


# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

KARIMNAGAR | THURSDAY | 20 AUGUST 2020

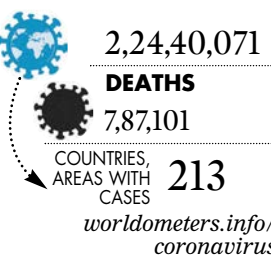
## WEATHER

 **Max:** 25.0°C  
**Min:** 21.5°C  
**RH:** 92%  
**Rainfall:** 8.7 mm  
**Forecast:** Cloudy sky. Light to moderate rains likely  
Max/Min temp. 27/21 °C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+70,770)	(+960)
28,34,755	53,978
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+1,763)	(+8)
TS: 95,700	719
(+9,742)	(+86)
AP: 3,16,003	2,906

### CASES AROUND THE WORLD



## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana  
**Tithi:** Bhadrapada Shuddha Dwitiya till 2.12 am (Friday)  
**Star:** Purvaphalguni till 11.49 pm  
**Varjyam:** 9.19 am to 10.46 am  
**Durmuhurtam:** 10.14 am to 11.04 am; 3.15 pm to 4.05 pm  
**Rahukalam:** 1.30 pm to 3 pm  
**HJRI CALENDAR**  
Zulhijja 29, 1441 AH  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 4.56 am  
**Zohar:** 12.29 pm  
**Asar:** 4.43 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.44 pm  
**Isha:** 7.55 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY 6.38 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.00 AM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 7.01 AM**  
**MOONSET TODAY 7.54 PM**

## COUNTER POINT



Thanks to the government for arranging a city tour for us every year!

## IN BRIEF

### Indian captain held for oil leak

**Johannesburg:** Authorities in Mauritius have arrested the Indian captain of the Japanese ship that ran aground near Mauritius and spilled 1,000 tonnes of oil on the Indian Ocean island's protected coastline. Sunil Kumar Nandeshwar, captain of the *MV Wakashio* and who is from India, was charged with "endangering safe navigation" and is in custody pending a bail hearing next week, Police inspector Sivo Cooten said Tuesday. The *Wakashio* ran aground a coral reef on July 25 and after being pounded by heavy waves for several days the vessel cracked and started leaking 4,000 tonnes of fuel on August 6. — PTI

### PC: No SC order on PM CARES

**New Delhi:** Congress leader P. Chidambaram said on Wednesday that the Supreme Court had delivered a verdict on the legality of the PM CARES, saying it did not pronounce a judgement on the fund's transparency, disclosure and management practices. His comments come a day after the apex court had refused to direct the Centre to transfer the contributions made to the PM CARES Fund for battling the COVID-19 pandemic to the National Disaster Response Fund.

## WORLD | 10

### Pakistan's future linked to China, says Imran



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



## BUSINESS | 7

### Apple hits \$2,000 billion market capitalisation

## SPORTS | 8

### Neymar takes PSG into Champs final



Vol. 83 No. 232 Established 1938 | 16 PAGES | ₹6.00

## Krishna gushes out



Authorities have opened three crest gates of Srisailem dam on Wednesday after inflows from upstream areas brought the water level just three feet short of its full reservoir level. The authorities are withdrawing 1,89,140 cusecs of water from the reservoir, while the inflows stands at 3,67,454 cusecs. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

## Rains kill 3 in Mahbubnagar

### Several people have drowned in overflowing water bodies

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

Heavy rains claimed three lives in Mahbubnagar district on Wednesday. Elsewhere in the state, several more people were washed away, drowned and some are still missing. A woman and her two daughters were killed when the roof of their house collapsed in the wee hours of Wednesday due to incessant rains in Pagid-

yal village of Gandede mandal, Mahbubnagar. According to the Mahbubnagar district police, the victims were identified as Sharanamma, 37, and her daughters Bhavani, 13, and Vaishali, 9, all of whom died instantly when a portion of roof collapsed while they were asleep. Her husband, Malleth, and son who were sleeping outside were saved. Two persons were drowned in a lake at

Ibrahimpur village of Chegunta mandal in Medak district on Tuesday night. According to the police the victims were identified as Gudenboina Muthyalu, a resident of Ibrahimpur, and his relative, Arun, a native of Hyderabad. The police said that they went fishing on Tuesday late evening and slipped into the lake accidentally. The bodies were fished out on Wednesday morning. The Chegunta police have

registered a case.

In Jangaon district, a 23-year-old youth got washed away in floodwater in Nashkal village of Chilpur mandal. The victim was identified as Aroori Vamsi. Officials reached the spot and launched a rescue operation. After three hours, the body was retrieved.

■ Page 2: Boat capsizes in river Krishna, 3 killed  
■ More reports on Page 2

## Withdrawal of 10K troops from J&K gets Centre nod

### Centre okays one test for Group B & C jobs

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** The Centre on Wednesday ordered "immediate" withdrawal of about 10,000 paramilitary personnel from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

This is the biggest deinduction of these forces after additional troops were rushed to the UT post the abrogation of the Article 370 of the Constitution that gave the erstwhile state a unique status.

The officials said the decision was taken after the ministry of home affairs reviewed the deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in the union territory (UT).

The home ministry had last withdrawn 10 CAPF companies from the UT in May, while 72 such units were taken out in December last year.

A senior official said that a total of 100 CAPF companies have been ordered to be withdrawn "immediately" on Wednesday and they have been asked to revert to their base locations in the country.

As per the directions, a total of 40 companies of

the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and 20 each of the Central Industrial Security Force, the Border Security Force and the Sashastra Seema Bal, will be taken out from Jammu and Kashmir by this week.

on writing multiple exams. The NRA will conduct a Common Eligibility Test (CET) to screen/shortlist candidates for the Group B and Group C (non-technical) posts. The NRA will have representatives from the ministry of railways, the ministry of finance, the Staff Selection Commission, the Railway Recruitment Board and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection.

The NRA will set up examination centres in every district of the country. — PTI

### PG 4 | THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JAIPUR, GUWAHATI AIRPORTS TO BE LEASED OUT

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and 20 each of the Central Industrial Security Force, the Border Security Force and the Sashastra Seema Bal, will be taken out from Jammu and Kashmir by this week.

The CRPF has been asked to make arrangements for air lifting of these units to Delhi and other locations, the officials said. A CAPF company has an operational strength of about 100 personnel. — PTI

## HONG KONG BARS AIR INDIA FLIGHTS TILL AUGUST END

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** Hong Kong has banned Air India flights till the end of August after some passengers on one of its flights tested positive for Covid-19 post arrival, a senior government official said on Wednesday.

Passengers from India can arrive in Hong Kong only if they have a Covid-19 negative certificate from a test done 72 hours prior to the journey, according to rules issued by the Hong Kong government in July.

Moreover, all international passengers are required to take a post-flight Covid-19 test at the airport premises in Hong Kong.

"Some passengers who landed in Hong Kong on one of Air India flights recently tested Covid-positive post arrival," the government official said.

"The Hong Kong government has banned all Air India flights till August-end," the official added. Air India did not respond to the PTI's request for comment.

The airline had said on Twitter on Monday: "Due to restrictions imposed by Hong Kong Authorities, AI 310/315, Delhi - Hong Kong - Delhi of 18th August 2020 stands postponed. Next update in this regard will be intimate soon." — PTI

## After CJI, Justice Nariman opts out of hearing on AP capital plea

### Centre washes hands off role in AP capital

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 19

Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman on Wednesday recused from hearing the Andhra Pradesh government's plea against the state High Court's August 4 status quo order on move for the trifurcation of the state capital.

Justice Nariman heading a three-judge bench also comprising Justice Navin Sinha and Justice Indira Banerjee recused from hearing the matter saying that senior counsel Fali Nariman has been briefed in the case by the respondents.

Fali Nariman is the father of Justice Nariman. "The matter be listed before a Bench of which one of us (Rohinton Fali Nariman, J.) is not a member", said a brief order after Justice Nariman recused from hearing the matter.

Prior to this, Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde had recused from hearing the matter on August 17, 2020, after senior counsel Ranjit Kumar informed him that his daughter had appeared for one of the private parties in the case before the AP HC.

The Andhra Pradesh High Court had passed a status quo order on the state government's move to trifurcate the state's

capital.

Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan has already given his assent to the bill that provides for three

capitals — Amravati being the seat of state legislature, Visakhapatnam executive capital and Kurnool judicial capital.

The Centre has once again clarified that it has no role to play in deciding the capital of Andhra Pradesh.

The Centre has filed its counter affidavit in the AP High Court on Wednesday following a direction by the latter in the course of hearing a writ petition filed challenging the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Repeal Act, 2020 earlier.

Union ministry of home affairs under secretary Lalita T. Hedao in the counter affidavit mentioned that the AP Capital Region Development Authority Repeal Act, 2020, was introduced and passed by the state legislature and said that while framing the act, the AP government had not consulted the Centre. She

capital. Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan has already given his assent to the bill that provides for three

capitals — Amravati being the seat of state legislature, Visakhapatnam executive capital and Kurnool judicial capital.

The affidavit said that the state government through Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020, had published in the state gazette notification about setting up three seats of governance to be called as capitals on July 31 and three capitals were identified as Amaravati, Metropolitan Region Development Area called as Legislative Capital, Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Area called as executive capital and Kurnool called as Judicial Capital.

held a review meeting with senior officers at Pragathi Bhavan on Wednesday, discussed the strategy to be adopted in the Apex Council meeting to effectively counter issues being raised by the Andhra Pradesh government, which is opposing various irrigation projects taken up by TS.

## KCR will attend river water meet

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG 19

Chief Minister K. Chandra-shekar Rao on Wednesday decided to attend a meeting of the apex council, convene by the Union Jal Shakti ministry on August 25, to discuss on interstate water disputes between AP and Telangana. The Chief Minister, who

held a review meeting with senior officers at Pragathi Bhavan on Wednesday, discussed the strategy to be adopted in the Apex Council meeting to effectively counter issues being raised by the Andhra Pradesh government, which is opposing various irrigation projects taken up by TS.

■ Full report on Page 4



## SHORT TAKES

DRI SLEUTHS  
SEIZE 52.5 KGS  
OF NARCOTICSDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

In continuation of the seizure of huge quantities of narcotics and psychotropic drugs in the city, sleuths of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized 52.5 kg drugs buried in a factory located on the outskirts of Hyderabad.

A couple of days ago, the sleuths had arrested one person from Kazipally area on the city outskirts for making and smuggling Mephedrone and Ephedrine drugs in huge quantities by taking a factory premise on rent. The drugs and raw material worth ₹81.2 crore were seized from his possession. "Subsequent to arrest, the further investigation has unearthed 45 kg Ephedrine and 7.5 kg Mephedrone, concealed in polythene bags underground in the factory premises. The seized drugs are worth ₹6 crore, and further investigation is underway," said the DRI officials on Wednesday.

CONG: AIMPLB  
MUST SPEAK ON  
MASJID RAZING

Hyderabad, Aug. 19: The Congress on Wednesday demanded that the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) take a clear stand over the demolition of two mosques in the premises of Telangana Secretariat.

Hyderabad City Congress Committee (HCCC) Minorities Department Chairman Sameer Waliullah, in a media statement, said that the AIMPLB's present stand on the demolition of Secretariat mosques — Masjid Dafaatir-e-Muatamadi and Masjid-e-Hashmi by the Telangana Government has created confusion within the Muslim community. "Despite knowing the fact that demolition of Secretariat mosques was illegal, unethical, immoral and unconstitutional, the AIMPLB appears to be in some confusion over taking a firm stand against the TRS government headed by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao. A few members of the AIMPLB are holding official posts in the TRS government and therefore they are trying to dilute the issue," he said. —ININ

BOAT CAPSIZES  
IN KRISHNA,  
THREE KILLED

From Page 1

According to the police, Vamsi came along with his friends to fish in the overflowing Akeru Vagu in the village.

Meanwhile, Gadwal district authorities have found two bodies of women near Jurala dam here on Wednesday morning. These two women were believed to be the victims of a country boat capsized that occurred in Makhtal mandal of Narayanpet district on Monday. The victims were identified as Sumalatha and Parvathamma.

Three women and a nine-year-old girl were swept away in the Krishna river after a boat capsized. They were all residents of Kurvapuram village in Raichur district of Karnataka and were returning to their village after buying essential commodities in Makhtal town of Narayanpet district. Search is on to locate two of the women's bodies as only one woman and the girl's bodies were found.

## Battered roads



A newly laid road under the Erragadda Metro Rail station damaged due to continuous rains since last week.

— R. PAVAN

Medical distancing a  
cause for virus spread

Never ignore illness symptoms for first 3 days, say docs

KANIZA GARARI | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

Inability to understand symptoms and ignoring them for the first three to six days, a phenomenon known as medical distancing has led to complications in Covid-19 cases according to data analysed from different states in India.

Patients avoiding or delaying seeking medical help for conditions that previously would have had them going to a physician's office or emergency room have led to multiplication of the SARS Cov 2 virus, which has led to high viral loads and a strong inflammatory response of the body, leading to sudden collapse.

With the disease presenting in the form of pneumonia in China, it was believed that it would be only cough, cold and fever which would indicate the presence of the virus. But, in

India, it has been noted that the symptoms of nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea, headache, increased frequency of urination, right abdominal pain, skin rashes, conjunctivitis, Covid-19 toes, presenting as gout-like symptoms, calf pain and tiredness have also been the early signs of the disease setting in.

The Indian medical association (IMA), assessing the data of symptoms in recovered doctors, healthcare workers and patient population, has found that understanding the symptoms of the disease in the early months from March to June was a challenge for many. It was only in July, when there were different cases in the hospitals that it was realised that apart from respiratory symptoms there were also the gastrointestinal and nervous system symptoms caused by the virus.

Apart from the test results which were negative for those in the early stages, evaluating symptoms was also important for proper diagnosis of the disease. It has been noted that in some patients, diarrhoea was the only symptom and cough and fever never developed. These symptoms were easily missed earlier.

Dr K.K. Aggarwal, past president of the IMA, explained, "Patients who have suffered from diarrhoea are found to be super spreaders. They have infected the full family and that is why we have members of joint families getting infected one after the other. Intermittent diarrhoea for 48 hours is a high index of suspicion for Covid-19."

The different symptoms have been understood now by the medical community and they are treating patients with medications in early stages. Those who come

to hospitals in the first two days of any symptoms are well-controlled and recovery is fast.

The fatigue that sets in due to the inflammatory response of the body needs time to heal.

Dr Narsinga Reddy, national vice-president of IMA, said, "Treatment for Covid-19 is being started immediately when the symptoms are noted at the clinical level. With the test sensitivity of RT-PCR at 67 per cent, it is becoming important to look at the symptoms and save patients."

Negative results but positive symptoms have made it important to opt for early treatment methods. This is one of the reasons that 95 per cent of them are recovering well. Experts state that with better understanding of the disease, patients must reach out early via teleconsultation or visit hospitals and not wait as that is leading to the loss of precious time.

BPCL LAUNCHES  
'GO DIGITAL'  
INITIATIVETSS SIDDHARTH | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

The Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) launched a major digital initiative called, Go Digital, across the country to facilitate Bharat Gas customers to book and pay digitally.

The options include a Whatsapp 'hi' to 1800224344 or a missed-call to 77109-55555 to book the cylinder and also app-based facilities such as, Bharatgas Mobile App, Amazon Pay, Paytm, Phone Pe, Google Pay to digitally pay and book for the refill.

The state-owned company said that these services are part of BPCL's continuing mission to enhance efficiency and convenience to its customers across the nation and the ongoing fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

BOY FALLS FROM  
APARTMENT'S  
2ND FLOOR, DIESDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

A two-year-old boy fell from the second floor of an apartment while playing and succumbed while undergoing treatment at Osmania General Hospital.

According to Petbasheerabad police, the boy Manoj Kumar, 2, son of Mallikarjun and Saritha, fell from the balcony of their flat located on the second floor of an apartment at Kompally area on Tuesday noon.

The boy, who is the only child of the couple was playing in the balcony and slipped in front of his mother's eyes.

The boy suffered multiple injuries and was shifted to Osmania General Hospital for treatment where he succumbed to his injuries. A case has been registered, said Petbasheerabad police.

TS records 1,763  
fresh Covid casesDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

Eight deaths and 1,763 cases have been recorded in the state on Tuesday, as per the bulletin released by the state government. With this, the total number of cases in the state has reached 95,700 and overall deaths are 719.

The number of active cases is 20,990 of which those under home treatment are 14,461. Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation limits have again seen a slight rise with 484 cases. Districts like Medchal and Malkajgiri have 169 cases, Ranga Reddy 166 cases and Warangal Urban 88 cases. High incidence of disease has been noted in age-group of 20-50 years.

People have been asked to maintain social distancing, which has been found to be lacking, leading to spread of infection. People have also been advised to avoid unnecessary travel. Districts have seen a constant rise in cases. Floods have prevented many people from reaching hospitals. The state government has appealed to people that they reach hospitals soon after they feel the symptoms, as early treatment will prevent complications.

MOST INFECTED ARE  
ASYMPTOMATIC:  
CCMB CHIEF

From Page 1

A conservative estimate of the number of active cases who are shedding the virus may be around 2.6 lakhs.

"Our finding clearly indicates that a large proportion of the affected individuals are asymptomatic and did not need hospitalisation. This is also in agreement with the observation that hospitalisation rush or mortality is way lower than otherwise expected with such large infection rates at a given time. It explains why our healthcare system has been able to handle the situation during the pandemic reasonably well.

Such studies if carried out in coordination with civic bodies to identify the hotspots in the city and monitor the dynamics of the infection rate can assist the system in taking necessary measures," Dr Rakesh Mishra, director, CCMB explained.

Woman dies, man  
flees mishap siteJAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T.  
| DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

A 33-year-old woman, working in the office of the controller of defence accounts in Secunderabad, was killed when she fell under a crane while on a scooter she was travelling on with another person at Gopalpuram on Wednesday.

The police found that the scooter rider, responsible for the accident, is absconding and a search is on to nab him. According to the police, the accident took place at Bhoiguda in Secunderabad under Gopalpuram when a traffic crane was taking away an abandoned car which was

in an accident the previous night, to facilitate free vehicular movement. A speeding scooter tried to overtake the crane from the left side and pillion rider, Sai Lakshmi, 33, a resident of Musheerabad, lost her balance and fell under the wheels of the crane. The woman suffered a head injury and died on the spot, while the scooter driver did not stop and fled from the spot.

It is yet unclear about the person with whom the woman was travelling on the bike. A case was registered and efforts are on to trace the absconding accused. The body of the deceased was shifted to a mortuary, said the police.

TS skips PMFBY,  
farmers sufferDC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, AUG. 19

Bharatiya Kisan Morcha state president Kondapalli Sridhar Reddy said, "Chief minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is not implementing the Prime Minister Fasal Bhima Yojana (PMFBY) scheme that will help the farmers at a time when farmers have faced huge losses due to the heavy rains and floods."

In the recent rains that hit Telangana State it is said that farmers faced a loss of ₹200 crore as cotton and paddy fields were inundated.

Mr Sridhar said, "The Chief Minister has done injustice to the farming community by not introducing the scheme and not making farmers aware of it."

As the state did not pay its share of premium, thousands of farmers were not paid compensation by the insurance companies. He said, "PMFBY is the best insurance scheme for farm-

ers. Even the Congress ruled states like Chattisgarh joined the scheme and the farmers there have benefited. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is also implementing the scheme."

Under the PMFBY, farmers pay 2 per cent of the sum insured as their share of premium for kharif crops, 1.5 per cent for rabi crops and 5 per cent for horticulture and commercial crops.

If the actual is lower than this rate, the lower of the two would apply. The difference between the actual premium rate and premium paid by the farmers is the subsidy shared equally by the states and the Centre.

The BJP Kisan Morcha president said that the state government should evaluate the loss immediately and pay compensation to the farmers. Sridhar Reddy also visited the areas where the crops were damaged in Khammam and Bhadrachal districts.

Civic body gears up to  
fight mosquito menaceSANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

Medical practitioners, on World Mosquito Day, warn authorities that the recent rains will trigger mosquito-breeding. If the government does not act immediately, this could lead to another pandemic of dengue in the months of September, October and November.

Last year, there were thousands of dengue and malaria cases at this time. This season malaria has been controlled and only 445 cases have been reported so far, says Dr Amar Singh Naik, additional director of malaria, department of medical health.

For two years now, the cases have gone down, compared to previous years, he said.

Dr M. Karuna, a paediatrician, working on dengue for eight years now, warned the authorities that with the incessant rains, the city's entomology department should be proactive, before the city turns into a breeding ground for mosquitoes. "Communities should be educated to keep their surroundings clean, clearing stagnant water. It's not only the government's duty but the citizens should take up the responsibility," she said.

"Last year the cases went up terribly. Hospitals were flooded with dengue cases. Now fresh cases have start-

ed," Dr Karuna said, recommending "the areas with high cases can be fogged by mosquito repellents, the spreading can be controlled, a feedback committee with a panel of doctors should be formed by the authorities."

According to the GHMC entomology department, daily 2 lakh houses have been marked with mosquito to eradication by 652 teams. There are 185 lakes in the GHMC area and 17 special drones for anti-larva operations. Six vehicles mounted with foggers, another 15 portable fogging machines are also available.

The 21-kilometre Musi river has been on the radar of the department, from Attapur to Uppal.

TRS afraid of BJP ahead  
of polls, says Rao PadmaDC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, AUG. 19

Even though the BJP has pointed out about the unabated encroachments in the city with the involvement of the ruling party leaders, the state administration has never paid heed to it. However, during minister K.T. Rama Rao's visit to Warangal, he himself agreed that there were 435 illegal structures occupying nalas in the city, BJP Urban district president Rao Padma said.

Speaking to newsmen on Wednesday, she termed Mr Rama Rao's visit to city as mere eyewash. "It was just a face saving trip in view of BJP state president

● MINISTER K.T. RAMA RAO during his visit to Warangal, agreed that there were 435 illegal structures occupying nalas in the city.

● SANJAY'S VISIT could change the political tide in favour of the BJP in the municipal corporation.

Bandi Sanjay Kumar's visit to the city, the previous day, TRS leadership is aware of the fact that Mr Sanjay's visit could change the political tide in favour of the BJP in the municipal corporation elections due for early next year," she said.

The BJP district president also objected to the state government's plan to turn the Central government funded PMMSSY super-speciality hospital

actions involving large amounts of money were taking place. It should have raised suspicion," sources said, adding that they have stumbled upon evidence which suggests that many bank accounts were opened in the names of different companies with the same address.

A court nod is awaited for the custody of the Chinese national and three others. While the total value of inward transactions of Beijing T Power company was ₹1,100 crore, detectives have further unearthed companies and bank accounts, again in HSBC, in which deposits to the tune of another ₹50 crore was found.

● The domain name servers of the gaming websites are based out of China and the payments were being routed through India based payment service providers and gateways.

● In the U.S., HSBC has been accused of money laundering, drug trafficking and terrorist financing and violating several rules.

● The bank is accused of moving money for organisations linked to Al-Qaeda, and aiding several criminals in hiding their cash.

● Hyderabad police suspect that bank officials may have colluded with accused and overlooked shady money transactions.

ny's directors, which has led to a multi-agency probe. Sources associated with the investigation disclosed to *Deccan Chronicle* that senior officials of the Gurgaon branch of HSBC bank

have been summoned by the central crime station (CCS), the wing of the Hyderabad police investigating the case.

"It is strange that the bank could not detect, or chose not to, shady trans-

Rly staffer, aides held in  
fake document scamJAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T.  
| DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

A railway employee and his aide, who helped three persons get jobs in Postal Department using fake educational certificates, have been arrested by Hyderabad city police on Wednesday.

Acting on a tip-off, North Zone Task Force police apprehended Maloth Machender, 41, who works as a Senior Grade Electrician at South Central Railway, and his aide M. Santosh Reddy, 31, of Habsiguda, who had been forging education certificates of SSC and open schools and selling them to unemployed seeking government jobs.

In March this year, India Post had issued a notification for recruitment of Grameen Dak Sevaks. Machender, who saw the notification, hatched a plan

for earning easy money by selling fake certificates to aspirants. He sought the help of Santosh for preparing fake certificates with aspirants' names and marks at about 97 or 98 per cent.

Three persons A. Rajesh Kumar, 30, A. Jayanth Kumar, 39, and S. Deepika succeeded in getting jobs by submitting fake documents given by Machender. They paid between ₹2 and ₹3 lakh for the certificates. Following a tip off, Jayanth and Rajesh, who joined the Postal Department, have been arrested, while Deepika is yet to be nabbed.

Task Force police said 13 fake certificates, two provisional engagement letters of postal department, five applications, and a laptop have been seized from the accused. Machender had earlier been arrested for similar offences at Malkajgiri and Pattabhipuram in AP.



## OTHER STORIES

### BODY OF NEWBORN FOUND NEAR RAILWAY TRACK

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NIRMAL, AUG. 19

Locals found the body of a two-year-old male baby in the bushes near railway platform no. 2 at Nirmal railway station on Wednesday.

Basar police team led by SI Raju visited the spot and registered a case of suspicious death. The police have begun investigating to find out if it was a kidnap and murder case or the parents did not want the baby.

### LEOPARD AND ITS CUBS KILL 2 DOGS IN BELTHARODA

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NIRMAL, AUG. 19

A leopard and its cubs killed two dogs on the outskirts of Beltharoda village in Thanoor mandal in Nirmal district on Wednesday.

The dogs were tied to a pole in the agriculture fields to guard the cotton crop.

The owner of the agriculture field informed the forests officials who rushed to the spot. The forest officials confirmed that the dogs were killed by the leopard and two cubs based on the pug marks at the crime scene. The animal was found moving in the forest close to the Beltharoda.

### IUML WANTS ACTION TAKEN ON HATEMONGERS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NIZAMABAD, AUG. 19

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has asked Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to initiate stringent action on hatemongers in Hyderabad.

National general secretary, MP P.K. Kunahalikutty, IUML, Telangana state general secretary Abdul Gani said that communal forces were trying to change Independence Day to August 5, the day bhoomipuja was conducted for the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

A memorandum in this regard was submitted to the CM through the Nizamabad collector on Wednesday.

### 7 OF FAMILY TEST +VE FOR COVID IN MALLAVARAM

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, AUG. 19

Seven members of a family in Mallavaram village under Madhira mandal tested positive for Covid-19 on Wednesday. The medical and health officials also conducted tests on 18 persons in Madhira mandal. Three cases were exposed in Madhira town and seven cases in Mallavaram.

In Wyra of the 27 tests that were conducted, 11 tested positive for Covid-19 cases. One case each was reported in Leela Sundariah nagar, Santhinagar, Gandhinagar, Brahmanapalli, Wyramain Road, Muslim Colony and ST Colony and two cases each in Idiranagar and Dwarakanagar. Four cases in Penuballi mandal, six in Nelakondapalli and two in Kallur mandal were recorded.

On Wednesday, health workers collected samples from 347 persons in Khammam district of which 87 tested positive.

Interestingly, the government has shifted the Covid-19 centre in the Youth Training Centre at Maddupalali to Sarada Engineering College at Ballepalli. Patients at the Maddulapalli Covid-19 centre complained that they were not being given food.

### MANUU INKS MOU WITH MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY

ATHER MOIN | DC  
HYDERABAD, AUG. 19

School of Technology, Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Defence University of Malaysia (UPNM), Kuala Lumpur, to promote qualitative research, collaborative work and exchange of faculty members in fields of mutual interest for the benefit of both universities.

Prof Abdul Wahid, Dean, School of Technology, MANUU, and Dr Khairul Amali Bin Ahmad, Dean, Faculty of Engineering, UPNM, Malaysia, will be coordinators for collaboration between the two universities.

# Inflows begin into Nizamsagar

## Inflows into the SRSP crossed 1 lakh cusecs

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC  
NIZAMABAD, AUG. 19

Nizamsagar project is receiving inflows from upstream areas of river Manjeera. Following rains in the catchment areas in Kamareddy and Medak districts for the last few days, water flows into the river have improved.

The Nizam era project located at Achampet in Nizamsagar mandal of Kamareddy district received inflows of 1,115 cusecs.

Presently, water level in the Nizamsagar has reached 1,379.74 feet as against its Full Reservoir Level (FRL) of 1,405 ft. Last year on the same day, the water level was 1,368.37 ft. Compared to last year the water storage has

■ **PRESENTLY, WATER level in the Nizamsagar has reached 1,379.74 feet as against its Full Reservoir Level (FRL) of 1,405 ft. Last year on the same day, the water level was 1,368.37 ft.**

increased from 0.14 tmc ft to 1.25 tmc ft. Irrigation department officials are hopeful that the Nizamsagar project may get copious inflows in August and September months.

Meanwhile, the Singeetham and the Kalyani reservoirs have reached Full Tank Level (FTL) and may supplement Nizamsagar main canal.

Pocharam reservoir in Kamareddy district has

been filling fast for the last couple of days.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday inflows crossed 1 lakh cusecs into the Sriramsagar project. By Wednesday afternoon 1.06 lakh cusecs of water had reached the project from the upstream areas.

The water level of the Sriramsagar project is 1,083.3 ft and average inflows recorded were 79,672 cusecs. Water storage has reached 61.766 tmc as against its gross storage capacity is 90.313 tmc.

Heavy inflows into the river Godavari from Maharashtra has fast filling the Sriramsagar project in Nizamabad district. Revenue and police officials alerted the people on the banks of the river Godavari of the rising water levels.



The NDRF team brings the dead of the Aroori Vamsi ashore on Wednesday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

# Youth drowns in Aakeru vagu

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, AUG. 19

A 23-year-old youth, Aroori Vamsi, who went fishing in the Aakeru stream in Nashkal village of Jangaon district got washed away after he had a seizure.

His friends tried in vain to save him. They

informed the villagers who alerted the Station Ghanpur MLA Thatikonda Rajaiah, district collector K. Nikhila and West Zone Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) B. Sreenivas Reddy who all rushed to the spot.

The local DRF teams' attempts to save him with the help of a rope too were

unsuccessful.

Later the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team arrived at the location and launched a rescue operation. However, they were able only to find his body on the outskirts of the village.

His body was shifted for autopsy to the MGM Hospital in Warangal. A

case of suspicious death was registered.

DCP Sreenivas Reddy said that due to heavy rains Aakeru Vagu is in spate.

The DCP asked the villagers not to go fishing at this time and remain safe at home. He also asked the farmers not to venture near lakes and tanks.

# After 4 days, rains take a break in old Adilabad

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, AUG. 19

People living in low-lying areas in old Adilabad district on Wednesday got relief as the rains took a break after four days.

The water in the streams and rivulets is gradually receding. However, certain mandals including Kadam and Khanapur in Nirmal district continue to receive sporadic heavy rainfall.

Government officials are actively participating in relief measures and trying to restore road connectivity to the villages cut off due to the overflowing of streams and rivulets and floodwater.

Inflows into the rivers Godavari, Penganga and Pranahitha have reduced compared to previous days.

However, officials released water downstream from the Kumarambheem project by lifting three gates following heavy inflows into the project.

Inflows were also witnessed in the Vattivagu in Kumarambheem in Asifabad district and into Swarna and Kadam projects in Nirmal district.

The administration now fears that the stagnation of floodwater in the villages may result in the spread of seasonal diseases in the villages.

The need of the hour is for the health and panchayat raj department to engage in sanitation works like sprinkling of bleaching powder and other chemicals to control the spread of seasonal diseases.

# Hand over rice by Sept. 15, millers told

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KAMAREDDY, AUG. 19

Rice millers have been told to complete the custom milling of 1.92 lakh metric tonnes (MTs) paddy worth of ₹352 crore and handover the rice to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) by September 15. Civil supplies and FCI officials will take up steps to complete the procurement of rice for the public distribution system.

To ensure a minimum support price of ₹1,835 per quintal for paddy, the government agencies had procured paddy from the farmers and was handed over to the rice millers. Rice millers are paid custom milling charges by the government. In this context, rice millers in Kamareddy district received 1.92 lakh MTs paddy for custom milling and rice, but have yet to hand it over to the FCI.

Reviewing the situation, Kamareddy district collector A. Sharath on Wednesday directed the officials to complete the procurement of rice by

■ **TO ENSURE** a minimum support price of ₹1,835 per quintal for paddy, the government agencies had procured paddy from farmers and had handed it over to the rice millers. Rice millers are paid custom milling charges by the government. Rice millers in Kamareddy district received 1.92 lakh MTs paddy.

September 15 from the millers. The collector said that space should be made available in FCI godowns for the rice stocks. "Engage more workers as and when required and complete the procurement during the stipulated period", he said.

The collector also asked the civil supplies joint custodian officials to monitor daily arrivals of rice.

Rice millers, civil supplies district manager Jithendra Prasad, FCI Nizamabad divisional manager Ashok Kumar and others were present.



From left: Cotton crop damaged due to floods in Turubaka village in Bhadradi district. BJP Kisan Morcha state president visits a cotton field that was damaged due to the floods in Sanjevareeddyapalem village in Bhadradi district on Wednesday.



— DECCAN CHRONICLE

# Rains damage crops in over 60,000 acres

A. RAVINDRA SESHU | DC  
KOTHAGUEM/KHAMMAM, AUG. 19

Though district-level farm officials are claiming that crop damage due to rains and floods in Khammam and Bhadradi-Kothagudem districts is about 23,000 acres, the actual damage extends to over 60,000 acres. Value of the crops lost is expected to exceed ₹90 crore. It is feared that if the ongoing second spell of rains continues, damage in

the two districts will be much higher.

More than 18,000 acres of paddy and cotton have got damaged due to floods in Godavari River in six mandals of Dumugudem, Charla, Aswapuram, Manuguru, Burgumpahad and Pinapaka in Bhadradi district. Cotton plants have completely withered and there is no chance of their recovery after the floods recede.

As far as paddy crops are concerned, the plants have

got washed away in floods in these mandals. Paddy fields in Turubaka in Dumugudem mandal have been totally destroyed. Y. Ravi Kumar of Turubaka village said floodwaters entered paddy fields and washed away the plants. CPI-M state secretary T. Veerabhadram has demanded that the government pay ₹15,000 per acre for cotton and ₹10,000 per acre of paddy as compensation.

Mandals including Kamepalli and Karepalli in

Khammam district have been worst hit due to extensive rains.

All streams in these mandals are overflowing, destroying paddy over 1,600 acres. Karepalli mandal recorded 91 percent while Kamepalli 81 percent of excess rains. Another 18 mandals have received excess rains ranging from 32 percent to 63 percent.

Rain water is standing one foot in 35,000 acres of Khammam district and 10,000 acres of Bhadradi

district. Farm experts say plants will get destroyed if the rains continue. Farmers will have to re-sow seeds in place of the destroyed ones. Mandals including Mudigonda, Vemsoor, Penuballi and Enkoor have received more than 50 percent of excess rains and crops over 6,000 acres have been damaged.

Mandadapu Sudhakar, a farm expert said, "If there is no relief from rains in the next two days, crop damage will be severe."

# Min: State to pull out all stops to revive battered Warangal

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, AUG. 19

Minister for panchayat Raj Errabelli Dayakar Rao on Wednesday said efforts are on to review the damages caused by flash floods in Warangal city. He thanked the state government for its support in executing the rescue operations.

He noted that the minister for municipal administration K.T. Rama Rao monitored the situation round the clock and provided all the help required.

The minister said that 97 colonies in 34 divisions were affected by floods. Apart from giving shelter to 4,500 affected people in the rehabilitation centres, 16,000 were provided food and water. The state will also allot a double bedroom house to those who lost their homes in the flood.

So far, the state has announced ₹10 crore to build a drainage system in Sammaiahnagar and ₹25 crore to re-lay damaged roads in the city. "More funds would be allocated if required once a detailed survey of the damaged is conducted," he said.

Mr Dayakar Rao said that the officials have taken up the repairs of damaged roads on a priority. According to him 23 R&B roads, eight panchayat raj roads and 65 corporation roads were damaged.

During his visit to the affected areas the people complained to Mr. Rama Rao that the floods were caused by the encroachments on nalas.

Accordingly, Mr Rama Rao had ordered action against such structures.

"We have issued orders to conduct a re-survey of

the nalas and remove all the encroachments within 45 days. A task force team with the district collector, police commissioner, GWMC commissioner, RDO, superintendent engineers of National Highways, irrigation and panchayat raj departments. The new municipal act has been brought into force avoid the mistakes of the previous governments. The new city master plan is also ready and will be announced soon by the Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao," he said.

Despite these efforts by the state government and the district administration the opposition parties are making hue and cry over the flood situation. Instead of appreciating the successful rescue operation, they are resorting to petty politics, he lamented.

TRIBAL | CULTURE

Adivasis observe Jagai Mathare Jagai after the Polala festival

# Ritual held to ward off seasonal diseases

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC  
ADILABAD, AUG. 19

Adivasis observed 'Jagai Mathare Jagai' (chasing away of seasonal diseases in their villages) in Adilabad district on Wednesday.

The 'Jagai Mathare Jagai' is part of the 'Bodaga' which is celebrated the day after the 'Polala' festival.

Adivasis perform a special ritual hoping that their villages will not be affected by seasonal diseases during the monsoon.

Like every year, this year besides the rituals for seasonal diseases, Adivasis also performed special rituals against the Coronavirus, as few Adivasis tested positive for the Covid-19 in old Adilabad district.

During the monsoons, Adivasis use bamboo stilts to cross the slushy areas in the villages and the fields. Walking on stilts helps them avoid snakes and diseases which they believe will come from the soil during the monsoon.

After the rituals the Adivasis walked up to the village outskirts carrying the bamboo stilts, raising slogans 'Jagai mathare... Jagai mathare Corona' and also shouted slogans to drive away cough and cold. After the ritual they participate in a community meal on the occasion.

Adivasis observed 'Polala' festival in their respective villages by decorating their oxen.



Adivasis of Marlavai village at the village outskirts after symbolically chasing away the Coronavirus during the 'Bodaga' that is observed the day after the Polala festival in Jainoor mandal in Kumarambheem Asifabad district on Wednesday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE



SHORT TAKES

UP SCRIBE HELD FOR SHARING ‘INDECENT’ POST

**Lucknow, Aug. 19:** The Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested a journalist for allegedly sharing an objectionable social media post on Ram temple, claiming that he did so on instructions of a Hindutva outfit's chief, an official said on Wednesday.

Accused journalist Prashant Kanojia had also been arrested in June last year for allegedly making objectionable remarks against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on social media, but had been granted bail on orders of the Supreme Court.

“Journalist Prashant Kanojia was arrested from Delhi on Tuesday in connection with an indecent post,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Somen Barma said on Wednesday.

The FIR against him was registered here at the Hazratganj police station on August 17 for allegedly sharing an indecent post on his twitter handle and saying that he did it on orders of Hindu Sena chief Sushil Tiwari, who denied the allegation.

The FIR registered on the complaint of Sub-Inspector Dinesh Kumar Shukla said, “On August 17, it was seen that Prashant Kanojia through his twitter handle (@Pjkanojia) had uploaded an indecent post related to Ram temple stating that it was done on orders of Tiwari.

The post was uploaded to malign Tiwari's image, said the sub-inspector in his complaint, adding that “such posts can disturb peace”.

The case against Prashant Kanojia was lodged under various sections of Indian Penal Code, including section 420, and those of Information Technology Act.

BIRLA ATTENDS GLOBAL MEET OF SPEAKERS

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** The fifth world conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP) is being organised jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Geneva and the Parliament of Austria from Aug. 19.

The conference is being held with the support of the United Nations.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the conference is being held in virtual mode.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla attended the inaugural session of virtual 5WCSP on Wednesday.

Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Meenakshi Lekhi, both Members of Parliament, Lok Sabha and Snehlata Shrivastava, Secretary General, Lok Sabha will also be attending the conference.

The theme of the 5WCSP is “Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet”.

RECOVERY AGENTS HIJACK BUS

**Agra/Lucknow, Aug. 19:** A privately-operated bus with 34 passengers on board was hijacked by recovery agents of a finance company in Agra on Wednesday morning, officials said.

The incident took place in the Malpura police station area when the bus was en route to Panna in Madhya Pradesh from Gurgaon in Haryana, according to police.

Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi said the bus driver, staff and passengers are safe. “Regarding the bus incident in Agra, the finance company had illegally seized the bus. The driver, staff and passengers are safe. The bus owner died on Tuesday and his son is conducting the last rites,” he said in a statement.

However, the statement did not mention the whereabouts of the bus.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Agra, Babloo Kumar said three people who got off the bus informed the police that representatives of the finance company had boarded the vehicle.

“Preliminary information reveals the bus has been taken away by the people from a finance company which had financed the vehicle. A case has been registered and police teams formed to search for it,” he said. He said it was a finance-related incident and the action of the men was “audacious”. The registration number of the sleeper bus is UP75M 3516 (Etawah in UP) but it is owned by a private operator in Gwalior.

Naval commanders meet



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviews innovations by Indian Navy to fight with Covid-19 pandemic on the inaugural day of Naval Commanders' Conference in New Delhi on Wednesday. Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh is also seen. Top commanders of the Indian Navy on Wednesday began an in-depth review of the evolving regional maritime security architecture as well as the border row with China in eastern Ladakh on the first day of a three-day conclave.

Now, Covid deaths cross 53,000-mark

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, AUG. 19

More than 64,500 fresh cases and nearly 1,100 deaths were reported in the country due to Coronavirus in the last 24 hours taking overall cases to 27.67 lakh and deaths to 52,889, as per Union health ministry's data.

However, the overall figures by Wednesday evening raced past 27.86 lakh and deaths crossed 53,000 according to covid19India.org.

Health ministry officials said India has tested more than 8 lakh Covid-19 samples for the second consecutive day in a row and the cumulative testing as on date has reached 3,17,42,782.

The Tests Per Million too have seen a sharp rise to 23,002 while positivity remains stable at around 8%. “With a strong resolve to rapidly increase the number of tests done per day to touch 10 lakh/day testing capacity, 8,01,518 samples were tested in the last 24 hours. The sustained level of high testing has

played a key role in India's increasing rate of recovery, widening gap between the recovered and active cases, and also progressively declining fatality rate,” officials said.

The total recoveries have now reached 20,37,870, taking the recovery rate to 73.64 per cent. However, with several persons reporting secondary ailments, post recovery has raised concerns about the post-treatment care needed by the patients and the possibility of re-infection.

According to American scientist and a prominent cardiologist Dr Eric Topol, there are no documented reinfections.

“For the respondents claiming there are documented SARS-CoV2 reinfections, that is exceedingly hard to prove, requires a BSL-3 lab, culture+, live virus. No reports to date,” he said. Dr Topol said SARS-CoV2 virus is evolving very slowly, so making neutralizing antibodies and vaccines have a better chance to succeed.”

It’s a victory for kin & fans, says family lawyer

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** Sushant Singh Rajput's family lawyer said on Wednesday that the Supreme Court's upholding the transfer to the CBI of the FIR against his girlfriend and actress Rhea Chakraborty and others for allegedly abetting the actor's suicide has given impetus to their “quest for justice”.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh said the apex court verdict is a victory for Rajput's family and fans.

The Supreme Court has accepted all points. The Court also clearly said that the FIR registered at Patna was correct, Singh told media persons.

Minutes later he tweeted: Well begun is half done. Has been a grueling time listening to experts that Patna had no jurisdiction to register the FIR. Our quest for justice gets impetus with the authoritative decision by Supreme Court.

His family, friends and admirers are keenly waiting the outcome of the investigation so that all the speculations floating around can be put to rest. “Therefore a fair, competent and impartial investigation is the need of the hour, the top court said.

Later, actress Rhea Chakraborty's lawyer said in his reaction to the Supreme Court verdict that truth will remain the same whichever agency investigates the case.

The Mumbai-based lawyer said in a statement that the actress will appear and face the investigation by the CBI as she herself had demanded such a probe in the death of her live-in partner.

The lawyer, Satish Maneshinde, further said that the apex court, after examining the facts and circumstances of the case and the report of the

LAW MINISTER SAYS JUSTICE TRIUMPHS

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** BJP leader and Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Wednesday hailed a Supreme Court order.

He also praised the “exemplary courage” shown by the actor's family and the “overpowering desire of the people of India” to see justice in the case and called it a new milestone.

“Justice triumphs! The soul of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput will surely now rest in peace with the assurance of a fair investigation by CBI on the FIR filed in Patna by Bihar Police whose request for transfer of case to CBI has been validated by the Supreme Court,” Prasad tweeted.

Mumbai police, has observed that it will be the desired justice as Rhea herself called for a CBI investigation.

The Supreme Court also observed that due to the allegations made by the two states of political interference against each other, it would be in the interest of justice to hand over the case to the CBI, he said.

Since the Court has transferred the investigation to CBI invoking it's powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India, she will appear and face the investigation by the CBI as she has done earlier with the Mumbai Police and the Enforcement Directorate. Rhea maintains that the truth will remain the same which ever agency investigates the case, Maneshinde said.

NAYEAR AZAD | DC  
PATNA, AUG. 19

The Supreme Court verdict allowing the CBI to probe the death case of actor Sushant Singh Rajput has raised the political temperature in Bihar.

After the verdict was announced on Wednesday, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in a tweet said that “action taken by Bihar police and the state government's decision to hand over the case to CBI has been termed as correct by the Supreme Court”.

“Few people tried to give political colour to the whole issue but the state government saw it as a matter related to justice only. I am confident that after the verdict CBI will begin a probe soon”, he added.

The apex court's verdict in the Sushant Singh Rajput case has come amid the ongoing tussle over the jurisdictional issue between the Maharashtra and Bihar police.

The state government had recommended CBI probe into the case after Sushant Singh Rajput's father filed an FIR against actress Rhea Chakraborty, her family and six others for abetment of suicide of his son and fraud.

“Supreme Court order transferring the case to the CBI has raised hopes for getting justice for Sushant Singh Rajput. The order vindicates the Bihar police stand that it was acting as per the law and Constitution”, Bihar DGP Guptaeshwar Pandey said.

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi also welcomed the court's verdict.

In a tweet, he said, “We welcome the decision of Supreme Court to allow

● **WHILE REFERRING** to Rhea Chakraborty's statement on Chief Nitish Kumar, Bihar DGP Guptaeshwar Pandey said, “she has no stature to comment on Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. It is due to the Chief Minister's support there is hope for justice in Sushant Singh Rajput's case”.

CBI to continue with its probe in Sushant death case on the basis of FIR filed by Bihar police. Our stand vindicated”.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, however, created a flutter in the political circles by claiming that it was his party which demanded a CBI probe into the case. While talking to reporters he said that “the state government acted after we demanded a probe into the case. We can now hope for justice for Sushant Singh Rajput's family”.

Political experts are of the view that different parties including the NDA could use the issue as an agenda during the assembly elections scheduled to be held later this year.

The issue had snowballed into political controversy last month after a Bihar cadre IPS officer who was sent to supervise the investigation was forcibly placed under home quarantine in Mumbai by BMC authorities.

While referring to Rhea Chakraborty's statement on Chief Nitish Kumar, Bihar DGP Guptaeshwar Pandey said, “she has no stature to comment on Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. It is due to the Chief Minister's support there is hope for justice in Sushant Singh Rajput's case”.



Sushant Singh Rajput

MUMBAI POLICE ASKED TO HAND OVER PROBE PAPERS TO CBI

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI, AUG. 19

The investigation into the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput was formally handed over to the CBI on Wednesday, bringing in a major setback to the Mumbai police.

The Mumbai police commissioner said they are awaiting detailed court order, while they are being asked to hand over all the case related documents to the central probe agency.

The decision came in contrast to the Mumbai police's argument of their counterparts in Bihar having no locus standi to lodge a first information report (FIR) in connection with the suicide that took place in Mumbai.

The apex court, however, stated in its observations on Mumbai police that their hostilities towards Bihar police were suspicious.

The single bench at the apex court ruled in the favour of a CBI probe stating the obstruction to Bihar police could have been avoided as it gave rise to suspicion over the bona fide of the inquiry.

We will assist CBI, says Maha home minister

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC  
MUMBAI, AUG. 19

Problems in the Pawar family are far from over: Soon after the Supreme Court decided to hand over the Sushant Singh Rajput case to the CBI, Parth Pawar tweeted *Satyameva Jayate*, which means truth shall prevail, without making any reference to the case.

Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar had called Parth “immature” for seeking CBI investigation in the case and said that he gives no importance to his grand-nephew's opinions.

Meanwhile, reacting to the Supreme Court order, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said some political leaders from Maharashtra have maligned Mumbai police's image, while the BJP accused the government of not letting the police to do impartial investigation.

Senior BJP leader Ashish Shelar said that the “hidden hands”, that have been misguiding the police investigation, will now be exposed.

“Thank you to the SC. Jail time for ‘Pub & party gang’ who enjoyed illegally, while 15,000+ Mumbaikars died in lockdown! Note-Justice will be done,” Shelar said in a tweet.

Former Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnis said that the Maharashtra government

needs to introspect on the way it handled the case.

“A decision that boosts faith in the judiciary system! Maharashtra Government now needs to introspect on the way they handled this case. Now, we expect justice in #SushantSinghRajput case and for his fans,” the former state chief minister tweeted.

However, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said that Maharashtra has always been at the forefront of fighting for truth and justice.

“Doubting the integrity of Mumbai Police was a “conspiracy,” Raut said, alleging that politicians maligned the Mumbai police.

The Shiv Sena leader said the Mumbai police had probed the case “in all fairness”. “Nobody is above law. With the Supreme Court giving its judgement, it is not right to make a political comment,” the Rajya Sabha member said.

Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said, “We welcome the apex court's verdict. We will assist the CBI. It is a matter of pride that the Supreme Court observed that the Mumbai police carried out their probe into the matter in a professional manner. The Supreme Court has observed in its order that there was no fault in the Mumbai police's probe.”

Government denies claim of delay in payment of remuneration, says orders already issued

Kerala docs allege exploitation, say not getting salary

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUG. 19

Widespread resentment prevails among the junior doctors in Kerala who allege that they have not been paid their remuneration despite being deployed in Covid First Line Treatment Centers (CFLTCs) and Second Line Treatment Centres across the state.

The junior doctors alleged that they were posted more than a month ago but are yet to get their remuneration. Besides they are not being granted seven days leave after 10 days continuous duty in the CFLTCs.

“We are not being given risk allowance or insurance coverage despite being exposed to Covid-19 patients,” said a junior doctor. The health authorities had issued an order in April end asking 980 house surgeons from all government medical colleges to join peripheral health centres for a period of 90 days.

After exempting lactating mothers, pregnant doctors and those who got PG, about 700 doctors had to join the peripheral centers. Since the majority of them did not get their permanent registration number, they couldn't join at that time. The health authorities issued another order on June 24 asking

the junior doctors to join duty before July 8 or face action under the Epidemic Act.

Most of them joined the duty without proper appointment letters, and were deployed in covid first line and second line treatment centres. Though their remuneration was fixed as ₹42,000 per month, there is no clarity who will disburse it and under which head.

“We have been included in the government's salary challenge under which six days salary has to be contributed to the chief minister's distress relief fund. This means we will get only ₹35,000 as remuneration,” said a doc-

● **THE JUNIOR** doctors have filed a petition in Kerala HC listing their problems and seeking redressal of grievances

tor. When contacted, Director Health Services of Kerala Dr Saritha refuted the allegations raised by the junior doctors.

“We have already issued orders regarding their remuneration. If they have any problem or if they don't know about it, please ask them to contact me. I will explain,” she said. However, she didn't respond to junior doctors' allegations regarding patient doctor ratio, denial of leave, risk allowance

and insurance coverage. At many CFLTCs, just two doctors are managing more than 100 patients, at times working continuously for 12 to 16 hours.

Though the authorities had assured that the junior doctors would get one week leave after 10 days duty in CFLTCs, in many cases the doctors are being asked to rejoin after three days leave. Junior doctors who contacted by this newspaper said despite several representations the authorities were not ready to redress their grievances.

They claimed that the doctors deployed by National Health Mission in CFLTCs were getting

₹52,000 including 20 per cent risk allowance and insurance coverage.

The junior doctors alleged that they are also being deployed in Second Line Covid Treatment Centres where critically ill patients are also being treated.

Since many patients require emergency support systems, the junior doctors are not trained to handle such cases. These doctors are also entrusted with swab collection of asymptomatic patients in the CFLTCs and even sent for field work including random testing in various communities.

The junior doctors have filed a petition in Kerala

high court listing their problems and have sought redressal of grievances.

Meanwhile, Kerala on Wednesday reported highest single day spike in Covid-19 cases with 2,333 testing positive for infection even as 1,217 persons recovered from the disease. The number of active cases in the state has risen to 17,382.

Seven deaths were reported in the state on Wednesday.

Of the new cases 2,151 got the infection through contact, 60 came from abroad, 98 from other states, source of infection is not known among 53 persons and 17 health workers also got infected.



## IN BRIEF

**Mali coup leaders pledge poll**

**Bamako:** Mali's president said Wednesday he had resigned to avoid "bloodshed" after he was detained in a military coup, whose leaders pledged new elections to resolve a spiralling political crisis in the fragile West African nation. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's government had been beset by months of protests over economic stagnation, corruption and a brutal Islamist insurgency that has claimed thousands of lives. Rebel soldiers took Keita and Prime Minister Boubou Cisse into custody on Tuesday afternoon and drove the pair to a military base on the outskirts of Bamako.

**Kabul rocket hit: Death toll at 3**

**Kabul:** A rocket attack that struck Kabul this week as the city marked Afghanistan's Independence Day killed at least three people, including two members of President Ashraf Ghani's honour guard. Fourteen rockets were fired into central Kabul on Tuesday as the country celebrated the 101st anniversary of its independence, with one of the missiles slamming into the compound of the Arg presidential palace. Interior ministry spokesman Tareq Arian said three people, including two government employees, had been killed in the strike. Another six honour guard members were wounded when the rocket hit the palace compound shortly after Ghani had wrapped up his ceremonial duties. The Arg palace is in a highly fortified area of the capital.

**Norway expels Russian diplomat**

**Copenhagen:** Norway's Foreign Ministry on Wednesday expelled a Russian diplomat linked to the case of a man jailed on accusations of spying for Russia, officials said. "We have today informed the Russian ambassador that one of his employees is unwanted in Norway and has been asked to leave the country. This is because the person in question has performed actions that are not compatible with his role and status as a diplomat," Siri R. Svendsen said. It was unclear whether the expelled diplomat was the Russian intelligence officer that Norwegian authorities said was meeting with the suspected spy in an Oslo restaurant when he was arrested on Saturday. The accused man has not been officially identified beyond that he is a Norwegian national in his 50s who was born abroad. However, Norwegian broadcaster NRK identified him as Harsharn Singh Tathgar.

**ASTEROID COMES CLOSEST EVER TO EARTH**

**Washington, Aug. 19:** An asteroid the size of an SUV passed 1,830 miles above Earth, the closest asteroid ever observed passing by our planet, NASA said Tuesday.

If it had been on a collision course with Earth, the asteroid — named 2020 QG — would likely not have caused any damage, instead disintegrating in the atmosphere, creating a fireball's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) said in a statement.

The asteroid, which was about 10 to 20 feet long, passed above the southern Indian Ocean on Sunday at 0408 GMT.

It was moving at nearly eight miles per second, well below the geostationary orbit of about 22,000 miles at which most telecommunication satellites fly. The asteroid was first recorded six hours after its approach by the Zwicky Transient Facility, a telescope at the Palomar Observatory at the California Institute of Technology, as a long trail of light in the sky.

The US space agency said that similarly sized asteroids pass by Earth at a similar distance a few times per year.

But they're difficult to record, unless they're heading directly towards the planet, in which case the explosion in the atmosphere is usually noticed — as in Chelyabinsk, Russia in 2013, when the explosion of an object about 66 feet long shattered windows for miles, injuring a thousand people.

One of NASA's missions is to monitor larger asteroids (460 feet) that could actually pose a threat to Earth, but their equipment also tracks smaller ones.

"It's really cool to see a small asteroid come by this close, because we can see the Earth's gravity dramatically bends its trajectory," said Paul Chodas, the director of the Center for Near-Earth Object Studies at NASA.

**Protest in Palestine**

Palestinian youth burn an Israeli flag as they protest against the United Arab Emirates decision to normalise ties with Israel, in the village of Turmus Aya near the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah on Wednesday. — AFP

**Oz PM: Make vaccine mandatory as race to develop it gathers pace**

**Sydney, Aug. 19:** Australia's leader called Wednesday for Coronavirus immunisations to be mandatory, wading into ethical and safety debates raging around the world as the race to develop a vaccine gathers pace.

Almost 30 potential vaccines are currently being tested on humans across the globe in hope of ending a pandemic that has now killed more than 775,000 people and infected nearly 22 million, according to an AFP tally.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he wants all 25 million Australians to get the jab after the country secured access to a vaccine currently under development by AstraZeneca and Oxford University.

"There are always exemptions for any vaccine on medical grounds, but that should be the only basis," he said.

Nations are scrambling to develop an immunisation or gain access to one of a handful of contenders in the final stages of clinical trials.

Upping the ante, Russia on August 11 said it had developed the world's first vaccine offering "sustainable immunity", and was in the final stage of human testing.

But the announcement was met with scepticism by the World Health Organization, which said it still needed a rigorous review, and scientists say it has been approved without large-scale trials.

Among the competitors, Brazilian health regulators on Tuesday gave the

**Iran surpasses 20K confirmed deaths from the Coronavirus**

**Tehran, Aug. 19:** Iran surpassed 20,000 confirmed deaths from the Coronavirus on Wednesday, the health ministry said the highest death toll for any Middle East country so far in the pandemic.

The announcement came as the Islamic Republic, which has been struggling with both the region's largest outbreak and the highest number of fatalities, went ahead with university entrance exams for over 1 million stu-

dents. Iran is also preparing for mass Shiite commemorations later this month.

Iran suffered the region's first major outbreak, seeing top politicians, health officials and religious leaders in its Shiite theocracy stricken with the virus. It has since struggled to contain the spread of the virus across this nation of 80 million people, initially beating it back only to see it spike again beginning in June.

Still, international experts remain suspicious of Iran's case counts. Even researchers in the Iranian parliament in April suggested the death toll is likely nearly double the officially reported figures, due to undercounting and because not everyone with breathing problems has been tested for the virus.

Iran reported its first case and death on the same day in February the Midwest's first outbreak of the virus. — Agencies

**Finland imposes tight border curbs**

**Helsinki, Aug. 19:** Finland has removed most EU countries from its "green travel list", with only arrivals from a handful of states now able to enter the country without restrictions, the government announced on Wednesday.

The tougher rules, aimed at halting the spread of the Coronavirus, mean

that only people coming from Italy, Hungary, Slovakia, Estonia and Lithuania will now be allowed into Finland without proving they have a valid reason for travel and self-isolating for two weeks.

Arrivals from Georgia, Rwanda and South Korea continue to be freely permitted. — AFP

green light to the final stage of trials on a vaccine by Johnson & Johnson.

The US pharmaceutical firm will test its drug on 7,000 volunteers in Brazil, authorities said, part of a

group of up to 60,000 worldwide.

South Africa, meanwhile, will launch clinical trials of a US-developed vaccine with 2,900 volunteers this week. — AFP

**BRAZIL NOD TO FINAL TESTS OF J&J VACCINE**

**Rio de Janeiro, Aug. 19:** Brazilian health regulators said Tuesday they had approved Johnson & Johnson's experimental vaccine against the new Coronavirus for the final stage of clinical trials, the fourth vaccine to receive widespread testing in the hard-hit country.

The US pharmaceutical company's subsidiary Janssen will test the vaccine on 7,000 volunteers across seven states in Brazil, part of a group of up to 60,000 worldwide, health regulator Anvisa said in a statement.

It said the test would be a randomized, controlled, double-blind Phase 3 trial, or large-scale testing on humans — the last step before regulatory approval. "Another vaccine study has been approved in Brazil, which is a very important development," Anvisa official Gustavo Mendes said in a video on the regulator's website.

Brazil has become a key testing ground in the search for a vaccine against Covid-19, since the virus is still spreading fast in the country.

The South American nation has the second-highest number of infections and deaths in the pandemic. — AFP

**Biden nominated to take on Trump****Party convention says Don's chaos will end**

**Milwaukee, Aug. 19:** US Democrats nominated Joe Biden as their 2020 presidential candidate on Tuesday, offering the Washington veteran as a "man of courage" who would sweep away the "chaos" of four years under Donald Trump.

Viewers tuning in to Day 2 of the four-day Democratic National Convention saw presenters affirm Biden's character and leadership while drawing a sharp contrast with the brash Republican scrambling to remain in the White House after November's election.

In an unprecedented and elaborate roll call vote that took place entirely online due to the Coronavirus pandemic, all 50 states and seven territories announced their vote tallies that cemented Biden's role as the party flagbearer.

It was a diverse array of politicians, everyday Americans and even some of Biden's erstwhile rivals who helped nominated the 77-year-old Biden.

"Well thank you very much, from the bot-

tom of my heart," a beaming Biden said in a live video link.

"It means the world to me and my family," he added, reminding viewers he will deliver a formal acceptance speech on Thursday at the conclusion of the four-day jamboree.

The nomination was a formality as he had already won the majority of the more than 3,900 delegates back in June.

The roll call came on Day 2 of the mostly virtual Democratic National Convention aimed at celebrating the party's candidate and welcoming independents and frustrated Republicans into their political movement to oust Trump from the White House.

The proceedings included a series of presentations by party leaders past and future who unleashed their own arguments against the White House incumbent and urged voters to rally around Biden.

The lineup featured 95-year-old president Jimmy Carter, who served one term from 1977, and 1990s commander-in-chief Bill

Clinton, who warned that the Trump White House is swirling with chaos instead of the competence necessary to address the nation's crises.

"At a time like this, the Oval Office should be a command center. Instead, it's a storm centre. There's only chaos," Clinton said.

"Just one thing never changes — his determination to deny responsibility and shift the blame," Clinton said. "The buck never stops there."

The night's emotional underpinning was delivered by Jill Biden, who closed out the night with a compelling profile of the man she married in 1977.

The educator from Pennsylvania delivered a personal, high-stakes prime-time testimonial describing how the personal tragedy of the death of Biden's first wife and daughter in a 1972 car crash has shaped him.

"How do you make a broken family whole?" she said. "The same way you make a nation whole. With love and understanding — and with small acts of compassion." — AFP

**HK bars AI flights till Aug.-end after passengers test Covid +ve**

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** Hong Kong has banned Air India flights till the end of August after some passengers on one of its flights tested positive for Covid-19 post arrival, a senior government official said on Wednesday.

Passengers from India can arrive in Hong Kong only if they have a Covid-19 negative certificate from a test done 72 hours prior to the journey, according to rules issued by the Hong Kong government in July.

Moreover, all international passengers are required to take a post-flight Covid-19 test at the airport premises in Hong

Kong. "Some passengers who landed in Hong Kong on one of Air India flights recently tested Covid-positive post arrival," the government official said.

"The Hong Kong government has banned all Air India flights till August-end," the official added.

Air India did not respond to the PTI's request for comment.

The airline had said on Twitter on Monday: "Due to restrictions imposed by Hong Kong Authorities, AI 310/315, Delhi Hong Kong Delhi of 18th August 2020 stands postponed. Next update in this regard will be intimated soon. Passengers may

please contact Air India Customer Care for assistance."

Besides India, a pre-flight Covid-19 negative test result certificate is mandatory for all passengers coming from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Africa and the United States, according to the Hong Kong government's rules. An airline operating a flight to Hong Kong from any of these nine countries has to submit a form before departure stating that all passengers onboard have Covid-19 negative certificates. — PTI

**EU leaders talk crisis in Belarus**

**Brussels, Aug. 19:** EU leaders held an emergency video summit Wednesday to discuss the crisis in Belarus, as the country's exiled opposition chief urged them to reject President's disputed reelection. France, Germany and EU Council President Charles Michel have all urged Lukashenko's close ally Russia to push for dialogue to end the crisis peacefully, after security services brutally broke up peaceful demonstrations calling for the long-ruling strongman to quit.

The EU is already working on a new round of sanctions against Belarus, targeting those involved in allegedly fixing the August 9 vote and in the bloody repression of protests, which have shaken Lukashenko's grip on the ex-Soviet republic as never before.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that his country could intervene in the crisis and this week warned against

"unacceptable" foreign interference in Belarus or pressure on its leadership. As the meeting began, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the EU "cannot accept the result of these elections" and called for "resolute and concerted" action.

"Our message to the regime is clear: violence is unacceptable, political prisoners must be released and human rights must be respected," he tweeted.

"Dialogue must lead to a solution that reflects the vote of the people", Lukashenko's claim to victory in the election with 80 percent of the ballot sparked the largest demonstrations in Belarus since it gained independence with the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

Opposition leader Svetlana Tikhonovskaya, a 37-year-old political novice who fled to neighbouring Lithuania after claiming victory in the vote, called on EU leaders "not to recognise these fraudulent elections". — Agencies

**IMRAN: PAK FUTURE LINKED WITH CHINA**

**SHAFIQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, AUG. 19**

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that Pakistan's future was linked with China. In an interview with a Pakistani television channel, he said it should be clear that "our future is tied to China which has stood by Pakistan through thick and thin." He said that both countries recognised each other's importance and were further strengthening mutual ties. Unfortunately, Western countries are using India against China, he added. He said Chinese President Xi Jinping was scheduled to visit Pakistan in May this year but his visit was delayed due to the coronavirus outbreak. His visit is now expected towards the end of the year, Mr Khan said.

The PM said Israel would not be recognised until a just and fair solution to the Palestinian problem is given.

**Keith Melton, an espionage historian, took four decades to find the crime instrument****MURDER | WEAPON**

**Washington, Aug. 19:** The ice axe that was plunged into Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky's skull during his gruesome murder in Mexico on August 20, 1940 is today among the prized exhibits at Washington's International Spy Museum.

It took Keith Melton, an espionage historian for the CIA, nearly four decades to find it — as well as to figure out why the assassin sent by Joseph Stalin, Ramon Mercader, used the axe to kill Trotsky.

Melton, who combed the world to amass the collection of ingenious and

macabre tools of the black arts of spying that fill the museum, had his eye on finding the weapon since the 1970s.

It had disappeared shortly after the assassination. Following clues from Mexico to Moscow and countries in between, Melton repeatedly came up empty-handed. "I like detective hunts. This really is one that challenged me," he said. As he searched, he also focused on a mystery: Why choose an ice axe?

An experienced mountaineer, Mercader was handy with the tool, also known as a piolet.

But just shooting the 61-year-old revolutionary would have been easier, after several failed attempts crafted by the Russian NKVD, or secret police.

Trotsky never left his small compound in the Mexican capital where he went into exile, protected by a handful of armed guards. But Mercader gained entry to the revolutionary's small entourage as the lover of a New York Trotskyite, who believed he was a left-leaning son of a wealthy Belgian diplomat — a cover designed by the Russian NKVD, or secret police.

After moving to Mexico

● **RAMON MERCADER, the assassin, gained entry to the revolutionary's small entourage as the lover of a New York Trotskyite, who believed he was a left-leaning son of a wealthy Belgian diplomat — a cover designed by the Russian NKVD, or secret police.**

City, over time Mercader could enter and leave the compound without being searched. Shooting Trotsky was one option, but it risked noise that could

make escaping difficult.

Then, weeks before the planned act, Melton says, Trotsky installed a new metal gate at the entry controlled by an electric switch in the guard booth.

That meant Mercader would have to kill Trotsky quietly and instantaneously with the ice axe's jagged pick, so that he could walk out, the guards unsuspecting. "I had a rare ability to handle the piolet, since two blows were sufficient for me to crack through an enormous block of ice," Mercader told police afterward. Where to get one in Mexico, though? As it tur-

ns out, the son of the owner of Mercader's residence had one, and so he stole it.

Mercader cut the long handle down by half, and entered the compound on the day of the attack hiding it — along with a backup pistol and knife — under a raincoat.

It did not go as planned: The axe went 2.75 inches deep into Trotsky's skull but did not immediately kill him. The victim shouted and struggled, the guards were alerted, and Mercader was captured.

Trotsky died in hospital the next day. And, after

being displayed at a police press conference, the grisly weapon disappeared.

Over the years, Melton saw numerous axes purported to be the original, including one on display in a Prague museum. But none were the right brand or model, from the Austrian maker Werkgen Fulpmes.

Finally, in 2005, the daughter of a former Mexican police officer, Ana Alicia Salas, revealed she had kept the axe under her bed for years. It matched perfectly, and Melton eventually bought it for his collection — for how much, he won't say. — AFP



## DECCAN Chronicle

20 AUGUST 2020

### MP govt's job quotas: Dangerous, desperate

The Madhya Pradesh government's move to reserve all state jobs for sons of the soil, so to say, is dangerous and unprecedented. It is unprecedented because though there have been similar, discriminatory, measures recently taken by various state governments — Andhra Pradesh has blocked industrial jobs, Karnataka gives priority to Kannadigas, Maharashtra reserves some jobs for people residing there for 15 years and Uttarakhand recruits local inhabitants to some posts — no state had earlier placed 100 per cent of its jobs in a particular segment in the reserved category.

The measure may be unconstitutional under Article 19(1)(d) (right to freedom of movement), Article 19(1)(e) (right to residence) and Article 16(2) that states "no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against, in respect of any employment or office under the state". Only Parliament can enact residence- and employment-based laws, but the power does not extend to state governments.

The MP Chief Minister's announcement is also in violation of the Supreme Court's landmark judgment in the 1992 Indra Sawhney versus Union of India case. The court had ruled that the total number of reserved seats cannot exceed 50 per cent of jobs available.

Clearly, legal rectitude was the last thing on the mind of CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan when he made this pronouncement. The ruling party is facing indifferent prospects in the impending bypolls in the state. These bypolls, which will elect MLAs to 24 Assembly seats, are crucial for the party to retain its majority in the state legislature. Hence this crude appeal to identity, and insecurity, growing in a Covid year that has seen massive retrenchment.

However, though expedient, this appeal is problematic and will prove detrimental to the interests of everyone in the long run. "Son-of-the-soil" debates are typically framed as a conflict between the individual citizen's "liberal" right to freedom of movement and the collective "democratic" right of the people of a state to self-determination. Except that the binary projected here is a false one. The Indian economy is a single entity that is characterised by regions and cities functioning as hubs of certain trades and professions, having an edge over others based on the prior availability of natural and human resources, initial access to specialised skills and related infrastructure development. It is imperative for governments, therefore, to let citizens travel, train and work at these hubs not only so as not to deprive them of their right to develop their own expertise but also to ensure flow of talent for achieving the best GDP. Second, the rationale behind economic protectionism makes a limited sense but only when borders restrict the inward flow of goods and resources into the state and the outward flow of its people for business and employment. Three, place of birth and domicile reservations principally militate against the government's own vision of a single market for which it implemented the controversial Goods and Services Tax.

It is indeed ironical that a ruling party which has enthusiastically extended domicile rights for land as well as jobs to non-locals and central employees in Jammu and Kashmir so far safeguarded as special rights and privileges under articles 370 and 35A is seen following the exact opposite policy in another state. It will no doubt set a dangerous precedent in these increasingly socially divisive times that will not serve our economy well either.

### Court snub to Vedanta

Not many court verdicts bring cheer to a state. So, if the Madras High Court telling the Vedanta group that it cannot reopen its Sterlite Copper plant in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi evoked merriment in various spheres, including politics, there is a history. Right from its inception, the mega smelter project has been embroiled in legal tangles, besides earning public ire. Despite a well-oiled PR machinery whirring continuously, the company could not endear itself to the local people, who had been opposing it. Besides, the environmentalists were also at its jugular.

The unprovoked, calculated police firing at peaceful protestors on May 22, 2018, that left 13 innocent persons dead, however, came as the last straw in changing the public perception all over the state. Sterlite Copper became a symbol of state tyranny for the people, who had earlier seen it as a typical "environment versus development" row. For, the company's closure in 2010 following a high court order was due to alleged violation of pollution control norms and the 100-day public protest that culminated with the police firing, too, was started against alleged degradation of the environment.

But the vignettes of the 2018 police action, beamed live on television, impelled the people to see Sterlite Copper as evil, all its propaganda on making India self-reliant on copper or the plethora of livelihood opportunities it offered for locals notwithstanding. That was why the local people, who had anyway vowed not to let the company open again, welcomed Tuesday's verdict as justice rendered to the sacrifices of the 13 martyrs.

On the flipside, Sterlite Copper's history has made many fear its emergence like a phoenix as in 2013 when the Supreme Court allowed its reopening with a fine of Rs 100 crore under the 'polluter pays' doctrine. That the EIA 2020 seeks to enforce such doctrines and the BJP was the only political party that did not welcome the high court verdict only adds to their concerns.

#### DECCAN CHRONICLE

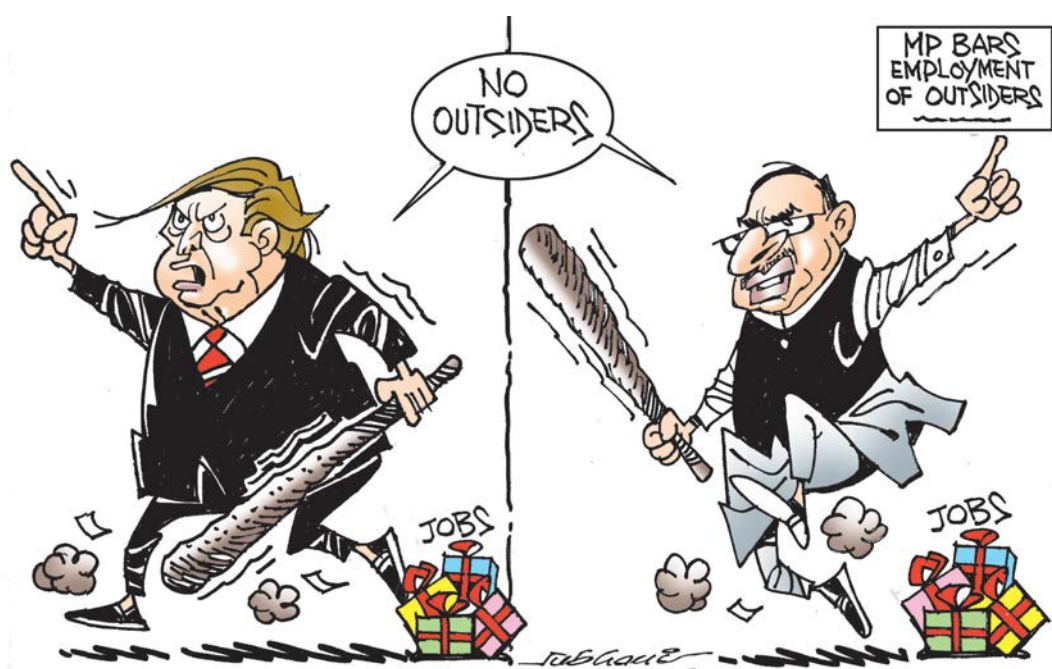
ADITYA SINHA  
Editor

K. SUDHAKAR  
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

**Hyderabad:** 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax: 040-27805256  
**Vijayawada:** No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234  
**Visakhapatnam:** Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285  
**Rajahmundry:** Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208  
**Anantapur:** Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904  
**Karimnagar:** Survey No.1341, Vavilalpally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433  
**Nellore:** Survey No.527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemmudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580  
**Chennai:** SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325  
**Bengaluru:** 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Feet Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560 095 Ph: 080-43460500; Fax: 080-22960552  
**Coinbatore:** 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coinbatore - 641 009, Ph : 0422 2231255  
**Kochi:** No.3-B, 3rd Floor of DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Emakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408  
**Thiruvananthapuram:** St Joseph's Press, TC 15/1040, Cotton Hill, Thycud (PO), Thiruvananthapuram 695 014  
**Kozhikode:** Door No 6/1002 E, First Floor of City Mall, Opp. YMCA, Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001, Fax : 0495 4019 018  
 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: H/SD-348/2006-08

Subhani



## 'Lockdown generation' at risk: Save their jobs



Patralekha Chatterjee

Dev 360

Sahil, a South Delhi manicurist, is back at work. His salon reopened in June. He did not get his salary for April and May, during the lockdown, when the parlour was shut. Now he has some work, but no regular salary. The footfalls are too few, his bosses say. Sahil has to make do with just 30 per cent of the amount the customers pay for his services. "My earnings at the end of the month barely cover my expenses. But I have no choice, I have to come to work just to keep my "job", he says, from behind a mask and a face shield. Sahil is in his twenties, single and lives with his family. He concedes that he is relatively lucky. Without family support, he says, he wouldn't have been able to survive in Delhi on his current earnings.

Sahil could well be the face of the "lockdown generation". In the time of the pandemic, his story is all too common. According to recent data from the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE), one of India's leading business information companies, 17.7 million regular salaried jobs were lost in April alone this year.

By July, that figure had shot up to 18.9 million, CMIE data shows. The CMIE data analysis underlines a grim fact during Unlock 3.0. The economy has been opening up in a phased manner since June, and some of the "jobs" are coming back, but the "recovery" has been largely in informal jobs. More and more young people find themselves in Sahil's situation. "While salaried jobs are not lost easily, once lost they are also far more difficult to retrieve," CMIE notes.

The beauty industry, one of the largest job-generators in this country during pre-coronavirus

times, is one among many sectors that has been badly hit. Even rich customers are wary of spending much time inside parlours though the staff wear protective gear and safety protocols are maintained. Many back alley parlours in urban India have shut down. The bigger parlours that have survived are functioning at 30-40 per cent of their staff strength. More than a dozen beauty salon workers died by suicide during the lockdown, according to reports in the media. The All India Hair and Beauty Association, which has around eight lakh salon professionals, have launched a "Save Salon India" campaign.

The grim data about job losses and further casualisation of the workforce in a country where only 21 per cent have regular salaried jobs bears out an unsettling reality.

While the elderly have absorbed the worst of the health impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the young are likely to be disproportionately absorbing its economic and social impacts in the times to come.

A recently released report by the International Labour Organisation and the Asian Development Bank titled "Tackling the Covid-19 Youth Employment Crisis in Asia and the Pacific" estimates that in India, the job losses will affect at least 4.1 million youths.

Construction and agriculture have witnessed the major job losses among seven key sectors, the ILO-ADB report pointed. In India, two-thirds of firm-level apprenticeships and three quarters of internships were completely interrupted during the pandemic, the report said. Huge chunks of the service sector have also been gutted — hotels, restaurants, beauty parlours, wholesale and retail, real estate and

many other businesses are severely hit and millions of workers, especially the young, are seeing their dreams going up in smoke.

Those who have been laid off or are desperately looking for jobs are being asked to start their own businesses, but just how easy is it to follow that prescription and how are women faring in the current context?

A recent article by academics Dipa Sinha and Sonu Mitra in the *Leaflet* makes some pertinent points. "The post-Covid stimulus package focused majorly on easing credit availability for the MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) through these schemes. For example, the Covid package announced by the Government of India includes ₹50,000 crores in equity infusion for MSMEs, almost ₹3,00,000 crores in collateral-free loans for MSMEs and other businesses, and two per cent interest subvention on Mudra Sishu loans — 68 per cent of these beneficiaries being women. However, it does not mention special provisions for women-owned micro-enterprises or the sectors which have a concentration of women's businesses," say Sinha and Mitra. Further, as the authors point out, "the emphasis of the announcements remains on easing loans and credit rather than providing access to markets, which becomes crucial in the post-lockdown scenario. It is not only the disruption in supply, but the slackening of overall demand within the economy, which can potentially lead to closures of many such small businesses, especially for women who are anyways perceived as 'secondary earn-

**While the elderly have absorbed the worst of the health impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the young are likely to be disproportionately absorbing its economic and social impacts**

ers' within a household."

Analysing the impact of the Covid-19 crisis is needed for the targeted policy intervention to help the most affected and more vulnerable sections of the population. Providing income support to workers and enterprises is an immediate policy concern, argue Basit Abdullah and Kashif Mansoor, research scholars at the Centre for Development Studies in Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram, in a recent report for the Azim Premji University. "It is important that the youth are not long-term unemployed since it affects their future career prospects and earning potential. Massive short-term training and skill development programmes for youth along with social protection expansions will increase the chances of them finding employment in growing sectors post the pandemic. This will help limit the long-term effects of the pandemic on the youth labour market," the authors advocate.

The ILO has warned that young people could well be left behind in large numbers as the world finally emerges from the pandemic and that the initial shock to young people will last a decade or longer than a decade.

For India, a country with a dominantly young population, this is a terrifying scenario with political and social repercussions. India's economy was already in a slow-down mode. The lockdown knocked it down further. If there are no policies and initiatives specially targeting the youth — the lockdown generation — or if they are not followed through, and young people go without jobs for long stretches, the famed demographic dividend would turn upside down and morph into a demographic disaster.

We simply cannot let that happen.

*The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com.*

#### LETTERS

##### COVID TESTING

The only way to defeat Covid-19 is to conduct more tests and states should not shy away from reporting cases (*Low testing, few cases is TS trick, DC, Aug. 19*). The correct way to measure testing is find out how tests were done per million. It is possible to infer that due to low testing, some infected people could be dying before hospitalisation and they are not counted under Covid-19 deaths. They could also be spreaders.

A.R.R. Datta

Hyderabad

##### EMBRACE FARMERS

Farmers seem to be losing confidence in Rythu Bandhu and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana during this critical time as they fail to provide funds for the loss on account of extreme monsoon conditions in the state. The massive loss for Warangal farmers who lost over 37,300 acres of paddy and 72,000 acres of crops lost across Warangal Rural is a case in point.

Sreelakshmi Peri

Hyderabad

##### SURESH RAINA

In the rush to remember M.S. Dhoni on his retirement, we ignored the contributions of Suresh Raina who also retired that day. He made highest runs in 20-20 match and also he made century in all the three formats.

Balekar Shanker Lal

Hyderabad

Email your letters to [info@deccanmail.com](mailto:info@deccanmail.com), [editor@deccanmail.com](mailto:editor@deccanmail.com). You can also send them to Editor, Deccan Chronicle, 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad-500 003.

##### Godavari still rising, Army relief rushed

HYDERABAD, August 19 Army help has been rushed to the flood-stricken people of Nizamabad district even as unprecedented rains continued to lash the area today.

The Godavari is still rising and in the past 24 hours over ten inches

of rainfall has been recorded. The water flow recorded

at 11 a.m this morning at Pochampad project was over eight lakhs cusecs — 25 feet above the spillway. The Godavari waters have caused breaches at several places, overflowing railway tracks and marooning at least two villages. At least three bridges have been washed away so far.

Sanju Verma



## Modi govt has a modern and mature outlook on gender

Last year, on International Women's Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invoked the indomitable spirit of Nari Shakti by reaffirming how India fully endorsed the United Nations in its "think equal, build smart, innovate for change" motto with regard to women's empowerment. Again, during one of his inspiring Mann ki Baat speeches in October 2019, Mr Modi recounted real life anecdotes of ordinary women who chose to do extraordinary things to make a difference to others' lives. Mr Modi shared the story of Major Khushbu Kanwar who is considered "Bharat ki Laxmi" by many; Khushbu is the daughter of a bus conductor and she led the all-women contingent of the Assam Rifles. Narrating another motivating story, Mr Modi spoke about a 92-year-old woman who had been providing free drinking water to travellers at Gwallor railway station for many years. During his Vijayadashmi address in October, Prime Minister Modi said, "In the last nine days we worshipped Ma Durga. Taking that

spirit ahead, let us always work towards furthering empowerment, as well as the dignity of women. During Mann Ki Baat, I had spoken about 'Ghar ki Laxmi' and 'Bharat ki Laxmi'. This Diwali, let us celebrate the accomplishments of our Nari Shakti. This can be our Laxmi puja."

On August 15, 2020, in keeping with his women-centric governance model, Mr Modi pointed out that now women have an opportunity to have permanent employment in the Indian Army and Indian Navy, something that was unthinkable earlier. He added, "Whenever women got an opportunity, they made India proud. The country is now determined to provide equal opportunities of self-employment and employment to women. Now, women are also working in coalmines. Our daughters are scaling heights by flying fighter planes."

But if there was one thing that stirred the imagination of 1.38 billion people more than anything else, it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unabashed acknowledgement

from the ramparts of the Red Fort of how 6,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras had provided around five crore sanitary pads at ₹1 to poor women in rural India. Despite all the bombast about 21st century women, the harsh reality is that even in the most educated, elite, modern and seemingly civilised societies, menstruation is often a topic that is taboo. It should not be, but it has come to be a source of embarrassment, with men squirming at the very mention of the word "menstruation". Hence, for Mr Modi, an international leader of towering repute, to openly embrace and mainstream the issue of women's hygiene is not mere symbolism. By doing what he did, Prime Minister Narendra Modi sent a strong message. From defining the nation's first menstrual hygiene protocol, amending the Medical Termination Pregnancy Act of 1971, giving women reproductive rights over their bodies and increasing the foetal gestation period from 20 to 24 weeks, welcoming more women recruits in the NCC, to criminalising the inhuman and unconstitutional practice of instant

triple talaq and setting up a committee to explore an increase in marriageable age from 18 to 21 years for women, the Modi government has truly exhibited a bold, woman-friendly approach which is both mature and modern.

Banning commercial surrogacy, which led to mushrooming of illegal IVF and surrogacy clinics, was yet another bold move by the Modi government. Now, only married Indian couples, who have been together for a minimum of five years and been deemed medically unfit by a doctor or practitioner to conceive children naturally, will be allowed to depend on a surrogate. The move now makes it difficult for people to run a "rent a womb" business and exploit women in the economically weaker sections, who are often left in the dark about their rights.

Women's empowerment is not just about gender equality. It also means more jobs, higher safety, protection of the girl child and, most importantly, just "letting women be". If there is one leader who has recognised women for what they are and who

they are, it is Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Whether it is providing free cooking gas via the famous PM Ujjwala Yojana to over 8.5 crore poor households, financial inclusion via 25 crore new bank accounts for women only from a total of 40 crore Jan Dhan accounts, the Mahila Shakti Kendras to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development or the Mahila-E-Haats for facilitating direct contact between vendors and buyers, the Modi government has always been ahead of the curve. The government's holistic approach in making Beti Bachao Beti Padhao a reality is best amplified by the fact that out of 25 crore loans given under the Mudra Yojana, 70 per cent of the beneficiaries have been women. The entrepreneurship ecosystem for women has taken a massive leap of faith under Mr Modi and this is just the beginning, with a lot more to come.

*The writer is an economist, chief spokesperson for BJP's Mumbai unit and bestselling author of 'Truth & Dare' — The Modi Dynamic*



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,614.79	0.22
Nifty 50	11,408.40	0.20
S&P 500*	3,394.42	0.14
Dollar (₹)	74.82	-0.07
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.28	-0.96
Euro (₹)	89.41	-0.54
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	54,269*640	1.17
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	45.32	-0.14
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.008	0.022
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.654	-0.015

GST Council to discuss states' compensation

The GST Council is likely to meet on August 27 to discuss the compensation payout to states and the opinion of the attorney general on the legality of market borrowing to meet revenue shortfall. Sources said the 41st meeting of the council would be a single agenda meeting on states' compensation to be held via video conferencing. Besides, a full-fledged meeting of the Council would be held on Sept. 19.

Inter-ministerial meet on royalty payments soon



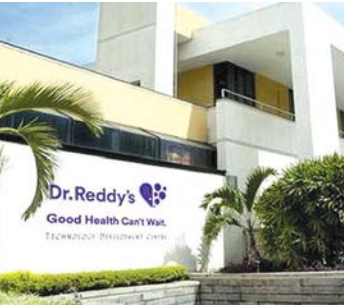
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has convened an inter-ministerial meeting on royalty payments on Aug. 25, an official said. DPIIT secretary Guru-prasad Mohapatra will chair the meeting. Officials from commerce department, RBI and revenue department would participate in the deliberations. Earlier, a proposal was under consideration to impose some kind of limits on royalty payments.

Pvt placement of bonds up 22% in April-July

Companies raised Rs 2.57 lakh crore through issuance of bonds on private placement basis in the first four months of the ongoing fiscal, up 22 per cent from the year-ago period. According to Sebi data, companies listed on BSE and NSE garnered a total of Rs 2,57,387 crore during April-July, 2020-21. In comparison, listed firms raised Rs 2,08,795 crore in the first four months of 2019-20.

Dr Reddy's Lab launches Avigan in Indian market

Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd announced the launch of Avigan (favipiravir) 200 mg tablets in India. The launch is part of the global licensing agreement with Fujifilm Toyama Chemical Co Ltd that grants the Indian drug maker the exclusive rights to manufacture, sell and distribute the tablets in India, said M. V. Ramana, CEO of branded markets (India and emerging markets), Dr Reddy's Laboratories.



■ Disease-specific policies suggested Health cover set to overtake motor

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, AUG. 19

Health insurance has become the biggest line of business under the general insurance category and by the year end, it would overtake motor insurance, however the protection gap in tier-2 and 3 cities remains a concern as it has serious implications on the financial health of the poor, said the insurance regulator on Wednesday.

T Alamelu, member-non-life at the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) while speaking at a Ficci virtual health insurance conference suggested that insurers could focus on launching disease-specific policies to increase the customer base.

Citing the example of the huge sale of corona-specific insurance products, Alamelu said that as of August 14, a total of 7.50 lakh policies covering 10.28 lakh lives have been sold under Corona Kavach by insurers. The premium collected was Rs 215 crore. Under the Corona Rakshak policy which is a benefit-based health plan, insurers have sold 1.83 lakh policies covering 2.17 lakh lives and collected premiums of Rs 29 crore. This is in contrast to Aarogya Sanjeevani policy, a standard health insurance policy launched in April 2020 where insurers have sold only 72,000



policies and collected Rs 33 crore premium only.

"It just shows that there is a fear factor among the public so they are finding a lot of value in the Corona Kavach. It's a short-term policy and relatively cheaper, hence people are buying it in large numbers. Also, not many people have opted for the three-and-a-half-month tenure and most have opted for nine-and-a-half months, as they believe the virus is not going away any time soon," Alamelu said.

Covid-19-specific plans have tenure of 3.5 months, 6.5 months or 9.5 months.

Going forward, Alamelu said there is a need to re-think the way health insurance is sold and to ensure that the product creates more value for customers. "This is what the customer is looking for,"

Health insurance companies should focus on developing disease-specific policies to cover a larger population rather than

focusing only on healthy individuals, she added.

"Insurers could look at blending wellness with health insurance. For example, someone who has diabetes could be offered a health plan with a wellness element so that the policyholders are also motivated to stay fit," she said.

Speaking about the gap in health insurance Alamelu said that even as 27 lakh Indians have tested positive for Covid-19 so far, only 1.25 lakh health insurance claims have been filed. However, there is a rise in awareness as far as health insurance is concerned. Alamelu said there have been 131 new health products between March and now.

"We have almost 96 per cent people who have not claimed any health insurance under Covid-19. Having a minimal health insurance cover with exclusions is atleast better than having no medical cover," she added.

Iron ore's stunning rally faces challenge

ANNIE LEE AUG. 19

Iron ore's stunning rally this year, underpinned by China's demand for the steel-making raw material, risks slowing as miners ramp up output.

The industrial material blasted past \$120 a tonne this week, propelled by China's stimulus to prop up its pandemic-hit economy and supply disruptions that constrained output of the raw material.

Miners, who have gained from the more than 30 per cent jump in iron ore prices this year, now see the rally as unsustainable. BHP Group expects prices to ease from current levels while volatility remains. That's similar to view of top producer Vale SA, which said last month it doesn't see support for high prices in the short-to medium-term.

Iron ore demand from mills in China is likely to remain strong, analysts at ING Bank NV said in a note on Wednesday, adding that uncertainties over Brazilian supply in recent months has also been supportive for



the market. "But as these uncertainties subside, we would expect prices to ease," according to the note.

Supply from Brazil, which is in the grip of the coronavirus, has also been gradually picking up with 1.68 million tonnes shipped daily in the first 10 business days of August, an increase from 1.48 million tonnes a day in the 23 business days of July. Exports from Australia's leading port also hit a record July.

China's economic stimulus has raised hopes of a recovery in downstream activity, bolstering the outlook for iron ore demand. Crude steel output topped 90 million tonnes for a third straight month in July, and is on course to breach 1 billion tonnes this year.

—Bloomberg

Apple hits \$2 trillion mark in market cap

New York, Aug. 19: Apple Inc became the first publicly listed US company with a \$2 trillion stock market value on Wednesday, as Wall Street investors put aside challenges to its iPhone ecosystem in favor of bets it will only prosper more in the post-coronavirus world. Shares in the company have surged since blowout quarterly results in July that saw the iPhone maker eclipse Saudi Aramco as the world's most valuable listed company, up about 57 per cent in value so far in 2020.

The moves reflect growing investor confidence in Apple's shift towards relying less on sales of iPhones and other gadgets and more on services for its users, as well as a broad shift by big institutional investors during the coronavirus crisis.

With Amazon, Microsoft and Google-owner Alphabet, all now worth around \$1 trillion or more, the big US tech companies are together worth more than \$6 trillion.

Cupertino, California-based Apple surprised Wall Street as it was able to get loyal shoppers buy iPhones, iPads and Macs online even as several brick-and-mortar stores remained closed due to the coronavirus lockdowns in various states.

—Reuters

Auto parts firms see 30% fall in revenue in 2 years

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, AUG. 19

The total revenues of the automotive component industry in FY20 fell 11.7 per cent to Rs 3.49 lakh crore (\$49.2 billion) from the previous year, the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association (Acma) said on Wednesday.

Deepak Jain, president at Acma said that there will be about 25-40 per cent de-growth this year and a 30-35 per cent de-growth in two years.

The Acma, the apex body representing the auto parts sector, released the findings of its Industry Performance Review for FY20 on Wednesday.

"The revenues in June quarter was at 15 per cent level compared to the March quarter. Month-on-month, there is an improvement and we see this improving till the festive period. Nevertheless, over a two-year period, we are seeing a 30-35 per cent de-growth," Jain said.

The turnover of the auto component aftermarket (the segment where components are sold in the market freely, through shops) at Rs 69,381 crore (\$9.8 billion) in FY20 remained stable, while sales to original equipment manufacturers in the domestic market declined 17 per cent to Rs 2.87 lakh crore (\$40.5 billion), both over the previous year.

In FY20, imports and exports declined by 11.4 per cent and 3.2 per cent,



respectively. Imports stood at Rs 1.09 lakh crore (\$15.4 billion) and exports at Rs 1.02 lakh crore (\$14.5 billion).

"The automotive industry faced a prolonged slowdown in FY20, with vehicle sales in all segments plummeting significantly," Jain pointed out.

Subdued vehicle demand, investments made for transition from BS-IV to BS-VI emission norms, liquidity crunch, lack of clarity on policy for electrification of vehicles and slowdown in key export markets, among others, had an adverse impact on the performance of the components sector as also on its expansion plans, he said.

In the wake of the financial stress, the government in June, approved a Rs 20,000-crore aid package to the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) sector.

Several Tier -III companies from the auto component sector also benefited from this initiative.

Timely release of payments from the automakers helped tide over the crunch.

Jain said the revival in demand for vehicles since the second half of June has resulted in an uptick in demand for auto parts. Several two-wheelers and car makers have also witnessed demand jumping back to the pre-COVID levels, he said.

"With the unlocking of the economy, growth seems to be returning to the industry with uptick in vehicle consumption, especially in the two-wheeler, passenger vehicle and the tractor segments, although sales of commercial vehicles continue to be challenged," Jain said.

To allow for uninterrupted production in the automotive value chain, despite local lockdowns, Acma has recommended to the government to accord 'continuous production industry' status to the automotive industry.

World Bank says may project steeper growth contraction

New Delhi, Aug. 19: The World Bank on Wednesday indicated that it may further lower its growth projections for India and said critical reforms in key areas such as health, labour, land, skills and finance are needed to come out stronger from the Covid-19 crisis.

The World Bank had in May projected that the Indian economy will contract by 3.2 per cent in FY 2020-21 (April 2020 to March 2021) and rebound slowly in the next financial year.

"Further challenges

have emerged in recent weeks which are likely to weigh on the prospects in the near term. These risks include the virus continuing to spread; further deterioration in the global outlook; and additional strains projected on the financial sector.

"Keeping these factors in mind, a steeper contraction may be projected in the revised outlook that will be available in October 2020," it said in its India Development Update released on Wednesday.

It projected India's fiscal deficit to rise to 6.6 per

cent of GDP in FY21 and remain elevated at 5.5 per cent in the following year.

"The pandemic has afflicted India at a time when its economy had already been decelerating," the World Bank said. Defying a long-term accelerating path, real GDP growth moderated from 7.0 per cent in 2017-18 to 6.1 per cent in 2018-19 and further to 4.2 per cent in 2019-20.

"The outlook has now changed substantially, and the economy will likely contract in the current fiscal year," it said.

—PTI

Indian lockdown hurts Walmart global sales

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 19

Walmart's international sales dipped 6.8 per cent in Q2 FY21, mainly due to the lock-down in India as well as that in Africa and Central America. However, since the lifting of the lockdown Flipkart's gross merchandise value has crossed pre-Covid levels.

Walmart International's net sales for Q2 FY21 saw a decline of 6.8 per cent to \$27.2 billion, the company

said in its results release. "Net sales included the effects of the government-mandated closure of the company's Flipkart business in India for a portion of the quarter, as well as similar actions in markets in Africa and Central America," the company said.

Changes in currency rates negatively affected net sales by about \$2.4 billion. Excluding currency, net sales would have been \$29.6 billion, an increase of 1.6 per cent.

Since the market reopened post lock-down, GMV at Flipkart has exceeded pre-Covid levels, says Walmart. Gross profit rate moved up 74 basis points due to reduced sales of fuel in the UK and limited operations of Flipkart.

The company's total revenue, however, witnessed an increase of \$7.4 billion or 5.6 per cent to \$137.7 billion. This was mainly driven by Walmart US' comparable store sales, which rose 9.3 per cent.

Marriott faces London lawsuit over data breach

KIRSTIN RIDLEY LONDON, AUG. 19

Marriott International, a leading hotel operator, is facing a London class action brought by millions of former guests demanding compensation after their personal records were hacked in one of the largest data breaches in history.

Martin Bryant, founder of technology and media consultancy Big Revolution, is leading the claim for English and Welsh-domiciled guests after more than 300 million customer records from Marriott's global database, potentially including passport and credit card details, were hacked between 2014 and 2018.

"I hope this case will raise awareness of the value of our personal data, result in fair compensation ... and also serve notice to other data owners that they must hold our data responsibly," he said in a statement.

The lawsuit, which seeks unspecified damages for loss of control of personal data, automatically includes guests who made a reservation for one of the former Starwood brand hotels—including Sheraton Hotels & Resorts and St. Regis Hotels—before September 10, 2018.

Bryant is represented by law firm Hausfeld and the case is funded by Harbour Litigation.

Around seven million British guest records were compromised by the hack, according to the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which last year proposed to fine Marriott 99.2 million pounds (\$133 million).

Marriott announced in 2018 that hackers had accessed its Starwood hotels reservation database and notified the FBI. Attorneys filed a lawsuit in a Maryland federal court within hours.—Reuters

FB health scarers get billions of views

ELIZABETH CULLIFORD AUG. 19

Misleading health content has racked up an estimated 3.8 billion views on Facebook Inc over the past year, peaking during the Covid-19 pandemic, advocacy group Avaaz said in a new report here on Wednesday.

The report found that content from 10 "super-spreader" sites sharing health misinformation had almost four times as many Facebook views in April 2020 as equivalent content from the sites of 10 leading health institutions, such as the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease



Control and Prevention.

The social media giant, which has been under pressure to curb misinformation on its platform, has made amplifying credible health information a key element of its response. It also started removing misinformation about the

novel coronavirus outbreak that it said could cause imminent harm.

"Facebook's algorithm is a major threat to public health. Mark Zuckerberg promised to provide reliable information during the pandemic, but his algorithm is sabotaging those

efforts by driving many of Facebook's 2.7 billion users to health misinformation-spreading networks," said Fadi Quran, campaign director at Avaaz.

"We share Avaaz's goal of limiting misinformation, but their findings don't reflect the steps we've taken to keep it from spreading on our services," said a Facebook company spokeswoman.

"Thanks to our global network of fact-checkers, from April to June, we applied warning labels to 98 million pieces of COVID-19 misinformation and removed 7 million pieces of content that could lead to imminent

harm. We've directed over 2 billion people to resources from health authorities and when someone tries to share a link about COVID-19, we show them a pop-up to connect them with credible health information," she said.

Avaaz's report also said that warning labels from fact-checkers were applied inconsistently even when misinformation had been found to be false.

The report tracked how content from a sample of misinformation-sharing websites was shared on Facebook by interpreting available Facebook data between May 2019 and May 2020.

—Reuters



## SHORT TAKES

## Barcelona name Koeman as coach

**Barcelona:** Barcelona will try to end one of the worst crises in club history with Ronald Koeman as their coach. Barcelona officially announced a deal with Koeman on Wednesday, a day after club president Josep Bartomeu had said the Dutchman accepted the coaching offer and only details needed to be sorted out. The official announcement comes five days after the team's humiliating 2-8 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League quarterfinals. Barcelona said the former defender's deal runs through June 2022. Koeman replaces the fired Quique Setien, who stayed only 25 matches on the job after taking over from Ernesto Valverde in January. Barcelona said Koeman will be officially introduced later. — *AP*

## Nagal through to Last 8 in Prague

**Prague, Czech Republic:** India's top singles player Sumit Nagal advanced to the singles quarterfinals of the Prague Open with a come-from-behind win over lower-ranked Kiri Lehecka. Sixth seed and world number 127 had to battle hard to prevail 5-7, 7-6 (4) 6-3 in two hours and 21-minute second round. Nagal is expected to meet three-time Grand Slam winner Stan Wawrinka in the next round. The Swiss is up against Germany's Oscar Otte in his second round contest. Nagal is also competing in the doubles draw. The other Indians featuring in the doubles are Divij Sharan and N. Sriram Balaji. — *PTI*

## Former India goalie Maity dies

**Mumbai:** Former India goalkeeper Bhaskar Maity died at a Navi Mumbai hospital due to brain hemorrhage on Wednesday. Maity was 67 and is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter. "He (Maity) passed away at around 6PM at the MGM hospital in Vashi following brain hemorrhage," his family friend Shashikant Prasad said. Maity represented India against Iraq during the 1978 Asian Games at Bangkok. He played for Maharashtra from 1975-1979 in the Santosh Trophy. He also played for Mafatlal Sports Club from 1974-80 and the Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers from 1981-82. After his retirement, Maity was made the coach of the RCF football team. All India Football Federation president Praful Patel expressed grief over Maity's demise. — *PTI*

## COVID MAKES WAY INTO US OPEN BUBBLE

**New York:** A positive test for Coronavirus has been found in the New York tennis bubble where the US Open is set to take place later this month, the United States Tennis Association (USTA) announced on Tuesday. USTA medical officer Bernard Camins revealed that the person who has contracted the virus "is not a player" and is asymptomatic. The finding comes after 1,400 tests for the disease were conducted since August 13 in the bubble at the Billie Jean King centre in New York City, where the Cincinnati ATP event and the US Open are to be staged. Dr Camins said the male individual initially tested negative but then a second test two days later came up positive. He added that the person's hotel roommate has also been placed under quarantine. The US Open, which was rescheduled to start on August 31, has been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to a host of top players pulling out of the tournament. Among those not taking part are men's world number two — and last year's champion at Flushing Meadows — Rafael Nadal and the majority of the top 10 from the WTA women's tour. Simona Halep became the latest star to skip the American Grand Slam, joining Ashleigh Barty and Bianca Andreescu. — *AFP*

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2018-20

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

## NINJA NEYMAR

## Brazilian takes PSG to first Champions League final

**Lisbon, Aug. 19:** Paris Saint-Germain are through to the final of the Champions League for the first time after goals by Marquinhos, Angel Di Maria and Juan Bernat saw them ease to a 3-0 win over RB Leipzig in a one-sided semi-final in Lisbon on Tuesday.

It was 2-0 at half-time, with the first two goals set up by Neymar, the Brazilian again outstanding at the Estadio da Luz, just as he had been in last week's quarter-final against Atalanta.

Bernat's goal came in the 55th minute and snuffed out any hopes Leipzig had of a comeback. They could not handle the world's most expensive player, or the many other outstanding performers in the PSG side, who no longer appear overcome by the sense of occasion that surrounds a Champions League knockout tie.

After seeming to invent ever more absurd ways to lose in Europe in recent years — the 1-6 loss against Barcelona in 2017 and last year's defeat by Manchester United in the last 16 stand out — despite all the investment by the club's Qatari owners, here they lived up to their billing.

"We wanted to make history and we did it," Di Maria told French broadcaster *RMC Sport*. "If we continue the way we played today, that could help us in the final."

Thomas Tuchel's team are the competition's first French finalists since Monaco in 2004.

Nine years after Qatar Sports Investments bought a moribund mid-table French league team and began turning them into the untouchable force in France, they are now one game away from winning the trophy that really matters to them. "It is a dream but I hope the dream doesn't end here tonight," said PSG's Qatari president, Nasser Al-Khelaifi.

There is little doubt that the context in Lisbon is helping. PSG have only needed to perform for 90 minutes instead of over two legs in the latter stages of this season's tournament, so badly impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. — *AFP*



Paris Saint-Germain players celebrate their win at the end of the Champions League semifinal against Leipzig at the Luz Stadium in Lisbon on Tuesday. PSG won 3-0. — *AFP*

## Tuchel hails 'incredible' PSG

**Lisbon, Aug. 19:** Thomas Tuchel heaped praise on his Paris Saint-Germain side after they cruised into their first ever Champions League final, putting the French side on the brink of coveted European glory.

"Incredible, that's why we're here to play in the final and to win," Tuchel told French broadcaster *RMC*.

"We showed our quality, our hunger, determination. A good mix which showed we deserved the win."

"The team showed once again the hunger two win, to play together, to suffer. They made the most of it."

PSG's easy 3-0 win over RB Leipzig at the Estadio da Luz in Lisbon showed all the composure on a big European occasion that they have lacked in recent seasons.



PSG's Angel Di Maria (left) celebrates with Neymar after scoring against Leipzig. — *AFP*

"I felt the pressure before the game, it wasn't easy. I have players who love the pressure of key matches. I'm never relaxed," said Tuchel.

"We know well that Bayern are the favourites, it will be difficult against Lyon, but we'll see. It's

obviously the biggest challenge of my career."

**DI MARIA 'WON'T SLEEP' AFTER REACHING FINAL**

Angel Di Maria said he will find it difficult to sleep after scoring in PSG's victory over Leipzig to reach the final.

Di Maria claimed his side's second goal in a fixture played in a near-empty Estadio da Luz in Lisbon was due to the coronavirus pandemic. "It's going to be hard to sleep tonight with the final on my mind," Di Maria told broadcasters *RMC Sport*.

"We're very happy. The team worked well, we succeeded in taking PSG to the final. Now we're in the final which is important for us and if we continue like today then it will help us for the final," he added.

The semi-finals included two sides each from Ligue 1 and Germany's Bundesliga and Di Maria said it underlined the standard of both competitions. "We have proven French and German leagues are high quality, same level as other leagues and we have to keep doing what we have been," he said. — *AFP*

## COVID | TREATMENT

## Virus-hit athlete runs out of cash

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** Asian Games medallist runner Sucha Singh recovered from Covid-19 but not before a nightmarish experience while undergoing treatment.

Giving an account of his ordeal, Singh said it was "disrespectful" that an athlete, who has won laurels for the country, had to endure so much at this stage of life since he had to run from pillar-to-post to even get the test done.

Singh had won an individual 400m bronze in the 1970 Asian Games and was a part of the silver winning teams in 4x400m relay in the 1970 and 1974 Asian Games.

He had tested positive for Coronavirus on August 4 but has now been discharged after another test on August 17 returned negative.

The septuagenarian, who was admitted to PIMS hospital in Jalandhar, said the treatment burnt a big hole in his pocket as he had to arrange ₹2.5 lakh with the help of his relatives.

"I had high fever and cough on the intervening night of July 25-26 and I consulted a doctor at a clinic. The fever and cough did not subside and after a few days I decided to get tested," Singh said from his home in Jalandhar.

But the ordeal began after that as he had to wait for two days to get the test done.

"I got the test done for which I paid ₹5,000 at a

● **Sucha Singh, who was admitted to PIMS hospital in Jalandhar, said the treatment burnt a big hole in his pocket as he had to arrange ₹2.5 lakh with the help of his relatives.**

hospital (at Jalandhar). They sent me to Patel Hospital where for what was a two-hour test, I spent two nights there and had to pay ₹30,000.

"For recovery from Coronavirus, I was admitted to PIMS Hospital on August 4. The next day, the staff asked me deposit ₹1 lakh before 12 noon for treatment and I did that," he said.

Singh said he had to borrow money from his relatives to pay the hospital bill.

"After one week they asked me to deposit another one lakh. I had to ask my relatives for help. They gave me the money and only then I could get discharged from the hospital. I have spent ₹2.5 lakh in total.

"This is really disrespectful for a former athlete." Singh was one of the top quarter-milers in the 1970s and he won a hat-trick of titles in the Nationals from 1972 to 1974.

His son works in the US and daughter also studies near New York. — *PTI*

## GIVE DRONACHARYA TO BROTHER, SAYS BOXER

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** Two-time Commonwealth Games medal-winning boxer Manoj Kumar on Wednesday wrote to Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, requesting him to consider his brother and personal coach Rajesh Kumar Rajound for the Dronacharya award after he was overlooked by the selection committee.

"...hoping for a positive response... request you to once see into the matter of Dronacharya Award names announced for the year. I request you to consider the achievement of my coach Rajesh Kumar and help him in getting his achievements recognised as you are our last hope in this matter," he wrote.

"If now once again hard work of a coach and his discipline is ignored and not rewarded despite the whole country knowing the struggle of them, then how come new talent will be motivated to give all his life to country," he added.

The Haryana-boxer, who had to go to court for the Arjuna award that he received in 2014, is a two-time Asian bronze-medallist besides being a gold-winner at the 2016 South Asian Games.

"When there can be more than one award in hockey then why can't it be in boxing also. Hoping for a quick and positive response from your side," he said — *PTI*

## WOMEN'S | HOCKEY

## Camp resumes after a month

**Bengaluru, Aug. 19:** The Indian women's hockey team goalkeeper Savita says the coronavirus-forced break provided them a perfect opportunity to self-evaluate and analyse life on and off the field as the national camp resumed here on Wednesday after a month.

Having completed their 14-day self-isolation period, the Indian senior men and women core probables resumed training with the national camp, which is expected to continue till September 30 at SAI South Centre.

"When you are a professional athlete, it gets really hectic sometimes... As such you don't really get the chance to introspect at length, but these few months and especially the past 14 days, I've had the chance to look back on a lot of things and understand myself better," said Savita. "What I've realised is that this is the only time I might get in my life where I can analyse a lot of things — personal and professional — and work towards bettering them... I totally believe that it has been one of the most important phases in my life."

Barring the six Covid-19 recovered male players, including skipper Manpreet Singh, all members of the men and women teams resumed training with light activities on Wednesday. — *Agencies*



Savita

The six Covid recovered players including Manpreet, Suresh Kumar, Jaskaran Singh, Varun Kumar, Krishan B. Pathak and Mandeep Singh, who were discharged from a city hospital on Monday, are currently in self isolation inside the SAI campus here.

"We have to get back to full fitness so we will be including outdoor running, high-intensity workouts and a bit of stick-work to our schedule," Savita said.

"We started today with an outdoor exercise session maintaining social distancing." — *PTI*

## Dream11's fantasy to end in 2020

**New Delhi, Aug. 19:** The BCCI on Wednesday announced fantasy gaming platform Dream11 as this year's IPL title sponsor but the company will not stay on board for the next two seasons after its conditional three-year proposal was rejected due to "low" bid amounts for 2021 and 2022.

Dream11 piped educational technology companies BYJU's and Unacademy to win the rights for a period of four months and 13 days with a bid of ₹222 crore, replacing Chinese mobile phone company Vivo.

"The IPL Governing Council has announced Dream11 as the new Title Sponsor of the 2020 edi-

## IPL TITLE | RIGHTS

tion of the Indian Premier League. Dream11 (Sporta Technologies Pvt. Ltd) is an Indian company based in Mumbai, Maharashtra," a BCCI statement said on Wednesday, confirming what IPL chairman Brijesh Patel had stated on Tuesday.

Dream11 offered to pay ₹240 crore for years two and three in case Vivo did not come back. Vivo was forced to pull out of its ₹440 crore per year deal this season due to the Sino-India border stand-off.

Sources said BCCI and Dream11 negotiated on

the conditional three-year bid and the board asked the company to raise the amount considerably for the next two seasons.

"Dream11 bid the highest but why will BCCI give them the rights for ₹240 crore when we can expect the Covid-19 situation to improve in the next two years," a veteran BCCI official said on conditions of anonymity.

"We still have our deal with Vivo on. We haven't closed it as it's a pause. If we are getting ₹440 crore, why will we settle for ₹240 crore?" the official asked. Dream11's association

with sports has grown over the years and it is presently partnering a total of 19 leagues along with six Indian Premier League Franchises.

"We welcome Dream11 on board as Title Sponsor for the 2020 edition of the IPL. Dream11 upgrading their association from an Official Partner to Title Sponsors is a great testament to the brand IPL," IPL chairman Patel was quoted as saying in the BCCI press release.

It is expected that BCCI will open fresh bids for 2021 and 2022 in case Vivo doesn't come back but the world's richest cricket board won't settle for anything less than ₹400 crore. — *PTI*

## WILL NOT ALLOW ASHWIN TO USE 'MANKADING': PONTING

**Melbourne, Aug. 19:** Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting says he will not allow senior India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin to employ the controversial "Mankading" dismissal during the upcoming IPL as "it's not within the spirit of the game".

Last IPL, Rajasthan Royals batsman Jos Buttler was run out on 69 while backing up at the non-striker's end, with Ashwin, then captaining Kings XI Punjab, whipping off the bails after the batsman stepped out of the crease before the ball was bowled. Ashwin will play for Delhi Capitals this year.

The dismissal is permitted under cricket's laws but viewed by some as going

against the spirit of the game. "I'll be having a chat with him about (Mankading), that's the first thing I'll do. That is going to be a hard conversation I will have with him. I think, even him, looking back now, probably he'd say it was within the rules and he's right to do it," Ponting said while speaking on 'The Grade Cricketer' Podcast.

"...watching that last season, as soon as it happened, I actually sat our boys down and said 'Look, I know he's done it, there'll be others around the tournament who'll think about doing this well but that's not going to be the way that we play our cricket. We won't be doing that'." — *PTI*



Ravichandran Ashwin