the financial year ended March this year, the company posted a net profit of Rs 549 crore as against Rs 335 crore for the previous financial year, Granules India said. The company's revenue from operations of the company stood at Rs 3,238 crore for the financial year under consideration. It was at Rs 2,599 crore for the previous financial year, it

added. "Despite unprecedented challenges over the past year, our robust performance demonstrates the unwavering commitment of our colleagues and the resilience of our business. We are investing for the next phase of growth across all verticals," Granules India CMD Krishna



Prasad Chigurupati said. The board of directors has recommended a final dividend of 75 paise per equity share of Re 1 each in addition to an interim dividend of 75 paise per equity share of Re 1 each paid during the year, the filing said. Shares of Granules India Ltd closed at Rs 359.90 per scrip on the BSE, down 1.17 percent from its previous close.

Cold chain logistics may grow 20% by 2025: JLL

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

THE national cold chain sector is expected to grow at over 20 per cent CAGR by 2025, according to JLL, due to its transformation from conventional cold storage to modern storage space. The estimates are based on the sector's performance over the past few months, where despite the post-Covid economic impediments, the organised cold chain segment has seen significant growth in country-wide footprint.

According to JLL, there is an opportunity for organised cold storage, palletized cold storage in tier-I cities like Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Bangalore Chennai, Pune, Kolkata, Hyderabad as well as tier-II cities like Lucknow, Kanpur, Ranchi, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Goa, Aurangabad, Ahmedabad, Kochi, and Coimbatore. An additional 1.5-2 lakh pallet capacity (frozen and chilled) may be



1.5 - 2 lakh pallet capacity is expected to be added as part of temperature-controlled storage space in next 2-3 years

added as part of temperature-controlled storage space in the next two to three years. Cold chain refers to the transportation and warehousing of temperature-sensitive products from the point of origin to the point of consumption, which increases shelf life and prevents spoilage. About 60 per cent of cold storage capacity is concentrated in the states of West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and

Bihar, out of which storage of potatoes accounts for 85-90 per cent of the capacity. Cold storage in India contributes 43.7 per cent of the total revenue from the cold chain industry and only 36 per cent have a capacity below 1,000 MT. "Automation in the logistics sector will only become more pronounced in the coming years and we see innovation in the multimodal and cold supply chain as catalysts for new segments of demand. Both from the equity and lending community, the appetite for the yield in the industrial sector is likely to further drive the investor demand for cold chain facilities," said Yogesh Shevade, Head - Industrial Services, JLL, India.

"The rationale behind the expansion is primarily driven by capturing higher market share by organised cold chain operators, changing consumer behavior for quality products, and securing supply reliability in a pandemic like situation," he added.

Intel's new phone enables users to fight Covid-19

NEW DELHI



TO help users keep a check on their health amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Intel mobile has in its portfolio an innovative offering an entry-level feature phone -itel it2192T Thermo Edition that can measure the temperature of the human body on the go. Arjeeet Talapatra, CEO, TRANSSION India, said: "We aim to enable, empower, and provide access to customers with a technology-based solution to make them informed about their health with a tap of their finger."

Priced at Rs 1,049, the phone comes with an in-built temperature sensor that enables consumers to monitor their temperature. The phone also comes with a text-to-speech feature and supports eight regional input languages.

Despite Covid, M&A deals touch 10-yr high

The benchmark stock indices have also not witnessed any serious dent since the second wave despite it leaving more devastation

MUMBAI

DEAL numbers, including private equity investments and mergers and acquisitions, touched a decadal high for any month at 161 in April, even as the country faced the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, a report said on Tuesday.

The total value of the transactions in April stood at over \$13 billion, the report by Grant Thornton, a consultancy, said, pointing out that domestic M&A transactions led the pack by reporting over 30 transactions aggregating to \$5 billion.

Even though the second wave started earlier, the infections rose very fast across large parts of the country in April and the country has reported 4 lakh new infections and 4,000 deaths a day. The second wave has overwhelmed the healthcare apparatus in many places, and has led to localised lockdowns in 20 States which



While the second wave of the pandemic is threatening to delay the current pace of economic recovery, the current level of economic activities does not seem to have suffered significantly from the localised lockdowns yet

dent the economic activity.

The benchmark stock indices have also not witnessed any serious dent since the second wave despite it leaving more devastation, leading many to wonder about the apparent disconnect between the markets and the real economy.

"While the second wave of the pandemic is threatening to delay the current pace of economic recovery, the current level of eco-

nomic activities does not seem to have suffered significantly from the localised lockdowns yet," Grant Thornton partner Prashant Mehra said.

He acknowledged that the deal record coincides with the peak in Covid-19 cases in the country, but added that it also reflects the importance of the time period between the first wave and the second wave, which witnessed several fiscal and economic in-

centives and created opportunity.

The way global economies deal with new variants of the virus in the coming months is likely to pose uncertainty around deal activity with overseas investors, he said.

By number of deals, the transactions more than doubled to 161 in April when compared to the year-ago period which was marred by a nationwide lockdown, while the deal values are 50 per cent higher.

When compared with March 2021, the activity in April witnessed heightened activity with deal volumes up by 18 per cent and deal values spiking by 174 per cent, the report said.

There were 42 merger and acquisition transactions totalling to \$5.5 billion in the month on an overall basis.

While deal volumes increased more than twice the deal volumes when compared to last year, deal values fell by 30 per cent because

of the Facebook-Jio Platform deal valued at \$5.7 billion in the last year. Barring this deal, April 2021 recorded 2.5 times increase in deal values.

Domestic deal activity accounted for 91 per cent of the overall M&A deal volumes and 76 per cent of the deal values in April 2021, it said.

April 2021 witnessed record PE activity both in terms of deal values and volumes with 119 investments aggregating to \$7.6 billion, the highest PE activity in any month since 2011.

The month saw five start-up/e-commerce companies join the esteemed unicorn club making a historic month for the Indian startup ecosystem.

IT and IT Enabled Services, e-commerce, education, manufacturing and energy and natural resources were the transaction torch bearers for the month in terms of deal values, the consultancy said.

Don't think we will ever see those glorious days again: Ambrose on WI cricket

KINGSTON

PACE legend Curtly Ambrose believes the current lot of Caribbean youngsters doesn't really understand what cricket means to the West Indies and so the two-time world champions will never be able to relive the glory days again.

West Indies had lifted first two World Cup titles in 1975 and 1979 and it took 33 years for the team to claim another ICC title when Darren Sammy had guided

them to the 2012 T20 World Cup crown and repeated the feat four years later.

"Most of the youngsters we have now probably don't quite understand what cricket means to West Indians in the West Indies and abroad because cricket is the only sport that really unites Caribbean people," Ambrose told Talk Sports Live.

"This is no disrespect to the players we have now because we have a couple of guys who have some quality in them and

can become great, but what we have to understand is that I don't think we will ever see those great, exceptional glory days again."

The 57-year-old, who claimed 405 wickets in 98 Tests between 1988 and 2000, said it is difficult to find talented cricketers from the island nation nowadays.

"It's going to be difficult to find another Viv Richards or a (Demond) Haynes and (Gordon) Greenidge, a Brian Lara, Richie Richardson, you know, a

Malcolm Marshall, Curtly Ambrose, Courtney Walsh, Michael Holding, Andy Roberts, and the list goes on and on, Clive Lloyd," Ambrose said.

"It's going to be extremely difficult to find those quality players again." Ambrose said West Indies team can improve their ICC rankings but won't be able to dominate the way it did in the 80s and 90s.

"When we were the best team in the world, West Indians all over the globe could

walk and boast about how good we were because we were the best, so it's going to be difficult to see those glory days again," he said.

"Yes, we can be competitive and climb up the ICC rankings and be a force to be reckon with again, but those glory days, I don't think we will see them again." (PTI)



Tour of Sri Lanka

Two-way fight for captaincy between Shikhar and Hardik

NEW DELHI

VETERAN opener Shikhar Dhawan and flamboyant allrounder-turned specialist batsman Hardik Pandya will be locked in a two-way fight for India captaincy if Shreyas Iyer doesn't get fit in time for the white-ball tour of Sri Lanka in July.

India's limited overs specialists will be playing three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs in the island nation during the second half of July, when big guns like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma will be in England for a marquee five-match Test series.

"It is still not clear if Shreyas will recover fully and will be match-fit in

time for tour of Sri Lanka. Normally, a surgery of this scale along with rest, extensive rehab and training to get back in shape takes around four months," a senior BCCI source privy to selection matters told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"In case Shreyas was available, he would have been the automatic choice for captaincy." It's only logical that the two contenders for captaincy are 35-year-old Dhawan, who has had good "one and half IPLs" in last two seasons and Pandya junior, who is one of the most accomplished match-winners.

"Shikhar has had two very good IPL including this curtailed one and being the senior most among those who are available for selection, he is a very strong contender. Also he has been a solid performer for India for past eight years," an official said.

As far as Hardik is concerned, his reputation as a white-ball match-winner can't be discounted either. "Yes, Hardik hasn't been regularly bowling for MI or In-

dia in recent times. However, he is the man with x-factor and among options available. He is miles ahead of his peers in terms of being an impact performer. And who knows, may be extra responsibility brings the best out of him."

Pandya was included in the four-Test series at home against England so that his bowling workload is increased keeping the England tour in mind but it is learnt that the Baroda man is unlikely to bowl more than an odd over or two in the shortest format or ODI in near future.

"Hardik, after his back surgery to cure stress fracture, is not the same bowler anymore. He was a fast medium bowler before injury but to bowl at a brisk 135 kmph plus pace consistently, it could impact his back. "So he is focussing more on his match finishing skills," a person in the know of things said. (PTI)



Qualifying round draw of 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup in India deferred

KUALA LUMPUR: The qualifying round draw of the 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup to be held in India, scheduled for May 27 was on Tuesday postponed due to rising COVID-19 cases in the host country and across the continent. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said the draw to be held here has been postponed until further notice. "Taking into consideration the current challenges and logistical arrangements, the AFC agreed the postponement of the draw was necessary due to rising COVID-19 cases in the host nation as well as across the continent keeping in mind the wellbeing and safety of all teams, players, officials and relevant stakeholders," the AFC said. "More details on the new arrangements for the draw for Asia's flagship women's tournament will be announced in due course," it added in the statement. In January, the AFC had announced that the (main) tournament would take place between January 20 and February 6 next year. However, the draw for the qualifying matches of both the 2022 AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup in Uzbekistan and the 2022 AFC U-17 Women's Asian Cup in Indonesia will proceed as planned on May 27. (PTI)

FIH Pro League: Australia and New Zealand to face-off in June

LAUSANNE: Australia and New Zealand hockey teams will compete in the two-leg FIH Pro League on June 26 and 27 in Perth, the game's governing body said on Tuesday. The two teams were scheduled to play in April but the tie was put on hold due to travel restrictions in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. "...the FIH Hockey Pro League matches between both countries, which were postponed because of the current global COVID-19 pandemic, will now be played on 26-27 June in Perth, Australia," an FIH statement said. "This has been made possible thanks to the Trans-Tasman bubble put in place last month and allowing quarantine free travel between Australia and New Zealand." The double-headers between Australia and New Zealand were originally scheduled to be played on the April 24 and 25 before they were postponed due to the health cri-

Boxing world championship for men to be held in Oct-Nov in Belgrade

LAUSANNE: The world championship of boxing for men will be held from October 26 to November 6 in Belgrade, Serbia, the International Boxing Association (AIBA) announced on Tuesday. The event was to be held in India originally but the country lost the hosting rights after failing to pay the host fee last year. An irate AIBA then awarded the competition to Serbia. "The tournament will be held from 26 October – 6 November 2021," the AIBA announced. The organisation of the event will be overseen by the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic, who heads the Local Organising Committee (LOC). "The AIBA men's World Boxing Championships will show our determination to provide a platform for boxers all around the world to achieve their full potential," AIBA President Umar Kremlev said. "We have full confidence that the tournament will be conducted safely, given our successful implementation of COVID-19 counter measures throughout this year," he added. The previous edition of the championship was hosted by Ekaterinburg, Russia in 2019. (PTI)

Leipzig seek maiden title

BERLIN: Julian Nagelsmann will have one last chance to finish his term at RB Leipzig with a first-ever major title for him and the club when they face Borussia Dortmund in the German Cup final on Thursday.

The 33-year-old German coach will move to Bayern Munich in summer. To clinch the trophy with Leipzig, he must overcome a negative run against Dortmund. Nagelsmann has won only one of his 11 league duels against the Cup final opponents. Dortmund's late 3-2 win on Saturday just added up to the negative series.

"The record is not outstanding. It's about time we won a game. We have our next chance on Thursday," Nagelsmann said.

'England players to skip remainder of IPL'

LONDON

EVEN as the Indian cricket board hopes to complete remainder of the Indian Premier League (IPL), possibly at an overseas destination, the English board has put its foot down in favour of international cricket, ruling out the possibility of English cricketers playing in the league.

"We're planning on the involvement of England players in England matches. We've got a full FTP schedule. So if those tours to Pakistan and Bangladesh [in September and October] are going ahead, I'd expect the players to be there," England men's director of cricket Ashley Giles told British media here.

While the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is looking for a window in September -- between

the home series against India and the T20 World Cup - or after the T20 World Cup ends in November, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) wishes to follow the tight schedule as laid out in the Future Tours Programme (FTP).

England play New Zealand in two Tests on June 2-14 in a series that was hastily arranged and Giles said the IPL players were allowed to skip the Test series as an exception since their IPL contracts were already formalised.

"The New Zealand scenario was very different. Those Test matches were formalised at the end of January, by which time all those contracts and NOCs [no objection certificates] were signed for full involvement in the IPL," he said further.

"None of us knows what a rearranged IPL looks like at the mo-

ment; where it's going to be or when. But from when we start this summer against New Zealand, our programme is incredibly busy. We've got a lot of important, high-profile cricket including the T20 World Cup and the Ashes. And we're going to have to look after our players."

England are expected to tour Bangladesh in September immediately after hosing India in a five-Test series and then they travel to Pakistan in mid-October. They play the T20 World Cup, scheduled to be held in October-November, after that and then travel to Australia for Ashes that begins on December 8.

They then have a limited overs series in West Indies just after Ashes in January and they follow it up with a limited-overs series which means they are tied up till the next IPL. (IANS)

IOC to 'work with full engagement' towards safe Olympics

BEIJING

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC) will continue to "work with full engagement" towards a safe Olympics, an IOC spokesperson told Xinhua.

Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga had said on Monday that he had never put Olympics first when asked whether the Tokyo Olympics will go forward if the Covid-19 situation worsens, adding that the IOC has the final say on the matter.

"My priority has been to protect the lives and health of the Japanese population. We must first prevent the spread of the virus," said Suga, whose government is under fierce criticism over its handling of the pandemic.

When asked about Suga's comments, the IOC spokesperson responded: "The Olympic community from all over the world is thinking of the Japanese people who are affected by the pandemic and who are facing this crisis with solidarity and resilience. Together with our Japanese partners and friends, we continue to work with full engagement to ensure the safe organisation of the Olympic and Paralympic Games."

The spokesperson also highlighted the



An ignition ceremony for the Tokyo Olympic torch relay is held at Heiwadai Athletic Stadium in Fukuoka, southwestern Japan on Tuesday. The torch relay was taken off public roads due to the coronavirus pandemic. The next week's torch relay is being pulled off the streets in Hiroshima prefecture, too, as COVID-19 cases rise in Japan. This is at least the sixth change to the relay - from preflight to cancellation - in the last several weeks as cases surge in Japan. Organizers warned before the relay began that changes and delays were expected in the face of the pandemic.

vaccination of delegations, which has been in place to ensure a safe Games.

"In addition to the already strict science and experience-based Covid-19 counter-measures, the IOC has initiated an already very successful vaccination program for the

national delegations coming to Japan. This will ensure that the vast majority of the residents of the Olympic Village will arrive in Japan vaccinated," the spokesperson said.

"It is happening in solidarity with the Japanese people, and to protect the Japan-

ese people as well as the participants of the Olympic and Paralympic Games," he added.

Thus far, Japan has only managed to vaccinate 240,000 of those aged 65 or older with the second of their two jabs, in stark contrast to the pace of other advanced countries.

The Japanese central government has reportedly begun to speed up the national vaccination drive from Monday.

In the following two weeks, the government said it will deliver enough vaccines to the local municipalities to inoculate nine million seniors, with all 36 million of this demographic having the requisite amount of vaccine doses administered by the end of June.

The host city of Tokyo is currently under an extended state of emergency until the end of May, and the Games organisers announced on Monday that IOC president Thomas Bach's scheduled visit to Japan on May 17 and 18 has been postponed.

A recent opinion poll by the Yomiuri Shimbun daily showed nearly 60 per cent of the people in Japan want the Games cancelled. Tokyo 2020, postponed by one year due to the pandemic, is scheduled to take place from July 23 to August 8. (IANS)