

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

KARIMNAGAR | MONDAY | 26 APRIL 2021

## WEATHER



Max: 37.9°C  
Min: 25.2°C  
RH: 28%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.  
Rains likely. Max/Min  
temp. 38/25 °C

## ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Chaturdasi  
till 12.42 pm  
Star: Chitta till 11.03 pm  
Varjyam: 8.56 am to 10.20 am;  
3.58 am to 5.23 am (Tuesday)  
Durmuhurtam: 12.39 pm to  
1.29 pm; 3.10 pm to 4 pm  
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am  
HIJRI CALENDAR  
Ramzan 13,1442 AH  
PRAYERS  
Fajar: 4.50 am  
Zohar: 12.24 pm  
Asar: 4.39 pm  
Maghrib: 6.40 pm  
Isha: 7.50 pm  
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.53 AM  
SUNSET TODAY 6.34 PM  
MOONSET 4.29 AM  
MOONRISE 4.53 PM



## COUNTER POINT



We will give 2 oxygen  
cylinders to each family  
if voted to power!

## SHORT TAKES

### Apex court judge passes away

New Delhi: Supreme Court  
judge Justice Mohan M  
Shantanagoudar died at a  
private hospital in Gurgaon,  
sources said on Sunday. He  
was 62. The mortal remains  
of the judge will be taken to  
his Rajaji Nagar residence in  
Bengaluru, where last rites  
will be conducted.

### CoWIN registration must for vaccine

New Delhi: Getting regis-  
tered on the CoWIN portal  
and taking an appointment  
to get a Covid vaccine jab  
will be mandatory for those  
aged between 18 and 45  
years as walk-ins will not be  
allowed initially, official  
sources said. Those above  
45 years can avail the facili-  
ty of on-site registration.

### Schools, colleges vacations start

Hyderabad: The Telangana  
state government on  
Sunday announced that  
summer vacations for  
schools and colleges in the  
state will start from  
Tuesday, April 27, and con-  
tinue till May 31.  
■ Report on Page 2

## COVID | CARE

Staff on long shifts, slim meals, controlled fluid intake

# ICU docs work with few breaks

BALU PULIPAKA | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The air inside is cool, but  
thick with Coronavirus.  
Among the 13 patients in a  
Covid-19 ICU, some are on  
ventilators as their bodies  
wracked by the virus try  
and fight back the disease.

The sight is pathetic. The  
tube inside the throat adds  
to their cough. Each time a  
patient coughs, countless  
virus particles are spewed  
into the air.

Inside the blue full body  
protection kits, doctors,  
nurses and other support  
staff go about their tasks  
methodically. At stake are  
the lives of infected patients  
who, along with their fami-

● THE SIGHT is pathetic.  
The tube inside the throat  
adds to their cough. Each  
time a patient coughs,  
countless virus particles  
are spewed into the air. In  
the PPE kits, the health  
staff go about their tasks  
methodically

lies, have placed their faith  
in god the almighty and the  
hospital staff.

The staff in attendance is  
practising a new regimen of  
long shifts on slim meals  
and controlled fluid intake.  
“If anyone wants to take a  
break, they will take off the  
PPE kits and spend 20 min-  
utes in the restroom and  
spend another 20 minutes

putting on a fresh kit. In the  
meanwhile, we need to find  
a replacement for that per-  
son for a similar duration,”  
explained Dr K. Subba  
Reddy, chief intensivist at  
Apollo Hospital.

Last year, when patients  
began streaming into the  
ICU at Apollo in Jubilee  
Hills, there was fear and  
apprehension among the  
staff. Everyone was worried  
and scared. It was  
Annapurna, a senior house-  
keeping staffer, who gave  
the medics the confidence  
to carry on.

“I had attended to the  
requirements of TB, AIDS  
and Chicken Pox patients.  
We overcame those situa-  
tions with courage and we

can overcome this too,” she  
had told them. “That gave  
us a lot of motivation and  
strength. Then there was  
one of our nurses Pyun Su  
Klin, who lost her sister and  
brother in the first wave.  
Yet, she said she will not  
take a break or go home, but  
continued to work, saying  
there were so many pa-  
tients around to be taken  
care of,” Dr Subba Reddy  
recalled. While the stress of  
working to save lives every  
minute is itself a challeng-  
ing experience, so is it that  
an ICU staffer cannot mingle  
with own family as a  
matter of precaution.

■ Page 2: Doctors see kin  
from a distance

## WORLD | 5

Saudi to ship 80 MT  
of oxygen to India

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

# TS to hire 755 health staff to fight Covid

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The Telangana state gov-  
ernment will appoint 755  
health personnel includ-  
ing 144 doctors within  
five days to provide better  
medicare to people.

Chief Minister K.  
Chandrashekar Rao on  
Sunday directed the dis-  
trict collectors to issue a  
notification for special



recruitment, conduct  
interviews and appoint  
the staff in five days in

114 state hospitals.  
According to a CMO press  
release, Rao took the de-  
cision due to the unexpect-  
ed surge in the Covid-19  
cases.

As per the government  
orders, posts for 144 doc-  
tors, 527 nurses and 84 lab  
technicians were sanc-  
tioned. This will have a  
financial burden of ₹9.02  
crore on the state’s exche-  
quer.

# Kishan: TS must give true picture

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The Centre is taking all  
steps to ensure oxygen at  
hospitals across the coun-  
try, Union minister of  
state for home G. Kishan  
Reddy said on Sunday.

At the same time, he  
urged the Telangana state  
government to give cor-  
rect figures on the daily  
Covid deaths and cases.  
Speaking to the media  
after visiting Telangana  
Institute of Medical  
Sciences (Tims) — the  
1,000-bed Covid hospital at  
Gachibowli — the Union  
minister said that the  
Centre has provided 200  
ventilators exclusively to  
TIMS. “There is no prob-  
lem with ventilators in  
TIMS,” he said.

Kishan Reddy had been  
advised by Prime  
Minister Narendra Modi  
to visit government hospi-  
tals in Telangana state  
and check the Covid-relat-  
ed situations there.

The minister said about  
600 Covid-19 patients are  
being treated at Tims and  
100 patients are in ICU  
while 50 people are in gen-  
eral wards. NRB equip-  
ment for oxygen is also  
available, but there is a

## FATHER, SON LOOTING STATE, ALLEGES BANDI

Khammam: BJP state  
president Bandi San-jay  
alleged that Chief  
Minister K. Chandr-  
ashekar Rao and his son  
and minister K.T. Rama  
Rao are looting TS with  
kickbacks from govern-  
ment projects.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 3

shortage of masks, he said  
and noted that states have  
an emergency fund to rely  
on during natural disas-  
ters.

The minister of state  
said Tims has 700 vials of  
remdesivir and the Centre  
has given fresh permis-  
sion to several companies  
to produce oxygen.  
Oxygen is also being  
imported from Singapore  
and Germany.

“Telangana state should  
keep revealing the actual  
number of Covid19 cases  
and deaths in the state. If  
the true picture is given,  
people will be aware of the  
seriousness of the situa-  
tion and take more care,”  
he said.

■ Page 2: Second wave  
more serious: Kishan

# 62,000 ACTIVE CASES COULD TRIGGER CRISIS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The number of people  
suffering from Covid in  
Telangana is rising  
with no let-up in fresh  
cases being reported.

As per the latest num-  
bers for Saturday  
released by the state  
health department,  
Telangana state had a  
total of 62,929 active  
cases, more than 10  
times the number of  
active cases — 6,159 —  
on April 1. On  
Saturday, April 24, one  
out of every 12 persons  
tested for the disease in  
the state was found  
positive.

■ Page 2: 38 more die  
due to Covid

## 100 VILLAGERS TEST POSITIVE AFTER DRAMA

Adilabad: Over 100  
villagers from Sundar-  
ashala tested positive  
for Coronavirus after  
they sat through a tra-  
ditional drama event  
called *Chirathala  
Ramayanam* — with-  
out wearing masks.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 3

# NTV founder booked for Jubilee Hills land scam

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The Jubilee Hills police  
on Saturday registered a  
case against T. Narendra  
Chowdary, former  
Jubilee Hills Cooperative  
Housing Society presi-  
dent and founder of  
Telugu news channel  
NTV, and several others  
in connection with a plot  
scam in the upmarket  
area.

Deccan Chronicle had  
carried a report titled  
“1,500 sq yd plot for ₹2  
lakh” in these columns on  
April 23 revealing the reg-



T. Narendra Chowdary

istration of a plot in  
Jubilee Hills worth at  
least ₹50 crore in the  
name of a person who  
allegedly impersonated a  
Non Resident Indian. The  
present secretary of the  
society B. Ravindranath  
approached the High

Court seeking direction  
to the police to register a  
case against Mr  
Chowdary and former  
secretary T. Hanumantha  
Rao.

According to the FIR,  
Mr Chowdary and eight  
others including sub reg-  
istrar of Banjara Hills  
zone got a plot registered  
in the name of B. Sirisha  
for a sale consideration of  
₹1.91 lakh and subse-  
quently created a gift  
deed in the name of B.  
Srihari.

■ Page 2: Fake papers for  
plot allotted 30 yrs ago

## SPORTS | 8

Jadeja’s all-round  
show puts CSK on top

## TABLOID

Finally, talent  
gets its due



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PM says second wave shook country, but will beat it

# Modi orders installation of oxygen plants swiftly

SRIDHAR  
KUMARASWAMI | DC  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

Prime Minister Narendra  
Modi on Sunday ordered  
the swift installation of 551  
dedicated Pressure Swing  
Adsorption Medical  
Oxygen Generation Plants  
inside public health facili-  
ties in the country that will  
be financed by the PM  
Cares Fund in the war  
against the deadly second  
“storm” of Covid-19 bat-  
tering the country. Directing  
that these PSA oxygen  
plants should be made  
functional as soon as possi-  
ble, Mr Modi said they  
would serve as a major  
boost to oxygen availabil-  
ity at the district level.

In his monthly Mann ki  
Baat radio address on  
Sunday, Mr Modi admitted  
that the second coron-  
avirus “storm has shaken  
the country” when the  
nation had been full of  
enthusiasm and self-confi-  
dence after “successfully  
confronting the first wave  
of corona”.

Urging people not to get  
“swayed by any rumour  
about the vaccine”, Mr  
Modi pointed out that from  
May 1 onwards, the vac-  
cine would be made avail-

# US set to resume vax raw material

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

In a major announcement,  
the United States National  
Security Adviser (NSA)  
Jake Sullivan told his  
Indian counterpart Ajit  
Doval late on Sunday  
evening that the US has  
“identified sources of spe-  
cific raw material urgently  
required for Indian manu-  
facture of the Covishield  
vaccine that will immedi-  
ately be made available for  
India” and that the  
US has also “identified sup-  
plies of therapeutics, rapid  
diagnostic test kits, venti-  
lators, and Personal  
Protective Equipment  
(PPE) that will immediate-

ly be made available for  
India”.

The US also is pursuing  
options to provide oxygen  
generation and related sup-  
plies on an urgent basis, he  
said, adding that his coun-  
try is “working around the  
clock to deploy  
available resources and  
supplies”.

The American NSA also  
said the U.S. Development  
Finance Corporation (DFC)  
is funding a substantial  
expansion of manufactur-  
ing capability for BioE, the  
vaccine manufacturer in  
India, “enabling BioE to  
ramp up to produce at least  
1 billion doses of COVID-19  
vaccines by the end of  
2022”.

able for every person above  
18 in the country.

This comes amid a severe  
oxygen crunch for hospi-  
tals in several parts of the  
country due to the sharp  
and deadly spike in Covid

cases that has already  
claimed thousands of lives  
in the past few days.

Assuring that the Centre  
is “applying its entire  
might to give a filip to the  
endeavours of state govern-

# YOGI TO INVOKE NSA AGAINST MISINFORMATION

New Delhi: UP Chief  
Minister Yogi Adityanath  
asked officials to invoke  
the National Security Act  
and the “Gangsters Act”  
against those spreading  
“rumours” on shortage of  
oxygen cylinders.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 7

# INDIA ADDS 3.52 L NEW COVID CASES

New Delhi: India on  
Sunday reported 3,52,541  
new Covid-19 cases, 2,688  
deaths and 2,14,712 dis-  
charges in the last 24  
hours. The active cases  
rose to 28,09,308, which is  
15.82 % of infections.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 7

ments,” Mr Modi also  
“appealed to the states to  
extend the benefit of this  
free vaccine campaign of  
the Government of India to  
the maximum number of  
the people of their state”.

# Long wait for oxygen refill



Relatives of Covid patients wait to refill cylinders with medical oxygen at Badarpur in New Delhi on Sunday during the second wave of pandemic.

— PTI

# DIDI CONFIDENT OF RETURNING TO POWER IN WB

RAJIB CHOWDHURI  
& PRANMOY  
BRAHMACHARI | DC  
KOLKATA/BERHAMPORE,  
APRIL 25

A day before the seventh  
phase of the Assembly elec-  
tion in West Bengal, Chief  
Minister Mamata Banerjee  
declared that there was “no  
alternative” to the  
Trinamul Congress in the  
state, and that it would  
return to power.

“There is no reason to feel  
scared. There is no alterna-  
tive to the TMC in view of  
the way the previous phas-  
es recorded voting and the  
remaining ones that are  
going to the polls. The TMC  
will retain power here,” she  
declared at Berhampore in  
Murshidabad on Sunday.

The TMC supreme sound-  
ed confident of her third  
term in power as 34 seats,  
spread over four districts,  
will go to the polls in the  
seventh round on Monday.  
Among these, four — Bho-  
wanipore, Rashbehari,  
Ballygunge and Kolkata  
Port — are in Kolkata.

# Isro to launch satellite to track Gaganyaan

● SATELLITES IN orbit  
cannot pass along their  
information to the  
ground stations on Earth  
if the satellite does not  
have a clear view of the  
ground station. A data  
relay satellite serves as  
a way to pass along the  
satellite’s information.

New Delhi, April 25: The  
Indian Space Research  
Organisation will launch  
a data relay satellite that  
will help maintain contact  
with the Gaganyaan mis-  
sion throughout after the  
launch, sources said.

The satellite will be  
launched before the final  
leg of the Gaganyaan mis-  
sion, which will send  
astronauts to the Lower  
Earth Orbit (LEO). The  
first leg — the unmanned  
mission — is to be  
launched in December.

“We’re planning to  
launch our own satellite,  
which will act as a data  
relay satellite before going  
for the first human space  
flight,” the sources said.

The ₹800-crore project  
has been approved and  
work has been going on,  
they added. Satellites in  
orbit cannot pass along  
their information to the  
ground stations on Earth  
if the satellite does not  
have a clear view of the  
ground station. A data

relay satellite serves as a  
way to pass along the  
satellite’s information.  
The NASA, with a robust  
human space mission pro-  
gramme, also has its own  
data relay satellite.

Its Tracking and Data  
Relay Satellite allows it to  
have global coverage of all  
the satellites round the  
clock without having to  
build extra ground sta-  
tions on Earth. The Isro  
uses several ground sta-  
tions spread across the  
globe — Mauritius,  
Brunei and Biak,  
Indonesia. Last month,  
Isro chairperson K. Sivan  
had said the space agency

was also in talks with the  
Australian counterpart to  
have a ground station at  
the Coco islands for the  
Gaganyaan mission.  
However, there are blind  
spots, due to which there  
is a possibility of not  
receiving signals, sources  
added. The data relay  
satellite will help address  
the issues.

Earlier this month, the  
ISRO signed an agreement  
with French space agency  
CNES for cooperation for  
the Gaganyaan, a move  
that will enable training of  
Indian flight physicians in  
French space agency’s  
facilities. Under this  
agreement, CNES-devel-  
oped French equipment,  
tested and still operating  
aboard the International  
Space Station, will be  
made available to Indian  
crews. The CNES will also  
be supplying fireproof  
carry bags made in France  
to shield equipment from  
shocks and radiation, it  
said.

— PTI



OTHER STORIES

GO 73 receives strong resistance

**Hyderabad:** There is strong opposition from civil society seeking withdrawal of Government Order (GO 73), with Prof. G Haragopal writing a letter to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on the issue. “Telangana government declaring organisations unlawful in a democratic country without valid reason curbs voice of people’s organisation,” they said.

TWO HELD WITH 22 KGS OF GANJA IN HYDERABAD

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The Mangalhat police of Hyderabad arrested two men who were found in possession of 22 kilos of marijuana on Sunday. The contraband was seized 11 bags with each containing 2 kilos, officials said. The accused were identified as Thakur Ashish Singh, 24, and Adarsh Singh, 27, both residents of Mangalhat. We also seized a basic model mobile phone with contacts of buyers from their possession, police said. Based on credible information about the regular supply of ganja in Mangalhat area, police teams kept watch on the habitual offenders and area locals, following which they apprehended two accused persons.

“The duo, both childhood friends and degree dropouts, got into the illegal business in the year 2019 and started procuring ganja from unknown villagers of Visakhapatnam agency areas who used to come to Dhoolpet to sell the contraband. They used to purchase it for ₹5,000 per kilo from them and also used to smuggle the same from Visakhapatnam after buying it for ₹3,000 per kilo by travelling in private buses. They then sell it to needy customers for a high wholesale rate,” explained the police.

On Saturday evening, they went to Jummerat Bazar area and purchased 22 kilos of marijuana from an unknown villager of the agency area for ₹1.10 lakh. After they came back to Mangalhat and were heading back home, police teams apprehended them and seized the ganja from them. A case was registered against the accused men and an investigation was taken up further.

● **“The duo, both childhood friends and degree dropouts, got into the illegal business in the year 2019 and started procuring ganja from unknown villagers of Visakhapatnam agency areas who used to come to Dhoolpet to sell the contraband.”**

CHUGH CAMPAIGNS IN SIDDIPET MUNICIPALITY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

BJP Telangana affairs in-charge Tarun Chugh accused ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi of looting people’s money in the name of irrigation projects. He alleged that Kalvakuntla family has received commissions in projects that were redesigned in the state.

Chugh was campaigning in Siddipet on Sunday in favour of BJP candidates fighting municipal elections in the town. He was accompanied by Dubbaka MLA M. Raghunandan Rao and district president Doodi Srikanth Reddy. On the occasion, BJP released a charge-sheet against TRS leaders in the Siddipet municipality.

The BJP TS in-charge said TRS leaders of Siddipet, who were riding bicycles before 2014 elections, are now roaming around in cars after making money in the name of developing Komati Cheruvu. He asked finance minister T. Harish Rao how many industries he had brought to Siddipet and the number of people provided employment.

Chugh charged that the state government is being run like a private company, saying it distributed only 2,000 double bedroom houses when 12,000 beneficiaries had applied for these houses.

The BJP leader said roads had been laid overnight in view of municipal elections and funds misappropriated under the Amrut scheme. He asserted that with TRS losing its popularity, BJP will come to power in Telangana in the 2023 assembly elections.

Hyd lacks crematorium to burn Covid victims

GHMC drags feet, families waiting time reaches 24 hours

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC  
HYDERABAD APRIL 25

Lack of seriousness on the part of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) in providing facilities for cremation of the dead is emerging as a more serious problem during the Covid-19 season here. The waiting time for families reaching crematoria is as high as 24 hours, straining their nerves.

The corporation had promised to lay out five modern crematoria aside of or in place of the existing seven. The works on these are dragging. While the numbers of deaths increased every passing day here, two of the seven facilities are defunct. GHMC had installed electric furnaces long ago at Amberpet and Bansilalpet

● **THE CORPORATION** had promised to lay out five modern crematoria aside of or in place of the existing seven. The works on these are dragging. While the numbers of deaths increased every passing day here, two of the seven facilities are defunct

cremation grounds and modern electric crematoria were launched at SR Nagar and Panjagutta graveyards a decade ago.

Larger numbers of Coronavirus-affected deaths are occurring every day. The civic authorities are facing severe pressure in disposing of the bodies in the conventional way as residents surrounding the cremation grounds are vociferously protesting against burning of the Coronavirus-infected bod-

ies in their areas.

There are 960 graveyards in the city limits and, by now, these hardly have space to bury more bodies. Of them, the graveyards at Bansilalpet, Panjagutta, Amberpet and SR Nagar have electric crematoria and modern facilities.

The one at SR Nagar was defunct for six months as its management did not clear the electricity bills. Of the two crematoriums in Bansilalpet, one is functional. In Amberpet, both are functional. However, their management has not allowed cremation of bodies of the Covid-19 victims.

GHMC sources said they have been cremating more bodies than what the health bulletins issued by the state government stated. For instance, in Wednesday’s health bul-

letin, the government declared 23 Corona-linked deaths but in the Panjagutta crematorium alone, 40 bodies were disposed of.

During July last year, the GHMC had invited tenders for construction of LPG-based crematoriums at five locations, each costing ₹70 lakh.

Citing the Covid-19 deaths, the authorities said they would construct them on a priority basis and make them available soon.

All the five crematoria are to be readied in the core city areas including Charminar, Khairatabad, Secunderabad, Uppal and Kukatpally zones. The civic apathy has been troubling the families of the dead. When contacted for comment, senior officials at GHMC refused to respond.

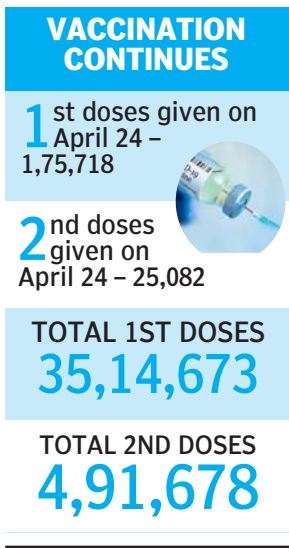
1 out of 61 test +ve, 38 deaths in 24 hrs

From Page 1

On April 1, one out of every 61 persons tested, was found to be Covid-19 positive.

Meanwhile, the state witnessed yet another record of 38 deaths, as per the official data released by the department, the highest yet during this pandemic. The new cases too rose to a whopping 8,126 on Saturday. With these, the total deaths rose to 1,961 and cumulative cases to 3,87,106 in the state.

The GHMC area reported 1,259 new cases, followed by 676 in Medchal-Malkajgiri, 591 in Ranga Reddy, 497 in Nizamabad, 346 in Nalgonda, 339 in Khammam, 334 in Warangal Urban, and 306 each in Siddipet and Mahbubnagar districts. Except seven other districts — Bhupalapally, Gadwal, Asifabad, Mulugu, Nagarkurnool, Narayanpet, and Nirmal — which reported cases in



double figures, all the other districts reported cases between a 100 and 300.

The health department said 3,307 persons were declared as cured from Covid-19 on Saturday, taking to 3,30,304, the total recovered cases.

FAKE PAPERS OF JUBILEE HILLS PLOT ALLOTTED 30 YEARS AGO

FROM PAGE 1

The complainant, Ravindranath, alleged that the accused created forged and fabricated documents to ensure registration of the plot 30 years after it was allotted to one Sirisha who is now settled in United States. “The registration was done by then office bearers in collusion with the sub registrar without any representation from the NRI and verifying the identity of the person,” he alleged.

According to Jubilee Hills inspector S. Rajasekhhar Reddy a case was registered based on the contents of the complaint with crime number 237/2021 under sections 120-B, 406, 408, 409, 419, 420, 467, 468, 471, 477A of Indian Penal Code and investigation was taken up.

Other accused include A. Suresh Reddy, former treasurer of the society, employees of the society Ch. Krishnamurthy, D. Srinivas Reddy, Md Javeduddin, B. Sirisha and P. Srihari.

Sources said apart from the criminal aspect involved and likely action against the accused, the property registered in the name of Sirisha which was subsequently transferred to Srihari will also land in trouble with police registering FIR.

As per rules, the Stamps and Registration department, based on the FIR, will make an entry of fraudulent property against the said plot making it difficult for the owner to resell or mortgage it. The registration can also be cancelled if the real NRI established the impersonation and seeks for cancellation of the sale deed.

Meanwhile, both Sirisha and Srihari have to account for at least ₹6.5 crore to the Income-Tax department. Irrespective of the sale consideration claimed by the buyer and seller, the IT department will take the market value fixed by the government as deemed sale consideration and levy the tax accordingly.

TWITTER TAKES DOWN REVANTH REDDY’S TWEET

MADDY DEEKSHITH DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

Complying with central government’s request, Twitter has removed Malkajgiri MP Anumula Revanth Reddy’s post related to Covid-19, apart from posts of 52 others. Majority of these tweets had been critical of how centre is handling the second wave of Coronavirus and health infrastructure in the country is breaking down.

Revanth Reddy tweeted the picture of a mass cremation, pointing out that with healthcare system collapsing, India has been reporting over 2,00,000 new cases daily.

AICC in-charge for Telangana Manickam Tagore said on his twitter handle, “Dear Twitter, is what my Parliament colleague Revanth Anumula saying wrong? Are there no 2,00,000 new cases in India? Has not health system collapsed in Delhi? Why this hypocrisy @Twitter? It’s India’s shame we have ministers like R.S. Prasad and Dr Hars-hvardhan.”

Twitter, besides removing Telangana MP’s post, also deleted from the micro-blogging site tweets including those of Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera, West Bengal minister Moloy Ghatak, ABP news editor Pankaj Jha, actor Vineet Kumar Singh, filmmaker Avinash Das, and former journalist Vinod Kapri.

A study of contrasts



The dead jostle for space with the living in an ICU ward at the Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences in the city on Sunday. The bodies of three Covid-19 patients who passed away are packed and await the arrival of patient care workers and crematorium staff to come and pick them up, a process that sometimes takes a few hours.

— DC



Doctors and healthcare workers attend on a Covid-19 patient at the ICU in Apollo Hospital.

— BY ARRANGEMENT

Doctors see relatives from a distance

FROM PAGE 1

The air in a Covid-19 ICU is thick with the virus. Intubated patients are coughing, generating aerosols carrying the virus particles.

Subba Reddy, over the past one year, has only been seeing his 11-year-old daughter from a distance, in a different apartment where she lives with her grandparents. Going nearer meant a risk to the child.

Coming off a prolonged 72-hour shift, Dr K. Swarna Deepak, also of Apollo, told *Deccan Chronicle* on Sunday, “Sometimes you just cannot take a break. Over the last couple of days, we opened more ICUs for Covid patients.”



Healthcare staff at work at the Apollo Hospital.

— BY ARRANGEMENT

And if a hospital runs out of ventilators, the doctors and nurses would

resort to sheer physical stamina, drawing every ounce of strength they

have to keep a patient alive.

Using a bag ventilator, they keep pumping, squeezing the bag to push oxygen into a patient’s lungs. “And when one arm gets tired, you just switch arms and continue. As long as it takes,” Dr Deepak said.

Elsewhere, at KIMS hospital, Dr Sambit Sahu, a critical and intensive care specialist, talks wistfully of what the scene was just a few weeks ago. “We barely had three patients in the Covid-19 ICU. Then it hit us like a storm. All of a sudden, it was 50 patients; and by the time we realised what was happening, we had a 100 of them in these ICUs,” he said.

Unlike last year, Covid-19 was a novel disease and

what everyone heard about it came from other parts of the world. The second wave is different. There was a sense of mental fatigue, of coming out of a stressful year. “We just got out of a traumatic year. And the feeling as the patients began pouring in was Oh God! Not Again!,” Dr Sahu said.

As the virus keeps flying around in the ICUs, the doctors have just one prayer on their lips; that they be able to save the life of every patient and that people at large followed the safety measures and helped medical professionals by keeping the case loads low. “If that does not happen soon, we are in for a disaster,” said Dr Subba Reddy.

Ambulance drivers struggle due to poor salary, Covid

DURGAPRASAD SUNKU | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

Several of the 108 Ambulance staff have been infected with Covid-19. The drivers are stressed out and are saddled with heavy workload, plying patients to hospital unendingly in view of the pandemic’s long stay and spread.

During the troubled months last year, they used to get an allowance of ₹3,000 and were provided with medical kits.

Now, they are not even getting proper gloves and sanitizers. “We are living in fear and if we die of this virus, there is no one to take care of our family,” stated a 108 driver, expressing his agony.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, a 46-year-old ambulance driver who tested Covid-positive and is under isolation said, “Earlier, when an ambulance driver tested positive, the GVK’s EMRI (Emergency Management and Research Institute) used to provide us medical kits and consider the isolation period as leave. Now, they are con-

● **THE DRIVERS** are stressed out and are saddled with heavy workload, plying patients to hospital unendingly in view of the pandemic’s long stay and spread. During the troubled months last year, they used to get an allowance of ₹3,000 and were provided with medical kits. Now, they are not even getting proper gloves and sanitizers.

sidering this as loss of pay. With meagre wages, we are already struggling to eke out a living. On top of it, this agony; neither the government nor the company is helping us.”

“We are the first to reach out to patients in emergency, especially to take Covid-19 patients to hospital. We are called the frontline warriors. Yet, when the government hiked pay to employees in the state, we were ignored,” he said.

Expressing his helplessness, the driver said, “I have to take care of my mother, wife and two daughters. It is impossible to feed them with the ₹10,000 salary I get. We,

though, have fewer options.”

Another driver said, “Each and every minute we are fearful about contracting this disease. As per the agreement between the government and GVK, EMRI should give a 10 per cent hike in salary every year. However, since 2015 there is no hike. There used to be an off every three days. Now, we are not getting an off even after two weeks. It’s non-stop work. The company is not giving the 21-day mandatory isolation to those who are tested positive. It is loss of pay.”

An ex-union member of the ambulance association said, “In most ambulances, there is no assistant to attend to patients. In this round, several drivers were infected with the virus. Yet, if we ask for a salary hike or allowance, we will be sacked. We are helpless. A strike is likely.”

Ambulance drivers seek a hike in their salaries by 60 per cent, saying the pay remained the same in the last six years. They also seek better support and facilities to drivers who tested positive.



OTHER STORIES

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY FOUND IN KHAMMAM

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, APRIL 25

An identified body is found at the new bus stand in Khammam on Sunday. The persons, who identified the body while street dogs were plucking out the body, informed the officials. The news was heard by Annam Srinivasa Rao, who is running the Annam Seva Foundation to the destitute. He rushed to the spot and shifted the body to the mortuary room in Khammam district headquarters hospital. It is noticed that the deceased was a beggar.

COPS ARREST THREE IN FORGERY CASE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, APRIL 25

Mancherial police on Sunday arrested three persons on the charges of indulging in forgery of the signature of collector Bharati Holli Kheri and Ramawath Balu, assistant director of Mines and Geology and for stealing the checkbook of Sand management of Mancherial. Police said the accused tried to withdraw ₹1.97 crore cash through check with the forged signature from the bank. Police registered a case following the complaint lodged by the assistant director of mines on April 22. As per police the accused were identified as Thallapalli Raju (28), Medipalli Jeevan (32), and Thallapalli Srinivas (34) of Ramnagar colony in Mancherial. Accused Thallapalli Raju used to book slots for lorries in TSMCD and his brother Thallapalli Srinivas used to work as outsourcing employee in AD mining office, Mancherial. Police seized ICICI bank checkbook of AD Mining office, Axis bank book, and stamp pad, copies of signatures of Mancherial collector and Assistant Director of Mining and the accused cell phones.

EXCISE MUDDLE DENIES SALARIES TO 87 SINCE JANUARY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

The issue of 280 excise sub-inspectors recruited in Group 2 by state government through a notification in 2015 is still hanging in balance. Many are yet to receive posting orders and some are not even getting their salaries. State government had issued through Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) notification in 2015 for filling 1,032 Group-2 posts in all departments, including 280 SI posts in Excise Department. Examination was held in 2016 and verification of certificates belonging to successful candidates completed in 2017. But in 2018, some candidates went to court in 2018 over mistakes in exam sheets. Thus, interviews had to be held again in 2019 and appointment letters were issued in 2020. In the interim, Excise Department had given ad-hoc promotions to junior assistants and appointed them as sub-inspectors. As 193 posts had already been filled, SIs recruited by TSPSC ended up being referred to as being under training period in respective police stations. For the remaining 87 candidates, state government issued a G. O. creating supernumerary posts and they were assigned to various police stations in the state. With this, 193 people started getting salaries through various police stations and 87 recruited under supernumerary posts were paid through the Excise Department. However, the period of G. O. has ended on January 23, 2021. As a result, these employees have not got their salaries since past three months. They are requesting chief secretary Somesh Kumar, who is also principal secretary (Excise), and excise minister Srinivas Goud to immediately intervene into the matter and resolve their predicament.

● 193 PEOPLE started getting salaries through various police stations and 87 recruited under supernumerary posts were paid through the Excise Department. However, the period of G. O. has ended on January 23, 2021.



(1) BJP state president Bandi Sanjay participates in a campaign ahead of KMC polls in Khammam on Sunday. (2) Warangal East, MLA, Nannapuneni Narender along with minister for Tribal welfare, Satyavathi Rathod, campaigning at Khila Warangal on Sunday.



—BY ARRANGEMENT

KCR, KTR duo looting state, alleges Sanjay

Injustice is done to the tribals of Gurrupodu thanda: MP Choose TRS for development: MLA

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, APRIL 25

Bharatiya Janata Party state president Bandi Sanjay said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao and his son, Minister for Municipal Administration and IT, K.T. Rama Rao are looting the state by getting kickbacks in each and every project in Telangana. Sanjay, who made whirlwind tours in ten divisions of Khammam Municipal Corporation, said that they father and son(KCR, KTR) are not leaving sand, soil and granite and mining illegally through benamis. He said that BJP government at Centre released ₹106 cr to Khammam under AMRUT scheme but, the TRS government diverted them to the Mission Bhagiratha and following the same in Aasara scheme too. The government is not serious in solving problems of the people. He recalled that the police hand-cuffed the farmers of Khammam when they asked remunerative prices for the cotton. He said that no section in the state including women, unemployed

youth, dalits and farm labourers are happy in Telangana. “KCR and KTR are doing injustice to the tribals and filing illegal cases against tribals in Gurrupodu thanda”, he said, adding that TRS government is not consistent with its policies being implemented in the state. Referring to the gestures of Minister for Transport P. Ajay Kumar, he said that Ajay is doing all contracts through his benami company and earning crores of rupees. Each and every work going in Khammam is being executed by Minister’s benami company. He said that Ajay had no guts to face BJP in Khammam so, the Minister and his followers are using police to threaten the candidates of opposition parties. Illegal cases are being filed against political opponents. Sanjay said that he is ready to go to jail on behalf of victims. He said that BJP will win majority seats in Khammam. People started knowing the corruption of the TRS government and are ready to vote against TRS.

is allocating sufficient funds for Warangal and in the guidance of Minister K.T. Rama Rao, Khila Warangal area will be turned into a tourism hub. He appealed to the citizens to choose the TRS over the parties which create rift between religions. Minister for Tribal welfare, Satyavathi Rathod said that Chief Minister KCR is developing Warangal wonderfully after the formation of Telangana. Pensions of ₹2,000 are being offered like never before. Kalyana Lakshmi helps the girl’s marriage and stands by the poor. Mission Bhagiratha provides clean water to every household in the city of Warangal. “The BJP which is in power at the Centre has done nothing for Telangana. The Congress has lost its presence completely. The BJP does not have a proper leader here. To keep this development going the TRS must remain in power,” she urged.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, APRIL 25

The Khila Warangal area would soon be developed as a tourist hub boosting the business employment chances of the locals, said Warangal East MLA Nannapuneni Narender. Campaigning for party candidates ahead of GWMC elections, Narender assured the locals that the land issues of the farmers will be solved. “We are also develop the Qila Warangal ground for the convenience of the local walkers. We are going to set up a market worth ₹5 crores in the area. Shelters for those who sell vegetables in the market will also be provided. We will facilitate micro farmers to sell their produce in the market. Apart from these, a Skill Development Center would also be set up with ₹200 crore,” Narender promised. The MLA also said with the efforts of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao who

Tests, vaccination process picks pace in Khammam

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, APRIL 25

Amidst a rise in Covid-19 cases, RT-PCR tests and vaccination process was sped up in Khammam and Bhadradri-Kothagudem. Both districts witnessed a rise in the number of Covid-19 cases, and hundreds of symptomatic patients were visiting hospitals, including the district headquarters hospitals in Khammam and Kothagudem. About 255 people have died in Khammam district while 154 have succumbed to the virus in Bhadradri district, as per records. In Kamapalli mandal, eight people died in a single day. Long queues were seen at RT-PCR test and vaccination centres. In Khammam district, nearly 1,82,275 people have been administered with the first dose of the vaccine, while 35,255 people have received the second dose. About 83,556 people received the first dose, while 20,833 persons have received their second dose in Bhadradri district.

100 test +ve after attending a drama

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, APRIL 25

More than a hundred villagers of Sundarashala got who attended a traditional drama called ‘Chirathala Ramayanam’ which was performed by an artist’s troupe who came from Nalgonda, in the Chennur mandal of Mancherial district tested positive for Covid-19. It is also learnt that three or four people from surrounding villages who attended the event also tested positive for Covid. The issue came to light late as many villagers got tested positive for Covid at a time. Generally, these traditional dramas are organised during the summer for the entertainment in the night time and community elders or village elders arrange such traditional programmes on special occasions. It is found that the many villagers attended the drama without wearing mask, not maintaining physical distance and the villagers who attended the drama got affected in the initial days and spread the virus to their family members, unknowingly. Actually, the drama has been played for five days from April 10 and concluded on April 14 night

and subsequently many people started complaining Covid symptoms. Village elders said that 22 people out of 30 who attended the drama got tested positive. As these 22 persons contracted with their family members thus nearly 100 villagers were affected with the virus and tested positive for covid till now. Meanwhile, two elderly persons died of covid positive in the village. The same is the case with the marriage functions that are being conducted at various places. People are attending marriage functions without wearing mask and not maintain physical distances. People’s negligence is quite visible at the mass gatherings in the old Adilabad district. Villagers of Sundarashala have imposed self-lockdown to prevent from spreading others in the village and the gram panchayat has asked the villagers not to venture out from their homes and be stay at their homes by taking all home quarantine measures. News is making rounds that two members of drama troop also got tested positive for covid but it was not traced who contracted the covid virus to the villagers.

also found to be Covid-19 positive in both the districts. With hundred thronging primary health centres and a delay in testing, people are forced to go to

district hospitals. Many patients are also unable to get beds at private hospitals, and are trying to approach politicians to get a bed via contacts.

MLA accuses RIMS, director for poor Covid-19 treatment

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, APRIL 25

An argument took place at a review meeting between the Adilabad MLA Jogu Ramanna and director RIMS Bhanoth Balram Naik over poor treatment and facilities in the covid ward on Sunday. Jogu Ramanna find fault with director Bhanoth Balram Naik for the mismanagement of things at the RIMS and poor administration and lack of coordination between the doctors and himself.

● REFUTING THE charges made by the MLA, Jogu Ramanna, RIMS, director, Balram Naik said the charges against him are nothing but a conspiracy by a section of doctors and political leaders.

Jogu Ramanna said he had information that RIMS authorities have failed to keep the oxygen cylinders ready to use them in emergency. Refuting the charges made by the MLA, Balram

Naik said the charges against him are nothing but a conspiracy by a section of doctors and political leaders. The state government is making efforts to supply the oxygen to meet the demand of the Covid patients at RIMS, Adilabad. On the otherhand, Adilabad DCC incharge president Sajid Khan distributed nearly 30 oxygen cylinders free of cost in memory of his father late Siraj Khan, to the Covid patients in need of oxygen.

INCLUDE COVID-19 INTO AAROgyASRI OR ADMIT KCR IN GANDHI: ACTIVIST

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, APRIL 25

A social activist who is the resident of the Karimnagar district, Kota Shyam Kumar holding a placard in his hands staged a protest demanding the government either include Covid-19 into Aarogyasri scheme or admit Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao into Gandhi Hospital in front of the hospital in Hyderabad on Saturday. Why, KCR and IT minister, K.T. Rama Rao are not admitted in the Gandhi hospital when they tested

positive for Covid-19, he questioned. With the pandemic spreading at an alarming rate in the state and thousands of people testing positive to Covid-19 day-to-day, taking this as an advantage many private hospitals are looting the innocent patients in the name of treatment and are driving them into poverty, he alleged. Shyam Kumar said that due to lack of facilities in the government hospitals, many middle class patients are not interested to risk their lives by joining in the government hospitals.

MEDARAM JATARA TO BE HELD FROM FEBRUARY 16 TO 19

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, APRIL 25

The biennial Samakka-Saralamma jatara, held at the Medaram shrine in Tadvali, Mulugu district, will take place between February 16 and 19, 2020. The dates were announced after convening a meeting with the tribal priests, on Sunday. Samakka-Saralamma jatara is the biggest tribal congregation in Asia, and has visitors not only from Telangana state, but also from Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. Falling on Magha Shudda Pournami, the fair would begin on February 16 with the arrival of the tribal deity Saralamma, from Kanneppally, about six km from Medaram village. On February 17, deity Samakka would arrive from the Chhalkalagutta hillock, located at a distance of 2 km from the altar at Medaram. A day after, on February 18, devotees flock in large numbers to get blessings of both the deities. The jatara concludes on February 19, when the deities would be taken back to their respective abodes by the tribal priests.

● MEDARAM JATARA is the biggest tribal congregation in Asia, and has visitors not only from Telangana state, but also from Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.

Police arrest smuggling gang, 100 kg ganja seized

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, APRIL 25

The task force and Wardhanapet police in a joint operation, arrested three members of a gang, including a woman, for smuggling marijuana. Police seized a car, a two-wheeler and three cell-phones used for transporting cannabis along with one hundred kilos of cannabis worth about ₹10 lakh from the gang. Kondi Shetty Satyanarayana, Islawat Vinod Kumar, Ajmeera Ramadevi were among those arrested. Warangal, commissioner of police, Tarun Joshi, disclosed the details of the arrest and said due to financial difficulties, the accused took to smuggling cannabis. The prime accused Satyanarayana, a car driver, with his accomplices Raju, Praveen (both of whom are currently on the run), bought cannabis at a low



Commissioner of police, Tarun Joshi, inspects the seized vehicle used in smuggling.

● THE ACCUSED made a special arrangement at the back of his car to hide the ganja and avoid being caught by the police.

price. The cannabis is stored in five kg packets in the car and were transported to Hyderabad, Mumbai, Surat and Pune. After receiving information regarding the car transporting ganja, the task force police were conducting vehicle checks along with the Wardhanapet police at the Rajarajeshwari temple on the outskirts of Illanda village when they got hold of the accused.

price from unidentified persons in the Kunta area of Odisha and smuggled it to various areas in the country. The accused made a special arrangement at the back of his car to hid the ganja and avoid being caught by the

COVID | BATTLE Min. congratulated the dean, staff for receiving 3 awards

Mobile lab hit 1L Covid tests

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

DRDO-developed Mobile Virology Research and Development Laboratory (MVRDL) at ESIC Medical College Hospital has completed one year and conducted more than one lakh RT-PCR tests for diagnosing Covid-19 cases. Sunday marked MVRDL completing 1,00,300 tests. Union minister of state for home Kishan Reddy visited the ESIC Medical College Hospital to mark the occasion and take stock of Coronavirus services at the hospital. He lauded that ESIC is



Minister of State for Home, G. Kishan Reddy, speaks at the ESI Medical College in Hyderabad on Sunday.

the only hospital with more than 1,000 beds (470 general + 88 ICU + 300 Covid + 150 super speciality + 34 special ICU); providing both Covid and non-Coronavirus services

exclusively to 70 lakh ESI beneficiaries in Telangana every since the pandemic started in 2020. The minister congratulated hospital dean and

professor M. Srinivas apart from his team, for receiving three awards from the ESI Corporation. ESIC Medical College and Hospital also accounts for the highest clinical workload delivered by any medical college hospital in the country during the pandemic period from April 2020 to March 2021. Dr. Srinivas thanked DRDO chairman Sateesh Reddy and DRDO DG M. S. R. Prasad, in addition to all senior scientists for their contribution in building the mobile lab within a record time of 15 days.



## SHORT TAKES

### PT RAJAN MISHRA DIES OF COVID IN DELHI HOSPITAL

New Delhi, April 25: Renowned Hindustani classical vocalist Pt Rajan Mishra died due to Covid-19 complications at a hospital here on Sunday evening, his nephew said. He was 70.

Mishra, who along with his brother Sajjan Mishra was one of the foremost exponents of *khayal gayaki*, had a heart attack in the afternoon and then another in the evening, his nephew Amit said.

"Pandit Rajan Mishra ji passed away at around 6.30 in Delhi's St Stephen hospital. He had Covid-19 and was admitted to the hospital. He had taken the first dose of the vaccine about 15-20 days ago. He had a heart attack in the afternoon and he had another attack at around 5.30 pm," Amit said.

Mishra was a Padma Bhushan awardee. The brothers belonged to the Banaras gharana.

### ODISHA SEES UNRELENTED SURGE IN CASES

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 25

The Covid-19 surge in Odisha continued unabated on Sunday as the state recorded 6,116 new cases while seven patients succumbed to the disease.

The fresh surge pushed the state's Coronavirus positive tally to 4,07,457 while the death toll climbed to 1,988. The active cases in the state stood at 45,949 while 3,59,467 patients have recovered so far.

According to state health and family welfare department data, of the fresh cases spread across 30 districts, 3,546 were detected among people in quarantine and 2,570 were local infections.

Two fatalities were reported from Rayagada. One death case was reported from Ganjam, Kalahandi, Khordha, Puri and Sundargarh districts.

### TMC CANDIDATE KAJAL SINHA PASSES AWAY

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, APRIL 25

The fresh wave of Covid-19 claimed the life of the third Assembly election candidate: Kajal Sinha of the Trinamul Congress while infected another: Babul Supriyo of the BJP in West Bengal as the daily spike in cases crossed 15,000 mark in the state with 57 fresh deaths in the last 24 hours.

According to the state health department, 15,889 persons have contracted Covid-19 in an all-time high during the second spell of the pandemic since Saturday when the figure of fresh infection stood at 14,281.

Out of 15,889 new cases, 3,774 alone are in Kolkata.

Sinha who contested from Khardah in North 24 Parganas was admitted to Infectious Diseases Hospital in Beliaghata on April 21 after he tested positive for the deadly virus.

Two days later he was put on a ventilator as his condition worsened. At around 9.45 am the 58-year-old died there.

### BHOPAL: MAXIMUM BODIES CREMATED ON SINGLE DAY

RABINDRA NATH CHOWDHURY | DC BHOPAL, APRIL 25

A crematorium here on Saturday witnessed cremation of a record number of bodies of Covid victims amid a spike in Coronavirus cases in Madhya Pradesh. A record number of 118 bodies were cremated in the Bhadbada Ghat crematorium on the outskirts of Bhopal on Saturday. Of them, 100 bodies were cremated with corona guidelines, according to the records of the crematorium.

"So many bodies have never been cremated in a single day in the history of Bhadbada Ghat crematorium", Mamtesh Sharma, secretary of the crematorium told this newspaper on Sunday.

He described how pyres were lighted in both the phase one and phase two sections of the crematorium literally round-the-clock since six in the morning till past night on Saturday.

"The horrific sight will shake even a hard soul. I have never seen such a mass funeral of bodies going almost round-the-clock in a crematorium", Sharma said.



Connaught Place street wears a deserted look during the Covid-induced lockdown in New Delhi on Sunday. With the positivity rate as high as 36 per cent in the past few days, the lockdown in the national capital was extended. — PTI

## Delhi extends lockdown till May 3 as cases rise rapidly

Services of courier outlets, electricians, shops selling books permitted

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA & SUNIL THAPLIYAL | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday announced the extension of the ongoing lockdown in the national capital for another week, saying that the severity of Covid-19 was unabated, and the positivity rate has been as high as 36 per cent in the past few days.

The lockdown imposed on April 19 night will now continue till 5 am on Monday, May 3. Before the extension, it was due to end at 5 am on April 26. "We will have to watch the situation for a few more days on whether the cases decrease or increase," he said.

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority, in an order for extension of the lockdown, has allowed the services of courier outlets, electricians and plumbers, repair of water purifiers, and shops selling books and electric fans.

The Chief Minister said the onslaught of the Coronavirus has not subsided even as the govern-

## 3.52 lakh more cases added as 2,688 die, 28 lakh active

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

India on Sunday reported 3,52,541 new Covid-19 cases, 2,688 deaths and 2,14,712 discharges in the last 24 hours, as per Union health ministry. India's total tally of Covid-19 cases has climbed to 1,73,04,308, while active cases have crossed the 28-lakh mark, according to the Union health ministry.

The death toll has increased to 1,94,998. The active cases have increased to 28,09,308, this comprises

15.82 per cent of the total infections. The national Covid-19 recovery rate has further dropped to 83.05 per cent. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has surged to 1,42,92,791, while the case fatality rate has further dropped to 1.13 per cent, the data said.

West Bengal registers highest single-day spike of 15,889 Covid-19 cases, 57 more fatalities. Kolkata alone accounted for 2,970. One of two persons undergoing RT-PCR tests in Kolkata and its suburbs is

turning out to be Covid-positive. In the rest of the state, one of four RT-PCR report is Covid positive. That is a five-fold jump from the beginning of the month, when only one of 20 tests was positive.

Maharashtra reports 66,191 new Covid-19 cases, 61,450 discharges, and 832 deaths in the last 24 hours. Active cases-6,98,354, Total discharges-35,30,060, Death toll-64,760. Mumbai recorded 5,542 new cases, its lowest single-day rise in infections so far this month, the civic body said.

ment imposed a six-day lockdown as the last weapon in its arsenal.

"Public opinion is in favour of an extension of lockdown. The positivity rate reached up to 36-37 per cent in past few days although it has slightly dipped now. It is around 29

per cent today," he said.

To keep a close watch on oxygen availability, the Delhi government has decided that manufacturers, suppliers and hospitals will update the supply and consumption data every two hours on a portal set up by it.

"This is to ensure the Delhi government knows where a shortage might be felt and is able to divert resources in that direction in time," he said.

He said the Centre had further increased Delhi's oxygen quota by 10 MT per day and hoped the chaotic

## Yogi threatens to slap NSA on oxygen rumours

SANJAY BASAK | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

At a time when Uttar Pradesh has recorded over 35,000 new Covid cases and over 200 deaths in just 24 hours, the highest since the pandemic broke out a year ago, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asserted that there was "no shortage of oxygen" in the state and asked officials to invoke the National Security Act and the "Gangsters Act" against all those spreading "rumours" on the social media and attempting to "spoil the atmosphere".

For the Chief Minister, who announced this at a virtual press conference with select journalists on Saturday, the actual problem is "black marketing and hoarding" of oxygen cylinders.

Claiming that there was "no shortage of oxygen at any Covid hospital, be it private or government", he said the "main problem is black marketing and hoarding, and stern action will be taken against the culprits". It was reported in a regional paper that the Chief Minister had said the "state government will pay for the treatment of those Covid patients who could not get hospital admission".

According to the local daily, the Chief Minister said those who failed to get admission into hospitals should get them-

● **YOGI SAID** main problem is black marketing and hoarding, and stern action will be taken against the culprits.

● **OFFICIALS TOLD** to invoke the NSA, Gangsters Act against all those spreading "rumours".

selves "treated on their own and the state government would bear the medical expenses".

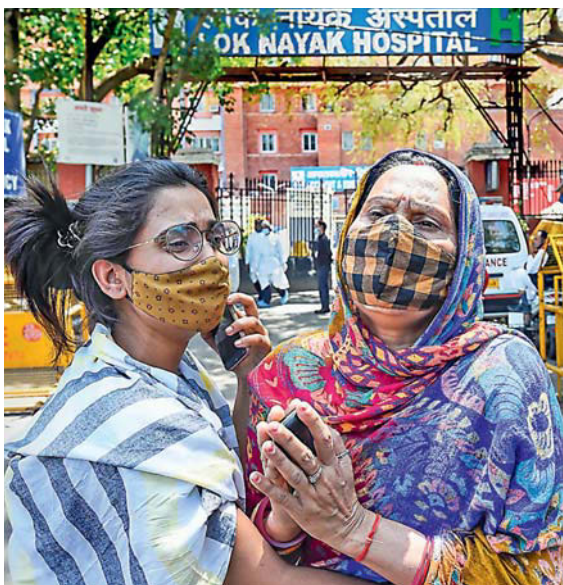
The Chief Minister said it would be a "huge mistake to take Covid as a normal viral fever. I am also in its grip. I have been following all Covid protocols since April 13 while in isolation".

As the UP Chief Minister planned to tackle the oxygen crisis, reports indicated the country during the last 24 hours recorded 3,49,391 new Covid-19 cases and 2,767 deaths.

Reports of oxygen crisis in Delhi's hospitals continued to pour in. A private hospital indicated it had "barely an hour's supply".

A TV channel reported that New Delhi's Fortis Escort Heart Institute, "which has at least 100 patients on oxygen support, said it would not admit any more patients".

The oxygen situation remained grim at Lok Nayak Hospital, the largest Covid-19 facility in Delhi.



Relatives of a Covid-19 patient pleading to media for their support in providing oxygen for their relative admitted in the hospital in New Delhi on Sunday. — PTI

## C'garh: Lockdown extended in 20 dists

DC CORRESPONDENT BHOPAL, APRIL 25

The Bhupesh government on Sunday announced to extend lockdown in 20 districts amid surge in Coronavirus cases in Chhattisgarh.

While lockdown has been extended from April 26 to May 5 in the districts of

Rajnandgaon, Dhamtari, Kanker, Kondagaon, Jashpur, Surajpur, Bemetra, Balrampur, Ambikapur and Narayanpur, total shutdown has been extended from April 26 to May six in the districts of Raipur, Durg, Mahasamund, Balod, Bilashpur, Jagdalpur;

Raigarh, Kawardha and Sukma.

Meanwhile, Chhattisgarh has reported more than 16,000 positive cases for the second day.

While the state reported 16,731 Coronavirus positive cases on Saturday, 16,750 positive cases were reported on April 22.

The state recorded 203 deaths on Saturday and 219 deaths on Friday.

"The infection rate has increased by four times in the last four weeks in Chhattisgarh", health minister T.S. Singhdeo said. The tally of positive cases in the state has reached 6,396,96 and the tally of toll due to the virus increased to 7,111.

## Twitter, FB take down 100 posts

New Delhi, April 25: Twitter and other social media platforms have removed about 100 posts and URLs after the government asked them to remove content that was critical of the handling of the current medical crisis or spreading fake news around the pandemic.

Twitter said it has notified the impacted account holders of its action taken in response to a legal request from the Indian government, while Facebook did not comment on the issue.

Sources said the companies have complied with the order. However, it was-

n't immediately known what the removed posts were. Meanwhile, government sources said the IT ministry, on the recommendation of the ministry of home affairs, asked the social media platforms to remove the posts and URLs (uniform resource locators) to "prevent obstructions in the fight against the pandemic and disruption of public order due to the said posts."

They added that the order was issued in view of the misuse of social media platforms by certain users to spread fake or misleading information and create panic about the pandemic

in the society by using unrelated, old and out of the context images or visuals, communally sensitive posts and misinformation about Covid-19 norms.

Although reports suggested that the posts critical of government handling of the medical crisis were asked to be removed, sources said the government is open to criticism and suggestions in the collective fight against Covid-19.

However, they said it is necessary to take action against those users who are misusing social media during this grave humanitarian crisis for unethical purposes.

Twitter removed or restricted access to more than 50 posts in the past one month at the behest of the government, including tweets that criticised its handling of the pandemic. Other posts removed showed pictures and videos of a recent Maoist attack in Chhattisgarh.

Earlier this year, more than 500 accounts were suspended and access to hundreds of others in India blocked after the government ordered the microblogging platform to restrain the spread of misinformation and inflammatory content related to farmers' protests. — PTI

CSIR | SURVEYS 10.14% sero-positivity suggests India had large pool of recovered immune subjects

## Recurrence of virus due to lack of antibodies: Report

New Delhi, April 25: The recurrence of Coronavirus outbreak in March could have been due to lack of "meaningful antibodies" in seropositive people after a peak in September last year, suggests a survey by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

The CSIR conducted a sero-survey on 10,427 people comprising the staff members of its 40 laboratories, including contractual employees, and their family members from 17 states and two union territories.

In 10,427 people, the average sero positivity was 10.14 per cent. The survey

suggested that the neutralising antibodies declined significantly after five-six months, making people prone to reinfections.

The cases in the country peaked in September 2020 and there was a nationwide decline of new cases starting in October, said Shantanu Sengupta, one of the lead authors of the paper. "Our data shows that while anti-NC (nucleocapsid) antibodies provide long-lasting evidence of viral exposure or infection, about 20 per cent of seropositive individuals lack meaningful neutralisation activity after 5-6 months."

"Using more stringent measures (more than 30

per cent inhibition of surrogate receptor-spike protein binding), the loss of neutralisation may be even higher. We speculate that this may be related to recurrence of outbreaks in March 2021 after the peak in September 2020," the paper said.

India is currently witnessing a massive surge in infections with logging a daily case count of over 3,00,000 on four consecutive days.

According to the paper, the aggregate sero-positivity of 10.14 per cent in its multi-centre study suggests India had a large pool of recovered immune subjects by September

2020, especially amongst its high contact workers and people using public transport, leading to a decline in new infections.

"However, the duration of such immunity may not be sufficient to prevent future outbreaks, even in highly affected regions, the paper said.

States like Maharashtra have witnessed an explosion of cases since March.

The present study, which recruited subjects from 24 cities in India, provides an important and timely snapshot of the spread of SARS CoV2 pandemic across India shortly before the peak of new cases, the paper said. — PTI

## SERO-POSITIVITY 'LOWER' IN SMOKERS, VEGETARIANS; O BLOOD GROUP 'SAFER'

New Delhi, April 25: Smokers and vegetarians were found to have lower sero-positivity, while those with blood group 'O' may be less susceptible to Coronavirus, according to a survey by an top research body.

The pan-India serosurvey, conducted by the CSIR, studied the presence of antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the Coronavirus, and their neutralisation capability to infer possible risk factors for infection.

The study, done by a team of 140 doctors and scientists, assessed 10,427 adult individuals working in more than 40 CSIR laboratories and centres in urban and semi-urban settings, and their family members. These people voluntarily participated in the study.

The survey suggested that despite Covid-19 being a respiratory disease, smoking might be acting as first line of defence due to its role in increasing the mucous production. — PTI







DECCAN Chronicle

26 APRIL 2021

CJI should make judiciary kinder, faster, transparent

A new chapter in Indian judiciary starts with Justice N.V. Ramana having taken oath as the 48th Chief Justice of India (CJI) on April 24, which can and should be glorious. Till his tenure ends on August 26, 2022, CJI Ramana must focus on addressing three crucial issues — humaneness of judicial processes and systems, especially in the criminal side of law and justice, with great stress on speed and efficiency, and openness and transparency.

The absolutely first area to priority is administrative. The CJI must ensure all the pending vacancies in the judiciary, especially in the higher echelons of the Supreme Court and the various high courts, must be filled within the first 90 days of his term on a war footing. This numbers-led priority is to ensure the judiciary is operating at maximum mandated capacity and to a full strength to focus on the next area of priority — speedy delivery.

Justice delayed is justice denied. Time gap has been an underlying weakness and area of concern with our judicial system for a long while now. Systems need to be created to ensure timely dismissal of cases and the recent suggestive directive empowering high courts to hire retired justices to dispose pending cases is welcome and must be taken to a logical conclusion under stern supervision. There can be suggestions made to the government, a mandated litigator, to withdraw a large number of cases through a matrix of stake involved versus the time since the case has stretched. Automatic disposal of petty and routine cases can also go a long way in unburdening the judicial load.

The CJI will hearten the citizenry by ensuring the implementation of faster and timely disposal of criminal cases against politicians and bureaucracy and give them punishment.

A lesson that no one is too mighty to get away from the clutches of the law is an expectation that has waited long enough to be delivered with urgency, and who better than the author of this extraordinary hope-giving judgment to ensure its implementation? The highest expectation from CJI Ramana is that he will strive hard to humanise criminal justice systems and focus on ensuring higher regard for law and human rights amongst the law enforcement agencies, particularly the lathi-happy police.

Fake encounters too can and will likely become a thing of the past, if his record is anything to go by — with strongest action likely in custodial death cases. Ensuring police respond to sensitise their departments and officers regarding human rights would be a great achievement.

A larger effort is needed to make it clear to the government and officials that they cannot ignore judicial pronouncements, which could be one of the most significant contributions of this tenure.

Finally, the judiciary must make itself even more open and transparent in coming out with unambiguous guidelines to dealing with grievances and complaints against itself.

A judicial ombudsman is needed, comprising members of the bar, and of different states in composition at state-level and representatives of the government. Brothers and sisters of the judiciary must be able to handle all such instances in a way as to raise the respect for the blindfolded lady with a balance even higher.

At the start of CJI Ramana's tenure, history might well ask — if not here — where; if not now — when; if not you — who?

We're safe when all are safe

It is in the DNA of every pandemic that it is global, all the more so in a truly globalised world. It hardly makes sense for a nation to think that it can fight the pandemic all alone and be safe; it will not be long before it realises that the microorganism that causes the pandemic has reached its shores by means it can hardly block. Eliminating the virus from the face of the earth is an economic priority, too, as it would bring productive people back in action and the global economy back into black; not to forget the humanitarian angle as a pandemic devastates lives and often extinguishes them on a mass scale.

The US government's fight against pandemic Covid-19 has entered a decisive phase with close to 70 per cent of its population having been vaccinated. The country has the capacity to manufacture more as the vaccination programme advances and hence the demand in the country to help countries such as India where people have started dying in their thousands every day.

The US has spare vaccines which are part of the Indian vaccination programme and hence can be put in the logistics chain on arrival. There are also redundant quantities of anti-viral drugs such as Remdisivir, as well as oxygen, which could save lives in India.

It's not just in the case of the ready-to-serve products that Indian wants the US to take a global view. The Serum Institute of India which makes the Covishield vaccine had recently appealed to US President Joe Biden to relax the ban on the export of the raw materials for the vaccine but to no avail.

One cannot fault the US administration's policy that "it is not only in the US's interest to see Americans vaccinated; but it is in the interests of the rest of the world to see Americans vaccinated". The point of difference is that we will all be safe when we all are vaccinated; nationality hardly counts.

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Kishwar  
Desai  
London Diary



A fitting farewell for Prince Philip; Cameron, Carrie graft entertains

The headlines here lately, about India, have been worrying. Many of them are about the Indian Covid crisis, and it is sad to see the terrifying predictions that are doing the rounds. While Boris Johnson thinks about sending respirators to India, many are wondering what happened to the great advantage India had last year. Now all we see are the burning pyres, and an ever-expanding body count. The question everyone asks is how could this have happened when India was doing so well? Yes, there had been a harsh lockdown earlier — but then that was the only way to deal with the enemy, who was unknown at the time. But now the bonds between the two countries are being sealed, ironically, by the "Indian" strain in the UK, and "British" mutant in India. The alarming difference is that while the UK is slowly opening up, India seems to be in the midst of a severe medical tsunami. Could it be also because the UK had vaccinated such a large proportion of its population?

The big event of the past fortnight has, of course, been the Royal funeral. The Monarchy is perfect-

ly adept at staging the most spectacular coronation (not seen, happily, since 1952), weddings (the most recent, of Harry and Meghan, was beautiful but is proving unforgettable for other reasons) and, of course, funerals. There has not been a Royal funeral since Elizabeth the Queen Mother died at the ripe old age of 101 a while ago.

The funeral for the Duke was planned well in advance and indeed he had participated in its arrangements, choosing the carriage specially designed by himself for the occasion. But as luck would have it, the Duke's funeral became unique because of Covid. And this brought to the fore the discipline maintained by the Royalty as it abides by the laws it is formally responsible for promulgating through it is the civilian government which thinks them up. For example, even through the Second World War, the Royal Family ate only the rations permitted to their subjects.

The sparseness of numbers at the funeral, the lack of street crowds, the location at Windsor rather than London gave the occasion its own special magic. He was after all 99, just one week short of his century. The Queen is, more or

less, universally respected and much loved by all but a few diehard Republicans. The Duke had to earn the respect given to him. The Press delighted in his more acerbic and "politically incorrect" views. He himself had joked about his "foot in the mouth" problem. But the sheer length of his presence on the public platform, discreetly walking a few steps behind his wife, won people over.

Most watched the ceremony on TV where the BBC yet again turned up trumps as it does on such occasions. It was a sombre but a beautifully staged occasion. Even so, it was the Queen sitting by herself in the chapel, which was the most dramatic sight. She had already placed her own written farewell into the coffin and then she sat quietly, the picture of dignity in grief. While the media wanted to make a fuss about Harry and William, the Palace managed to make them all behave themselves. And the emotion of the moment almost made everyone forget THAT interview.

Can it be a mere coincidence that Prime Minister Modi cancelled his final four rallies, out of a total of 18, minutes before the commission announced the ban on rallies?

Shikha Mukerjee is a senior journalist in Kolkata



Subhani

Mishandling elections in the time of a pandemic



Shikha Mukerjee

For voters and contestants, every election is necessarily different, because the ways in which the thousands of acts of omission, commission, violation and bad faith by the incumbent government or the challenger are in a constant state of change. For the Election Commission, tasked with conducting the process through which the voter chooses a representative who is adequate to fulfil the aspirations and expectations he or she has, every election is both different and the same.

The context in which an election is held is certainly material to the way the Election Commission undertakes the exercise of holding free and fair polls so that the people's sovereign will is exercised without obstruction or violation. If the EC fails to comprehend the context, then what follows is a super-spreader event of terrifying proportions in the state that has been victim of the whims of the poll panel in its refusal to recognise that the Covid-19 crisis could turn into a catastrophe.

Dismissive of the pleas of West Bengal's ruling party and the state government, of all other Opposition parties barring the BJP that the eight-phase six-week poll schedule would be seriously risky at a time when new mutant strains of the coronavirus were detected and whose impact had pushed Britain and Europe to declare new lockdowns, new protocols and manage a new crisis, the EC maintained it had no power to alter the schedule after it was announced or notified. It insisted it was entirely capable of ensuring its strict guidelines on how campaigning and voting should be done in Covid times were followed by all candidates and of course

their parties.

Having announced its guidelines, mobilised the largest force of security personnel drawn from every Central paramilitary force imaginable, adding up to over 1.5 lakh jawans and officers and innumerable support personnel, brought in over 200 general observers, added to the original 54 appointed as police observers, the EC flooded West Bengal with the paraphernalia necessary to do two things simultaneously — hold peaceful, free and fair polls over eight phases and ensure adherence to its Covid guidelines. It failed on both counts at an incredibly high cost to the public exchequer.

Citizens exposed to the virus through super-spreader events and shoddy observance of Covid protocols are paying twice over for the EC's failures and its outrageously unrealistic assessment of its own capacity to deliver a flawless election process. The death of two candidates from the virus, a large number of candidates ill or critically ill because of the infection and the final humiliating confirmation of its inadequacy as the order from the Calcutta high court lashed out that the role of the EC cannot be just "issuing circulars" and "holding meetings".

It took a searing indictment from the high court to get the commission to implement its own guidelines. It took a threat from the high court to ensure that big rallies were banned.

The Calcutta high court last week said the judiciary would step in and "act like T.N. Seshan", the legendary tough chief election commissioner, who had postponed and threatened to cancel elections in Bihar and West Bengal if political parties failed to follow the rules.

Through the weeks of disastrous mismanagement by the EC that has cost lives and skyrocketing state public health expenditure to cope with the outfall of the speed of the spread of the deadly virus, the then chief election commissioner Sunil Arora and current CEC Sushil Chandra said they were powerless to listen to reason and heed the context of this election in West Bengal, namely the danger of an even greater surge of the evolving virus.

The Election Commission dismissed the plea by Mamata Banerjee that the eight-phase election was very risky. It seemed to pay more attention to the BJP's jeers that the eight-phase election was necessary to ensure peaceful, free and fair elections. The Election Commission rejected the April 16 appeal by all political parties in the fray in West Bengal, besides the BJP, that the remaining three phases should be clubbed together. Defending the eight-phase polls, BJP candidate Swapan Dasgupta said anything else would affect the "democratic spirit" of the process. His assurance and that of his party that all Covid protocols would be maintained cut no ice with the Calcutta high court, as its indictment reveals.

In declaring that it couldn't change the schedule once it as notified, the Election Commission forgot that it has the power to do so and there is a precedent. In 1984, the Lok Sabha elections were held in all states, except Punjab and Assam. Elections there were held in 1985 because the circumstances called for it. In 1991, the EC decided that the Lok Sabha elections would be

rescheduled with new dates because after some states had voted, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated and there was turmoil. The Representation of the People Act is rigid, but the law isn't stupid. It does admit there can be an obstruction to the polling process after a natural calamity or any other sufficient cause.

As a result, West Bengal saw an unprecedented number of public rallies and meetings organised on a mega scale for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, at least a dozen or more star campaigners from the BJP's very large and varied pool of leaders, including defence minister Rajnath Singh and UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath. A comparison of one day of campaigning by the BJP and Ms Banerjee is revealing; the BJP held at least nine major rallies, roadshows and meetings on one day while Mamata Banerjee managed only four.

As the challenger in West Bengal, the BJP's capacity to spread havoc without being restrained by the EC, outdid all other political parties on a daily basis. Can it be a mere coincidence that Prime Minister Modi cancelled his final four rallies, out of a total of 18, minutes before the commission announced the ban on rallies?

A pandemic on the scale of Covid-19 is unprecedented. If the EC failed to grasp this simple fact, so did the Prime Minister. Not till the nationwide oxygen shortage began killing patients in hospitals across India, ICU beds ran short and private hospitals went to court did the magnitude of the calamity impress itself on Mr Modi, whose office had earlier reportedly turned away Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray's desperate SOS for help. Can the democratic spirit freely exercise its franchise if disease and death stalk the voter? The EC will eventually have to answer this question.

LETTERS

LISTEN TO DOCTORS

The state government must pay heed to whatever advice is given by the doctors (*Docs give 20-point action plan to KCR, DC, April 25*). It must be followed strictly as only doctors can save us in this pandemic.

Shobhan S. Hyderabad

POSTPONE POLLS

It is shocking that the government opted for municipal elections when the EC sought its opinion. It shows how insensitive our leaders are towards the health and lives of people. Even after seeing the virus spreading fact after the recent bypoll, we have not learnt any lessons. If there is a war will there be elections? We are in a war like situation. If the governments fail to safeguard people, the courts should step in.

K.A. Raju Secunderabad

Are we in our right senses to even think of holding municipal elections now when people are dying all around us? Is there no one in the government to think if the decision was right or wrong, or does the desire to gain more power override all other considerations? The High Court should step in and negate the executive decision.

Shashi Karan Hyderabad

ELDERS HELPLESS

When the state government is taking action to contain Covid, senior citizens and people with health problems are going through tough times. Many of them got first dose of vaccine in private hospitals and have no clue when they will get second dose as the vaccine stocks appear to have run out. From May 1 when there will be a huge rush, what will aged citizens do? What if someone got a heart attack or stroke as hospitals are full.

A.R.R. Datta Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

1 dead, 55 hurt in rail mishap

HYDERABAD, April. 25 A nine-year-old girl was killed and 55 other passengers were injured, five of them seriously, when a passenger train collided with a goods train this evening between the Asifabad Road and Lalapet stations in the Kazipet-Balharshah section of Secunderabad Division of the South Central Railway.

the Prime Minister in the UK cannot use taxpayers' money to re-do the official home in London. Can such a rule ever work in India, hmmm?

But Boris has retained his amazing luck. While he has presided over the shambles of Covid mismanagement, he is doing very well thanks to the widely successful vaccination programme. The UK has become the envy of EU, if not the world, for its vaccination performance. Even Brexit has been forgotten for the while.

Actually Boris was supposed to be in Delhi today, on April 26. His earlier trip to Delhi for the Republic Day on January 26 had to be postponed due to Covid. But the two Prime Ministers seem to be fated never to meet in India (especially not if the date is the 26th) and the British PM has once again cancelled his trip. Call the astrologer!

Kishwar Desai's latest book, The Longest Kiss: The Life And Times of Devika Rani, has just been published and she is the Chair of the Trust that set up the World's first Partition Museum in Amritsar



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	47,878.45	-0.42
Nifty 50	14,341.40	-0.45
S&P 500*	4,180.17	1.09
Dollar (₹)	75.02	-0.06
Pound Sterling (₹)	104.13	0.07
Euro (₹)	90.46	-0.24
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,273▼24	0.05
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	65.76	0.55
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.035	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.574	0.018

\* As of Friday/Saturday

Steel companies produce 3,474 t medi-oxygen/day

The steel industry produced 3,474 tonne of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) on Saturday, higher than its daily production capacity to meet the shortage of the life-saving gas. A steel ministry statement said on Sunday, there are 33 oxygen plants in the steel sector, of which 29 are tapped regularly. The total daily oxygen production capacity of steel plants is 2,834 tonne. The production of LMO was 3,474tonne on April 24.



Indian ops boost US giant's profit Flipkart to get \$1 bn more from Walmart

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, APRIL 25

Walmart has decided to pump in around \$1 billion more to support the operations of Flipkart. Walmart said its international segment's cash and cash equivalents of \$2.8 billion may not be freely transferable to the US due to local laws or other restrictions. Of this, approximately \$1 billion can only be accessed through dividends or inter-company financing arrangements, subject to approval of the Flipkart minority shareholders. This cash is expected to be utilised to fund the operations of Flipkart, Walmart said in its annual report. Walmart's gross profit rate increased 50 basis points in financial year



2021 primarily due to Flipkart's improved margin mix and reduced fuel sales in the UK. This is against a 136-points reduction in gross profit in FY20 primarily due to Flipkart, as well as a change in merchandise mix. Walmart finalised the valuation of assets and liabilities of Flipkart in the second quarter of FY20. As per this, Flipkart

has assets of \$24.1 billion, which comprise primarily of \$2.2 billion in cash and cash equivalents, \$2.8 billion in other current assets, \$5 billion in intangible assets and \$13.5 billion in goodwill. Of the intangible assets, \$4.7 billion represents the fair value of trade names. The remaining \$0.3 billion of intangible assets primarily relate to acquired technology with a life of three years. Flipkart has liabilities of \$3.7 billion, which comprise primarily of \$1.8 billion of current liabilities and \$1.7 billion of deferred income taxes and non-controlling interest of \$4.3 billion. The company began consolidating the financial statements of Flipkart in the third quarter of FY19, using a one-month lag.

BHARAT BIOTECH SEEKS NOD TO EXTEND SHELF LIFE OF COVAXIN

New Delhi, April 25: Bharat Biotech has written to the drug regulator, seeking extension of the shelf life of its indigenously developed vaccine, Covaxin, from six to 24 months, sources said on Sunday. Bharat Biotech was given permission for sale and distribution of Covaxin with a shelf life of six months when stored at two to eight degrees Celsius. "Now, we are herewith applying for the extension of shelf life from six months to 24 months when stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius," the firm said in its application to the Drugs Controller General of India. Bharat Biotech has submitted updated accelerated and real-time stability data of Coaxin, in support of its claim. —PTI

Mkt momentum to be tested in event-heavy week

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, APRIL 25

The equity market is lacking foreign and domestic institutional investors support, as the Covid-19 cases saw almost a vertical rise to above 3 lakh infections daily, leading to caution. The Indian currency has also weakened against the US dollar to the levels seen during the market crash last year. Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) were net sellers of equities worth Rs 8,674 crore in April so far. The previous six months have been good for the market, as after September 2020 FPIs had turned net buyers in a big way. Mutual funds also reduced equity buying in April so far to just Rs 1,251.72 crore against Rs 2,476.45 crore net buying in March. But domestic institutional investors, including mutual funds, insurance, banks and pension funds, were net buyers by Rs 7,960.71 crore. With the rupee expected to weaken further this year, FPIs may not resume buying in a big way unless the currency stabilises. "The Indian rupee, Asia's best-performing currency in March, is going to slide right back to levels last seen in the depths of the pandemic meltdown; the currency will drop toward 76.5 to a dollar by the end of the year," according to Parul Mittal Sinha, head of macro trading, India and South Asia financial markets, Standard Chartered. "We do not see the volatility easing out in the



coming week too, thanks to scheduled data and events," said Ajit Mishra, VP-research, Religare Broking. "The monthly expiry of April month derivatives contracts will keep the traders on their toes. On the data front, core sector data will be unveiled on April 30. The recent proposal by the US president to raise capital gains tax has started showing its impact in US markets which may cascade to others in the coming week. Needless to say, the Covid-related updates will remain on the participants' radar," Mishra said. "Details of US President Joe Biden's proposed wealth tax will start emerging next week. Biden wants to raise the federal capital gains tax to 43.4 per cent for the richest of individuals, bringing combined state and federal rates in places such as New York and California to well above 50 per cent—the highest ever in US history. Expect volatility whenever these details emerge," said an analyst tracking Indian market. The market will also react to earnings of many blue chips this week.

CHIP SHORTAGE: VW WARNS OF WORSENING SITUATION

April 25: Volkswagen AG has warned managers to prepare for a bigger production hit in the second quarter than the first due to a global chip shortage, the Financial Times reported. "We are being told from the suppliers and within the Volkswagen Group that we need to face considerable challenges in the second quarter, probably more challenging than the first quarter," Wayne Griffiths, president of Volkswagen's Spanish brand Seat, said. Griffiths called the shortage the "biggest challenge" the company faces at the moment. He said production at Seat's Martorell plant outside Barcelona was currently "hand to mouth", with the brand deciding what cars to build only after it receives chips from suppliers, the report said. Volkswagen has said it expects chip supply to remain tight in the coming months, adding it could not provide visibility for the full year. The company has been unable to build 100,000 cars due to the shortage, CEO Herbert Diess said last month, adding the group would not be able to make up for the shortfall in 2021. "The situation has been exacerbated i.e. by the blizzards that have occurred in Texas, as the large chip manufacturers based there had to stop or reduce their production. For that reason further adjustments to production cannot be ruled out", Volkswagen said in an emailed statement. —Reuters

GAMES

SHORT TAKES

Amit settles for bronze in Russia

New Delhi: Olympic-bound Indian boxer Amit Panghal (52kg) settled for a bronze medal at the Governor's Cup in St Petersburg, Russia after going down to world champion and familiar foe Shakhobidin Zoirov in the semifinals. Amit, a world championships silver-medallist, lost 5-0 to the Uzbek, who is also the reigning Olympic champion. This was the Indian's second loss to Zoirov after the 2019 world championships. In that event, he had lost to Zoirov in the finals. Both the boxers are bound for the Tokyo Games, to be held in July-August. Amit was the lone Indian to make the medal round. —PTI

Barty survives early scare to win title

Stuttgart, Germany: World number one Ashleigh Barty earned her third WTA title this year by beating Aryna Sabalenka in the final of Stuttgart's clay-court tournament on Sunday. After winning in Miami and a pre-Australian Open event in Melbourne on hard court, Barty added the Stuttgart title, her first tournament on clay this season. A day after her 25th birthday, the Australian rallied from losing the first set to claim a 3-6, 6-0, 6-3 win over Sabalenka, who needed a medical time-out after the second set for an adductor injury. —AFP

Nadal sets up final date with Tsitsipas

Barcelona: Rafael Nadal will face a red-hot Stefanos Tsitsipas in the Barcelona Open final after the 11-time champion eased past fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreno 6-3, 6-2 on Saturday. Nadal roared out to a 5-1 lead before Carreno pulled back a break. Carreno then had three break chances on Nadal's next service game, but the latter saved them all and closed out the set. The top-seeded Nadal improved to an 8-0 career record against Carreno. The second-seeded Tsitsipas advanced after beating Janik Sinner 6-3, 6-3 for his eighth consecutive straight-set victory including last week's title run at Monte Carlo. —AP

Andhra skaters on a roll

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

Andhra Pradesh skaters did very well at the 58th National Roller Skating Championship held in Chandigarh, Punjab, recently, returning with a clutch of medals from the tournament. Rayudu Arun Kumar and Farheen Shaik won the gold in the Above 17 years pair skating as well as couple dance skating events while Preetam and Laasya took silver in the couple dance category. Arun also won a bronze in the boys above 17 free dance skating, in which Harikamal took gold. Harikamal also took silver in the above 17 figure event and was part of the Above 17 quartet team (Venu, Farheen, Anmisha, Harikamal) that won gold. Anmisha, Samhitha, Siddi Vinayak were among the skaters who won multiple medals. MEDAL WINNERS ■ Above 17 age group, figure event: Boys — Harikamal (silver), Sahith (bronze). Girls — Lasya (bronze). ■ 14-17 age group figure: Girls — Tanvi Vinayak (gold). Boys — Mohan Kiran (silver), Rishab (bronze). ■ Above 17, freestyle: Girls



Rayudu Arun Kumar (right) and Farheen Shaik perform on way to winning the Above 17 years pair skating event at the National Roller Skating Championship held in Chandigarh, Punjab.

— Anmisha (gold). Boys — Venu (silver), Rayudu Arun Kumar (bronze). ■ 14-17 freestyle: Girls — Samhitha (gold), Meghana (silver). Boys — Mohan Kiran (gold), Vaishnav (silver). ■ Above 17 inline: Girls — Anmisha (gold). Boys — Venu (bronze). ■ 14-17 inline: Girls — Meghana (gold), Samhitha (silver), Swetha (bronze).

Boys — Vaishnav (gold), Rishab (silver). ■ Above 17 pair skating: Rayudu Arun Kumar & Farheen Shaik (gold). ■ 14-17 pair skating: Vaishnav & Grishma (gold). ■ Above 17 free dance skating: Boys — Harikamal (gold), Rayudu Arun Kumar (bronze). ■ Above 17 couple dance skating: Rayudu Arun Kumar

& Farheen Shaik (gold), Preetam & Laasya (silver). ■ Above 17 quartet team: Venu, Farheen, Anmisha, Harikamal (gold). ■ 14-17 quartet team: Vaishnav, Vishal, Samhitha, Swetha (gold). ■ 11-14 boys freestyle: T. Nihal (gold), Sowrya Nathani (silver). ■ 11-14 girls freestyle: Siddhi Vinayak (gold), Greesham

(silver), Saheera Pondala (bronze). ■ 11-14 boys inline: Sowrya Nathani (gold), Kvyalya (silver). ■ 11-14 girls inline: Siddhi Vinayak (gold), Saheera Pondala (silver), Greeshma (bronze). ■ 11-14 boys figure: Tej Nihal (silver). ■ 11-14 girls figure: Siddhi Vinayak (bronze).

Bess hated game after bubble pain

London, April 25: England off-spinner Dom Bess has revealed that he had started "hating cricket" after his prolonged stay inside a bio-bubble during the Test tour of India earlier this year. Bess got just five wickets from two Tests in the fourth-match series which India won 3-1. He was dropped after helping England to victory in the first Test in Chennai, only to return for the final match in Ahmedabad, where he went wicket-less during an innings defeat. After spending around seven weeks inside the bio-bubble in India, the 23-year-old Bess is currently involved in the county season, looking to rediscover his form with Yorkshire. "After India I had a good break away from it, because I really did start hating cricket," Bess was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. "It got too much at times, certainly in that bubble in India, there's a lot of pressure going on and it was really important for me to come back and get away from it," he said. On returning from India, Bess had "two or three weeks off", getting to know his new home in Leeds and spending time with his girlfriend and the



Dom Bess

puppy they have adopted. "It was nice to see them and get away from it, because in India, in the bubble, everything was about cricket. And it's fine when you're going well, but when things aren't going well it is very tough," he said. "But I only see what I had in India as a great positive. It's been a tough time really, but one hell of a learning curve for me. And it terms of where I see my game, I know what I've got to do. That's so exciting, knowing that I've still got so much work to do, when I'm so close as well, at times." Bess said he learnt some really tough lessons in India and felt that should improve his chances of achieving success with England in the long run. —PTI

MAN UNITED HELD GOAL-LESS BY LEEDS; BURNLEY WIN BIG

London, April 25: Manchester United drew 0-0 with Leeds on Sunday to stay on track for a second-place finish in the Premier League after Burnley took a giant step towards survival. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's men beat their bitter rivals 6-2 at Old Trafford in December but both sides looked short of energy and imagination in a lacklustre encounter at Elland Road. The result takes United to 67 points after 33 games, 10 points behind champions-elect Manchester City but eight points clear of third-placed Leicester. Manchester City, Manchester United, Leicester and Chelsea currently occupy the top-four

spots in the Premier League but just seven points separate Leicester from eighth-placed Everton. Most of the teams have just five games to play. Earlier, Chris Wood scored a first-half hat-trick as Burnley pummelled Wolves 4-0 to lift themselves nine points clear of the Premier League relegation zone. Chelsea took control of the battle to secure Champions League football next season as Timo Werner's goal earned a 1-0 win over West Ham on Saturday, while Liverpool conceded a stoppage time equaliser to draw 1-1 with Newcastle. Liverpool are now four points adrift of the top four. —AFP

Zidane's men slip in title race after draw at home

Madrid, April 25: Real Madrid handed the initiative back to Atletico Madrid in La Liga on Saturday by drawing at home to Real Betis, a result that raises doubts about the team's condition ahead of Tuesday's Champions League semi-final against Chelsea. Eden Hazard was thrown on for the last 15 minutes of the 0-0 draw at Vallebebas in what was only the Belgian's second appearance in three months but Madrid could not find a way through. Atletico are now two points clear at the top of La Liga and can extend

that advantage to five by winning away at Athletic Bilbao on Sunday. Barcelona could pull level on points with Real Madrid if they overcome Villarreal. Real Madrid struggled for chances and the concern will be that numerous injuries and fatigue are catching up with Zinedine Zidane's side at a crucial moment in the season. "It's two points dropped, that's obvious, we lacked a lot going forward, especially at the start of the game," said Zidane. "We weren't sharp but that can happen. We have

to go again on Tuesday." They play Chelsea at home on Tuesday in the first leg of the Champions League semi-finals and it is possible none of Toni Kroos, Sergio Ramos, Ferland Mendy, Fede Valverde or Lucas Vazquez, all absent due to injury, will return. Hazard could feature against his former club after coming on for the final quarter of an hour but the fact Zidane waited so long to introduce him suggests he is still not considered match fit, having now played 30 minutes since the end of January. —AFP

AZAM FASTEST TO REACH 2000 RUNS AS PAK WIN

Harare, April 25: Pakistan captain Babar Azam became the fastest batsman to reach 2,000 Twenty20 international runs Sunday, achieving the feat in 52 innings, four fewer than India skipper Virat Kohli. Azam lifted his T20 total to 2,035 runs by making 52 as Pakistan defeated Zimbabwe by 24 runs to win a T20 series 2-1 at Harare Sports Club. Kohli has scored 3,159 runs in the 20-over format, but it took him 56 innings to pass the 2,000-run landmark. Azam won the toss, opted to bat and the tourists made 165-3 in 20 overs as they sought redemption after a shock 19-run loss two days ago. The batting of Mohammad Rizwan (91 not out) and Azam (52) and career-best bowling from Hasan Ali (4-18) ultimately ensured Pakistan would not suffer the humiliation of losing the series. —AFP Brief scores: Pakistan 163/3 in 20 overs (Mohammad Rizwan 91 not out, Babar Azam 52; L. Jongwe 3-37) bt Zimbabwe 141/7 in 20 overs (Madhevere 59, Marumani 35, Hasan 4-18, Rauf 2-34).





● CHENNAI SUPER KINGS ● DELHI CAPITALS ● KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS ● MUMBAI INDIANS ● PUNJAB KINGS ● RAJASTHAN ROYALS ● ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE ● SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

DECCAN CHRONICLE, KARIMNAGAR, MONDAY, 26 APRIL 2021

ORANGE	
Shikhar Dhawan, DC	259
KL Rahul, PBKS	221
Faf du Plessis, CSK	214
PURPLE	
Harshal Patel, RCB	15
Avesh Khan, DC	11
Rahul Chahar, MI	9

Off the field



Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma arrives in New Delhi with his daughter. — MI

Tye pulls out due to personal reason

Rajasthan Royals' Australian pacer Andrew Tye on Sunday flew back home due to "personal reasons" making him the fourth overseas recruit of the franchise to pull out of the ongoing Indian Premier League. Earlier, Englishmen Jofra Archer (hand surgery), Ben Stokes (finger fracture) and Liam Livingstone (bubble fatigue) had opted out. "AJ Tye flew back to Australia earlier today due to personal reasons. We will continue to offer any support he may need," Royals tweeted on Sunday. The 34-year-old Tye hasn't yet got a game in this edition of the tournament.

Kohli fined ₹12L for slow over-rate

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh for his team's slow over-rate against Chennai Super Kings in an IPL game on Sunday. "As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Mr Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh," a press release said.

Hussey backs Gill to fire again for KKR

Backing the out-of form Shubman Gill, Kolkata Knight Riders team mentor David Hussey said the opener is a "class act" who will be among the highest-scoring batsmen by the end of the IPL. The highly talented 21-year-old has not been at his best this season, managing 80 runs from five matches. "He is a star player, he took the Test match arena by storm in Australia. He is very specific and he has a great work ethic," said Hussey. "All I can say is that form will come and go, class is always permanent. He is one class individual, both on and off the field. Mark my words, he will be one of the highest-scoring batsmen by the end of the tournament. He is an absolute class act," Hussey added. Asked why Kiwi speedster Lockie Ferguson has not got a game yet, Hussey said the team management will be going back to the drawing board in terms of strategies.

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# SUPER DELHIVERY

## Axar does star turn as Capitals edge Sunrisers in Super Over

Chennai, April 25: Delhi Capitals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad in a thrilling Super Over contest in the Indian Premier League here on Sunday. Batting first, Delhi Capitals managed to score 159 for 4 with opener Prithvi Shaw back in form with a 53 off 39 balls. Skipper Rishabh Pant scored 37 off 27 balls. Steve Smith remained not out on 34 off 25 balls. For SRH, pacer Siddharth Kaul took 2 for 31 in 4 overs.

In reply, SRH scored 159 for 7 with Kane Williamson contributing 66 nt out off 51 balls as the match went into Super Over.

In the Super Over, SRH managed only 7 off Axar Patel while DC scored the runs of the last delivery.

SRH skipper David Warner said: "I thought the way the bowlers came back after the powerplay was fantastic. Vijay is not one of our strike bowlers, but he was fantastic. Johnny at the top and Kane batted deep but we couldn't make it. They bowled fantastically in the middle and brought it back. If you hit the ball to a world-class fielder, you get run-out nine times out of ten."

Earlier, Prithvi Shaw hit a sparkling fifty but Delhi Capitals frittered away a bright start to settle for 159 for four.

The 81-run stand between openers Shaw (53) and Shikhar Dhawan (28) had set a perfect platform for DC for a huge total but Hyderabad spinners Rashid Khan (1/31 in 4 overs) and Jagadeesha Suchith changed the course of the innings with their tight spells.

Skipper Rishabh Pant (37) and Steve Smith (34 not out) raised a 58-run stand for the fourth wicket to ensure a fighting total after electing to bat.

Shaw began with a hat-trick of fours off pacer Khaleel Ahmed. Those were breathtaking strokes, straight out of text book.

There was sheer elegance in his cover drives, both along the ground and the ones played over the



Delhi Capitals spinner Axar Patel celebrates after taking a Sunrisers Hyderabad wicket in an IPL game on Sunday. — IPL

field as Shaw backed his timing with precision and power.

His six off pacer Siddharth Kaul over long on and the ramp shot over short third-man off the same bowler bore testimony to his supreme touch.

Dhawan was happy playing the second fiddle as the Capitals put on board 51 without loss in

Powerplay overs.

Left-arm spinner Suchith, playing his first game for SRH, did a decent job, giving away only 21 runs in his four-over quota. He consistently troubled Dhawan.

Suchith bowled in tandem with Khan, SRH's best spinner over the years, as the two bowlers put brakes on the run flow.

Rashid also provided his side with first breakthrough when he found stumps of Dhawan, ending DC's 81-run opening stand.

Shaw's splendid knock ended in a run out after a mix-up with skipper Pant.

Pant and former Australia captain Steve Smith were now two new batsmen at the crease.

### SCORECARD

**Delhi Capitals:** Prithvi Shaw run out (Ahmed/Suchith) 53, Shikhar Dhawan b Rashid Khan 28, Rishabh Pant c Suchith b Kaul 37, Steven Smith (not out) 34, Shimron Hetmyer c Williamson b Kaul 1, Marcus Stoinis (not out) 2. **Extras (b 1, nb 1, w 2) 4. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 159.** **FoW:** 1-81, 2-84, 3-142, 4-145. **Bowling:** Khaleel Ahmed 4-0-42-0, Abhishek Sharma 1-0-14-0, Siddharth Kaul 4-0-31-2, Jagadeesha Suchith 4-0-21-0, Vijay Shankar 3-0-19-0, Rashid Khan 4-0-31-1.

**Sunrisers Hyderabad:** David Warner run out (Rabada/Pant) 6, Jonny Bairstow c Dhawan b Avesh Khan 38, Kane Williamson (not out) 66, Virat Singh c Stoinis b Avesh Khan 4, Kedar Jadhav st Pant b Mishra 9, Abhishek Sharma lbw b Patel 5, Rashid Khan lbw b Patel 0, Vijay Shankar b Avesh Khan 8, Jagadeesha Suchith (not out) 15. **Extras (b 2, lb 1, w 5) 8. Total (for seven wickets in 20 overs) 159.** **FoW:** 1-28, 2-56, 3-84, 4-104, 5-117, 6-117, 7-136. **Bowling:** Kagiso Rabada 3-0-26-0, R. Ashwin 4-0-27-0, Marcus Stoinis 1-0-12-0, Axar Patel 4-0-26-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-34-3, Amit Mishra 4-0-31-1.

**Delhi Capitals won the Super Over.**

They kept the scoreboard moving.

Smith was dropped on 14 by Kaul off Vijay Shankar. Khaleel had also missed out on a chance offered by Pant a few balls ago off Rashid.

The duo managed to get a few boundaries but SRH bowlers largely controlled the proceedings. — Agencies

## RAVINDRA CAN TURN MATCH ON HIS OWN: DHONI

Mumbai, April 25: All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja's significant improvement in batting has convinced his Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni to give him "those extra deliveries" that can change the complexion of a game. "Jaddu is somebody who can change the game on his own. In the last few years, we've seen significant change in batting and it's worth it to give him that extra bit of time, extra deliveries," Dhoni said.

"The bowlers have found it difficult to contain left-handers, and that helps as well," Dhoni said. — PTI

## KOHLI HAPPY TO SEE JADDU FIRE AHEAD OF T20 CUP

Mumbai, April 25: Premier all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja's brilliance may have ruined the Virat Kohli-led Royal Challengers Bangalore's plans in the IPL here on Sunday but with one eye on this year's T20 World Cup, the India captain was not complaining. In fact, Kohli seemed delighted to see his India teammate make an excellent return after a long injury layoff. "His (Jadeja) ability has been there for everyone to see. I am very happy to see him perform with the bat, ball and on the field," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony. — PTI

POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Points	Net RR
CSK	5	4	1	0	8	+1.612
DC	5	4	1	0	8	+0.334
RCB	5	4	1	0	8	+0.096
MI	5	2	3	0	4	-0.032
PBKS	5	2	3	0	4	-0.428
RR	5	2	3	0	4	-0.681
SRH	5	1	4	0	2	-0.180
KKR	5	1	4	0	2	-0.675

## Can Knights end miserable slump?

Ahmedabad, April 25: Their three-match losing streak finally over, Punjab Kings would seek to build a winning momentum when they face the struggling Kolkata Knight Riders in an IPL match here on Monday. Punjab made a winning start but then slumped to three straight losses before producing a clinical show to beat defending champions Mumbai by nine wickets on Friday, and they would look to notch up another triumph against KKR which have suffered four defeats on the trot.

Captain KL Rahul has been one of the few consistent performers in the formidable-looking Punjab batting unit and he once again led by example against MI with an unbeaten 60, his third fifty in five games.

Mayank Agarwal has been the other main performer and the return to form of 'Universe Boss' Chris Gayle against MI with a 43 not out should be good news for Punjab.

But Deepak Hooda, who has not done much after one impressive innings, will have to step up if Punjab want to perform consistently.

The place of Nicholas Pooran, who has scored 0, 0, 9, 0, in the playing XI is expected to be under review though his turn did not come in the last match.

The Punjab bowlers, who have been pedestrian in earlier matches, came good in their last match with the talented Ravi Bishnoi (2/21) and senior India pacer Mohammad Shami (2/21) leading the charge.

Young Arshdeep Singh has been a consistent bowler with six wickets from five matches.

On the other hand, KKR, led by England's World Cup

### Live on TV

Punjab Kings vs Kolkata Knight Riders from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

### HEAD to HEAD

Matches 27

KKR 18 PBKS 9

### FOR THE RECORD

- Eoin Morgan with 6,957 runs at an average of 27.07 in 181 innings needs 43 runs to become the fourth Englishman and 23rd batsman overall to complete 7,000 runs in T20.
- Chris Gayle has scored 700 runs at an average of 46.66 in 181 innings against Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL.

### LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

- KKR beat Punjab by two runs at Abu Dhabi.
- Punjab beat KKR by 8 wickets at Sharjah.

### STATS: S. PERVEZ QAISAR

winning skipper Eoin Morgan, continued to slide after losing to Rajasthan Royals by six wickets in their last match.

Their batting unit need a complete turnaround in form if KKR has to snap their losing streak.

The top-five batsmen continued to struggle with only Nitish Rana — two half centuries — and Dinesh Karthik doing anything of worth.

Pacer Pat Cummins played an incredible innings — 66 not out — for a losing cause against Chennai Super Kings but KKR would like their specialist batsmen to deliver consistently instead of relying on the lower order.

Gill and Morgan have been in woeful form and they desperately need big scores to make themselves count. — PTI



KKR players leave for Ahmedabad where the next leg of IPL begins from Monday. — KKR

## OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP PEOPLE HAPPY, SAYS MORRIS

Mumbai, April 25: Rajasthan Royals all-rounder Chris Morris says the COVID-19 catastrophe in India has been discussed in his team multiple times and the players can feel the pain that the pandemic is causing in its deadly second wave here.

India is reeling under the second wave of the pandemic with cases rising by over 3 lakh everyday, a crisis compounded by shortage of some crucial medicines and oxygen supplies. Morris said it is "difficult to comprehend" what is happening.

"As a team, we have been talking about it quite a lot over the last couple of days. We have seen how badly this pandemic has taken over the specific parts, if not all of India," Morris said at the post-match press conference after his side defeated Kolkata Knight Riders by six wickets here on Saturday.

"It is quite difficult to comprehend what is happening. It is a responsibility for us to play with smiles on our faces because we have a reason to smile and that we are healthy and get to play cricket. "We hopefully get to keep people happy on the other side of the screen. Whether we winning or losing, it is an opportunity to keep people smiling, if that gives people a reason to smile, then we are doing well as a sport," he added. — PTI