



## WINDOWS



A woman holds an idol of Lord Krishna at a shop ahead of the Janmashtami festival, in Prayagraj, on Monday

## PM reviews flood situation with 6 CMs

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday reviewed the flood situation with the Chief Ministers of Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala in a video conference. The meeting was attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan, both Ministers of State of Home Affairs and senior officials of the concerned Central Ministries and various agencies.



## Rajnath launches 'Self-reliant Week'

**New Delhi:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the self-sufficient India Week on Monday. During this, he spoke of increasing self-reliance and military forces in the defence sector. In this inaugural event in South Block, he said that all the activities during this week will promote indigenous defence production.

## Specially-abled teen gangraped in Rajasthan

**Jaipur:** Police on Monday detained three accused for the abduction and gangrape of a 17-year-old specially-abled girl in Dausa district of Rajasthan. She was kidnapped on her way to a store near her home and then assaulted.

## BUSINESS



## 50% INDIAN WORKFORCE MAY BE AI READY IN NEXT 6-10 YEARS: MICROSOFT

P6



# Pilot may fly back to Cong

## Rebel leader calls truce with Gandhis

**New Delhi:** Ahead of the crucial Rajasthan Assembly session from August 14, rebel Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Monday met party leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra amidst indications of a possible breakthrough.

Top Congress sources said the meeting took place a little after noon at Rahul Gandhi's residence and a "positive outcome" was expected.

Sources said Pilot has been in touch with the top Congress leadership and a formula for his return was being worked out. According to the sources close to Pilot, the meeting lasted for about two hours and the Pilot camp was assured that all issues raised by them will be resolved.

Meanwhile, party sources said Pilot has been in touch with the top Congress leadership and a formula for his return was being worked out. They said among the options, one possible agreement discussed during the meeting was favourable voting by Pilot and MLAs loyal to him in case of a trust vote during the upcoming Rajasthan assembly session.

Pilot and 18 other MLAs have rebelled against the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in Rajasthan, leading to Pilot's sacking as deputy



chief minister and state party chief. Party sources add that some of the rebel MLAs have also been in touch with the Congress leadership in the last few days.

Sources also claimed that one of the MLAs was back to the Congress fold after being in touch with the party leaders. Other MLAs are likely to meet top party leadership soon and discuss their issues, they added.

The Congress had a total of 107 MLAs in the 200-member Rajasthan assembly. This includes 6 MLAs who were previously with the BSP.

Pilot and other rebel MLAs would face disqualification in case they defied the Congress whip on the floor of the house.

With Ashok Gehlot firmly holding on to the remaining MLAs, top leadership are positive of resolving the rebellion raised against the state chief minister.

## Officials rule out possibility of zero year

**New Delhi:** The Narendra Modi government is not thinking of treating the current academic session as a "zero year", and it will ensure that all school and college exams are held, Union Higher Education Secretary Amit Khare informed the parliamentary panel on Human Resource Development (HRD) on Monday. One of the MPs, who attended the Rajya Sabha standing committee meeting, said that Khare told the MPs, "Students will get their classes online and offline, and all logistical support will be provided to ensure that exams happen."

We are not going to treat the current academic session as a year-long holiday."

The standing committee, which has 31 MPs from Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, met to discuss the preparedness of school, higher and technical education sectors during the Covid-19 pandemic. Over a dozen MPs attended the meeting.

Khare, however, did not give any clear indication on when the schools, colleges and universities are likely to open.

# Consumer charter likely to get Cabinet nod on 24X7 power

**New Delhi:** The Union government proposes to bring in regulations that will give rights to consumer to seek 24X7 electricity supply in their homes and provide them compensation for any deviation from the stated goal.

Sources said that a consumer charter has been introduced in the new tariff policy that has been finalised by the Power ministry that clearly mandates role and responsibility for power distribution companies and states the rights of consumers.

The new tariff policy with added consumer charter has been placed for approval of the Cabinet by the Power ministry. Once approved, the subordinate legislation would be placed in Parliament before it becomes operational bringing under its ambit state discoms over performance of providing 24X7 power to consumers.

"The policy would become model electricity generation and supply in the country and give citizens the right to seek uninterrupted power supplies

The new charter specifies interruptions in power supplies due to load shedding that is unscheduled or stretches beyond a cut off time, consumers would be compensated by the discoms



or get compensated," said a source in the ministry.

The new charter would specify interruptions in power supplies due to load shedding. For every load shedding that is unscheduled or stretches beyond a cut off time, consumers would be compensated by the discoms. The compensation would be in the form of a credit that will be made into the consumers' account with discoms so that this credit is used when paying the next electricity bill.

"In most regions, power is in surplus over the current demand. This provides ideal ground for providing 24X7

power households. If the regulation does not go into litigation and all states are on board over it, it would be a major reform that would change the way electricity is supplied in the country," said a power sector analyst asking not to be named.

The Union government is carrying forward two major reforms in the power sector. One that will come through the tariff policy, while the other through a new Electricity Act. The aim of both regulations is to create a competitive power market where suppliers, distributors and consumers -- all gain.

# Optical fibre for Andamans

## PM inaugurates first-ever submarine OFC for Andaman, Nicobar Islands

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday inaugurated the first-ever undersea optical fibre project for Andaman and Nicobar Islands which will provide high-speed broadband connections in the Union Territory at par with services in the mainland.

On December 30, 2018, the Prime Minister had laid the foundation for the 2,312-km-long submarine optical fibre cable project connecting Chennai - Andaman and Nicobar Islands (CANI).

"From Chennai to Port Blair, Port Blair to Little Andaman and Port Blair to Swaraj Dweep, this service has started in large part of Andaman



Nicobar from today," Modi said after inaugurating the project.

The project has been implemented at a cost of Rs 1,224 crore.

Besides, Port Blair, it will connect other islands namely Swaraj Dweep (Havlock), Long Island, Rangat, Little Andaman, Kamorta, Car Nicobar and Greater Nicobar.

The PM said that it is the responsibility of the nation to provide modern telecom connectivity to the people of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. All telecom operators in the country will be able to provide their mobile and broadband services using the CANI optical fibre link.

"The optical fibre connectivity project to connect Andaman and Nicobar with the rest of the country and the world is a symbol of our commitment towards ease of living,"

Modi said.

According to official data, internet with a speed of 400 gigabytes (Gb) per second will be provided at Port Blair and for other islands, it will be 200 Gb per second.

Undersea cable linking the Andaman Islands with Chennai was laid before time, Modi said while inaugurating the cable link. Work of laying undersea cable has been executed by BSNL in a record time of less than 24 months.

This project will give a boost to 4G mobile services and digital services like tele-education, telehealth, e-governance services and tourism on the islands.

## India is not for sale: Ex-hockey coach recalls Dhyan Chand's response to Hitler

PRATIK SAGAR

**New Delhi (IANS):** The date August 15 holds a great significance for every Indian around the world but 11 years before that day in



1947, the Indian flag flew highest in another part of the world -- Germany.

## Rhea moves Supreme Court

**Mumbai:** Rhea Chakraborty, who has been accused by actor Sushant Singh Rajput's father of abetting his son's suicide, has filed a fresh affidavit in the Supreme Court, stating that the media is "unfairly" targeting her. In the affidavit, Rhea said that she has been declared a convict by the media trials. She also said that she had no objection if the apex court would transfer the case to the CBI, but the ongoing media trial against her should be stopped.

# Swarna hotel probe looks into all angles

MOHD AMEEN

**Vijayawada:** A probe into the fire accident that took place in the Swarna Palace hotel turned into Covid care centre has begun in the right earnest. But the focus of the probe seems to be more on who is at fault? Is it the management of the hotel or the hospital and what was the agreement between them?

They do not seem to be looking into the loopholes in rules and if there was any laxity on the part of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation officials or the Fire authorities. Since Sunday, different versions of the archaic rules pertaining to the conditions of giving permission for hotels has been in circulation. It is clear that no authority had even thought of possible accident once a hotel is converted into a hospital.

Talking to The Hans India, a Fire department official confirmed that the hotel turned to Covid care centre had not obtained NOC. Even Covid guidelines were not followed by the hotel management. The hospitals have to take extra measures and install more equipment for the safety of patients and the hospital staff. The big question now is will the committee pinpoint if there was a failure of authorities?

Hotel-turned Covid centre has not obtained Fire NOC from Fire department



All that has happened on Monday was that the District level committee constituted by Collector Md Imtiaz inspected the Swarna palace hotel and Dr Ramesh hospital. Another team headed by Joint Collector L Sivasankar, committee members Vijayawada Sub-collector HA Dhyan Chandra, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Chief Medical and Health officer Dr G Geetabai, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Regional Fire Officer T Uday Kumar and an official from CPDCL inspected the Swarna palace hotel and tried to get information on the reasons for the fire.

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# Safety threat looms large over Covid care centres

RANI DEVALLA

**Visakhapatnam:** How safe are hotels and other buildings turned into quarantine facilities and Covid care centres in Vizag? This is the million-dollar question in the minds of many after the incident that happened at Swarna Palace in Vijayawada on Sunday.

Though the government is considering concrete measures after the incident, many had lost their lives by then.

Absence of proper coordination among the government departments is leading to costly lapses. Apparently, such lapses in following safety norms in Covid care

## Fire dept has no clue about number of pvt buildings used as quarantine facilities

centres (CCCs) or quarantine facilities that are attached to several hospitals treating coronavirus patients are not evident in Visakhapatnam. However, no exercise pertaining to the fire safety precautions has been carried out before converting buildings into quarantine centres. "The private buildings used as quarantine centres in Visakhapatnam have obtained NOCs from the Fire department. In addition, three more private hospitals approached to

obtain no objection certificate from the Fire department. Since they did not meet the criteria, they were denied the certificates. Couple of them were given the NOCs later as they met the required norms," explained BVS Ram Prakash, District Fire Officer.

When private buildings are utilised as facilities to treat Covid patients, power usage is normally high. Variation between consumption of power and voltage streaming leads to short circuits. In case

of any unforeseen incident, these buildings should be armed with fire-fighting equipment. But the mechanism to examine whether a building is capable enough for such high-power consumption or meet any exigency seems to be a question mark.

When verified, the Fire department officials have no clue about the statistics related to the number of private buildings being used as quarantine facilities. The reason for this is the district administration has taken up the exercise of converting the buildings into such facilities after verifying the NOCs.

Continued on Page 5



# Womenia

## For this B'wood actress, all world's a stage

**Veteran Bollywood actress Supriya Pathak shares her thoughts on 'Theatre'**

ASKARI JAFFER

It is said that theatre is for those who are passionate about acting and want to make it their profession. However, veteran actress Supriya Pathak is not in sync with this adage. She says theatre is for anyone and everyone who has gone through a basic training. Also, she advocates just like other art forms like dance and singing, theatre should also be taught as a subject in schools and colleges.

Sharing about it, Supriya says, "I think theatre is not just for the actors but also for common men who want to experience theatre. I think theatre is for all and any person from business, corporate, academics, medicine or any other profession must have a little theatre experience. In fact, I tried speaking to principals and teachers of educational institutions to try and introduce theatre as a subject in extra-curricular activities."

A little part of theatre experience would boost the confidence level in every individual, she added.

Sharing one of her life experiences, she said, "We were in London. And a play on Lion King was to be performed. I was overwhelmed watching it and couldn't believe that such theatres can also be done. After that I felt that theatre is the foundation for the growth and journey in life."

"While speaking to a live audience normally you feel a little scared, but at the same time you feel happy that you can see the reactions of the audience. If you have done some kind of theatre workshop it gives you a lot of positive thinking to face any kind of problems that may arise during your life," she said further.

"Theatre has always been a very important part of my life and I try and tell everyone around me especially youngsters to experience

speaking in front of live audience and you will get immediate response, 'Achha lagegi to tali milegi bura lage to tamatar' (You will get applause if the performance is good, and criticism if it is bad)," Supriya said laughingly.

Life itself is a stage and we all are actors playing a character and one day we all go away, but what is important is what we leave behind for the younger generation, she said.

Supriya's mother always used to tell her to experience theatre once in her lifetime. If you do theatre you will realise what exactly life is.

When she started doing theatre she actually felt that she is being alive when she performs in front of the live audience. She still hopes that she can perform as many characters as she can for her audience and the only platform that she can think about is the theatre. According to her, what happens in theatre doesn't happen anywhere else.



You get to see different reactions of the

audience of the same play which we perform in different cities around the world.

"I would like to say to youngsters who are listening to this session, to try a little training about theatre or any workshop and enjoy the entire process that will help you in life and groom you as a better person," concludes Supriya.

## The beauty of Bandhani

SUJATA ASSOMULL

A vibrant, colourful and exuberant fashion trend seems to have emerged in these uncertain times; the confinement of Covid-19 has seen the resurgence of tie and dye. Judging by social media feeds in the last few months you have either baked banana bread or tie-dyed t-shirts.

Tie and dye is the comfort food of fashion easy to do, a great bonding activity and the result is very Instagram friendly. Its psychedelic patterns give us pangs of nostalgia, a throwback back to the "Summer of 69", a time remembered for social revolution and free love; and right now we are all in the mood for some reminiscing.

The resistant dye technique can be traced back centuries, with India's Bandhani considered to be one of the oldest forms of tie and dye. The term Bandhani is rooted from the Sanskrit verb 'bandh', which means "to tie," and uses natural dyes. The craft-rich Kutch belt is home to many skilled Bandhani artisans, as the ancient art comes from the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan. It requires nimble hands, the smaller the knot the more time it takes; intricate designs are a sign of a precision.

A red and white bandhani sari was traditionally worn by brides from this region, and yellow bandhani sarees were gifted to mothers-to-be as a sign of fertility. Today you can find Bandhani in a range of colours from neutral shades of indigo, greys and blacks to vibrant pinks and oranges. Revered by fashion historians all over the world, it's a technique that European brands such as Etro have referred to in their collections.

It is safe to assume with tie and dye

coming to the forefront of global fashion, this decorative technique will be something Indian designers will champion. Contemporary Indian design label Abraham and Thakore has turned to the beauty of Bandhani for many of their collections, even injecting the artisanal practice with a graphic sensibility by engineering square patterns and forms into their designs. "There is a surge of interest in handmade products at this time, because they have a feel of authenticity, and Bandhani fits right into this trend. It is also a flexible technique, so it lends itself to be modernised with ease," says David Abraham.

A technique that works on anything from a sari to a slip dress, India's doyenne of fashion is on board with Bandhani too.

Ritu Kumar says, "The original Bandhani was a very fine one, however today we have variations wherein wider ranged areas are tied to highlight the tie-dye effect. The technique of Bandhani keeps making a comeback through the arrangement of patterns in different ways. The bonus reason for expecting Indian designers to refer to this craft is its a history of being a leveller, its pattern embraces the #inthis together spirit of these unprecedented times. As Abraham explains, "There is something evergreen and classic about Bandhani making them good investment pieces. Chiffon Bandhani and Leheriya sarees are still worn by the elite as well as on the street."

As we become more conscientious of the need to support our artisans, Bandhani is the "Handmade in India" story. With its colour, craft, history and enduring appeal - it does seem as though Bandhani's beauty is ready to be rediscovered.



## Anxiety can harshly impact your skin, hair

PUJA GUPTA

The lockdown has resulted in stress for a lot of people - stress of being cooped inside for weeks together; the uncertainty looming large has taken a toll on people's mental well being. Stress cannot be hidden; it is seen right on your face. The first tell-tale signs of stress are reflected on your face as pale skin and mild eruptions. Stress causes hormonal imbalance which leads to acne, rashes, hair thinning and fall, and various other skin break-outs. It is imperative that people follow good skin care hygiene while they're locked indoors. Staying inside does not necessarily mean you can forego or overlook skin and hair care. These are prone to more damage owing

to stress, Dr Geetanjali Shetty, Consultant Dermatologist and Cosmetologist, Cetaphil India tells. She adds further, "Hence we encourage people to follow a strict, if not elaborate, skincare routine, which involves cleansing, toning and moisturizing."

### Side effects of stress - oily skin and acne

Acne and oily skin are the most common side effects of stress. When our body is stressed it releases cortisol which is our fight or flight hormone. The cortisol (stress hormone) weakens the skin's immune system, leading to oxidative (free radicals) stress, which manifests itself as wrinkles, lines and lacklustre skin. It also increases inflammation in the body and conditions like

eczema, rosacea and psoriasis can flare up.

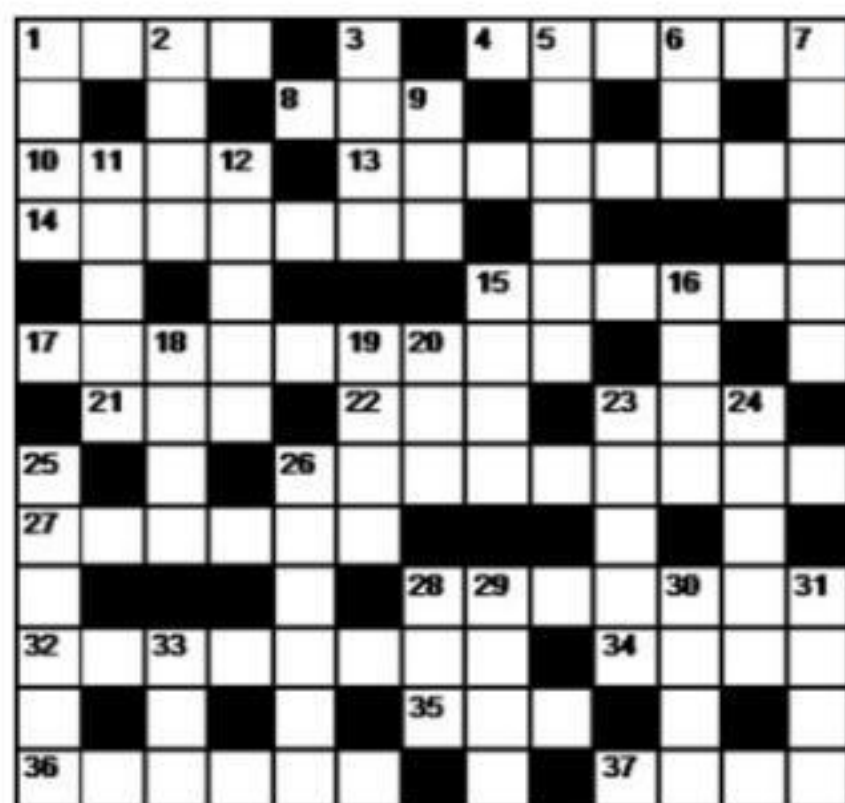
### Keeping your hair and skin health

Hair is non-essential to physical survival and so it will always be the first part of you to suffer when something is off-balance in your body. But maintaining it is equally important. Using a warm, natural hair oil can do wonders for hair health and texture, while it aids repairing damaged hair, it also helps nourish your scalp. You should ideally warm around 100 ml of your chosen hair oil and then gently apply it on your hair every alternate day. While for skin, the stress is quite evident in various forms like redness of skin, acne, etc. If there are skin breakouts and eruptions - it is advised to avoid exfoliation and

stick to cleansing your face thrice daily. Similarly, those who are on the drier side should aim to wash their face only twice a day with a foaming cleanser.

### Role of Diet!

It is highly imperative that one pays heed to what they're eating. The lockdown can result in redundancy, as your physical activities will be down by notches, this can cause your digestive system to slow down leading to poor digestion. Important that we stay away from fried and spicy food. Vitamin E is the superfood of the skin - you can apply it on the skin topically or you can choose to consume it through Vitamin E rich foods like almonds, corn oil, cod-liver oil, hazelnuts, lobster, peanut butter, safflower oil, salmon steak, and sunflower seeds.



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SOLUTION TO AUGUST 10

### CROSSWORD

#### Across

- Applies lubricants to (4)
- Expresses pleasure by grinning (6)
- Tease (3)
- Frozen treats (4)
- Rejection, nonacceptance (4-4)
- Threw carelessly (7)
- Pass by (6)
- Warrior as per Indian caste system ? (9)
- A large drinking cup (3)
- Expert or adept (3)
- Thickness or layer of cloth or wood ? (3)
- Unsuspecting or gullible (9)
- Jumble (6)
- Excessive bureaucracy or formalities ? (3,4)
- Driver or putter (4-4)
- Large antelope (4)
- In short, the management course qualification ? (3)
- Dislike strongly (6)
- Modify the text (4)

#### Down

- Of the ear (4)
- In \_\_\_ of : instead ? (4)
- Snap or snip, sting (4)
- Main city of Philippines (6)
- Lion constellation (3)
- Perceived or felt (6)
- Baby blossom (3)
- Yawning gap (5)
- Skinny person or animal (5)
- Saw (4)
- Equestrian sport (4)
- Tinted (4)
- Infrequent (4)
- On thin \_\_\_ : in a risky situation ? (3)
- Dwarf planet (5)
- Young urban professional (5)
- Formed a concept (6)
- Mouse operations (6)
- Cane spirit (3)
- Flows back (4)
- Parched (4)
- Leaving door (4)
- Set on fire (3)

### SUDOKU

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SOLUTION TO AUGUST 10

### NEWS ROUNDUP

## TV star Prachi Tehlan shares her wedding pics

Actress Prachi Tehlan, who recently got married to Delhi-based businessman Rohit Saroha, has treated her fans with her wedding pictures on Instagram.

Posting a picture from her 'phera' ceremony, Prachi wrote: "7.8.2020. Wedding Date."

She chose to wear a red bridal lehenga on her big day. Reacting to the image, athlete Raspreet Sidhu commented: "The prettiest bride ever."

The marriage took place on Friday in Delhi. Prachi, who is best known for her role in the TV show "Diya Aur Baati Hum", used to play netball for India.





# Militants target BJP leaders in Kashmir, many resign due to fear

**Jammu:** The attack on a BJP worker in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam district has triggered fear among party's Valley unit while several activists have ended their association with the party. To ensure their safety, the BJP has asked its leaders in the Valley not to leave their houses without security clearance.

Suspected militants shot at Abdul Hamid Najar, a BJP worker in Budgam, on Sunday. He succumbed on Monday at a hospital in Srinagar. Najar was the OBC Morcha district president of the party for Budgam.

Najar's killing has led to a series of resignations from BJP

workers in the Valley. There have been around eight fresh resignations by BJP workers in the last 24 hours.

Najar's killing is the third attack on BJP leaders in the past five days. On Thursday, sarpanch Sajjad Ahmad was killed in South Kashmir's Qazigund area outside his residence. Another BJP sarpanch Arif Ahmad Shah was also critically wounded in the attack by militants in Kulgam district.

"First there were the killings of the BJP workers in north Kashmir, then south Kashmir, and now central Kashmir's Budgam. It looks like militants



are working under a set pattern," said an official, pleading anonymity.

With the attack on its party members, the fear among BJP

leaders in Kashmir is palpable. After Najar's killing, the BJP on Monday asked for safe accommodation for its workers and leaders at the district headquarters. The BJP has asked its leaders not to step out from their safe houses without security clearance.

Altaf Thakur, spokesperson for BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit, termed the killing of Najar as "inhuman and barbaric". He appealed police to nab Najar's killers and work out a security plan for the BJP leaders and workers as suggested by the BJP's top leadership.

Thakur said the police top brass should work out a security model for BJP leaders, workers, and activists across Kashmir as per the suggestion by the BJP top leaders.

He demanded that at each district headquarters, one building should be reserved for BJP leaders and its workers where all security arrangements should be kept in place.

"The safe accommodation at district headquarters should have accommodation for at least 50 to 60 people. They should be provided with food and other basic facilities there as well," Thakur demanded.

In a diktat to its cadre, Thakur stressed that no BJP leader should venture out without security clearance.

The attacks on BJP leaders have become more frequent

since last month when BJP leader Sheikh Waseem Bari; his father, Bashir Ahmad; and his brother, Umer Sultan, were killed outside their residence in north Kashmir's Bandipora area. Though the house of the BJP leader is exactly opposite to a police station, a day later threatening posters, asking the BJP workers to resign, appeared at the same place.

Officials say around 500 BJP workers have been in secured hotels and government accommodation for the past one year. After Bari's killing, 30 party workers have been provided security.

## KERALA PLANE CRASH

# 56 injured passengers discharged from hospital

**Kochi:** The Air India Express said on Monday that 56 passengers, who were injured in the plane crash in Kozhikode, have been discharged from various hospitals after obtaining complete fitness.

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had said on Saturday that 149 people have been admitted to hospitals, 23 have been discharged, while three are critically injured in the B737 plane crash.

The Air India Express flight from Dubai with 190 people, including a six-member crew, overshot the tabletop runway during landing at the Kozhikode airport in heavy rain on Friday night, fell into a valley 35 feet



below and broke into two, killing 18 people, including the pilots.

"The Chief Executive Officer, Air India Express Ltd as well as Regional Head-Southern Re-

gion continue to remain in Calicut (Kozhikode) to render continuous support to the family members," the airline said in a statement on Monday.

"As on date, 56 injured passengers have been discharged from various hospitals after obtaining their complete fitness," it added.

Air India Express, a wholly owned subsidiary of national carrier Air India, has only B737 aircraft in its fleet.

The airline said on Sunday that the mortal remains of 16 passengers killed in the plane crash have been handed over to their families, and added that authorities were investigating the accident.

## A web series on gangster Vikas Dubey

**Mumbai:** Filmmaker Hansal Mehta is set to develop and direct a web series based on gangster Vikas Dubey, who was killed in an encounter by Uttar Pradesh police last month.

Eight policemen, including Deputy Superintendent of Police Devendra Mishra, were ambushed in Bikru village in Chaubeypur area of Kanpur when they were going to arrest Dubey and fell to bullets fired from rooftops shortly after midnight on July 3.

Dubey, who was carrying a reward of Rs 5 lakh on information leading to his arrest, was arrested from Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh on July 9.

He was killed in an encounter on the morning of July 10 when a police vehicle carrying him from Ujjain to Kanpur met with an accident and he tried to escape from the spot in Bhauti area, the police had said.

Producer Shailesh R Singh's Karma Media and Entertainment, in association with Po-



laroid Media, have bought the rights for the upcoming project on the gangster.

Mehta, known for directing acclaimed films like Aligarh, Omerta and the National Award-winning Rajkumar Rao-starrer Shahid, said he will approach the subject responsibly.

"It is a reflection of our times and our system where politics, crime and lawmakers form a curious nexus. It is early to dis-

cuss approach but it will be approached responsibly and as a fascinating recounting.

"I see an edgy political thriller emerging out of this, and it will be very interesting to tell this story," the director said in a statement.

Singh, who has backed films like Tanu Weds Manu, Shahid, Manoj Bajpayee-headlined Aligarh, Omerta and Judgemental Hain Kya, said he is excited to bring Dubey's life to the screen.

## Bapu's glasses to go on sale in UK

**London(IANS):** A pair of Mahatma Gandhi's glasses will go on sale after staff at the East Bristol Auctions, the largest auction house in South West England, found them in a plain envelope. Auctioneer Andrew Stowe said: "Someone popped them into our letterbox on a Friday night and they stayed there until Monday - literally hanging out."

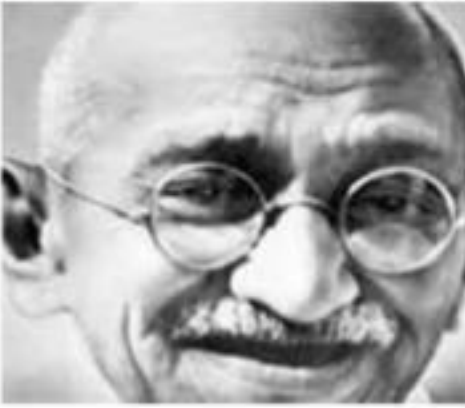
"One of my staff handed them to me and said there was a note saying they were Gandhi's glasses. I thought 'That's an interesting one' and carried on with my day." Upon investigating, Stowe said he almost "fell off his chair" to discover the circular rimmed, gold-plated glasses, had been worn by the Indian civil rights leader.

"I phoned the guy back and I think he nearly had a heart attack," said Stowe.

The glasses are expected to raise more than \$19,600 and was the most important find in the company's history.

Stowe said the owner "nearly had a heart attack" when he was told their value.

Stowe said the owner told him the glasses had been handed down from generation to gener-



ation in the owner's family, after a relative met Gandhi on a visit to South Africa in the 1920s.

"We looked into the dates and it all matches up, even the date Gandhi started wearing glasses. They are probably one of the first pairs of glasses he wore as they are quite a weak prescription," he added.

Stowe said there had been a lot of interest in the glasses, especially from India, but that it was fortunate they reached him intact.

"They were just in a plain white envelope. They could quite easily have been stolen or fallen out or just ended up in the bin. This is probably the most important find we have ever had as a company."

The glasses are going to be sold as part of an online-only auction on August 21.

## IIT-Madras announces course on biomimicry

**Chennai (IANS):** The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) on Monday announced introduction of a full semester course under the interdisciplinary stream on biomimicry.

Biomimicry has immense potential not only in engineering, technology and design but also in areas like management, human resources, administration, social sciences and the arts, the IIT-M said.

According to the institute, biomimicry means to imitate or look at nature as a source of inspiration to resolve complex problems. It is the intersection of biology and engineering.

Examples of modern engineering inspired by biomimicry include the 'Shinkansen' bullet train in Japan, inspired by the kingfisher; the Eastgate Centre in Harare in Zimbabwe inspired by termite mound; and self-filling

water flasks inspired by the Namib Desert beetle.

IIT-Madras is among the first few institutions in India to offer a full-fledged course on biomimicry, the Institute said in a statement.

The institute has also created a community of biomimicry enthusiasts who are exploring opportunities in research, entrepreneurship, new products, processes, and systems.

It plans to hold a biomimicry challenge to provoke bold, sustainable ideas from young minds.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals can provide students with challenges, for which they can design solutions using biomimicry.

Schoolchildren can benefit from biomimicry, which not only helps learn innovation from nature but also create a sustainable way of life.

## Faesar steps down as prez of his party

**Srinagar:** Shah Faesar, who resigned from the Indian Administrative Service and floated the Jammu and Kashmir People's Movement last year, has resigned as its president, the party said on Monday. Faesar had dropped a hint about stepping away from politics on Sunday as he edited his personal details on Twitter, removing the reference to his political affiliations.

He could not be contacted for comments. The JKPM's executive committee held an online meeting on Monday to discuss the ongoing political developments in the state, the party said in a statement. "In the meeting, request of Dr Shah Faesar to spare him from the organisational responsibilities was discussed. Dr Shah Faesar had informed state executive members that he is not in a position to continue with political activities and wants to be freed from the responsibilities of the organisation," the JKPM said.

"Keeping in view this request, it was decided to accept his request so that he can better continue with his life and contribute whichever way he chooses," the party said.

## Hong Kong media tycoon arrested

**Hong Kong:** Hong Kong pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai was arrested on Monday and led in handcuffs through his newspaper office as police raided the building, part of a sweeping crackdown on dissent since China imposed a security law on the city.

Lai, 71, was among seven people detained on suspicion of colluding with foreign forces -- one of the new national security offences -- and fraud in an operation targeting his Next Digital publishing group.

It was the latest police operation against dissidents under the sweeping new law introduced at the end of June. Two of Lai's sons were among those detained, a police source told AFP. The most serious national security crimes carry up to life in jail. Journalists working at Lai's Apple Daily took to Facebook to broadcast dramatic footage of some 200 police officers conducting the raid, and the newspaper's chief editor Law Wai-kwong demanding a warrant from officers.

## Pak resorts to firing, shelling on J&K LoC

**Jammu(IANS):** Pakistan resorted to unprovoked firing and shelling on the Line of Control (LoC) on Monday in Jammu & Kashmir's Poonch district, continuing its series of ceasefire violations.

Defence Ministry spokesman Colonel Devender Anand said, at about 10.15 a.m. Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along the LoC in Balakote sector of Poonch district.

"The Indian Army is retaliating befittingly", the spokesman said.

One terrorist was killed and two injured on Sunday when alert Army troops foiled an infiltration bid on the LoC in Poonch district.

So far this year, 23 civilians have been killed and over 100 injured in more than 2,720 ceasefire violations by Pakistan on the LoC.

**New Delhi (IANS):** There is an extreme shortage of medical abortion drugs across the country, with acute crisis due to lack of stocks in Delhi, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh, a study on Monday revealed.

The study conducted by the Foundation for Reproductive Health Services on 1,500 chemists showed that merely one per cent of the chemists in Punjab, two per cent in Tamil Nadu and Haryana, 6.5 per cent in Madhya Pradesh and 34 per cent in Delhi have stocked the abortion drug.

The State which fared best is Assam at 69.6 per cent.

As per the study, the non-stocking of drugs seems to be linked with over-regulation by drug control authorities. About 79 per cent of chemists do not stock the drugs to avoid legal is-

ssues and excessive documentation requirements.

Even in Assam, which has the highest stocking percentage, 58 per cent chemists report over-regulation of drugs. State-wise legal barriers continue to be a major reason for non-stocking of the abortion drugs, with 63 per cent chemists in Haryana, 40 per cent in Madhya Pradesh, 74 per cent in Punjab and 79 per cent in Tamil Nadu reporting so.

FRHS Chief Executive Officer V.S Chandrashekar told IANS: "The main reason for not stocking drugs is over-regulation by local drug authorities. Even while it is a Schedule K drug and is even given to ASHA workers to distribute in communities, many retailers are not stocking them due to misconceptions and legal barriers."

He added that medical abortion drugs are the most preferred



method with 81 per cent of abortions being administered through them and hence their lack of availability hinders women, who do not wish to opt for surgical abortion methods.

"In the midst of the pandemic when movement of people is restricted and clinical methods of family planning are not adequately available, there is a dire

need to ensure unrestricted access to drugs," said Chandrashekar, who is also the member of Pratigya Campaign Advisory Group.

While the purpose of the study was to verify the availability of drugs, the findings also reveal that Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECP) are not being stocked by chemists in the state of Tamil

Nadu. Only 3 per cent of the chemists surveyed in the state reported stocking ECPs and 90 per cent not stocking shared that the pills are banned in the state. Emergency Contraceptive Pills are non-prescription drugs and are also stocked and distributed by ASHAs under the National Family Planning Program. Not allowing chemists to stock ECP denies women of Tamil Nadu a safe and easy to use contraceptive choice.

The primary reason for non-availability of MA drugs seems to be the incorrect understanding that medical abortion combipacks can be used for gender biased sex selection among regulatory officials. A Medical abortion combipacks is indicated for use only up to nine weeks while an ultrasound can detect the sex of the fetus at 13-14 weeks gestation.



## Pak should not act at the behest of China

The World Bank has expressed its inability to take an independent decision on the appointment of a neutral expert, which India prefers, or a Court of Arbitration, which Pakistan has asked for into to the Indus treaty, to settle the recent controversial issues between the two neighbours, saying they will have to “bilaterally” choose one option. Pakistan had made a request for appointment of a Court of Arbitration (COA) while India sought a neutral expert to resolve their dispute on two hydroelectric projects. Because of two conflicting positions under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, the World Bank was facilitating the two governments to find ways in resolving differences and move forward. There is no provision in the treaty for the World Bank to take an independent decision though it was part of the 1960 treaty and had been

“sitting” on Pakistan’s request for a COA for almost four years now. Pakistan has been asking the World Bank to recognise its responsibility under the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 to address its concerns over two disputed proposals — 330 MW Kishanganga project on the Neelum river and 850 MW Ratle Hydropower project on the Chenab — and play its role to ensure that India abide by the provisions of the 1960 treaty while building the projects. There is a considerable hardening of stance on both sides recently. After the Galwan skirmish between India and China, Pakistan could be said to have started playing a bit dicey. India has already completed the Kishanganga project during the period the World Bank “paused” the process for constitution of a Court of Arbitration (COA) as requested by Pakistan in early 2016. The Pakistani request was countered by India by calling for a neutral expert. In Dec 2016, the bank had announced that it had “paused” the process for either appointing a COA or a neutral expert, and started mediation between the two countries on how to advance and develop consensus in the light of the treaty on

the mechanism for resolution of faulty designs of the two projects. Pakistan does not like the World Bank’s stand on projects in disputed areas (which it does not fund) and keeps insisting that Diamer-Basha Dam be funded just as the Bank supported Dasu-I and II on Indus. India has suggested to Pakistan that the talks for discussing pending issues under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) be held through video-conferencing in view of the coronavirus pandemic, but Islamabad has been insisting that the parleys be conducted at the Attari check post. In a letter last week, the Indus Commissioner of India told his Pakistani counterpart that it is not conducive to hold the meeting at the Attari Joint Check Post due to the pandemic. It may be recalled that on Pakistan’s request, a meeting was scheduled in the last week of March to discuss the pending issues. However, it was deferred due to the pandemic, Pakistan accuses India of waging a water-war here which is only laughable, at the best. India has always stood for peace and good neighbourly relations and will do so in future too. Let Pakistan not overreact, at the behest of China.

# Self-financing capital that could not take off



Madabhushi Sridhar Acharyulu

So-called dream of greenfield capital Amaravati was a failure mostly because the earlier Chief Minister could not make it irreversible as that was left incomplete in his term. Existing structures housing some government offices like Secretariat, Assembly and the High Court which accounted for some thousands of crores of public money may not serve the purpose completely. The foundation stone laid at Uddandarayuni-palem by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 22 October 2015, along with Vice President, SC Judge, Japanese Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Yosuke Takagi and the Singaporean Minister for Trade and Industry, S Iswaran, remain a forgotten point in the chronology of AP capital. The CM’s office started functioning in April 2016 from Velagapudi village, might continue for some time to come. Interestingly Naidu’s description of these permanent edifices as ‘temporary’ became true.

The capital city was planned to spread over 217 square km area with a total cost of Rs 55,300.43 crore to the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) out of which the State government’s contribution is only Rs 12,600 crore (equity Rs 6,600.29 crore and supporting grant Rs 5,900.71 crore) spread over a period of 8 years from April 2018 to March 2026 (Rs 500 crore in 2018-19, Rs 1,800 crore per year for later six years and Rs 1,300 crore in 2025-26).

It was called self-financing city as its construction was planned by self-financing from loans and land selling with the State government’s moral support. The Naidu regime refused to take loans from foreign/international banks. According to a detailed news article published by Eenadu, the contribution from the government is to be repaid by the CRDA after 2037. It is claimed that ultimately the State or the Central governments will not be incurring any expenditure to construct this capital as that is wholly expected to be financed by the income accrued from the sale of land for various development schemes (Rs 17,100.51 crore), loans and the local taxes (Rs 14,600.41 crore by 2037) to the CRDA. The State and Union governments are expected to earn Rs 12,000 crore per annum out of which the State Goods and Services Tax (State GST) alone is expected to be Rs 6,000 crore per annum. The CRDA was expecting a net surplus income of Rs 33,300 crore by 2037 after meeting the total expenditure. A 177-page report of the CRDA in 2019 says that the Amaravati government complex which is dreamt to provide world-class facilities needed for the State government and its employees’ accommodation is also part of the CRDA project. It also contained a plan



for the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) in Amaravati to connect with the adjacent Vijayawada and Guntur cities by world-class road network. Both the Amaravati government complex and BRTS were supposed to incur an expenditure of Rs 14,000 crore.

Generally, the cities would boost up the economic growth contributing between 59% and 70% of GDP, which, with three capitals decision in Andhra Pradesh should lead to significant growth in urbanisation, leading to healthy economy. With approval to the Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Equal Development of All Regions Act, Amravati slated to continue as the legislative capital; Visakhapatnam and Kurnool were added as the executive and judicial capitals, respectively. The apprehension is that it would be a death blow to interests of thousands of farmers who gave up their substantive part of agricultural fields hoping to reap dividends of growth arising out of development new capital Amaravati. Tens of thousands of crores of investment is at stake now.

With three capital cities, the distances among them need to be counted. Executive capital Visakhapatnam will house the Secretariat and the Raj Bhavan, is 700 km from Kurnool (Judicial capital), and 400 km from Amaravati. Amaravati and Kurnool are 370 km apart. It is estimated that to give a speech at the State legislature, the Governor will have to travel 400 km. With the State police headquarter at Mangalagiri, 14 km from Vijayawada, senior police officials will have to travel 400 km to be at the Secretariat. And, given how often litigation matters require administrative and police staff to depose, bureaucrats posted in Visakhapatnam and police officers posted in Mangalagiri should be travelling some 700 and 330 km, respectively. Most of the State revenue might be spent on footing the travel bill. Mysore (Karnataka) and Pune (Maharashtra) attracted IT industries, though they are not

capital cities. Immediate fall out of the scrapping of the Amaravati project was walking out of World Bank and a Singapore-based consortium. Along with World Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) also announced they would not fund the Amaravati project. Singapore also walked out.

Previous government tried the model of acquiring farmland for urbanisation to fetch high commercial value to the lands surrendered by the farmers. Around 28,000 farmers handed over 33,000 acres of land in the Mangalagiri-Guntur region expecting a return for annuity besides getting a portion of the surrendered land in a capital city having far greater value than their original plot. The State is supposed to pay them a monthly income for 10 years and allot a developed plot for every acre of land surrendered.

Earlier the government allotted lands to several Central corporations and private bodies at cost ranging from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 2 crore per acre. It was agreed to pay three times to the cost as compensation if agreement is not adhered to. The compensation perhaps reaches the astronomical heights of Rs one lakh crore if all agreements with 23,000 farmers are enforced. All those 33,000 acres should be reconverted into agricultural lands and given back to the same farmers, which is another gigantic exercise.

It is reported that several thousands of crores of rupees worth Bills are pending with the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) which is now being scrapped. The land investors suffered most as real estate value in Amaravati have dropped by half, from Rs 40,000-45,000 per sq. yard to Rs 20,000-22,000. It is alleged that projects worth Rs 10,000 crore are suffering unexpected losses.

It is estimated that the government at present needs more than Rs 1 lakh crore to complete projects initiated by the earlier

government. A project to create infrastructure for drinking water, power, roads, and drainage is awaiting the loan from AIIB. A six-way arterial road connecting Amaravati to national highway 16, which is part of the Golden Quadrilateral from Kharagpur in West Bengal to Chennai needs huge funds. Once the Finance Minister said: “We don’t have money to build a city. Our priority is to raise the standard of living, provide equitable development and create infrastructure for manufacturing”.

Immediately after winning elections in 2019, Jagan Mohan Reddy explained that the State is left with a debt burden of Rs 2.57 lakh crore — up from Rs 97,000 crore in 2014. Every year, the State pays Rs 20,000 crore to service the debt and coupled with prepayment of the principal component, the outgo is Rs 40,000 crore.

The Chief Ministers and the ruling Party may change, but the government is a continuous institution, the decisions and agreements become irrevocable especially when it comes to issues like seat of capital and the contracts signed with owners or allottees of the land. Though the parties to these contracts may not have a right to have the capital in Amaravati, they can certainly demand compensation for the losses they suffered due to change in the decision, beyond what was agreed to. The farmers who offered their agricultural fields were assured with the proper development of the capital. They could have legally enforced their right to seek proper development. They are plunged into crisis because the seat of capital itself is changing, which means that there will no further development of the area as planned or agreed.

With these potential, legal and constitutional threats the ‘three capitals’ issue could be totally uncertain and dependent upon the outcome of the Judicial review by Andhra Pradesh High Court.

*(The writer is former Central Information Commissioner and Professor at Bennett University)*

## LETTERS

### Stop plundering environmental resources

The landslide in Idukki district in Kerala that seems to have claimed more than 25 human lives and many feared missing is not new to the country. Such repeated incidents should have prevailed upon the rulers to look into the cause and done something to prevent their recurrence. In fact, Indian subcontinent is bestowed with rich natural resources covering the entire spread from the Himalayas to the Southern tip of the Western Ghats providing all provisions for a healthy living for all living beings. But the greedy capital has its spell on these resources plundering them for profits and endangering the very life and livelihood of all the living beings in the region. The subsequent rulers have, under the guise of promoting employment, have recklessly allowed mindless plundering of these rich environmental resources further and further and the people are facing the untoward and unpleasant consequences. There is an apprehension that the situation may turn worse with the latest amendments made in environment related statutory provisions. We may not be able to create icebergs of Himalayas or live rivers like Ganges or Indus or thick forests like Western Ghats, but we can and should at least allow them to survive to care our future generations. This is not time to liberalise the destruction of forests but to be stricter in preserving them and handing them down safely to the future generations. Let us pass on a pleasing environment instead of a blazing earth.

A G Rajmohan, Anantapur, AP

### Indifferent hotel staff must be held responsible for mishap

Propos the news report ‘10 Covid patients die in AP mishap’ (August 10), reading the facts of this case, it looks like that delay in reporting fire caused heavy casualties. Fire fighters took fifteen minutes to reach the venue which could have cut 30 crucial minutes delay. It is simply callousness on the part of hotel staff to not report fire immediately. Hotel staff’s negligence proved fatal for the hapless patients who had no clue that they were locked in fire chamber. Now the onus is on the government to complete the probe and book the culprits. Hotel staff’s propensity not to report fire immediately and handle themselves to avoid adverse publicity may be the only reason for delaying reporting. It was a criminal act.

Ashok Goswami, Mumbai

### A chilling reminder of 2010 Mangalore plane crash

There are three tabletop airports in India from where scheduled flights operate. Calicut International Airport in Malappuram, India and Mangalore International Airport in Mangalore, and Lengpui airport in Mizoram are examples of tabletop runways. Prima facie, the aircraft landed beyond the touchdown point and broke into two after crashing. It was indeed a chilling reminder of the 2010 Mangalore crash. At the time of landing on tabletop airports, you will have goose bumps. It is highly risky during heavy rains. As a regular flier on this route I felt that landing on a tabletop airport is highly risky as the risk of missing the landing mark may lead to disaster. Somehow, the third attempt for landing did not click on a wet runway

and failure of break at a crucial time made the matter worse. Tabletop tragedy for the second time is a terrible one for the national airways.

Ramani Subbu Mani, Bangalore

### Hike pay scale of medical staff

Importance of a decent remuneration in any job cannot be undermined. Though the nature of the medical profession is such, that concerns of remuneration take a back-seat in general, yet with a vast difference of pay scales existing in public and private sector for the same posts is preventing medics from joining public sector health institutions. On the other hand, the government is taking vindictive measures by stopping all increments, DA, DR and IR for a period of one year. In addition, they are imposing hardships on promotions and bonus. Though the AP government has issued three notifications within a span of two weeks, doctors are reluctant to join duties. The government has taken an insensitive and inhuman decision to cut the DA of its employees, pensioners, who are serving the public by fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. No doubt, the country has been passing through a financial crisis, but why should workers and employees be made the sacrificial item for the same. After the cost of living has gone up, it is unfair to deny the compensation to the employees. This poor show is due to the lethargic attitude of the State government and district officials. Most of the MBBS students passing out from private medical colleges, which charge over Rs 1 crore for the five-year course end up getting salaries less than Rs 50,000 a month when they complete their course and opt to join hospitals to begin practice. This should stop.

Dr M Suresh Babu, Vijayawada

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## As China marches ahead, who will be the winner?

PRADIP BALJAL

IR 4.0 and 5.0 are on the horizon today. These technologies work on the same medium, wire or wireless, which has taken both China and India forward, like in IR 3.0. India had the additional advantage of having IT and mobile technologies in their genes. Perhaps such genes ensure most of the world chiefs of such companies being Indians, and also most writing software or algorithms in the world being Indians.

China has also invested huge monies on these technologies, but only Indian-advanced digital country collaboration can change the world, like it was changed during 1980-2017 by US-China collaboration. With its newfound power, the Chinese are also loudly stating that they are very powerful and will shortly take over the world. Acquiring more power and land area has also been in the Chinese genes for thousands of years, with dynasties like Great Qing and Mao being revered today.

Technologies being on the horizon, the developed world, which includes China now, will try its best to stop the natural advantage of China, which has invested heavily in new generation technologies and India, which has new digital technologies in its genes to take these extremely disruptive technologies further.

We have to recognise that the first American action in 2019 was to negotiate a settlement after 2015 Manifesto. But these failed due to public reaction against China and its involvement in the Corona crisis being very strong, almost reaching limits that will lead to a similar position, whoever in US wins the election.

There is also a very strong reaction against BRI, first opposed by India, and then Japan.

Mao is still celebrated in all Chinese minds for all his expansionist and aggressive approach, and is also a cult figure for Xi Jinping, who said in his speech to celebrate the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, that when the CPC Central Committee set off from Xibaipo to Beijing on the morning of March 23, 1949, Mao Zedong said: “Today is the day to go to Beijing to take the exam. The practice has proved that our party has achieved excellent results in this historic examination. At the same time, the exam is not over yet and continues. Today, all the work our party unites and leads the people to do is the continuation of this examination.”

According to Xi, a series of achievements have taken place, but some officials have developed a sense of pride and complacency and believe that the party’s ruling position is now stable and we can sit back and relax and enjoy the blessings on our merits. As a result, some people could not control their own hands and became corrupted and stood against the people; some people did not want to be enterprising, were greedy for enjoyment, and lost their fine traditions. Xi is, therefore, far more aggressive domestically and internationally.

In future, China will employ millions of American workers and dominate thousands of small communities all over the US. Chinese acquisition of US businesses set a new all-time record last year, and it is on pace to shatter that record this year. The Smithfield Foods acquisition is an example. Smithfield Foods is the largest pork producer and processor in the world. It has facilities in 26 US States, and it employs tens of thousands of Americans. It directly owns 460 farms and has contracts with approximately 2,100 others. But, now, a Chinese company has bought it for \$4.7 billion, and that means that the Chinese will now be the most important employer in dozens of rural communities all over America.

Due in part to many countries’ massively bloated trade deficit with China, the Chinese have trillions of dollars to spend. They are only just starting to exercise their economic muscle. It is important to keep in mind that there is often not much of a difference between “the Chinese government” and “Chinese corporations”. In 2011, 43 per cent of all profits in China were produced by companies where the Chinese government had a controlling interest.

Chinese involvement is massive, and no analyst is precisely able to assess China’s part in US manufacturing and business chains -- e.g. last year, a Chinese company spent \$2.6 billion to purchase AMC entertainment, one of the largest movie theatre chains in the US.

But China is not just relying on acquisitions to expand its economic power. “Economic beachheads” are being established all over America. For example, Golden Dragon Precise Copper Tube Group, Inc. recently broke ground on a \$100 million plant in Thomasville, Alabama. Many of the residents of Thomasville, Alabama will be glad to have jobs, but it will also become yet another community that will now be heavily dependent on communist China.

And guess where else Chinese companies are putting down roots? In Detroit, where the local American industry is facing existential threats. Chinese-owned companies are investing in American businesses and new vehicle technology, selling everything from seat belts to shock absorbers in retail stores, and hiring experienced engineers and designers in an effort to soak up the talent and expertise of domestic automakers and their suppliers. After being bailed out by US taxpayers, GM is involved in 11 joint ventures with Chinese companies.

China seems particularly interested in acquiring energy resources in the US. For example, China is actually mining for coal in the mountains of Tennessee. Guizhou Gouchuang Energy Holding Group spent \$616 million to acquire Triple H Coal Co. in Jacksboro, Tennessee. At the time, that acquisition really didn’t make much news, but now a group of conservatives in Tennessee is trying to stop the Chinese from blowing up their mountains and taking their coal.

China is also planning to build entire cities in the US just like they have been doing in other countries. Right now, China is actually building a city larger than Manhattan just outside Minsk, the capital of Belarus. There are many such projects in many countries with Chinese precision implementation abilities.

As an overall economy, China is now in aggregate the leading manufacturer of goods in the entire world, it uses more cement than the rest of the world combined, is now the number one producer of wind and solar power on the entire globe, it produces three times as much coal and 11 times as much steel as the US does. To keep a futuristic hold on the NextGen economy, China produces more than 90 per cent of the global supply of rare earth elements, and has acquired enormous reserves, is now the number one supplier of components that are critical to the operation of any national defence system, it publishes substantial scientific research articles and is expected to become number one in the world very shortly.

Again, to control and monopolise on infrastructure in the world, it now has its own ports and industries all over the world and has launched its own BELT and ROAD scheme.

China understands that US and EU can’t decouple easily and they can’t do much harm militarily in the Asian region, so why not create a win-win situation economically as well as militarily because they understand that rivalry with the western world is going to increase - so, first, establish supremacy in the Asian region.

On the issue of American or Chinese supremacy, the jury is still out, but no one can forget the way the Americans destroyed Japan after the Pearl Harbour bombings and the entire Soviet power without firing a bullet, nor can they forget the destruction of Germany and its reconstruction after the Second World War.

*(The writer is former Secretary, Disinvestment and former Chairman, TRAI. He is the author of ‘Containing the China Onslaught’. Views expressed are personal)*



# Veteran leader Penmatsa Sambasiva Raju passes away

- The 8-time legislator was Minister from 1989 to 1994 during Congress rule
- He is considered political mentor to leaders like Botcha Satyanarayana and K Veerbhadr Swamy
- One of the first Congress leaders from Vizianagaram to support Jagan when he set up YSRCP

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Vizianagaram:** Veteran politician and 8-time MLA Penmatsa Sambasiva Raju died of ill-health in the early hours of Monday at a private hospital in Visakhapatnam. He is 87. Raju started his political career as Samithi president in 1958 and elected to Assembly Gajapathinagaram as independent in 1968 and in 1972, was elected unanimously from Congress.

Later, he shifted to Sativada constituency, which is now Nel-



limarla and continuously won as MLA for six times. He was the minister for transport and civil supplies between 1989-94 in Congress government. He used to maintain good relation with all the chief ministers like Marri Chenna Reddy, Nedurumilli Janarthan Reddy, Kotla Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy, Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, and even with T Anjaiah and Damodaram Sanjeevayya. Only once, in 1994 Assembly elections, he was defeated by Potnuru Suryanarayana of TDP.

He was an untainted politician till the end of his life. Sambasiva Raju was the political

guru of senior leader Botcha Satyanarayana and many MLAs like K Veerabhadr Swamy, B Appala Narasayya, B Appala Naidu. He was the first person who stood with Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy after his exit from Congress. He toured hundreds of villages and strengthened the party.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed grief over the death of the senior leader. He said Raju who had been in the public service for more than 50 years was a flawless leader who understood the values and credibility in politics. He said his death was a huge loss to the state along with Vizianagaram district. The Chief Minister conveyed his deepest condolences to the family members of Raju.

The final rites of Sambasiva Raju were performed at Moyida village under Nellimarla mandal with state and police honours. Armed reserve police fired guns into air and paid tributes. Due to corona pandemic, only the family members of Raju are allowed to participate in his last journey. Minister Botcha Satyanarayana and MLAs paid their homage.

## SRMIST announces rank list

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** The SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST, formerly SRM University) on Monday announced the rank list of the students who applied for admissions for the academic year 2020-21. It may be recalled that the SRMJEEE was cancelled this year in the wake of pandemic.

A total of 1.36 lakh candidates from across the country applied for admissions to secure admissions in the seven campus of SRM—three campuses in Chennai, Delhi, AP, Haryana, and Sikkim. The top ten rankers represent ten different states in the country.

For further details the students who appeared for admissions may contact the counselors at 044-27455510 and 47437500. They may email their queries to admissions.india@srmist.edu.in or log into www.srmist.edu.in.

# AP CM launches call centre to track work of secretariats

- Pursuance and Monitoring call centre will closely observe functioning of village and ward secretariats
- It will ensure applications for various welfare benefits are disposed of in a stipulated time
- CM also releases guidelines for social audit of welfare schemes, launches internet for secretariats in remote villages

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy launched Pursuance and Monitoring Unit (PMU) call centre to oversee the functioning of village and ward secretariats and released the guidelines for social audit besides launching internet services to village secretariats in remote areas.

During a review meeting here on Monday, the Chief Minister launched the Pursuance and Monitoring Unit (PMU) call centre which will closely oversee the functioning at village and ward secretariats and keep a vigil on the whether the deadlines are met or not in providing the services and will alert if any application is pending at any point.

The call centre will keep the



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy releasing Social Audit Guidelines during a meeting on village and ward volunteers and secretariats at his camp office in Tadepalli on Monday. Minister P Ramachandra Reddy and officials are seen.

official machinery on alert and will see that the applications are cleared and disposed of within the stipulated time and send alerts. Starting with four services, the scope of the PMU will be widened to 543 services and will have 200 employees.

The Chief Minister said all applications for rice card, pension, Aarogya card, house site patta will be tracked by the PMU and a constant follow up will be there. This will track the work of the employee of village secretariat and upwards to tahsildar, MPDO and secretary to see that the services are rendered within the prescribed timeline like ten days for rice card and pensions, 20 days for Aarogya card and 90 days for house site patta.

The feedback on why the application was not cleared in the

stipulated time should come to the CMO and the officials here should be talking to the concerned district collectors or joint collectors. The officials should remember that power comes out of responsibility.

The data from the call centre should be processed automatically and an analytical text should come out which should be followed up.

The Chief Minister has also released the guidelines for the social audit in village and ward secretariats and also launched the internet services to secretariats in remote areas with functional broadband internet services. These services will be available in 512 secretariats where internet services are not available. They will be linked to other secretariats within two months.

The secretariats will have digital boards displaying the welfare schemes the government has been implementing and the information should be available to people. All village secretariats should have toilets. The focus should be on construction work of ward secretariats and urban health clinics.

The vacancies in village secretariats should be filled up by September and the employees should be given proper training on the various schemes being implemented by the government and there should be self assessment.

Panchayat raj minister Peddireddy Ramchandra Reddy, chief secretary Nilam Sawhney, principal secretary Ajaya Kallam and others participated in the meeting.

## FAPCCI hails new industrial policy

Says the it gives priority to create a better ecosystem for attracting industries for generation of more employment

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Vijayawada:** The Federation of Andhra Pradesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FAPCCI), welcoming the new industrial policy of the State Government for 2020-23, stated that the policy has given emphasis to create a better ecosystem for attracting industries so as to generate more employment opportunities.

FAPCCI president CV Atchut Rao, said in a statement here on Monday that with this new policy the industrial activity will pick up momentum in the state. The policy was framed in such a way so as to encourage industrialists to make the state their destination.

"We are sure that the policy would create better ecosystem for entrepreneurs, through which the government has intended to provide the needed infrastructure, skilled labour availability and support to the industrial units by creating an App 'YSRAPONE'. We look forward that this app would resolve the issues of all existing and new entrepreneurs," he said.



Dwaraka Tirumala Rao

Atchut Rao expressed pleasure over the policy that focused mainly on providing ready-built pre-cleared facilities and skill development centres which can serve as base for growth of the state of AP. He thanked the government for addressing the basic issues of MSMEs through the policy which also aims to create a competitive ecosystem for new industries and start-ups.

Referring to the fiscal sops for new enterprises in the MSME sector like stamp duty, non-claimable SGST, 25 per cent of land conversion charges up to Rs 10 lakh, interest subsidy of 3 per cent on term loans for five years and 35 per cent investment subsidy up to Rs 50 lakh and fixed power cost reimbursement at the rate of Rs 1.25 per unit for five years for MSMEs, Atchut Rao said that these will go a long way in promoting and creating more MSMEs in Andhra Pradesh.

## TDP MP concerned over AP becoming Covid epicentre

- Notes that AP is recording second highest daily number of infections after Maharashtra for the last few days
- It has also fastest doubling days among the States in the country
- Blames careless attitude of govt, ruling party MLAs and Ministers who continue to organise mass gatherings and roam the state

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** TDP Guntur MP Galla Jayadev expressed concern that the state has turned a global epicentre of the Covid-19 pandemic.

India is reporting the highest number of daily cases and AP, is reporting second highest after Maharashtra, he noted in a statement on Monday.

"The state has been recording around 10,000 new cases daily for several days in the last two weeks. When the lockdown ended on May 31, the number of cases in the state stood at



3,571 as compared to 2,27,860 cases on August 9. That is an increase by more than 60 times," he observed.

AP has the fastest doubling time amongst the all major states in India. Since the start of the pandemic, Maharashtra has always been recording the most number of cases in India, but now the numbers from Andhra Pradesh are rivalling them, he added.

The scary part is that there are a substantial number of cases being recorded in every district across the state, which means that the spread is not just restricted to some urban centres, but has spread to the rural areas as well, making trac-

ing, testing and isolating a challenge for the administration, the MP said.

He blamed the careless approach of the YSRCP government towards the pandemic as well as the neglect of physical distancing and hygiene norms by people for the rapid increase in Covid.

Jayadev said ruling party MLAs and ministers themselves violated the lockdown restrictions, organised large gatherings and moved across the state with no regard for the rules that were in place. The Chief Minister continues to ignore wearing a mask during meetings.

"We are already the third most infected state in the country in terms of numbers. We have already seen the effect of the lockdown on the economy and on the livelihood of the people. The YSRCP government needs to take corrective action to avoid any future disruptions to the state economy and the lives of the people. If not, it will be the innocent citizens of the state who will have to pay the price for the government's negligence," he said.

## Suresh Kumar is new CEO of TTD's SVBC

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Tirupati:** Suresh Kumar Gedela has been appointed as TTD devotional channel SVBC's chief executive officer (CEO).

The government on Monday issued a GO for the deputation of Suresh Kumar working as Deputy Director (News), Doordarshan Kendra, Vijayawada, to TTD for appointing him as SVBC CEO.

After the director, Government of India, ministry of information and broadcasting issued orders on July 8 for placing the service of Suresh Kumar at the disposal of Government of Andhra Pradesh on deputation for a period of three years, he was relieved and reported to Government of Andhra Pradesh after which he was admitted into service with effect from July 15.

On his admission into duty, the services of Suresh Kumar are placed at the disposal of the revenue (endowments) department for posting him as chief executive officer of SVBC as per the GO issued on Monday.

TTD issued a notification two months back, inviting applications from suitable candidates for appointment as CEO, SVBC following the term of present CEO ended.



Suresh Kumar G

## Nabard sanctions ₹347 cr to Apcob

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Guntur:** National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has sanctioned Rs 310 crore loan to Andhra Pradesh State Cooperative Bank (Apcob) to support 347 Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS) in state for the construction of rural godowns, silos, establishment of custom hiring centres, setting up of RO drinking water plants and for purchase combined harvesters under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.

Finance secretary K Sunita handed over loan sanctioning letter to Apcob managing director Dr R Srinath Reddy at a stakeholders meeting held at Nabard regional office in Vijayawada on Monday.

The objective of the fund is to build community farming assets and post-harvest agriculture infrastructure to enable the farmers to get better value for their produce as

The loan is for PACS to build godowns, silos and set up RO plants, buying harvesters amount others

they will be able to store and sell at higher prices, reduce wastage and to go for value addition.

The projects supported under the fund are eligible for availing interest subvention benefit of 3 per cent per annum up to Rs 2 crore loans for a period of 7 years and credit guarantee coverage under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small enterprises scheme for loans up to Rs 2 crore.

Agriculture commissioner H Arun Kumar, Union Bank of India general manager Brahmananda Reddy, Nabard chief general manager for AP J SudhIR Kumar, were among those participated.

## Value of land in urban areas hiked

**Amaravati:** The state government on Monday increased the value of land in urban areas by 10 to 30 per cent to net an additional revenue of Rs 800 crore per annum but kept the registration rate unchanged at six per cent.

Special chief secretary (revenue, stamps and registrations) Rajat Bhargava told PTI that revision of land values has been effected to reflect the reality as there were a lot of anomalies in the current rates.

"We had to rationalise and equalise the value of land based on the nature and use in a vicinity. Only where there was a huge difference between the prevailing higher market value and its substantially lower registration value, we increased the land rate by 10 per cent to 30 per cent to achieve market value correction," he said.

This would also protect the avenues for revenue generation "in a balanced manner," Bhargava said.

He said the stamp duty and transfer duty structure on land and related transactions had not been increased from the existing six per cent because of the prevailing economic environment, though many other states had enhanced the rates.

We have focused more on rationalisation and simplification of numerous land rate slabs by rectifying various anomalies," the official said.

## Swarna hotel probe looks into all angles

*Continued from P1*

Earlier, the Committee visited Dr Ramesh Hospital and collected some documents pertaining to the agreement taken place between the hospital and the Swarna palace.

Speaking to media after the inspection of Swarna palace hotel, L Sivasankar said that he would submit the report to the

district collector on Tuesday. Sources said that the committee was also informed that 8 out of 10 who died in the fire had tested negative. If that was the case the committee would try to find out why were they not discharged from the hospital.

Meanwhile, Governorpet police took three hotel staff into custody for questioning in connection with the fire accident. Those who were arrested were Hotel General Manager Sudarshan, Chief Operator Rajagopala Rao and Night manager Venkatesh.

## Pranab tests Covid positive, urges contacts to get tested

*Continued from P1*

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin wished his former Indian counterpart a speedy recovery. "Sending our best wishes and prayers for the speedy recovery of former President Pranab Mukherjee," Rivlin tweeted in English and in Hindi.

The Covid-19 tally in India on Monday crossed the 22-lakh mark with 62,064 new cases, while the death toll climbed to 44,386 with 1,007 more fatalities, the Health Ministry said.

## Safety threat looms large over Covid care centres

*Continued from P1*

"Quarantine centres in Visakhapatnam are safe as buildings are examined before utilising them as CCCs or quarantine facilities. A few of the hotels and other buildings chosen for quarantine centres are in tune with the fire safety norms and also equipped with fire-fighting systems," says PV Sudhakar, Special Covid Officer and Principal of Andhra Medical College.

Currently, there are 79 government and private hospitals, area hospitals, district hospitals, community health centres, primary health centres, CCCs and quarantine centres treating Covid-19 patients along with

mildly symptomatic and asymptomatic persons.

After the short-circuit incident that claimed 10 lives in Vijayawada at the CCC of Ramesh Hospital, the state government directed the officials concerned to inspect and certify the electrical connection by the fire safety authorities in all the centres and hospitals treating Covid-19 patients. In connection with this, task force teams are constituted to carry out investigation and submit a report in two days to the district authorities.

With hundreds getting treated in various facilities on a daily basis, the focus is now on ensuring safety of the patients.



## TODAY'S QUOTE

### Balance of payments will be very strong

“ India's balance of payments this year is going to be very strong on the back of significant improvement in exports and a fall in imports. Good green shoots are visible in the economy and exports have shown a good turnaround”  
- Commerce Minister **Piyush Goyal**



## POWER

### States lap up liquidity scheme for discoms

After a slow start, Centre's Rs 90,000-crore plan on liquidity injection for electricity distribution companies has taken off now with close to 80 per cent of the amount already sanctioned. Southern States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka have got sanctions for about Rs 25,000 crore.

## FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	79.38	South	
Euro	92.5	African Rand	4.86
UAE Dirham	22.42	Hong Kong Dollar	11.11
Thai Baht	2.77	Japanese Yen	0.81
British Pound	101.74	New Zealand Dollar	51.8
Australian Dollar	56.24	Saudi Riyal	21.96
Canadian Dollar	58.73	Swedish Krona	9.85
Swiss Franc	85.02	Singapore Dollar	57.24

DELHI TUESDAY 11 AUGUST 2020

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Union Bank cuts rates

**Hyderabad:** The Union Bank of India on Monday announced a reduction in the marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) by up to 15 basis points across tenors. The reduced MCLR would come into effect on Tuesday. This is the 11th consecutive rate cut announced by it since July 2019, the bank said in a statement. Post the reduction, the one year MCLR now stands at 7.25 per cent, down from 7.40 per cent, the bank said in a statement. The overnight MCLR and one-month MCLR stand at 6.8 per cent while the three-month and the six-month MCLR have reduced to 6.95 per cent and 7.10 per cent, respectively.

### Tata Projects completes work

**Hyderabad:** Infrastructure major Tata Projects on Monday said it along with its consortium partner has completed 110-km stretch of the 200-km Surathani-Phuket transmission line project in Thailand. This transmission line passing through forests and mountainous terrains will carry additional electricity to Phuket. "Tata Projects Limited and its consortium partner has completed an important 110-km stretch of the 200-km Surathani-Phuket transmission line project in Thailand. This 500kV transmission line is an achievement since it passes through thick jungles and mountainous terrain," the company said in a statement. Of this 110-km stretch, about 80 km was executed by Tata Projects and the remaining by its partner, the company said adding that it utilised drone technology for stringing of transmission lines thereby reducing timeframe and avoiding manual work. The company, however, did not provide the project cost.

### Tata Sky's campaign

**Hyderabad:** To commemorate the 14th anniversary milestone, Tata Sky, a pay TV platform, created a nostalgic #14YearsOfJugaladigital campaign honouring the allegiance of 14 of its patrons who have been the earliest customers of Tata Sky. The outreach involved touching base with some of the loyal customers spread across the country and requesting them to share their thoughts on being associated with the brand for more than a decade. Their unscripted anecdotes thus advocated the evolution of the brand. Anurag Kumar, Chief Communication Officer, Tata Sky, said: "This anniversary, we wanted to relive the connections we have forged with our consumers through genuine and authentic testimonials that gave an overview of their journey with us. The responses received not only makes for a joyful and encouraging video but also makes us take comfort in the fact that we have made a positive difference."

### Centre plans GeM expansion

**New Delhi:** The government is looking at partnering with industry bodies for getting wider participation on its public procurement platform called GeM or government e-marketplace. Source in the commerce ministry said that talks on wider participation of industry chambers have taken place with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and other associations would also be roped in so that a larger number of suppliers are brought onto the platform, particularly from the MSME sector. It is expected that partnership growth with industry bodies would not only bring their membership to GeM but also help in getting across the word on government procurement to a larger audience.

# AP policy will promote growth, create jobs: CII

Says AP's new industrial policy lays emphasis on promoting entrepreneurship

## HANS BUSINESS

**Hyderabad:** The Andhra Pradesh chapter of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII AP) said the new Industrial Development Policy 2020-23 announced by the Andhra Pradesh government on Monday would fuel growth and create more jobs in the State.

Welcoming the new policy released by Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy, the industry body said that the policy laid emphasis on promoting skill development and entrepreneurship. "30 skill development centres which will be set up across the State will ensure the availability of skilled manpower for industry," said Dasari Ramakrishna, Chairman, CII AP. He thanked the Industries Minister for laying greater focus on MSME, end-to-end business facilitation and balanced regional development in the new policy.

The policy is in line with CII recommendations to the government to give greater impetus to sectoral strengths and natural advantage of the State. The advantage of the State in sectors like aerospace and defence, pharma, textiles, automobile, electronics and petrochemicals would attract greater investments under the new policy, CII AP said in a statement.

Under the Ease of Doing Business, the policy envisages setting up of YSR AP One, a multi-faceted business enablement centre to assist investors



Policy envisages setting up of YSR AP One, a multi-faceted business enablement centre to assist investors throughout the entire investment life cycle, which is a great move, Ramakrishna said. De-risking the investments, development of plug and play infrastructure facilities targeting MSME players at affordable rates with an end-to-end support

throughout the entire investment life cycle, which is a great move, Ramakrishna said. De-risking the investments,

development of plug and play infrastructure facilities targeting MSME players at affordable rates with an end-to-end support

## Big boost to industrial sector: FSME India

## HANS BUSINESS

**Hyderabad:** The Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises of India (FSME India) hailed the New Industrial Development Policy for 2020-2023 unveiled by the Andhra Pradesh government on Monday.

"The New Industrial Development Policy announced by the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government is a practical exercise. The State government has promised what it can deliver. This policy will definitely fuel industrial growth and attract more investments into the State. It gives a big boost for the industrial sector," said APK Reddy, national president, FSME India. AP Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy and APIIC Chairman RK Roja unveiled the policy at the APIIC head office in Mangalagiri. APK Reddy was also present at the unveiling ceremony.



AP Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy launching a Special Edition on Andhra Pradesh's industrial development brought out by FSME India's Industrial View magazine at APIIC head office, Mangalagiri, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh, on Monday. Karikal Valaven, Special Chief Secretary, Industries Department, APIIC Chairperson RK Roja and APK Reddy, national president, FSME India, are also present

mony. Reddy lauded incentives offered to key micro, small and medium enterprises in the new policy. "The YSRCP government has been proactive towards MSMEs from the beginning. The new policy also has a number of incentives for the sector," he said. "For new micro and small units, the government offers 100 per cent reim-

bursment of net State GST and a subsidy of Rs 1 per unit on power tariff for five years. There is also 15 per cent investment subsidy on fixed capital investment limited up to Rs 20 lakh. There are also several other incentives which will give a big boost to micro and small enterprises," Reddy said.

## IFC invests \$10 mn in Endiya Partners Fund



## HANS BUSINESS

**Hyderabad:** Endiya Partners Fund II, a city-based venture capital fund, has received a commitment of Rs 75 crore (\$10 million) from the International Financial Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, the company said on Monday. IFC has also committed an additional \$10 million for direct co-investments alongside Endiya Fund II, it said in a press release. "Early Stage VC investment volumes in India are markedly lower than VC vol-

umes in countries like the US and China. Our investment in VC funds like Endiya helps mobilize capital from other LPs and brings that capital to path breaking early stage businesses. Endiya Partners has demonstrated differentiation in access to high-quality Pre-Series A opportunities in enterprise technology and healthcare sectors," said Jun Zhang, IFC Country Head, India. Endiya Partners is a seed and early-stage venture capital firm investing in IP-led Indian product startups that are globally relevant.

## India Inc recovery likely to be prolonged due to Covid

**New Delhi:** The coronavirus pandemic will significantly impact performance of companies and it is likely to be severe and prolonged for select sectors, especially aviation, hospitality and retail, according to ratings agency Icrs.

The pandemic, followed by extended lockdowns in India both nationally and then localised, has impacted India Inc for the major part of the first quarter of the current financial year.

Although economic activity has started to recover from the troughs experienced in April 2020, when the lockdown was at its severest, the unabated rise in Covid-19 cases in the unlock phase and localised re-imposition of lockdowns in several states have interrupted this recovery in recent weeks, Icrs said in a statement.



The financial performance of corporate sector will be significantly impacted, as manufacturing, construction, industrial and consumption activities have taken a sharp hit - Icrs

"The financial performance of corporate sector would be significantly impacted, as manufacturing, construction, industrial and consumption activities have taken a sharp hit. As per Icrs analysis, the impact is likely to be severe and prolonged for select sectors, especially avia-

tion, hospitality, retail and allied businesses," it said. Icrs vice-president Shamsher Dewan said, "Overall, Q1 FY2021 will be a washout for India Inc, with significant pressure on revenues and earnings, considering that the major part of the quarter was under lockdown or gradual ramp-up phase."

With continuing fixed overheads and virtually no revenues, the earnings and margin profile of the corporate India are expected to have deteriorated quite sharply during the quarter, despite some recovery towards the end, he added.

"Furthermore, with gradual recovery expectations during the rest of the fiscal, and the current subdued macro-economic environment, pressure on earnings and credit profiles are expected to continue over FY21," Dewan said.

## Markets rise for 3rd day, gains 142 pts

**Mumbai:** The BSE Sensex notched up gains for the third straight session on Monday, buoyed by engineering, finance and pharma stocks amid positive cues from global markets.

After rallying 390.12 points during the day, the 30-share BSE benchmark pared some gains to end 141.51 points or 0.37 per cent higher at 38,182.08. Similarly, the NSE Nifty climbed 56.10 points or 0.50 per cent to close at 11,270.15.

L&T was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying 4.81 per cent, followed by M&M, Sun Pharma, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, SBI, ICICI Bank and Titan. On the other hand, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints, Maruti, Bajaj Finserv, UltraTech Cement and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards, shedding up to 1.26 per cent. According to traders, market sentiment was positive amid firm cues from global indices and consistent foreign fund inflows.

## 50% Indian workforce may be AI ready in next 6-10 years: Microsoft

**New Delhi:** The organisations that have deployed Artificial Intelligence (AI) with skilling initiatives in India are generating most value from this new-age technology, and senior executives predict that half of all employees will be equipped with AI skills in the next 6-10 years, a new Microsoft survey said on Monday.

In India, all AI-leading companies said they are actively building skills of their workers, or have plans to do so, while over 93 per cent of senior executives surveyed from these companies were sure their business was gaining value from AI. The research surveyed employees and leaders within large enterprises across industry verticals in India, and 19 other countries, to look at the skills needed to thrive as AI becomes increasingly



adopted by businesses, as well as the key learning from early AI adopters.

"AI is at the heart of digital transformation - which has accelerated at an extraordinary pace - and will continue to play a critical role in helping businesses be more agile, resilient and competitive during this time," said Dr Rohini Srivathsa, National Technology Officer, Microsoft India. However, the path of unlocking the full potential of AI lies in "combining its deployment with skilling initia-

tives that focus on both tech and soft skills", she stressed. Notably, 98 per cent of the employees surveyed among all the AI companies were highly motivated for reskilling.

While 98 per cent of AI leading firms in India were increasing skills investments and interestingly, the overall number of Indian employees interested in skilling (85 per cent) is more than double that of employees across all surveyed markets (38 per cent). Both the senior executives and employees surveyed found a direct link between having the skills needed to thrive in an AI world and the value organizations gain from their AI implementations.

The combination of skilling and AI deployment is helping businesses succeed, said the report.

## ₹10,000 cr Fund of Funds for MSMEs soon

**New Delhi:** To provide Rs 50,000 crore equity support to stressed MSME units, a Fund of Funds announced as part of the Rs 20.97 lakh crore Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package is expected to get operational soon, State Bank of India Chairman Rajnish Kumar said on Monday. The objective of the Rs 10,000 crore Fund of Funds scheme is to help MSMEs with growth potential at a time when they are facing severe shortage of equity and low revenues.

Talking about various steps taken to help MSMEs, he said banks have announced an emergency credit line for such businesses to improve their liquidity which has been hit by the outbreak of Covid-19. Another liquidity enhancement measure was through support by way of a subordinated debt which was guaranteed by the government for the troubled MSMEs, he said.

## RLS gets DCGI nod for Covid drug Favipiravir

## HANS BUSINESS

**Hyderabad:** City-based Raghava Life Sciences Limited (RLS) on Monday said it received Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) approval to manufacture and market bulk drug (API) for Favipiravir which is being widely used for the treatment of Covid-19. RLS Managing Director P Lohit Reddy said that pharma companies such as Lupin, Hetero, Cipla and Sun Pharma recently launched oral pills of favipiravir under their own brands at competitive prices.

"Favipiravir is being widely considered successful in treating Covid patients. The medicine is currently being prescribed to Covid-19 patients with mild to moderate symptoms. A data from clinical trials involving 150 sub-



jects showed that about 70 per cent of the patients being treated with the drug achieved clinical cure by the fourth day of the study, compared with about 45 per cent in the standard care group," Reddy said.

Advanced stage trials of favipiravir are currently underway in several countries including India. RLS, which also specializes in contract research projects, received approval to supply the active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) of the drug to formulation companies.





Kites displayed outside a shop ahead of Independence Day, during unlock 3.0 at Chawri Bazar, in New Delhi on Monday

## Turkey develops vaccine

**Ankara (IANS):** Turkey has become the third country to develop vaccines locally against COVID-19 after the US and China, claimed President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "The COVID-19 Turkey Platform, founded by the TUBITAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) is currently working on eight different vaccines and 10 different medication projects," Erdogan said at the opening ceremony of the TUBITAK Excellence Centers in the northwestern province of Kocaeli. "Collaborating with state and private sectors and universities, Turkey has been making significant progress in developing vaccines and drugs against COVID-19," he was quoted as saying by the Xinhua news agency. Erdogan noted that two vaccine candidates have successfully completed the animal tests, and one of them has received ethical approval to move on to the clinical trial on humans.



## 56 prison inmates test positive



**Bareilly (IANS):** As many as 56 inmates of two prisons in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh have tested positive for coronavirus, officials said on Monday. District Surveillance Officer Ashok Kumar said 51 inmates of the central jail and five inmates of the district jail tested positive for COVID-19. The jail inmates were tested after an inmate of the central jail died due to COVID-19, Kumar added. The district has so far reported 3,773 coronavirus cases with 98 deaths. Meanwhile, according to a report from Banda, a journalist died due to COVID-19 on Sunday. Anjani Nigam, 52, was admitted to the Banda Medical College and later referred to the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow on Saturday when his condition deteriorated.

## 'Maha needs to increase testing'

**Panaji (IANS):** Maharashtra needs to boost its Covid-19 testing capacity, as well as increase the number of isolation centres in a big way, in the wake of rising infections and death rate, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis said on Monday. Fadnavis, who paid a courtesy call on Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant in Panaji, also said that the flood situation in Maharashtra needs to be monitored closely in wake of the havoc caused by heavy rains in the western state last year. "The corona situation in Maharashtra is serious... What is serious is that the rate of infection is also increasing rapidly. Maharashtra also accounts for 42 per cent of the deaths in the country," Fadnavis said. "The situation as of now is very serious. There is a need to increase testing and increase isolation centres in a big way. We are telling this to the government constantly," the former Maharashtra Chief Minister said.



## 2 held for spreading false info



**Bhubaneswar (IANS):** The Commissionerate Police on Monday arrested two persons for allegedly spreading misleading information about Covid-19 management in the capital city of Odisha. The two were arrested after an audio clip of the conversation between two persons was circulated and broadcast on a private regional news channel accusing Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) of COVID-19 mismanagement. The two arrested are Biswajit Mohanty and Laxmikanta Behera. The police swung into action after the BMC lodged a complaint against the news channel accusing it of spreading misinformation related to Covid-19. "On examination and prima facie investigation, it has been found that the audio recording has been prepared, circulated, edited, uploaded and propagated, with mala fide and mischievous intention as the clip contains misleading and false information about COVID pandemic," said a statement issued by Bhubaneswar Additional DCP.

## Face masks mandatory in Paris

**Paris (IANS):** The mandatory wearing of face masks while outdoors in many parts of Paris came into effect on Monday, after authorities imposed new measures to curb COVID-19 spread in the French capital. The order applies to people aged 11 and over in crowded areas, such as along the banks of the river Seine and open-air markets, the BBC quoted the police as saying. More than 100 streets are covered by the order, according to a list sent out by the police. However, some popular tourist hotspots, such as the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe and the Champs-Elysees, were exempt from the new rules. Face masks are already compulsory in enclosed public spaces in France. Violators risk of a fine of 135 euros.



## Australia records deadliest day



**Canberra (IANS):** Australia on Monday recorded its deadliest day of the coronavirus pandemic amid a second wave of infections in Melbourne. Victoria state, of which Melbourne is the capital, reported 19 deaths on Monday, reports the BBC. More than 100 deaths have been recorded in the state in just the past week as hospital admission rates also rise. Victoria also reported 322 new cases on Monday, down from a high of 725 registered five days ago. The state's Premier Daniel Andrews said it was too early to tell if the state was at a turning point, but "we're certainly seeing some greater stability" following the stricter measures. "It's always better to be lower than the previous day, but it is only one day's data," the BBC quoted Andrews as saying.

## Global cases top 19.7mn

**Washington (IANS):** The overall number of global coronavirus cases has topped 19.7 million, while the deaths have increased to over 729,000, according to the Johns Hopkins University. As of Monday morning, the total number of cases stood at 19,778,566 and the fatalities rose to 729,692, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed in its latest update. The US accounted for the world's highest number of infections and fatalities at 5,044,435 and 162,919, respectively, according to the CSSE. Brazil came in the second place with 3,035,422 infections and 101,049 deaths.



# Israeli jewellers design diamond face mask worth ₹11 crore

**Moscow:** Worried about face masks dampening your look as you step out to shop for essentials? No worries. You can add some glitz to your pandemic look with a blingy, diamond face mask from Israel. After some Indians went viral for wearing masks made of gold that cost lakhs of rupees, an Israeli jewelry company has revealed that it is working on what it says will be the world's most expensive coronavirus mask, a gold, diamond-encrusted face covering with a price tag of \$1.5 million. That's Rs 11 crore, in case you wondered.

The 18-karat white gold mask

will be decorated with 3,600 white and black diamonds and fitted with top-rated N99 filters at the request of the buyer, said designer Isaac Levy. Levy, owner of the Yvel company, said the buyer had two other demands: that it be completed by the end of the year, and that it would be the priciest in the world. That last condition, he said, "was the easiest to fulfill." But who commissioned such an expensive mask? Levy declined to identify the buyer, but said he was a Chinese businessman living in the United States. The glitzed-up face mask may lend some pizzazz to the protec-



tive gear now mandatory in public spaces in many countries. But at 270 grams (over half a pound) — nearly 100 times that of a typical surgical mask — it is not likely to be a practical accessory to wear.

In an interview at his factory near Jerusalem, Levy showed off several pieces of the mask, covered in diamonds. One gold plate had a hole for the filter. "Money maybe doesn't buy

everything, but if it can buy a very expensive COVID-19 mask and the guy wants to wear it and walk around and get the attention, he should be happy with that," Levy said. Such an ostentatious mask might also rub some the wrong way at a time when millions of people around the world are out of work or suffering economically. Levy said that while he would not wear it himself, he was thankful for the opportunity. "I am happy that this mask gave us enough work for our employees to be able to provide their jobs in very challenging times like these times right now," he said.

## LOCKDOWN MISERY

# 15% students enrolled in Delhi schools 'missing'

**New Delhi:** Close to 15 per cent students enrolled in Delhi government schools are not "traceable" since the lockdown was announced and have not been attending the alternative classes conducted online or through phones, according to Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Sisodia, who is also the Education Minister, said efforts are being made to locate these students either physically or telephonically to get them into the system. "We are conducting full fledged teaching learning either online or through phones and teachers have been instructed to ensure personal involvement with each student. So far, there are maximum 15 per cent students who are not traceable and are not in contact with their schools and hence not attending the classes," Sisodia told PTI. "I have been reviewing this personally and we have been



able to trace few students, for others either they are not staying at the same addresses or their phone numbers mentioned in our records are not traceable. I have asked that School Management Committees (SMCs) should be roped in to track these students. There are certain students who have gone to places like Uttarakhand and Bihar but are still connected with us and are attending the classes and doing assignments," he added. Asked about a definite num-

ber of the students who have not been traced, Sisodia said, "On an average there are 4-5 students in every class who are in this category. Many of them are class 6 students and numbers for other classes are quite low". There are around 15 lakh students enrolled in over 1100 Delhi government schools. "We started conducting online classes for class 12 students from April 6 and sending e-learning material or activities to those enrolled in classes nursery to eighth over What-

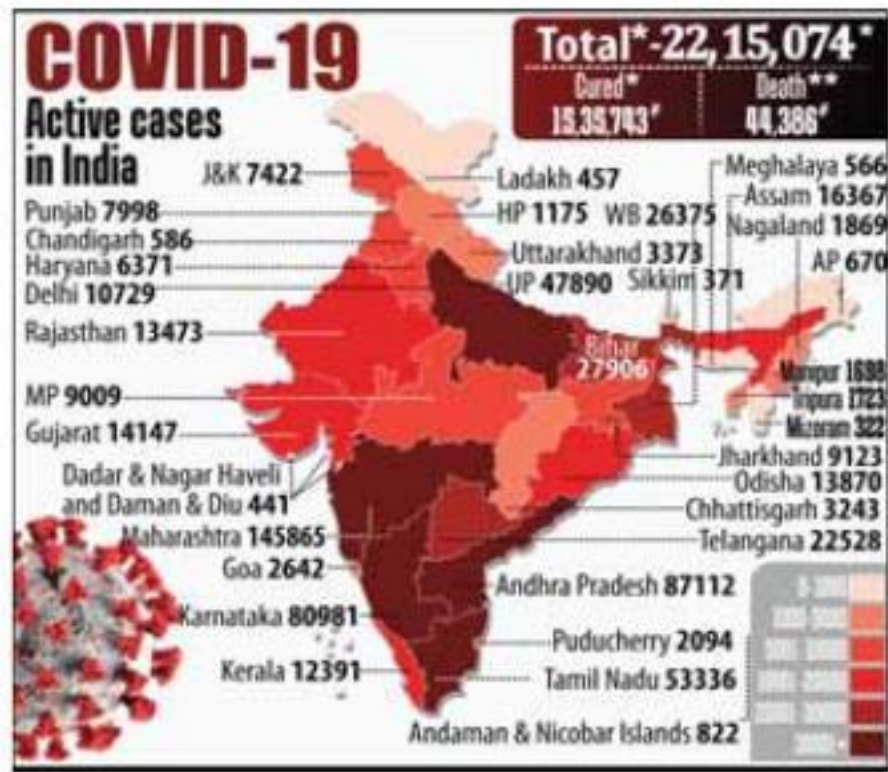
sApp or SMS. The government has also provided a subsidy of Rs 200 for internet packages to all its class 12 students who had registered for the online classes," a senior Directorate of Education (DoE) official said. The HRD ministry had last month asked states and union territories to ensure that the names of children of migrant workers who returned home during the COVID-19 pandemic are not struck off their school rolls. Issuing a set of guidelines, the ministry had also directed the states to prepare a database of children who have left the local area for their homes in other states or other parts of the same state. It also suggested that the state governments may direct all schools to give admission to any child who recently returned to village without asking for any other documents, except for some identity proof.

## CUSTODIAL DEATHS IN TN

# Accused sub-inspector dies of coronavirus



Benicks after they died due to custodial violence at the Sattankulam police station in Thoothukudi district in June. Shortly after his arrest on July 8 by the CB-CID, Pauldurai (56) was remanded to judicial custody and lodged in the Madurai Central prison. A few days later, he fell ill and was diagnosed with Covid-19 on July 24 after which he was admitted to the corona ward of the Madurai Rajaji Government Hospital. He was diabetic and also had hypertension, which made him more vulnerable to the coronavirus. His wife had petitioned the Madurai Police Commissioner that her husband had been wrongly implicated in the case, since he had been only on a temporary posting at the Sattankulam police station and was not on duty when Jayaraj and Benicks were tortured at the station. She also alleged that he was being denied proper treatment for Corona, which had endangered his life. She had sought his transfer to a private hospital and assured that the family would spend for the treatment. But the authorities had informed her that since he was a remand prisoner, she had to approach the court to transfer him to a private hospital. Even as Pauldurai's wife was planning to approach the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Monday, the news of his death reached the family early morning. In fact, four of the six member CBI team, now probing the case, had also tested positive for Corona and have recovered.



## 1,007 deaths in 24 hours

**New Delhi:** India's novel coronavirus tally crossed the 22-lakh mark on Monday with 62,064 new cases, while the death toll climbed to 44,386 with 1,007 more fatalities, the Health Ministry said. The recoveries surged to 15,35,743 with a record 54,859 more people recuperating in the past 24 hours, taking the recovery rate to 69.33 per cent. The case fatality rate has dropped to about 2 per cent, the ministry said. There are 6,34,945 active cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The total coronavirus cases now stands at 22,15,074, including 44,386 deaths, according to the ministry data. This is the fourth consecutive day that the COVID-19 cases have increased by more than 60,000. As many as 4,77,023 samples were tested on Sunday, taking the total to 2,45,83,558, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research.



## Yediyurappa recovers, discharged

**Bengaluru (PTI):** Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa has recovered "completely" from COVID-19 and was on Monday discharged from a private hospital here nine days after being admitted, the state government said. The 77-year old leader was admitted to the Manipal Hospital on August 2 after he tested positive for coronavirus. "After recovering from COVID-19 completely, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa has been discharged from the Manipal Hospital," an official statement said here. Later, the chief minister himself tweeted about his discharge. "Thank you everyone for your wishes and prayers. I have been discharged from the hospital and will be in self-quarantine. Deeply grateful for your affection and support. I look forward to getting back to the routine very soon," he said.



## 4 Gurkha soldiers infected in Nepal

**Kathmandu (PTI):** Four Gurkha soldiers of the Indian Army who were visiting their home in Nepal have tested positive for the coronavirus at a quarantine centre in the country's eastern Sunsari district, officials said on Monday. The Nepalese nationals from the Gurkha regiments of the Indian Army tested positive after their swab samples were collected at a quarantine facility in Dharan Municipality of Sunsari district in Eastern Nepal, Assistant Chief District Officer Mahesh Kumar Pokharel said. The soldiers, aged around 40-45 years, were on leave and staying in the quarantine centre in Sunsari after returning home. A large number of Nepalese nationals are serving in seven Gurkha regiments in the Indian Army.



## Assam DGP Bhaskar tests positive

**Gauhati:** Director General of Assam Police Bhaskar Jyot Mahanta tested positive for COVID-19 on Monday, officials said. The top police officer has opted for home isolation, an official source told PTI. "Healthcare professionals will act as per protocols and test the samples of his immediate contacts," a senior official said. Since March, around 30 people at the Assam Police Headquarters have tested positive, including the IGP (Law and Order) and DIG (Administration).



## 20 mn cases this week: WHO

**Geneva:** The head of the World Health Organisation predicted that the number of people infected by the coronavirus will hit 20 million this week, including about 750,000 deaths. In a briefing on Monday, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus acknowledged that "behind these statistics there is a great deal of pain and suffering" but said there were still "green shoots of hope" no matter what stage in an outbreak a country or region might be.

# Russia plans to register 1st vaccine this week

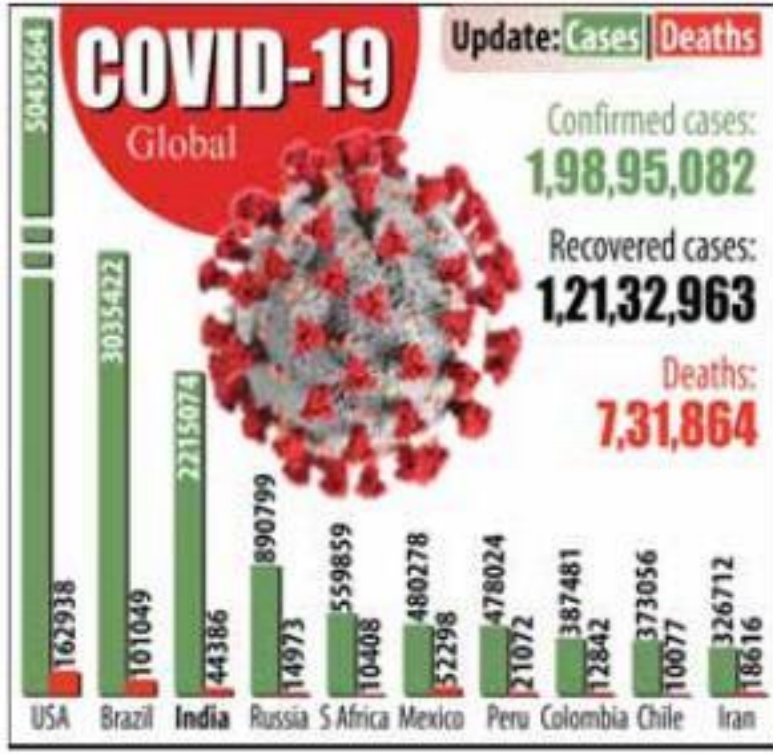
**Moscow (IANS):** Russia is reportedly going ahead with its plan to register the world's first Covid-19 vaccine this week before it starts mass vaccination in October, despite safety concerns raised from several quarters, including the WHO. Russia's Deputy Health Minister Oleg Gritnev recently revealed plans to register a Covid-19 vaccine on August 12, Sputnik news agency reported. Russia is the fourth worst-nation after the US, Brazil and



India. The vaccine that the country is planning to register this week has been jointly developed by the Gamaleya Research Institute and the Russian Defence Ministry. On August 3, a "final medical

examination" of participants in clinical trials of the vaccine took place at the Burdenko Main Military Clinical Hospital, the Russian Defence Ministry earlier said in a statement. The results clearly showed that all volunteers had a clear immune response resulting from vaccination, the ministry said, adding that there were no side effects or abnormalities in the work of the volunteers. "Thus, the available data of laboratory and instrumental studies

allow us to speak about the safety and good tolerance of the vaccine," the statement added. "Thus, the available data of laboratory and instrumental studies allow us to speak about the safety and good tolerance of the vaccine," the statement added. But this vaccine is not among the six vaccines that have reached the crucial Phase 3 trial, according to the World Health Organization.





# India is not for sale: Ex-hockey coach recalls Dhyanchand’s response to Hitler

PRATIK SAGAR

**New Delhi (IANS):** The date August 15 holds a great significance for every Indian around the world but 11 years before that day in 1947, the Indian flag flew highest in another part of the world -- Germany. At the 1936 Olympics, the players of the Indian hockey team were creating an unbelievable sort of frenzy around them, courtesy of their performances in front of packed arenas of Berlin.

France felt the brunt of India’s might in the semi-final, especially from Major Dhyanchand, who scored four of team’s 10 goals to completely annihilate the European powerhouse. The stage was now set for India to take on hosts Germany on August 15. However, the mood inside the Indian camp wasn’t that of excitement but of fear and anxiety. The reason being Adolf Hitler who was scheduled to watch the final along with more than 40,000 Germans.

Come the fateful day, Dhyanchand

ran riot in front of the fuhrer, and what followed next holds much more importance than just an Olympic gold.

“It was Dada Dhyanchand, called the wizard of hockey, who in 1936 Berlin Olympics had scored six goals against Germans as India had won 8-1. Hitler had saluted Dada Dhyanchand as he offered him to join the German Army,” former India hockey coach Saiyed Ali Sibtain Naqvi told IANS.

“It was during the prize distribution ceremony and Dada was silent for a few seconds, even the packed stadium went completely silent and feared that if Dhyanchand refused the offer then the dictator might shoot him. Dada had narrated this to me that he replied to Hitler with closed eyes but in a bold voice of an Indian soldier that ‘India is not for sale’.

“To the utter surprise of the entire stadium, Hitler saluted him, instead of shaking his hand and said, ‘German nation salutes you for the love of your country India and your nationalism.’



His title of ‘Wizard of Hockey’ was also conferred by Hitler. Such players are born rarely in centuries,” he added.

Naqvi also gave an insight into what differences he finds in hockey of yesteryear in comparison to contemporary times. India is still longing to recreate their age old performance, especially in the Olympics, and while there have been some encouraging

displays, the gulf in class between the two different generational teams is clearly apparent.

“The Indian team at present is being trained and coached by European and Australians and now are playing in the European style. They have changed the entire concept of artistic hockey and mainly concentrate on physical fitness,” said Naqvi, who also coached the women’s team at 1978 Women’s World Cup in Madrid.

“The Australian coaches try to teach them a combination of European and Indian style which is why they are successful. Though the present Indian team is young but their performances are not consistent. It has been observed in some important and crucial matches they have lost the game in dying minutes. The defence crumbles against the fast European teams.

“During my time the Indian team players were masters of their positions and carried great confidence. They were artistic dribblers, masters



in different strokes and they had great national spirit to fly the tricolours in Olympics. Each player was conferred and can achieve top form.

“Old team had master penalty corner and penalty strokes specialists such as Trilochan Singh, R.S Gentle, Prithipal Singh, Rajinder Singh and MP Singh. For example, in 1956 Melbourne Olympics, R.S Gentle rightfully brought back victory through penalty corner against Pakistan. Similarly in 1964 Tokyo Olympics, Mohinder Lal scored through penalty

stroke and India won the Olympics,” the former coach added.

India are currently ranked fourth in the world following their string of consistent performances. They are now ready, according to Naqvi, to reclaim their throne at next year’s Olympics in Tokyo.

“Yes, India is capable with young team led by Manpreet Singh as the captain. He is my favourite as well. It is expected that the team will be in the top four position. And the rest is on luck,” the celebrated coach said.

# Kohli, Rohit, Dhoni most popular cricketers globally

**New Delhi (IANS):** India skipper Virat Kohli’s popularity knows no bounds and once again it has been re-affirmed by a study which has revealed that the 31-year-old is the most popular cricketer in the world. Meanwhile, ‘The Men in Blue’ also topped the chart as far as most popular cricket team in the world is concerned.

According to a SEMrush study, Kohli was searched online an average of 16.2 lakh per month from January to June this year while the Indian cricket team was searched an average of 2.4 lakh times per month in the same time period.

Other cricketers among the top-10, as per the study, were Rohit Sharma, MS Dhoni, George Mackay, Josh Richards, Hardik Pandya, Sachin Tendulkar, Chris Matthews and Shreyas Iyer. From January to June 2020, each cricketer, respectively, was searched an average of 9.7, 9.4, 9.1, 7.1, 6.7, 5.4, 4.1, and 3.4 lakh times.

With respect to the cricket teams, India led the chart followed by England, Australia, West Indies, Pakistan, South Africa, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Ireland, Afghanistan, and



Zimbabwe. Each cricket team, respectively, was searched .66, .33, .29, .23, .16, .12, .12, .09, .05, .04, and .03 lakh times per month.

In addition, cricket followers across the globe were captivated by women cricketers as well. Despite not being in the top-10, Smriti Mandhana and Ellyse Perry, were searched 12th and 20th most times, topping big names like Yuvraj Singh and

Shikhar Dhawan.

“While we are not entirely surprised by the results of our study, we are excited nonetheless. Finding that Virat Kohli is the most searched cricketer, and India, the most searched cricket team is unsurprising, what’s surprising is that women cricketers are being searched more often than a lot of top-rated men,” Fernando Angelo, Head of Communications,

SEMrush SEMrush said.

“Our study suggests that stereotypes of cricket as a man only sport no longer hold. There is considerable enthusiasm about women cricketers and women playing cricket. In the future, there are likely to be many more women playing cricket, and India, as the most important cricket playing nation is likely to supply many of them,” he added.



## Former selector Khoda reveals why Rayadu didn’t make it to 2019 WC squad

**New Delhi:** Going into the World Cup 2019, India had issues regarding their no.4, which wasn’t really solved throughout the tournament. There was a time when Ambati Rayudu was considered for the job, and in fact Virat Kohli too had talked about the same. But in the end, he wasn’t picked in the WC bound team, and instead Vijay Shankar was preferred.

The major reason for that could have been the dip in his form, especially in the ODI series against Australia.

Now former India selector Gagan Khoda has come up with an explanation behind the axing of Rayudu.

He told in a chat with Sportskeeda, “Ambati Rayudu was experienced and you were looking at the World Cup. We carried on with him for a year but we felt he was getting stagnant. The confidence level going into the World Cup wasn’t there. We couldn’t get any youngster in because the tournament was in England also.”

# We have got govt approval for IPL in UAE: League Chairman Brijesh

**New Delhi (PTI):** The BCCI has received the central government’s formal approval to conduct this year’s Indian Premier League (IPL) in the UAE, IPL Chairman Brijesh Patel revealed on Monday.

The IPL will be held in the UAE from September 19 to November 10 in three cities -- Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

The government had last week given an “in principle” go-ahead to the BCCI to shift the marquee league to the UAE due to rising cases of COVID-19 in the country.

“Yes, we have received all the written approvals,” Patel told PTI when asked whether the permission has come in writing from both the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

When an Indian sports body shifts a domestic tournament abroad, it requires clearance from Home, External and sports ministries respectively.

“Once we had the verbal okay from the government, we had intimated the Emirates Cricket Board. Now we have the papers also, so franchises can be inti-

mated that everything is in order,” a veteran BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Most of the franchises will be flying out after August 20 after two mandatory RT-PCR (COVID-19 tests) conducted within 24 hours from their departure base.



The Chennai Super Kings players and staff, who are leaving on August 22, will have a small camp at the Chepauk on the insistence of skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

The BCCI is also facing problems on the sponsorship front after calling off the title deal with Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for the current year due to massive public outrage over the Sino-India border stand-off.

It was a Rs 440 crore deal and as BCCI looks at potential sponsors, Baba Ramdev’s Patanjali has shown interest in becoming the new title sponsor.

## Bangladesh’s Mosharraf tests +ve for COVID-19

**Dhaka (IANS):** Bangladesh spinner Mosharraf Hossain has tested positive for novel coronavirus and is currently quarantined at home. His father had tested positive for the deadly virus before him. “My father tested COVID-19 positive earlier and he was admitted in the ICU of the CMH hospital,” Mosharraf was quoted as saying by “The Daily Star”. “Later I also experienced some symptoms and tested coronavirus positive. My health is fine so far and I have isolated myself at home.” My wife and my child however tested negative and they are living with her parents.” The 38-year-old had contracted brain tumour last year and had undergone intense treatment for the same for four months. He was hoping to make a comeback to the domestic circuit this year after recovering from his illness. Mosharraf has so far played just five ODIs in his international career, picking four wickets.

## Tyson’s comeback exhibition bout postponed

**New York (IANS):** Former world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson’s exhibition bout against Roy Jones Jr. scheduled for September 12 has been postponed. The Mike Tyson-Roy Jones Jr. clash will now take place to November 28, according to a report on ringtv.com. The marquee bout is still expected to take place at a crowdless Dignity Health Park in Carson, California. CSAC executive officer Andy Foster had earlier told reporters earlier that Tyson-Jones bout would be nothing more than a hard sparring session and that both fighters would be prohibited from engaging in serious business which could hurt the other, the report further said. 51-year-old Jones expressed concern with the regulations. Tyson, who became the youngest heavyweight champion of all time when he defeated Trevor Berbick in 1986 aged 20, won 50 of his 58 professional fights before retiring after his loss to Kevin McBride in 2005.

## Former WWE wrestler ‘Kamala’ passes away

**Florida (IANS):** WWE legend James Harris, popularly known to fans as Kamala, has passed away at age 70. Under the frightening face paint of Kamala, the 6-foot-7, 380-pound Harris battled the greatest Superstars in sports-entertainment history, including Hulk Hogan, The Undertaker and Andre the Giant. He wrestled more than 400 matches over the course of several stretches with the WWE. “He terrorised opponents and thrilled audiences in Mid-South, World Class Championship Wrestling, WCW and WWE until 2006,” WWE said in a statement. “WWE extends its condolences to Harris’ family, friends and fans,” it added. Expressing remorse, WWE NXT General Manager William Regal said on Instagram: “My deepest condolences to the family of James Harris. I first saw him on TV when I was a child in the UK and at live shows as ‘The Mississippi Mauler’ Big Jim Harris and then had the pleasure of being on shows with him in the US. A lovely man.”

## West Ham United’s Simic joins AC Milan

**London (IANS):** West Ham United have confirmed that midfielder Julia Simic has joined Italian club AC Milan. The German made the switch to the Serie A side after two seasons in the FA Women’s Super League with the Hammers. Simic, who joined West Ham in July 2018 from SC Freiburg, made 22 appearances in all competitions in Claret and Blue, scoring three goals. The playmaker’s time with the Irons was unfortunately hampered due to a persistent knee injury, which saw Simic miss a year of action. The 31-year-old played a crucial role in the team’s fortunes on and off the pitch, helping the club to reach the 2019 SSE Women’s FA Cup Final and establish themselves in the top-flight of women’s football in England.

# Mandeep latest hockey player to test +ve for corona

**Bengaluru (IANS):** Striker Mandeep Singh is the latest member of the Indian men’s hockey team to test positive for the novel coronavirus. He is, however, asymptomatic.

“Mandeep Singh, a member of the Indian men’s hockey team, who was given the COVID-19 test (RT PCR) along with 20 other players at the National Camp at SAI’s National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, has tested COVID-19 positive, but is asymptomatic,” Sports Authority of India (SAI) said in a statement on Monday.

“He is being administered treatment by doctors, along with the other five players who have tested positive,” it added.

Earlier, captain Manpreet Singh, Surender Kumar, Jaskaran Singh, Varun Kumar and Krishan Pathak had also been diagnosed with COVID-19 upon arrival at the centre for the hockey national camp which began on August 4. Coach Graham Reid had however



said that all the five tested players were doing fine.

“I am constantly in touch with all five of them and they are doing fine. SAI has made every arrangement to give them the best care. The chefs are making special dishes for them as per their choice, beyond the mess menu, and the athletes are very happy about it,” Reid said.

# Raikkonen breaks Schumacher’s most laps record in Silverstone

**Silverstone (IANS):** Alpha Romeo driver Kimi Raikkonen surpassed legendary racer Michael Schumacher’s most laps record during the 70th Anniversary Grand Prix at Silverstone.

Raikkonen has now raced a total of 16,845 laps in his career and he went past Schumacher’s mark, who had raced a total of 16,825 laps during the course of his illustrious career.

The Finn won his first and only championship in 2007 with Scuderia Ferrari. He finished second in 2003 and 2005 seasons while finishing third in 2008, 2012 and 2018.

Raikkonen, this season, is yet to open his account as he remains at the 18th spot in the 2020 Driver’s Standings.



Cars are parked on the pit lane ahead of the 70th Anniversary Formula One Grand Prix at the Silverstone circuit, Silverstone, England

Mercedes’ Lewis Hamilton, despite finishing second in the race on Sunday, remains at the top of the table with 107 points. Red Bull’s Max Verstappen, meanwhile, became the first non-Mercedes driver to win a race in 2020 by claiming victory at Silverstone. His last win came in Brazil in the penultimate race of 2019.

Verstappen finished ahead of Hamilton and his Silver Arrows teammate Valtteri Bottas with Ferrari’s Charles Leclerc fourth and Red Bull’s Alexander Albon completing the top five.

Courtesy of his win at Silverstone, Verstappen moved past Bottas to take the second spot on the standings. He has so far accumulated 77 points in comparison to Bottas’ 73.