

City techie regrets his love escapade

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“Prashant had met the girl for whom he crossed the border when he was working in Bengaluru. She was his colleague and was a native of north India who shifted to Switzerland. Hoping that he would win her heart by walking to Switzerland, he took off from home. He was staying with his brother Srikanth in Kukatpally before he left the state,” said the Madhapur police inspector.

Prashant said there was a land route to Switzerland via Pakistan which takes about 60 days. Replying to a query in Punjab on Tuesday morning, he claimed he was beaten up by the Pakistani police, but did not want to fault them. He said he was treated well in the Lahore prison.

“On Tuesday afternoon, as we were heading back to the

city, he asked me in Hindi if we could eat something as he had not eaten anything since morning. After I replied in Telugu that we will stop for lunch, he had this glow in his eyes and was expressing how happy he is to speak in his mother tongue after four years. He shared how he regrets the decisions and how he wasted four years of his prime youth behind a quest of a one-sided love,” added the official.

Prashant, while thanking the Telangana government and external affairs ministry for their efforts to bring him back, said he did not expect that he would come back to India so soon. “I owe a lot to the Telangana government and the Centre,” he said. The family members of Prashant profusely thanked the Telangana government, the Centre and officials for getting Prashant released safely.

TS affidavit in HC shows 37K Covid cases hidden

Data buried across different heads; fever survey offers clue

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The state government informed the Telangana High Court on Tuesday that it had left out more than 37,000 potentially Covid-19 positive persons from the daily count of fresh cases between May 6 and May 30.

However, this startling number was not provided directly but was hidden amidst the numbers distributed under different heads, and buried in a set of data sheets on Covid-19 in Telangana.

Included in these documents was an affidavit filed by the Director of Public Health, as part of the state's submissions to the court, which is hearing public interest litigations (PILs) on Covid management in Telangana state.

As part of the affidavit, the government informed the court that 16,01,040

Covid-19 outpatient consultations were registered and services provided across the state between May 6 and May 30. During the same time, 2,96,829 patients were given Covid-19 medical kits.

Similarly, during this period, a state-wide fever survey was conducted to detect possible Covid-19. The survey covered 17,53,112 households, during which time, 3,60,634 medical kits were distributed to symptomatic people. In all, between May 6 and May 30, the state health authorities distributed 6,57,453 medical kits during out-patient services and additionally as part of the household fever survey.

Further, as part of the affidavit, the Telangana state health authorities informed the High Court that the average positivity rate, which determines how many people are getting infected out of every

hundred, stood at 6.39 per cent for the period between May 1 and May 29.

However, the average positivity rate for the period between May 6 and May 30 stood at 5.72 per cent, according to additional information provided in the affidavit, and as culled from daily Covid-19 bulletins.

As can be recalled, the state government had announced that these two exercises — household fever surveys and outpatient Covid medical kits distribution — were to ensure early identification of symptomatic persons and treating them instead of focusing on testing and getting results. Health officials described testing as a time-consuming process that left any Covid-19 positive patient open to infecting others during the wait for the test results to come.

If this premise of

“detecting and providing” medical kits to “untested but symptomatic Covid-19 cases” was the one Telangana health authorities believed, then, among the total of 6,57,453 people given medical kits, as per official positivity rate of 5.72 per cent, Telangana state possibly had 37,606 Covid-19 patients who were never tested and included in the official figures.

As per data provided in daily Covid-19 bulletins, new Covid-19 cases between May 6 and May 30 — the ones that were found through testing which are the only ones listed as confirmed Covid cases — stood at 94,187. This number could have been 1,31,793 had all symptomatic people found as part of treatment been tested, and assuming the positivity rates provided by health authorities are true. If not, the number could be even higher.

Explain plan to tackle the third wave: HC to TS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The Telangana High Court on Tuesday asked the state government to inform it about the plan of action formulated to counter a likely third wave of the coronavirus spread during which children are feared to be the worst-affected.

Chief Justice Hima Kohli said the court was surprised that the status report filed by the director of public health has reserved only one facility, the Niloufer Hospital, for treating such children. The court noted that the hospital has just a few beds.

Advocate L. Ravichander told the court about the bed availability in Niloufer Hospital, which he said was the only government hospital in Telangana State specializing in treatment for children. “Only eight ICU beds and 12 oxygen beds are available in the hospital to treat children in a critical condition,” he said.

In response, Chief Justice Kohli said, “some 8,000 children hailing from one district in Maharashtra have been affected by Covid-19 during this wave. Going by this kind of (insufficient) preparedness, the health of our future generation is at stake.”

The court noted that the counter filed by the public health director had given no details of the infrastructure, medical equipment and technical manpower to handle these machines, or of the requisite drugs for treating children in anticipation of the third wave.

“Several members of the advocate community have lost their lives due to the pandemic,”

● **CHIEF JUSTICE Hima Kohli** said the court was surprised that the status report filed by the director of public health has reserved only one facility, the Niloufer Hospital, for treating such children. The court noted that the hospital has just a few beds.

Ravichander told the court.

He explained how a young advocate at age 35 lost his life, and complained that there was a serious shortfall of the medicines in the state. He said the state government continued to act contrary to court orders in relation to RTPCR tests and the tests for the old and the disabled.

Counsel Chikudu Prabhakar pointed out how the promised rations are not being supplied in the state and how the distressed poor are committing suicide.

Noting that several directions issued by the court in the past had not been complied with, the high court asked the public health director to appear before it on Wednesday June 2, on virtual mode, and explain matters.

The court also directed the additional solicitor general representing the central government to inform it as to the quantities of the life-saving drugs that are supplied to the Telangana State for treating patients suffering from black fungus disease.

Since May 26, the central government has not supplied even the allocated vials, it heard.

The court sought to know the reason for this lag and directed the ASG to come up with all details by Wednesday.

Cancelling licence won't help patients

From Page 1

“We are aware of the situations where the relatives of Covid patients are mortgaging gold, and approaching money lenders to pay hospital bills to save their kins’ life.”

“We are well aware that the hospitals are not discharging the patients or handing over the dead bodies unless the bill

amount is paid fully. The government should control it. Cancelling of licences cannot give any relief to the aggrieved patients. At least, the amount, collected excessively, should be returned,” the court said.

The court also directed the Advocate General to submit the government's stand on not issuing new GOs fixing the price cap for Covid treatment.

Preventive measure



Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar takes a look at a painting on Covid-19 safety at Moazzam Jahi market crossroads on Tuesday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Drive to sanitise police patrol cars launched

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

● **60 PATROL** were sanitised by the vrLocal team at Nizam College Ground.

Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar launched a programme to sanitise patrol cars of the city police in association with vrLocal Industries.

Speaking at the event, Anjani Kumar said, “Sanitising the patrol vehicles was a much-needed

step to protecting our police officers in the midst of the pandemic.”

On Tuesday, 60 patrol were sanitised by the vrLocal team at Nizam College Ground. It will similarly sanitise the 63 law and order stations, 26

traffic stations, and 564 police vehicles.

Meanwhile, the Hyderabad police booked 7,501 cases and seized 4,549 vehicles for lockdown violations. The cases included 5,692 for violating the lockdown, 1,407 for not wearing the mask, and 305 for not maintaining social distancing.

COVID PUSHED STATE INTO FISCAL CRISIS

From Page 1

The Covid outbreak and lockdown since March 2020 has pushed the government into an unprecedented financial crisis for the first time after its formation. It fell short by ₹50,000 crore in achieving its budgetary target of ₹1.83 lakh crore in 2020-21.

Despite this, the government presented an ambitious budget of ₹2.30 lakh crore for 2021-22 with a belief that Covid would subside but the second wave and subsequent night curfew, lockdown since April 20 added to the financial woes of state government.

Though the Chief Minister announced new PRC for government employees from April, it could not be implemented so far due to fund crunch causing resentment among staff. Bills worth ₹25,000 crore are pending with the treasuries department for want of funds.

The government is relying on auction of bonds to run the show. It already raised ₹3,000 crore in April, ₹3,500 crore in May and ₹1,000 crore on June 1 amounting to ₹7,500 crore in the very first three months of this fiscal.

STAR | OFFICER

Only bureaucrat to run the state administration for about two decades

S.V. Prasad first suggested Kalam for Prez

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

S.V. Prasad, former chief secretary of undivided Andhra Pradesh, who passed away on Tuesday, will go into the annals of history as the only bureaucrat who had the privilege to run the state administration for about two decades.

Yet, he remained “ajata satru” so much so that none of the dozen-odd senior officials, who were overlooked by the then Chief Minister K. Rosaiah to make this ever smiling and friendly bureaucrat the Chief Secretary, murmured, leave alone questioning the decision in 2010.

Everyone in the administration felt that Prasad was destined to become Chief Secretary and that it was only a continuation of what he had been doing earlier, running the state administration, after a short break during the Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy regime. The 1975 batch officer began his career as a sub collector like any other pass-out from the Mussorie-based Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, but soon made his mark with his administrative skills and positive approach in resolving issues. He

entered the power corridors when N. Janardhan Reddy was Chief Minister in the early 1990s and gained enormous confidence of two more Chief Ministers down the line — Kotla Vijayabhaskar Reddy and N. Chandrababu Naidu. Like the longest serving Chief Minister record of Naidu, he too served as principal secretary to the Chief Minister for a record nine consecutive years.

“His success lay in his ability to grasp the issues concerning the state, guess the positive and negative impacts of a decision and communicate the same to the political boss in an unbiased manner,” says retired IAS official Balasubrahmanyam, who was part of Naidu's CMO and a close associate of Prasad.

There is no surprise that Prasad, who always wished to keep a low profile, may never get the credit for giving the country one of the finest and impactful Presidents — Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. As revealed by Balasubrahmanyam to this correspondent, while mourning the death, it was Prasad, who suggested Kalam's candidature to Naidu who in turn took it up with the then powerful BJP duo of Prime Minister Atal Behari



S.V. Prasad.

Vajpayee and home minister L.K. Advani. The rest of course is chronicled history.

Known for not losing his wit despite being in the thick of tense moments, Prasad, tongue in cheek, told Naidu that he would end up as the youngest Prime Minister of India. This was when his view was solicited by his boss at about 3 am at AP Bhavan, New Delhi, on the day the exit of H.D. Deve Gowda as PM became certain and Naidu was under pressure to accept the crown of thorns.

Insiders say he did not mince words, again in his own witty style, in opposing Naidu's decision to advance Assembly elections post Naxal attack on

him at Alipiri en route to Tirumala. When Naidu was jubilant over school-children thronging his residence with roses in their hands to express solidarity, his principal secretary was said to have reminded him that the visitors, unfortunately, can't vote.

Prasad was always there for officials or politicians to share their joy, fears, anguish or anger. Even ruling Congress leaders felt suffocated over the YSR's CMO not being as friendly as Prasad-headed CMO during the TD rule towards them. He stood by juniors when they looked at him. “Sir backed my decisions as Warangal collector despite political pressure,” pointed out Adityanath Das, Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh. As Vigilance Commissioner, Prasad was liberal in punishing the lower rung officials particularly when they don't have mala fide intentions.

This correspondent had opportunity to interact with him on numerous occasions for more than a decade and developed an insight into various administrative decisions. But, the disappointment over Prasad not heeding to the repeated suggestion to pen an autobiography that would have a potential to become a text book to the

FORMER CHIEF SECRETARY S.V. PRASAD DIES OF COVID-19, WIFE CRITICAL

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

S.V. Prasad, former chief secretary to erstwhile combined Andhra Pradesh, died of Covid at a private hospital here on Tuesday. He was 70.

Prasad's wife Lakshmi and his two sons, Vardhan and Sailesh, were also admitted to the hospital after they were tested positive. While the family recovered from the virus and was initially in home isolation, they developed post-Covid symptoms and were hospitalised.

According to close relatives, doctors performed a brain surgery on the ex-official and his wife a few days ago to remove clots. While Prasad breathed his last in the morning, doctors said his wife was in a critical condition. Both sons are stable.

Prasad was widely acclaimed as an efficient officer and a kind individual. The 1975 batch officer,

a native of Vadisileru village in East Godavari, did his engineering from JNTU at Kakinada and joined IAS while doing Masters in Business from IIM, Ahmedabad.

He served in different posts including as collector of Visakhapatnam and Kadapa districts, Information and Public Relations Commissioner, principal secretary to the CM, APSRTC managing director and revenue principal secretary before becoming chief secretary in 2010. He also held the post of vigilance commissioner after his retirement in September 2011.

Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan, Himachal Pradesh Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, Chief Ministers Jagan Mohan Reddy and Chandrababu Naidu and Telugu Desam president Chandrababu Naidu condoled Prasad's death.

civil servants of his next generations will remain forever. “Rayalandi (I have to write one day),” was his reply every time with the trade mark disarming

smile largely writ on his face, perhaps unmindful of extraordinary situation in the form of Covid and losing battle to the fatal virus.

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IN BRIEF

Tipper runs over bike, kills two

Hyderabad: Two persons going to a temple on a motorcycle were run over by a tipper (TS12 UB 9565) on the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway, the Vanasthalipuram police said. The deceased were identified as Ch Ravikanth Reddy and Maharaja Tara. The Vanasthalipuram police booked a case and further investigation is underway.

Man kills father over quarrel

Hyderabad: A man killed his 50-year-old father at Dinakarnagar, the Neredmet police said on Tuesday. The accused was identified as Kranthi Kumar, 24, and the victim Kondaiah. Police said Kondaiah used to drink and quarrel with his family. On Tuesday, he beat his wife Kobdamma, upon which Kranthi Kumar tried to stop his father and beat him. Kondaiah sustained injuries on his head and was shifted to a nearby hospital where he died, police said.

LOCKDOWN RULES TO BE STRICT DURING NIGHT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

D.S. Chauhan, additional commissioner of police, law and order, Hyderabad, said that the lockdown rules will be implemented strictly during the night hours. He instructed the police on duty to ensure a successful lockdown to contain the pandemic.

Chauhan said now that the relaxation period had been extended and the government had given an extra hour to reach home, even a five-minute concession will not be given to people.

Chauhan said instructions were given to seize all vehicles found outside after 2 pm. There will be no difficulties for those who were exempted.

Meanwhile, a fruit vendor, Suhail of Talabkatta, claimed that he was beaten by a constable at Mir Alam Mandi at 10.30 am while he was going to Purani Haveli.

WATER DISPUTES AFFECT AP-TS RELATIONS

From Page 1

About ₹1,51,349 crore under capital heads, ₹28,099 crore under loans and advances, ₹4,474 crore under deposits and advances, ₹238 crore under suspense and miscellaneous, and ₹310 crore under remittances are yet to be apportioned even after seven years of bifurcation.

While the 'political rivalry' between Chief Ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, K. Chandrashekar Rao and, at that time, N. Chandrababu Naidu, respectively was attributed to delay in resolution of bifurcation issues between 2014 and 2019, the situation did not improve much even after the change of guard in AP after the YSRC government headed by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy stormed to power in 2019.

Jagan Mohan Reddy extended a 'friendly hand' to Chandrashekar Rao within days of becoming the Chief Minister by handing over all government buildings in Hyderabad including Secretariat and Legislative Assembly buildings to the Telangana state government which Naidu had refused to do till 2019 even after shifting the AP administration to Amaravati in 2016.

Though Chandrashekar Rao and Jagan Mohan Reddy initially displayed bonhomie by meeting over half a dozen times to resolve bifurcation issues, the situation is back to square one after the AP CM launched Rayalaseema lift irrigation scheme in May 2019 to divert Srisailem water, which fuelled 'water disputes' between both the states again after which both the Chief Ministers never met.

Even the Chief Secretary-level talks between the states to resolve bifurcation issues came to a halt in January 2019. The Centre, which is supposed to hold regular meetings with Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state governments to resolve bifurcation issues, did not conduct a meeting for nearly two years after August 2019 and recently held a meeting in April which ended abruptly with no consensus reached on any issue.

Vaccine shortage leads to rise in anxiety in the state

Religious organisations, communities, colonies step up for registration

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Shortage of vaccines is leading to anxiety. People are queuing up during relaxation hours, hoping that they will get the vaccine. People are roaming around with their Aadhaar cards to get themselves registered, as they are not able to do so from the app. Many religious organisations, communities and residential colonies have got their senior members along with youngsters to work on registration.

Sai Ramesh, a resident of Malkajigiri said, "I am co-ordinating for more than 500 people in my colony. I am helping senior citizens to download apps and register. They are trying at different times and some of them get the slot while others keep on trying. Hardly five people are able to register every day from the people I am coordinating with."

There are senior citizens, students and also employees in the waiting list for vaccination.

Dr C.R.K. Prasad said, "In our hospital, we are getting requests from the neighbourhood but vaccines are not available. I get the stock once a week and this is over in three days. After that, I have to wait for a week to apply and then it has to be cleared by district medical and health officials. It is a long and tedious process."

Corporate hospitals are acquiring stocks for a week and they are also facilitating registration. There are administration charges of ₹250 plus the vaccine cost. Thus, each dose in the corporate hospitals is costing ₹850 for Covishield and ₹1,250 for Covaxin.

The shortage is expected to be till the end of June. After that, there will be sufficient stocks.

A health official said, "Doses cannot be distributed as there is concern about pilferage, wastage and black marketing. Due to this reason, corporate registered hospitals are being given prefer-

GHMC launches app to weed out ineligible from vax drive

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

In order to stop ineligible people from obtaining tokens for Covid-19 vaccination, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has decided to make the enrolment process through a specially designed mobile app from Wednesday.

As the mega vaccination drive against Coronavirus for the super spreaders category by the GHMC entered the fifth day on Tuesday, a total of 27,117 have been vaccinated so far. With several instances of ineligible people managing to grab tokens for vaccination from GHMC staffers, the civic body has decided to introduce

the app, where officials and staff will fill the beneficiary details along with their photograph and Aadhaar details.

The vaccination drive started on May 28 for a period of 10 days, targeting 25 to 30 lakh people who are vulnerable to the virus in the GHMC area.

Union minister G. Kishan Reddy visited vaccination centres at the GHMC playground at Amberpet, Banjara Gardens at Banjara Hills, MP Gardens at Mehdiapatnam and Government High School at Musheerabad. Speaking on the occasion, he said, "The Centre has partnered with the state governments to curb the spread of Covid-19. It has already funded the com-

panies which are producing the vaccines to enhance the production capacity. By December, the majority of India's adult population will be vaccinated, do not panic if you don't get the vaccine now, we will see to it you will be vaccinated soon," the minister said.

Vendors from Ramnagar fish market, which is mostly crowded with customers, leaving both the sellers and buyers exposed to the disease, had a special vaccination at the Government High School, Musheerabad. It is estimated that around 500 fish merchants, 300 of whom cut and clean the fish, and 200 others including other workers, were among those vaccinated on Tuesday.

Dr Y. Hemalatha, assistant medical officer, health GHMC, said, "A total of 975 persons have been vaccinated on Tuesday, most of them sellers at the fish market. From Wednesday, enrolment will be through the app, where the GHMC's, sanitary field assistants, sanitary jawans and tax inspectors will register the details," she said.

Meanwhile, the GHMC said as a part of Annappurna free food for the poor programme, 75,340 people had been delivered food during the lockdown. As part of the ongoing fever survey, 1,439 teams visited 86,726 houses, taking the number of homes visited so far to 12,16,596, an official said.

Vaccination reduces severity of Covid-19 hit

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Invasion of SARS-CoV-2 in the lungs on a large scale, with round glass formations or white patches, has been noted in 88 per cent of the people who were not vaccinated, in a study carried out by Government Medical College in Nizamabad.

The study is published in the Journal of Health and Clinical Research. As many as 206 patients were brought into the study. Of these, 108 had not been vaccinated and 26 vaccinated. The age-group of the patients ranged from 28 to 80 years.

It was found that, in the non-vaccinated group, the involvement of lungs was more than 25 per cent.

This was noticed in 160 patients, leading to a conclusion that 88 per cent of them had invasion in the lungs.

In the vaccinated group of 26, only three patients had involvement in the lungs, which formed into 12 per cent.

As many as 26 members in the study group were healthcare and frontline workers in the hospital, like doctors, nurses. They had symptoms for 4 to 5 days and then recovered. The three members who had lung involvement of less than 25 per cent, recovered with the available treatment.

The study concludes on the efficacy of the vaccine and it concludes that even if one contracts the Covid-19 infection after

vaccination, it will be mild and not severe.

Dr Kiran Madhala, author of the study and senior doctor at the medical college said, "In real-time data we have seen 3 per cent of doctors succumb despite both doses of vaccine. It has also been noted that those above 65 years of age are not producing sufficient antibodies despite vaccination."

She said that in senior doctors the study showed that despite vaccination there were no antibodies produced. "These are subjects for further research," she said.

The young vaccine recipients showed a pool of antibodies which brings down the severity of the infection, Dr Madhala said.

108 micro CZs set up despite drop in cases

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The number of micro containment zones in Telangana now totals 108 despite the reduction in new Covid19 cases. The number was increased from 81 to 108 as several districts are reporting more than 100 cases per day.

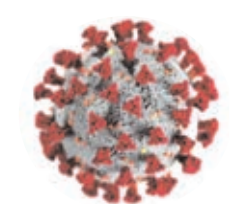
Mahabubabad has the highest number of micro containment zones and 105 new cases were reported from there today. The second highest micro-containment zone, with 15 more infected, is in Warangal Rural. It has reported 569 cases from May 26 to June 1. Hyderabad has 13 micro containment zones. Dr V Rakesh in Warangal says, "Among the rural population, we had to explain the symptoms and also carry out camps to make

people understand the safety protocols. They have not been able to understand how they were protected in the first wave. Now they are seeing a continuous reporting of Covid cases. Many of those who worked in neighbouring states are back and they are approaching hospitals late. The hypoxia condition in them is high."

He added: "The numbers are less now as many of them are at home and not moving out. Many families are worried and scared whether they must hereafter opt for work outside the state. Even to travel to Hyderabad within the state is considered risky by those who have lost their near and dear ones."

Experts say the declining numbers have to be viewed keeping the the lockdown in adjoining states in mind.

DAILY COVID BULLETIN DATA



Update: Cases | Deaths

June 1, 2021	
Fresh Cases	2,493
Deaths	15
Tests Done	94,189
Active Cases	33,254
Total Cases	5,80,844
Total Deaths	3,296

Highest New Cases

GHMC (Hyderabad)	318
Nalgonda	165
Ranga Reddy	152
Medchal-Malkajigiri	137
Karimnagar	129

Lowest New Cases

Adilabad	12
Komarambheem Asifabad	14
Nirmal	14
Kamareddy	15
Nizamabad	18



भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान कोलकाता
Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Kolkata
(An Autonomous Institute under Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
Mohampur - 741 246, Dist : Nadia, West Bengal

Advt. No.: IISER-K/Admn./NT-Rec./2021/02 Date: 01.06.2021

Applications are invited from eligible Indian Nationals for **One (1) post of Lady Medical Officer on Direct Recruitment method in Pay Level-10 plus NPA.**

For further details, please visit the Institute website <http://apply.iiserkol.ac.in/jobs>

The last date for submission of hard copy of application is **30th June, 2021 upto 17:30 hrs.**

Registrar



Department of Social Justice and Empowerment
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Government of India

Extension of closing date for receipt of nominations for Vayoshreshtha Samman - 2021 (Nation Award for Senior Citizens)

In partial modification of advertisement of Department of Social Justice & Empowerment uploaded on Ministry's website (www.socialjustice.nic.in) on 09.02.2021 and published in newspapers on all India basis on 14.04.2021 (davn 38101/11/0001/2122). It is notified for information of all concerned that the closing date for receipt of nominations in the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment has been extended upto 15.06.2021.

Davn 38101/11/0003/2122



Appointment of General Manager in

Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi invites applications from Indian National for one (01) post of General Manager on deputation basis, in the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority, a statutory body established under section 125 of the Companies Act, 2013. The said posts are based at Delhi.

2. Application in the prescribed format, duly completed must be submitted in duplicate through proper channel till 05.07.2021 to Shri. Sanjay Jain, Director IEPF, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Room No. 515, 5th Floor, 'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi-110001.

3. For application format, eligibility conditions, requisite qualifications and other details like terms and conditions for service, please log on to Ministry of Corporate Affairs' website www.mca.gov.in or www.iepf.gov.in.

DAVP 07101/11/0001/2122

Last moment rush



Motorists rush in the last hour to their destination as traffic gets halted at lower Tank Bund, in Hyderabad on Tuesday, during lockdown hours. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

COVID | WOES

Hospitals seek legal help for recourse

6 more hosps lose permit

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Permissions for six hospitals to treat Covid-19 patients have been revoked by the director of public health and family welfare in the state. These are the KIMS Hospital in Secunderabad, Sunshine Hospital in Gachibowli, Century Hospitals in Banjara Hills, Medisys Hospital in LB Nagar and Integro Hospital in Tolichowki.

"A total of 174 complaints had been received by the government about additional charges levied on patients etc and 113 of these have been issued show cause notices. The permissions granted to 22 hospitals have been revoked," the govern-

ment said on Tuesday.

Revoking of the permission means that no more of admissions of Covid-19 patients can be done in these hospitals. The patients currently undergoing treatment have to be treated and discharged.

Doctors of the Indian Medical Association and the Telangana Superspecialty Hospitals Association say the government action was likely based on complaints of "one or two" patients.

"We have treated thousands of patients in the second wave. How can complaints of one or two form the basis for such action? Is this being done to the benefit of hospitals that are close to the gov-

ernment to enable them to do way with such difficult treatment?"

There is buzz in medical circles that the action was taken on the basis of complaint from a single patient, in each case, and the points put forward by the hospitals were not considered.

The Telangana Hospital and Nursing Homes Association stated that their request for a revision of rates for treating Covid-19 patients has not been agreed to by the government. "We are calling the office of the director of public health everyday but there is no response," they said.

Another doctor said, "As per the right to health, hospitals cannot

deny treatment to a patient. The action of the government during the pandemic will be challenged in court."

Hospitals say the health infrastructure is based on medical devices, medicines and various other components. "Actions like black marketing or increasing the prices of drugs several times are not being checked and anti-social elements are not being controlled by the government. But, registered hospitals are instead being targeted," a doctor said.

Many of these hospitals that were issued notices in the last three days have asked their legal team to look into this for possible legal recourse.

CCMB gets new director

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Dr Vinay K. Nandicoori, a well-known molecular biologist, is the new director of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad. He was formerly with the National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi.

Dr Nandicoori's research interest spans molecular signalling networks in Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the micro-organism that causes TB. His research has found national and international relevance and recognition.



Dr Vinay K. Nandicoori

An alumnus of IIT-Mumbai, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, Texas A&M University and University of Virginia, he holds the prestigious J.C. Bose fellowship. He is an elected fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Indian National Science Academy and National Academy of Sciences, India.



Department of Social Justice and Empowerment
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Government of India

Announcement of 63 lakh Post Matric Scholarships

for Scheduled Caste Students for academic year 2021-22
Government of India, along with the State Governments, will award 63 lakh post matric scholarships for the Scheduled Caste students during 2021-22 to bring Gross Enrollment Ratio (higher education) among the SCs as par with the National standards within the 5 year period.

Eligibility-

Students belonging to SC category having parents' income of <Rs. 2.5 lakh per annum for studying in classes XI and above in recognised institutions.

Benefits-

- * The scholarship includes the following components for the complete duration of the course:-
 - * Compulsory non-refundable fees including tuition fees.
 - * Academic allowance ranging between 2500 to 13500 per annum based on level of education.
 - * Ten percent extra allowances shall be provided for Divyang students.
 - * All eligible students shall be entitled to take admission in the institutions without pre-payment of tuition fees and hostel fees.
 - * A FREESHIP CARD will be issued by the State Governments to the eligible students, to enable them to study in the institution without pre-payment of the fees.

Applications-

- * All eligible students may apply on the online scholarship platform of the State Govt starting from 16th April till 30th June 2021 in the first call.
- * In case of any difficulty, call the grievance redressal number of the State Govt or consult the Commissioner Social Welfare of the State Govt.

Detailed Scheme guidelines can be seen at on www.socialjustice.nic.in

davn 38101/11/0007/2122

SHORT TAKES

COURT DISMISSES
REVANTH'S PLEA
ON CASH-FOR-VOTEDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The Telangana High Court dismissed a petition filed by TPCC working president A. Revanth Reddy, who had said that the cash-for-vote case would not come under the purview of the ACB. He had contended only the Election Commission can look it.

The High Court rejected the contentions of Revanth Reddy and made it clear that the ACB has jurisdiction to probe the bribery cases in which politicians are involved. Earlier, the ACB court had dismissed a similar petition fled by Revanth Reddy, and he had approached the High Court.

KISHAN RELEASES
AYUSH-64 MEDS
FOR COVID-19DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy released the Ayush-64 medicine developed under the aegis of the Union Ayush ministry for Covid-19 patients. The drug was formerly used for malaria, and has been tested upon Covid-19 patients. The National Research Institute of Unani will conduct clinical trials on people between the ages of 18 and 60.

Authorities are selecting asymptomatic patients and those with mild symptoms to test the medicine. There is an MoU between the RSS and Seva Bharti and ministry of Ayush.

On Tuesday the minister handed over Ayush 64 medicine to Seva Bharti representatives at the Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine. Erragadda.

TS GOVT FAILED
TO CURB COVID,
SAYS CONGRESSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Congress leaders said the state government had failed to curb the Covid-19 spread. Leaders including state party chief Uttam Kumar Reddy and CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka participated in a meeting via social media app on Tuesday as part of a "campaign to vaccinate everyone" as per the call given by AICC.

Reddy urged the government to include journalists in the list of frontline warriors and inform the public about remdesivir injection availability. The vaccination drive should be carried out without any halt, he proposed. He said the TRS government was failing to fulfill the promises it made to the people even after seven years in power. The central and state governments took the pandemic issue lightly after the first lockdown, he alleged.

He asked that when neighbouring states were offering Covid-19 treatment free, why was the TRS government not doing so? He demanded that the RT-PCR testing should be done free at all mandal centers. Bhatti said the government does not care about the problem of unemployment and does not care about giving unemployment benefits to youths.

He said Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao had deceived the people. He said that AICC president Sonia Gandhi gave Telugus the separate state of Telangana but the aim for which it was created, namely to give employment to youths, had not been fulfilled. The CLP leader said if the black fungus situation worsened in the state, a fear is that there will not be sufficient stock of medicines.

Stage set for digital
survey of lands in TS

KCR likely to hold a meet with the firms soon

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The state government has initiated the process to undertake digital survey of lands in Telangana. The government had allocated Rs 400 crore in the recent 2021-22 budget for undertaking digital survey to safeguard every acre of land and determine the ownership of lands accurately with an aim to make Telangana a 'land dispute-free state'.

As a follow-up to this, chief secretary Somesh Kumar on Tuesday held a preliminary meeting with various survey agencies. As many as 17 firms participated in the meeting and discussed the modalities

● **METHODOLOGY, TECHNOLOGY** to be adopted, time and cost factor, availability of survey equipment and technical persons, requirement of software, hardware and internet bandwidth were some of the issues which figured in the discussion.

for taking up surveys covering the entire state.

Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao is likely to hold a meeting with these firms shortly to finalise the modalities.

During the discussion, Somesh Kumar enlisted the views of the companies and the problems encountered by them

while taking up similar surveys in other states. The methodology, technology to be adopted, time and cost factor, availability of survey equipment and technical persons, requirement of software, hardware and internet bandwidth were some of the issues which figured in the discussion.

Principal secretary industries Jayesh Ranjan, commissioner of stamps and registration Seshadri, TSTS MD Venkateswar Rao, commissioner of settlements Sashidhar and other officials were present.

In the recent budget session of the Assembly, the Chief Minister said, "Once the survey is completed, there would

be complete clarity on all issues. Boundary disputes between farmers on agricultural land, dispute over government and forest lands and between forest lands and private lands will be resolved. There will be a solution to Podu lands too, and all such issues will be resolved in the next three or four months."

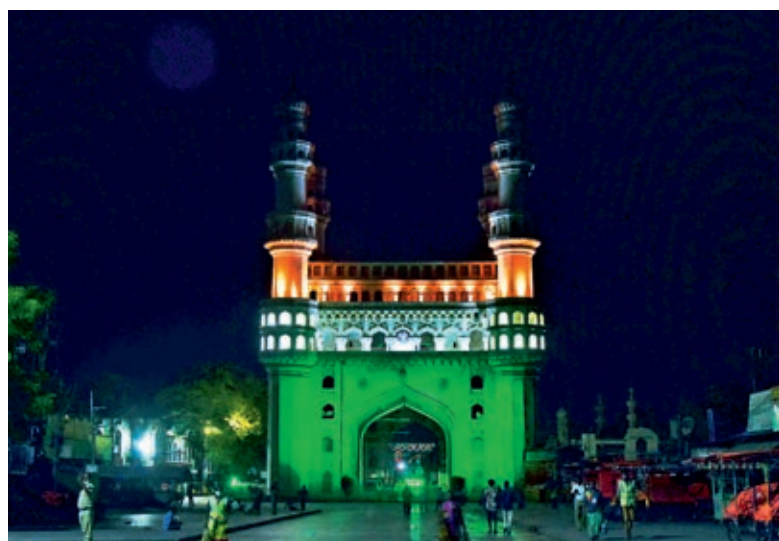
With the provision of land coordinates, he said, there would not be any scope for boundary disputes in the future. "In countries where land records are maintained properly, they have achieved 3 to 4 per cent GDP growth. The government is ready to have such a revolutionary change here," the Chief Minister said.

EX-TD MP's SON
FOUND DEAD
IN HOTEL ROOMDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Telugu Desam former Eluru MP Maganti Babu's younger son was found dead in a room of a luxury hotel in Banjara Hills on Tuesday. Police sources revealed that the deceased, Maganti Ravindranath Chowdary, was seeking treatment at a hospital in Andhra Pradesh and had checked into the hotel without informing anyone.

Ravindranath, who reportedly has an alcohol addiction, was found by the hotel staff. Upon being alerted by the hotel management, the Banjara Hills police reached the spot and rushed him to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead. The body was then shifted to the Osmania General Hospital for the post-mortem examination. "He had recently fallen sick and was admitted to a hospital in Andhra Pradesh, where he was being treated. However, it is learnt that he left the hospital without informing anyone and reached Hyderabad to check into the hotel and was staying there for the last few days without medication," police sources said.

● **POLICE SOURCES** revealed that the deceased, Maganti Ravindranath Chowdary, was seeking treatment at a hospital in Andhra Pradesh and had checked into the hotel without informing anyone.



Charminar is fully illuminated on the eve of Telangana Formation Day celebration in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

KCR: Will not rest until
'Bangaru' TS is achievedDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao said that he will not rest till his dream of "Bangaru Telangana" is achieved. In a press release issued by the Chief Minister's Office on Tuesday, the CM greeted the people of the state on the eve of the seventh Telangana State Formation Day on Wednesday.

"With many battles, sacrifices, martyrdom, we have achieved Telangana state in a parliamentary democratic way," the CM said. The state has excelled in all sectors within a short span of seven years, the state laid strong foundations and offered stability, he said.

"The Telangana state is fulfilling the de-

mands of the statehood movement one by one. Water for the irrigation and drinking, power, medical and health, roads and all other infrastructure facilities are being provided, reaching short-term and long-term aims," the CM said.

The CM said he is felt proud to announce that the 29th state had made rapid strides in the development and welfare sectors and became role model for the other states and the country as well.

Rao said that every sector that was neglected in undivided AP now being corrected. As Telangana society has constitutes 90 per cent of people from the SC, ST, BC and minorities communities, the government has been working for their wel-

fare. The government has been successful in reviving and revitalising agricultural operations by constructing irrigation projects and stabilising the farm sector. The government was also successful in strengthening the rural economy. The CM said the people had contributed to the success and thanked them for the same.

Though a great economic loss had been caused by the Coronavirus pandemic, with the people's support the state is marching forward, he said. The faith and confidence reposed in him by the people, the CM said, is rock solid support. He said he would not rest till with the people's support he makes it Bangaru Telangana, a golden state.

Bandi asks CM about jobs for youths

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay said on Tuesday that though seven years have passed after the formation of Telangana, the youth in the state are suffering due to lack of jobs and employment.

"There was a Telangana movement for Neellu, Nidulu, and Niyamakalu. But water went to the chief minister's farm house, funds went to his benamis

and employment was given to his family members. This is what happened since 2014," Sanjay said.

Addressing the media in Delhi, Bandi expressed concern that millions of youths in the state have no job for years and many educated are crossing their age limit for government jobs.

Some 25 lakh people have registered with the TSPSC for jobs in the state as was stated by former chairman of

TSPSC Ghanta Chakrapani.

Sanjay also recalled that the Biswal Committee had announced that there existed some 2.90 lakh job vacancies in the state but unfortunately, the state government has not issued a Group 1 notification to fill these posts. Teacher posts were not filled after the formation of Telangana, he said, and added that the TRS government cheated the voters by saying they

would be given unemployment benefits before the Graduate MLC elections. The BJP state president said the Chief Minister had promised that he will notify 50,000 jobs after the completion of the graduate quota MLC elections. "Till today, there is no such action."

He also said 12,000 education volunteers are starving due to the Corona spread. Nearly 20,000 contract employees were laid off.

main accused -- Kailash Gupta, Nitin Gupta, Nikhil Gupta and their firms, their chartered accountants, the gold bullion dealers and the major contributors of the black money involved in the fraud.

A total of 41 entities/individuals have been charged with the offence of money laundering. "They knowingly layered the amount into the bank accounts of Musaddilal Group to claim the same as untainted money, then converted the same into gold bullion which was further sold for profit," as per the case.

total proceeds of crime generated in this scam was of ₹139 crore. A provisional order was issued on February 2 this year, attaching both movable and immovable properties of the accused, worth ₹130.57 crore, which included jewellery worth Rs86 crore, which had been seized during the searches conducted by the ED.

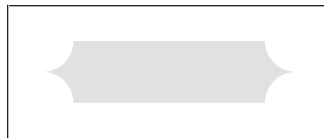
Two prosecution complaints were filed by the department against 13 individuals/entities. On May 31, ED filed this final prosecution complaint after extensive investigation and has charged the

ARUNA BLASTS TRS
CADRE FOR REMARKS
AGAINST ETALA

Hyderabad: BJP vice president D.K. Aruna on Monday objected to the comments of TRS leaders that former health minister Etala Rajendar had mort-

gaged his self-esteem to the BJP. She said that, rather, TRS leaders were currying favour with the CM to amass wealth. Addressing the

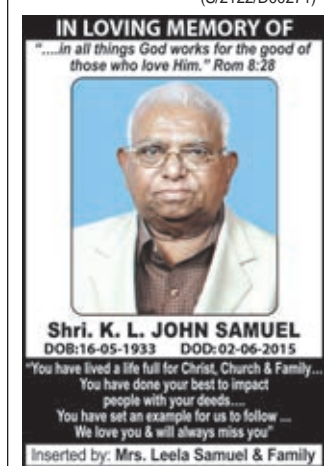
media online, she said the TRS leaders had no self-esteem, no soul and were stooping low to appease the CM to serve their own individual ends.



SHRADDHANJALI



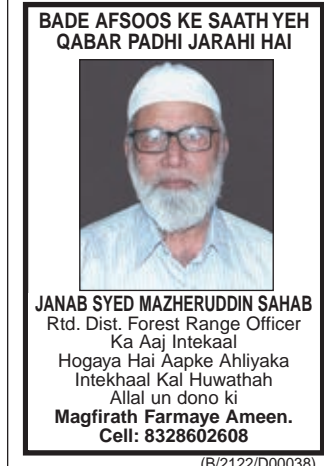
T. JAIHIND BABU
Expired on: 24th May 2021
(Managing Committee Member)
The Samajam has Lost a Dedicated Committee Member.
Samajam expresses heartfelt condolence to his Family.
Inserted by:
SRI SAI BABA SAMAJAM (Regd 122/72)
Minister Road, Nallagutta,
Secunderabad
(S/2122/D00271)



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

"...in all things God works for the good of those who love Him." Rom 8:28

Shri. K. L. JOHN SAMUEL
DOB: 16-05-1933 DOD: 02-06-2015
"You have lived a life full for Christ, Church & Family...
You have done your best to impact people with your deeds...
You have set an example for us to follow...
We love you & will always miss you"
Inserted by: Mrs. Leela Samuel & Family

BADE AFSOOS KE SAATH YEH
QADAR PADHI JARAHAI HAI

JANAB SYED MAZHERUDDIN SAHAB
Rtd. Dist. Forest Range Officer
Ka Aaj Intekaa
Hogaya Hai Aapke Ahiyaka
Intekhaal Kal Huwathah
Allal un dono ki
Magfirath Farmaye Ameen.
Cell: 8328602608
(B/2122/D00038)



In Fond Remembrance

NIKHIL SRIVASTAVA (Nikki)
S/o Mrs. & Mr. N.L. Srivastava
D.O.B: 02-06-2020
In Grief:
Mrs. & Mr. N.L. Srivastava
Wife: Durgarani Srivastava
Daughter: Mahak Srivastava
Sisters: Urvasi & Harsha
Ph. No: 9391062616, 8309647421
(B/2122/D00037)



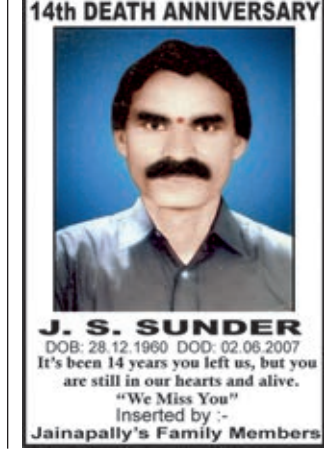
10th DAY CEREMONY

N. BABU RAO
(Prop.: Chitanand Shoemart)
(Ex. International Refree In Powerlifting)
DOD. 24/5/2021
10th Day Ceremony on 3rd June 2021 at Sun to 12 pm
in our Residence (H.No. 1-5-102 General Bazar Secbad. T.S.)
Inserted by:
SDN - N. Shiv Kumar, N. Chetan, N. Arvind,
DAUGHTER - H. Sangeetha, Minnakar Family.
9494860355, 9959395315



11th DAY CEREMONY

Late. VUNGARALA NAGESHWAR RAO
DOB: 19-2-1952 DOD: 24-5-2021
11th day ceremony will be held on 03.06.2021 at H.No. 3-95-20F, Saraswathi Nilayam, Alkapuri, Sainagar Colony, Nagole, Hyd
Inserted by:
Wife: VUNGARALA DURGA BHAVANI
Son: VUNGARALA PREM KUMAR
Daughter-in-law: VUNGARALA SARVAGNA
Grand sons: VUNGARALA AMOGH, KHUSANT
Daughters: VANKA MAHALAKSHMI (SWAPNA)
Son-in-law: VANKA SUNIL KUMAR
Grand son: VANKA MOHIT
Grand Daughter: VANKA SHAMKA



14th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

J. S. SUNDER
DOB: 28.12.1960 DOD: 02.06.2007
It's been 14 years you left us, but you are still in our hearts and alive.
"We Miss You"
Inserted by:-
Jainapally's Family Members

FIRST ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCE



Mrs. Kothapally Victoria Elzaphan
(W/o Late K S P Elzaphan Joshua)
Office Superintendent, PCOM Office,
South Central Railways
24th Aug 1949 to 2nd June 2020

Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28
Mummy you were an epitome of courage, faithfulness, love, laughter, prayerfulness, resilience, sacrifice, servitude and strength.
We thank our Lord Jesus for the love and grace He has shown us through you.
We love you and we miss you.
Rest in peace, mummy

Remembered by:
Son: George Joshua Kothapally,
Daughter: Smitha Rebecca Prodduturi,
Son-in-law: Shadrach Prabhu Kumar Prodduturi,
Grandson: Jesse Samuel Prodduturi, Relatives, Colleagues, Friends and Neighbours

10th DAY REMEMBRANCE



Shri RAVINDER GORAK
DOB: 22 Apr 1964 - DOD: 24 May 2021
(Proprietor Shree Lakshmi Medical Needs)
You will live forever in our hearts.
In Grief:
Gorak Laxmi Narayana & Laxmi Bai,
Sandhya, Pranav & Samantha Priya
Shreya & Gautam, Mahender & Sunita
Meena & Vinay, Aruna & Naveen
All office staff members of
Shree Lakshmi Medical Needs

Condolence Message



TIRUMALA JAIHIND BABU
D.O.B: 24-05-2021
You were a great strength to our family, you will be missed & you will always be remembered. You live in our hearts.
Inserted by:
Kodimela Sai Prasad, Kodimela Muralidhar,
Kodimela Soujanya, Kodimela Anupa,
Kodimela Sai Sruthi, Kodimela Sai Vishal,
Kodimela Sai Vaneesh
(S/2122/D00258)

In Loving Memory



S.N. VIDHYA BHUSHAN
Rtd. Asst. Director (ESI)
D.O.B: 05-02-1952 D.O.D: 10-05-2021
Your absence cannot be replaced by anyone. We all will miss you always.
Inserted by: C. Vijay Kumar,
C. Geethanjali, P. Amitha Raj &
All Family Members.
Contact: 9160187770
(B/2122/D00039)

OBITUARY



TIRUMALA JAI HIND BABU
D.O.B: 24-05-2021
Your sweet memories will remain in our hearts forever & ever
Inserted by:
Kodimela Family
K. Sai Prasad, K. Sowjanya,
K. Sai Sruthi, K. Muralidhar, K. Anupa,
K. Sai Vishal, K. Sai Vaneesh
(B/2122/D00267)

7th Death Anniversary



Mohammed Daulat Khan
Sons:
Mohammed Bakhtiyar Khan - 98490 91900
Aziz Ahmed Khan - 9849790907

8th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



AAREY KAMALA BAI
Inserted by:
Aarey Rajalingam
Grand Son - A. Reshikesh
Grand Daughter - A. Pranitha
9441651169

SHRADDHANJALI



Sri. BHEEMSEN JAISWAL JI
S/o Late. Sri. Ashrafali Jaiswal Ji
DOD: 23.05.2021
Your memory will eternally permeate our lives and manifest as blessings

Fondly remembered by:
Sri. Ugrasen Jaiswal (Brother)
Sri. Rakesh Jaiswal (Corporator Jambhag. Division),
Sri. Dharmesh Jaiswal (Sons),
Smt. Veena Jaiswal,
Smt. Seema Jaiswal (Daughters-in-Law)
Sri. Dr. Aakash Jaiswal M.S.Ortho,
Sri. Darpan Jaiswal (Grand Sons)
Miss. Srijita Jaiswal (Grand Daughter) & All Jaiswal Family.
Ph.No. 7997811111
(B/2122/D00040)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



E.P. LAXMI NARSIMHA
D.O.B: 25-02-1960 D.O.D: 25-05-2021
10th Day Ceremony will be held on Thursday June 3rd
From 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
At Plot No: 28, Street No: 1, S.P. Colony, Trimulgherry, Sec-bad - 500015
Ph: 9652915283, 9581983732.
(S/2122/D00029)

13th DAY CEREMONY



T. NIRMALA
D.O.B: 01-07-1969 D.O.D: 21-05-2021
W/o T. Narsing
Inserted by:
Sons & Daughter-in-laws: Kiran & Shailaja Arun & Sukanya Amar
Grand Sons: Rakshit, Varshith & Chaitanya Brothers: Lakshman, Shabbir, Pathi, Murthy
Son-in-law: Santosh
And Family Members
(S/2122/D00270)

PAGDI



Our beloved Mother Smt. JANKI GOPANI
W/o Late Sri Mohandas Gopani
Left us peacefully for her heavenly abode on Monday 31st May '21
Pagdi will be held online on 2nd June '21, Wednesday between 4:00 to 4:30 PM.
Gopani Family & Relatives
Heera Moti Garments
(S/2122/D00026)

IN FOND REMBRANCE



MADUGULA DEVASAHAYAM
S/o. Late. M. Devapriyam
Called to glory : 02.05.2021
You will be missed every moment of our lives. Your presence will continue to surround us.
Inserted by:
Daughters - Madugula Sharon Supriya, Madugula Sarah Samanthra and Family Members.

LOVING & BLESSED PARENTS



MAMILIA SHIKHAMANI (SE) C.S.I.
DATE OF BIRTH : 5-4-1907
DATE OF DEATH : 10-1-1992
SMT ALEESAMMA
DATE OF BIRTH : 3-1-1918
DATE OF DEATH : 2-6-1984
5- SONS, 1 DAUGHTER, GRAND & GREAT GRAND CHILDREN
INSERTED BY:
SMT & DR M.S. CHRISTOPHER & FAMILY
CELL NO. 9246500916

SHORT TAKES

30 FLESH TRADE RACKETS BUSTED SINCE JAN. 2020

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The Rachakonda Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) has busted 30 human trafficking cases and rescued over 100 victims since its inception on January 1, 2020, it said on Tuesday. It has also apprehended 81 human traffickers and placed 28 notorious traffickers under preventive detention.

Rachakonda police commissioner said the unit had also rescued 55 boys and 16 girls from different states, all aged below 17 years, working in hazardous industries.

In Rachakonda commissionerate, during Operation Smile-VII in January, 65 minor victims were rescued and nine cases registered against the accused.

Among the important cases, the AHTU where recently busted an online prostitution racket organised by traffickers of Uganda.

BIOLOGICAL E TIES UP FOR COVID VACCINE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Biological E Limited, the city-based vaccine and therapeutics manufacturer, has announced that it has entered into an agreement with the Canadian company Providence Therapeutics Holdings Inc. for sale in India of up to 30 million doses of Providence's messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine, PTX-Covid-19-B.

As part of the agreement, Providence will transfer technology to Biological E to manufacture mRNA vaccines, with a minimum production capacity of 600 million doses in 2022 and a target capacity of 1 billion doses.

In its announcement, Biological E said the agreement represents the sale of all the remaining 2021 Providence production, plus a portion of the early 2022 production, after accounting for the first sale of vaccines to the Canadian province of Manitoba. Mahima Datta, managing director of Biological E, said, "We hope to provide India and other countries yet another option to ramp up their efforts towards achieving herd immunity against Covid-19."

JAGAN SAYS RAJU'S PLEA IS FOR PUBLICITY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Refuting the allegations made against him in the bail cancellation petition filed by YSRC Narsapur MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy filed a counter before the CBI court on Tuesday stating that Raju had filed the petition with an ulterior motive.

"The petitioner wants to garner publicity through sensationalism and hence using the judicial system for this purpose," alleged Jagan Mohan Reddy in his 98-page counter to the plea by Raju who urged the court to cancel the bail granted in the disproportionate assets and the quid pro quo-related cases. The AP CM took to the notice of the court the cases registered against the petitioner for cheating banks and other criminal cases.

Cops tracking source of black fungus drug

Is med. reaching black market from hosps, cops wonder

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Special Operations Team (SOT) of the Rachakonda police cracked around eight cases of illegally selling amphotericin B injection vials and around 50 cases of remdesivir.

Although medicines for black fungus are supplied by the government, some unscrupulous elements are getting hands on it and selling them for exorbitant prices. The Rachakonda police launched an investigation into the scam and the alleged nexus between hospital authorities and black marketers.

As per the procedure, the patient, who is suffering from black fungus infection, has to place a request with the government seeking medicines. The request, after examination of a team of doctors in a private hospital, is forwarded to the medical department along with identity proofs.

Then the department gives approval and issues medicines to the patient. During the delivery of medicine to patients, or by placing fake requests, fraudsters are managing to divert the medicines and sell them at high prices in black market.

In some cases, SOT police has arrested doctors, nurses and some medical representatives.

The SOT Bhongir, along with the LB Nagar police, apprehended a junior doctor and a staff nurse who came to sell amphotericin

ENT Hosp reports first fungus death

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

One person died of black fungus at the Government ENT Hospital on Tuesday. This is the first death due to the disease at the hospital. The patient came in a very critical

condition, doctors said.

Forty-three persons joined the hospital during the day, and most of them from the districts of the state. Doctors carried out 26 surgeries. The hospital has 300 patients. Doctors said 24 patients were discharged on Tuesday.

B Liposome injections. In another case, the SOT Malkajgiri arrested two persons including an advocate in connection with the black marketing of amphotericin B.

On Monday, the SOT LB Nagar busted another illegal sale of amphotericin B Liposome and arrested two brothers who were involved in the scam.

"It is impossible to pull off the scam without the help of medical staff. Medical representatives after colluding with black marketers are taking advantage of the pandemic and encashing by selling the injection used in the treatment of black fungus at exorbitant prices. We are investigating the nexus between the medical representatives and black marketers," said a Rachakonda police official.

Amphotericin B Liposome injection is being used to treat black fungal infections. The antiviral drug is currently in high

demand which leads to shortage of the drug.

The drug normally does not cost more than ₹7,858, depending on the manufacturer. However, black marketers are selling the injections for ₹50,000-₹70,000.

Speaking to this newspaper, Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh M. Bhagwat said, "The patients who are suffering from black fungus have to undergo treatment in government hospitals like the ENT and Gandhi Hospital rather than going to private hospitals." Bhagwat added that there were many cases of fraudsters duping patients under the guise of providing medicines. "Every day, a patient suffering from black fungus requires six injections and black marketers are selling each injection at prices ranging from ₹40,000-₹70,000," said Bhagwat.

He urged the public to reach out to the police immediately if they were

7 HELD, TWO DRUG RACKETS ARE BUSTED

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The Rachakonda Special Operations Team (SOT) police busted two rackets of illegal sale of amphotericin B injection vials, used in the treatment of black fungus, in the black market and arrested seven persons on Tuesday. The vials were being sold for ₹40,000 to ₹50,000.

In the first case, the LB Nagar SOT along with Chaitanyapuri police apprehended four persons — M.S. Venkateshwarlu, Manchala Rama Krishna, Leavaki Maheshwar Reddy and Chennu Ramu — and seized five vials of amphotericin B injections from them. Two other accused are absconding.

In the second case, the Malkajgiri SOT nabbed three persons — Pujari Naveen, Grandhe Kishore and Darpareddy Venkatesh — for illegally selling amphotericin B, at ECIL crossroads under Kusaiguda police station limits.

duped by fraudsters through Rachakonda police WhatsApp number 9490617111 or through official social media handles.

NO ACTION AGAINST CUSTODIANS FOR REFUSING BURIAL

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The Wakf Board failed to take action against the custodians of three graveyards against whom a written complaint was lodged 10 days ago for refusal to bury a Covid-19 victim's body.

A complaint was registered on May 22 against the custodians of the Jamalikunta graveyard of Golconda, and those at Shaikpet and Hakimpet. One of the inspector and auditors of the Wakf Board instead of furnishing the report tried to convince the petitioner to withdraw the complaint.

Apart from this, there are many complaints of refusing burial in graveyards on one pretext or another. Most people were denied citing that the deceased person does not reside in a nearby area. The Wakf Board has constituted a complaint cell, but it does not work properly.

AP DOCTORS GEAR UP FOR BOYCOTT

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 1

Andhra Pradesh seems to be heading for a health crisis with nearly 5,000 medical students gearing up to boycott all duties including Covid care in protest against an inordinate delay in stipend hike. Already 300 senior residents along with over 800 final year PG have served a strike notice on the government.

TS to decide fate of Inter exams

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

The decision to cancel Class 12 exams came as a big respite for students across the country. Even though the criteria for assessment are not finalised students are happy that the exams have been cancelled after a massive outcry over the issue in the past few weeks.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced that the decision to cancel the exams was taken in the interest of students, owing to the health and safety hazards due to the pandemic surge in the country.

"It is a surprise move from the government, in all honesty. Even though there was demand being raised from students across the country to cancel these exams, we did not expect that this would really happen. We are all happy and relieved," said Pravalika, a Commerce stream student in a private school in the city.

Another student, Kritika said even though she had decided to take the year off before joining college next term, the decision had warded off the danger of being exposed to the deadly virus. "If the exams were held, it would not have been an ideal situation, considering the loss of lives probably every family across the country has witnessed in the past few months. To have us write the exams, and for the teachers to correct the papers would have been a difficult task," she said. On whether the decision will impact studies further, educationist and principal, Meridian School, Hydera-

bad, Dr Usha Reddy said, "It is unlikely that this will impact studies, but concerns have to be raised on how the evaluation will take place, because online exams throughout the year have given leeway to students. Students may score good numbers now, but those who have used wrong ways to write exams could face problems going forward. Academic honesty and validation of results should be put under scrutiny".

The TS Board of Intermediate Education (TSICHE) has not decided on how they will proceed on the postponed intermediate exams. An official in the education department on Tuesday told this correspondent that they would assess all options and present them to the government for a final decision.

Admissions to higher education institutes could also be impacted on the basis of what the state government decides. Prof. Papi Reddy, Chairman, TSICHE, said in case the state decides to cancel the exams, they will opt for entrance tests for admission to colleges this term.

The CBSE also released a statement that it will release objective criteria for assessment. Any student not satisfied with the assessment will have the option to appear in the exam when the situation is conducive.

Meanwhile, sources suggest that schools have been asked to curate marks obtained by students in the past three years, that is, in Class 9, 10 and 11, including the internal assessment for the past one year. However, an official notification in the matter is awaited.



Clouds form over the Hussainsagar on Tuesday, ahead of the monsoon.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Monsoon rains on way, will be bountiful, forecasts IMD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

Owing to the interaction between an atmospheric trough extending from Bihar to the state, coupled with the influx of moisture from the Arabian Sea, the city on Tuesday experienced light to moderate showers, which were sparsely spread out.

Parts of the city in the eastern corridor were lashed by rain, accompanied by thunder. According to the Telangana State develop-

ment planning society (TSDPS), the rain in the city was concentrated in the Alwal and Kapra zones.

The highest rainfall of 22.5mm was registered at the Kothabasti community hall in Alwal until 8pm. Nandigama PHC in Ranga Reddy district topped the state's rainfall chart. It received 57.5mm of rainfall.

"The next 48 hours would be marked by interspersed light rainfall over the state until the monsoon arrives. The monsoon is expected

to reach the state by June 10. The rains would begin in the city from around June 15," Mahesh Palawat, from the private Skymet weather forecasting agency told *Deccan Chronicle*.

According to officials from the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), the southwest monsoon forecast suggested that quantitatively, the monsoon rainfall is likely to be 101 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA) with a model error of plus or minus four per cent. The

LPA of the season's rainfall over the country as a whole for the 1961-2010 period is 88cm.

"The spatial distribution suggests normal or above normal seasonal rainfall is most likely over many areas of north-west India, central India and eastern parts of the southern Peninsula. Below-normal seasonal rainfall is most likely over some areas of north, east and neighboring northeast parts of the country and western parts of the south peninsula," it said.

CAR RAMS INTO HOME GUARD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

A Home Guard was injured after a car driver drove on him at a checkpoint of the Rachakonda police near the LB Nagar traffic police station. Police said the car (TS08 EA 0117) drove past the Nagole checkpoint without stopping. The police informed the LB Nagar traffic police and Home Guard Ramesh tried to stop the vehicle. Police said the car driver, Karun Kumar, rammed into Ramesh and drove away. Ramesh sustained head injuries and was admitted in a private hospital. Police is trying to nab the driver.

30-yr-old gets life for sexual assault

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

A 30-year-old man who raped a minor and left her pregnant was life imprisonment on Tuesday. Ghatkesar police said the accused, Vanguri Praveen Kumar, used to invite the 17-year-old girl home, offer her coffee laced with sedatives and rape her.

Based on the complaint from the victim Ghatkesar police booked and collected evidence, arrested the accused and remanded him to judicial custody.

In another case, Erraolla Bikshapathi, 25, was sentenced to 10 years rigorous imprisonment and fined ₹50,000. Bikshapathi had

● IN ANOTHER case, Erraolla Bikshapathi, 25, was sentenced to 10 years rigorous imprisonment and fined ₹50,000.

eloped with a 20-year-old woman and sexually assaulted her without her consent.

The victim's family lodged a complaint with the Thurkapally police which investigated the case. Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh M. Bhagwat appreciated the officials for their efforts in securing the conviction and announced a reward for them.

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice

e-tender is invited on behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work:-

e-Tender No. ECR-CAO-C-S-ETEN-11-21-22, Name of work: Construction of 3 nos Subway in lieu of existing level crossing no 16/C, 18/C & 20/C, in between Gaya - Son Nagar section of Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Division. **Approx. cost of the work in (Rs.):** Rs. 34,97,28,499.21, **Cost of tender form in (Rs.):** 0.00, **Earnest money in (Rs.):** 0.00, **Period of work completion :** 24 [Twenty Four] Months, **Date and time for closing of tender:** 21.06.2021 at 15.30 hrs.

Any e-tenders which is sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or by hand will not be accepted. All such manual submission of tender even if it is on firm's letter pad or received in time will not be accepted. The above e-tender document alongwith full information is available on website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Note: In case of any discrepancies found in tender notice, English version will be final. Tenderers are requested to visit the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> atleast 15 days before last date of closing, for latest corrigendum/corrections etc in connection with this e-tender. Any change/addendum/ corrigendum will be published on IREPS website only.

CAO/Con/South, E.C. Rly, MMX, Patna
PR/289/CONN/Engg./T/21-22/40

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LTD. CORRIGENDUM e-Procurement Tender Notice

The e-Tenders called for replacing/overhauling of sick 33/11 KV power transformers of different makes and various capacities available at various substations and sites of TSSPDCL on rate contract vide Spec No. CGM/O&M: 01/2021-22 is hereby extended for further 30 days i.e. up to 30.06.2021, in view of prevailing covid-19 pandemic situation and lockdown imposed. The extended dates can be seen in www.southernpower.com & www.tender.telangana.gov.in

Phone: 040-23431012, 040-23431390, 040-23431496 sd/- **(P. Bhikshapathi)**
Ro.No: 12384-PP/CL/Advt/1/2021-22 Chief General Manager (O&M)

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

Regd. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001

Corporate Identification Number: U40199PB2010SGC033813 | Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact number 9646117697)

Tender Enquiry No. 91/CHP/EMC-424/GHTP/2021 Dated 31-05-2021

SE-MM-II/GHTP, Lehra Mohabait invites E-tender for the work of 'CHP-GHTP STAGE-I(2x210MW) & STAGE-II (2X250 MW) Breakdown, Shutdown, Preventive & Routine Maintenance of electrical system as per Tender Specifications under Coal Handling Plant/Electrical Maintenance Call on lump sum basis at GHTP. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 01-06-2021 from 17:00 PM onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

GHTP-27/21 RO No PR-Advt. No :- 76155/12/285/2021/5009

TRAGEDY | UNFOLDS

9-yr-old had rare blood disorder, family couldn't afford treatment

Kid dies, mom had wanted mercy killing

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, JUNE 1

A nine-year-old boy died in the lap of his mother, who was desperately seeking permission from a local court in Punganur, Chittoor district, to end his painful ordeal by mercy killing. Doctors had said that there was no cure for the rare blood disorder that the boy, Harshavardhan, was suffering from.

The parents were too poor to pay for his medical expenses.

G. Aruna, the mother of Harshavardhan, hailing from Beerjepalli village in Chowdepalli mandal, was going to the Punganur court for the last two days to seek the approval of a designated judge to grant mercy killing of the boy. According to her,

Harshavardhan became bedridden after he met with an accident at his school about five years ago. At that time, the doctors found that he had a very rare medical condition that caused him to ooze or sweat blood from his skin, nose and mouth.

Initially, Aruna and her husband Mani approached several doctors and did everything they could do to save their child. Even as they ran up huge debts, they learnt that there was no cure for Harshavardhan's condition.

"Being from a very poor family, we sold everything we had and even borrowed money from many to save our child. But all our efforts went in vain as the doctors declared that the boy was suffering from a rare disorder which had no



Aruna and her relatives carrying Harshavardhan, when he was alive, to the Punganur court on Tuesday.

cure," Aruna, speaking through her tears, told mediapersons.

In the last few years, Aruna approached several hospitals in Andhra Pradesh and TN to save her only son.

"She did everything she could do and spent every penny she had or borrowed

from others to get him cured, but nothing could help her save her child. She ran out of money and reached a point where she was unable to bear the medical expenses any further and could no longer see the agony of her child. As suggested by our relatives, she tried to move the court to

seek help for the treatment of the boy or grant mercy killing for him," a relative of Aruna said.

In this regard, Aruna was coming to Punganur court along with her son to file a mercy killing petition from the past two days. As the court remained closed due to holidays, Aruna, carrying her son in her arms, was returning home in an auto rickshaw on Tuesday when he suddenly began bleeding and died in her arms.

With the help of locals, the mother carried Harshavardhan to her home in the same autorickshaw.

A pall of gloom descended on Beerjepalli. Villagers and relatives gathered in large numbers at Harshavardhan's house to console his mother.



DECCAN
Chronicle

2 JUNE 2021

Stop misuse of sedition, all other laws to stifle dissent

The Supreme Court’s observation that Section 124A of the IPC which deals with sedition will need interpretation, especially on its application with regard to freedom of the press, is welcome. It is all the more refreshing that it came along with a directive restraining the police from taking coercive action against two TV channels in Andhra Pradesh for airing news, and a query, albeit sarcastic, by a bench of the court as to whether sedition cases were being filed against TV channels which aired visuals of a body of a suspected Covid-19 victims being thrown into a river.

This is not the first time that the Supreme Court has taken a close look at the sedition law vis a vis Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution which guarantees freedom of speech and expression. A Constitution bench of the Supreme Court had in 1962 upheld the constitutionality of the law but held that its use must be limited to “acts involving intention or tendency to create disorder, or disturbance of law and order, or incitement to violence”. The court had gone on to say that a citizen has “a right to say or write whatever he likes about the govern-

There are reports that 96 per cent of sedition cases in the last 10 years were registered after 2014... of the 405 such cases, 149 were booked against persons who spoke against the Prime Minister

ment, or its measures, by way of criticism or comment, so long as he does not incite people to violence against the government established by law or with the intention of creating public disorder”. A month ago, the Supreme Court had, in fact, decided that it will review the constitutional validity of the law.

There are reports that 96 per cent of sedition cases in the last 10 years were registered after 2014. According to one report, of the 405 such cases, 149 were booked against persons who spoke against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and 144 against Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath. It is curious that the NDA dispensation, which scrapped about 1,500 redundant laws, chose to retain this relic of the Raj. Given the propensity of the governments at the Centre and in the states to invoke this law, it is appropriate that the apex court get on to the exercise of its review at the earliest. It is, however, a bit baffling that the court talked of a review with regard to the press, though the Constitution makes no mention of freedom of the press and assures every citizen of the right to speech and expression. It is expected that the review would ultimately benefit every citizen of this country.

It is not just the sedition law that the governments now find handy to muzzle dissent or criticism. The Uttar Pradesh government had recently warned that those who publicly flag shortage of healthcare facilities Covid patients face will be booked under the National Security Act. It took a stern warning by the apex court that it will brook no violation of the right to free speech of a citizen when the country is going through a humanitarian crisis for the state government to halt its draconian moves. Another forceful and timely intervention by the Supreme Court is imperative if free speech were to survive and succeed in this country.

3 kids in China: It’s demographics

The China Communist Party politburo’s shift to a three-child policy comes amid a falling birthrate that has led to certain demographic challenges like an ageing society which may have 300 millions people in the 60+ category by 2025. The title of the world’s most populated country may not remain much longer with China as estimates have it that India is behind by a mere five crore people and is being tipped to take the title in this decade itself. The question arises, then, whether a nation can over time cope with a rising population when the economic and social indicators are far from promising as they may have been in the past.

Can society support an ageing section of people even as it faces the challenge of providing jobs for millions of young people in an environment in which industry and to an extent services too are bound to get more automated and the traditional job and livelihood prospects are fast declining in the modern age? China’s problem right now seems to be to sustain what was once a demographic advantage of a vast number of younger people in the working category driving an economy that steadily rose over the last four decades into one of the most powerful in the world.

More recently, India was thought to have the advantage in which those aged above 64 represent only about 6.38 per cent of the population while 26.62 per cent are younger than 14.

As education reached all, more and more couples adopted the one or two child norm in India where family planning is only voluntary and not State policy-driven as it is in China where resentment is rife over government’s invasive control over women’s bodies and where unwed or single mothers with children are not only frowned upon but also made ineligible for State benefits. There are far too many factors like economic pressures and social trends among women that govern birthrates. While policy planners may fret over demographic profiles, individual choice is more likely to govern population trends. Ultimately, it will be the economy and the environment that will dictate trends than fancy ideas of social engineering.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

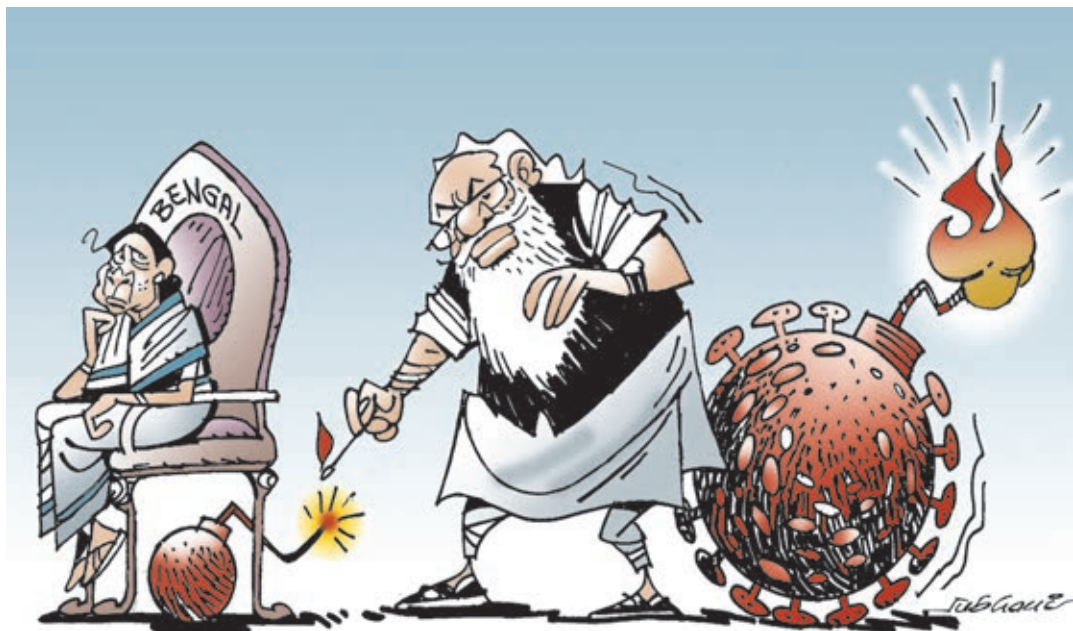
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Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. HSD-348/2006-08

Subhani



Game score at halftime: China — 1, Mankind — 0

Sriram Karri

Welcome. We are joined live by nearly billions of people across the world, but the telecast of this soccer game is not being broadcast live only in China. We are just a few minutes away from kick-off of the game to decide the winner of the ultimate trophy — world domination.

China, under its new coach, manager and captain, Xi, has prepared hard and meticulously for this match. Xi’s strategy is unclear. The rival team, “All of Mankind”, is unsure how to deal with Xi, even experts are divided. The excitement and tension among spectators is unbelievable, and it feels like a game of life and death.

Xi wins the toss against his rival captain, Donald T, who is shaking his head angrily, and claiming that the referee, Mr Who, is resorting to unfair play. Xi will kick off the ball. Against all rules, Xi has unveiled a new ball for the match. The sphere, green in colour, has tentacles on its surface. China has not revealed how or where the ball was made. Some experts feel that it was created in a lab, but a few say it was a natural mutation.

The jury is still out. But clearly China has an unfair advantage as they know a lot more about this ball, now dubbed Corona. By refusing to share information, clearly Xi is complicit as guilty as per the lab-leak theory. The game picks pace. Trump and his team mates are running around in confusion as Xi and his team are showing excellent coordination, dribbling the ball with practiced finesse, deflecting all attacks with nonchalance.

Mankind and he does it with ease. China takes the lead, 1-0.

The coach of Mankind is looking on carefully as Trump puts up a little fight back here, taking the ball into the Chinese side. It is the Quad strategy. The US, India, Japan and Australia are moving forward with some skill. But China is not giving it up.

It is using reverse aggression tactics and is targeting India again. The India-China scuffle momentarily distracts everyone. But India refuses to budge. China now kicks in other directions. China’s selective aggression against the Philippines, Vietnam, Australia and Japan leads to anger in Mankind.

Meanwhile, the coach decides to substitute a player. No, not just any player, but the captain. Trump is out. Biden steps onto the ground but the exiting captain refuses to hand over the band. Some internal scuffle here... but matters seem to have finally settled nicely.

Can Biden change Mankind’s strategy? He has experience and great understanding about China, having been a crucial player in Obama’s Club before. Biden is pushing hard on the investigation flank. The ball is being held by Mankind for a tad bit longer as Wuhan keeps coming into the picture... Lab or natural mutation? The tactics are simple but are working. But will China wilt and relinquish its advantage? Traditionally, China believes in the Middle Kingdom domination

Can Biden change Mankind’s strategy? He... is pushing hard on the investigation flank. The ball is being held by Mankind for a tad bit longer as Wuhan keeps coming into the picture. Lab or natural mutation?

strategy.

Biden is under great pressure, having taken charge after China took a lead. Will he go down in history as the captain who surrendered American global leadership, a trophy held since World War II? Or can he inflict enough high costs on Xi for his misadventures? Biden is getting his players to focus on the economy flank and pushing vaccine tactics. China is imitating the vaccine ploy but does not seem to have too many takers. Except Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the ball goes back to investigations into the origins of Covid. China is protesting. We are nearing the end of the play for the first half, with Xi’s China holding on to the 1-0 lead. Mankind has not even reached China’s half convincingly even once in this match, no mismatch. Europe has been disappointing in the game so far. Biden has another brief distraction on the field — it is Israel and Palestine having a go at each other.

Most Mankind players are looking on in disbelief while China is enjoying the distraction to catch its breath. We have just a few minutes left. It looks unlikely with the pace at which Covid is moving around the global field if there can be an equaliser. Clearly, the second half is when the fate of the match will be decided.

Will Mankind adopt a more aggressive challenge to China in response to their bio-warfare tactics? Will Mankind get together strongly to remove China from the UN Security Council? Or impose a fine of \$10,000 for each Covid death worldwide? Biden’s response — military, diplomatic, economic, or a combination? We will find out when the game resumes after a break if he can make a strong comeback.

The referee blows the whistle. Halftime. The scoreline reads Mankind — 0, China — 1. All the players are walking out of the ground. We will take a short commercial break. Be right back...

LETTERS

CASTE SYSTEM

People are vexed with the caste system. Even as campaigns are run propagating an egalitarian society to give a message to the future generations politicians are turning hypocritical and supporting the quota system. This is despite the Supreme Court ruling that the 50 per cent quota cap imposed earlier must not be exceeded.

M.G. Sai Baba
Hyderabad

WORKING HOURS

Many citizens observed that the first wave lockdown helped them regulate their daily timings and be at home on time. I suggest that Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao take advantage of this lockdown and make 6 am to 6 pm as a thumb rule for working and business hours for the future. This would help everyone to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Syed Amer Ahmed
Hyderabad

VAX POLICY

The Supreme Court is right in questioning the vaccination policy of the government n mandatory registration on Co-Win app. It is a matter of record that both in urban and rural areas there are many persons who being ignorant of online procedure are unable to register their names on Co-Win app.

Wasim Ahmed Khan
Secunderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN
Chronicle

Ex-Minister held for alleged link with Pak spies

CALCUTTA, June 1. Former United Front Minister Golam Yazdani and former member of Lok Sabha Syed Badruddoja were arrested this afternoon for their alleged involvement in the activities of a Pakistani spy ring.

Chief Minister Ajoy Mukherji told newsmen that the arrest was made under the Maintenance of Internal Security Ordinance 1971 with a view to prevent the two persons from acting in any manner “prejudicial to the defence of India and India’s relations with foreign powers and the security of India.”

Aakar Patel



How Jaishankar put on mat in US over Hindutva and other issues

India’s external affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar was till Saturday on a visit to the United States. The first half of his trip was apparently not very productive as the person he had come to meet, US secretary of state Antony J. Blinken, had to go to the Middle East on an urgent visit. Mr Jaishankar met him only several days after reaching the US. In the meantime, the minister met the Indian teams at the United Nations and had sundry other meetings. He also had an interview with former President Donald Trump’s national security adviser Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster. The general, who is familiar with India and has visited it, spoke about radicalism in the region and how extremism had hurt Pakistan. He then asked Mr Jaishankar: “I wanted to ask you about how you see political developments in your own country. You are not a partisan person. You have served with great distinction across many administrations. There is concern in the midst of the pandemic about some of these Hindutva policies that could be undermining the secular nature of Indian democracy... Are India’s friends right to be concerned about some of these recent trends?”

Mr Jaishankar first corrected Gen.

McMaster to say that he was actually partisan: “Let me clarify something. I served multiple administrations when I was a civil servant. I am today an elected member of Parliament. Do I have a political viewpoint and political interest? Of course, I do. Hopefully I will be able to articulate the interest that I represent.” He then says he will give two replies: a “straight political answer” and a “slightly more nuanced societal answer”. His straight political answer is that in the past India had “votebank politics”, but no longer does because democracy had deepened under the BJP. This had happened through “broader representation in politics and in leadership positions and in civil society of people... who are much more confident about their culture, about their language about their beliefs. These are people who are less from the English-speaking world, less connected to other global centres”. Mr Jaishankar says there’s nothing to be concerned about as there is no problem, and this set of people he is referring to are “judged politically harshly and it is often used to create a certain narrative”.

His nuanced societal answer is that the BJP government doesn’t discriminate, Mr Jaishankar says, as they gave extra rations to people in the pandem-

ic and put money in people’s Jan Dhan accounts without separating them by religion.

We should perhaps be thankful to Mr Jaishankar that India so far hasn’t decided to give entitlements to the poor based on religion. But while we are thankful, we should also note Mr Jaishankar didn’t actually answer what was asked. Gen. McMaster’s question was framed around the word Hindutva and its policies. What are they? They are the introduction of religion into citizenship. The United Nations and the European Union and members of the US Congress expressed disappointment and alarm over India’s Citizenship Amendment Act.

The US International Commission on Religious Freedom report for 2021 identified laws in India that criminalise conversion, especially of women to Islam. These laws are the BJP’s Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act 2018, Himachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act 2019, Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantritya Adhyadesh 2020, Uttar Pradesh Vidhi Viruddh Dharma Samparivartan Pratishedh Adhyadesh 2020 and Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Act 2021. The USCIRF report (which recommends sanctions

against India) says while these laws ‘target inter-faith marriage in particular, several other states prohibit conversion based on vague criteria, including force, inducement, allurement, coercion, fraud, or misrepresentation. These anti-conversion laws are often the basis for false accusations, harassment, and violence against non-Hindus that occur with impunity. In 2020, for example, mobs — fuelled by false accusations of forced conversions — attacked Christians, destroyed churches, and disrupted religious worship services’.

India under Narendra Modi has spent a lot of energy in drafting laws that go after minorities. The Gujarat Animal Preservation (Amendment) Bill 2017 punishes cow slaughter, that is ostensibly an economic crime, with life in jail. No other economic crime carries a life sentence. More than half of all arrests under the National Security Act in Uttar Pradesh in 2020 were for cow slaughter. This is a law that allows preventive detention, meaning the government locks up people without any crime. Muslim men are the only community for whom divorce is not a civil wrong but a criminal one. This is the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act 2019. It criminalises a non-act. Triple

tafaq in one sitting is not lawful in India. If I say talaq to my wife three times, our marriage doesn’t end, and it is not a crime. If a Muslim man says it to his wife, their marriage doesn’t end, but it is a crime.

India uses a 12-gauge shotgun firing birdshot into protesters in only one state. In no other state in India except Kashmir is the so-called pellet gun used on crowds. It has blinded and wounded thousands, including infants nowhere near the protest.

I could go on, but you get the picture. These are the things that India’s friends are concerned about. They are new laws that are the gift to us of Hindutva, which is why Gen. McMaster used that term.

Mr Jaishankar replied to Gen. McMaster without once using the word “Hindutva”, and without referring to any of the laws India was getting pulled up for around the world. The reason he ran away from the debate, of course, was that there is no defence. Obfuscation and avoiding the issue was the only way to respond to the accusation, which is a correct one, that India was harming itself and its own people through Hindutva.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

SHORT TAKES

ODISHA: CYBER THIEVES SWINDLE 1.49 CRORE

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 1

Incidents of cyber theft increased during the lockdown period in Odisha in the last one month.

According to a statement issued by the police on Tuesday, the looters took advantage of the pandemic restrictions which prompted people to prefer online transactions for shopping and other financial activities.

The police said that fraudsters duped unsuspecting people to the tune of ₹1.49 crore during the lockdown out of which ₹70,78,714 was duped in the state capital Bhubaneswar alone during the period.

According to the data shared by the police, the Cyber help desk had received 529 calls regarding cyber frauds out of which the cyber cell in Bhubaneswar had received a maximum 256 calls.

As many as 160 calls were related to UPI fraud while 100 other calls related to frauds regarding credit and debit cards.

Based on the data of Bhubaneswar cyber cell, 17 cases had been registered at different police stations.

Similarly, 56 dubious mobile numbers have been blocked by the police during the period.

Police have refunded/blocked ₹12,05,306 during the month of May, the statement added.

UNPARALLELED HANDLING OF COVID IN UP: BJP

Lucknow, June 1: BJP vice president Radha Mohan Singh on Tuesday dismissed speculation over any change of leadership in Uttar Pradesh and called the state government's handling of the Covid pandemic "unparalleled".

Singh and BJP's national general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh are on a three-day visit here, meeting party leaders on "preparations to fight Covid" and what participants called "organisational" issues.

The party vice president met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and deputy chief ministers Dinesh Sharma and Keshav Maurya on Monday. On Tuesday, the two deputy chief ministers met Santhosh. When asked about speculation over "leadership change" in the state, Singh dismissed it as a figure of someone's imagination.

"Generally, the BJP review meetings take place twice a month, but this time there was a gap due to Covid-19. At the meeting, the 'sewa' (service) done by us was reviewed. Apart from this, the party's preparations for a possible third wave of Covid were also discussed," he said.

DELHI ALLOWS HOME DELIVERY OF LIQUOR ONLINE

New Delhi, June 1: Delhiites may soon order liquor through a mobile app or website for home delivery, with the Delhi government amending the excise rules through a notification that also allows take-away of draught beer in bottles or growlers from micro-breweries.

An official said that the amended rules were implemented with the issuance of notification, but the new facilities will take some time as the government will have to decide dates for implementing different provisions by notifying the new excise policy or separate term and conditions.

The Delhi Excise (Amendment) Rules, 2021, published in a gazette notification on Monday, permit the holders of the necessary licences to serve liquor in open spaces such as terraces, the courtyards of clubs, bars attached to hotels and independent restaurants where customers will also have choice of getting alcohol in bottles. However, it will be the sole responsibility of such establishments to ensure that no customer takes the served bottles out of the licensed premises.

The move will boost the government's revenue at a time when Delhi's economy is struggling due to ongoing lockdown that was implemented on April 19.

According to the notification, the licensee will make delivery of liquor at the residences only if order is received through an app or a web portal. Such deliveries will not be allowed at offices, institutions and hostels.

Only people can break the chain of virus to end lockdown: Stalin

Says unless the state recovers from Covid, govt's plans for other dept's cannot be looked into

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, JUNE 1

Entrusting the responsibility of putting a full stop to the spread of Coronavirus with the people, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said only they could break the chain of the infection that spread from individual to individual as the lockdown could not be imposed always.

Urging the people to adhere to the restrictions and the norms imposed by the government, Stalin, in a video message to the public on Tuesday, said since Coronavirus spreads from person to person, everyone should play safe and also ensure that they did not spread it to others.

He pointed to the drastic reduction in the number of infections after a total lockdown was imposed on May 24 and said that though the government extended the lockdown by another week and the numbers came down further, it cannot be extended forever.

There was an urgent need to come out of the present day tragedies and step into a bright future with renewed hopes, he said, adding that the failure to put a full stop to the pandemic in its first wave had led to the second surge, which was throwing up a challenge to medical infrastructure and the state's finances.

Referring to his visit to the Covid ward at the ESI

Hospital in Coimbatore to extend moral support to the patients, the families and the frontline workers of the medical community, he said there were several people who had affectionately warned him not to repeat such an act.

The same alarm raised by the well-wishers should be a common caution guiding the general behaviour of the people since a violation of the precautions even by one person can jeopardise the collective efforts to put an end to the spread of virus.

Unless the state recovered from the present ravages of the pandemic, the government's plans for the other departments cannot be looked into and executed, he said.

As of now, the three-week-old government had developed adequate infrastructure to face the threat of Coronavirus, leading to a situation in which there was no shortage of beds or oxygen, Stalin said.

In fact, beds were empty in hospitals, he said. Besides, three lakh persons were being vaccinated every day and 1.70 lakh RT-PCR tests were being taken daily — both the figures are the highest among all states in the country — he said.

He also elaborated on the relief provided by the government to bring succour to the affected persons mentioning the payment of ₹2,000 to each of the families, a move that had won accolades from Nobel

laureate Abhijit Banerjee.

Other special measures taken by the government to offset the ill-effects of the lockdown include the arranging for supply of groceries and vegetables at the doorsteps and opening ration shops and also issues a list of 13 provisions to cardholders, he said.

Meanwhile, examinations for the State Board Plus Two examinations may also be cancelled in the wake of the Centre doing away with the final examinations for CBSE students, citing the safety of students in the context of the Covid-19 crisis.

State school education minister Anbil Mahesh Poyamozhi said that he would discuss the matter

with the Chief Minister and officials of the education department on Wednesday before arriving at a decision.

On Tuesday Poyamozhi had a rethink on his earlier decision to hold the examinations for the State Board students in the schools and said he was waiting for the CBSE's decision. The Minister had a review meeting with the Chief Minister at the Secretariat earlier in the day.

Now that the Centre has made it clear that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not in favour of holding the examinations for the CBSE board, the state government might also take a similar line and cancel the examinations.

RAHUL TWEETS ABOUT 'PM'S HALL OF SHAME'

New Delhi, June 1: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the adverse GDP and unemployment figures and raised the issue of "shortage" of drugs for treating black fungus.

"PM's hall of shame — Minimum GDP, Maximum Unemployment," he said on Twitter and shared a graph showing a rise in unemployment among the youth since 2014.

His remarks came a day after data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) showed that India's economy contracted by 7.3 per cent in the fiscal year ended March 2021 after the growth rate picked up in the fourth quarter, just before the world's worst outbreak of Coronavirus infections hit the country.

The gross domestic product (GDP) in Asia's third-largest economy grew by 1.6 per cent in the January-March period, up from 0.5 per cent in the previous quarter when India began pulling out of a steep pandemic-induced recession in earlier six months.

Gandhi also posed questions to the central government on mucormycosis or "black fungus epidemic".

"What is being done about the shortage of drug Amphotericin B? What is the procedure for helping the patient get this medicine," he said on Twitter.

"Instead of providing treatment, why is the Modi government embroiling the public in formalities," he also asked, but did not elaborate.

After thousands of cases of black fungus were reported among Covid-19 patients in the country, the Centre on May 20 urged all states and Union Territories to declare it as a notifiable disease under the Epidemic Diseases Act to ensure mandatory surveillance to tackle the "new challenge".

The government had said that the shortage of Amphotericin B shortage will be resolved soon as five more pharma companies have got new drug approval for producing it in India, in addition to the existing six pharma companies. — PTI

'Unlock' in full swing



Rag-pickers collect recyclable plastic from the Dhaka waste dumping site after ease in lockdown restrictions in Kolkata on Tuesday.



Shopkeepers open their shops at a market after the unlock process of lockdown began in Bhopal on Tuesday.



Vehicles ply on a road during relaxation hours in the ongoing lockdown in Guwahati on Tuesday.

Maha: 3 new cases found in Dharavi

Mumbai, June 1: The slum-dominated Dharavi area of Mumbai reported only three new Coronavirus infections on Tuesday, the civic body said.

The congested area with a population of over six lakh thus reported a single-digit rise in cases on the eighth day in a row, the civic body said. Dharavi had witnessed an alarming rise in cases in the beginning of April 2021.

It had reported 99 cases — the highest daily spike so far — on April 8, 2021. On May 23, the area

recorded 16 Covid-19 cases, after which the cases dipped to single digit.

The caseload in the area on Tuesday stood at 6,825, said an official of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

There are 17 active Covid-19 cases in Dharavi while 6,449 patients have recovered, he said. The BMC does not publish death figures from Dharavi. The day before the area had reported only two Covid-19 cases, the lowest spike in several months. — PTI

MP begins 'unlock', relaxes norms

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JUNE 1

Madhya Pradesh was on Tuesday unlocked partially to start economic and business activities in the state.

The state government has, however, extended the 'corona curfew' in Madhya Pradesh till June 15. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also announced relaxation in curbs.

The lockdown was imposed on April 24 in the state to contain the Coronavirus pandemic, in the wake of 47 out of total 52 districts reporting a positivity rate below five

per cent. In a series of tweets, the Chief Minister's office has issued detailed guidelines regarding the relaxations that will be provided during the period of 'corona curfew' in the state.

According to the guidelines, the 'corona curfew' will remain in force from 10 pm every Saturday to 6 am on Monday. There will be night curfew in the state from 10 pm to 6 am.

Grocery shops and other small business establishments have been allowed to open. But, shopping malls, cinema halls, gym, swimming pools, picnic spots, auditorium and community centres will remain closed during the

curfew. Similarly, religious activities, political and social gatherings will remain prohibited till June 15. Schools, colleges and coaching institutions will also remain closed during the period.

On Monday, Madhya Pradesh reported 1,205 fresh Coronavirus cases taking the tally of cases to 7,80,030. The state has recorded 48 deaths in the last 24 hours taking the death toll to 5,023.

Meanwhile, neighbouring Chhattisgarh government also relaxed some curbs in the state, but decided to extend the lockdown to different periods in different districts considering the gravity of sit-

uation in these areas.

Those districts with a positive rate above five per cent shall continue with restrictions on opening of shops and other commercial establishments, as was instructed in the earlier instructions on May 24, a press release by the Chhattisgarh government said.

Shops and commercial establishments in all other districts reporting less than five per cent positivity rate will be opened. However, restrictions on opening of cinema halls, swimming pools, water parks and other group gathering places will remain in force in these districts.



Adar Poonawalla

HC DIRECTS MAHA TO ENSURE POONAWALLA'S SECURITY

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, JUNE 1

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday said that the Maharashtra government must assure Adar Poonawalla, the CEO of Serum Institute of India, of adequate security in the wake of alleged threats to him over the supply of the 'Covishield' vaccine manufactured by his company.

A vacation bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and Abhay Ahuja was hearing a petition filed by city based lawyer Datta Mane seeking Z+ security for Poonawalla, claiming that the news reports showed that he left the country due to fear.

Even though the Union government has already granted 'Y' category security to the Pune-based industrialist, the petitioner through his lawyer Pradip Havnur, told the court that as per news reports, Poonawalla had been living in fear due to constant pressure from politicians and some others demanding that he provide more supply of the Covishield vaccine to their states.

Mane in his petition further said that Poonawalla had left for London due to such threats.

Notably, the SII CEO in an interview had revealed that he has been receiving threats and pressure from 'powerful people' seeking vaccine doses on priority.

The bench said the state must not consider the petition as an adversarial litigation and the state's top officials must personally speak to Poonawalla and assure him of his safety upon his return to India.

The bench directed state's counsel Deepak Thakare to speak to the government officials and convey the court's concerns. "Please speak to the highest state functionaries, maybe the state home minister, and assurance must be given to him (Poonawalla) from the top. They should talk to him personally" the HC said.



People not adhering to Covid-19 norms walk at Heritage Street near Golden Temple in Amritsar on Tuesday. Punjab, which has the highest case fatality rate of 2.4 per cent in the country, registered more than 100 deaths due to Covid-19 every single day in May.



SHORT TAKES

3-YEAR-OLD BOY HACKED TO DEATH BY NEIGHBOUR

Berhampur (Odisha), Jun 1: A three-year-old boy was allegedly hacked to death by his neighbour in Odisha's Ganjam district on Tuesday, police said.

The incident happened around 9 am at Bhabarada village in the Polasara area, around 50 km from Berhampur, they said.

The child was attacked with a sharp-edged weapon when he was playing near his house, an officer said.

The father also got wounded while trying to save him, he said.

The accused sustained injuries while trying to escape from the irritable villagers after the incident, police said.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Bulu Sethi (37) was mentally challenged, Polasara police station in-charge Jeetendra Mallick said.

An inquiry has been initiated to find out what led to the incident, Mallick said.

A murder case has been registered and the weapon used in the crime seized. The body has been sent for post-mortem, the inspector said.

2 MAOISTS GUNNED DOWN IN BASTAR

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JUNE 1

Two Maoists including a woman were on Tuesday gunned down in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's north Bastar district of Kondagaon.

The encounter took place in Bhandarpal jungle in the district at around 12.30 pm, Bastar range inspector general of police Sunderraj P. told this newspaper.

According to him, a search operation was launched on Monday along Kondagaon-Kanker inter-district border region in Bastar following intelligence inputs on presence of North Kanker-Mahpur Division Co-ordination Committee members of CPI (Maoist) along Rajpur-Bhandarpal-Timnar jungles.

On Tuesday afternoon, an exchange of fire took place between Maoist cadres and district reserve group, the tribal counterinsurgency wing of Chhattisgarh police, in Bhandarpal forest.

The encounter between them lasted around one hour.

Later, security forces recovered bodies of two Naxals including a woman in Maoist uniform at the encounter site.

One Self-Loaded Rifle (SLR), one .303 rifle, and three 12 bore rifles along with huge quantities of explosives were also recovered at the encounter site. The slain Naxals were yet to be identified, he added.

CONGRESS SOFTENS STAND ON OBC QUOTA

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, JUNE 1

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in Maharashtra can breathe easy as the Congress has softened its stand on the issue of scrapping 33 per cent reservation in promotions for public servants. We are hoping for a positive solution on this issue, said Congress minister Nitin Raut on Tuesday.

The MVA government had found itself in trouble after the Congress had refused to budge from its an aggressive stand saying it will force the state government to cancel reservations in promotions. It has also warned of a state-wide protest on the issue.

The State General Administration Department on May 7 issued a government resolution (GR) cancelling the 33 per cent quota for public servants belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC), Schedule Tribe (ST), Vimukta Jati and Nomadic Tribes (VJNT) and Special Backward Classes (SBC) categories in the promotions.

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar held a cabinet sub-committee meeting to address the concerns of Congress leaders on the issue of reservations in promotions. The meeting was attended by senior NCP and Congress ministers like Chhagan Bhujbal, Balasaheb Thorat, Jayant Patil and Nitin Raut.

"A comprehensive discussion was held on the issue and we are hopeful of a positive solution. The government is also positive towards resolving the issue," said Mr Raut after the meeting.

INDIA, AUS TO HOLD FIRST-EVER 2+2 DIALOGUE

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, JUNE 1

India and Australia on Tuesday vowed to hold their first-ever ministerial-level 2+2 dialogue "at the earliest opportunity".

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday had a telephonic conversation with his Australian counterpart Peter Dutton.

The 2+2 dialogue will involve defence and foreign ministers from both India and Australia.

The move is significant as in recent days Australia's relation with China has seen a sharp deterioration. India too is facing Chinese aggression at the Line of Actual Control from last one year.

Both India and Australia along with US and Japan are part of the Quad alliance, which Beijing sees as an anti-China alliance.

India already has 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial level meeting with other Quad countries US and Japan. Last year India had invited Royal Australian Navy, to participate in the Naval war game "Malabar 2020" along with US and Japan.

Temple reopens



A view the Shiv Mandir, repaired and renovated by the Army with the help of locals, during its re-opening for the public in Gulmarg on Tuesday. This Shiv temple was constructed in 1915 by Maharani Mohini Bai Sisodia, wife of the erstwhile Maharaja Hari Singh of J&K. — PTI

Dhankhar on Didi skipping PM meet: Ego prevailed over public service

Governor says Chief Minister had objected to the presence of Adhikari in the meeting

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JUNE 1

In a startling revelation, West Bengal governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday claimed that chief minister Mamata Banerjee had hinted during an urgent talk between them at the "boycott" by her during the review meeting by Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the devastation of Cyclone Yaas on May 28.

He alleged that the Trinamul Congress supremo's "ego prevailed over public service."

Stumped by his revelation in a series of tweets, the ruling Trinamul swung into damage control mode before countering him.

Mr Dhankhar tweeted, "Constrained by false narrative to put record straight: On May 27 at 2316 hrs CM @MamataOfficial

● **GETTING INTO A DAMAGE CONTROL MODE,** Senior TMC MP Sougata Roy, however, claimed, "The Governor's comments are irresponsible."

He messaged "may i talk? urgent". Thereafter on phone indicated boycott by her & officials of PM Review Meet

#CycloneYaas if LOP @SuvenduWB attends it. Ego prevailed over Public service. With unparalleled trampling of constitutional values & affront to the office of PM, May 28 will go down as 'a dark day' in India's long-standing ethos of cooperative federalism." (sic)

"At PM Review Meet #CycloneYaas democracy was shredded @MamataOfficial and Chief Secy @IASAssociation. All constitutional principles were

torn asunder by CM @MamataOfficial and functionaries @IASAssociation at PM Review Meet #CycloneYaas. Democracy imperilled by such unconstitutional stance. Time #Media to introspectively check fear quotient in WB that threatens rule of law." (sic)

Senior TMC MP Sougata Roy, however, claimed, "The Governor's comments are irresponsible. The CM did not boycott the meeting of the PM. She rather met him and submitted the state government's demand to him. As the CM, she however has the liberty to question Mr Adhikari's presence at the meeting. Since he is not a government official, why would he attend it? And why would a CM, whose party has come to power, tolerate their politics? The constitution does

BJP 'imposing' officer on Uttar Pradesh CM: Yadav

Lucknow, June 1: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday accused the BJP of "imposing" an officer on the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, in an apparent reference to retired IAS officer A.K. Sharma who is overseeing Covid relief in Varanasi.

He also targeted the Centre, saying that it directed a senior officer from West Bengal to

appear in Delhi against the wishes of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Calling BJP's policy strange, Yadav tweeted in Hindi, "Imposing on UP chief minister against his will an officer sent from Delhi and recalling an officer from West Bengal against the West Bengal chief minister's will."

Sharma, a retired IAS officer of the Gujarat

cadre, after closely working with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, voluntarily retired as secretary of Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, and joined the BJP in January.

Soon after, the retired 1988-batch IAS officer was made the party's MLC in Uttar Pradesh, and there have been reports that the central leadership wants to elevate him. — PTI

not give the governor any scope to tweet. He should stop it."

Another TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee won-

dered, "The PM had destroyed the federal structure in democracy. In that sense, May 28 will be seen as a 'Dark Day.' Since

when has the leader of the opposition been a member of the state government that he would attend it's meeting?"

Five miners trapped in Meghalaya's rat hole mine; rescue op under way

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, JUNE 1

Despite complete ban of National Green Tribunal on unscientific rat hole mining of coal in Meghalaya, at least five workers are feared trapped in a 500-feet-deep abandoned coal mine in the Umpleng area of East Jaintia Hills district.

The accident came to light when one Karimul Bari of Assam's Cachar district reported to the Assam Police that one of his neighbours was among the miners feared trapped in the coal mine.

● **THE INCIDENT** took place when water gushed in and inundated the mine after a dynamite explosion.

Rescue operations were under way on Tuesday to trace at least five migrant workers from Assam and Tripura who were trapped inside a rat hole coal mine, officials said. The incident took place when water gushed in and inundated the mine after a dynamite explosion.

The Meghalaya government has directed the deputy commissioner of East Jaintia Hills, E

Kharmilaki, to institute a magisterial inquiry into the mishap and file an FIR against whoever is involved. Police have already registered a case under IPC sections and the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act and Disaster Management Act.

Jagpal Singh Dhanoa, SP of the district, said, "The main culprit, according to the eyewitnesses, is one 'sardar' Nizam Ali, who did nothing to rescue the trapped labourers. Rather Ali threatened the survivors with dire conse-

quences and chased them away from the mining site."

He told reporters that it appears that the mine was operating illegally and search operation is on for the five trapped labourers. "There are 6-7 survivors. According to them, at least five workers got trapped inside. It has been raining incessantly for the last two days. Therefore, pumping water out of the mine to rescue the workers is proving to be difficult. Police have been trying hard to arrest the sardar of the mine," he added.

Girl's homework video triggers policy change

Srinagar, June 1: A six-year-old girl's video message to Prime Minister Narendra Modi complaining of a huge burden of homework through online education not only won hearts on the internet but triggered a policy change in Jammu and Kashmir to lighten the pressure on school kids.

In a short video posted on Twitter that went viral, the girl appeals to the Prime Minister to ease the burden of homework on school kids. The video has so far garnered nearly 3.3 lakh views and nearly 19,000 likes catching the

attention of Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The L-G has directed the school education department to come out with a policy in 48 hours to ease the burden of homework on school students.

"Assalamualaikum Modi sahib", is how the girl starts her video message to the PM as she complains of her teachers giving her too much homework through Zoom classes. "My classes are from 10 am till 2 pm... This much homework is for students of Class 6, 7, 10. Why are kids given this

much homework Modi sahab?" she says. The cute video moved Sinha who described it as a very adorable complaint.

He directed the department to come out with a policy within 48 hours to lighten the burden of homework on school kids.

Very adorable complaint. Have directed the school education department to come out with a policy within 48 hours to lighten burden of homework on school kids. Childhood innocence is gift of God and their days should be lively, full of joy and bliss, the L-G said.

BITTER | PILL

Doctors say the yoga guru is not qualified to pass remarks on the discipline of allopathy

Protesting against Ramdev, docs observe 'Black Day'

New Delhi, June 1: Upset over yoga guru Ramdev's remarks on allopathy, resident doctors at several hospitals in Delhi protested as part of a nationwide stir on Tuesday and sought an unconditional public apology or action under the Epidemic Diseases Act.

Banded under the Federation of Resident Doctors Associations (FORDA), which had called for the protest on May 29 and stressed that healthcare services would not be hampered, the doctors wore black armbands,

ribbons and held up placards.

"Our protest began on Tuesday morning against the remarks made by Ramdev, who is not qualified to even speak on the discipline of allopathy. It had affected the morale of doctors, who are fighting day in and day out in the (Covid-19) pandemic. We demand an unconditional public apology from him or action against him under the Epidemic Diseases Act," a senior FORDA official said.

FORDA India on Tuesday even changed its

● **WHILE SOME** doctors held up placards bearing protest messages, others wearing PPE kits had "Black Day Protest" scribbled on the back of the medical gear.

Twitter profile picture to a dark poster that said 'Black Day'. Many RDAs from outside Delhi put up posts on social media in solidarity with FORDA.

The RDAs which have joined the stir are from AIIMS, Safdarjung Hospital, Lady Hardinge Medical College and

Hospital, Hindu Rao Hospital, Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital, B R Ambedkar Hospital and more will join later in the day, he said.

"Many doctors are wearing black armbands or black ribbons to symbolise the protest," the FORDA official said, adding, "Doctors in other cities have also joining the stir."

While some doctors held up placards bearing protest messages, others wearing PPE kits had "Black Day Protest" scribbled on the back of the medical gear.

In a statement issued on Saturday, FORDA India had said even after raising objections to the statements made by Ramdev, "no action has been taken yet. We are hereby declaring a Nationwide #BlackDayProtest on 1st June, 2021 at workplace, without hampering healthcare services".

"We demand an unconditional open public apology from him or action against him under the relevant sections of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897," the statement had said.

— PTI



Doctors during their protest against Baba Ramdev at the entrance gate of AIIMS in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

NEW VATICAN LAW CRIMINALISES ABUSE OF ADULTS

Vatican City: Pope Francis has changed church law to explicitly criminalise the sexual abuse of adults by priests who abuse their authority and to say that laypeople who hold church office can be sanctioned for similar sex crimes.

The new provisions, released Tuesday after 14 years of study, were contained in the revised criminal law section of the Vatican's Code of Canon Law, the in-house legal system that covers the 1.3-billion strong Catholic Church.

The most significant changes are contained in two articles, 1395 and 1398, which aim to address major problems and shortcomings in the church's handling of sexual abuse.

TECH PROBLEM ON IRAN FIGHTER JET KILLS TWO PILOTS

Tehran: An Iranian fighter jet on Tuesday developed a technical problem that killed both of the aircraft's pilots, state TV reported.

The report said the incident happened in the country's southwest, in the city of Dezful, 444 kilometres (270 miles) from the capital, Tehran and near the border with Iraq.

The report said an investigation was underway as to what had caused the malfunction of the Iranian air force's F-5 fighter jet. The TV said it happened before takeoff. It did not elaborate. The report, citing an informed source, identified the pilots as Kianoush Basati and Hossein Namj, without providing their rank. Authorities were investigating, it said.

MYANMAR SCRIBE TO SEEK ASYLUM IN SPAIN

Madrid: Myanmar correspondent Mratt Kyaw Thu will arrive in Madrid on Tuesday to ask for asylum after fleeing the military junta in Yangon, said the Spanish news agency EFE, which he worked for.

The 30-year-old correspondent, who will travel to Spain after failing to obtain asylum in Germany, won Kate Webb award in 2017 for his outstanding coverage of the ethnic and religious conflicts in Myanmar.

"Tomorrow he will fly from Frankfurt to Madrid to ask for asylum in Spain," EFE southeast Asia director Ramon Abarca said. "He has spent four weeks in a detention centre," he said. A spokesman for Spain's interior ministry said Mratt's arrival had not been officially registered but would be treated according to international law.

2 THAI PROTEST LEADERS GRANTED BAIL

Bangkok: Two prominent Thai pro-democracy protest leaders were granted bail on Tuesday, weeks after contracting Coronavirus in the kingdom's overcrowded prison system. Activist Panupong "Mike" Jadnok and human rights lawyer Anon Numpa are both facing multiple charges under royal defamation laws.

A Thai criminal court on Tuesday granted them bail, Thai Lawyers for Human Rights said.

They had to post a 2,00,000 baht (\$6,500) bail bond each and are banned from leaving Thailand or becoming involved with further activities that defame the monarchy. Anon has been in custody for more than 100 days and Panupong for 85.

They are expected to be released from Thammasat University Hospital later on Tuesday.

FLOOD RECEDES IN NEW ZEALAND, LEAVING DEBRIS

Wellington: Floodwaters in New Zealand receded on Tuesday, leaving behind a big mess on many farms in the Canterbury region and damage to a major bridge.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern told reporters the top priority was getting transport links working again, although it was unclear how long it would take to fix the bridge that connects the town of Ashburton to the main highway south. Crews hoped to have an alternate route to the town ready by the end of the day.

Ardern said farmers had been particularly hard hit with lost feed, broken fences and debris spread across their fields. She said that seeing the damage from the air had shown her the scale of what had happened.

Four Pak soldiers killed in terror attacks

In the exchange of fire, four to five terrorists were killed while around eight ultras were also injured

Ugandan minister injured in assassination bid: Govt

Islamabad, June 1: Terrorists attacked a Pakistani security post and later targeted a military vehicle carrying IED, killing at least four paramilitary soldiers and injuring eight others in the restive southwestern province of Balochistan, the Army said. In the first incident, terrorists targeted Frontier Corps (FC) troops in Quetta and Turbat respectively on Monday, according to a statement issued by the media wing of the Pakistan Army — the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The post near Pir Ismail Ziarat was targeted by terrorists, it said. In the exchange of fire "four-five terrorists were killed while around eight were injured" while "four soldiers were killed while six soldiers got injured."

In another incident, terrorists targeted an Frontier Corps vehicle with an improvised explosive device at Turbat and injured two soldiers.

"Such cowardly acts by inimical elements backed by anti state forces" said and added that they cannot sabotage the hard earned peace and prosperity in Balochistan.

It also said that the security forces are determined to neutralise their nefarious designs.

Resource-rich Balochistan for a long time has witnessed violence by the Taliban and Baloch nationalists. Terrorists had earlier

launched twin attacks on soldiers on May 9, killing three of them and five others wounded in two separate terrorist assaults in Quetta and Turbat.

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SHORT TAKES

TROPICAL STORM STRENGTHENS OFF MEXICO

Mexico City, June 1: Tropical Storm Blanca, the second named storm of the eastern Pacific hurricane season, has gained some strength while staying far off Mexico's southern coast and posing no threat to land. Blanca had winds of about 60 mph (95 kph) late Monday and was forecast to reach its peak intensity by Tuesday before beginning to weaken while move farther into the Pacific, the US National Hurricane Center said.

The storm was centred about 620 miles (1,000 kilometres) south of Cabo Corrientes on Mexico's southwestern tip. It was moving west-northwest at 9 mph (15 kph). The first named storm in the eastern Pacific, Andres, formed May 9.

KIDNAPPED EIGHT VENEZUELAN SOLDIERS RESCUED

Caracas, June 1: Eight Venezuelan soldiers who had been kidnapped by armed groups operating on the Colombian border have been rescued, Caracas said Monday.

"The eight military professionals kidnapped by Colombian illegal armed groups... were rescued" in a military operation, the Venezuelan defense ministry said in a statement.

The soldiers are "safe and sound," it said.

The statement also said the military was looking for two missing soldiers but did not give further details.

Venezuela's armed forces have engaged in clashes with Colombian armed groups along the border since March 21, displacing thousands of civilians who fled to Colombia.

NEW ROUND OF LIBYA PEACE TALKS ON JUNE 23

Berlin, June 1: Germany will host a new set of Libyan peace talks on June 23 in Berlin, with Libya's transitional government due to attend, the foreign ministry said in a statement Tuesday. "The next steps needed for a sustainable stabilisation of the country will be discussed" at the conference, said the ministry. Talks will mainly focus on preparations for national elections planned for December 24 as well as the withdrawal of foreign troops and mercenaries from Libya.

They will also look at the creation of unified security forces for the North African country.

"The conference is an expression of the continued international support for the stabilisation of Libya," said a German ministry spokeswoman.

CHINESE HELD IN IRAN FOR POSTING VIDEOS OF WOMEN

Tehran, June 1: Iranian state TV said Tuesday that a Chinese man has been arrested for posting videos on social media of his intimate conversations with Iranian women.

The report said the man, who has not been identified by name, was arrested on Monday night by Iranian police and intelligence forces in the central city of Kashan, some 160 kilometres (100 miles) south of the capital, Tehran.

It was not known if he has been charged with anything. A photograph of the alleged suspect, showing him sitting in front of a camera, accompanied the TV report.

It was also not clear why he is in Iran, where more than 5,000 Chinese nationals live and work.

NZ LATEST NATION TO INK SPACE DEAL WITH NASA

Wellington, June 1: New Zealand announced Tuesday it was the latest country to sign a space agreement with Nasa, just as New Zealand's nascent space industry begins to take off. New Zealand became the eleventh signatory to the Artemis Accords, a blueprint for space cooperation and supporting the US space agency's plans to return humans to the moon by 2024 and to launch a historic human mission to Mars.

Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta said New Zealand was one of only a handful of nations able to launch rockets into space. "New Zealand is committed to ensuring the next phase of space exploration is conducted in a safe, sustainable and transparent manner and in full compliance with international law," Mahuta said. New Zealand said it's particularly interested in making sure that minerals taken from the moon or elsewhere in space are used sustainably.

Bodies at school leave Trudeau visibly appalled

Toronto, June 1: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Monday it is not an isolated incident that over 200 children were found buried at a former indigenous residential school. Trudeau's comments come as indigenous leaders are calling for an examination of every former residential school site — institutions that held children taken from families across the nation.

Chief Rosanne Casimir of the Tk'enlups to Secwepemc First Nation in British Columbia said the remains of 215 children, some as young as 3 years old, were confirmed this month with the help of ground-penetrating radar. She described the discovery as "an unthinkable loss that was spoken about but never documented" at the Kamloops Indian Residential School, the largest such school in the country.

"As prime minister, I am appalled by the shameful policy that stole indigenous children from their communities," Trudeau said. "Sadly, this is not an exception or an isolated incident," he said. "We're not going to hide from that. We have to acknowledge the truth. Residential schools were a reality — a tragedy that existed here, in our country, and we have to own up to it. Kids were taken from their families, returned damaged or not returned at all."

From the 19th century

until the 1970s, more than 1,50,000 First Nations children were required to attend state-funded Christian schools as part of a program to assimilate them into Canadian society. They were forced to convert to Christianity and not allowed to speak their native languages.

Many were beaten and verbally abused, and up to 6,000 are said to have died. The Canadian government apologised in Parliament in 2008 and admitted that physical and sexual abuse in the schools was rampant. Many students recalled being beaten for speaking their native languages.

They also lost touch with their parents and customs. Indigenous leaders have cited that legacy of abuse and isolation as the root cause of epidemic rates of alcoholism and drug addiction on reservations. Plans are underway to bring in forensics experts to identify and repatriate the remains of the children found buried on the Kamloops site.

Trudeau said he'll be talking to his ministers about further things his government needs to do to support survivors and the community. Flags at all federal buildings are at half-staff. Opposition New Democrat leader Jagmeet Singh called Monday afor an emergency debate in Parliament. "This is not a surprise. This is a reality of residential schools," Singh said. — AP

Will exchange views at BRICS meeting: China

Beijing, June 1: Ahead of the BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting, China said on Tuesday that it looks forward to exchanging views, coordinating positions and building up consensus with other members of the five-member bloc on the most urgent issues of common concern.

Announcing the participation of China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Foreign Ministers' meeting via video link convened by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here that the conference is of special significance to promote the post Covid-19 pandemic world economic recovery.

BRICS is a cooperation mechanism consisting of major emerging markets and developing countries with global influence, he said. "Amid the combined impact of Covid-19 and other major changes as seen in this century the BRICS mechanism is of more special significance in deepening cooperation between emerging markets and developing countries in promoting the post epidemic world economic recovery," he said.

"Under the guidance of the BRICS leaders, Foreign Ministers of the five countries meet regularly to deepen mutual

● **JAISHANKAR WILL chair the meeting. Besides Wang, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor are expected to attend the meeting.**

trust and cooperation in the field of political security," he said.

Asked about China's expectations of the meeting, the spokesman said, "At the meeting, China looks forward to exchanging views, coordinating positions and building up consensus with other BRICS members on the most urgent issues of common concern".

"Together we will send out a strong signal that BRICS countries with solidarity and cooperation, support true multilateralism, promote post epidemic economic recovery and tackle global challenges," he said.

Jaishankar will chair the meeting. Besides Wang, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor are expected to attend the meeting. Brazilian Foreign Minister Carlos Alberto Franco is also likely to attend the virtual meeting. — PTI

CAPITAL | CONFUSION

S. Korean video highlights Pyongyang

Seoul, June 1: A climate change summit hosted by South Korea has drawn ridicule for kicking off with a promotional video suggesting it was taking place in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang.

The opening ceremony for the P4G, or Partnering for Green Growth, summit at the weekend featured speeches from world leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

First, though, came the

lavishly produced video. At one point it centred on the Taedong river in North Korea's capital, pulling back to reveal the giant May Day Stadium — the world's largest with a 150,000-seat official capacity — zooming out rapidly to take in the rest of the city, the Korean peninsula, Asia and the world.

"Leaders from around the world gather here today," read a caption.

The South remains officially at war with its nuclear-armed and impoverished neighbour, and

First human case of H10N3 bird flu reported in China

Health authorities play down outbreak, saying pandemic risk very low

Beijing, June 1: China has reported the first case of human infection with the H10N3 strain of bird flu from the country's eastern Jiangsu province, China's National Health Commission said on Tuesday.

The patient, a 41-year-old man from Zhenjiang city, is currently in a stable condition and meets discharge standards, the state-run CGTN TV reported. Health authorities played down the outbreak, saying the case was a sporadic virus transmission from poultry to humans, and the risk of causing a pandemic was extremely low.

The patient was diagnosed as having the H10N3 avian influenza virus on May 28, National Health Commission said in a statement without elaborating on how the man had got infected with the virus.

No other cases of human infection with H10N3 have previously been reported globally, it said.

H10N3 is a low pathogenic or relatively less severe strain of the virus in poultry and the risk of it spreading on a large scale is very low.

There are many different strains of avian influenza in China and some sporadically infect people, generally those working with poultry.

H5N8 is a subtype of the Influenza A virus (bird flu virus). While H5N8 only presents a low risk to humans, it is lethal to wild birds and poultry. In April, a highly pathogenic H5N6 avian flu was found in wild birds in China's Shenyang city. — PTI



Chris Phillips of musical act Zowie Bowie performs during a "Downtown Rocks Again!" event at the Fremont Street Experience in Las Vegas, on Tuesday. Clark County dropped all pandemic mandates as its Covid-19 mitigation plan expired at midnight, meaning businesses may operate at 100 percent capacity with no restrictions. — AFP

Oz court upholds travel ban

Canberra, June 1: An Australian court on Tuesday rejected a challenge to the federal government's draconian power to prevent most citizens from leaving the country so that they don't bring Covid-19 home.

Australia is alone among developed democracies in preventing its citizens and permanent residents from leaving the country except in "exceptional circum-

stances" where they can demonstrate a "compelling reason." Most Australians have been stranded in their island nation since March 2020 under a government emergency order made under the powerful Biosecurity Act.

Libertarian group LibertyWorks argued before the full bench of the Federal Court in early May that Health Minister Greg Hunt did not have the po-

wer to legally enforce the travel ban that has prevented thousands of Australians from attending weddings and funerals, caring for dying relatives and meeting newborn babies.

LibertyWorks lawyer Jason Potts argued that Australians had a right to leave their country under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that Australia had ratified. But the three

judges ruled that submission was based on the "erroneous premise that the right is absolute."

LibertyWorks' lawyers also argued that such a biosecurity control order could only be imposed on an entire population. The order could only be imposed if that individual had symptoms of a listed human disease. — AP

Peru death toll is over 180,000

Lima, June 1: Peru announced a sharp increase in its Covid-19 death toll, saying there have been more than 180,000 fatalities since the deadly pandemic hit the country early last year.

The announcement was made in the presidential palace during the presentation of a report by a working group commissioned to analyse and update the death toll.

The results of the study put the new toll at 180,764 in a population of about 32.6 million, compared to recent data indicating that 69,342 people had died from Covid-19.

Health Minister Oscar Ugarte said the criteria for assigning the new Coronavirus as a cause of death were changed.

Previously, only those who had a positive diagnostic test were considered to have died from the virus, but other criteria have since been incorporated.

The new toll from Covid-19 includes deaths reported between March 2020 and May 22 of this year. Among Latin American countries, only Brazil and Mexico have reported higher death tolls from the disease.

On Monday, the Coronavirus monitoring site of Johns Hopkins University was reflecting the previous figure of just under 70,000 deaths in Peru. Questions about Peru's death toll surfaced soon after the beginning of the pandemic. — AP

Lockdown in Lanka, int'l airport reopens

Colombo, June 1: Sri Lanka on Tuesday reopened its international airport here for passengers in the midst of the current Covid-19 lockdown with the first flight with 53 passengers landing from Qatar.

However, those with a travel record to India and Vietnam over the last 14

days would not be allowed to disembark at the Colombo airport, said a senior Civil Aviation official, P A Jayakantha.

The internal travel restrictions, which allow only essential services, have been in effect from mid-May and due to be lifted on June 7. — PTI

London, June 1: London's busy Heathrow Airport opened a dedicated new terminal on Tuesday for arrivals from countries designated as "red list", such as India, for a higher risk of Covid-19 transmission. Travellers on direct flights from such destinations will now go through Terminal 3 and then move directly to a government-approved quarantine facility booked at the passengers' own expense.

It comes after the London airport's staff had raised fears for their safety because of overcrowding,

amid concerns that travellers arriving from red list countries from where travel is effectively banned except for British and Irish nationals or limited exceptions were mixing with those from green and amber. "Red list routes will likely be a feature of UK travel for the foreseeable future as countries vaccinate their populations at different rates, a Heathrow Airport spokesperson said.

"We're adapting Heathrow to this longer-term reality by initially opening a dedicated arrivals facility

in Terminal 3 from 1 June for red list passengers arriving on direct flights. While opening this facility will be logistically very challenging, our hope is that it will enable Border Force to carry out its duties more efficiently as passenger volumes increase in line with the green list. Until then, the current red list system will remain in place, the spokesperson said. Currently, there are 43 countries on the UK government's red list to cover regions linked with high-risk Covid-19 variants. — PTI

Nepal asks US, UK, Russia for vaccines

Kathmandu, June 1: Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari has appealed to the top leaders in the US, the UK and Russia to supply Covid-19 vaccines to her country which is completely dependent on foreign support for the doses, according to a media report on Tuesday.

Nepal Ambassador to the US, Yubraj Khatriwada forwarded the letter written by Bhandari to US Department of State Senior Adviser Ervin Massinga, *The Himalayan Times* reported. The letter has been

addressed to President Joe Biden.

The Nepali Embassy in Washington DC said Khatriwada expected significant support from the US. A similar request was forwarded by the Embassy of Nepal, UK, to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II via the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK on Tuesday, the newspaper reported.

In her letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin, Bhandari said Nepal would immediately like to purchase Russia's Sputnik vaccine. — PTI

CHINESE CITY LOCKS DOWN TWO AREAS

Beijing, June 1: China's southern manufacturing hub of Guangzhou has imposed lockdowns on two neighbourhoods after an additional 11 cases of Covid-19 were detected in the city.

The surrounding province of Guangdong has already required anyone wishing to travel to other parts of China produce a negative test for the virus taken within the previous 72 hours.

Guangzhou has 15 million people but it wasn't clear how many people were affected. — AP

Huawei ex-exec accused of spying

Warsaw, June 1: The trial opened in a Warsaw court on Tuesday of two men accused of spying for China a Chinese citizen who is a former director of Huawei in Poland and a Polish cybersecurity expert.

The men, Weijing Wang and Piotr Durbajlo, who have both pleaded not guilty, were in court at the start of the trial on Tuesday morning.

Prosecutors requested that the trial be held in secret due to the classified nature of some of the evi-

dence. Though Wang and Durbajlo objected, the court agreed, citing state interests, and journalists were asked to leave.

Wang and Durbajlo were arrested by Polish authorities in January 2019 and accused of spying for China under the cover of seeking business deals for China's technology giant Huawei. Wang has been in custody since his arrest. Durbajlo, a former cybersecurity expert for government agencies, has been released on bail. — AP

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	51,934.88	0.00
Nifty 50	15,574.90	-0.05
S&P 500*	4,203.77	-0.01
Dollar (₹)	72.90	0.38
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.37	0.42
Euro (₹)	89.18	0.77
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,892.285	0.58
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	70.18	1.24
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.025	0.05
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.632	0.039

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Move to exempt electric vehicles from RC fees

The ministry of road transport and highways has issued a draft notification proposing to exempt battery-operated vehicles (BOV) from payment of fee for issue or renewal of registration certificate (RC). The ministry said comments from the public have been sought within 30 days. "The ministry...proposing to exempt BOV from payment of fees for the purpose of issue or renewal of RC and assignment of new registration mark," it said.

Curbs on export of amphotericin-B injections



The government imposed curbs on export of amphotericin-B injections that are used for treatment of mucormycosis or black fungus infections. By a notification issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade, export of the injections have been put in the restricted category. This means that an exporter would need permission or licence from the directorate for its outbound shipments.

Renault Triber gets 4-star adult safety rating

Renault India's seven-seater model Triber has received a four-star safety rating for adult occupants, vehicle safety group Global NCAP said. The model has achieved a four-star rating for adult occupants and three stars for child occupants as per the Global NCAP's latest round of crash tests. Vehicles are rated from zero to five based on their safety features and automobiles with a higher rating are considered safer for occupants.

Eli Lilly India gets nod for antibody combination

Eli Lilly and Company India said it has received permission for emergency use of its antibody drugs combination in the country. The company has received permission for restricted emergency use of its monoclonal antibody drugs, bamlanivimab 700 mg and etesevimab 1400 mg, used together for the treatment of patients with mild to moderate Covid-19, Eli Lilly said in a statement.

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■ Reversal of stamp duty relief affects sales Mumbai property deals take bad hit

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, JUNE 1

The Metropolitan Region (MMR) recorded a sharp drop in property sale transactions in April-May 2021 over the Covid-19 second wave and the Maharashtra government's decision to discontinue the stamp duty waiver on property registrations from April 2021.

Sale transactions in April and May came down to Rs 10,979 crore and Rs 22,507 crore, respectively, against Rs 44,167 crore in March 2021.

The property sale transactions registered in MMR in February and January 2021 were Rs 21,696 crore and Rs 21,484 crore, respectively. As per data from the Inspector General of Registrations-Department of Registrations & Stamps Maharashtra, as on May 30, 2021, the stamp duty collection in MMR for the month was Rs 417 crore, as compared to Rs 725 crore in April 2021.

The stamp duty collection in MMR for the months of March, February and January 2021 were Rs 1,365 crore, Rs 648 crore and Rs 570 crore, respectively.

"We have started witnessing a 50 per cent dip in property sales after the Maharashtra government restored stamp duty back to 5 per cent in Mumbai and 6 per cent in the rest of Maharashtra from April 2021. The sales regis-

CONSTRUCTION TO RESUME BY MID-JUNE: ASSOCHAM

New Delhi, June 1: With several states started easing Covid-related restrictions, the employment-intensive construction industry should witness resumption in operations by the middle of June, though at a curtailed level, industry chamber Assocham said on Tuesday. The chamber said it would take about two weeks for the contractors to put together again



the material and manpower at the sites after the disruptions of about 40 days in major states like Maharashtra, UP, Rajasthan, Bihar and Haryana, among others. The major challenge is bringing back the construction workers, Assochan said, adding, "Fast vaccination of the labour force would be a big morale booster for them and their families."

—PTI

tered in the month of April & May are due to the overflow of registrations from the previous quarter where many homebuyers took advantage of the stamp duty benefit before the March deadline and registered their properties later," said Ashok Mohanani, president, Naredco Maharashtra. "Due to the impact of the second wave of Covid-19 and the Maharashtra government's decision to discontinue the stamp duty waiver on property registrations from April 2021, there has been a decline in the property sales in the months of April and May 2021," real estate experts said.

"The second wave which has been more deadly than the first wave made the homebuyers more cautious to save money for emergencies rather than

investing in properties. Amid the sudden surge in Covid cases and the various curbs due to the lockdown in the state, the sector faced a gradual slowdown, which made it extremely difficult to sustain the momentum...the homebuyers took advantage of the stamp duty benefit before the March deadline," said Pritam Chivukula, co-founder & director, Tridhaa Realty. "For the second consecutive month in a row, the real estate sector faced a dip in sales due to the second wave of the pandemic. Even the festive occasions of Gudi Padwa and Akshaya Tritiya saw buyers shying away from auspicious purchases due to the surge in Covid-19 cases," Ram Naik, executive director, The Guardians Real Estate Advisory.

Guidelines for pharma PLI issued

New Delhi, June 1: The government on Tuesday issued operational guidelines for the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the pharmaceutical industry.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals has notified the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Pharmaceuticals, for which the approved outlay is Rs 15,000 crore, the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers said in a statement.

"The scheme envisages to create global champions out of India who has the potential to grow in size and scale using cutting edge technology and thereby penetrate the global value chains."

The scheme is now open to applications from the industry, the ministry said.

The applications are invited in the three groups, based on the global manufacturing revenue of FY20 of the applicants. A special carve-out for MSMEs has been kept under the scheme. The application window is for 60 days starting from June 2 to July 31, 2021.

"The products covered under the scheme are formulations, biopharmaceuticals, active pharmaceutical ingredients, key starting material, drug intermediates, in-vitro diagnostic medical devices, etc," it added.

A maximum of 55 applicants will be selected. An applicant, via a single application, can apply for more than one product.

—PTI

Nestle working to update nutrition, health strategy



New Delhi, June 1: Swiss FMCG major Nestle SA said it is looking across its entire portfolio to increase the nutrient profile of its products, following international media reports that 60 per cent of the company's mainstream food and drinks portfolio failed to meet a "recognised definition of health" and nutrition.

Nestle is working on a company-wide project to update its nutrition and health strategy. It is looking at its entire portfolio to ensure that its products are helping meet their nutritional needs and supporting a balanced diet, a Nestle SA spokesperson said.

On Monday, *Financial Times* reported that the majority of Nestle's mainstream food and drinks portfolio failed to meet recognised standards of health and nutrition. "The world's largest food

company, Nestle, has acknowledged that more than 60 per cent of its mainstream food and drinks products do not meet a "recognised definition of health and that some of our categories and products will never be healthy" no matter how much we renovate", the *Financial Times* report said quoting a Nestle document.

A presentation circulated among top executives this year, seen by the *Financial Times*, said that only 37 per cent of Nestle's food and beverages by revenues, excluding products such as pet

food and specialised medical nutrition, achieve a rating above 3.5 under Australia's health star rating system.

"Within its overall food and drink portfolio, about 70 per cent of Nestle's food products failed to meet that threshold, the presentation said, along with 96 per cent of beverages—excluding pure coffee—and 99 per cent of Nestle's confectionery and ice cream portfolio," the media report noted.

While issuing a global statement, Nestle—maker of KitKat, Maggi and Nescafe—said it is working on a company-wide project to update its nutrition and health strategy. "We are looking at our entire portfolio across the different phases of people's lives to ensure our products are helping meet their nutritional needs and supporting a balanced diet," he said.—PTI

Lending to MSMEs up 3% in FY21

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 1

Credit offtake by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) increased by 3 per cent in the last fiscal year (FY21) against a marginal de-growth in FY20. However, the second Covid wave has hit incremental credit growth in April this year.

At Rs 12.43 lakh crore at the end of FY21, the total bank credit outstanding to MSMEs grew 3.19 per cent. At the end of the previous

fiscal, the outstanding had degrown 0.21 per cent.

While micro and small enterprises (MSEs) registered a growth of 4.22 per cent in credit offtake in FY21, outstanding by medium enterprises grew 5.14 per cent. The manufacturing sector recorded a growth of 3.07 per cent in FY21 against a degrowth of 6.15 per cent in the previous year. Services bettered growth from 3.89 per cent in FY20 to 4.83 per cent in FY21.

Some of the key policy

measures provided by the government during the pandemic led to the growth in bank credit. This includes the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme.

However, since the second wave of the pandemic started hitting industries, there has been a decline of bank credit.

In April 2021, incremental bank credit to the MSME sector fell by 3.2 per cent compared with a negative growth of 0.2 per cent in April 2020.

MANUFACTURING PMI SLIPS IN MAY

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, JUNE 1

With the Covid second wave and subsequent restrictions across many states, India's manufacturing activity slipped in May, India witnessed the loss of growth momentum last month due to the pandemic's negative impact on demand, slowest rise of new work orders and job losses, a private sector survey showed on Tuesday.

According to the monthly IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index survey, manufacturing PMI stood at a ten-month low of 50.8 in May, down from 55.5 in the previous month of April. "Although the health of the Indian manufacturing sector continued to improve in May, the latest results showed a significant loss of growth momentum," the survey showed.

Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit, said, "The Indian manufacturing sector is showing increasing signs of strain as the Covid-19 crisis intensifies. Key gauges of current sales, production and input buying weakened noticeably in May."

Moderate impact of 2nd wave seen

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 1

The impact of the second wave of pandemic on different sectors will be largely moderate compared to the first wave last year, says Brickwork Ratings.

Engineering goods, automobiles and ancillaries, BFSI and media and entertainment, which were in the "high impact" category in the first wave are now in the "moderate" category.

Partial opening of economic activities, declining

interest rates and a pick-up in execution are helping engineering goods. As for automobiles, demand revival over the low base of last year, robust delivery channels and pent-up demand might be supportive. Revival in the collection cycle will support BFSI. Localised and less stringent restrictions allow a slight scope of growth for media.

However, hotels and tourism, gems & jewellery and transportation will remain highly impacted

due to restricted mobility and lower disposable incomes.

Textile and accessories, metal & metal products, real estate, infrastructure, construction & construction materials, chemicals & chemical products, power and consumer durables continue to be moderately impacted as last year.

IT and ITes will have a low impact compared to a moderate impact in the first wave due to higher demand and better economic prospects in the US.

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, JUNE 1

The second Covid-19 wave has brought back pain for India's automakers as their sales slumped over the preceding month on fresh lockdowns in several states and companies suspending manufacturing.

Comparisons between last month and May 2020 are not comparable as both months saw disruptions in production. The national lockdown last year had only begun being eased in a phased manner in May,

therefore, sales comparison is made to April 21 to gauge the market trend.

Vehicle sales at Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata Motors, Kia, Mahindra and Mahindra, Honda Cars, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, and MG Motor fell sharply in May amid the pandemic, which hit the rural market hard this time round.

Maruti Suzuki on Tuesday reported a 71 per cent decline in total sales to 46,555 units in May as compared to 1,59,691 units in April. The auto major had also shut production from

May 1 through May 16 so as to divert oxygen from industrial use for medical purposes.

Sales at Hyundai dipped to 49 per cent at 25,001 units last month against 49,002 units in April.

The passenger vehicle sales at Tata Motors declined 40 per cent to 15,181 units in May, down from 25,095 units in April this year.

Sales at Kia India clocked 11,050 units, making it the 4th most sold car brand last month. It had sold 16,111 units in April 2021.

Investors cheer after RBI clarifies crypto trading isn't banned

SUVASHREE GHOSH JUNE 1

The Reserve Bank of India's clarification that cryptocurrency trading isn't banned in the country is a welcome relief for a community facing push-back from traditional lenders needed to help settle these deals.

The regulator late on Monday told banks not to cite a 2018 central bank circular as a reason to hinder crypto trades, given the Supreme Court has since squashed the order. Banks must continue with other routine due diligence measures on the deals, the central bank said.

The RBI order follows local media reports that financial firms, including SBI Cards & Payment Services Ltd, one of India's biggest credit card issuers, and the nation's largest private-sector bank, HDFC Bank, had cautioned cus-

tomers against dealing in virtual currencies. Indian authorities have repeatedly expressed concern that crypto assets could be used for criminal activity such as money laundering and funding terrorism.

"Investing in crypto has always been 100 per cent legal in India and the new RBI circular clearly confirms the right to do business with crypto firms," said Avinash Shekhar, co-chief executive officer at ZebPay, India's oldest crypto exchange. He added that the clarification would attract more investors to the virtual currencies.

The RBI's broader concerns and banks' worries around money laundering should help to spur regulations and make the industry safer and stronger, said Sumit Gupta, CEO and co-founder of crypto exchange CoinDCX.

—Bloomberg

TACKLING EMISSIONS

Dairy firms are under pressure to clean up their supply chains

Now, a cow mask that traps methane burps

AGNIESZKA DE SOUSA JUNE 1

Agriculture giant Cargill Inc will start selling methane-absorbing wearable devices for cows, putting its support behind an experimental technology that could help the industry cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The mask-like accessory was developed by UK startup Zelp Ltd, which claims it can reduce methane emissions by more than half. Cargill said on Tuesday it expects to start offering the devices to European dairy farmers in 2022. The companies haven't set a price yet, but Zelp says an annual subscription fee may start at about \$80 a cow.

Tackling methane emissions from livestock is one of the most critical-and-most difficult-climate issues for meat and dairy companies that are under increasing



pressure to clean up their supply chains. Having access to Cargill's vast customer network could help Zelp secure demand as it prepares to roll out a product that's still under development.

"Cargill has an impressive reach across dairy farms in Europe," said Zelp chief executive officer Francisco Norris. "They are uniquely positioned to distribute our technology to a large number

of clients, both farmers and dairy companies, maximising the roll-out from the very first year we hit the market."

Some 95 per cent of methane released by cows comes out as burps and through the nose. The gas traps 80 times more heat than carbon dioxide in its first 25 years in the atmosphere. Zelp's wearables, placed above cows' mouths, act a bit like the catalytic converter on a car. A set of fans powered by solar-charged batteries sucks up the burps and traps them in a chamber with a methane-absorbing filter. Once the filter is saturated, a chemical reaction turns the methane into CO2, which is then released.

Zelp is working on miniaturising the technology and optimising the energy inside the device, Norris said. It's in talks with a number of potential manufacturing partners and aims to be ready

for mass production at the end of the year. It aims to produce 50,000 units in the first year and as many as 200,000 units the next. The company is close to completing its next financing round, according to Norris.

Cargill was attracted to the masks because they can be used in combination with other solutions, said Sander van Zijderderveld, the company's ruminant strategic marketing and technology lead for West Europe. Several food suppliers are testing or have begun using feed additives which inhibit microbes in cows' stomachs to help them produce less methane.

"The nice thing about Zelp is that it could complement a cow that is already receiving feed additives to reduce methane emissions," he said. "It could still capture the methane that is coming out. We could reduce it even more."

—Bloomberg

THAILAND OKAYS \$4.5-BN STIMULUS THAT INCLUDES CASH HANDOUTS



SUTTINEE YUVEJWATTANA JUNE 1

Thailand's government approved a set of economic stimulus measures worth 140 billion baht (\$4.5 billion) to counter the impact from the nation's biggest coronavirus outbreak yet.

The measures—which include cash handouts to welfare-card holders and special groups, co-payments and cash rebates—are expected to be implemented from July, Anucha Burapachaisri, a government spokesman, said on Tuesday.

Thailand's economy is facing strong headwinds from the country's latest Covid outbreak, which has totalled more than 130,000 cases since it began in Bangkok nightlife venues in April.

The latest aid is on top of an 85.5-billion baht package last month that extended two cash handout programmes implemented. The two latest packages will be financed by borrowing under a 1 trillion baht programme approved in April 2020, Anucha said.

The package announced Tuesday includes: 93 billion baht in co-payments for consumer purchases, targeted at 31 million people; 16.4 billion baht in cash handouts to 13.65 million holders of welfare cards; 3 billion baht cash handout to 2.5 million people considered members of special groups, such as the disabled; A 28 billion baht cash-back measure aimed at 4 million high-income people.

The new outbreak has weakened prospects for an economic recovery, with Thailand's central bank and the economic-planning agency warning of risks to their growth forecasts.

—Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Coach booked for raping teen

Jaipur: A lawn tennis coach at a sports training centre in Jaipur allegedly raped a 17-year-old player on the pretext of selecting her for a domestic tournament, police said on Tuesday. According to a complaint filed by the girl, coach Gaurang Nalwaya would call her to the Sawai Man Singh Stadium for training and sexually assault her. On the latest instance, the coach allegedly raped her on the pretext of selecting her for a tournament in Udaipur, the police said.

"A case has been lodged against the coach. Investigation into the complaint has been initiated and a search is on for the accused," Jyoti Nagar police station SHO Saroj Dhayal said.

— PTI

Shafali maintains top spot in T20s

Dubai: Indian teen sensation Shafali Verma maintained her pole position among T20 batters while Kathryn Bryce became the first woman from Scotland to make it into the top-10 in the latest ICC rankings published on Tuesday. Shafali is holding onto her top rank with 776 ranking points well ahead of Australians Beth Mooney (744) and Meg Lanning (709). India's T20 vice-captain Smriti Mandhana is ranked fourth while Jimmah Rodrigues is the third Indian batter at ninth position. India also has two bowlers in the top-10 list with off-spinner Deepti Sharma at sixth and left-arm spinner Radha Yadav just a notch below at seventh.

— PTI

Kahn to occupy Bayern big chair

Berlin: After 30 years in charge of Bayern Munich, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge will step down as chairman at the end of the month and be replaced by former Germany captain Oliver Kahn, the Bundesliga giants confirmed Tuesday. Rummenigge had been due to see out his contract which expires at the end of 2021, but is leaving six months early to meet the end of the financial year on June 30. Rummenigge's departure represents the start of a new era at Bayern with Julian Nagelsmann, 33, also replacing Hansi Flick as head coach going into next season. "It is strategically the most sensible and logical point in time," said Rummenigge, 65, with Kahn, 51, to be Bayern's chairman when the new season starts in August.

— AFP

Scotland player +ve ahead of Euro

Glasgow: The Scotland team reported their first player testing positive for Covid-19 on Tuesday at a training camp in Spain ahead of the European Championship. The national federation said midfielder John Fleck is self-isolating and will not travel to Portugal for a warm-up game on Wednesday against the Netherlands. "The rest of the squad was retested for Covid-19 and returned negative results," the federation said.

— AP

Covid positive Vidal in hospital

Santiago: Inter Milan's Chilean midfielder Arturo Vidal is receiving hospital treatment after testing positive for coronavirus, his national team said Monday. The diagnosis means the 34-year-old will miss Thursday's World Cup qualifier between Chile and Argentina. "The medical team of the Chilean national team emphasizes that at the request of the player Arturo Vidal, it is announced that he has been diagnosed positive for Covid," the national team said on its official website.

— AFP

Live on TV

CRICKET

England vs New Zealand: First Test, Day 1 from 3.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

Euro Pre-Tournament Friendlies: England vs Austria on Sony Ten 2; Germany vs Denmark on Sony Six; France vs Wales on Sony Ten 1 from 12.30 am (Thursday)

Regd. No. HQ/SD/509/2021-23

Printed and Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Plot No. 9 Alwal Village, Vaidh Nagar Taluk, Medchal Malkajgiri Dist. Telangana and Published at 36, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-3. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Kaushik Mitter

OH!SAKA

Osaka reveals 'bouts of depression' after Paris pullout

Paris, June 1: Naomi Osaka withdrew from the French Open on Monday following the bitter fall-out from her decision to boycott all media activity at the Grand Slam event, revealing she has "suffered long bouts of depression" and will "take some time away from the court".

"The best thing for the tournament, the other players and my well-being is that I withdraw so that everyone can get back to focusing on the tennis going on in Paris," the world number two wrote on Twitter.

The 23-year-old Japanese star was fined \$15,000 on Sunday and threatened with disqualification after she refused to carry out a mandatory news conference following her first round win.

She claimed on the eve of Roland Garros that such post-match inquests were akin to "kicking people when they are down" and that they had a detrimental effect on her mental health.

"I never wanted to be a distraction and I accept that my timing was not ideal and my message could have been clearer," the four-time Grand Slam title winner said in her statement.

"The truth is I have suffered bouts of depression since the US Open in 2018 and I have had a really hard time coping with that."

She added: "In Paris, I was already feeling vulnerable and anxious so I thought it was better to exercise self-care and skip the press conferences."

"I announced it preempt-



Japan's Naomi Osaka celebrates after defeating Romania's Patricia Maria Tig in the French Open first round match in Paris on Monday.

tively because I do feel like the rules are quite out-dated in parts and I wanted to highlight that.

"I am going to take some time away from the court now."

Osaka said she has also apologised to organisers over the affair.

French Tennis Federation president Gilles Moretton had described her vow of silence as "a phenomenal error".

On Monday, he said in a statement: "We are sorry and sad for Naomi Osaka."

The outcome of Naomi withdrawing from Roland Garros is unfortunate."

HIGHEST EARNING FEMALE ATHLETE

Osaka is the world's highest earning female athlete, making \$37.4 million in 2020.

She burst onto the scene in 2018 with a maiden Slam win at the US Open. She has gone on to win another title in New York as well as two Australian Opens.

Mari Osaka, a former player herself, said her

sister had been struggling to cope in the run-up to Paris. "Naomi mentioned to me before the tournament that a family member had come up to her and remarked that she's bad on clay," Mari wrote on Reddit.

"At every press conference she's told she has a bad record on clay."

"When she lost in Rome, she was not OK mentally. She was completely shattered and I think everyone's remarks and opinions have gotten to her head."

— AFP

Barty survives scare

Paris, June 1: World number one Ashleigh Barty survived a French Open opening round scare on Tuesday.

Top seed Barty marked her return to Paris for the first time since her 2019 title triumph by beating American left-hander Bernarda Pera 6-4, 3-6, 6-2.

Barty, 25, skipped the defence of her title in 2020 due to the pandemic but this year has won trophies at the Yarra Valley Classic, Miami and on clay in Stuttgart in the run-up to the year's second Grand Slam at Roland Garros.

Ironically, another Roland Garros press conference led Tuesday to the injury-enforced withdrawal of two-time

Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova.

The Czech 11th seed, a Roland Garros semi-finalist in 2012 and 2020, had saved a match point in her first-round win over Belgian qualifier Greet Minnen on Sunday. Fifth seed Elina Svitolina recovered from a 2-5 second set deficit to beat French teenager Oceane Babel 6-2, 7-5.

BOPANNA ADVANCES

India's Rohan Bopanna and Franko Skugor of Croatia sailed into the men's doubles second round with a 6-4 6-2 win over Gerogia's Nikoloz Basilashvili and Andre Begemann of Germany.

— Agencies

WHAT THEY SAID

The only thing I feel is that I feel for Naomi. I feel like I wish I could give her a hug because I know what it's like.

— SERENA WILLIAMS
Former world No.1

I am so sad about Naomi Osaka. I truly hope she will be ok. As athletes we are taught to take care of our body, and perhaps the mental & emotional aspect gets short shrift. This is about more than doing or not doing a press conference. Good luck Naomi-we are all pulling for you!

— MARTINA NAVRATILLOVA
Tennis legend

We are sorry and sad for Naomi Osaka that she has withdrawn from the tournament.

— GILLES MORETTON
French tennis federation president

Stay strong (love heart emoji). I admire your vulnerability.

— COCO GAUFF
American teen sensation

You shouldn't ever have to make a decision like this-but so damn impressive taking the high road when the powers that be don't protect their own.

major respect @naomiosa-ka.

— STEPHEN CURRY
NBA star

Everyone talks about mental health after someone commits suicide but ridicules everyone who tries to protect their mental health. You are strong for standing up and speaking out and even giving up the game you love to protect your mental health. I salute you young queen.

— CARLOS BRATHWAITE
West Indies cricketer

The challenge today is to convince people of the value of truth, honesty, compassion and a concern for others.

— VICTORIA AZARENKA
Two-time Grand Slam champion

Mental Health is nothing to criticize. Nothing to joke about. Pls take your mental health seriously. Without my support system, I truly believe I would not be here today. Here for you @naomiosa-ka.

— MARDY FISH
Former top-10 ATP player

I respect her decision. I respect what she does. I can't really comment on that. I feel like everyone's dealing with their own stuff."

— SOFIA KENIN
American fourth seed

CORRUPTION | CASES

HCA heavyweights under the hammer

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

In a jolt to Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) heavyweights, the Telangana High Court on Tuesday rejected their pleas to stay the proceedings against them in the Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) Court.

Former president Arshad Ayub, secretary N. Shivalal Yadav and office-bearers D. S. Chalapathi, Naresh Sharma, John Manoj, P. Yadagiri, Syed Moizuddin, Surrender Agarwal, R. Devaraj were among those accused of corruption in allotting developmental works of the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium at Uppal, Hyderabad.

Justice K. Lakshman of Telangana High Court dismissed the three petitions filed by these accused, who sought to quash the FIRs registered against them by ACB and to stay the trial proceedings at ACB court.

ACB had registered three cases against the accused, who are allegedly involved in misappropriation of funds with regards to construction works of RGICS at various stages.

The construction cost was estimated at ₹31 crore (the successful bidder had quoted ₹30,26,55,587) but over a period of time the cost was enhanced to ₹108 crore. Also, the bidder did not comply with the agreed terms, majorly non-fitting of fire fighting system and non construction of fire pump house.

There were irregularities in selling of tickets, investment of ₹83 lakh on three playgrounds at Mathrusri Engineering College, Qutubullapur and Osmania University. Irregularities have been found even in the installation of floodlights at the Stadium.

There are specific allegations that the committee has paid ₹910 for each bucket chair, whereas in the open market the cost is ₹450. The committee has paid an amount of ₹ 2.7 crore excess by taking huge kickbacks from the supplier, the court observed.

Cases were registered in 2016, 2017 and 2020 by Aijaz Ali Qureshi, secretary of Shalimar Cricket Eleven Club and C. Babu Rao Sagar, secretary of Sagar Cricket Club, following

● High Court rejects pleas of several former and current office-bearers to stay graft proceedings against them in ACB Court.

which ACB authorities had investigated and filed a chargesheet against the accused. The trial was going on at ACB courts.

Meanwhile, the accused persons approached High Court seeking to quash the cases against them and to stay the proceeding in the trial court.

The accused contended being Managing Committee Members of HCA they never discharged their functions as public servants. Therefore, the provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, does not attract against them. HCA never received any aid or grant from the Government and therefore, it is not a public authority and the accused are not public servants. The offences alleged against the accused under the provisions of the PC Act are not maintainable.

ACB Counsel submitted that there is an aid from the Government to HCA including providing of land on lease (23 acres at a nominal rent of ₹1 lakh per annum) and grants from 1963-1981. Therefore, it is a State as defined under Article 12 of the Constitution of India and provisions of PC Act are applicable.

The accused, being Managing Committee Members of the said Association, discharged public duties and therefore, they are public servants in the eye of law.

"Prima facie, there are serious allegations against the petitioners herein. However, whether the HCA has received any aid or financial assistance, whether the office bearers of HCA have discharged public duty and whether they are the public servants as defined under the provisions of the PC Act is a question of fact and triable issues. The same will be decided during the course of trial. The petitioners have to face trial and prove their innocence by leading evidence. Thus, the said issue cannot be decided in the present proceedings," the order read.

SHUTTLE ACE MARIN HURT, OUT OF TOKYO OLYMPICS

Madrid, June 1: Spain's Carolina Marin, the women's Olympic badminton singles champion, will miss the Tokyo Games after tearing the anterior cruciate ligament and meniscus in her left knee.

The 27-year-old will undergo surgery in the coming days after suffering the injury during a training session last week.

"This is another blow that I have to deal with, but I will certainly be back," she wrote on social media.

The three-time world champion also ruptured the ACL in her right knee in 2019 and missed that year's world championships.

— AFP

Southern flavour on sports watch

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 1

It's the best of both worlds in sport, especially south. Sony Pictures Sports Network has launched an exclusive channel in Telugu and Tamil, Ten 4, on Tuesday. It began with quite a boom, as regional commentary accompanied the WWE wrestling live action.

The big feast would be 10 days later though, when the biggest international football tournaments of the year, Euro and Copa America, kick off. Euro will be telecast in six languages — English, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam while Copa will drop Hindi from the list.

"During these difficult times, the festival of football is something to cheer about for the fans. We are very excited," says Rajesh Kaul, Chief Revenue Officer, Distribution and Head — Sports Business, Sony Pictures Networks India.

"We have four months of

top class sport lined up — Olympics, India's cricket tours to Sri Lanka and England. We couldn't have asked for more," he adds.

"We are pioneers in trying out sports content in different languages... we have been doing this for all the marquee events. We will have commentary by different experts on the cricket series and other big competitions in local languages for sure. People are going to love it," he says, adding "Apart from Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, we are trying to reach more languages across the country. We already have Bengali, Malayalam and Hindi feeds."

Sony also announced their panelists for Euro that features footballers Bhaichung Bhutia, Sunil Chhetri, Louis Saha, Luis Garcia, Don Hutchison, David James, Terry Phelan, Mark Seagraves, Ashley Westwood, Jofre Mateu, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Sandesh Jhingan and Robin Singh.

