

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 25 | MARCH 2021

## WEATHER



**Max:** 38°C  
**Min:** 22°C  
**Rainfall:** Nil

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Panguni 12  
**Tithi:** Dwadashi  
**Star:** Aayilyam  
**Rahukalam:** 1.30 pm to 3 pm  
**Yamagandam:** 6 am to 7.30 am

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 5.01 am  
**Zohar:** 12.21 pm  
**Asar:** 3.34 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.20 pm  
**Isha:** 7.31 pm

**SUNSET TODAY 6.20 PM**

**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.10 AM**

**MOONRISE TODAY 3.14 PM**

**MOONSET TOMORROW 4.15 AM**

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+51,286)	(+219)
1,17,84,880	1,60,696

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,636)  
**TN:** 8,71,440 12,630

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

12,51,13,170

### DEATHS

27,50,432

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES  
219

worldometers.info

## Summons to PC and Karti in INX Media case

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court Wednesday issued summons to former Union minister P Chidambaram and his son Karti in the INX Media money-laundering case on taking cognisance of the charge sheet filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against them. Special Judge M K Nagpal issued summons against the senior Congress leader, his son and others directing them to appear before court on April 7.The chargesheet names Karti's chartered accountant SS Bhaskararaman among others.

### COUNTER POINT



**Don't panic! Not extortion. I am only collecting party fund!**

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC**  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

Tears, smiles, selfies, bonhomie, tete-a-tetes, sharing professional burden and words of promise are some of the weapons of endearment used by candidates and supporters as they go around wooing the electorate with the campaign for the April 6 Assembly elections shifting into overdrive.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is addressing a meeting at Seelanaickenpatti in Salem district on March 28 to seek votes for the candidates of the DMK-led alliance.

DMK President M K Stalin would preside over the meeting in which leaders of all alliance parties, besides DK President K Veeramani, would speak. Leaders scheduled to address the crowd are TNCC chief K S Alagiri, MDMK's Vaiko, VCK's Thol

Thirumavalavan, CPM's K Balakrishnan, CPI's Mutharasan, MMK's M H Jawahirullah, IUML's Kadar Moihdeen and Tamilaga Valvurimai Katchi's T Velmurugan.

While Stalin was away campaigning for his party candidates in the districts, his wife Durga Stalinwent around her husband's Kolathur constituency on Tuesday meeting voters and soliciting their support as the candidate himself was away campaigning for other candidates of his party.

Reaching out to people in his own constituency of Viralmalai, Health Minister C Vijayabaskar broke down telling his tale of woes. He tried to tug at the heart strings of the people by revealing his health condition, saying that he was a diabetic and suffered from hypertension.

It is said that the Minister's rival, Palaniyappan of the DMK,



DMK women's wing secretary Kanimozhi during an election campaign rally in support of party's Jayankondam constituency candidate KSK Kannan in Ariyalur district, on Wednesday.

has earned the sympathies of the people, who see him as one who had lost two elections and needed their support. Chary of his support base slipping,

**Mumbai, March 24:** The National Investigation Agency on Wednesday said it has invoked provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in the Antilia explosives scare case, in which suspended police officer Sachin Waze is an accused.

Waze is in NIA's custody for his alleged role in planting an explosive-laden SUV near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's multi-storey residence Antilia in south Mumbai on February 25.

The NIA on Wednesday moved an application informing the special NIA court about adding the UAPA charges in the case,

which was allowed by the court, sources said. Waze, an assistant police inspector (API) with the Mumbai police, has been charged under sections 16 and 18 of the UAPA, the sources said.

These deal with an individual/group conspiring or attempt to commit or advocates, abets, the commission of a terrorist act or any act preparatory to the commission of a terror act.

The central agency's move comes a day before the NIA custody of Waze ends. Waze (49) is a former 'encounter specialist' and is credited with eliminating many criminals in 'encounters'. — PTI

## Ex CoP can go to Bombay HC, says SC

**New Delhi, March 24:** The Supreme Court Wednesday said there was no doubt that the issues raised by former Mumbai police chief Param Bir Singh in his plea against Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh were "quite serious", but asked him to approach the Bombay High Court with his grievances.

The court allowed Singh to

withdraw his plea seeking direction for an "impartial and fair" CBI probe into alleged corrupt practices of Deshmukh. A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and R S Reddy granted liberty to Singh to approach the Bombay High Court with his grievances. "There is no doubt that the matter is quite serious", the bench observed.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Singh, said they would file a petition in the high court today itself and the apex court can say that the high court should take it up on Thursday. At the outset, the bench told Rohatgi that there are two preliminary questions — one is why Article 32 petition has been filed in the top court and the

petitioner has not approached the high court under Article 226, and why Singh has not impleaded the state home minister as a party in his plea. Rohatgi said that he will implead Deshmukh as a party in the matter and the application in this regard is ready. He said that this is a serious matter which has affected the administration of the state. — PTI

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC**  
KOLKATA, MARCH 24

Hammering at West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee's slogan of "bohiragato" (outsiders) against the BJP on a nationalistic pitch, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the Trinamul supremo Wednesday of "defaming" Nandigram, the hot seat of the Assembly election where she is contesting from.

**INSIDE**  
■ **CITY.. PG2**  
HC stays proceedings in defamation cases against Maran  
■ **STATE.. PG3**  
Quantum jump in number of Covaxin takers

ministry said. INSACOG is a grouping of 10 national laboratories established by the ministry of health and family welfare in October last year. Since then 771 variants of concerns (VOCs) have been detected in a total of 10,787 positive samples shared by states and UTs. These include 736 samples positive for viruses of UK (B.1.1.7) lineage, while 34 samples were found positive for viruses of South African (B.1.351) lineage and one sample was found positive for virus of the Brazilian (P.1) lineage. The samples with these VOCs have been identified in 18 states.

The analysis of samples from Maharashtra has revealed that compared to December 2020, there has been an increase in the fraction of samples with the E484Q and L452R mutations. From Kerala, 2,032 samples (from all 14 districts) have been sequenced.

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC**  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

Cracking the whip, the Election Commission of India suddenly transferred out the Coimbatore District Election Officer and Collector, K. Rajamani, and Coimbatore Commissioner of Police Sumit Sharan to non-election posts on Wednesday and ordered the Chief Secretary to report compliance by noon.

S Nagarajan would take over as the Collector and Davidson Devasirvatham as the Commissioner, the ECI order said, adding that the decision was taken 'on the basis of various input received.' It is alleged that the two officers were close to a State Minister that gave rise to many complaints of partiality that were forwarded to the Election Commission.

In another crackdown, authorities seized ₹1 crore cash hidden in the Toyota-Innova MUV displaying a MLA sticker on the windscreen. The sticker had been issued for Musiri AIADMK MLA M Selavaraj.

The vehicle, when it was stopped at the Petavaithalai check post near Tiruchy, had three occupants other than the driver. All the three men, said to be AIADMK party functionaries, reportedly told the police that they were not aware of the currency bundles inside the car.



The seized cash was taken

**SPORT | 8**  
**Shreyas out of England ODIs**



Vol. 11 No. 87 Established 1938 | 8 PAGES | ₹4.00

## ECI cracks the whip on officials; I-T raids target cash distributors

RIGOROUS WATCH	
Election Commission of India suddenly transferred out the Coimbatore District Election Officer and Collector, K. Rajamani, and Coimbatore Commissioner of Police Sumit Sharan to non-election posts on Wednesday and ordered the Chief Secretary to report compliance by noon.	 
<b>ANOTHER MAJOR CONCERN</b> that has now gripped the ECI is the possibility of the election campaigns causing the spread of Coronavirus.	
▶ With two more candidates - PSW Madhava Rao (Congress) of Srivilliputhur constituency and Aravind Ramesh (DMK) of Sholinganallur — testing positive, five candidates are already out of action due to Covid-19.	
▶ Two candidates of Makkal Neethi Maiaam, Santosh Babu (Velacherry) and Ponraj (Annanagar), and DMDK's Salem West candidate Mohan Raj have already left the campaign scene.	

to the office of the returning officer in Srirangam at midnight and it took two hours for the officials to count the ₹500 bundles using cash counting machines. The money was handed over to the Income-Tax department, which would take up the investigation of the case since the seized currency exceeded Rs 50 lakh.

Another Income-Tax raid in Chennai on Wednesday made tongues wag about the possibility of the authorities trying to figure out a possible money distribution channel for a political party. The raids were at the houses and offices of a railway union leader and his son.

When the I-T sleuths tried to storm into the house of Prakash, son of Southern

Railway Mazdoor Union (SRMU) long time general secretary, N Kanniah, in the morning they faced resistance. Police reinforcements were requisitioned and the officials gained entry into the house.

Soon, I-T officials were at the house of Kanniah and offices of the SRMU and that of Prakash, who owns IT companies. Kanniah is also the head of Railway Employees Urban Bank. Though a union leader, he is known for his ostentatious lifestyle. Not only are his house and office furnished in a plush manner, he drives around in luxury cars like Mercedes Benz. He is suspected to be helping a political party in providing cash for distribution to voters. ■ **P4**

## PM slams Didi for defaming Nandigram

With her nemesis Suvendu Adhikari on the dais at his mega rally at Contai in East Midnapore, Mr Modi also promised the crowd that the BJP will pick a "son of this soil" as CM if it comes to power in the state. In a virulent speech, the PM said: "Didi is now talking of bohiragato in Bengal, which stitched the whole of India with Vande Mataram! Amra Sobai Ei Bharatbhumir Sontan. Ei

Bhumi te Kono Bharatbasi Bohiragoto Noy. Bolun Bharat Mata Ki Jai, Vande Mataram! Ekhane Kono Bharatbasi Bohiragoto Noy. Sob Bharatmatnar Sontan (All of us are the children of the land of India. No Indian is an outsider on this land. Hail Mother India, we worship Mother India. No Indian is an outsider here. All are the children of Mother India)."

Invoking the national

anthem Mr Modi asked Ms Banerjee: "How dare you to talk of bohiragato in that very Bengal from where Gurudev stitched all Indians in one bond and said from this soil what we repeat daily? How can you? While labels of 'tourist' are made, fun is made and insults are hurled. The people from the soil of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore do not see anyone as bohiragato here. ■ **P4**

## CJI names Ramana as his successor

**PARMOD KUMAR | DC**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

The Chief Justice of India, Justice Sharad A. Bobde, on Tuesday recommended Justice N.V. Ramana — the senior most judge after him — to be appointed as the next Chief Justice of India when he demits office on April 23, 2021.

Justice Ramana will be the 48th Chief Justice of India and will have a tenure of one year, four months and five days. He was elevated as a judge of the top court on February 17, 2014.

Justice Ramana will take over as Chief Justice of India on April 24, a day after incumbent CJI Bobde demits office. While recommending the appointment of Justice Ramana as next Chief Justice of India, the Supreme Court also rejected a complaint by

Andhra Pradesh chief minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy against him relating to the Amravati land scam.

A statement issued by the top court said, "A complaint dated 6th October, 2020, sent by the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh to the Supreme Court was dealt with under the 'in-house procedure' and the same, on due consideration, stands dismissed. It be noted that all the matters dealt with under the 'in-house procedure' being strictly confidential in nature, are not liable to be made public."

Justice Ramana will be the second Telugu speaking



N.V. Ramana

Chief Justice of India. Born in an agricultural family in undivided Andhra Pradesh on August 27, 1957, in Ponnavaram village, Krishna District, Justice Ramana did his B.Sc., B.L. and was enrolled as an advocate on February 10, 1983.

Prior to him Justice K. Subha Rao, the 9th Chief Justice of India, was from Andhra Pradesh and was in office from June 30, 1966, to April 11, 1967. Justice Subha Rao did his graduation from Govt. College, Rajahmundry, B.L. from Law College, Madras, and had practised in Madras high court, 1926 onward.

Though initially Justice Subha Rao was appointed as a judge of Madras high court, he went on to become the Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh high court.

CJI Bobde recommended Justice Ramana as next Chief Justice of India going by the principle of seniority — the senior-most judge after the CJI succeeding the incumbent CJI upon his retirement.





## No postal ballot facility for overseas Indians

Postal ballot facility for eligible overseas Indian electors cannot be extended for the upcoming assembly polls as the matter is still under discussion with the Ministry of External Affairs to iron out logistical challenges in implementing the proposal, Lok Sabha was informed on Wednesday

# MANDATE 2021

TAMIL NADU

DECCAN CHRONICLE | THURSDAY | 25 MARCH 2021 | COIMBATORE

pg 2

## OTHER STORIES

### AU faculty members get reprieve

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

Coming to the rescue of assistant professors and associate professors of Anna University, who were denied promotions citing new additional qualifications introduced by the University, the Madras high court has directed the Anna University to pass appropriate orders within 4 weeks by granting promotions to them, as per their entitlement on the basis of the then existing eligibility criteria, if there are no other legal impediment against them.

Justice V.Parthiban gave the directive while disposing of a batch of petitions from Ganapathi Malarvizhi, an associate professor and 13 others.

The judge said without any uniform bench mark put in place, promotions cannot be allowed to capriciously depend on the opinion formation viz., subjective satisfaction of the committee members, giving room for personal preferences and predilection of the members in rejecting or clearing the candidates.

## AIADMK, DMK leaders go spiritual to get votes

From P1

State leaders like Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Stalin are already going around the State launching broadsides against each other and would continue to do so till the end of March, after which they might concentrate on their own constituencies — Kolathur and Edappadi.

In Edappadi constituency, Palaniswami's rival from the DMK, Sampath Kumar, was worshipping in local temples and seeking votes from the devotees. In Chennai's Royapuram, Minister D Jayakumar visited a church to say a word of prayer and also seek the blessings of the priest. AIADMK candidate in Avadi, Minister K Pandiarajan, went to a market in the morning and spoke to the traders assuring them loans to run their businesses if his party was returned to power, while another Minister, P Benjamin, fighting it out again at Maduravoyal, called on leaders of the residents' welfare associations in Valasaravakkam to seek votes.

When AIADMK nominee for Pallavaram, Chitalapakkam Rajendran, was on the campaign trail, a house at Mongil Eri in Pammal accidentally caught fire. The candidate and his supporters rushed to douse the fire and also promised to build concrete houses.

Virugambakkam DMK candidate Prabakar Raja was going on foot to meet votes in K K Nagar area when he sat down at a roadside eatery and lent a helping hand to the cook by making dosas. Gudiyatham AIADMK candidate Farida too sat with a vegetable vendor and helped her do business for some time.

Saidapet DMK candidate Ma Subramaniam, a known health freak and marathon runner, is setting out to meet voters only on foot. He leaves home at 7 am and walks from house to house till noon. Then again he does it from 4 pm to 9 pm. He plays with the children in the houses and also takes selfies with them.

His rival from the AIADMK, Saidai Duraiswami, who was also the Mayor of Chennai, is also visiting the people personally. He is accompanied by the students of his various academies that train youth for competitive examinations, including the civil services.

In Thiruvottiyur constituency, where Naam Tamizhar Katchi founder and Chief Ministerial candidate Seeman is a candidate, the nominees of DMK, Shankar, and AIADMK, Kuppan, walk into the narrow allies of the fishing slums and talk to the people personally. Kuppan, on his part, tells them that washing machines will land at their doorstep if his party comes back to power.

In Karur, a former strongman of the DMK, Chinnasamy, had decided to meet Palaniswami when he visited the constituency for campaign and join the AIADMK. Chinnasamy, who was suspended from the DMK on Tuesday, said that Stalin was unable to take decisions on his own.

The Karur seat has been given to Senthil Balaji while Chinnasamy had been expecting to contest from there as a DMK candidate. He had been an MP and an MLA for three terms during his earlier stint in the AIADMK.



DMDK founder Vijayakanth canvassing for votes at Gummidipoondi on Wednesday. — DC

### Constituency watch

## Nagapattinam to witness tough straight contest

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC  
NAGAPATTINAM, MARCH 24

Of the six assembly segments in the integrated Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai districts, Nagapattinam constituency seems to be a one of the keenly contested seats between the AIADMK and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (DMK front), next to Vedharanyam constituency where there is a direct fight between Handloom minister O.S. Manian and former DMK MLA S.K. Vedharathinam.

AIADMK Nagapattinam town secretary and poll candidate, Thanga Kathiravan, who is pitched against DMK front's Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) candidate Alur Shanawaz, hopes that the voters here would prefer him, realising the government's achievements, and the popular 'Two leaf' symbol with the voters.

Both Thanga Kathiravan and Alur Shanawaz have been vociferously campaigning in their constituency. Slightly popular than Alur Shanawaz, Thanga Kathiravan, during a campaign in Nagore Vandipettai area, noticed a woman washing clothes in front of her house, and in an effort to draw the attention of womenfolk in the region, went there and assisted her in washing

AIADMK Nagapattinam town secretary and poll candidate, Thanga Kathiravan, who is pitched against DMK front's Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) candidate Alur Shanawaz, hopes that the voters here would prefer him, realising the government's achievements, and the popular 'Two leaf' symbol

the clothes. Before leaving, he made sure that the women assured their votes for him. He is also popular among fishermen in the district, and used to help them whenever they approached him.

Alur Shanawaz fully depends on the Muslim votes and seems to be disappointed over the non-cooperation of the DMK front parties, since they have been denied the seat this time.

Nagapattinam assembly consisting of 36 wards of the Nagapattinam municipality, 13 village panchayats of Nagapattinam panchayat union, 39 village panchayats of Thirumarugal panchayat union besides Thittacherry town panchayat. This constituency so far faced 15 assembly elections from 1,952 to 2016, of which CPI(M) won six times, the Congress twice and the AIADMK four times.

In the 2016 assembly election, sitting AIADMK MLA Thamimun Anzari, defeated his nearest Manitha Neya Makkal Katchi rival,

Jawahirullah, by a margin of over 20,000 votes. Nagapattinam constituency dominated by Dalits, Muslims and fishermen, also has Vellalar, Kallar and other communities in lesser numbers spread across the constituency. The constituency is having fishing and agriculture activities and has facilities like port, ITIs, engineering and pharmaceutical colleges, arts and science colleges and a fisheries university in the name of late Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa. The Chennai Petroleum Corporation, IOC and ONGC firms, are located in and around Nagapattinam, which provides employment to a sizeable local population. Recently, the foundation stone was laid for Rs 31,500 crores oil refinery at Panagudi near Nagapattinam, and Rs 34 crore fishing harbour at Nambiyar Nagar, which is a fishermen hamlet in the district.

Despite all these, locals want works on the proposed rail overbridge at Thoni Thurai to be expedited, establishment of a green port to face all seasons, the work of which is pending for years together, and check dams to be constructed across the Vettar river to prevent sea water entering the town.

There are 1,97,316 voters including 1,01,748 women voters, and in the last five years new voters numbering 1,428 have been enrolled.

# The fight of the also-rans in Kanyakumari district

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KANYAKUMARI, MARCH 24

The smaller parties of T.T.V. Dhinakaran, Seeman and Kamal Haasan which fielded candidates for the six assembly constituencies in the Kanyakumari district and the Kanyakumari Lok Sabha segment byelection however fight not to bag the constituencies but to ensure the fifth position as the first places will be shared by the big brothers

Seeman's Naam Tamilar Katchi and Kamal Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiaam too are no better than the AMMK as their candidates also had forfeited the deposit amount in the Lok Sabha contest in 2019

— the DMK, Congress, AIADMK and the BJP.

Likely to play spoilsport against the ruling AIADMK-led alliance, Dhinakaran's AMMK is not a force to be reckoned

with in any of the six assembly segments in the Kanyakumari district or in the Kanyakumari Lok Sabha constituency. The reason is the absence of the caste which supports AMMK in the district. The party bagged just 1.18 percent votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha election in Kanyakumari.

Seeman's Naam Tamilar Katchi and Kamal Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiaam too are no better than the AMMK as their

candidates also had forfeited the deposit amount in the Lok Sabha contest in 2019.

The three smaller parties put together were able to secure just 3.63 percent of votes in the Kanyakumari Lok Sabha election in 2019 against the major players. Congress candidate Vasanthakumar's vote share was 59.83 percent and BJP candidate Pon Radhakrishnan polled 35.04 percent votes.

## Canvassing through WhatsApp: HC seeks EC's reply

Chennai, March 24: The Madras high court on Wednesday sought a detailed reply from the Election Commission over allegations of Puducherry unit of the BJP obtaining cell phone numbers of local voters to canvass through WhatsApp.

In his public interest writ petition, Anand, Puducherry unit president of the Democratic Youth Foundation of India, alleged local BJP candidates had obtained the cell phone numbers from the Unique Identification Authority of India and created WhatsApp groups in their respective constituencies for campaigning.

He wanted the court to set up a special investigation team to probe the issue and restrain the BJP candidates from doing so.

When the matter came up today, counsel for the EC told the first bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy that the complaint received from DYFI in this connection has been forwarded to the Cyber Crime Cell for inquiry. The EC was directed by the bench to submit its reply on Friday. — PTI



## Constitute anti-corruption special cell in registration dept, says HC

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, MARCH 23

With a view to eradicate or at least minimize corruption in the Registration department, the Madras high court has directed the Inspector General of Registration/Head of the department to constitute a separate "Anti-Corruption Special Cell", consists of officials with integrity for initiating actions against illegalities, irregularities and corrupt practices in co-ordination with the department of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption.

Justice S.M.Subramaniam who gave the directive said the "Anti-Corruption Special Cell" constituted shall collect information and materials regarding illegal and corrupt activities in the department across the state of Tamil Nadu and provide active inputs to the vigilance and anti-corruption department for the purpose of initiation of actions under law.

## Tada Periyasamy hopes to win poll with thumping margin

A ARUL PALANI | DC  
CUDDALORE, March 23

Tada Periyasamy, a BJP candidate for the Thitakudi Assembly (Reserved) Constituency in Cuddalore district is hoping to win the poll with a thumping margin. Periyasamy, son of the soil, has worked for the welfare of the poor and downtrodden people in the rural terrain for decades. During the campaign he assured the people to improve the Constituency and bring more infrastructure for the development of the people, especially youth.

Thittakudi (SC) assembly constituency was formed after constituency delimitations in 2008. It is included in the Cuddalore parliamentary constituency. After delimitation the Mangalore (SC) Constituency became Thittakudi (SC) assembly constituency in 2008.

In 2016, Thittakudi legislative assembly constituency had a total 2,06,089 electors, and total number of voters were 1,60,176. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam candidate Ganesan V won by securing 65,139 votes. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam candidate Ayyasamy P stood second with 62,927 votes. He lost by 2212 votes. Now the Constituency has total voters of 2,18,971 and of this 1,07,303 are men and 1,11,656 women voters.

Thittakudi constituency has number of villages including Thittakudi, Pennadam, Sengamedu, Mangalore, Avinagudi, Sirupaakam, Arasangudi Tholar, Karunkuzhi, Kothatai, Kozhiyur, Sirumangalam, Sevr,



BJP candidate Tada Periyasamy campaigns in Thitakudi Assembly (Reserved) Constituency in Cuddalore. — DC

Neivaasal, P. Deevalur, Thazhanallur, Narasingamangalam, Kollathangurichirai, Eraiyur, Venkarumbar, Guddalore, Thiruvattadurai, Kodikalam, O.Keeranur, Pe. Poovanur, Pelandurai, Irulampattu, Kosapallam, Maligaikottam, Korakai, Aavati, Sirumulai, Pulivalam, Pothirangamangalam, Thachur, Thozhudur, Ramanatham, Keezhacheruvai, Melur and Nanthimangalam.

Periyasamy has been touring every corner in the constituency since he was nominated by the party high command. Son of the soil hope to win the Assembly poll. Recently, CT Ravi, BJP national general secretary in charge of Tamil Nadu, has toured the Constituency and appreciated Periyasamy for his election related work.

Periyasamy's promise includes improving the living conditions of the people, setting up of more infrastructures, factories and improving rural connectivity in the backward region.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, Periyasamy said people including women are aware of people friendly policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The office bearers

from alliance parties including AIADMK and PMK have been rendering support to him.

He wishes to set up a multi speciality hospital, to bring water from Gomukhi dam to Wellington Reservoir. The region faces a water crisis during summer. Replenishing the reservoir will help the farmers to cultivate thrice in a year. This would also solve drinking water shortage.

The region was known for sugarcane cultivation. As the lone private sugar mill was functioning farmers were not interested in raising sugarcane.

He assured that he would take efforts to set up more sugar mills in the region. Majority of youth have gone to Chennai and other cities for employment opportunities. He said he would speak to party high command in Delhi to bring more industries to create employment opportunities for the youth.

Periyasamy, a pioneer in Tamil nationalism, had contested in election for Perambalur parliamentary constituency in 1999 and Harur assembly constituency in 2001 as DPI (now VCK) candidate, Chidambaram parliamentary constituency in 2004 and Varagur assembly constituency in 2006 as BJP candidate. He has been running 'Nandhanar Sevashrama Trust', which is working for the development of Dalit children and providing vocational training to women in the region. He is also involved in restoring the 'Panchami lands' from the illegal occupants.

# VTMS demands promises from Gudalur candidates

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC  
OOTY, MARCH 24

The Vyavasiyaikal Thozhailalarkal Munnetra Sangam (VTMS) in Gudalur has demanded the candidates of the jungle-rich Gudalur assembly constituency to make their stand clear on man-animal conflict, issues related to Janmam lands and other issues.

VTMS state coordinator M.S. Selvaraj said the demands put forward by the people of Gudalur for the last several years for getting title for agricultural

**VTMS state coordinator M.S. Selvaraj said the demands put forward by the people of Gudalur for the last several years for getting title for agricultural lands in Section 17(Janman land) and Section 53 have not been resolved till date**

tural lands in Section 17(Janman land) and Section 53 have not been resolved till date.

As per the new law, brought in 2019, Section 16A was added to the Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882 enabling the conversion

of agricultural lands into a reserve forest in Section 53 and Section 17 of the Janmam Act. Such transfer of inhabited lands to the forest department is a grave injustice, he said.

Therefore, the amendment should be repealed. Steps should be taken to

provide house and agricultural land to plantation workers.

Due to lack of food in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve jungle, wild animals stray into human settlements resulting in man-animal conflict. Flora for animals should be produced inside the forest. A relief of Rs 10 lakh should be given to the families who suffered loss of life due to man-animal conflict.

The Protection of Private Forest Act should be amended to exempt lands up to 4.5 hectares from the Act.

# My govt protected Muslims: CM Palaniswami

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC  
KARUR, MARCH 24



Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami has said his government reflected the feelings of Muslims and protected them, and added he is not saying this for any political purpose. But the DMK, in order to get minorities' votes,

has unleashed a false propaganda against him, he said.

**CM listed out various welfare measures undertaken exclusively for Muslims and said his government hiked the subsidy for Haj pilgrimage from ₹6 crore to ₹10 crore, and a ₹15 crore Haj house is coming up at Chennai for the benefit of Haj pilgrims**

Palaniswami said this at a campaign meeting at K. Paramathi in support

of the BJP's Aravakkurichi assembly segment candidate K. Annamalai. He listed

out various welfare measures undertaken exclusively for Muslims and said his government hiked the subsidy for Haj pilgrimage from ₹6 crore to ₹10 crore, and a ₹15 crore Haj house is coming up at Chennai for the benefit of Haj pilgrims.

He said Prime Minister Narendra

Modi has provided several suggestions for the betterment of Tamil Nadu. He said Union Home Minister Amit Shah has also helped us whenever we asked for any help for Tamil Nadu and its people. The BJP government at the Centre is providing good governance to the people and because of main-

taining a cordial relationship, the union government has sanctioned several projects including the more than Rs 1 lakh crore national highways project in Tamil Nadu. Palaniswami took strong exception to DMK president M.K. Stalin's charge that he was a fake farmer. He said 70 percent of

Tamil Nadu people depend on agriculture and the government is keen to provide necessary schemes for their uplift, he added.

M. Chinnasamy, agriculture wing secretary of the DMK, joined the AIADMK in the presence of the chief minister and participated in the CM's election meetings.



# Quantum jump in number of Covaxin takers

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

The publication of the third phase trial data a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the jab has resulted in the multiplication of the takers of indigenous Covaxin in the state which was below par compared to Covishield vaccination till the beginning of

March. According to the data provided by the state health department, 84,585 people aged above 60 took Covaxin till March 23. This is a big jump from 175 on March 1.

When it comes to the category aged between 45 and 60 with co-morbidities, 82,283 beneficiaries took Covaxin that was just 29 on

March 1. The surge of Covaxin takers shows that publishing of trial data on March 3 had instilled a great deal of confidence among beneficiaries.

Publishing the first interim analysis data, Bharat Biotech, the manufacturer of Covaxin, had said that the whole virion inactivated Covid-19 vaccine candidate demonstrated

an interim vaccine efficacy of 81percent in its phase 3 clinical trial.

It was on January 16 the government introduced Covishield, manufactured by Serum Institute of India, and Covaxin of Bharat Biotech, aiming at bringing speedy immunity to the virus. However, the controversies over lack of public data on trials marred

the fortunes of Covaxin.

The number of healthcare workers and frontline workers who chose Covaxin has also gone up in March. The data shows 30,714 healthcare workers and 40,445 frontline workers took Covaxin till March 23, which is a jump from 9,746 and 1,032 on March 1.

According to the data, the state was able to vac-

inate 2,346,107 people till March 23. The officials said that the number of Covaxin takers will increase further as the norms on co-morbidities between 45 and 60 have been removed. "Enough doses of vaccine are made available to all centres including private and public. After trial data was published, we had instructed the concerned authorities to

issue Covaxin doses to start with minimum one viral to the private hospitals upon their request and inform the hospitals to use the vaccines with minimum wastage and obtain consent from the individual. The department has set up 529 government Covid vaccination centres and 761 private Covid vaccination centres across the state," the officials said.

## Three children drown in check dam at Ariyalur

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ARIYALUR, MARCH 24

Three children, including two girls aged 7 and 10, drowned in a check dam across the Chinna Odai at Manappathur village near Senthurai in Ariyalur district on Wednesday. Police said the deceased were identified as S.

Sudarvizhi (7), daughter of Sudhakar, studying in second standard and his brother Jayaseelan's daughter Suruthi (10) studying in 5th standard, and his son Rohit (7) studying in the second standard.

The police shifted the bodies to the government hospital, Ariyalur for post-mortem.

## Absconding accused in vandalism case held

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

A 30-year-old man, accused in a vandalism case, was arrested by the immigration officers at the Chennai airport on Tuesday night when he landed here from Oman. A Lookout Circular (LOC) was issued by the Nagapattinam district police against him.

According to Immigration official sources, the accused has been identified as Ramesh (30) a native of Nagapattinam in Tamil

Nadu. He had been working as an electrical engineer and had allegedly caused damage to the public properties while taking part in a protest in Nagai district in 2013.

He was caught at the Chennai airport when he arrived from Muscat by Oman Airlines flight. The Immigration authorities, while verifying the passport of all the passengers who arrived in the flight, found that a LOC was pending against Ramesh, who was also cited as an absconding

accused in the case, arrested him and proceeding with formalities to hand him over to the Nagapattinam police.

After his involvement in vandalism, the accused fled Oman. Following this, the District Superintendent of Police declared him as an absconding accused and a LOC was issued to all the airports. He was caught on arrival from Oman on Tuesday. Police at the airport said the accused was handed over to the district police team on Wednesday.

## Andhra girl rescued at Tiruvarur

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MANNARGUDI, MARCH 24

A teenaged girl hailing from Andhra Pradesh who lost her way was rescued near Mannargudi in Tiruvarur district recently and accommodated at the women's protection home.

Official sources said the girl was moving around Paravakkottai near Mannargudi on March 20. The locals intercepted the girl and asked her

details. Since she did not know Tamil she could only tell her name. Following this, the locals provided her food and asked her to stay at the house of T.S.T. Rajendran who alerted the Mannargudi-based NGO Nesakkaram and asked them to restore the girl to her parents.

The Nesakkaram authorities on Tuesday handed over the girl to the all-women police station at Mannargudi. DSP Lanchezian and inspector Bhagavathi quizzed her.

Bhavani's father Venkanna and mother Annapoorna hailed from Pottala area in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

They alerted the Polur police station which assured that they will inform the parents of the girl and bring them to Mannargudi. Following this, Bhavani was accommodated at the government protection home, in the presence of the officials of the district child welfare committee, the sources added.



## Indian Coast Guard ship commissioned in Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

The Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vajra' an offshore patrol vessel, was commissioned in Chennai on Wednesday. General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Defence Staff has commissioned the ship in the presence of DG Krishnaswamy Natarajan, Director General-Indian Coast Guard, Inspector General S Paramesh Commander, Coast Guard Region (East), JD Patil, Whole Time Director, M/s L&T and other senior dignitaries of the Central and State Government.

ICGS Vajra is commanded by Deputy Inspector General Alex Thomas and will be based at Tuticorin under the Operational and Administrative Control of the Commander, No.16 Coast Guard District (Tuticorin). Vajrais the sixth in the series of seven offshore patrol vessel (OPVs) constructed by M/s Larsen & Toubro Ltd.,

ICGS Vajra, the 98 meter OPV, has been designed and built by M/s Larsen & Toubro Ltd at Kattupalli, Chennai. It has been fitted with state-of-the-art navigation and communication equipment, sensors and machinery.

The Ship will be equipped with 30mm and 12.7mm Guns with Fire Control System for enhancing its fighting efficiency. The ship has been designed to carry a twin-engine helicopter (ALH MK-III under acceptance by ICG from M/s HAL) and four high speed boats including two Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats for swift Boarding Operations, Search and Rescue, Law Enforcement and Maritime Patrol.

The ship is also capable of carrying Pollution Response Equipment for oil spill response at sea. The sustenance and reach, coupled with the latest modern equipment & systems, provides her the capability to perform the role of a Command Platform to accomplish the Coast Guard Charter of Duties.

'Vajra' meaning 'Thunderbolt' is a projection of Indian Coast Guard's will and commitment 'To Serve and Protect' the maritime interests of our nation. On joining the Coast Guard Eastern fleet, it will be deployed extensively for EEZ surveillance and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard Charter, to safeguard the Maritime Interests of India. The Indian Coast Guard with this ship joining the fleet, will have 156 Surface Assets and 62 Aircraft in its inventory.

## 2 nabbed for running fake foreign exchange co to cheat customers

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

Sleuths of the Central Crime Branch (CCB) have arrested two persons for running a fake foreign exchange company and cheating people under the pretext of earning them high profit amounts.

According to police sources, the complainant identified as M. Ashok Kumar, electrician from Thiruverkadu, had lodged a complaint before the Commissioner of Police, in which he stated that the accused, had approached him over phone number and introduced themselves as directors of a foreign exchange company having its branch in various countries and allured him to invest to earn high profit amount.

Believing the accused's alluring words, Ashok Kumar had created an account in the company's website and transferred Rs 10.54 lakh to its bank account through 11 transactions between October 17, 2019 and January 3, 2021. Later, on releasing that he was cheated by the accused with false

promise of offering high return of money, he had approached the Chennai City Police Commissioner and the case was registered in Cyber Crime Cell, CCB and took up for investigation.

During the course of investigation, the accused identified as Syed Abu Thahir and Syed Ali Hussain have been caught and they have admitted to creating fake website www.deltinfx.com and www.deltininternational.solutions.com and misused foreign numbers for contacting complainant Ashok Kumar and made false promise of high return and made him to create an account in Deltin International Solutions and fraudulently swindled ₹10.54 lakh.

The duo was arrested and ₹1,95,000 Lakh in cash and five mobile phones were seized from them. Further investigations revealed that hundreds of victims across India were cheated by the accused.

Chennai Cyber Crime Cell Police have advised the general public to be cautious while transferring money for Foreign Exchange Company without verifying it.

## Rowdy hacked to death in Kancheepuram dt

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

As in a scene out of a movie, the murder of a 42-year-old history-sheeter outside temple, in front of public, has left the residents of Kanchipuram shocked.

The victim has been identified as 'Soolai Karuppu' alias Vadivel, 42 a resident of Thaayaramman Kuppam, had several criminal cases, including that of murder, pending against him.

According to the police, while he was walking towards a temple near his home at 8: 30 am on Wednesday, a gang of four who came to spot two motorbikes surrounded him right outside the temple and attacked him indiscriminately with the knives and

machetes.

The public who witnessed the gory murder, ran out of fear from the spot. The assailants escaped the scene after confirming the victim had passed away.

Based on the alert from the residents, the Sivakanchi police rushed to the spot. Senior police officials in the district arrived at the crime scene and conducted investigations. The police sent the body of Vadivel to the Kanchipuram government hospital for post-mortem.

Police said that the victim has had previous enmity due to his fights with another rowdy gang. Police have taken a few persons into custody for further investigations. Sivakanchi police have registered a case.

### FORM C-1

#### Declaration about Criminal Case

(As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No.536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name and address of candidate : Agri.S.S.Krishnamurthy

s/o. Sundaresan,  
Elathur Village & Post, Kalasapakkam Taluk,  
Tiruvannamalai District.

Name of Political Party : All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)

Name of Election : Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly Election - 2021

Name of Constituency : 066 - Polur

I, Agri.S.S.Krishnamurthy, a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending criminal cases				
Sl.No	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of Case (s)	Section (s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence (s)
1	Hon'ble Supreme Court	Crl. Appeal No : 322/2017 dated 10.02.2017	(Detailed below)	(Detailed below)
(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences.				
Sl.No	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed		Maximum punishment imposed
	Nil	Nil		Nil

The CBCID Police, Tirunelveli has registered a FIR in Crime No. 1/2015 under Section 174 of Cr.P.C and it was subsequently altered to Section 120(B) of I.P.C., r/w. Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, r/w. Sections 109, 306 & 34 of I.P.C. and the same was numbered as P.R.C. No. 40/2015.

The Crl.O.P. (MD) No. 22379/2015 was filed by the candidate herein under Section 482 of Cr.P.C before the Hon'ble Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court and the said P.R.C. No. 40/2015 on the file of the Judicial Magistrate, Tirunelveli was quashed by an order dated 08.03.2016 of the Hon'ble Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court.

However, the State has preferred SLP No. 2688/2016 before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, challenging the said order and the SLP has been converted as Criminal Appeal No. 322/2017 and the same is pending.

\*\*\*\*\*

Cyber scams are on the rise, Don't share your OTP, UPI-PIN, Card details and pay a heavy price

Using details shared by you, fraudsters can create your Virtual Payment Address (VPA) and link your bank account with UPI

And easily debit money from your card or bank account. So beware

RBI Kehta Hai... Jaankaar Baniye, Satark Rahiye!

Issued in public interest by भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक RESERVE BANK OF INDIA www.rbi.org.in



# Cong’s Mahajut is a ‘Maha jhooth’, says PM in Assam

Cong did nothing for tea workers when they were in power: Modi

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, MARCH 24

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday accused the Congress of making false promises to the people of Assam.

Coming down heavily on the Congress-led grand alliance - Mahajut (grand alliance), Prime Minister while addressing a public meeting at Bihpuria said that it's not Congress' Mahajut but it's Congress party's 'Maha jhooth' (Biggest lie).

"A Maha jhooth that guarantees illegal immigrants in Satras, Namghar, National Parks, a mahajhooth which guarantees poaching and corruption. It is a mahajhooth, who for their own sake, can defame Assam's pride and even tea in the whole world," said Mr Modi.

Speaking about the promises made by the Congress to improve the condition of tea workers, Mr Modi said that the Congress did nothing for those working in the tea gardens when the party was in power. "In 15 years regime, they could not hike the tea workers wages above Rs 100," he said.

He alleged that Congress never worked for the uplift of tea garden workers while the NDA government has increased and doubled their wages.

"Immediately after coming to power, we will work extensively to make their life better. The NDA government is committed to

## BJP leader’s ‘wear Bermudas’ remarks distasteful: O’Brien

New Delhi, March 24: Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien on Wednesday condemned as "distasteful" BJP leader Dilip Ghosh's purported remarks against the West Bengal chief minister suggesting that she should wear Bermuda shorts to display her injured leg, and said such comments were "not acceptable" in politics.

Participating in a debate on the Finance Bill in Rajya Sabha, O'Brien said his party condemns this kind of remarks against anyone.

"There is decency, there is courtesy which we always try to extend. Doesn't matter man, woman... So I am little disturbed...most distasteful statement was made about a woman saying that she should not wear a saree anymore but she should

providing a dignified life to the women of tea gardens," said Mr Modi.

The BJP leader said that Congress can do anything for votes.

"Today, Congress' hand is with those who are set to destroy the identity of Assam. Congress can do anything for votes. They can stand with anyone and can even betray anyone,"

● A VIDEO clip of Ghosh apparently suggesting Mamata Banerjee should wear Bermuda shorts to display her injured leg has triggered a controversy. While no one was named in the purported speech by Ghosh, most commentators took the comments to be directed at Banerjee.

wear Bermuda shorts," the Trinamool MP said.

He said the statement was made by a parliamentarian who is a state president of the BJP.

"This is not acceptable in politics. This was said by an MP and state president of the BJP. We condemn this kind of remarks against anyone," the leader said.

He said there may be political differences among parties but that

does not mean that they are political enemies.

"...so what if there are political differences...we have major differences on ideology. I respect Ma'am and every other MP. They are our political rivals. We are not political enemies..." he said referring to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

A video clip of Ghosh apparently suggesting West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee should wear Bermuda shorts to display her injured leg has triggered a controversy.

While no one was named in the purported speech by Ghosh, known for his controversial comments, most commentators took the comments to be directed at Banerjee.

In the video, the veracity of which could not be confirmed by PTI, Ghosh was

seen stating at an election meeting in Purulia on Monday that after the cast was taken off and the foot was bandaged, she is displaying the leg to everyone.

"...she is wearing saree with one leg covered but kept another open for viewing. Haven't seen anyone draping a saree in such a way... If she has to display her leg for viewing, she can very well wear Bermuda shorts. That will help to have a better view," the BJP MP was purportedly heard stating.

Taking part in the debate on the Finance Bill, O'Brien targeted the Centre over the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* scheme. "It is bad, poor and pathetic governance when 60 per cent funds of the scheme are spent on advertising," he said.

Congress and its cronies.

Referring to the illegal migrants, he said, "Indo-Bangla Border in Dhubri is now sealed, to tackle illegal infiltrators."

He said that Lakhimpur is famous for Bao Dhan (Red Rice) and under 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', the BJP government is working to take this rice to the world.

# Rajya Sabha approves Delhi L-G Bill

New Delhi, March 24: The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday approved the Bill giving primacy to Delhi's Lieutenant Governor (L-G) over the elected government after high drama in the House that saw uproar by the Opposition and a walkout by MPs of parties like the BJD, SP, Congress and the YSR-Congress.

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021 that seeks to make it clear that the "government" in Delhi means the "Lieutenant Governor" was passed by Lok Sabha on March 22.

The legislation was passed in Rajya Sabha by a voice vote on Wednesday. However, a division was sought by the Opposition when the government moved the bill for consideration. During voting, 83 members were in favour while 45 opposed the Bill. Just before the passage

of the bill, the Congress too walked out.

Earlier, Rajya Sabha witnessed uproar by Opposition members who termed the Bill as "unconstitutional" and demanded that it be sent to a Select Committee for scrutiny. The upper house also witnessed two brief adjournments. The members of the BJD, SP and the YSR-Congress also walked out of the House.

Replying to the debate, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy sought to dispel the concerns of the opposition members saying the amendments in the Act would create a sound government mechanism in the NCT of Delhi. He said it will improve equity and inclusiveness. The amendment will lead to transparency and clarity in governance in NCT Delhi and enhance public accountability, he added.

# ECI CRACKS WHIP ON OFFICIALS

FROM PAGE 1

Another major concern that has now gripped the ECI is the possibility of the election campaigns causing the spread of Coronavirus. With two more candidates - P S W Madhava Rao (Congress) of Srivilliputhur constituency and Aravind Ramesh (DMK) of Sholinganallur - testing positive, five candidates are already out of action due to Covid-19. Two candidates of Makkal Neethi Maiaam, Santosh Babu (Velacherry) and Ponraj (Annanagar), and DMDK's Salem West candidate Mohan Raj have already left the campaign scene.

Since DMDK's top honcho, L K Sudheesh, has also been admitted to hospital after testing positive for Covid-19, election authorities requested his sister and the party treasurer Premalatha Vijayakanth to take a test.

Premalatha, a candidate from Vridhachalam, was busy canvassing for votes and hence declined to go for the test, saying that her campaign would be affected. But Health Officials are said to have met during the campaign trail and given her an ultimatum.

All the affected candidates are now reaching out to their voters through social media and video calls and only their supporters are doing the campaigning at the ground level. Anyway, they would be allowed to vote by visiting the booth in the last hour of polling wearing PPEs. Two days prior to polling and on the day of counting all liquor shops and bars should be closed, says an order from the government.

# WORLD

## SHORT TAKES DUBAI'S DY RULER PASSES AWAY AT 75

Dubai: Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, deputy ruler of Dubai and the finance minister of the United Arab Emirates, has died, his brother said on Wednesday. He was 75.

Sheikh Hamdan served as deputy leader of Dubai under his brother, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the hereditary ruler of the city-state who also serves as prime minister and vice president of the UAE. Emirati officials announced his death without specifying the cause. Sheikh Hamdan had been in poor health for several months.

## VIRGINIA GOV. TO SIGN LAW ENDING DEATH PENALTY

Jarratt (US): Governor Ralph Northam is set to sign historic legislation that will put an end to the death penalty in Virginia, a state with a long and prolific history of carrying out executions.

Northam scheduled a tour on Wednesday of the death chamber at the Greensville Correction Center, then planned to sign the landmark legislation abolishing the death penalty.

The legislation marks a dramatic shift in a state that has executed more people than any other. Virginia has put to death nearly 1,400 people since its days as a colony. In modern times, Virginia is second only to Texas in the number of executions it has carried out, with 113 since the US Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976.

## GILANI'S POLL RESULT PLEA DISMISSED

Islamabad: A Pakistani court on Wednesday dismissed former prime minister Yusuf Raza Gilani's petition challenging the results of the Senate chairman election which he lost in a keenly-fought contest.

Gilani filed the petition on Monday in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) which was accepted for hearing by Chief Justice Athar Minallah. During the hearing on Wednesday, Chief Justice Minallah noted that the proceedings of the upper house of parliament were "immune from the interference" of the high court.

# Myanmar releases hundreds

It is first gesture by the military to try to placate the protest movement

Yangon, March 24: Hundreds of people imprisoned for protesting last month's coup were released Wednesday in the first apparent gesture by the military to try to placate the protest movement.

Witnesses outside Insein Prison in Yangon saw busloads of mostly young people, looking happy with some flashing the three-finger gesture of defiance adopted by the protest movement. State-run TV said a total of 628 were freed.

The prisoners appear to be the hundreds of students

detained in early March while demonstrating against the Feb. 1 coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. One lawyer, speaking on condition of anonymity because she doesn't want attention from the authorities, said all those released were arrested on March 3. She said only 55 people detained in connection with the protests remained in the prison, and it is likely they will all face charges under Section 505(A) of the Penal Code, which carries a penalty of

up to three years in prison. Myanmar's Assistance Association for Political Prisoners says it has confirmed the killings of 275 people in connection with the post-coup crackdown, with additional deaths still unverified.

It also says that as of Tuesday, it had verified arrest or charges against 2,812 people, of whom 2,418 remain in custody or with outstanding charges. Demonstrators on Wednesday tried a new tactic that they dubbed a silence strike, calling on people to

stay home and businesses to close for the day.

The extent of the strike was difficult to gauge, but social media users posted photos from cities and towns showing streets empty of activity save for the occasional stray dog. The online meme posted to publicise the action called silence "the loudest scream" and explained its purpose was to honour the movement's fallen heroes, to recharge protesters' energy and to contradict the junta's claims that "everything is back to normal."

The new tactic was employed after an extended onslaught of violence from security forces. Local media reported that a seven-year-old girl in Mandalay, was among the latest victims on Tuesday.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners included her in its list of fatalities. "Khin Myo Chit was shot in the abdomen by a soldier while she sat in her father's lap inside her home in Aung Pin Le ward," the online news service *Myanmar Now* reported.

# No winner in Israel exit poll

Jerusalem, March 24: Israeli parliamentary elections have resulted in a virtual deadlock for a fourth time in the past two years, exit polls indicated, leaving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with an uncertain future and the country facing the prospect of continued political gridlock. The exit polls on Tuesday on Israel's three main TV stations indicated that both Netanyahu and his religious and nationalist allies, along with a group of anti-Netanyahu parties, fell short of the parliamentary majority required to form a new government. That raised the possibility of an unprecedented

fifth consecutive election later this year.

The election was seen as a referendum on Netanyahu's polarising leadership, and the initial results showed the country remains as deeply divided as ever, with an array of small sectarian parties dominating the parliament.

The results also signalled a continuing shift of the Israeli electorate toward the right wing, which supports West Bank settlements and opposes concessions in peace talks with the Palestinians. That trend was highlighted by the strong showing of an ultra-nationalist anti-Arab religious party. After three

previous inconclusive elections, Netanyahu had been hoping for a decisive victory that would allow him to form a government with his traditional ultra-Orthodox and hard-line nationalist allies and seek immunity from corruption charges.

In an address to supporters early Wednesday, a subdued Netanyahu boasted of a "great achievement" but stopped short of declaring victory. Instead, he appeared to reach out to his opponents and called for formation of a "stable government" that would avoid another election.

"We must not under any circumstances drag the

state of Israel to new elections, to a fifth election," he said. "We must form a stable government now."

Around 64 per cent of the vote had been counted by early Wednesday, leaving the outcome undetermined. A small Islamist party was hovering just below the threshold to enter parliament, and whether it made the cut could affect the distribution of pro- and anti-Netanyahu blocs in the Knesset.

Updated exit polls on two channels forecast an evenly divided parliament. The third station gave Netanyahu's opponents a one-seat advantage.

# Surgeon General: Senate okays Murthy

Washington, March 24: Indian-American physician Vivek Murthy has been confirmed by the Senate as President Joe Biden's surgeon general, a role in which his top priority would be responding to the Coronavirus pandemic that has severely hit the country. Dr Murthy, 43, would occupy the position of America's Surgeon General for the second time. In 2011, president Barack Obama tapped him to serve on the advisory group on prevention, health promotion, and integration and public health.

I'm deeply grateful to be confirmed by the Senate to

serve once again as your Surgeon General. We've endured great hardship as a nation over the past year, and I look forward to working with you to help our nation heal and create a better future for our children.

Murthy said on Tuesday soon after the Senate confirmed his nomination by 57-43 votes.

In 2013, Obama nominated Dr. Murthy to be the surgeon general. He was the youngest ever to hold the office at the age of 37. However, he had to abruptly leave the position during the Trump administration. As US Surgeon General, Dr. Murthy will

advise President Biden on the Coronavirus pandemic and will be the federal government's leading voice on public health.

Seven senators from the opposition Republican Party voted in support of Dr Murthy. He was an adviser to the Biden campaign and transition.

Senator Joe Manchin said that during his previous tenure as Surgeon General, Dr. Murthy worked to create a culture of public health promotion grounded in nutrition, physical activity and emotional well-being to help prevent conditions like obesity and diabetes.

Dr. Murthy also released a report outlining plans to reduce opioid prescriptions and expand access to treatment for those suffering from a substance use disorder, he said. He understands the issues facing this nation including the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the drug epidemic and protecting rural healthcare.

Covid-19 has taken the lives of several members of Murthy's extended family. During his confirmation hearing in February, he said that seven of his family members in India and America have died due to Covid-19.

## INDIA, U.S. TO TALK HOMELAND SECURITY

Washington, March 24: The Biden administration has announced the re-establishment of the Homeland Security Dialogue with India that was discontinued by the previous Trump dispensation. This comes a day after Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas spoke with India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Monday.

# Cargo ship turns sideways, blocks Suez

Dubai, March 24: A cargo container ship that's among the largest in the world has turned sideways and blocked all traffic in Egypt's Suez Canal, officials said Wednesday, threatening to disrupt a global shipping system already strained by the coronavirus pandemic.

The MV Evergreen, a Panama-flagged container ship that carries trade between Asia and Europe, became grounded Tuesday in the narrow, man-made waterway dividing continental Africa from the Sinai Peninsula. It wasn't immediately clear what caused it to turn sideways in the canal.

GAC, a global shipping and logistics company, described the ship as suffering "a blackout while transiting in a northerly direction," without elaborating. Evergreen Marine Corp., a major Taiwan-based shipping company that operates the ship, said in a statement provided to *The Associated Press* that the ship had been overcome by strong winds as it entered the

Suez Canal from the Red Sea but none of its containers had sunk.

A Egyptian official, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity as he wasn't authorized to brief journalists similarly blamed a strong wind in the area for the incident. Egyptian forecasters said high winds and a sandstorm plagued the area Tuesday, with winds gusting as much as 50 kph (31 mph). "All crew are safe and accounted for," said Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement, which manages the ship.

"There have been no reports of injuries or pollution." The Evergreen's bow was touching the canal's eastern wall, while its stern looked lodged against its western wall, according to satellite data from MarineTraffic.com. Several tug boats surrounded the ship, likely attempting to push it the right way, the data showed.

An image in Instagram by a user on another waiting cargo ship appeared to show it wedged across the canal.

# Shooting suspect prone to rage

Colorado (US), March 24: Law enforcement officials and former associates of a 21-year-old accused of killing 10 people at a Colorado supermarket described the suspect as someone prone to sudden rage who was suspended from high school for a sudden attack on a classmate that left the student bloodied.

Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa, who is from the Denver suburb of Arvada, was booked into jail Tuesday on murder charges a day after the attack at a King Soopers grocery in Boulder. He was due to make a first court appearance Thursday. Alissa had bought an assault weapon on March 16, six days before

the attack, according to an arrest affidavit.

Investigators have not established a motive, said Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty. It was not immediately known where the suspect purchased the weapon. Among the dead was Boulder police Officer Eric Talley, 51, who was the first to arrive after responding to a call about shots fired and someone carrying a gun, said police Chief Maris Herold.

A law enforcement official briefed on the shooting said the suspect's family told investigators they believed Alissa was suffering some type of mental illness, including delusions.



Format C-1  
(for candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV)  
Declaration about criminal cases

(As per the judgment dated 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court In WP (Civil) No.536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors.Vs.Union of India & Anr.)  
Name and address of candidate:**L MURUGAN, DOOR NO: 353 ARTHI FLATS, GUJI FIRST STREET, ANNA NAGAR EAST, CHENNAI 600 102**

Name of political party : **BHARATIYA JANATHA PARTY**  
(Independent candidates should write "Independent" here)

Name of Election **GENERAL ELECTION TO TAMILNADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2021**  
\*Name of Constituency : **\_101 DHARAPURAM-SC**

I **L MURUGAN** (name of candidate), a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

Sl. No	Pending criminal cases			Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences	
	Name of Court	Case No. and Status of Case	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence (s) & punishment imposed
1	Chengalpattu Police Station	Cr.no.- 3975 / 2020 Charges not framed	u/s 143,270 of IPC and u/s 51(b) of Disaster Management Act	NA	NA
2	Thiruthani Police Station	Cr.no.-2727 / 2020 Charges not framed	u/s 143, 341, 188, 269, 270 of IPC and u/s 51 of Disaster Management Act	NA	NA
3	Thiruvennainallur Police Station	Cr.no.- 637 / 2020 Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188, 269 of IPC .	NA	NA
4	Kallakkurichi Police Station	Cr.no.-2039/2020 Charges not framed	u/s 143, 269 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 51 of Disaster Management Act.	NA	NA
5	Thiyagaduruvam Police Station	Cr.no.-1334 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 51 of Disaster Management Act.	NA	NA
6	Cuddalore pudhunagar Police Station	Cr.no.- 1240 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188, 269 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 51 of Disaster Management Act.	NA	NA
7	AppanTirupathi PS	Cr.no.- 1359 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188, 290 of IPC.	NA	NA
8	Palani Town Police Station	Cr.no.- 1552 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 341, 269 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
9	Karur Police Station	Cr.no.-1303 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 341, 269 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
10	Erode North Police Station	Cr.no.- 1071 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 341, 269 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act , u/s 51 (b) of Disaster Management Act and u/s 4 Tamil Nadu Open Places ( Prevention Disfigurement ) Act.	NA	NA
11	Hossur Police Station	Cr.no.-982 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 188, 270 of IPC and u/s 134 of The Tamil Nadu Public Health Act .	NA	NA
12	Salem- Sooramangalam Police Station	Cr.no.- 1548 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 341, 269 of IPC, u/s 2&3 of Infectious Diseases Act , u/s 51 (b) of Disaster Management Act and u/s 4 Tamil Nadu Open Places ( Prevention Disfigurement ) Act.	NA	NA
13	Coimbatore - Rathinapuri Police Station	Cr.no.- 1323 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 341, 269 of IPC.	NA	NA
14	Chennai - Esplanade Police Station	Cr.no.-1660 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
15	Chennai - Esplanade Police Station	Cr.no.- 1661 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
16	Chennai - Mambalam Police Station	Cr.no.- 532 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188, 269 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 51(1) (b) of Disaster Management Act.	NA	NA
17	Chennai - C.M.B.D Police Station	Cr.no.- 792 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 147, 148, 188 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
18	Chennai - Thiruvottiyur Police Station	Cr.no.-5701 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 188, 269 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
19	Chennai - C.M.B.D Police Station	Cr.no.-797 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 147, 148, 188 of IPC and u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act.	NA	NA
20	Chennai - NazarathPettai Police Station	Cr.no.-738 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 269 of IPC , u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 41(6) Municipal Police Act.	NA	NA
21	Chennai - NazarathPettai Police Station	Cr.no.- 739 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 269 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 41(6) Tamil Nadu Municipal Police Act.	NA	NA
22	Chennai - NazarathPettai Police Station	Cr.no.- 740 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 143, 269 of IPC, u/s 3 of Infectious Diseases Act and u/s 41(6) Tamil Nadu Municipal Police Act.	NA	NA
23	Madurai - Thiruparankundram Police Station	Cr.no.- 1505 / 2020, Charges not framed	u/s 269 , 270 of IPC.	NA	NA

"In the case of election to Council of States or election to Legislative Council by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency.  
Note: (i) Details should be given separately for each case in separate rows.  
(ii) The matter in newspapers should be in font size of atleast 12

Chief agent  
P.K.raj





DECCAN  
Chronicle

25 MARCH 2021

Shot eligibility expansion  
route out of return wave

The decision of the Union government to open up the vaccination programme against pandemic Covid-19 further and include all those who are aged 45 years and above is a welcome move as it comes in the nick of time. India is on the verge of a second wave of the pandemic with more than 47,000 people contracting the virus on Tuesday alone. The daily caseload has been hovering above 40,000 for the last couple of weeks. Several states have already gone back to or are contemplating re-introducing lockdown in varying intensities to check the spread of the virus.

The government decision comes amid demands made by several state governments to include more categories of the population under it. The Delhi government has demanded that everyone above 18 years be given the jab while Punjab wanted the norms for the second phase where only those above 60 years were eligible for the vaccine be done away with. Its chief minister is particularly worried as 81 per cent samples that underwent genome sequencing from the state showed

**The US has vaccinated 37.83 of every hundred people while China's number stands at 5.21 against India's 3.54**

B117 virus, the UK strain of Covid-19. The government has of late ratcheted up the daily numbers in the inoculation programme, and the number of people who got a dose of the vaccine touched 33 lakhs on Tuesday. This is a commendable achievement compared with the slow progress the programme made in the initial phase. The total number of people who have got at least one dose of the vaccine has become 4.5 crores now but only less than 80 lakhs have got both their doses. The percentage of people who have got the vaccine is far too low compared with that in the US and Britain: the US has vaccinated 37.83 of every hundred people while China's number stands at 5.21 against India's 3.54. At this rate, India will take months on end to get a sizeable share of the population inoculated. This would mean some region or the other being under lockdown or debilitating restrictions. But the nation cannot afford to keep its economic activity in chains for long.

It has been one year since Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared a national lockdown to tame the virus and flatten the curve. One year on, India has suffered immensely at the hand of the microorganism. Crores of people found it difficult to make ends meet but the governments at the Centre and in most states offered very little in the form of immediate relief. Lakhs of people were made to flee their temporary abodes in the towns and trek thousands of miles on their way back home, creating one of the most heartrending and shameful episodes of Independent India. One year down the line, India is still the country with the third largest number of Covid cases and deaths after the United States and Brazil.

There cannot be a repeat of the same this year. The government must further strengthen the inoculation programme and at the same time strictly impose Covid-appropriate protocol across the country. Any laxity on these counts will cost the nation heavily.

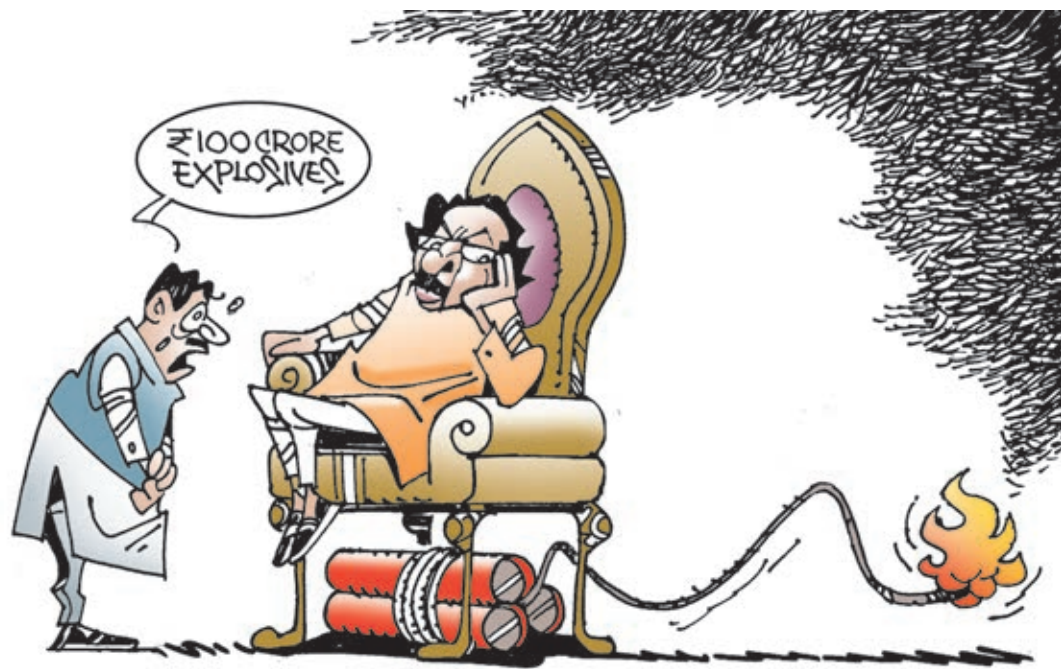
## Lanka: A lost opportunity

In abstaining from the vote on the United Nations Human Right Council resolution against Sri Lanka, India may have been attempting to find a pragmatic balance. But, in not claiming the moral high ground on the issue of human rights violations against Sri Lankan Tamils, the country lost an opportunity to be the conscience keeping leader of the region. There may have been inhibiting reasons in voting for the resolution like respect for the territorial integrity of the island nation, but none was so compelling as to impose an ambivalent position on how Sri Lanka tamed LTTE's secessionist movement towards the end of the civil war when it brazenly carried out executions, including that of the minor son of LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran.

What the Sri Lankan Army did in the guise of winning a war was morally reprehensible. Considering the head of the defence forces in the war against the rebels that ended in May 2009 is now the president of Sri Lanka, it is unlikely that the probe, financed with the UN's US \$2.8 million, will get very far. It is clear that India chose the path of lesser resistance in joining the abstainers rather than the 22 nations who voted for the resolution and 11, including Pakistan and China, voting against. India's two fundamental considerations of "supporting the Tamils for equality, justice, dignity and peace and ensuring the unity, stability and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka", are in the realm of the pedantic.

There is no doubt the nearness of April 6 elections in Tamil Nadu influenced the decision to abstain. The perception of New Delhi varies vastly from that of Tamil Nadu, obviously influenced by the romanticism of a Tamil Eelam, or homeland. The fact remains that New Delhi voted thus only with an eye on the Tamil Nadu voter rather than the empathetic first principles in favour of a people residing in northern Sri Lanka who are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity. No Indian on Tamil can influence the court of post-war events in Sri Lanka. But to remain a silent spectator to human rights abuses reflects moral bankruptcy.

Subhani

Halt Covid complacency:  
Be vigilant, keep all safePatralekha  
Chatterjee

Dev 360

Around this time last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a nationwide lockdown to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Indians were given four hours' notice before the order took effect. "From 12 midnight tonight, the entire country will go under a complete lockdown," Mr Modi said. "To save India and every Indian, there will be a total ban on venturing out of your homes." The initial clampdown was for 21 days.

A year on, where are we? That question is the big story in our lives.

Many of us have lost loved ones, jobs, watched our savings evaporate, been sick ourselves. Most of us have no choice but to tap our inner strengths as we cope with everyday challenges in the time of a pandemic.

It is not a totally bleak picture. Vaccines are available now and we are likely to see a huge scale-up in the government's immunisation drive in the coming weeks.

But alongside, worryingly, we are also seeing a big surge in Covid-19 cases in many parts of the country and a disconcerting general disregard for safety protocols. India's new Covid-19 cases had peaked at nearly 100,000 a day in September and had been declining steadily until late last month.

Two recent surveys give us a sense of just how bad the economic situation is.

The first one relates to the situation in New Delhi, the nation's capital.

According to a recent survey by the Delhi government, the unemployment rate in Delhi was 11.1 per cent before the onset of the pandemic and it shot up to 28.5 per cent during October-November 2020, an increase of 17.4 per cent. The male unemployment rate was 8.7 per cent before the pandemic;

it increased to 23.2 per cent, an increase of 14.5 per cent. The female unemployment rate was 25.6 per cent before the pandemic and went up to 54.7 per cent, an increase of 29.1 per cent, in the same period. The average monthly income of employed persons in the city before the pandemic was ₹16,511. It dipped to ₹15,383, a reduction of 6.8 per cent in the average monthly income during October-November last year.

In the past year, on the whole, the worst-affected sectors have been construction, food and beverages, service activities, education, wholesale and retail trade, services to buildings and landscape activities, information service activities, land transport, security and investigation activities, human health activities and wearing apparel manufacturing.

The survey was conducted last year, and arguably things have improved since then.

But here is the catch, signs of economic activity do not necessarily mean that workers are getting their due wages. From my personal conversations with scores of people in the informal service sector, I know that many are still getting a fraction of their former wages and many who are without work.

In January this year, I met Naresh Kumar, 55, in one of the "pagoda" style temporary refugees in winter in the Bangla Sahib shelter run by an NGO. Mr Kumar told me

**Let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.**

**A spike in coronavirus cases in India would dent the green shoots of the economic recovery as fresh curbs will kick in to prevent a new wave from gaining momentum. We must do everything we can to ensure that does not happen.**

he used to earn his living as a waiter, mostly at weddings. For the last one and half months, he had been at the shelter. He had no work for the past year. He was picked up by a rescue van and brought to the shelter. He had no identity documents. Naresh Kumar feared going back to sleeping in the streets once the temporary shelter closed down. I wonder where he is today....

Even in tony South Delhi enclaves, it is not uncommon to find people in the beauty, wellness and hospitality industry complaining of getting less than their salary. They can't quit their jobs because there are few new opportunities in the market.

Though the unemployment rate is gradually decreasing in the city, the implementation of a job guarantee scheme is very much needed to revive the national capital's economy scarred by the coronavirus pandemic.

The survey tells us that people at the bottom of the income hierarchy were among the worst affected. Those with no or minimal education lost jobs in far greater numbers than those with a simple diploma.

This is not just in Delhi or India's big cities. Across the country, not only have the number of the poor increased, leading to a sharp spike in the global increase in poverty, a new Pew Research Centre analysis talks about the retreat of India's middle class in 2020. The middle class in India is estimated to have shrunk by 32 million last year as a direct fallout of the economic downturn, compared with the number it may have reached without the pandemic, it says.

Understandably, people are tired and craving for normalcy and economic recovery.

But let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.

Understandably, people are tired and craving for normalcy and economic recovery. But let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.

Understandably, people are tired and craving for normalcy and economic recovery. But let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.

Understandably, people are tired and craving for normalcy and economic recovery. But let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.

Understandably, people are tired and craving for normalcy and economic recovery. But let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.

Understandably, people are tired and craving for normalcy and economic recovery. But let's face it — we are in the middle of two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the one impacting the economy. Both intersect. We have the vaccine. But as scientists keep reminding us, it doesn't herald a full stop to the pandemic just yet.

## LETTERS

## UDDHAV MUST ACT FAST

This has reference to your editorial *Optics key, Uddhav must act fast to kill racket stink* (March 24). The silence of Uddhav and Pawar's defence of his corrupt subordinate does not speak well of their political prominence. Corruption charges have been levelled against the home minister by no less a person than a top police officer. A monthly hafta collection of ₹100 crores to the minister is quite surprising. Under the circumstances his continuance in the Cabinet is wrong. He himself should have resigned when the charges were levelled against him. He should be shown the door immediately now.

**Sravana Ramachandran.**  
Chennai

## TIMELY MOVE

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to allow all above 45 years of age to take the Covid-19 vaccine from April 1 represents a major step forward in quickening the pace of vaccination and, by extension, the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. It is a timely move when the country is staring at a possible second Covid-19 wave. It is commendable that the task force is responding flexibly to the pandemic and taking right decisions without procrastination. Now anyone who was born before January 1, 1977 becomes eligible to get vaccinated. It does not matter whether they have morbidities or not. Those who fall in the 45-59 age group form a considerable number; it is of paramount importance that they overcome vaccine hesitancy and take the jab for their protection and prevention of the transmission of the disease.

**G. David Milton, Maruthancode**

## WALKOUT AT GENEVA

APPROPOS THE report Walkout at Geneva to affect votes in TN (March 24). In abstaining from voting on the UNHRC resolution against Sri Lanka of human rights violations purported to be genocide of Sri Lankan Tamils during the armed conflict with LTTE in 2009, the NDA government at the Centre led by BJP has shown in no uncertain terms that the BJP does not care for the Tamils in general and the Sri Lankan Tamils in particular. The resolution accused Sri Lanka of human rights violations. Despite pleas to the Central government by almost all political parties in Tamil Nadu to vote in favour of the resolution, the Centre was averse to vote for it and hence abstained from voting. The BJP which is contesting Tamil Nadu Assembly elections in April in alliance with AIADMK must be aware that its decision would affect its votes.

**Manoharan Muthuswamy,**  
Chennai

## DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER  
EditorK. SUDHAKAR  
Printer & PublisherR. MOHAN  
Resident Editor

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:  
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748  
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256  
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256.

Bangalore: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55  
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334. Fax: (0891) 2755285  
Vijayawada: No. C-3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/2555287. Fax: (0866) 2555234

Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618  
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904  
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Buranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/82, Telefax (0861) 2348580

Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilala Colony, Jagitayala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878 ) 2228908; Telefax (0878) 2220433  
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408

Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001  
Fax : 0495 4019018  
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycad post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/S-D-348/2006-0885

Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka BabuWill J&K-AGMUT  
cadre merger solve  
Valley's problem of  
sparse governance?

The merger of the Jammu and Kashmir cadre into the UT cadre, among other things, is meant to address the old problem of the acute shortage of IAS officers in the Union territory. The erstwhile J&K cadre had a stipulated strength of 137 IAS officers but currently has merely 58, of which nine are on Central deputation. The result is that practically every IAS officer in the UT is handling several portfolios, which is not exactly great news for good governance.

The problem has lingered for several years, with the result that officers of the Kashmir Administrative Service have long been handling posts reserved for IAS officers, without being promoted to the IAS. For instance, the post of district magistrate (DM) can only be filled by an IAS officer, but in

Kashmir, nine out of 20 district magistrates are from the state administrative service.

Apparently, no state administrative service officer has been inducted into the IAS since 2012, which has only accentuated the problem. While in other parts of the country there is a 37 per cent reserved quota for state service officers, in Kashmir it has become 50 per cent!

The cadre merger, the Centre hopes, will allow officers in the AGMUT cadre to be posted in J&K and Ladakh, and vice-versa. Until that happens it is the state service babus who will continue to hold most of the administrative positions in the Union territory.

**A HIGH-PROFILE EXIT**  
P.K. Sinha, senior advisor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, quietly put in his papers but cannot stop

**P.K. Sinha, senior advisor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, quietly put in his papers but cannot stop tongues from wagging. It is being said that Mr Sinha could be the next lieutenant governor of either Delhi or Puducherry.**

tongues from wagging. It is being said that the former Cabinet secretary is being primed for another role by Mr Modi. Among the theories doing the rounds, it is being speculated that Mr Sinha could be the next lieutenant governor of either Delhi or Puducherry.

This may not be without precedent. Recall 2019 when Nripendra Misra, the then principal secretary

to the PMO, similarly resigned "for personal reasons" but was soon named chairman of the prestigious Ram temple construction committee.

## BABU'S MIXED LEGACY

Economic affairs secretary Tarun Bajaj has been given an additional charge of revenue secretary after the retirement of A.B.P. Pandey last month. However, Mr Pandey's exit hasn't been as quiet as he may have expected. As soon as he retired, media reports appeared around the lack of progress in filling more than 400 vacancies of income tax commissioners and others, some of which have been hanging fire since 2019. It was somehow hinted that Mr Pandey did not do enough during his stint as revenue secretary to fill these vacancies. Further,

sources say, Mr Pandey drew the ire of Odisha-based IT chief commissioner D.P. Kar, who reportedly wrote to the Prime Minister demanding an inquiry against Pandey.

Yet, others point out that the same Mr Pandey was among the few babus who successfully led three crucial institutions of the Modi sarkar — department of revenue, goods and services tax network and the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). As revenue secretary, Mr Pandey led significant tax reforms undertaken by the government. The detractors waited for the man to retire before raising issues that troubled them during his tenure.

*Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.*



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	49,180.31	-1.74
Nifty 50	14,549.40	-1.79
S&P 500*	3,919.66	0.23
Dollar (₹)	72.56	-0.17
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.61	0.16
Euro (₹)	85.90	0.28
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	44,350.149	0.33
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	64.43	5.99
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.152	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.642	0.004

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## Differential licensing in telecom mulled

The Centre is carrying out a consultation process on differential licensing through which different layers related to telecom services will be dealt separately. Currently, infrastructure, network, and service layers are not segregated and are part of the Unified Licence. "The government is in the process of consultation on the matter of enabling unbundling of different layers," minister of state Sanjay Dhotre told the Lok Sabha.



## ■ Selling pressure drags Sensex by 871 pts Market panics over 2nd wave

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, MARCH 24

Weak global cues and surging Covid cases in India and Europe led to across-the-board selling in the stock market on Wednesday, as investors worried about the impact of fresh lockdowns. The Sensex closed at 49,180, down 871 points, or 1.74 per cent, near a two-month low.

The Nifty-50 Index fell 265.35 points, or 1.79 per cent, to 14,549.40.

The broader market indices fell even more, with the Nifty Mid-cap 50 Index down 2.45 per cent and the Nifty Mid-cap 100 Index down 1.99 per cent.

The second wave of coronavirus infections was causing grave concern in the market, as it would impact the economic recovery process. Mumbai alone crossed 5,000 daily infections, the highest so far, as total fresh cases in Maharashtra stood at 28,699 and the all-India daily cases stood at 47,262.

The Maharashtra government announced a complete lockdown in Beed and Nanded districts from March 25 to April 4.

The foreign portfolio investors turned net sellers of equities worth Rs 1,951.90 crore.

With equity derivatives expiry scheduled on Thursday, market volatility is expected to rise, said analysts.

NSE's India VIX Index surged 8.66 per cent to 22.46, indicating higher market volatility ahead.



"All sectors barring pharma witnessed selling as second and third wave infections in India and Europe, respectively, are bound to hamper economic recovery. Reports of a potential tax hike in the US also impacted the market sentiment," said Vinod Nair, head-research, Geojit Financial Services.

Crude oil prices fell 4 per cent to below \$58 per barrel on global growth concerns, as Europe is experiencing a third wave of Covid infections.

"Sensex and Nifty-50 lost 871 and 265 points on the back of weakness in the commodity prices, lack of FPI flows and tight liquidity conditions due to successive IPOs and QIPs. Defensive sectors like Pharma & IT were relatively stable whereas high beta sectors like metals, banking and mid-cap stocks fell sharply," said Hemang Jani, head-equity strategy, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Investor wealth on tumbled by more than Rs 3.27

lakh crore as markets witnessed massive selling pressure. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies plunged by Rs 3,27,967.71 crore to reach Rs 2,02,48,094.19 crore at the close of trade.

Binod Modi, head-strategy at Reliance Securities, said, "Domestic equities fell sharply on weak global cues and continued apprehensions among investors from surge in coronavirus cases in the country."

Further, a sharp rebound in dollar index aggravated concerns despite dip in US bond yields and crude prices, he added.

Among the 30 scrip Sensex pack, barring Asian Paints and Power Grid Corporation, all other constituents closed in the red.

The top losers included Mahindra & Mahindra (3.97 per cent), SBI (3.38 per cent), Axis Bank (3.33 per cent), ICICI Bank (3.22 per cent), IndusInd (3.07 per cent) and ITC (2.75 per cent).

## SEBI TO ATTACH BANK, DEMAT ACCOUNTS OF RANA KAPOOR

New Delhi, March 24: Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday ordered attachment of bank accounts as well as share and mutual fund holdings of Rana Kapoor, former MD and CEO of Yes Bank, to recover dues of over Rs 1 crore.

The decision has been taken after Kapoor failed to pay the fine imposed on him.

Sebi, in September 2020, had levied a fine of Rs 1 crore on Kapoor for not making disclosures regarding a transaction of Morgan Credit, which was an unlisted promoter entity of Yes Bank.

By not disclosing about the transaction to Yes Bank's board of directors, Kapoor created an opaque layer between him and stakeholders and violated the provision of the LODR (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulation. Sebi had said in the order.

Further, the Securities and Exchange Board of India issued a demand notice to Kapoor in February this year, although he did not pay any dues.

The pending dues, totalling Rs 1.04 crore, include an initial fine of Rs 1 crore and an interest of Rs 4.56 lakh and a recovery cost of Rs 1,000, the attachment notice showed on Wednesday.

In the notice, Sebi has asked banks, depositories and mutual funds not to allow any debit from the accounts of Kapoor. But credits have been permitted. —PTI

## New bankruptcy filings may resume from April

SHRUTI SRIVASTAVA & BIJOU GEORGE  
MARCH 24

India's government is considering resuming fresh bankruptcy filings after the current suspension expires on March 25, people with knowledge of the matter said.

The lifting of the halt would come even as a resurgence in virus cases threatens the nascent economic recovery. It could spark a wave of new insolvencies, pent up from last year when businesses were hurt by India's first economic contraction in decades.

The government last year halted the process of initiating most fresh insolvency proceedings



to insulate cash-strapped borrowers hit by the pandemic for six months starting March 25, and that was extended twice during the year.

The suspension is unlikely to be prolonged further because a return to normality is needed, the people said, asking not to be identified citing rules. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman is

considering a proposal to this effect.

A spokesman for the corporate affairs ministry didn't answer calls made to his mobile during business hours.

The move closely follows a Supreme Court ruling on Tuesday that allows lenders to resume classifying bad debt. The two steps together give investors a clearer sense of the impact of the pandemic on the asset quality of local banks.

The move also reopens avenues for lenders to collect on soured debt from delinquent borrowers, allowing them more tools to manage one of the world's worst bad loan piles.

— Bloomberg

## Healthcare allocation of states rises

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, MARCH 24

Battling the pandemic, both central and state governments have increased their budget outlays for healthcare expenditure in FY22 compared with budget estimates of FY21. This is good news for the healthcare industry, which is expected to see positive revenue growth from the first quarter of FY22.

Healthcare allocation is to go up by 9.2 per cent in the FY22 budget estimates of 19 state governments that have announced their budgets, while the allocation of the central government in the budget esti-

mate of FY22 has gone up over BE FY21 due to the spending on Covid-19 vaccination of Rs 35,000 crore.

Among the 19 states, 10 have made double-digit increase in allocations for health. These 10 states account for 50 per cent of the spending on health. However, Maharashtra brought down the allocation by 7 per cent and West Bengal by 5 per cent, finds a report by Care Ratings.

In the current fiscal, 13 states have registered double-digit growth in healthcare spending compared to their revised budget estimates of FY21 and RE of FY20. These states account for 70 per cent of

the total spending on health. Uttar Pradesh is the only state where health care spending in FY21 remain at the same level as in FY20.

Meanwhile, the hospital and healthcare industry is expected to grow by about 10-12 per cent in FY22. The industry revenues, which had de-grown the first three quarters of FY21, are estimated to return to normal levels by end of Q1FY22 backed by expected improvement in occupancy rates, footfalls and ongoing vaccination program. Increase in momentum of non-Covid treatments and elective surgeries will support the industry growth in FY22.

# COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



**Aries:** You should put extra efforts to finish your pending work. Do not allow confusion to overtake you when it comes to handling your accounts. A change will give you confidence.



**Taurus:** Make sure that your partner takes a fair share of responsibility. Good day for planning holidays and future vacations. Spend time with elders today.



**Gemini:** Make sure that you get to work on time. You cannot afford to be late at work. This is an easygoing day for many of you. Some of you may even be able to take a day off.



**Cancer:** Someone close to your heart may need your presence. This could be quite a good day for speculations. Make up your mind and be firm.



**Leo:** Students may excel in all their endeavors. Businessmen may open up new offices. Do not give up if things do not go your way today; just try again.



**Virgo:** Try and plan a flexible schedule if you are travelling as there may be changes. It is likely to be a smooth sailing day as things will proceed pretty much according to plans.

### You share your b'day with

Sarah Jessica Parker is an American actress. She is best known for her roles in the films like Sex and the City, Sex and the City 2, The First Wives Club, New Year's Eve amongst others.



**Libra:** Make it a priority to rework successful strategies and get them more in sync with your current commitments and career goals. Hardwork brings gain.



**Scorpio:** The chances of a new romance are bright. You may travel a long distance for your business. You may devote some time for your family.



**Sagittarius:** It may turn out to be a hectic day as delays or changes may affect your schedule. Some projects may not move ahead. Be flexible and go with the flow.



**Capricorn:** Take care of your valuables and important documents as you could misplace them. All the activity around you could cause distractions. Complete your tasks for the day.

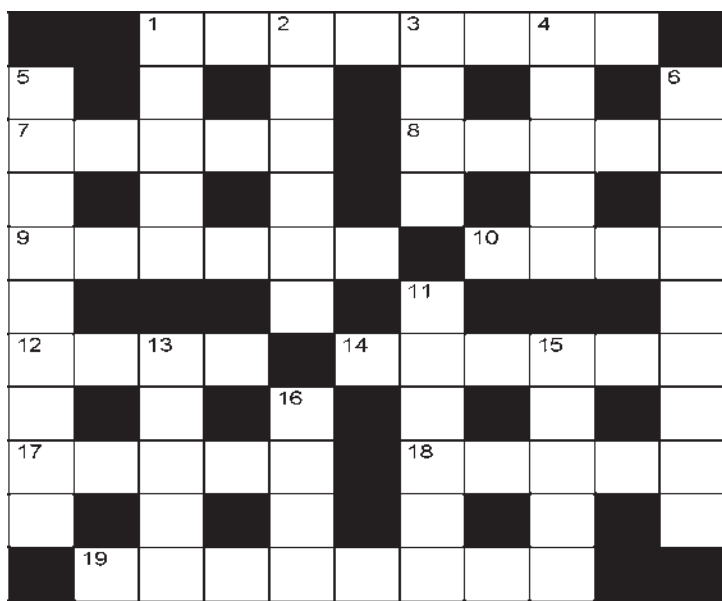


**Aquarius:** Don't neglect health issues. Those looking for work should focus more on networking as new opportunities could come your way through social or family connections.



**Pisces:** Instead of being bogged down by worries, focus on ways to overcome the challenges you face and you will succeed. A friend will invite you for a wonderful evening.

### QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- To a small degree (8)
- Expertise (5)
- Physically weak (5)
- Maintenance (6)
- Second letter of Greek alphabet (4)
- Against (4)
- Stone used for sculpture (6)
- Pursue (5)
- Accumulate (5)
- Strangle (8)

Down

- Avoid one's duty (5)
- Mould (6)
- Spouse (4)
- Wide open (5)
- Self-confidence (9)
- Uncomfortable (3,2,4)
- Empty (6)
- Rubbish (5)
- Courageous (5)
- Courageous person (4)

**YESTERDAY'S ANSWER**  
Across: 1. Meditate, 6. Lamb, 7. Embryo, 9. Straw, 11. Catch, 12. Alien, 13. Lever, 16. Eroded, 18. Mini, 19. Dialogue.

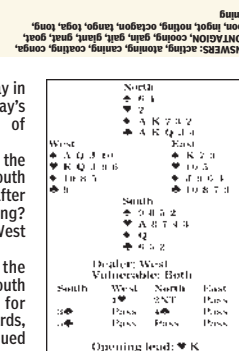
Down: 1. Milkshake, 2. Demur, 3. Ape'd, 4. Embrace, 5. Dry, 8. Otherwise, 10. Amended, 14. Vying, 15. Idea, 17. Rim.

### Word Mine

G  
N  
T  
O  
A  
I  
C  
O  
N

TODAY'S RATINGS: 16 AVERAGE; 18 GOOD; 20 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used only once. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.



### jumble

LROTL  
BHNCE  
NUIAAG  
TYAREE

THE (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: YOUNG CHUNK ORIGIN FINALE

Answer: The best view at Mount Rushmore is where it's — FACING YOU



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above context.

THE (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: YOUNG CHUNK ORIGIN FINALE

Answer: The best view at Mount Rushmore is where it's — FACING YOU

with three hearts. Then South, holding a heart stopper, would have bid three no-trump and had nine top tricks: one heart, three diamonds and five clubs. When North invited game by raising to four clubs, South moved on because he seemed to have two useful honor cards and a ruffing value in diamonds.

Since declarer's trumps are so low, South should assume diamonds are 4-3 and allow for a 4-1 trump break. Win with

the heart ace, unblock the diamond queen, play a trump to the dummy, ruff a diamond in hand, draw the remaining trumps and run the diamonds. Declarer loses only two spade tricks.

Finally, if West opens four hearts, North overcalls four no-trump to show at least 5-5 in the minors.

Copyright United Feature Syndicate (Asia Feature)

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli &amp; craig boldman



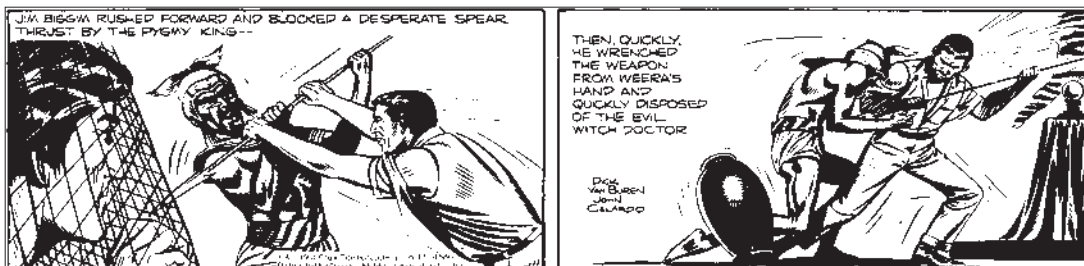
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs

bridge  
PHILLIP  
ALDER

## THE LOWEST-RANKING CAN OCCASIONALLY WIN

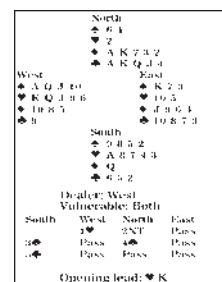
The fourth senryu by Anne Maverick of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, mentioning a bidding convention was: A major-suit bid / With five-five in the minors / Unusual two.

It must be admitted that the Unusual No-Trump, showing at least 5-5 in the two lowest-ranking unbid suits, is less effective than the Michaels Cue-Bid (see yesterday's column). You are always having to go one level higher to outbid the opponents. But the UNT

does have an occasional day in the sunshine -- not that today's deal is necessarily one of them!

What do you think of the bidding, and how should South plan the play in five clubs after West leads the heart king? What should North do if West opens four hearts?

After North used the Unusual No-Trump and South expressed a preference for clubs but limited high cards, North should have continued





## SHORT TAKES

## Shuttler forced out of Orleans tour

**Paris:** An unnamed Indian woman shuttle was on Tuesday forced to withdraw from the Orleans Masters after a team entourage member tested positive for Covid-19 and she was identified as a close contact. In a statement, the Badminton World Federation (BWF) said that a total of three players have been withdrawn from the event which began with the qualifiers here. "An Indonesian women's doubles pair has been withdrawn after one player tested positive to the mandatory PCR test conducted on Monday," the BWF stated. "An Indian women's singles player has been withdrawn after a team entourage member tested positive to the mandatory PCR test. The singles player was identified as a close contact of the entourage member and as a result the player has been withdrawn from the tournament," it added. — *PTI*

## SAI asks PCI to submit report

**Bengaluru:** Sports Authority of India on Wednesday sought a report from the Paralympic Committee of India after it emerged that facilities here at the National Para Athletics championship are not wheelchair-friendly and Covid-19 protocols are also "not being adhered to". A qualification event for the Tokyo Paralympics, the tournament to be held from March 24 to 27 was shifted here from Chennai at a short notice on March 20, leading to discrepancies in the conduct of the event. SAI has asked the national federation to immediately sort out the issues. "It has been brought to the notice of Sports Authority of India that the facility in Bengaluru at which the Para Athletics National Championships is not wheelchair-friendly and that Standard Operating Procedures for prevention of Covid-19 are not being adhered to," SAI said in a statement. — *PTI*

## Blatter banned by FIFA again

**Zurich:** Sepp Blatter was banned for a second time by FIFA on Wednesday for financial wrongdoing, seven months before the 85-year-old former president's first ban expires. Blatter has recently been in poor health and was put in an induced coma for one week after undergoing heart surgery in December. FIFA said its ethics committee banned both Blatter and former secretary general Jerome Valcke for six years and eight months for financial wrongdoing linked to awarding themselves contractual bonuses worth millions of dollars. Both men, who also face criminal proceedings in Switzerland, will start serving the new bans when their current ones expire. Blatter and Valcke were previously banned for six years and 10 years, respectively, in separate cases. Blatter's first ban expires in October and Valcke's initial ban will be served in October 2025. — *AP*

## Venus bows out of Miami Open

**Miami:** Venus Williams crashed out of the Miami Open on Tuesday, losing her first round game in straight sets to Zarina Diyas of Kazakhstan. Diyas advanced to a second round meeting with Swiss 11th seed Belinda Bencic after completing a 6-2, 7-6 (12/10) victory in 1hr 28min on the Hard Rock Stadium's Grandstand court.

## Live on TV

## FOOTBALL

**European Qualifiers for 2022 World Cup:** Bulgaria vs Switzerland from 10.30 pm on Sony Ten 2; Spain vs Greece from 1.15 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2; Italy vs Northern Ireland from 1.15 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 3; England vs San Marino from 1.15 am (Friday) on Sony Six; Germany vs Iceland from 1.15 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1

Regd. No.  
TNENG/2010/35692

Printed & Published by  
K. Sudhakar on behalf of  
Deccan Chronicle Holdings  
Limited and Printed at  
Deccan Chronicle Press situated at  
No 2/22, Sengalipalayam Road,  
N.G.G.O Colony Post,  
Kuruampalayam Village,  
Coimbatore - 641 022. RNI  
Registration No: TNENG/2010/35692  
Ph No : 2231252, 253, 255, 257 & 358  
Editor: KAUSHIK MITTER

## SHOULDER SLIPS

## Shreyas out of England ODIs, likely to miss IPL 1st half

**Pune, March 24:** India batsman Shreyas Iyer was on Wednesday ruled out of the ongoing ODI series against England and left in serious doubt for the first half of the IPL starting next month after dislocating his left shoulder in the opening game here.

The incident happened in the eighth over of the England innings when Shreyas dived on a drive hit by Jonny Bairstow off pacer Shardul Thakur.

He looked in tremendous pain as he left the field clutching his shoulder.

"It is unlikely he will play first part of IPL," a BCCI source said.

On Tuesday, the BCCI had stated, "Shreyas Iyer subluxated (partially dislocated) his left shoulder in the 8th over while fielding. He has been taken for further scans," the source added.

He captains Delhi Capitals in the IPL, which begins on April 9.

Shreyas had led Delhi Capitals to the final in the previous edition of the league. It could take as much as six weeks to recover from shoulder dislocation and much longer in case a surgery is required.

In his absence, the DC captaincy could be handed to either Rishabh Pant, Australian Steve Smith or R. Ashwin.

## EOIN, SAM INJURED TOO

Meanwhile, England skipper Eoin Morgan and Sam Billings are doubtful for the second ODI against India here on Friday after sustaining injuries in the series-opener, dealing a



India's Shreyas Iyer (left) walks off the field after injuring himself while fielding during the first One-Day International against England at Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Pune on Tuesday. — *AP*

fresh blow to the side's floundering campaign.

The visitors suffered the setbacks in their 66-run defeat after the skipper split the webbing between his right thumb and index finger that required four stitches. In another incident, Billings injured his collarbone following an awkward dive to stop a boundary.

"We're going to wait 48 for hours and see how it

is...give as much time as needed to hopefully be available for Friday," Morgan said.

England skipper Morgan said his batting would not be 100 per cent given the injury and fielding too is a concern with a split webbing.

Billings, who had dislocated his left shoulder to miss their triumphant campaign in the 2019 World Cup, too batted in

the stiff run chase, and scored 18.

"I haven't spoken with Sam about his batting so I don't know in his instance... In mine, it's never going to be at 100 per cent but it's not that I can't hold a bat," Morgan said.

Down 0-1, the world champions face a must-win situation in the second of the three ODIs here on Friday. — *PTI*

## NUMBERS GAME

## PRASIDH KRISHNA - 1st INDIAN TO TAKE FOUR WICKETS IN DEBUT MATCH

● Prasidh Krishna became the first Indian and 55th bowler overall to take four wickets on debut in one day internationals.

● The right-arm medium-fast bowler achieved this feat by taking four for 54 in the first one day international match against England at Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium, Pune on Tuesday (March 23).

● Off-break bowler Noel David who took three wickets for 21 runs against West Indies at Port of Spain on April 27, 1997 held the previous record of best bowling on debut for Indian in one day internationals.

## BEST BOWLING ON DEBUT FOR INDIA IN ONE DAYERS

● 4-54 — Prasidh Krishna against England in Ahmedabad on March 23, 2021.

● 3-21 -- Noel David against West Indies in Port of Spain on April 27, 1997.

● 3-24 — Varun Aaron against England in Mumbai on October 23, 2011.

● 3-30 — Subroto Banerjee vs West Indies in Perth on December 6, 1991.

● 3-31 — Hardik Pandya against New Zealand in Dharamsala on October 16, 2016

S. PERVEZ KAISER



Chinky Yadav poses with her gold medal in the Women's 25m Pistol event at the Shooting World Cup in New Delhi on Wednesday.

## Chinky, Aishwary dazzle with gold

**New Delhi, March 24:** Chinky Yadav upstaged the experienced Rahi Sarnobat and the fancied Manu Bhaker to win gold as India swept the women's 25m pistol event of the ISSF shooting World Cup here on Wednesday, highlighting the country's depth of talent in the sport.

The 23-year-old Yadav prevailed over Sarnobat, 30, 4-3 in a shoot-off after their scores were tied at 32, taking India's gold tally to nine in the event.

Bhaker, aged only 19, shot 28 to settle for the bronze medal before being eliminated, leaving her two other compatriots to fight for the top prize at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range.

Yadav led the pack after first 20 targets with a score of 14.

She was followed by Bhaker at second with 13.

Then, the shooter from Bhopal led with a score of 21 and pulled away from the rest, even as the seasoned Sarnobat clawed her way back into the finals after struggling in bottom half. In the finals, Yadav

shot all the five targets twice — in the first competition stage's second series and the sixth series of the elimination stage — after beginning with two.

Meanwhile, young Indian shooter Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar claimed the gold medal in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event, consolidating the host nation's top standing in the ISSF World Cup here on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old from Bhopal shot 462.5 to win the top prize ahead of Hungary's star rifleman Istvan Peni (461.6) and Denmark's Steffen Olsen (450.9) at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range. This was India's eighth gold medal at the ongoing marquee event.

The other Indians in the final, veteran Sanjeev Rajput and Niraj Kumar, finished sixth and eighth respectively. After an impressive start following which he led for a while, Tomar slipped in the standings but fought back strongly with a 10.4, 10.5 and 10.3 in the standing elimination stage. — *PTI*

## PT USHA, GURBACHAN NAMED SELECTION COMMITTEE HEADS

**New Delhi, March 24:** Sprint legend P. T. Usha has been given charge of the junior selection committee, while hurdling great Gurbachan Singh Randhawa will head the senior panel in the latest appointments announced by the Athletics Federation of India.

The 56-year-old Usha won multiple medals in the Asian Games in 100m, 200m, 400m and 4x400m besides finishing fourth in 400m hurdles in 1984 Olympics.

Other members of the junior committee are Soma Biswas, Anand Menzes, Satbir Singh, Sandeep Sarkaria, Sunita Rani, Rama Chandran, Joseph Abraham, Harwant Kaur, M. D. Valsama and Kamal Ali Khan. — *PTI*

## Ingram stands tall to sink LA Lakers

**Los Angeles, March 24:** Brandon Ingram scored 36 points as the New Orleans Pelicans took full advantage of LeBron James' injury absence to pummel the Los Angeles Lakers 128-111 on Tuesday.

Ingram sent his former team sliding to defeat in a one-sided game at New Orleans' Smoothie King Center.

The Lakers were rocked on Saturday by an injury to James which has left the

four-time NBA champion facing several weeks on the sidelines. With Anthony Davis and Marc Gasol already out injured, the depleted Lakers have now lost three consecutive games to fall to fourth place in the Western Conference standings at 28-16.

The Pelicans meanwhile remain in the hunt for a playoff berth after a win that sees them improve to 19-24. — *AFP*

## Super Kings pay tribute to armed forces in new jersey

## DC CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI, MARCH 24

Chennai Super Kings have redesigned their jersey for the first time since the inaugural 2008 edition.

Unveiled on Wednesday, the new-look jersey features camouflage as a tribute to India's armed forces and three stars atop the much-loved franchise's logo.

CSK hold the country's armed forces close to the heart and showed their appreciation by presenting a cheque of ₹2 crore at the start of the 2019

IPL season.

The team's talismanic skipper, MS Dhoni, is an honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the Territorial Army and also trained with the Parachute Regiment in 2019.

The camouflage on the shoulders is bordered with gold bands that signify the high standards set by the team both in terms of consistency and fair play — CSK won the IPL fair play award six times in 11 seasons.

The three stars denote the three IPL titles won in 2010, 2011 and 2018. Super Kings qualified for

the playoffs in 10 seasons and made it to the final eight times.

"It has been on our mind for some time now to find ways to raise awareness about the significant and selfless role of the armed forces. The camouflage is an appreciation of their service... they are the true heroes," CSK CEO KS Viswanathan said.

The IPL team with a legion of loyal fans also released a short video of talismanic skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni, launching the new jersey on its *Twitter* feed.



India's Hardik Pandya (left) greets teammate Krunal Pandya before the start of the first One-Day international (ODI) match against England at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Pune on Tuesday. — *AFP*

## Krunal remembers late Dad after India victory

**Pune, March 24:** India all-rounder Krunal Pandya had his late father Himanshu's travel bag in the dressing room as he tried to keep him close ahead of his outstanding ODI debut in which he smashed the fastest 50 by a debutant.

Celebrating his 30th birthday on Wednesday, Krunal and his younger brother and star all-rounder Hardik Pandya spoke about the close relationship they shared with the Senior Pandya, who died of a heart attack in January.

"So basically the thing is, he passed away on the first morning and I was playing Syed Mushtaq Ali on that day. He had a habit of

keeping his clothes ready in the night, his shoes, his pant, his shirt, hat as well.

"So what I did was just before the game, I got his bag from Baroda here, and I thought, I know he is not with us, but those clothes, which he was supposed to wear in that game, I thought I'll bring that and keep in the dressing room," Krunal said.

Apart from his 58-run knock, Krunal also picked up a wicket in the game, against England, which India won by 66 runs to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. He broke down while speaking to the host broadcaster after the match and was comforted by his brother.

"Obviously, I worked so

hard to be here...not just in cricket, but in terms of everything, taking care of my diet to fitness, to everything and again this is all dedicated to the old man...his blessings are there with us and obviously it was very emotional for you and me, both of us, and again getting a cap from you," Krunal added.

"...my focus has always been about how I can be the best version of myself, how I can improve, not just as a cricketer, but how can I improve as a human being as well.

"...again somewhere down the line, I just feel his (late father's) blessings are there, just feel more secure...this is for him," said Krunal. — *PTI*

## Akash hits century in Madras Indian triumph

G. Akashkumar smashed a century as Madras Indian Cricket Club beat Universal Recreation Club to win the TNCA sixth division championship league match.

**Brief scores: III-Division:** Sea Hawks Cricket Club 89 in 37.1 overs (S. Samuel 34 (not out); Gurjapneet Singh 4/25, E. Umasankar 3/9) lost to Egmore Recreation Club 90/2 in 21.5 overs (R. Anirudh Seshadri 40).

**II-Division-Plate (Final):** CromBest Recreation Club 264/9 in 50 overs (N. Mohammed Ashik 50, C. Sathanarayanan 49, Shubhang Mishra 31; P. Prashanth 4/63) bt Southern Railway Institute 124 in 42.5 overs (S. Parthasarathy 3/28, L. Ganesh 3/18).

**V-Division (Championship Play-off):** Kumbhat Cricket Club 237/8 in 50 overs (R. Prathosh 126, D. Aswath 35; V. Tharun Kumar 5/55, M. Dinakaran 3/83) bt Kamyuth Club 154 in 31.2 overs (S. Sachin

73; G. Siddharth 3/68, K. Praveen Kumar 3/31).

**V-Division (Relegation Play-off):** IAF (Tambaram) 181 in 36.1 overs (Sagar Sharma 68, Virender Singh 58; Siddharth Prakash 4/48, C.N. Ananthakrishnan 3/65, Devendar Soni 3/36) lost to Shivaji Cricket Club 182/2 in 23.3 overs (Asif Ahmaed Yousuf 56, Siddharth Prakash 50; Minerva Cricket Club 219/9 in 50 overs (E. Surender 103 (not out); C. Herald Prabhudas 3/45) lost to Youth Centre Cricket Club 220/8 in 49.4 overs (V. Taher Moiz 78, Hussain J Darbar 39, Mustansir Rohawala 50 (not out); P. Jayaram 3/41).

**VI-Division (Championship):** Universal Recreation Club 139 in 29.2 overs (T. Viswanathan 4/37) lost to Madras Indian Cricket Club 140/3 in 15.4 (G. Akashkumar 100).

## Riyah storms into quaterfinals

Riyah Dugar beat Saniya Manoj Masand 7-5, 6-1 in the second round of

## CITY CLIPS

the the TVS ITF juniors under-18 tennis tournament. She will now meet Amodini Naik in the quarter-finals.

**Results: Boys: Singles: 2nd Round:** Denim Yadav (IND) bt Aryan Shah (IND) 7-5, 6-3; Ronin Lotlikar (IND) bt Daksh Prasad (IND) 6-3, 6-1; Agriya Yadav (IND) bt Raghav Harsh (IND) 7-6(5), 6-3; Dhruv Hirpara (IND) bt Anup Bangargi (IND) 6-1, 6-3; Yuvan Nandal (IND) bt Kiruthik Kalyaan AS (IND) 6-2, 6-1; Dhananjay Athreya (IND) bt Manas Dhamne (IND) [5] 6-3, 6-3; Aayush P. Bhat (USA) bt Kabir Chhabria (IND) 6-1, 6-2; Monil Lotlikar (IND) bt Akarsh Gaonkar (IND) 5-7, 6-3, 6-2.

**Men's doubles: Quarter-finals:** Anup Bangargi (IND)/Rishivandhan Sadeeshkumar (IND) bt Dhanush Patel (IND)/Agriya Yadav (IND) 6-3, 6-3; Dhruv Hirpara (IND)/Aryan Shah (IND) bt Adhirit Awal (IND)/Cahir Warik (IND) 6-1, 6-4.

**Girls Singles: 2nd Round:** Riyah Dugar

(IND) bt Saniya Manoj Masand (IND) 7-5, 6-1; Arunkumar Lakshmi Prabha (IND) bt Madhurima Sawant (IND) 7-5, 6-0; Sonal Paygonda Patil Patil (IND) bt Kristi Boro (IND) [8] 6-1, 6-2; Lakshanya Vishwanath (IND) bt Amina Sailbayeva (USA) 2-6, 6-0, 6-3; Naisha Srivastav (IND) bt Naga Roshne Arunkumar (IND) 6-4, 6-4; Pushti Laddha (IND) bt Nandini Dixit (IND) 6-2, 6-2; Amodini Naik (IND) bt Saina Deshpande (USA) 1-6, 6-4, 6-4.

## Vijender moves up

Vijender Rao of Snook Inn defeated Mylapore Club's Vijayaram 3-2 in the seventh round of the Saleem Snooker Academy-Jhillmill all-India open snooker tournament.

**Results: Round 7:** Vijender Rao (Snook Inn) bt Vijayaram (Mylapore Club) 3-2; Vadvilelu (Snook City) bt Sikkander (QBC) 3-2; Hari Prabhu (CueZone) bt Shriram (Thiruppur) 3-0; Kamal (CueZone) bt Arun Kumar (Maharashtra) 3-0.

**Round 6:** Sajiv Mathew (Towers Club) bt Mohan (QBG Shooters) 3-0; Shriram (Thiruppur) bt Gopinath (Madurai) 3-1; Kamal (CueZone) bt Mahesh Aditya (Karnataka) 3-1; Dilip (CueZone) bt Dinesh (QBG Shooters) 3-0; Aashish Jain (SLVS) bt Fahd (Buddies) 3-0; Radhesh (Towers Club) bt Julvan (Pondy) 3-1; Prathish (TNBSA) bt Manoj (Towers Club) 3-2; Yeshwanth (Cue Zone) bt Akbar Hussain (Karnataka) 3-0; Damu Menon (TNBSA) bt Harish (SSA) 3-0; Sanjay (SSA) bt Gautham (Snook City) 3-0; Karthik (Red 15) bt Karuna (Cue Zone) 3-0.

**Round 5:** Kamal (CueZone) bt Sathish Kumar (TNCA) 3-1; Dilip (CueZone) bt Swaminathan (TNBSA) 3-1; Sikkander (QBC) bt Prakash (QBG Shooters) 3-2; Ashish Jain (SLVS) bt Shabir (QBC) 3-0; Manoj (Towers Club) bt Irfan Akhtar (Kerala) 3-2; Mohan (QBG Shooters) bt Amin (CueSports) 3-1; Karthi (QBG Tricks) bt Anooob (Kerala) 3-1; Shriram (Thiruppur) bt Sarfaraz (Presidency Club) 3-0; Harish (SSA) bt Nares (Snooker Point) 3-1; Gautham Ajeet (Snook City) bt Ashwin (Towers Club) 3-1.