





# Womenia

TWEET PATROL


**MITHALI RAJ**  
**@M\_RAJO3**

Happy to be part of the 'cheer squad'.  
Are you ???



## Dancing it out to aid mental health

TEJAL SINHA

Dance/movement therapy (DMT) is the psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration of the individual, for the purpose of improving health and well-being. Divya, a 26 year old mental health professional who also has a passion and love for dance, started 'Dance therapy with Divya' on Instagram in 2019.

She shares, "Dance therapy with Divya is a safe, no judgmental space to be yourself. Growing up as a child who liked dancing, I didn't get many opportunities, also feelings of being judged by everyone around was constantly there. I went on to study psychology and understood what all wonders can happen if people are provided with non-judgmental space and acceptance and positive regard from people around them, although these things should be naturally present but are sadly not. Once I started working as a school counsellor, I was dealing with children and their issues for the whole week and I needed some place that was therapy for me, hence I started DTWD for myself on Sundays and it still continues. It has grown in two years and from 6 people to now 150+ people have come to DTWD and shared space with us and gone back feeling better about themselves."

Divya started dancing at a really young age. She was a quiet child and the only way she felt really happy was through dancing so you could say Dancing was her form of expression.

She adds, "I teach whatever I



Divya Barai

**Dance therapy as it sounds is a mix of dance movement and psychology. It is a form of therapy that uses body movements. The Hans India speaks with Divya Barai, a mental health professional and a dancer by passion on dance therapy for mental health**

know through my experience and observation. I'm starting my professional course in Dance from ShiamakDavar Institute in August 2021. It's always better to keep challenging yourself and that's how you grow so that's inspired me to go for the course and learn more so I can teach even better. The concept of Dance therapy was very new for people, they had heard of therapy and dancing separately but not together. So, it was only when people started coming is when they understood what it truly was. But word of mouth and feedbacks have helped majorly, people keep

coming again and again and new people keep joining in. Especially now that it's online, people from different parts of India and the world are joining to be a part of the classes."

Divya shares that dance is known to be one of the best forms of expression. So, by building a therapeutic environment where one can express freely without being judged.

"There's unconditional positive regard all of us learn to share with each other. You may come in nervous and anxious but what we see is towards the end is there's immense positive energy.

People tell me they feel confident and so motivated for the coming week. It helps break the vicious cycle of negative thoughts or anxiety that may prevail. These classes are not a substitute to help from a mental health professional but to improve mental well-being by taking a break from their daily hectic lives," shares Divya.

### Dance therapy to address mental health

Divya shares that talking about mental health still remains a bit of a taboo, although things are changing slowly, people find

dance therapy much easier, it's not always easy to express verbally, it's not always easy to put words into how one is feeling or thinking, that's what makes dance therapy effective, a place where the therapist and the participants have a safe space and a conversation without words just through dancing.

### Surprising psychological benefits of dance therapy

The participants feel a sense of belongingness, feelings that you are not alone, it helps develop a lot of social skills, confidence, it helps with coordination and concentration, builds creativity and develops mind-body connect.

### Practicing dance therapy at this present scenario

The pandemic has struck us in the most unexpected way, it has taken a toll on everyone, the news flash of only number of cases and deaths reported and all that directly affects the mental health.

"In this scenario, it can be very difficult to not be invested in what's happening outside, Dance therapy helps with taking time out for oneself, to do something for themselves and their well-being. Meeting people virtually, sharing stories, dancing together, brings about a sense of community which is very important, to know that you are not alone. We are building a safe space so people can just come and try and be in the moment and be happy and grateful for everything in life and switch off from the outside world for some time and take care of themselves. Best part is that it is online now," ends Divya.



FASHIONISTA

## Celebs twinning in same outfits

PUJA GUPTA

Celebs put in a lot of efforts to finalise their look and deciding upon their OTT outfits. But there have been several instances when celebrities were spotted wearing the same outfit. The most recent one: Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Anne Hathway wore the same black bodycon by designer Alexandre Vauthier black for different photo-shoots.

Priyanka wore the figure-flaunting dress worth Rs 4 lakh for her photoshoot as the cover face of fashion glossy Vogue Australia. The silk embellished-trim maxi silk dress had gem embellishment, slim cut, square neck, and spaghetti straps and is from the French label's SS21 collection. On the other hand, Anne wore the dress for her shoot for CR Fashion Book China.

PeeCee's look was also compared to one of Deepika Padukone's old pictures in which she was wearing a black, floor-length Tom Ford gown. The comparison did not

go well with Priyanka's mother Madhu Chopra and lashed out at a media outlet who asked its followers on social media for which actress pulled off the black gown better. Madhu reacted to the tweet by writing, "Only a blind will think they are wearing same outfit. Besides, Priyanka always carries hot couture better."

Actresses Alia Bhatt and Shraddha Kapoor were clicked by the paparazzi wearing the same Zimmerman dress. Shraddha styled the white and pink floral mini with plunging neckline and bell sleeves with a pair of off-white strappy heels and kept her makeup neutral and left her brunette mane down in soft waves. Alia chose to do a bohemian braided hairdo that added extra oomph to her look. She then opted for glory makeup while sticking to strappy heels and accessorised it with a cross-body sling. Later, south Indian actress Rashmika Mandanna was also seen in the same outfit.

### BEAUTY FUNDA



## Rescue your hair from Monsoon

While the monsoon might be enjoyable for many of us, curling up with a good book and cup of tea while it pours outside is a great feeling, but our hair doesn't quite enjoy the weather.

Due to the increase in humidity, our hair becomes greasy and the scalp gets congested due to excess moisture. So, it's important to stick to hair care routine that works in this sort of weather. Megha Asher, COO & CO Founder, Juicy Chemistry suggests:

Using the right oil  
The good old champi need not be given a miss. In fact, it might help balance the scalp. Use a lightweight oil or blend of oils that'll do the trick for you.

Choosing the right shampoo  
Humidity calls for thorough cleansing of the scalp. Using a gentle shampoo gets rid of the buildup and balances and nourishes your scalp. Be sure to apply the shampoo to your scalp only! Otherwise, you will dry out your hair.

Use a leave-in conditioner  
Frizziness is a common concern in the wetter months and leave-in conditioners are quite effective at nourishing the hair and making the strands feel smoother and softer to the touch.

### NEWS ROUNDUP

## Swara Bhasker: 'Dobara Alvida' is about emotions we try to hide when a relationship is over



The upcoming Swara Bhasker and Gulshan Deviah-starrer short film "Dobara Alvida" is about emotions one tries to hide when a relationship is over, the actress says.

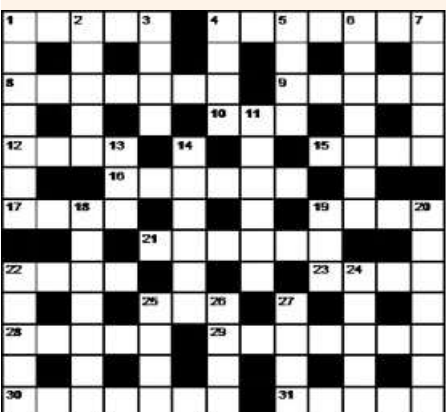
"This movie is a celebration of all the emotions that we try to hide away when any relationship is over. 'Dobara Alvida' is an exploration of what happens when one finds closure rather unexpectedly, taking them by surprise, and that is exactly where the beauty lies," said the actress, about the film. Swara feels the film, which had a trailer release recently, will leave a bittersweet feeling. The

story talks of two lovers who meet after a long time and the play of emotions between them. It is a walk down memory lane that happens after an unexpected meeting in a cab.

The actress feels that in today's age of millennial dating, the story will have more impact. "At a day and age where contemporary relationships are ever evolving, 'Dobara Alvida' is a journey of discovering how there's more to what we lead on," she said.

The short film also features Swapnil Kortivar and is directed by Shashank Singh. It is set to release digitally on June 8.

### CROSSWORD



#### Across

- 1 Repeat what's gone before (5)
- 4 Attitude (7)
- 8 Famous city in Madhya Pradesh (7)
- 9 Large fruit (5)
- 10 Little devil (3)
- 12 Stratagem (4)

#### 15 Sitarist Shankar

- (4)
- 16 Star system (6)
- 17 Toil (4)
- 19 Ex-English spinner Edmonds (4)
- 21 Isaac \_\_\_\_ : the master of science fiction ? (6)
- 22 Small arachnid (4)
- 23 Baby sounds (4)
- 25 Old French love poem (3)
- 28 Push against (5)
- 29 A confused mixture (7)
- 30 Indicate, point out or reveal (7)
- 31 Wood nymph (5)

#### Down

- 1 Thinks of or considers (7)
- 2 Category (5)
- 3 Bodily hurt (4)
- 4 Persian fairy (4)
- 5 Reservoir for oil etc (4)
- 6 Let loose (7)
- 7 Boredom (5)
- 11 Wise sayings (6)
- 13 \_\_\_\_ on : incite (3)
- 14 Fluid part of blood (6)
- 18 Consequence (7)
- 19 Plastic type (3)
- 20 Caught with

#### rope (7)

- 22 Meditates (5)
- 24 Egg producer (5)
- 25 German film director Riefenstahl (4)
- 26 Uncertain (4)
- 27 Barren (4)

### • Sudoku

	1					5	4	
4			1	2				6
7		3	5		8	2		
		6		9		3	5	
	8		6		7		9	
	9	2		1		4		
		5	3		6	8		1
6				8	4			5
	2	7					3	

## Milk Day

It's a well-known fact that milk is rich with calcium, a mineral that promotes healthy teeth and bones. June 1st is the date that has been set aside to celebrate Milk Day. And, of course, this is a celebration that can take place anywhere in the world, given that milk is a global food.

The use of milk in food and drink has been happening for thousands of years. As most people can appreciate, milk is an integral part of most people's daily lives, and there's an entire industry that revolves around it as well.

Milk is a liquid food rich with nutrients like calcium. It's a food product that is primarily used by mammals during infancy. Although, in the case of humans, people tend to consume it in adulthood, as most adult humans can digest the lactose in milk. Of course, milk isn't only available for drinking. It's an essential ingredient for dairy foods such as butter, cream, ice cream, and cheese. Milk can also be found as an ingredient used in other types of foods, such as bread, cakes, cereal, desserts and so much more. There is no denying that milk has become a mainstay of most people's diets today. It's also one of the cheapest food products to buy, given the industrial scale of milk production in the world. Some of the largest producers of milk are the United States, India, and China.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY  
with  
HANS INDIA

World  
MILK  
DAY





# Dont risk students’ lives, reconsider holding Class XII exams: Priyanka

NEW DELHI

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday wrote to Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, urging him to reconsider the decision regarding holding the CBSE Class XII board exams due to the Covid pandemic.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is yet to take a final call on conducting the Class XII board exams. The Centre is expected to take a final decision on the matter soon.

Priyanka Gandhi said the three-page letter has been written after taking feedback from

the students and parents on the issue of holding the Class XII board exams.

"I once again urge you to reconsider holding the CBSE 12th board exams and to consider the suggestions made by them (students and parents) very, very seriously. It will be a great injustice if they are pushed into circumstances that endanger their lives when it is completely unnecessary and it will be a great pity if we let them down at this trying time in their lives," the Congress leader wrote.

"These children are the future generation of Indians. They have already coped with immense

pressure in the last year of their schooling. For much of the year, their schools remained closed, normal interactions with friends that children thrive on have been practically absent. Many contracted Covid-19 themselves and many have lost people they love, family members and friends in this year of tragedy and turmoil," she added. Noting that the second wave of the pandemic has been even more devastating and traumatic than the first one, Priyanka Gandhi said, "The unimaginable pain we have suffered collectively as a nation in these last few months will probably be imprinted on the individ-



ual and collective psyches of our children for the rest of their lives.

"How can we expect them to set aside all that they are witnessing and focus on their board exams? How can we, as the guardians of their future, refuse to hear their cries of help and turn away from their requests to be heard? In fact, how can we willingly put them in a situation that is potentially dangerous and life threatening for them?" The Congress leader also said that no lesson has been learnt from events like the panchayat elections in Uttar Pradesh, where the state government had promised that all Covid guidelines would

be put in place only to subject the teachers and election officials to crowded spaces where all caution was thrown to the wind.

"Over 1,600 teachers lost their lives for the very same reason that we are now imposing on students of the 12th standard -- because they were given no choice but to show up in a situation that endangered their lives," Priyanka Gandhi wrote in the letter. She also compiled the suggestions made by the teachers, students and parents, which pointed out that like in other countries, internal assessment should be the basis of grading a student amid the pandemic.

## Drug addict held for killing mother over plot of land

LUCKNOW

A 50-year-old man, known to be a drug addict, killed his mother in a fit of rage after she refused to sell land which is in her name.

The accused, Siyaram, has been arrested. He had earlier served a jail term for murder in 1997. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), south, Khyati Garg said that Siyaram, on Saturday, informed his sister Sukhrana that their mother was unwell. When Sukhrana and her husband Rajaram reached the house, they were shocked to see blood spattered all over the courtyard and hair tufts were lying in one of the corners. A blood-stained brick was also lying there. The mother



was nowhere to be found. When Sukhrana persisted with her queries, Siyaram fled from the spot. Sukhrana informed the police and voiced apprehension about her mother's disappearance. Later, when Siyaram was arrested on Sunday and subjected to interrogation, he confessed that he had hit his mother with the handle of a handpump the previous night and then went to his sister's house and told her that their mother had fallen sic.

## Bride's cousin killed in celebratory firing in Kanpur

KANPUR

A cousin of a bride was killed during celebratory firing in Bilhaur area in Kanpur. The 35-year-old man was killed during the marriage celebration of his cousin sister in the wee hours of Sunday. The police said that he was hit by stray bullet during celebratory firing. Bilhaur inspector, Anup Kumar Nigam, said, that they re-

ceived a call about a man suffering a bullet injury at a wedding but the victim died on way to hospital. "Family members said that Rajendra had gone to welcome the 'baraat' when someone from the groom's side started firing. Rajendra was hit in the chest and slumped to the ground. He was rushed to a hospital, but died on the way." No arrests have yet been made in the case.

## Families of frontline workers who died of Covid didn't get ex-gratia: Akhilesh



LUCKNOW

THE BJP-led Uttar Pradesh government broke its word by not making ex-gratia payments promised to the families of frontline workers, who died of Covid-19, Samajwadi party alleged on Monday.

"Chief Minister used to announce compensation for the families of health workers and others who died due to the coronavirus while serving patients. Prime Minister was seen getting emotional about the loss of lives many a time during the pandemic but BJP has an expertise in forgetting promises," SP President Akhilesh Yadav said in a statement.

"In the injustice meted to the families of the corona warriors, who lost their lives (due to the virus), BJP's insensitive and inhumane behaviour is clear," he added. The former UP chief minister felt that the government

made mockery of itself and people's expectations. According to him, the saffron party lost its credibility and people's trust in its rule of four years in the state so far. "Seven months after Sub-Inspector Mukesh Arya died in Kanpur, his family did not receive pension or the government job promised to one of them," Yadav said, claiming that Rs 50 lakh compensation was announced for them. He also alleged that there were irregularities on part of officers in preparing list of Covid deaths. "At Kanpur's Kakadev police station, eight policemen died but the list sent to the government mentioned only two names," he alleged, adding: "In Lucknow, family members of LDA engineer SK Agarwal have not received the PF money yet."

According to the teachers' body, over 1,600 teachers and workers of the Basic Education Department have died in the state since the first week of April due to Covid-19 and 90 per cent of them were on panchayat polls duty. "While over 1,600 teachers died but the Basic Education says only three did...many families have lost their only earning members," he said.

## CPI concerned over Centre-State conflicts

LUCKNOW

THE Communist Party of India (CPI) has expressed concern over increasing cases of conflict between the Centre and States.

CPI national secretary Atul Kumar Anjaan said that the conflict could trigger a constitutional crisis in the country.

Talking to IANS here, Anjaan said, "The Constitution clearly defines the relationship between the Union government and states. In the last 70 years, there has been several occasions when a conflict of interest arose between the Centre and states, but the Centre never interfered in the concurrent list under states' jurisdiction. However, in the seven-years' rule of the present government, this rule is being violated."

Referring to the case of West Bengal chief secretary, he said that the chief secretary is retiring on May 31, but the Centre has extended his services by three months has asked him to come to centre on deputation.

"If the Centre abuses its rights to weaken states, it would be con-



sidered as an attack on federal structure," he added.

On the farmers' issue, Anjaan said farmers have been agitating since the past six months against the three farm laws passed by the Central government.

"The three farm laws were passed by the Central government without taking states in confidence. This is also a direct

threat to the federal system," he said.

The CPI secretary said that efforts should be made to strengthen the Constitution instead of weakening the federal structure. Anjaan asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to convene a special meeting of chief ministers to strengthen the centre-state relations.

## 'Trump cocktail' therapy in 2 Lucknow hospitals



LUCKNOW

THE monoclonal antibodies treatment therapy which was used in Covid treatment of former US President Donald Trump and is now known as Trump Cocktail therapy, is now available in two private hospitals of the city.

The therapy had recently got approval from India's Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO).

Dr Rakesh Kapoor director, Medanta Hospital, said, "A 55-year-old male Covid patient became the first recipient of the 'cocktail therapy' in Lucknow on Sunday. He was administered the drug by Dr Ruchita Sharma. The patient has witnessed good reduction in symptoms and viral load. Currently, the cost of the therapy is Rs 60,000."

Dr Mayank Somani, managing director of Apollomedics Super Speciality Hospital, said, "The monoclonal antibodies cocktail therapy, also known as 'Trump Cocktail', is now available at our

hospital. The method of treatment is effective in mild or moderate Covid patients where oxygen support is not required. A patient should be given the therapy within 10 days of testing positive for the infection."

Experts said the cocktail therapy was administered through a drug, Regeneron, a combination of two artificial antibodies - Casirivimab and Imdevimab - developed in labs.

It has been found that the cocktail of antibodies blocks the entry of novel Coronavirus in human cell, thus preventing it from replicating and damaging the cell before moving on to other cells in the body.

The drug is administered in the body of a patient through intravenous method which takes around an hour.

The patient is then kept under observation for one hour before being sent home, if there are no complications.

The therapy is generally given to patients with comorbidities in whom the possibility of Covid infection turning severe is high.

## Himachal CM opens makeshift Covid hospital in Solan

SHIMLA

HIMACHAL Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Monday virtually inaugurated a makeshift Covid-19 hospital at the Radha Soami Satsang Beas Centre at Rabon in Solan district, constructed at a cost of Rs 3.90 crore.

Thakur said the hospital, which was completed in just 14 days, would have 200 oxygen bed with 100 doctors, staff nurses and other paramedical staff. A laboratory for rapid testing has also been set up at the hospital.

The Chief Minister said the Radha Soami Satsang Beas sect has been helping the state fight the pandemic by providing properties for setting up makeshift hospitals at Mandi, Paraur and Solan.

Thakur said the state has ensured that no Covid patient is deprived of health-care facilities, adding that the state government has taken several initiatives to combat the pandemic.

On the request of the state, the Centre has enhanced its quota of oxygen from 15 MT to 40 MT, he added.

## Relaxations in curfew in 61 UP districts from today



LUCKNOW

THE Uttar Pradesh government on Monday extended the relaxations announced in the coronavirus curfew to six more districts from June 1, allowing shops and markets outside the containment zones to open for five days a week.

The relaxations will be applicable to a total of 61 districts from Tuesday, while 14 districts with an active Covid-19 caseload of over 600 have been kept outside the purview of the order for the time being.

"The relaxations were announced in 55 districts on Sunday, which has now been increased to 61 (of the state's 75 districts). According to latest reports, the active caseload has fallen below 600 in Sonbhadra, Deoria, Baghpat, Prayagraj, Bijnore and Moradabad, and the relaxations will be applicable in these six districts as well," an official spokesperson said here.

The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with senior officials, he added. The 14 districts where there would be no relaxations are Meerut, Lucknow, Saharanpur, Varanasi, Ghaziabad, Gorakhpur, Muzaffarnagar,

Bareilly, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Bulandshahr, Jhansi, Lakhimpur-Khri, Jaunpur and Ghazipur, the spokesperson said.

In the remaining 61 districts, shops and markets outside the COVID-19 containment zones will be allowed to remain open from 7 am to 7 pm from Monday to Friday, he said. Eateries on highways and vendors will also be allowed to operate, according to a statement issued by the state government. The night curfew will remain in place from 7 pm to 7 am and weekend restrictions or the "corona curfew" will also be in place on Saturdays and Sundays. Instructions were issued that over the weekend, cleanliness, sanitation and fogging campaigns will be carried out.

Shopkeepers and their employees will have to wear masks, maintain a two-yard distance with each other and customers, and ensure the arrangement of hand sanitiser. These rules will also be applicable to the customers. While there would be full attendance for the frontline workers, for the rest of the government employees, there would be 50 per cent attendance on rotation. A COVID help desk must also be established at all offices

## Aligarh nurse booked for throwing vaccine filled syringes in dustbin

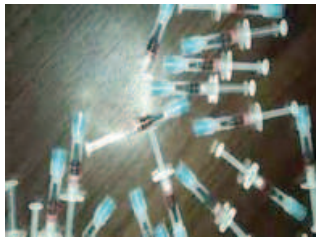
ALIGARH

AN ANM (auxiliary nurse midwife) of a primary health centre in Aligarh was booked on Sunday for allegedly disposing of 29 syringes filled with COVID vaccine without administering them to the beneficiaries.

The incident has been reported from Jamalpur Primary Health Centre where ANM Neha Khan allegedly used to insert needles of syringes inside the body of the vaccine recipients but take them out without releasing the vaccine and later drop the vaccine-filled syringes into the dustbin.

On investigation, 29 such syringes filled with COVID vaccines were found in the dustbin.

On a complaint of the CMO office, the police has lodged an FIR against ANM Neha Khan and the Medical Officer-in-charge of the primary health



center Aftreen Zehra.

Vishal Chaudhary, CO Civil Lines said, "A complaint was received from the CMO office stating that there were 29 doses of COVID-19 vaccines which were left unused. The vaccination report was also uploaded on the portal without administering the beneficiaries. A case has been filed against ANM Neha Khan and Aftreen Zehra under various sections of IPC."

An FIR has been lodged under Section 203/176/465/427/120 B 3/4 of Indian Penal Code at Civil Lines police station of Aligarh and investigation is underway.

## Factory owners grapple with shortage of raw material, labourers on day one

NEW DELHI

AS the Covid lockdown restrictions were eased in Delhi, factory owners on Monday opened their establishments after six weeks with many grappling with shortage of labourers and raw materials, and fearing losses due to slump in production.

After a strict lockdown for six weeks since April 19, the Delhi government allowed industrial manufacturing and construction work in the city from Monday as part of its phased unlock process.

However, since the majority of the workforce had left for their native

places fearing the unprecedented second wave of the coronavirus pandemic, and the markets yet to open for supply of raw material, the industrialists said they can only calculate their losses. "We have only been able to enter the factory and that is it. There is no way we can start work," said Neeraj Sehgal, owner of Sehgal Doors in the Mayapuri industrial area.

"Only 20 per cent workers are here and there is no raw material because the government has not allowed the industrial use of oxygen, which is essential to make steel doors," said Sehgal, who makes fire-rated doors and steel doors. And since the rules deny

the use of oxygen for industries, the price for raw material has skyrocketed.

"What we were buying earlier for Rs 55 per kg is now available at Rs 90 per kg. An increase of 65 per cent, can you believe this," lamented Sehgal, who is also the general secretary of Mayapuri industrial area welfare association. The pending electricity and water bills have only added to his woes.

As per an order issued by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on May 29, the workers and employees at manufacturing units and construction sites will be required

to carry e-passes for movement during the ongoing lockdown that has been extended to June 7. Another industrialist, Ashok Gupta of Jugmug Shoes in Udyog Nagar, Peeragarhi, was bogged down by not being able to get e-passes for his workers.

"The workers have been calling from their home in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar asking if we have arranged e-passes. But the system does not work. We are not able to get any passes. The entire operation has been shut," Gupta told PTI. Gupta, who manufactures shoes for other market players, has also incurred huge losses as he could not deliver the orders.





# Judiciary and governance

A ruler must be a man of good character who trusts and solicits the advice of qualified experts, and who looks to surround himself with people of whom the same is true. To elect a man of dubious character to the high position in democracy as a gesture of frustration with the existing set of enfant terribles never serves the purpose of the nation. This is why the Supreme Court is forced to step in everyday to set the matters right. But how many wrongs could one force upon people?

The aggression of the governments seems to be limitless to the extent that the Apex Court was forced to observe that it needs to define the limits of sedition now. The Supreme Court has been flooded with petitions appealing against the sedition cases against citizens.

The case of a body being dumped in river Ganges which was aired by a media house has been taken up by

the Apex Court suo motu. Some leaders in our country feel they could afford to introduce chaos into politics. But to renew the gesture under circumstances of pestilence, protest and penury would be masochistic. An act of national suicide.

In a sarcastic comment that conveyed its apparent displeasure at the manner in which governments viewed reporting of Covid-19 related issues by media, the Supreme Court on Monday quipped whether a sedition case has been initiated against a news channel which showed a dead body being dropped into a river from a bridge in Uttar Pradesh.

The remark was made by Justice D Y Chandrachud, who is heading a three-judge Bench hearing a suo motu case related to Covid-19 management. "A news report yesterday showed dead body was being thrown into river. I don't know if a sedition case has been filed against the news channel yet," Justice Chandrachud remarked.

This is not the first time the top court has been critical of governments registering cases against those seeking help via social media for Covid-related cases. The Supreme Court, in yet another case on Monday said that Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code which criminalises sedition, would require detailed interpretation with respect to its application to media and freedom of press.

"We are of the view that provisions of 124A and 153 of IPC require interpretation, particularly on the issue of the rights of press and free speech," Justice DY Chandrachud who was heading the Bench remarked. If a TV channel says something it cannot be called as sedition, he added.

The governments have become so thick-skinned that such observations carry no meaning for them. This country is not becoming intolerant. It is the rulers who are becoming so. They are not prepared to handle criticism the way it ought to be. This is a country where love has become 'jihad' unfortunately. Hence criticism is taken as sedition. Time for judiciary to take on other pillars of our democracy!

Covid kills 3.3 lakh, tobacco 40 lakh Indians a year

# FREEDOM TO DIE



Madabhushi Acharya

THERE was an interesting question before Supreme Court, whether a person has a right to die. That led to another question whether 'life' includes 'death'. What is life? The line between two dots of birth and death,

which are not within the 'life'. Man has no control over birth or death. There is no right to take birth or to die. For those who are born, there is right to live, for sure. If you attempt to kill yourself, the state will prosecute you. Why? As per law, state has a duty to protect 'you' from 'you'.

Next question is are you free to smoke and slowly advance your death. To smoke is part of one's personal freedom. Cigarettes are essential. Non-smoking tobacco is a big killer than smoking tobacco, several millions die of both smoking and non-smoking tobacco.

If one goes out into roads during lockdown, police will protect you from you by beating you black and blue. They can even kill you so that you are prevented from killing you. They think, they have authority to kill you, the Government allows them to do so and gives immunity because he is seriously injuring people only protect them. We should understand!

Terror prevailed and fear is ruling. They fear and die. If not, you can go to hospital and there you can fear to die or see bills to die. We fear that covid19 pandemic is killing few thousands every day. Now we are very brave, we do not fear even though the pandemic- tobacco is killing around 40 lakh people every year in India alone, while corona killed 3.29 lakh only so far from first and second waves.

According to latest statistics, 35.4 lakh died so far (till today) with corona in the world, 5 lakh less than the corona deaths! We are brave. We do not fear. Imagine the combo pack of corona and tobacco, death gets only accelerated.

### Every year in India

- 850 crore cigarettes sold.
- 26.7 crore smoke,
- 40 lakh people die.

It is said that India is third largest tobacco producer. Perhaps we should be proud of our progress, and India is contributing 42 per cent of deaths due to tobacco world over, reducing the burden of Mother Earth!

It is estimated that 3500 Indians die every day because of tobacco in India, equal to 25 Jet planes are crashing every day.

Some of the baffling facts about the consequences of tobacco use are:

- 100 million people died from tobacco use in the 20th century. If current trends continue one billion people will die from tobacco use in the 21st century. (Eriksen M et al. The Tobacco Atlas. Fifth Ed. Atlanta, GA: American Cancer Society; 2015.)
- Tobacco use kills up to half of all lifetime

users. On average, smokers lose 15 years of life. (WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008: The MPOWER package. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008.)

- Tobacco kills more than 8 million people each year.1 Of these deaths, 1.2 million are caused by second-hand smoke exposure. (Tobacco Fact Sheet. World Health Organization; 26 July 2019. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>.)
- Tobacco-related illnesses account for 1 in 10 adult deaths worldwide. By 2030, 80% of those deaths will be in low- and middle-income countries.
- Smoking is estimated to cause about 1.4 trillion USD in economic damage each year. (U.S. NCI and WHO. The Economics of Tobacco and Tobacco Control. NCI Tobacco Control Monograph 21. NIH Publication No. 16-CA-8029A. Bethesda: U.S. DHSS, NIH, NCI, and Geneva: WHO; 2016.)
- Bidi and cigarette smokers die 6 to 10 years earlier than their non-smoking counterparts.

26. 7 crore people consume tobacco in India, 42 per cent are men and 14.2 per cent are women. Every year ten lakh people die using tobacco, 9.26 lakh die with second-hand smoke, 20 lakh die by smokeless tobacco, which is 74 per cent of global deaths of smokeless tobacco. India is a big market for cigarettes, as in 2016 alone 85 billion cigarettes were sold. Tobacco is an enemy to medical profession and society, it is unrecognised pandemic, says Dr Subramanyeshwar Rao, senior oncology expert.

India became a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on February 27, 2005, later changed it to 31 May to spread awareness about dangers of tobacco. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), "When the news came out that smokers were more likely to develop severe disease with COVID-19 compared to non-smokers, it triggered millions of smokers to want to quit tobacco." This year, the theme is 'Quit tobacco to be a winner'.

### Tobacco control legislation

The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA) is the principal comprehensive law governing tobacco control in India. In 2004, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare exercised the powers granted to it in Section 31 of COTPA by promulgating a first set of rules, which, with respect to smoke free and tobacco advertising issues, have been stayed by court order or superseded. With respect to general enforcement of COTPA, G.S.R. 1866(E) lists certain officers who are authorized to carry out the entry, search, and seizure provisions of the Act. The Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 5B(2) of the Cinematograph Act of 1952, require the Central Board of Film Certification to ensure that certain types of smoking scenes do not appear in movies.

cannot be justified.

A beef ban and a ban on those who have more than two children, contesting elections, does not require super- intelligence to know which community is being targeted. Ironically if the same rule was applied to our present day legislators and ministers, most would have been eliminated for having more than two children. It would be best to leave the till now peaceful territory which is blessed in abundance by nature, alone, as the people are happy as they are.

The coronavirus which had not visited the island, increased its spread by leaps and bounds by the relaxation of quarantine rules, which is also a stark reminder that people's interests are not taken seriously. Whether the BJP is aiming for the development of the islanders or its own development is a moot question. If the Centre hopes to sell our virgin natural ecological systems to corporates who will cash in on the tourism front, then resistance is what they will face. Praful K Patel should read the writing on the wall and act accordingly or be re- called by the government, else the peaceful Union Territory could become a venue for turmoil.

Elizabeth Koshy, Pathanamthitta

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We do not fear even though the pandemic- tobacco is killing around 40 lakh people every year in India alone, while corona killed 3.29 lakh only so far from first and second waves. According to latest statistics, 35.4 lakh died so far (till today) of corona in the world, 5 lakh less than the tobacco deaths! We are brave. We do not fear. Imagine the combo pack of corona and tobacco, death gets only accelerated. The whole world is worried about Covid-19, not tobacco. The deaths it caused any day outnumber the corona killers

Packaging and labelling provisions are included in several implementing rules under COTPA 2003.

### 'No Smoking' in public places

In India smoking is completely banned in many public places and workplaces such as healthcare, educational, and government facilities and on public transport. But the law permits the establishment of smoking areas or spaces in airports, hotels having 30 or more rooms, and restaurants having seating capacity for 30 or more. With respect to outdoor places, open auditoriums, stadiums, railway stations, bus stops/stands are smoke-free. States are free to use within their jurisdictions to enact smoke-free laws that are more stringent than the national law.

Advertising through most forms of mass media is prohibited. There are some restrictions on tobacco sponsorship and the publicity of such sponsorship.

### Restrictions on media

It is regulated that the health warning labels are pictorial, and text should cover 85 per cent of the front and back panels of the tobacco product package parallel to the top edge; and are rotated every 12 months. Misleading packaging and labelling, including terms such as "light," and "low-tar" and other signs is prohibited.

### Cigarette contents and disclosures

It is unfortunate that the law does not grant the authority to regulate the contents of cigarettes. There is a need for such public law to control the tobacco commerce in the interest of public health. At present the law does not require that manufacturers and

importers disclose to government authorities information on the contents and emissions of their products. But it is basic requirement. When a cigarette maker wants a consumer to purchase his product, it is his duty to give complete information about contents, their proportion, the ill-effects of its use.

### No sale within educational institutions

The law prohibits the sale of tobacco products via vending machines and within 100 yards of any educational institution. Educational institution is a public place, hence prohibition against use of tobacco products applies there. In addition, several states ban the sale of single cigarettes and gutka and other forms of smokeless tobacco. But there are no restrictions on internet sales or the sale of small packets of cigarettes or other tobacco products. The sale of tobacco products is prohibited to persons under the age of 18.

### E-Cigarettes

The law prohibits the production, manufacture, import, export, transport, sale, distribution, and advertising of e-cigarettes. But it is a paradox that there are no restrictions on the use of e-cigarettes.

The Governments either at centre or states are interested in income from tobacco business, as vices are best sources of income for them. State facilitates tobacco business at the cost public welfare. You may not have place in crematorium, but you are free to die, smoking or Covid. First is choice and second is a chance.

(The writer is Professor of Law, Bennett University and former Central Information Commissioner)

## Cancel CBSE exams

WHY the central government is delaying a decision on conducting the CBSE and ICSE Class 12 exams and keeping the students on tenterhooks when the case against it is very strong defies understanding. There is no reason for it to be in a dither over the issue. Safety is paramount; students cannot be exposed to the risk of infection in any circumstances. The overwhelming majority of students favour the cancellation of exams not out of exam nerves, but out of the fear that they might contract the virus. What the students say must count with the decision-makers. Perhaps it is a relevant point that how much education has been imparted in the just-concluded academic year online or offline is not quite amenable to being quantified.

All this while, the students have been told to 'stay home, stay safe'. The virus is still in circulation for the education ministry or the CBSC to ask them to come out of their homes to take exams. As we learnt the hard way, the current dip in cases could be deceptive. It would be a monumental folly in this pandemic time if we are to stick to the old, wrong thinking that exams are the be-all-and-end- all of students' existence.

A Covid-19 positive result should con-

cern us more than Class 12 board exam results. A Covid-19 negative result is far more important than high grades in certificates! All this is said because you can draw a picture only if there is a wall or a canvas. Protecting the young from the pathogen is all that should matter now. Remember that the second wave has shown how teenagers and young adults are also vulnerable to the disease.

The intention is not to cause panic, but to persuade the government to take a prudent decision. Covid-19 precautions and Covid-19 appropriate behaviour are absolutely necessary and must be adhered to by all. But when it comes to the conduct of exams involving lakhs of students, how far it becomes practically possible to follow them remains a question. Is there any guarantee that they will preclude infections? The situation now is worse than it was last year to consider reversing the decision taken last year when the country went into a lockdown not to conduct the remaining exams. True, the cancellation of exams will require finding some way of facilitating higher education for Class 12 students. Then, there is no other choice. Imperfect assessments are a small price to pay for protecting the rising generation. The show must go on; it must go on without recklessness and risky gambles.

G David Milton, Maruthancode

## SOCIAL MEDIA ROW

# Indians can't be treated as guinea pigs anymore



NISHANT ARORA

After a week full of intense drama and screaming headlines as social media giants and the Indian government/law enforcement agencies took the knives out in the open over new IT rules as well as spread of misinformation, millions of Indians were left with a burning question: Where does all this lead as the spread of fake news continues unabated?

Amid an absence of a dedicate law on misinformation -- as other nations move on to penalise social media firms (Russia has just fined Twitter about \$259,000 for its failure to remove banned content) -- India currently has an insufficient IT regime to regulate social networks, which have grown so big that taming them need more than just firing notices every now and then.

In this debate, users in India have been worst hit, facing humongous difficulties in removing or disabling access to the spread of fake news/misinformation about themselves on the social media platforms.

Leading cybersecurity experts feel that India needs to give a strong message to social media companies that users cannot be treated as guinea pigs in terms of publishing and transmission of fake news/misinformation.

"India has failed to control the spread of fake news, primarily because regulating misinformation has never been a political priority. India has allowed itself to lag behind in the race of nations in this regard, while smaller countries like Malaysia, Singapore and France have come up with dedicated legal frameworks to deal with misinformation," leading cyberlaw expert Pavan Duggal told IANS.

The Indian Information Technology Act, 2000 is not a law on fake news. Consequently, even the amendments to the IT Act, 2000 by virtue of the IT (Amendment) Act, 2008 did not deal with fake news, barring inserting Section 66A.

The Section 66A made it an offence when somebody sends any information which he knows to be false, but which is sent for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, danger, obstruction, insult, injury, criminal intimidation, enmity, hatred or ill will.

However, the Supreme Court struck down the Section 66A as an unconstitutional vide judgment in the case of Shreya Singhal v/s Union of India in the year 2015.

"Since then, India has not had the political vision and determination to go ahead and fight fake news/misinformation," said Duggal, also a seasoned Supreme Court lawyer.

While moving ahead with implementing its user privacy policy from May 15 and suing the Centre over the chat 'traceability' demand, WhatsApp made it clear that it "will maintain this approach until at least the forthcoming PDP (personal data protection) law comes into effect".

The picture is transparent. They know that India lacks a strong data protection law like the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in the European Union (EU).

India is trying to make a feeble attempt to regulate some portion of fake news/misinformation by the new IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

"However, this is nothing but tantamount to provide lip-service to fight misinformation. No consequences for non-compliances for the users have been stipulated under the IT Rules, 2021," Duggal informed.

Actually speaking, misinformation has not been directly detailed under any legal provision in the country.

According to Jiten Jain, Director, Voyager Infosec and a leading cybersecurity expert, social media firms are the new avatars of digital East India companies.

"They are defying our existing laws and are meddling with our policy-making process which is the function of the government. Twitter should not bully India to influence its policies, work like a private company, comply with the law of the land and pay taxes on the money they make on Indian data," Jain told IANS.

The absence of a political will to take action against social media firms has further emboldened them to often adopt unilateral and arbitrary measures.

Virag Gupta, the lawyer of former RSS ideologue KN Govindacharya, who is arguing the social media Designated Officers' matter before the Delhi HC, said that as per new IT rules, social media firms must have their grievance officers in India, and not abroad.

"These companies are stakeholders in the intermediary rules and must comply with new rules. Despite judicial challenge to limited aspect of rules, WhatsApp and other significant social media firms are duty bound to comply with IT rules within the stipulated time period," Gupta said.

What are the options for India? Apart from a dedicated law on misinformation, the first option is to effectively enforce the provisions of the new IT rules that need to be adhered by social media intermediaries, and then put the personal data protection law in place.

The country also needs to come up with effective legal provisions stipulating the consequences to be faced by social media firms, in case they fail to act.

"This could mean not just stipulating stringent liabilities including fine ranging from Rs 5 crore to Rs 15 crore" and a term which "may be extend to 7 years as also with minimum fine of Rs 25 lakh per incident of fake news/misinformation transmission," Duggal added.

Other than the legal options, India needs to demonstrate a strong political will and thought leadership to curb fake news/misinformation online.



# Centre allocates funds for NH development in TS: Kishan Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

UNION Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy stated that despite the financial constraints due to Covid, the Centre has allocated funds in a big way for the development of national highways in the two Telugu States. Addressing the media on Monday, he said the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has allocated funds for the current financial year to the identified road development projects in both the States. Accordingly, in Telangana, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) in its annual planned works for the financial year of 2021-22 has identified



20 works of 787 km at an estimated cost of Rs 6,962 crore. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has proposed to take up 13 works of four-lane and six-lane road works to an extent of 485 km with an estimated cost of Rs 1,1530 crore. Together, during the financial year of 2021-22, the MORTH and the NHAI has identified 33 works

with an extent of 1,272 Kms with an estimated cost of Rs 1,8492 crore, he added. The main proposals include strengthening of Hyderabad-Bhupalapatnam, Sironcha-Atmakur has been sanctioned Rs 230 for a total of 54.7 Kms. Widening of two-lane of 695 Kms with Rs 5,230 crore. Similarly, major bridges including the construction of a major bridge across River Krishan and its approaches of Kalwakurthy-Somsila section of 3 kms with Rs 600 crore and widening to four-lane of the existing bridge at Nizamabad-Jagadapur with Rs 10 crore with total Rs 610 crore has been proposed. Similarly, it was also decided to award four and six-lane

works of national highways by the NHAI in 13 packages of 485 Kms with an estimated cost of Rs 1,1530 crore. He said that the Minister has already approved to take up the development of Northern Part of Regional Ring Road around Hyderabad city starting from its junction with NH No161 near Sanga Reddy and connecting Narsapur, Toopran, Gajwel, Prag-napur, Jagdevpur, Bhongir and terminating at its junction with NH 65 near Choutuppal NH 161AA under Bharatmla Pariyojana phase 1. Accordingly, bids are going to be opened for the appointment of consultants to prepare Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the same on June 1, he said.

## Bangladeshi woman trafficker arrested

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
RACHAKONDA

THE Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of Rachakonda police arrested an alleged Bangladeshi woman trafficker for operating a prostitution racket and also for staying illegally in the country. The accused was identified as Moyna Akther alias Munni Shen, a native of Narayongunj district. According to the police, she was rescued by the unit on May 18, believing to be a victim of prostitution as she mentioned her name to be Shilpi Biswas when the team conducted a raid. However, investigation revealed that Biswas was not a victim. In fact she was the organiser of the racket and pretended to be a victim during the raid. Further investigation revealed that her real name was Moyna Akther and she was staying illegally in the country for the past 15 years, working as a beautician. Six years back



she had gone to Bangladesh and arrived in India on a tourist visa and started working in the same firm. She also got married to one Anjaneyulu. After marriage she hatched a conspiracy along with Anjaneyulu to bring innocent women from Bangladesh and push them into flesh trade, said Mahesh Bhagwat, Rachakonda Police Commissioner. He stated that the woman was earlier arrested for the same crime. Cases were registered against her in different police stations. However, this time she was able to disguise herself and cheat the AHTU team. But her real identity was revealed. She was arrested from a correction home and sent to judicial custody, after being charged under Sections 419, 420, 468, 471 of IPC and Section 14 of Foreigners Act, 1946.



## Eatala meets Nadda in Delhi

The former minister is eyeing a key post in the State BJP, and unite all BCs against the ruling TRS before the next Assembly polls

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI

FORMER Health Minister Eatala Rajender on Monday met BJP national president JP Nadda clearing the way for his joining the Bharatiya Janata Party soon.

Accompanied by Telangana state BJP senior leader G Vivek and state party unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, the TRS leader called on Nadda in the national capital and held a discussion on his political fortunes in the party in the coming days.

Eatala explained the national BJP chief about the land encroachment cases booked against him by the State government and his legal battle against the government in Telangana High Court. He informed the party head that the government was harassing him for exposing the misdeeds in the State administration. Sources said that Eatala is likely to join BJP formally in the presence of party senior leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah only after Nadda briefed about the TRS leader fight against government on land grabbing allegations. The former minister is expecting to get a key post in the state BJP unit as he wanted to unite all backward communities against the TRS by next Assembly elections.

## AICC leader lashes out at PM Modi

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

ALL India Congress Committee (AICC) Secretary and Telangana Congress senior leader MA Sampath Kumar took a broadside at the Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the Centre's failure in tackling the second wave of corona pandemic. The Union Government had failed on all fronts in providing medical treatment to Covid-19 victims, supply of Covid-19 vaccination and relief to the bereaved families of Covid-19 victims, the Congress leader said that the BJP confined to project 'all is well' in the country at a time when the entire nation was in deep crisis by raising communal issues and territorial disputes with Pakistan. Unemployment, financial crisis and health emergency are the main issues before the Prime minister to address on a priority, he added.

## ACP warns stringent action on lockdown violators



HANS NEWS SERVICE  
SHADNAGAR

TO ensure strict and effective implementation of the lockdown Shadnagar Assistant Commissioner of Police Kushalkar instructed the police to be on the field round-the-clock while taking all needed precautions. A surprise inspection was carried out along with Shadnagar SI Naveen at shopping malls on the main road in Shadnagar on Monday. ACP Kushalkar lashed out at shop owners that do not comply with government Covid-19 safety regula-

tions. He later reviewed the situation in clothing stores, mobile showrooms and other complexes and imposed fines. Speaking on the occasion, ACP Kushalkar warned people and businessmen to follow Covid-19 safety norms. Similarly, three vehicles were also seized. ACP said that masks are said to be worn as a matter of duty regularly. The police department would now conduct surprise inspections and take action against those who neglect to abide by the rules and register a case if necessary on spot, ACP added. Shadnagar local police and others were present.

## Pharma firm MD helping Covid patients

SABYA SINGH  
HYDERABAD

AS the battle against Covid-19 intensifies, many people in the City have been extending their help to patients and their attendants. Sai Charan Chikkulla, MD of Consemen Healthcare Private Ltd, a pharmaceutical firm, has set aside his profession and has committed himself to respond to about 500 people on Twitter by helping with ventilator beds, oxygen concentrators, medicines for black fungus. "A person has lost his mother, but a well-known hospital in the City had denied permission as they were out of ventilator beds. I thought to myself, why did he run directly to the hospital without verifying. It all began when I checked the dashboard of the State government database. There I could see that ventilators and beds were shown, but in reality, they were occupied," he recalled. Charan said a patient's precious life was at risk because they have to run from pillar to post while battling the virus and for their lives.

- Providing ventilator beds, oxygen concentrators and medicines for black fungus
- Commits himself to respond to about 500 people on Twitter

Since he had contacts with doctors, he started making calls every morning to check the real availability of beds in hospitals. "It all began calling two-three hospitals and slowly reached 100 hospitals every day. Without proper verification from doctors and sources, I started uploading the information on my Twitter handle with the exact time of availability of ventilator beds." While Charan was helping many to provide medicines, he realised that there are many fake pieces of information doing the rounds on social media and in the surroundings. He informed offi-



cials regarding blackmarketing and made efforts to put a halt to it. "I realised that medicines are costly after verifying them. I handed over the formation to the police." Charan said his mother used to prepare food for Covid patients earlier motivating him to work for society and people during a crisis. "I maintain contacts with genuine sources for oxygen cylinders, plasma donors, coordinating with blood donors' associations and in collaboration with people to deliver medicines and groceries. I connect families with providers for home food service, among others," he said. Some times his phone rings up at midnight for help. "My pharma connections with various hospitals across Telangana have aided me to help patients across the City and elsewhere. The most important thing is to save lives. I devote my time virtually round the clock as a volunteer helping Covid patients. My mother is my best support," he added.

### CASE AGAINST TV CHANNELS

## SC opines it's time to define limits of sedition

NEW DELHI

TAKING a strong view on attempts to muzzle the Fourth Estate, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court on Monday called for defining "the limits of sedition", as it put on hold coercive action against two Telugu channels, TV5 news and ABN Andhra Jyoti. The Andhra Pradesh police had mentioned the coercive measures in an FIR alleging sedition. The bench comprising Justices D Y Chandrachud, L Nageswara Rao and S Ravindra Bhat said: "It's time we define the limits of sedition" and expressed prima facie that FIRs are an attempt to muzzle media freedom. Emphasising everything cannot be treated as sedition, the bench said the Andhra Pradesh government's act of filing sedition cases against the channels is an attempt to muffle their voice. The channels moved the top court seeking quashing of FIRs and also contempt petitions contending that Andhra police action violated the April 30, court's order, which emphasised on restraining prosecution against citizens, who ventilate grievances in connection with Covid issues. The top court said the TV channels broadcasting programmes and print media publishing views, "howsoever crit-



ical of government, may not be seditious". The top court observed that it would endeavour to define sedition in the context of such charges being invoked against media. The apex court asked the Andhra government to respond to the petitions and contempt pleas of two TV channels within four weeks and in the interim, the court added that the police will not take any coercive steps against TV channels and journalists. Senior advocates Shyam Divan and Sidharth Luthra, representing TV5 News and ABN Andhra Jyoti, contended that the FIRs were registered against the channels for publishing the press statements of rebel YSRCP MP K Raghurama Krishna Raju. The bench noted there was a need to define the scope of of-

fences under Section 124A (sedition) and 153A (promotion of communal hatred) under the IPC, especially in the context of media freedom. Luthra sought for a stay of investigation, but the bench replied that it will only stay coercive action at the moment. The pleas argued that the only allegation in the FIR against the news channels was that they allotted "premeditated" and "organised" slots to Raju, which evinces a meeting of minds amongst the accused persons. On May 14, Raju was arrested weeks after he asked a CBI special court to cancel the bail of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, in a disproportionate assets case. On May 21, the top court granted bail, citing a possibility that he was "ill-treated in custody". (IANS)

### KRISHNAPATNAM MEDICINE

## Villagers fear spike in infections



Herbal concoction was being distributed to the people in Krishnapatnam recently

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NELLORE

WITH the state government giving a green signal to the Ayurvedic or herbal medication for Covid-19 made by Anandaiah of Krishnapatnam, the residents of the village are on their toes as they expect a flood of visitors from both Telugu states to the village to lay their hands on the controversial remedy which, the villagers fear, further fuel the spread of coronavirus. Already, the village is witnessing an increase in Covid positive cases in recent weeks, including volunteers who distributed the medication till last week. Local people say that distribution activity shouldn't be conducted locally, instead it should be done in an open place in Nellore city or somewhere for protecting the interests of the villagers. In fact, for some time, there have been several Covid positive cases reported when medical

and health teams conducted rapid tests on the local population. Local people say there may be more than 100 cases, but 70 confirmed cases have been reported till now and five deaths. On Sunday and Monday alone, five persons tested positive when volunteers conducted tests for people who were active in the recent distribution of medicine before it was stopped by the authorities. The free movement of people, including those tested positive, in the village for Anandaiah's concoction, is said to be reason for surge in cases in the village. Crowds of people spent in the verandahs or some other public places as they waited for their turn to have a medicine. Further, even people with severe symptoms were allowed into the village. They reached the village in ambulances but the police kept the vehicles outside the village and permitted patients into the village.

## Rtd HM Kotaiah succumbs

Nellore GGH authorities say around 160 Covid-19 patients admitted to hospital after taking Anandaiah's 'medicine'



HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NELLORE

RETIRED headmaster Kotaiah who had been in news over effects of Anandaiah medicine, succumbed to Covid at the Government General Hospital here on Monday. It may be recalled that after getting eye drops, Kotaiah, of Tinnelapudi village under Kota mandal, spoke in a video of a great relief from effects of pandemic. The video which went viral on social media fuelled demand for the 'miracle' medicine in two Telugu states and other states. On May 22, two videos went viral on social media. One video showed the condition of Kotaiah where he was lying in a car while another on the same day showed the daughter of Kotaiah telling that her father's health condition was very good and he recovered from the virus infection after getting eye drops from Anandaiah. However, in a recent video, she said that her father had been facing severe health issues from the Covid-19. Meanwhile, GGH superintendent Dr J Prabhakar along with a team of doctors told the media on

Monday that around 160 patients had got themselves admitted to the hospital after receiving medicine from Anandaiah at Krishnapatnam on May 21. A team of doctors have been closely observing the conditions of the patients who were administered eye drops in the camp, he said. The superintendent of the GGH also said that they had maintained data of case studies of patients who got eye drops at Krishnapatnam and were admitted to the hospital subsequently. A GGH doctor Dr Sophia explained that Kotaiah was admitted to the hospital on May 23 and was placed in ICU. His lungs were affected more than 90 per cent and it was considered as a high-risk case. The oxygen saturation level was at 70 per cent at the time of his admission. Blood pressure, blood glucose levels were also found abnormal. She said that they had found that the condition of the patient went serious on May 29 and informed the same to his family members. He died in the early hours of Monday.

The villagers demand the authorities to conduct rapid tests for all people who are involved

in the concoction distribution for the safety of the population in future.



# Find Covid-19 origin or face ‘26 and 32’, warn US experts

Scientists have claimed that it is most likely that Covid had spread from wild animals to humans

The world needs the cooperation of the Chinese government to trace the origins of Covid-19 and prevent future pandemic threats, two leading U.S. disease experts said Sunday.

Information to support the theory that the SARS-CoV-2 virus may have escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, has increased, said Scott Gottlieb, a commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration in the Trump administration who now sits on the board of Pfizer Inc.

China hasn't provided evidence to disprove that theory, while the search for signs that the virus emerged from wildlife hasn't yielded results, Gottlieb said on CBS News's "Face the Nation." Not knowing how the pandemic

started puts the world at risk of future outbreaks, Peter Hotez, co-director of the Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development, said in a separate TV appearance.

"There's going to be Covid-26 and Covid-32 unless we fully understand the origins of Covid-19," Hotez said on NBC's "Meet the press."

Almost a year and half after the new pathogen was first detected spreading in a seafood market in Wuhan, China, the precise origins of the virus remain obscure.

Scientists have hypothesized that it is most likely spread from wild animals to humans. The idea that the virus may have accidentally escaped from a research lab, long promoted by some Republicans, has gotten renewed atten-



tion from the Biden administration.

In a surprise statement on Wednesday, President Joe Biden called for a renewed investigation into the virus's emergence. U.S. intelligence agencies had conflicting assessments of whether it was more likely the virus crossed the species barrier from a natural reservoir or leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Biden said. He ordered the agencies to "redouble their efforts" and report to him again in 90 days.

Debate over the virus's origin was fueled anew by a Wall Street Journal report on May 23 that three researchers from China's Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care for

"symptoms consistent with both Covid-19 and common seasonal illness." Scientists should be allowed to conduct a long-term investigation in China and take blood samples from humans and animals, Hotez said. The U.S. should pressure China, including with the threat of sanctions, to allow for an inquiry.

"We need a team of scientists, epidemiologists, virologists, bat ecologists in Hubei province for a six-month, year-long period," Hotez said.

Chinese officials have disputed the Wuhan lab theory. Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian on Thursday dismissed Biden's inquiry as an attempt to engage in "stigmatization, political manipulation and blame-shifting."

## WINDOW

### IAF joins fire fighting op

UDHAMPUR: The Indian Air Force (IAF) on Monday joined a fire fighting operation to control a massive forest fire in Ghordi block in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The fire in Daya Dhar forest started on Sunday and engulfed a vast area, damaging hundreds of trees, the officials said.

The forest protection force, along with fire department and emergency services personnel, police and civilian volunteers from nearby villages are making efforts to put off the blaze in the forest, home to various species of the wild animals and birds.

The IAF deployed its choppers with a bucket carrying thousands of litres of water early on Monday morning to help douse the fire, responding to the call of Udhampur Deputy Commissioner Indu Kanwal Chib.

The officials said the cause of the fire was not known immediately but it is believed that the blaze started after the dry grass caught fire due to rising mercury.

"The exact damage caused to the green gold and the wildlife would be known only after the fire is controlled completely," a forest official said.

### BJP MLA from UP dies

LUCKNOW: BJP MLA Devendra Pratap Singh died on Monday morning following a cardiac arrest. He was 55. The MLA from Amapur was rushed to a district hospital, where doctors declared him dead, family sources said.

"Singh was brought to the hospital around 7 am and he was pronounced dead," Chief Medical Superintendent of the hospital Dr Rajesh Agarwal said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has expressed profound grief over the demise of the Amapur MLA. Singh, a resident of Hajipur village under Amapur police station, was a three-term MLA. He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. On receiving information about Singh's death, a large number of BJP leaders and workers, including local BJP MLA Vipin Verma David and Marhara MLA Virendra Lodhi, rushed to the hospital.

# Finally, Modi govt halts vaccine exports

No record if any panel was formed by the govt to decide on vaccine export: Centre

PUNE/MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

IN a relief of sorts, from May 5, India has apparently halted the contentious doles and exports of vaccines which has erupted into a massive political furore across the country.

In a response to the RTI query filed by Pune-based activist Prafulla Sarda, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has provided details of the vaccines exported in different categories to 95 countries till May 5. To a question, the MEA has also made it clear that in future, supplies (export) would be undertaken, "keeping in view the domestic production and the requirements of the national vaccination programme".

All major parties in the country including Congress, Nationalist Congress Party, Shiv Sena, Aam Aadmi Party, the Left and other opposition parties had repeatedly slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led central government on the issue.

The Centre has said it has no record or documents if any committee was formed by the government to decide on the vaccines export, its members, the details and minutes of the meetings if any of such a committee.

India's decision to ban vaccine exports has had a severe impact on 91 nations dependent on Serum Institute of India's (SII) product, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has said.

With inadequate stocks, these countries, several of them in Africa, remain extremely susceptible to new strains of Covid, including B.1.617.2, first discovered in India.

With more than 8,000 children catching the coronavirus in the month of May in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar, the state has started taking extra steps to minimise the impact of a possible third wave that may affect children more.

In Maharashtra's Sangli city, award is being prepared especially for children. Currently, five children are being treated here and the facility is being prepared for more patients.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that the central government has a "zero vaccine policy" which is acting as a "dagger in Mother India's heart".

He also attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over media reports which claimed that post-Covid the unemployment rate was in double digits in May this year.



Beneficiaries wait under a tree to receive the vaccine dose at a centre in Kolkata on Monday

## Covid hits 8,000 children in 1 Maharashtra district

Zero vaccine policy acting like dagger: Rahul Gandhi

### Actor gets vax out of turn

MUMBAI: A Mumbai-based actress has denied allegations she used fake ID to receive an out-of-turn Covid vaccine shot at a civic health centre in Thane. Officials have ordered an inquiry into the incident.

Meera Chopra is accused of using the fake ID to get vaccinated as a "frontline worker". She falls in the 18-44 age group. Maharashtra has suspended vaccination for the age-group over shortage of doses.

She had uploaded a photograph on social media of herself getting the shot. The photograph has since been deleted but others, showing an "ID card" identifying her as a "frontline worker", emerged.

### India set to mix vaccine doses

NEW DELHI: India may soon start testing an immunisation routine that mixes two different types of Covid-19 vaccines, in order to see if it helps enhance immune response to the virus, said Dr NK Arora, chairman of Covid-19 working group under National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization. India may soon start in a few weeks testing feasibility of a regimen that mixes two different doses of Covid vaccines to see if it helps boost immune response to virus, ANI said quoting Arora. Dr Rajib Dasgupta, chairperson of the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health at Jawaharlal Nehru University, told the news agency on May 28 that a study on the effects of combining two different vaccines is being conducted.

### 6 bodies found floating in Ganga

FATEHPUR: Six more bodies of suspected COVID-19 victims were found floating in the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh, an official said on Monday. Fatehpur Sadar Tehsil Sub-Collector (SDM) Pramod Jha said he was informed about the bodies floating in the river on Sunday morning, following which a search operation was launched. Six decomposed bodies were recovered from the river, he said.

Later in the day, a team of doctors performed the last rites at Bhitara Ganga Ghat as per the Covid guidelines, the SDM said. The bodies could not be identified as they were highly decomposed, the SDM said, adding that they appear to have come floating from far-off places.

### UP MAN FILES PLAINT AGAINST SII'S POONAWALLA

LUCKNOW

PRATAP Chandra, a resident of Lucknow has filed a complaint against Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla and others, alleging that he did not develop antibodies despite taking a Covishield dose.

The complaint has been filed at Aashiana police station in Lucknow.

Those also named in the complaint are DCGA director, Joint Secretary of Health Ministry Luv Agarwal, ICMR director Balram Bhargava, National Health Mission director Aparna Upadhyay, among others.

Pratap Chandra has said in the complaint that he received the first dose of Covishield on April 8. Chandra said he was supposed to receive the second dose 28 days later but on the said day, he was told that the date for the second dose had been extended by six weeks.

Later, the government revised the time gap between the two doses to 12 weeks. Chandra said that after receiving the first dose of the vaccine, he felt weak and unwell.

Citing ICMR director general Balram Bhargava's quotes in media where he had said 'good levels of antibodies are produced in the body after the first dose of Covishield', Chandra took a Covid Antibody GT test from a government-approved lab.

The test result revealed that the complainant did not develop any antibodies against Covid-19, instead his platelets had gone down to 1.5 lakh from 3 lakh.

Chandra alleged that after taking the vaccine he has become more prone to the virus as his platelet count has been reduced by half.

The police have received the complaint but no FIR has been filed in the case.

The police said considering the sensitivity of the matter, they have informed the top officials before taking any further action.

Meanwhile, the complainant has threatened to move court if an FIR is not registered against the people mentioned in his complaint.

## Tarzan actor Joe Lara dies in US plane crash

WASHINGTON: All seven passengers aboard a plane, including Tarzan actor Joe Lara and his diet guru wife, are presumed dead after it crashed in a lake near the US city of Nashville, authorities said.

The small business jet crashed at around 11:00 am local time on Saturday, shortly after taking off from the Smyrna, Tennessee airport for Palm Beach, Florida, Rutherford County Fire & Rescue (RCFR) said on Facebook.

The plane went down into Percy Priest Lake, about 12 miles (19 kilometers) south of Nashville.

The Federal Aviation Administration confirmed seven people

had been aboard the plane, CNN reported. By Saturday night, operations had switched from search and rescue to recovery efforts, RCFR incident commander Captain Joshua Sanders told a press conference.

"We are no longer in an attempt to (look) for live victims at this point so we're now recovering as much as we can from the crash site," he said.

On Sunday afternoon, RCFR said on Facebook that recovery operations had found "several components of the aircraft as well as human remains" in a debris field about half a mile wide.



Locals stand near the broken culvert after heavy rainfall in the aftermath of Cyclone Yaas, at Raniganj in Malda district, on Monday

## Juhi Chawla files suit against 5G in India

NEW DELHI: Bollywood actor Juhi Chawla, who has been actively creating awareness on harmful effects of radiofrequency radiation (RF), has filed a lawsuit against implementation of 5G mobile technology in India.

The actor said that 5G technology exposes people and animals to RF radiation that is 10 to 100 times greater than it exists today.

The Bench of Justice C Harishankar on Monday refused to hear the matter and transferred it to another bench of the Delhi high court.

The matter will now be heard on June 2. In a statement, Chawla's spokesperson said that the suit has

been instituted to seek direction to the 'arrayed defendants' to certify that 5G technology is safe for humans and every type of living organism and to produce their studies regarding RF radiation in support. The spokesperson further said that if not already conducted, efficient research should also be conducted without the participation of private interests. The statement added that the urge to compete in the race to roll out 5th generation wireless network has 'somewhat distracted our nation from taking into due consideration some alarming factors to the health of present and future generations'.

# After row WB chief secy retires, Mamata appoints him adviser

West Bengal chief secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay retired from service on Monday amid a tussle with the Centre with chief minister Mamata Banerjee announcing that he would now work as Chief Adviser for the next three years to help the state government tide over the Covid pandemic.

"The Centre has asked him to join North Block on Tuesday, but it cannot force an officer to join it without the permission of the state administration," Mamata said.

"The CS got a letter from the Centre asking him to join North Block by tomorrow (Tuesday). This is not a reply to my letter but to the CS. I have not received any reply from it to the letter which I had sent earlier today (Monday),"

she said. The Central government's decision is unilateral and unconstitutional, the chief minister claimed. "We are not relieving him. He has superannuated today (Monday), but he will act as the chief advisor to the CM for the next three years," Mamata said.

H.K. Dwivedi has taken over as chief secretary, she added. "They have given no reason. I am shocked. I have decided we need his service for the Covid pandemic. For Covid and for Cyclone Yaas, he must continue his service to the poor, the state, the country, the affected people..." Mamata said, according to ndtv.com.

"If a bureaucrat is insulted after he has dedicated his life to his work, what message is the government and PM sending out? Are they bonded labourers? There are many Bengali



cadre officers at the Centre. Can I recall them without consultation, Mr Prime Minister? Mr Busy Prime Minister? Mr Mann-ki-baat Prime Minister?" "PM, Amit Shah behaving like autocrats such as Hitler, Stalin," she added.

Earlier in the day, Mamata wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to withdraw the Centre's order recalling chief secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay, and said her government "is not releasing" the top bureaucrat. In a five-page letter, Mamata urged the prime minister to reconsider the Centre's decision to recall the chief secretary after giving him a three-month extension. Mamata said she was shocked by the Centre's decision and termed the order as "unilateral", which was issued "without any prior consultation" with the

state government.

"This so-called unilateral order is an unreasonable volte face and by your own admission, against the interests of the state and its people. "I humbly request you to withdraw, recall, reconsider your decision and rescind the latest so-called order in larger public interest. I appeal to your conscience and good sense, on the behalf of the people of West Bengal," she said in her letter to PM Modi.

She also said, "The West Bengal government cannot release, and is not releasing its chief secretary at this critical hour, on the basis of our understanding that the earlier order of extension, issued after lawful consultation in accordance with applicable laws, remains operational and valid."



## TODAY'S QUOTE

### Covid 2.0 impact not likely to be large

“The overall impact of the second wave of Covid-19 on the country's economy is not likely to be large. Difficult to predict exact growth number as the path for pandemic still remains uncertain, pace of vaccination would help in lowering likelihood of another Covid-19 wave.”


— K V Subramanian, Chief Economic Adviser



## NEW DISCLOSURE RULES

### Sebi grants more time to MFs

Markets regulator Sebi on Monday gave time till September 1 for mutual funds (MFs) to comply with new rules wherein they are required to share details of risk, performance and portfolio to investors only for the scheme in which they have invested. The new norms were to come into effect from June 1.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	73.34	South	
Euro	89.38	African Rand	6.06
UAE Dirham	20.36	Hong Kong Dollar	10.76
Thai Baht	2.56	Japanese Yen	0.76
British Pound	103.96	New Zealand Dollar	53.22
Australian Dollar	56.71	Saudi Riyal	21.29
Canadian Dollar	60.75	Swedish Krona	10.05
Swiss Franc	81.41	Singapore Dollar	55.97

DELHI TUESDAY 1 JUNE 2021

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Realme unveils new products

Realme has introduced two new products - realme X7 Max 5G smartphone and realme Smart TV 4K. The X7 Max 5G smartphone comes with India's first mediatek dimensity 1200 5G processor, has a six nm chip and comes with dual 5G standby. Meanwhile, Smart TV 4K comes in two sizes 43 and 50. It is an all-in-one product that provides customers with a 4K spectacular cinematic experience. Madhav Sheth, Vice President, Chief Executive Officer, realme India and Europe said: "We are delighted to launch these two new products which are a result of realme's highly advanced technological innovations and will offer an immersive experience to our customers".

### IIFL launches new scheme

IIFL Finance has launched gold loan refer and win scheme. Existing customers of IIFL Finance across the country can benefit from the scheme under which they can recommend friends, colleagues, and family members for IIFL Gold Loan and can win 10-gram 24 Karat gold coins, iPhone 11 and more than 6000 attractive gifts as lucky draw prizes. Saurabh Kumar, Business Head, Gold Loans, IIFL Finance said: "Three out of every four IIFL gold loan customers come back to us. They prefer us because we do Seedhi Baat. That is, we are completely honest and transparent in our dealings, besides offering interest rate as low as 0.79 per cent per month. The Refer and Win scheme is an opportunity for our customers to refer their friends and family members."

### Oetker helps staff

Oetker has announced a series of initiatives to support employees and their families to combat Covid-19. The company committed to cover vaccine costs of all eligible employees and their immediate families, support the employees with medications, hospital beds, oxygen cylinders, ambulances or doctor consults etc, financial support towards medical costs for affected team members, top up on insurance covers for Covid care, team volunteers at the manufacturing plant produced hundreds of cloth masks to be distributed in the local community. Oliver Mirza, Managing Director, CEO, Dr Oetker Indian Subcontinent, said: "Our purpose as a company is creating a taste of home, and this begins with our people, who are at the centre of everything we do."

### Prince Pipes donates

Prince Pipes and Fittings Limited has announced that the company is donating oxygen concentrators airlifted from international partners to contribute to relief efforts in Telangana which is fighting the surging second wave of Covid-19. The equipment will be handed over to State officials of Telangana within this month. In January 2021, the company had launched its seventh manufacturing facility in Telangana to expand presence in the Southern markets. Nihar Chheda, AVP Strategy, Prince Pipes and Fittings Limited, said: "We are donating oxygen concentrators. With the urgency of supporting the medical infrastructure of hospitals in Telangana, the units will help in reducing dependency on oxygen cylinders as the concentrators obtain oxygen from ambient air."

# GDP recovers 1.6% in Q4, but shrinks 7.3% in FY21

## India suffers first full-year contraction in the last 4 decades

NEW DELHI

INDIA's economy contracted by less than expected 7.3 per cent in the fiscal year ended March 2021 after 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 the earlier six months.

GDP had grown by 3 per cent in the January-March quarter in the previous year. The economy, which was facing a slowdown even before the pandemic broke out last year, contracted by 7.3 per cent during April 2020 to March 2021 fiscal (FY21), weighed down by nationwide lockdown that pummeled consumption and halted most economic activities.

This is the first full-year contraction in the Indian economy in the last four decades since 1979-80, when GDP had shrunk by 5.2 per cent. The economy had grown by 4 per cent in the previous 2019-20 fiscal.

The GDP expanded by 8.3 per cent in FY17 before slipping to 7 per cent in the following fiscal

## COVID CASUALTY

■ India's real GDP contracted to Rs 135 lakh cr in FY21 from Rs 145 lakh cr in FY20

■ Unemployment soars to near 1-year high of 14.73% posing fresh challenges

■ Outbreak of Covid 2nd wave in March disrupted

## the economic activity

■ India needs to grow at 10-11% in FY22 to regain Rs145-lakh crore size

■ Economists doubt on possibility of reaching double-digit growth rate despite the current low base as consumer demand worst hit



and to 6.1 per cent in 2018-19. According to data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), India's real GDP contracted to Rs 135 lakh crore in FY21 (2020-21) from Rs 145 lakh crore at the end of March 2020. To regain Rs 145 lakh crore size, the economy will have to grow by 10-11 per cent in the current 2021-22 fiscal but the outbreak of the second wave of Covid-19 infections last month has disrupted the momentum of economic activity and many expect the GDP may not touch double-digit growth rate despite the low base. Even though daily Covid-19 cases have come down from a peak of over 4 lakh to 1.5 lakh, a crash in consumer de-

mand -- constituting over 55 per cent of the economy -- and unemployment soaring to near one-year high of 14.73 per cent pose fresh challenges. Analysts have warned of risks to growth from slow pace of the four-month-old vaccination programme. While the NSO had previously estimated that the economy will contract by 8 per cent in 2020-21, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had projected a shrinkage of 7.5 per cent.

China, which was once the hotbed of coronavirus infections, has recorded 18.3 per cent economic growth in January-March 2021. Separately, higher tax collections helped arrest fiscal

deficit (excess of government expenditure over revenue) at 9.3 per cent of the GDP in FY21 as against 9.5 per cent projected previously and 3.5 per cent estimated when the Budget was presented in February 2020.

Even before the outbreak of the pandemic, the fiscal deficit had soared to a seven-year high of 4.6 per cent of GDP in 2019-20 mainly due to poor revenue growth. The government has pegged the fiscal deficit during the current 2021-22 fiscal at 6.8 per cent of GDP.

Indian economy contracted by a record 24.4 per cent in April-June 2020 and by 7.3 per cent in the following quarter. The government had imposed a lockdown on March 25, 2020 to combat Covid-19. Later the lockdown restrictions were eased in phases. But it dented the economic growth eventually in the later period of the last fiscal. The Indian economy swung back to black in the October-December quarter.

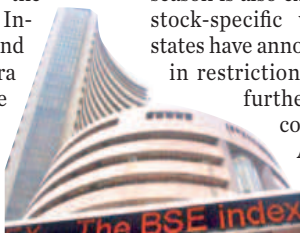
According to the NSO data, gross value added (GVA) growth in the manufacturing sector accelerated to 6.9 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2020-21 compared to a contraction 4.2 per cent a year ago. Farm sector GVA growth was down at 3.1 per cent, compared to 6.8 per cent in the corresponding period of 2019-20.

# Nifty soars to fresh peak on recovery hopes

MUMBAI

THE NSE Nifty defied gravity for the seventh straight session to close at its fresh lifetime high on Monday as a steady decline in daily Covid-19 cases bolstered investor sentiment amid mixed global cues.

Market heavyweights Reliance Industries, HDFC twins and ICICI Bank witnessed robust buying ahead of GDP data. Rising for the fourth day, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 514.56 points or 1.00 per cent higher at 51,937.44 -- around 200 points shy of its closing record hit on February 15 this year. The broader NSE Nifty surged 147.15 points or 0.95 per cent to 15,582.80, closing at a record high for the third consecutive session. Reliance Industries was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging 3.13 per cent, followed by ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, Dr Reddy's, Maruti, ITC, NTPC and Axis Bank. On the other hand, M&M, Infosys, L&T, IndusInd Bank, Tech Mahindra and Sun Pharma were among the laggards, skidding up to 4.53 per cent. "Amidst mixed global trends, Indian equities reg-



istered gains ahead of Q4 GDP data which has a mixed forecast. But it is expected to be better for FY22 and increased optimism from declining Covid cases is helping the market. The rise in heavyweights supported the rally and sectors like metal, private banks and energy witnessed maximum gains in anticipation of better economic growth," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

India reported the lowest daily new coronavirus infections in 50 days with 1,52,734 cases, taking the tally to 2,80,47,534 on Monday, while the active caseload declined to 20,26,092, the Health Ministry said. "After opening marginally in red, the benchmark drifted marginally lower in the early trades, but healthy buying interest in select heavyweights triggered sharp recovery as the day progressed. Meanwhile, the last leg of earnings season is also expected to induce stock-specific volatility. Some states have announced relaxation in restrictions and we expect further easing in the coming weeks," said Ajit Mishra, V-P (research) at Religare Broking.

## Union Bank holds vaccine drive for staff

HYDERABAD: Union Bank of India's Field General Manager (FGM) Office, Hyderabad, has on Monday conducted a special mass vaccination campaign for its staff and family members. The programme was inaugurated by FGM Kabir Bhattacharya.

"Union Bank of India under the leadership and guidance of our MD & CEO Raj Kiran Rai G is committed towards keeping all the human assets of the bank and their family members safe during the Covid-19 pandemic," he said.

To safeguard all our human capitals, our FGM Office Hyderabad and Regional offices are organizing special mass vaccination camps in different offices. On May 28, our Secunderabad Regional office has organized one camp and successfully completed vaccination of 100 staff members with the help of KIMS hospital, he said.

"Today our 200 staff and their family members were vaccinated in our FGMO Hyderabad building. Today's camp is organized in association with Apollo Hospital and we are thankful to the Hospital authorities for their support," he added.

# Aurobindo Pharma Q4 net up at ₹801.18 cr

NEW DELHI

DRUG firm Aurobindo Pharma on Monday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 801.18 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2021. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 863.16 crore for the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, Aurobindo Pharma said in a regulatory filing. Its consolidated revenue from operations stood at Rs 6,001.50 crore for the quarter under consideration. It was Rs 6,158.43 crore a year ago, it added. "Net profit after JV share, minority interest is not comparable due to Natrol divestment," Aurobindo Pharma said.

For the fiscal ended March this year, the company posted a net profit of Rs 5,333.83 crore. It was Rs 2,843.67 crore in the preceding fiscal year, the filing said. The company's revenue from operations stood at Rs 24,774.63 crore for 2020-21. It was Rs 23,098.50 crore in the previous fiscal, it added. "We are pleased to have ended the fiscal year with steady growth across our key businesses in a dynamic environment affected by the



pandemic," Aurobindo Pharma MD N Govindarajan said.

The company made good progress on its pipeline efforts to focus more on differentiated and complex generic opportunities and reached important milestones in the journey during the year, he added. The company's board has also approved the transfer of all equity shares held in Aura Cure Pvt Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the company, to Eugia Pharma Specialities Limited, another wholly-owned subsidiary of the company, the filing said. The board has also approved the transfer of business undertaking comprised in Unit-16 of the company on a going concern basis to Wytells Pharma Pvt Ltd, a wholly-owned step-down subsidiary of the company, it added. Shares of Aurobindo Pharma were trading at Rs 992.75 per scrip on BSE, down 2.85 per cent from its previous close.

## NCL rebrands Duradoor as NCLdoor

HANS BUSINESS

HYDERABAD: NCL Industries Limited has rebranded its product 'Duradoor' as 'NCLdoor'. The rebranding is in line with the company's corporate brand strategy for the year 2021. The change also seeks to avoid any confusion in the minds of consumers about products of other companies carrying a similar name as well as avoiding any possible trademark conflicts.

K Ravi, Managing Director, NCL Industries Limited, said: "Starting with our brand campaign for Nagarjuna Cement in 2020, we at NCL Industries have been on a mission to update our branding and communication strategy for our brands, to a more modern approach. The rebrand of our doors division is in alignment with the overall brand strategy and company vision for 2021."

Originally started in 2019, NCLdoor is a premium range of doors which are made with bison panel to withstand moisture, fire, termites and other elements that affect the overall life of a door.

# IFFCO rolls out world's first nano urea product

It is priced at ₹240/bottle; A 500 ml bottle of nano urea will replace at least one bag of conventional urea

NEW DELHI

LEADING cooperative IFFCO on Monday introduced the world's first 'Nano Urea' for farmers across the world, and its production will commence from June.

The indigenously developed 'Nano Urea' is in liquid form and is priced at Rs 240 per 500 ml bottle, which is 10 per cent cheaper than the cost of a bag of conventional urea, it said.

Nano urea will be available to farmers through its cooperative sales and marketing channel apart from IFFCO's e-commerce platform www.iffcobazar.in. The product was introduced at IFFCO's 50th annual general meeting held in online-offline mode here.

"IFFCO Nano Urea Liquid is easy on the pocket of farmers and will be effective in increasing farmers' income. A 500 ml bottle of Nano Urea will replace at least one bag of conventional urea. Hence, it will reduce the input cost to farmers," Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Ltd said in a statement.

The production of Nano Urea will start from June this year and its commercial rollout will start soon thereafter, it said.

Highlighting the benefits of the new product, IFFCO said it is a



sustainable solution for plant nutrition that boosts balanced soil nutrition programme by reducing

the excessive use of urea and making crops stronger, healthier and protecting them from lodging effect.

Nano Urea is developed to replace conventional urea and it can curtail the requirement of the same by at least 50 per cent. It contains 40,000 parts per million (ppm) of Nitrogen in a 500 ml bottle, which is equivalent to the impact of nitrogen nutrient provided by one bag of conventional urea, it said. Since it is in a bottle form will significantly bring down the logistics and warehousing cost.

Further, the new product would help reduce soil, water and air pollution, besides addressing global

warming, it added. According to IFFCO, Nano urea has been included in the government's Fertiliser Control Order after the field trials were undertaken under National Agriculture Research System (NARS), 20 ICAR research institutes, State Agriculture Universities and Krishi Vigyan Kendras on 43 crops.

To test its efficacy, around 11,000 farmer field trials were undertaken on more than 94 crops across India and results showed an average 8 per cent increase in crop yields, it said. Nano Urea Liquid has been developed indigenously through proprietary technology at IFFCO's Nano Biotechnology Research Centre (NBRC) in Kalol, Gujarat.



## ICC Board Meet

Asian WC  
qualifiers to be  
moved from  
China to Dubai

BEIJING

China's COVID-19 travel restrictions mean World Cup qualifying matches scheduled for the eastern city of Suzhou this week will likely be relocated to the United Arab Emirates.

The Chinese Football Association issued a statement Monday saying the outbreak of infections in the Maldives and Syria meant both national teams would have to undergo strict quarantine after arriving in China, and couldn't play as scheduled.

The Asian Football Confederation later issued a statement confirming a move from China, without saying where the next matches would be held.

"The Asian Football Confederation decided to move the remaining centralized Group A matches... from China to a neutral venue, which will be decided and announced in the coming days."

The decision was made due to the mounting challenges faced by several participating teams in traveling to China. The AFC is now working in close partnership with the Chinese Football Association and potential neutral venues, as well as the participating teams to arrange for the safe passage and well-being of all stakeholders while reiterating its commitment towards ensuring the successful completion of the Asian qualifiers.

Maldives and Syria were scheduled to play Group A games in Suzhou in the second round of Asian qualifying for the 2022 World Cup. "Under the suggestion of the Asian Football Confederation, the CFA agreed to move the remaining Group A matches of the FIFA 2022 World Cup Asian qualifiers to Dubai," the CFA statement said.

The AFC has not announced a new schedule of matches. Syria leads the five-team group with 15 points from five straight wins.

China moved into second spot on 10 points after a 7-0 win over last-place Guam on Sunday. Maldives is in fourth place with six points. The top team in each group will advance to the third round of Asian qualifying.

The second round of Asian qualifying has been severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The remaining games in most of the eight groups are to be contested in hubs. Some teams will be playing their first international matches in 18 months this week. (AP)

India paddlers  
Diya, Swastika  
finish runners-up

NEW DELHI

YOUNG Indian paddlers Diya Chitale and Swastika Ghosh's splendid run at the WTT Youth Star Contender ended with a runners-up finish following their 3-11 6-11 7-11 defeat against Russia's Natalia Malinina and Elizabet Abraamian in the U-19 girls doubles final in Tunis, Tunisia.

Earlier, the Indian pair made its way into the final, defeating Czech Republic's Linda Zaderova and Croatia's Hana Arapovic in the semifinals.

Diya and Swastika were also impressive in the U-19 singles as both finished their campaigns in the semifinals after suffering identical 2-3 defeats in hard-fought encounters.

Diya made life tougher for Russian paddler Vlada Voronina before losing the thrilling contest 8-11, 11-7, 11-6, 8-11, 7-11. The current junior national champion Swastika too lost to Turkey's Ece Harac 11-8, 4-11, 11-9, 3-11, 6-11 in an intense decider.

Since the Covid-19 outbreak, it was the first international youth event where Indian players were seen in action. (PTI)

## BCCI to seek time on T20 WC

## FTP cycle also to be discussed but outcomes far fetched

NEW DELHI

THE BCCI will ask for one month's extension to decide on hosting the T20 World Cup in India amid the looming Covid-19 threat when the all-powerful ICC Board holds a virtual meeting on Tuesday to discuss a host of other issues as well.

While earlier, it was decided that BCCI president Sourav Ganguly will attend the meet in person, it is learnt that now he will be present virtually and will only leave for the UAE on Wednesday to have discussions on the organisation of IPL with Emirates Cricket Board. There are no concrete outcomes expected at the meeting and after July 1, the BCCI will hold another SGM.

The ICC is likely to make a formal announcement of its final decision during its annual conference that starts on July 18.

While the remainder of the IPL has been shifted to the United Arab Emirates between September 15 to October 15, the Indian cricket board doesn't want to let go the opportunity of hosting the global T20 event, which also has Emirates as back-up hosts.

"The Covid-19 cases are reducing but obviously it is still not a situation where we can firmly commit to hosting the World T20. Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah are right in asking for one month's time to decide," a senior BCCI

source privy to developments told PTI on conditions of anonymity. "Obviously, they will also get a feedback from the government whether it would be prudent to host it in India.

"The second aspect is that you never know when the cases rise again. Right now, the lockdown in various parts of the country is yielding some good results but as we had seen the sudden surge during IPL, the situation remains fluid," he said.

However, one thing is clear that even if BCCI manages to host the tournament between the third week of October and second week of November, there is no question of nine cities being allotted games.

"If BCCI manages to host the tournament in October-November which is currently a 50-50 probability, it could well mean single city three venues in Mumbai along with Pune and Ahmedabad as venue for the final.

"This curtails travel. But Pakistan team playing in Maharashtra and Gujarat also needs to be factored in," the source said.

Tax issues: The other issue that BCCI is facing currently is tax waiver that ICC gets for its global events. It is understood that while BCCI is in discussion with the top government functionaries, there are no easy solutions.

If BCCI can't arrange the tax waiver from the government, it

will have to forego ICC revenue to the tune of USD 125 million (INR 905 crore approx). "In this post pandemic world and a hostile economic climate which is pretty hostile, the Indian government providing a tax relief close to Rs 1000 crore for a cricket event seems like wishful thinking," the source said.

"But then if BCCI can pull it off, good for them. In any case, we are not likely to give up on our hosting rights even if it is held in the UAE," the BCCI source added.

**FTP Cycle 2023-31:** The Futures Tours & Programme Cycle for the next eight years between 2023 to 2031 will also be discussed with provision for the flagship ICC events apart from the bilateral series.

"Obviously due to the pandemic, every cricket board has lost money and the bilateral events are the way forward to recover the costs. In any case, currently rested ICC CEO Manu Sawhney's proposal of a marquee



ICC event every year was red flagged by the 'Big Three' much earlier.

"They need to look after the financial health of their boards," the official further added. Also the future of the World Test Championship will also be discussed after a much curtailed first edition due to the pandemic.

ICC chairman Greg Barclay, a few months back, had expressed his apprehensions about the future of the tournament but a lot of people believe that its prospects can't be judged in a year where there was a global crisis.

## Global Strategy going forward:

The ICC will also discuss a strategy for the global growth of the game with special emphasis on women's cricket. India's participation in the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games has given ICC a big boost along with BCCI's in-principle approval to take part in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

The ICC board wants to spread the game equally in 104 countries.

"Women's game is the next big thing and T20 is a tool to popularise women's game globally," the board source said. (PTI)

Technical glitch  
plays spoilsport  
for Akhil at Circuit  
Paul Ricard

BENGALURU

INDIAN racer Akhil Rabintra's second round performance at the European GT4 Championship 2021 was marred by technical glitches at the Circuit Paul Ricard in France.

The 24-year-old Bengaluru-born driver who is also the only Indian at the European GT4 Championships this season, finished at P16 in the silver category.

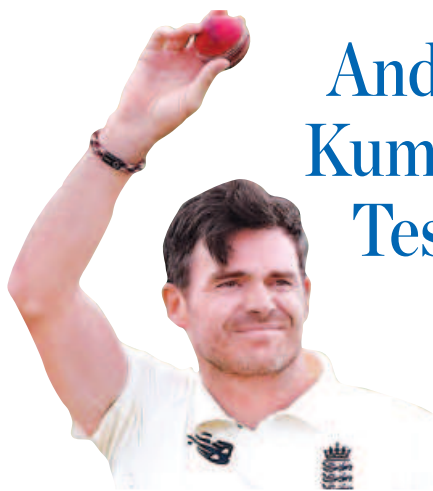
Akhil, driving an Aston Martin Vantage GT4 for the AGS Events Racing team, took to the drivers seat in Race 2 after he and his teammate Hugo Conde had to retire after 16 laps in Race 1 due to engine issues.

Akhil is also the only Asian to have made it to the Aston Martin Racing drivers academy in 2021, a feat that he has achieved for the third straight year in a row.

Earlier, Akhil and Hugo had to retire due to a faulty engine in Race 1 after having qualified at P14 in the qualifying race. Race 1 saw them completing 16-laps in 38:29.167 minutes. Post this, Akhil took the steering in Race 2, scripting an impressive run to finish P15 in the silver category.

Akhil completed Race 2 in 1:01:40.275 minutes on Sunday evening to finish 29th overall from a grid of 41 cars.

The European GT4 Series now moves to Circuit Zandvoort, Netherlands for Round 3 of the championship from June 18-20. (PTI)



LONDON

Anderson set to pip  
Kumble in list of top  
Test wicket-takers

ENGLAND pace bowler James Anderson is on cusp of surpassing Anil Kumble's Test tally of 619 wickets and equal Alastair Cook's record of most Test matches for England. The 38-year-old pacer, who has 614 wickets in 160 Tests, will likely go past former India leg-spinner in first Test against New Zealand that begins at Lord's on Wednesday.

Anderson is fourth on list of Test cricket's top wicket-takers while Kumble is third. Ex-Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan leads the list with 800 wickets whereas ex-Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne has 708 wickets.

Anderson is also eight wickets short of reaching 1,000 wickets in first-class cricket. Former England left-arm spinner Wilfred Rhodes holds record for most first-class wickets with 4,204.

The right-armar Anderson has played 23 Test matches at Lord's in his 18-year long Test cricket career. He has taken 103 wickets at an average of 23.89 with six five-wicket hauls at the historic venue.

England have been rotating

their two most experienced and frontline pace bowlers -- Anderson and Stuart Broad -- and not playing them in a Test together in recent times.

The Lancashire-born pacer may get to play the Test starting on Wednesday at Lord's where he had made his Test debut in 2003 against Zimbabwe.

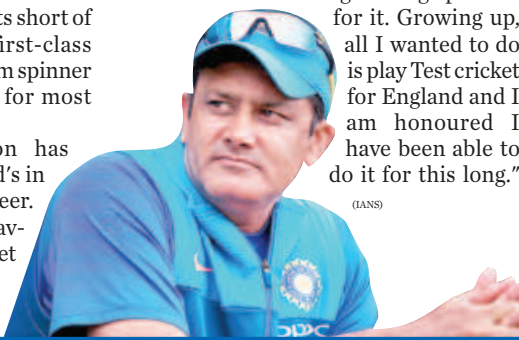
Anderson's next Test will also be his 161st and it will put him alongside former England captain and opener Alastair Cook as cricketer to have played most number of Test matches for England.

"It does make me feel proud," Anderson was quoted as saying by ESPN-cricinfo.com.

"I never imagined in a million years I'd get to this point. Certainly for a bowler to play this amount of games is... I don't know what the word is. But it's a bit mind-blowing to me," he added.

"I feel really honoured that I have managed to do it because it is such an amazing thing to do. I absolutely love Test cricket.

I've got a huge passion for it. Growing up, all I wanted to do is play Test cricket for England and I am honoured I have been able to do it for this long." (IANS)

Could've been better if Covid didn't disrupt  
training: Women's boxing coach Ali Qamar

NEW DELHI

IT was a 10 on 10 for Indian women boxers as far as clinching medals at the Asian Championship was concerned but national head coach Mohammed Ali Qamar believes the gold count could have been higher than one if their training had not been disrupted by COVID-19.

The Indian women's boxing team will be returning with one gold, three silver and six bronze medals from the event in Dubai, ensuring that all 10 weight categories featured an Indian medallist. Seven of these medals were secured on the day of draws itself thanks to the small size of competition.

"I am very satisfied with the performance overall. Yes, we could have got more gold medals but given that we hardly got to train before the championships, I cannot complain," Ali Qamar told PTI.

"All the silver-winners lost very close bouts and gave it their best. As a coach there is nothing more I can ask for," he added. Ali Qamar was referring to the 2-3 losses endured by the Olympic-bound M C Mary Kom (51kg), and tournament debutants Lalbat-saihi (64kg) and Anupama (81+kg).

All three of them fought draining contests and fell short only marginally. Olympic-bound defending champion Pooja Rani (75kg) was the lone Indian to clinch a gold. Interestingly the championship bout was her first and only outing of the competition as she got a bye into the semis and a walkover into the finals.

The tournament might not have been all that taxing but women boxers had a tough time preparing for the event, which was to be held in India originally but shifted to Dubai because of the escalating COVID-19 crisis here. Their national camp in Delhi's Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium was halted after several COVID cases came to light. Those infected included Ali Qamar and women's boxing's High Performance Director Raffaele Bergamasco.

Training was subsequently organised in Pune's Army Sports Institute a couple of weeks before the team's departure for Dubai and only a handful of Olympic-bound boxers, including Mary Kom, turned up for it.

"Mary had a very good tournament overall. She lost in the final but in my view the final round had been won by her but that's sport, you can't do much. With limited training, her performance is really praiseworthy," said Ali Qamar. (PTI)

## Goalkeeper Amrinder leaves ISL champs Mumbai City

MUMBAI

GOALKEEPER Amrinder Singh has left Indian Super League (ISL) champions and League winners Mumbai City Football Club after representing it for five seasons, the club announced on Monday.

Singh's contract got over on Monday. Singh, 27, who joined the club on September 7, 2016, initially on loan from Bengaluru FC, made his debut for the Islanders in a 0-0 draw against FC Goa in November that year.

With 84 appearances for Mumbai City FC, his last one coming in the iconic

2020-21 ISL Final at the Fatorda, Amrinder leaves the Islanders as the Islanders' highest appearance maker and an icon in the history of the Club.

"I came to this club five years ago as a boy and now I leave as a man. I have learnt so much about football and about life in my time at Mumbai City FC. I have had the privilege of working with some of the best players, the best coaches, and staff here in Mumbai," Singh said.

"Moreover, I will cherish every minute

I've spent playing in front of our fans. They are the backbone of this club and I can never forget all the love and support they've given me and my teammates in good times and especially, the not-so-good times." Singh said he was carrying fond memories of the club.

"This club is my family and it's always tough to say goodbye to family.

But I am proud that I can leave this family as a champion, winning our first ever trophies, and I will always hold Mumbai City close to my heart," he said. (IANS)



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