

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | MONDAY | 19 APRIL 2021

## WEATHER

Max: 37.2°C  
Min: 24.9°C  
RH: 43%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy.  
Rain likely in evening.  
Max/Min temp. 38/23°C

## ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Chaitra Shuddha Saptami till 11.57 pm

Star: Punarvasu full day  
Varjyam: 5.55 pm to 7.39 pm

Durmuhuram: 12.40 pm to 1.30 pm; 3.10 pm to 3.59 pm

Rahuakalam: 7.30 am to 9 am

HIJRI CALENDAR

Ramzan 6,1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajr: 4.55 am

Zohar: 12.25 pm

Asar: 4.38 pm

Maghrib: 6.38 pm

Isha: 7.48 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.33 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.56 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 11.08 AM

MOONSET NA

## RAMZAN TIMINGS

IFTAR: 6.38 PM (TODAY)

SEHRI: 4.32 AM (TOMORROW)



## COUNTER POINT



You used to hoard pulses and onions? I am hoarding Covid vaccines and medicines!

## SHORT TAKES

## India, Pakistan FMs in UAE

**Dubai:** The foreign ministers of India and Pakistan made crossover visits to the United Arab Emirates this weekend, after it was revealed the Gulf nation has been mediating between the hostile neighbours. "Good to be in the #UAE," Pakistan's Shah Mahmood Qureshi tweeted late Saturday. His Indian counterpart Subrahmanyam Jaishankar visited Abu Dhabi on Sunday.

## APRIL EDITION OF JEE-MAINS POSTPONED

**New Delhi:** Engineering entrance exam JEE-Mains scheduled to be held from April 27-30 has been postponed in view of the Covid-19 situation, Union education minister Ramesh Pokhrayal 'Nishank' said on Sunday.

Official order by the

National Testing Agency (NTA), "looking at the present situation of COVID-19 pandemic and also taking into account the safety and well-being of candidates and examination functionaries, it has been decided to postpone JEE-(Main) April session". "The revised dates will be announced later on and at least 15 days before the examination," the order said. — PTI

## CIVIC POLLS

## BJP offers 15 seats to JS in Khammam civic body

## BJP, JS tie up for Khammam

## IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

At long last, the BJP and the Jana Sena have come under one roof to fight elections. On Sunday, leaders from both parties met and discussed pre-poll alliance for the elections to the Khammam Municipal Corporation (KMC).

On Sunday, Jana Sena former legislator Chinthala Ramachandra Reddy and Jana Sena Telangana in-



## WORLD | 8

## Israel relaxes rule to wear mask in public



## SPORTS | 12

## ABD, Maxwell fire RCB to third win

## TABLOID

## 'False Positive' costs archery team dearly



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## Etala plays down health official's grim assessment of Covid in TS

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

Health officials calling the attention of the public to the serious Covid-19 crisis gripping Telangana appears to have caused some consternation in the government. Worried over how the tough messages being issued by officials are going down, the government appears to have launched a rear-guard action to assure the people that there is no reason for fear or panic.

The government, from day one, had been maintaining that there was no reason to worry. It has been consistent in its messaging — that the 0.51 per cent or 0.56 per cent rate of case fatalities is nothing to worry about, and a majority of Covid-19 patients do not even know they caught the disease and barely 5 to 6 per cent of them actually end up being hospitalised.

The fatality rates may be low, as claimed by the government, but the fact is when seen in actual numbers, this turns into 1,824 people killed by Covid-19 in TS in just over a year, at the rate of 140 a month since March last year.

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

**Page 2: Covid in the air statement triggered panic**

**Dr G. Srinivasa Rao**  
Director of Health Services

- The next 4 to 6 weeks are critical. We will continue seeing more cases and if people do not begin taking care, there may be nothing anyone can do to save people.
- The government, while doing all it can for all patients, by itself can no longer guarantee the safety of people.
- 80 per cent cases are asymptomatic, around 12 per cent patients requiring hospitalisation.
- The virus is now airborne, something that medical journal Lancet too has said.
- Some private hospitals have degenerated into exploiting panic-stricken families of Covid-19 patients.

**Etala Rajendar**  
Health minister

- Our officials are doing good job of creating awareness among people, but may be also creating unnecessary fear.
- There is no need to panic, the government will take care of Covid patients, people must follow safety precautions.
- 95 per cent of cases are asymptomatic, only between 5 per cent and 6 per cent of people need hospitalisation.
- I have been seeing Covid-19 for the past one year, I understand a thing or two, there is no official consensus that the virus is airborne.
- Private hospitals should not exploit patients, the government will take action against such hospitals.

## FACE-OFF



## Covid cases cross 5K/day mark

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

More and more Covid-19 cases are being reported in Telangana, as predicted by the state health department,

ment, even as the number of people that the disease has claimed is increasing with each passing day.

According to the figures released by officials for Saturday, the state had

5,093 new cases, yet another daily high since the arrival of the Coronavirus was first discovered in the state on March 2 last year.

**Full report on Page 3**

## BJP enters Mum. row on remdesivir

## CENTRE PLANS CRACKDOWN ON HOARDING

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

**BHAGWAN PARAB and SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, APRIL 18**

The conflict between the Maharashtra government and the BJP over the supply of the remdesivir drug, used for treating Covid, reached a flashpoint after the Mumbai police, late on Saturday night detained a director of the Daman-based pharma company for allegedly storing a huge quantity of the drug.

Furious BJP leaders have accused the state government of harassing remdesivir suppliers.

The Mumbai police detained and questioned the director, whose identity has not been revealed, of Daman-based Bruck Pharmaceuticals, after it got information that thousands of vials of remdesivir were to be flown out of the country.

Source said a team of officials has been set up in the ministry, which is in constant touch with all state police forces. The ministry has also assured states that paramilitary forces can also be provided for their assistance to check misuse of medicines and vaccines.

**Page 2: Pandemic's scale is massive, say officials**

Mumbai and will be transported out of the country by air cargo."

He added: "We all know how important remdesivir is for treating Covid patients and it's a matter of life and death."

**Page 2: Maha BJP leaders criticised police action**

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DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

**Page 2: People's pain is more important: Cong**

## RAHUL CANCELS HIS RALLIES TO FIGHT COVID

New Delhi, April 18: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday cancelled all his public rallies in poll-bound West Bengal following a rapid rise in Covid-19 cases in the country.

He also advised all other politicians to think about the consequences of holding large public rallies.

"In view of the Covid situation, I am suspending all my public rallies in West Bengal. I would advise all political leaders to think deeply about the consequences of holding large public rallies under the current circumstances," he said on Twitter.

"One has seen such a crowd of the sick and the dead for the first time," he said in another tweet in Hindi, apparently referring to the large crowds at Bengal rallies of BJP leaders.

Source said a team of officials has been set up in the ministry, which is in constant touch with all state police forces. The ministry has also assured states that paramilitary forces can also be provided for their assistance to check misuse of medicines and vaccines.

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DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

**Page 2: People's pain is more important: Cong**

## Singh's tips to PM on fighting Covid

Invoke CL to let more firms make vaccine

## Railways will run Oxygen Express

New Delhi, April 18: The Indian Railways on Sunday said that it will run 'Oxygen Express' over the next few days to transport liquid medical oxygen and oxygen cylinders across the country.

"Maharashtra and MP governments had earlier approached the railway ministry to explore whether liquid medical oxygen tankers could be moved by the rail network."

Liquid oxygen has to be transported through roll-on-roll-off service with road tankers placed on flat wagons. Ramps have to be built at Vizag, Angul and Bhilai.

— PTI

er and taxi drivers, municipal and panchayat staff, and possibly lawyers who have to attend courts as frontline workers. "I believe this is the time to invoke the compulsory licensing provisions in the law so that more number of companies are able to produce the vaccines under a licence.

This, I recall, had happened earlier for medicines to deal with the AIDS disease," he said.

Citing Israel's example, which has invoked the compulsory licensing, he said there is a case for India to do so as well.

**Page 2: Be transparent on Covid orders, says Singh**



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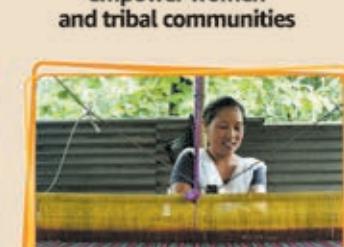
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# Environmental menace



The lake near Hitec City MMTS railway station is fully covered with water hyacinth on Sunday. The authorities have not bothered to remove the weed. —R. Pavan

# Be transparent on Covid orders, says former PM

Govt must support vax producers by giving them funds

## FROM PAGE 1

Singh said the Centre should publicise vaccine dose orders placed and accepted for delivery over the next six months. He said the government should indicate how vaccine supplies are to be distributed to states based on a transparent formula.

He suggested that the central government could retain 10 per cent for distribution based on emergency needs, and states should have a clear signal of likely availability so that they can plan their rollout.

"If we want to vaccinate a target number in this period, we should place enough orders in advance so that producers can adhere to an agreed schedule of supply," he noted.

The former PM said the government should indicate how this expected vaccine supply will be distributed

across states based on a transparent formula.

He suggested that the central government could retain 10 per cent for distribution based on emergency needs, and states should have a clear signal of likely availability so that they can plan their rollout.

Noting that India has emerged as the largest vaccine producer in the world, he said at this time of a public health emergency, the government must proactive

ly support vaccine producers to expand their manufacturing facilities quickly by providing funds and other concessions.

With domestic supplies being limited, Singh said any vaccine that has been cleared for use by credible authorities such as the European Medical Agency or the USFDA, should be allowed to be imported without insisting on domestic bridging trials.

"We are facing an unprecedented emergency and, I understand, experts are of the view that this relaxation is justified in an emergency."

The relaxation could be for a limited period during which the bridging trials could be completed in India," he said.

A warning to all consumers of such vaccines be given that these vaccines

are being allowed for use based on the approval granted by the relevant authority abroad, he said.

Singh said he is forwarding his suggestions for consideration in a spirit of constructive cooperation in which he has always believed and acted upon.

"I hope the government will accept these suggestions immediately and act on them promptly," he said.

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**SHORT TAKES**  
**FEW VISITORS:**  
**SECOND WAVE**  
**HITS ZOO HARD**

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

The second wave of Covid-19 has severely hit revenues of Nehru Zoological Park with the daily number of visitors falling drastically.

Earlier the zoo would attract 10,000 visitors on a regular and around 15,000 on weekends.

On extended weekends or festive holidays, the numbers used to go well past 20,000 a day. Now it has come down to 1,000 and 1,500 visitors a day. With around 20 of the zoo staff falling victim to Covid-19 and currently under quarantine, zoo officials also stepped up sanitisation to keep the animals safe.

"There is a vaccination drive within the zoo for the staffers. Till now, the UPHC Chandulal Baradari has vaccinated 300 staffers," said a source from the park.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, curator of Nehru Zoological Park, V.V.L. Subhadra Devi, said, "The inflow of visitors has come down drastically, which means the funds we acquired through the sale of entry tickets have come down."

The authorities are digging into funds acquired through animal adoption programmes and left-over reserves to make ends meet. "We are getting a few donations, apart from that we are using the funds used for adoptions, spending last year's unused funds and in some cases asking the state government to chip in, as it did last year. As of now, we have been able to manage but if the situation persists, we will have a dire situation on hand," she added. Last year, the state government provided around ₹38 crore towards feed costs and maintenance. Around ₹18 crore was spent last year on food costs and overheads.

**RAMA NAVAMI**  
**FETE LOW-KEY IN**  
**CITY, BHADRADRI**

DC CORRESPONDENTS  
HYDERABAD, BHADRALAM,  
APRIL 18

The annual Rama Navami Shobha Yatra in the city will not be held this year, T. Raja Singh, the BJP MLA from Goshamahal, said on Sunday. The decision has been taken in view of the rising Covid-19 cases, he said.

A report from Bhadrachalam said the celestial wedding of Goddess Sita and Lord Sitaramachandra Swamy in Bhadrachalam will be held without the usual crowds and pomp on April 21 in view of the Covid-19 situation.

As part of it, all rituals and sevas being held in the Antharayam will be cancelled from Monday to April 30. Only Seeghradarsham will be allowed in the temple and distribution of prasadam and therefrom has been cancelled.

The same system will be followed in the Rama temple of Parnasala.

# 5,093 Covid cases in 24 hrs, 15 dead

**GHMC area reports 598 cases, highest in state; 15 districts report cases in their hundreds**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

More and more Covid-19 cases are being reported in Telangana, as predicted by the state health department, even as the number of people that the disease has claimed is increasing with each passing day.

According to the figures released by the health department for Saturday, Telangana had 5,093 new cases, yet another daily high since the arrival of the Coronavirus was first discovered in the state on March 2 last year.

Also on Saturday, 15 people died while receiving treatment for Covid-19, marking the second straight day of more than ten people dying from the disease in a single day in the state.

On Friday, the state reported the deaths of 12 Covid-19 patients.

The steep rise in Covid-19 cases that was previously restricted to Hyderabad and the surrounding districts of Medchal-Malkajgiri, Ranga Reddy and

## CASES RISE IN STATE OVER A WEEK

Date	Daily	Active	Deaths
April 11	2,251	21,864	6
April 12	3,052	24,131	7
April 13	2,157	25,459	8
April 14	3,307	27,861	8
April 15	3,840	30,494	9
April 16	4,446	33,514	12
April 17	5,093	37,037	15

Sangareddy, has now become the norm in more than half of Telangana's 33 districts.

As many as 15 districts reported cases in their hundreds on Saturday with Hyderabad and the rest of the GHMC area reporting the most, 598 cases.

There were 435 cases as on Saturday stood at 3,51,424 and the toll at 1,824, according to the health department.

On Saturday, the health department said in its bulletin that 1,555 people were declared as recovered from the disease in the state taking the total recovered cases to 3,51,424.

## Etala: No need to worry; Buy remdesivir off the shelf now

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 17

15-day holding period of remdesivir doses by the manufacturers to one week.

Rajendar said the situation regarding availability of the injections, along with oxygen and other medical supplies was being constantly monitored by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao.

Any request for purchase must be accompanied by a prescription from the doctor treating a patient in a hospital.

Addressing a press conference at BRKR Bhavan here, Rajendar cautioned that remdesivir must be used with caution only in cases where it is absolutely required.

He said that to remove bottlenecks, Telangana had requested the Centre to reduce the mandatory

pitalisation or ventilator support.

He said 60,000 beds were available in the state, and permission have been given to private hospitals with more than 20 beds to treat Covid-19 patients.

He also declared that there was no need for any fear or panic and appealed to people to exercise self-control, follow safety precautions, and not to step out of their homes unless absolutely unavoidable.

"There will be no lockdowns or curfews. The only protection is wearing a mask. I appeal to all doctors and healthcare staff not to scare patients and their families. Like I have always maintained, courage is the primary medicine to fight off Covid. Oxygen is second and treatment is the third," Rajendar said.

## TS RECEIVES 2.7 L ADDITIONAL DOSES OF VACCINE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 17

On a day state-run hospitals suspended their Covid-19 vaccination drive, Telangana on Sunday received 2.7 lakh additional doses. This will enable it to resume the vaccination drive on Monday.

It may be recalled that the vaccination drive was suspended for a day with all government vaccination centres closed as the state ran out of vaccine supplies.

Telangana has been administering anywhere between 1 lakh and 1.5 lakh doses of vaccine daily over the past few days.

Officials hope that more supplies will arrive before they run out of the latest stock that arrived on Sunday.

On Saturday, the state administered 1,50,464 vaccine doses including 1,39,994 first doses and the rest to others who completed their vaccination shots by receiving the second dose.

## OVER 80 COVID CARE COACHES READY FOR USE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

The South Central Railway has about 80 Covid care coaches ready for use by the state government to house patients, sources said.

According to the Union health ministry guidelines, these converted coaches can be used by the state government when they exhaust their own medical facilities.

The process of conversion of railway coaches entails removal of the middle berth, conversion of toilets into shower rooms and others.

A railway official said it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's idea to convert the coaches for Covid care. The railways executed it on mission mode, the official said.

## ₹1 LAKH FOR COVID CARE TO STATE STAFF

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

The Telangana state government on Sunday announced that all its employees, former employees, and members of their families who are eligible for medical reimbursement claims, can seek up to ₹1 lakh for Covid-19 treatment if they are admitted to a hospital under emergency conditions.

In its circular, the health, medical and family welfare department said government employees in service and pensioners and their dependents and all eligible categories are allowed to secure treatment under emergency.

## Strict lockdown in Army quarters

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

for anyone who has been travelling and RT-PCR test is made compulsory, said an official, requesting anonymity.

"In several parts of the country, we have to undergo a strict 14-day quarantine after a travel and must show a negative report in the RT-PCR test to join the force. All facilities have been provided inside the hospitals and protocols are maintained to control the spread," he said.

Speaking about the controlled lockdown in the Army areas, a resident said that every entrance and exit of the colonies is shut down by guards manning them.

Sources revealed that jawans are sending trucks to the residential quarters for the families to buy vegetables and other essentials.

The Army had issued directions earlier this week to reduce physical attendance in its offices by 50 per cent.

Those attending offices have been told to have staggered timings, ensure all Covid-19 protocols and avoid crowding.

The directions stipulated that meetings or conferences should be done virtually as much as possible.

Strict rules are imposed for quarantine facilities



DRF personnel seen spraying disinfectant at establishments on NTR Marg beside Hussainsager in Hyderabad on Sunday, amid the rise in Covid-19 cases.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

## GHMC begins city sanitation drive

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

At a time when the state is witnessing a surge in the number of Covid-19 cases, K.T. Rama Rao, municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) minister, asked urban local bodies (ULBs) to strengthen their spraying of disinfectants to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

The minister instructed officials of the MA&UD department to initiate special sanitisation drives and spray sodium hypochlorite in the

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation limits and in other municipalities on a war-footing basis.

Speaking at the launch of a large-scale sanitation drive in the city, Rama Rao said the exercise was undertaken to remove rubbish from public areas like roads and major intersections.

This was done as part of the Coronavirus prevention and control measures.

The minister said 453 entomology teams had been deployed to spray sodium hypochlorite solu-

tion extensively in 636 areas of the city. The teams had sprayed nearly 900 litres of solution in a single day covering over 16,000 habitations with 840 sprayers, seven jet machines, 63 large fogging machines, and 302 small fogging machines.

The solution was sprayed twice a day, mainly in areas where there were positive cases. Three thousand litres of sodium hypochlorite solution have been made available in each zone. Emergency teams were also set up at zonal and circle level.

In another development, Mayor Gadwal R. Vijayalakshmi conducted surprise inspection of sanitation work in the Khairatabad and Charminar zones. She was shocked to see rubbish stretching to one km in Vijayanagar Colony in Mehdipatnam.

The mayor directed the authorities to immediately remove the garbage deposits that have accumulated in many places in the Khairatabad zone and not to find any kind of garbage deposits anywhere in the city.

## Cops flooded with pleas for plasma

DURGA PRASAD  
SUNKU | DC  
HYDERABAD APRIL 18

Cyberabad Police @cyberaba... · 16m  
@cpcybd Sri V.C. Sajjanar, IPS appreciated Dr. Kota Sesha Sampath Kumar garu WORLD Record Blood Donor for giving plasma in 22 times, platelets-133 times, blood-84 times. Request all the #COVID19 champions to come forward & #donateplasma. register on donateplasma.scsc.in, 9490617440



Plasma donor Kota Sesha Sampath Kumar.

Warangal, Khammam and others." Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Cyberabad police commissioner V.C. Sajjanar said, "The idea behind the drive is to avoid commercialisation of plasma donation. We have around 70-80 volunteers trained to convince donors to donate plasma." During the first wave of Covid-19 last year, Cyberabad Covid control room facilitated several plasma donations and benefiting many patients. Now, in the second wave, the police is off to facilitating plasma donations again.

Assistant commissioner of police Hanumantha Rao, Cyberabad, overseeing operations at the Covid control room, said, "There is a massive surge in requests from public in last few days. We have been getting hundreds of calls for plasma, followed by blood, platelets and others. Initially, we used to get 20 to 30 calls for plasma. Two days ago, the request calls increased to 70. In the last three days, we got 105, 111 and 115 calls respectively."

Rao added, "We are successful in catering to needs of 70 per cent requests. Further, we have been getting requests from others cities too, including

## Man donates plasma 22 times

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

Moved by the news of a person who died over 21 years ago after not receiving blood while undergoing some treatment at the Gandhi Hospital, Sampath Kumar started donating blood.

He is the highest donor of plasma since the outbreak of Covid-19. He donated plasma 22 times.

The 42-year old Kota Sesha Sampath Kumar runs a beauty parlour and is a social worker.

Till date, he has donated blood 84 times and platelets 133 times and plasma 22 times, which is the highest in the state.

He has received numerous awards for his service. He donated blood for the first time in life in 2000.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Kumar said, "Donating blood used to be a taboo till 2000. After an increase in viral fevers, demand for blood and platelets increased; as did taboos surrounding it. I wanted to fight these taboos and set an example by donating and encouraging

others to do the same."

Sharing his inspiration of how he started blood donation, he said, "I read a news article regarding a person's death due to unavailability of blood. The news moved me, so I decided to donate blood since then to whoever needed it."

During the lockdown last year, Kumar facilitated blood to thalassemia patients.

He contracted Covid-19, after recovering from which, he began giving plasma.

His wife Jayashree is a software engineer and daughter is studying MBBS, both of whom encouraged him to donate plasma.

## 4 DIE AS TRUCK RAMS CAR, OVERTURNS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD APRIL 18

Four persons were killed and 20 injured when a lorry overturned after ramming into a car on Sunday evening at Narkhuda, about 30 km from Hyderabad.

Police said the lorry, going from Shamshabad to Shabab was carrying guest workers from Odisha.

Police said the lorry (AP01 U 1845) hit the car (TS34 D

4779) head on, swerved and overturned. Three of the dead were guest workers: Krupa Suna, 40, Gopal Deep, 45, and Kala Kumar, 25. The other victim is yet to be identified.

N. Prakash Reddy said

## IN BRIEF

**Actor files plaint against realtor**

**Hyderabad:** Tollywood film actor Naresh on Sunday lodged a complaint with the Hyderabad Central Crime Station (CCS) alleging that a real estate company had defrauded him to the tune of ₹7.5 crore. The actor was referred to the CCS police by the Banjara Hills police, sources said. Actor Naresh claimed that a person named Lingam Srinivas who holds the signing authority on the banner of Kistos Company had borrowed the amount and had not returned it despite repeated requests, police said.

**MANY BIZMEN IN KHAMMAM ELECTORAL FRAY**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, APRIL 18

Nearly 35 businessmen and real estate players have filed their nominations for the ensuing elections to Khammam Municipal Corporation (KMC). About 281 nominations have been filed in 60 divisions by candidates from TRS, Congress, BJP, CPI, CPI-M and Jana Sena apart from independents by Sunday, the last day for filing nominations.

Interestingly, ticket aspirants of different political parties were told by their respective in-charge leaders to contest only if they could spend ₹50 lakh. The message on election expenditure is clear and loud. With this, many businessmen and those from real estate evinced interest in contesting as TRS nominees, followed by Congress and BJP. Vaddeboina Narasimha Rao, who was elected as councilor and later corporator for the last five times from Congress in Khammam, has decided not to contest, this time around. D Poornachander, a Congress loyalist was given a party ticket from his division.

Vaddeboina said, "Congress fielded Poornachander to disprove the belief that cash-flow is a key point to win. We as Congress workers take it seriously and will strive for his win".

**CONGRESS WILL WIN MAJORITY IN KHAMMAM: BHATTI**  
DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, APRIL 18

Congress Legislative Party leader Bhatti Vikramarka asserted that Congress will win majority of divisions in the Khammam Municipal Corporation elections.

In support of his contention, he said many leaders from TRS, who are vexed with corrupt deeds of transport minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar, have joined Congress. Incidentally, K. Sarita, TRS corporator joined Congress in the presence of Bhatti. The Congress leader said corruption is rampant in state with Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao and his son and minister K. T. Rama Rao busy accumulating wealth through corruption means, particularly by way of kickbacks in Kaleswaram Project and Mission Bhagiratha.

TRS leaders are busy exploiting natural resources of the state for their own benefit, instead of serving the people, he said. He maintained that people of Telangana are keen on teaching TRS leaders, including minister Ajay Kumar, a lesson for their corrupt deeds. He charged that no contract works in Khammam and Bhadravati districts could be sanctioned without the consent of Puvvada.

Bhatti said Congress will expose all the misdeeds of TRS government in Khammam elections. He said they have divided Khammam town into five segments for campaigning. Each Congress worker will be made responsible for mobilising voters from 50 families in favour of the Congress party, he added.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Public in general are hereby informed that my client Dr. Uday Chavhan and Dr. Vinay Chavhan had filed a Civil Suit O.S. No. 12/2021 on the file of the Hon'ble VIII Addl. District Judge, R.R.District, against Krishna Satya Palepu and Viswanadhapalli Pallamraju, in respect of the Property mentioned hereunder. As such the aforesaid properties are subject to civil litigation. Hence, it is hereby informed to the public in general, not to enter into any transaction or deal with the property mentioned hereunder. Any one doing so shall be doing it at his own risk and peril.

**SCHEDULE OF PROPERTIES**

All that the Hospital Building, with D.O. No. 8-7/20, admeasuring 1436 Sq.Yds. with built up area of around 40,000 Sq.Fts. in Sy No. 32, situated at Ward No.9, Block 10, Balapur, R.R.District, bounded by: NORTH : Road, SOUTH : Land of Anji Reddy & Narsimha Reddy EAST : Land of Anji Reddy WEST : Land of Srinivas & Santosh.

Sd/- M.V.V. BASWARAJ, Advocate Office: 6-1-30/35, Indra Prastha Colony, Phase-1, Saligram, Hyd. Mobile: 9866051324

**Fishing for trouble**

Even as the number of Covid-19 cases rise in the second wave, many people are seen ignoring masks and violating physical distancing norms at Ramnagar fish market, in Secunderabad, on Sunday.

-S. SURENDER REDDY

**TRS picks ex-MP as Warangal's Mayor**

**Sudharani benefits from ruling party's caste formula**

ANUDEEP  
CEREMILLA I DC  
WARANGAL, APRIL 18

The filing of nominations for the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation elections is still underway but the TRS seems to have ended the race for the Mayor's seat.

Without leaving anything to suspense, the party leadership is said to have sent signals to its leaders that Gundu Sudharani, former Rajya Sabha MP and TRS women's wing state president, would be the party's nominee. As expected, she filed her papers on Sunday.

The TRS leadership took the key decision

Sudharani to be just one step away from becoming Warangal Mayor.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao who evidently wanted to address the criticism of not giving much prominence to the Padmashali community,

chose Sudharani who has so far maintained a clean image.

She joined the TRS from the Telugu Desam in November 2015 when she was a member of the Rajya Sabha. She held the position of chairperson of the Women's Cooperative Finance Corporation until recently.

The TRS leadership

despite pressure from the other top leaders especially those hailing from the Munnuru Kapu community.

With both the TRS MLAs from Warangal Urban district belonging to the Munnuru Kapu community, the party leadership seems to have decided that handing over another big post to the same community does not augur well with the masses.

Leaders close to TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao have been lobbying hard for the mayoral seat for some time now.

In particular, Nagurla Venkateshwarlu, chair-

man of the State Debt Relief Commission, has worked hard for the mayoral seat. While he initially got positive signs, he reportedly was shut out in the last minute.

Dasyam Vijay

Bhaskar, the brother of Warangal West MLA Vinay Bhaskar, Vaddiraju Ravi Chandra, a businessman, and Gundeti Narendra, TRS senior leader from the Padmashali community, are said to be top runners.

The aspirants have reportedly not given up hope and are trying their level best to try their luck till the last minute.

**SHARMILA ENDS HER THREE-DAY FAST FOR JOBS TO YOUNGSTERS**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 18

Y.S. Sharmila on Sunday ended her three-day hunger strike demanding that the state government issue notifications for providing jobs to unemployed youth in Telangana.

Family members of Murali Yadav and Koppu Raju, who had committed suicide seeking issue of these notifications, offered her lemon water for ending her 'nirudhyoga deeksha'.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, Sharmila accused Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao of taking the lives of unemployed people by not providing them jobs, even though there are 1.9 lakh vacancies in all government departments. These vacancies have arisen during the past seven years of TRS rule. But the Chandrashekhar Rao government has not bothered to issue any job notifications.

She appealed to unemployed not to take the extreme step. She said though she has ended her hunger strike, district activists of her yet-to-be-formed party will continue to agitate till job notifications are released.

Sharmila, daughter of former chief minister Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, expressed confidence that her party will come to power in Telangana and she will ensure that all vacant posts are filled whatever the circumstances. She criticised the Chandrashekhar Rao for failing to fulfil his promises made to people before assembly elections. She pointed out that even posts of chairperson and 10 members of Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) have been lying vacant.

**FAMILY MEMBERS** of Murali Yadav and Koppu Raju, who had committed suicide seeking issue of these notifications, offered her lemon water for ending her 'nirudhyoga deeksha'.

**ADDRESSING A** gathering on the occasion, Sharmila accused Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao of taking the lives of unemployed people by not providing them jobs, even though there are 1.9 lakh vacancies in all government departments.

**SAD DEMISE**  
I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. II Timothy 04:07

**PIDAKALA SAMUEL JOHNSON**  
D.O.B.: 17-07-1964 D.O.D.: 18-04-2021  
S/o P. SOLOMON RAJ

SEPT IN THE LORD ON 18-04-2021.  
Funeral at Narayanguda Cemetery on 19-04-2021 AT 11:00 AM.  
9642383535, 9885328584

**Tirupati bypoll EVMs put in strongrooms**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, APRIL 18

The Electronic Voting Machines (EVMS), Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) and other units pertaining to Saturday's Tirupati Lok Sabha by-elections received from Chittoor district polling stations were kept in the strongrooms at S.V. Arts College here on Sunday.

Although polling ended by 7 pm on Saturday, it was only by Sunday morning that some of EVMs and VVPATs reached Tirupati. The machines were kept in strong rooms in the presence of candidates and representatives of contestants.

Addressing officials, Giridhar Lal said that the central armed police forces would safeguard the strong rooms.

political parties. They were sealed in the presence of election observer Dinesh Kumar Giridhar Lal, district election officer and collector M. Harinayanan and AROs.

Giridhar Lal also reviewed the scrutiny of the polling process with the DEO, municipal commissioner P.S. Girisha, SPs S. Senthil Kumar and Ch. Venkata Appala Naidu and joint collector Veerabrahman, polling officials and representatives of contestants.

Addressing officials, Giridhar Lal said that the central armed police forces would safeguard the strong rooms.

**OBITUARY**

I have finished the race, I have kept the faith... 2 Timothy 4:7



**TERA LILLY GRACE**  
(Teacher, GPS Lalpat, Secunderabad)  
W/o G. Vinay Bhushan  
(Vice Principal, Raja Ravi Varma College, Khurda Road, Bhubaneswar)

Date of Birth: 27.07.1966  
Date of Death: 18.04.2021  
Inserted by: Bereaved Family Members

**OBITUARY**

**T S RAGHAVAN**  
S/o Late Thirunaranapuram Seshadri IRAS, Sr DAO Retd. South Central Railways.  
Date of Birth: 18th April 2021  
Funeral Procession will be on 19th April 2021  
beginning 6.30 AM to 11 AM.  
Smashana Vatika, East Marredpally, Sec-bad  
Inserted by: Smt. T S R Mangavalli (Wife),  
T R Ranganathan (Son),  
T R Sundar Rajan (Son),  
M Rajalaxmi (Daughter) & all family members.  
Phone: 042-27506007, +91-9440365548,  
+91-9676193933, +91-9441451233  
CA-3582

**IN LOVING MEMORY**

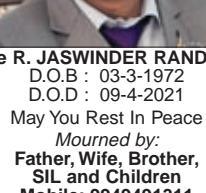
"Even in death, the righteous have refuge"  
Proverbs 14:32



**Late R. JASWINDER RANDEEP**  
D.O.B.: 03-3-1972  
D.O.D.: 09-04-2021  
May You Rest In Peace  
Mourned by:  
Father, Wife, Brother,  
SIL and Children  
Mobile: 9949491311  
CA-3583

**1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Timothy 4:7



**Y. C. KAMALAKAR JAMES**  
Retd. Sr. Manager SBH  
DOB: 27-06-1946 DOD: 19-04-2020  
We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there.  
Inserted by: Mrs LAURAL KAMALAKAR (Wife)  
Samuel Kiran Kumar (Son), Dr Mary Jyothi (Daughter-in-Law)  
Leona Priyadarshini (Daughter), Balaji Soundarajan (Son-in-Law)  
Grandchildren, Brothers, Sisters, Families & Grace Auly

**BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE**

**JOHN DASS**  
(EX-SERVICEMAN)  
Captain of St. Mary's Basilica at 6am  
Today Mass at St. Mary's Basilica at 6am  
Inserted by: Wife, Children & Grand Children  
(S/2122/D00060)

**IN LOVING OF**

"The Memory of the Righteous will be a blessing forever"  
Prov:10:7  
4th Death Anniversary



**ARTHUR JOSEPH SPRATT**  
H/o Late Honoria Spratt  
Today is the Day We Lost You Uncle  
Your Values Are Our Guidelines  
Though you are not with us physically  
You are with us in Prayer  
By: Mrs. M. S. Spratt  
But Your Memory Abides in us Forever.  
Memorial Mass at St. Mary's Basilica  
On 19-4-2021 at 6am/ 6pm.  
Inserted by: Mr & Mrs. Maria Pillay & Family Members  
(S/2122/D00058)

**9th ANNIVERSARY**

Dead in christ shall rise first. IThessalonians 4:16  
In Loving Memory Of



**Rev. B.M. SAMUEL (S.C. Rlys.)**  
Senior Pastor  
Mennonite Brethren Bethel Church  
DOB: 18-05-1940 DOD: 19-04-2012  
Inserted by: Family Members  
Ph: 27506079 / 9985182211 / 9849462213  
BEAVERED FAMILY

**40th Day Remembrance**

... and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.  
Ps 23:6b

**6th DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

**Late SATTU RAMULU**  
(AG Office Auditor Retd.)  
DOB: 18.03.1942 DOD: 19.04.2015  
You were in our lives everyday  
You are in our memories every minute and  
You will be in our hearts every moment  
"WE MISS YOU DAD"  
Inserted by Family Members

**Summer rain**

A sudden spell of rain catches motorists unawares at Kukatpally in Hyderabad on Sunday. Cloudy skies kept the maximum temperature at 37.2°C. More rain is forecast for Monday.

- R. PAVAN

**Officials fail to supply water to villages amid fight against Covid**

PILLALAMARI  
SRINIVAS IDC  
ADILABAD, APRIL 18

Despite rising instances of Covid positive cases, officials have failed to ensure supply of drinking water to villages that are facing acute water problems in old Adilabad district.

Many water bodies have dried up due to high temperatures and quite early this summer.

To make it worse, gram panchayat and rural water supply departments neglected drinking water supply to the villages. The offi-

cially funds to mitigate the drinking water problem during this summer and zilla parishes are not making arrangements to bring relief to the villagers.

Utnoor and Jainoor, Kerameri, Tiriyani, Sirpur (U), Lingapur, Ichoda, Boath, and Bharajarhathnoor mandals.

Meanwhile, revenue and health officials are engaged in measures to control the spread of Coronavirus.

The problem is high in Narnoor, Gadeguda, Sirikonda, Indravelli, Uttnoor and Jainoor, Kerameri

**IN BRIEF**

**J&K: Soldier shoots himself dead**

**Jammu:** An Army personnel allegedly shot himself dead with his service rifle inside a camp in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Sunday. Sepoy Hanuman Choudhary, who was on sentry duty, shot himself at his camp in Ukhral area around midnight, a police official said. The body has been sent to a local hospital for postmortem. Police have started inquest proceedings, the official said, adding the motive behind his taking such an extreme step was not known immediately.

**RAJ. BYPOLLS:  
60.37% POLLING TO  
3 ASSEMBLY SEATS**

**Jaipur, April 18:** The by-elections to the three Assembly seats in Rajasthan have registered a turnout of 60.37 per cent, an official said on Sunday.

The three constituencies recorded a lower turnout of 13 per cent than the 2018 Assembly elections.

As many as 4,49,885 people out of 7,45 lakh voters exercised their franchise on Saturday to decide the fate of 27 candidates in the three seats, a state election commission spokesperson said.

A polling of 60.37 per cent was recorded in the three constituencies. The polling 56.60 per cent in Sahada (Bhilwara), 67.23 per cent in Rajasamand and 58.21 per cent in Sujangarh (Churu).

In the 2018 elections, a turnout of 73.56 per cent was recorded in Sahada, 70.68 per cent in Sujangarh and 76.59 per cent in Rajasamand.

The counting of votes will take place on May 2.

Bypolls were held after the death of sitting legislators Bhanwarlal Meghwali from Sujangarh, Kailash Trivedi from Sahada and Kiran Maheshwari from Rajasamand.

**MAHA MUST SET UP  
WELFARE OFFICE IN  
BELGAUM: RAUT**

**Mumbai, April 18:** Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday said the Uddhav Thackeray government must set up an office in Belgaum, a district in Karnataka which Maharashtra claims is Marathi-speaking and therefore must be merged with the state.

In his weekly column 'Rokthok' in Sena mouthpiece *Saamana*, Raut said the office would be for the welfare of the Marathi-speaking population of the area, adding that Eknath Shinde, who is Maharashtra coordination minister for border areas, should make frequent visits there.

He said Chandrakant Patil, who was coordination minister in the previous Devendra Fadnavis regime, never visited the disputed border areas, and when he did caused confusion with some of his statements.

He said the Maharashtra government should strengthen its stand against Karnataka in the boundary dispute case pending in the Supreme Court, and the state advocate general should meet Marathi-speaking people in the border areas and update them about the case.

He said the Maharashtra government had decided to provide grants to educational and cultural institutions in Belgaum and other disputed border areas, and it was mandatory that the institutions be registered, but "the problem is the Karnataka government doesn't allow any organisation bearing Marathi or Maharashtra in its name to be registered."

**TALKING POINT**

**No scheduled meetings between ministers, says Pak ministry**

**India, Pak FMs in crossover visits to UAE**

**Dubai, April 18:** The foreign ministers of India and Pakistan made crossover visits to the United Arab Emirates this weekend, after it was revealed the Gulf nation has been mediating between the hostile neighbours.

"Good to be in the #UAE," Pakistani's Shah Mahmood Qureshi tweeted late Saturday, after announcing a three-day trip which ends Monday.

His Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar visited the emirate of Abu Dhabi on Sunday, a spokesman for

New Delhi's ministry of external affairs tweeted.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said there was no scheduled meeting between the two ministers.

Islamabad suspended trade and diplomatic ties with India in 2019 after New Delhi revoked the special status of the part of divided Kashmir that it rules.

But in February, Islamabad and New Delhi pledged to end all firing along the disputed frontier; after months of violence between the nuclear-armed rivals.

Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE's envoy to Washington, confirmed last week that the Gulf nation had played a role in bringing the Kashmir escalation down and created a ceasefire, hopefully.

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# DECCAN Chronicle

19 APRIL 2021

## Vital shortages hit India amid Covid's 2nd wave

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to the people concerned to use the entire national capacity in the production of vaccines against Covid-19 comes at a time when poor anticipation and planning coupled with a lackadaisical approach of the government he heads have started having a telling impact on the pandemic situation in the country. For more than a year, the world has been under the grip of the fear the micro-organism has unleashed, but the nation which the government and the Prime Minister have been tom-tomming as the pharmaceutical hub of the world is now facing a shortage of everything that the healthcare workers need to fight the virus and save lives — hospital beds, anti-viral life-saving drugs, vaccine, oxygen, intensive care units and ventilators. This, despite the fact that the government has set up a dedicated fund — PM-Cares — to promote initiatives to fight the virus.

The nation has no idea whether the government was, like most people in India, thinking if the pandemic had vanished, given the very little effort it was seen to be taking to face an exigency like the one we are facing now. There was little or no extra investment made to augment healthcare infrastructure in the country in the

interregnum or to step up production capacities of the same materials, which we now face a shortage of. That the government has learnt little from the past is reflected from the fact that even the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the national trade union belonging to the Sangh Parivar to which Mr Modi's BJP belongs, has cautioned about the reverse migration of guest workers from the towns and cities to the villages, in anticipation of another nationwide lockdown. It is stating the obvious that the government did not show as much alacrity as the guest workers did about planning for the future in the face of a pandemic attack.

It must not also go unsaid that the government had been busy plucking the low-hanging fruits from the beginning of the corona fight. It started with the premature show of gratitude to the healthcare fraternity even before they started the real fight. Even the Indian Air Force was dragged into the farce of showering flower petals on them from the skies; on earth, they were fighting the virus with their back to the wall, with little availability of infrastructure and consumables. The government missed no chance to advertise the world's largest vaccination programme with little idea about the number of people it will have to vaccinate or the quantity of vaccine it would require or how to produce and distribute the same. Today, the vaccine manufacturers are running pillar to post seeking financial help to augment production capacity but the government does not seem to understand it at all; we heard no firm and immediate commitment from the government till now.

But it's not all lost as yet — the government must launch massive investment programmes in healthcare infrastructure, put its foot down firmly and ban all social, religious and political gatherings that can turn superspreaders, and work with every institution, state or otherwise, to enforce Covid-appropriate behaviour. Every rupee, every action and every moment count now.

## Don't recoil from scrutiny

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, in a majority vote, has expressed concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in India. It has pointed out that "human rights defenders and journalists in the country lack a safe working environment" and commented on "concerns about the difficult situation faced by Indian women and minority groups, caste-based discrimination". This could not have come as sweet music to the ears of the rulers who seem convinced that vaccine diplomacy and a presence in Quad as a counterbalance to China in the difficult time of the pandemic proves that India enjoys a pride of place in the international community.

The EU stands on India's recent human rights record only adds to concerns already expressed by US freedom watchdogs and the UN. While an ostrich-like posture is easy enough to adapt on foreign perceptions of what ails Indian democracy now, a moment's reflection might show what the reality is. Dispassionate observers have signalled that India has been guilty of demonising its minorities, subverting institutions, intimidating journalists and social media executives, criminalising dissent and whimsically controlling the Internet. The incarceration of so many who opposed the CAA and the harsh treatment meted out to those supporting the months-long farmers' protest by lending their voices to global social media criticism are symptomatic of contempt for a dissenting opinion, be it from celebrities, academics and media-persons.

It is paradoxical that while we seem to crave international attention and pat ourselves on the back when we come in for praise, we recoil from any kind of scrutiny. Beyond reflection, there is a need to accept criticism, understand the reasons why and act on it to move away from an undemocratic path. Corrective action can begin even in a small way by looking first at why a few elderly academics and activists are in prison for interminable periods without even getting a trial, which in the Indian system inflicts inordinate delays and is the equivalent of extended imprisonment. It is no democracy which shows no inclination to support the right to dissent and, on the contrary, throttles it.

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DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

**Hyderabad:** 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad — 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax: 040-27805256  
**Vijayawada:** No.C 3 & 4 Puttama, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234  
**Visakhapatnam:** Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-255233/255234; Fax: 0891-2755285  
**Rajahmundry:** Venagiri, Dhawalewaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208  
**Anantapur:** Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904  
**Karimnagar:** Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2220433  
**Nellore:** Survey No.527/2, Burrampura Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemmudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348518/2; Telefax: 0861-2348580  
**Chennai:** SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-2254747/48/50/51; Adv. Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325  
**Coimbatore:** 77, Vivekananda Road, Ram Nagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255  
**Gram:** CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08

Anand K.  
Sahay  
**Far & Near**

## The idea behind capturing power in any kind of way: fair or foul

**T**he BJP may or may not win the Assembly elections in Assam. In West Bengal, its chances may be considered to be less bright than in Assam on account of the structural makeup of the state, notwithstanding the pre-Partition communal politics rampant in undivided Bengal. But winning a poll fair and square is not the metric any longer. We have seen popular verdicts being overturned in state after state to the BJP's benefit.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his principal operative, Union home minister Amit Shah, the saffron party's new *sutra* is to form a government in a state through any means. The capture of power is evidently crucial for erecting a scaffolding — a formal platform — for the systematic spread of ideas in the public realm through unrestrained heavy-duty propaganda, the rapid dissemination of communal politics through enabling instruments of State power (the police and the bureaucracy), and the unleashing of policy with a communal slant.

The last indubitably means going out of the way to disadvantage and

"other" those who are not the majority, leading to the making of such patently unjust policies — which defy the idea of equality before the law — the new normal in a sharp deviation from the political tradition whose roots were laid over 70 years ago.

The Westminster system of party politics, which is enshrined in our Constitution, has been stood on its head in the post-Atal Behari Vajpayee BJP. When the BJP fails to bag the numbers in an election, it simply sets up a trade mart in which MLAs become the commodity. The *gomashas*, or middlemen, and auctioneers are out in strength.

When elected legislators on party tickets other than BJP fail to take the bait (offered in the form of incentives), the punitive element kicks in and various agencies of the Central government raid and begin so-called investigations against the BJP's opponents. The law courts simply watch helplessly. The Election Commission has little to say. The governors of various states frequently don the garb of appratchiks. The Speaker is happy to receive instructions remotely.

The RSS is the ideological mentor of

the BJP and several dozen allied organisations that are the repository of the notion of the "Hindu Rashtra" (the idea that the land mass of India — in its present political geography as well as in its mythological connotation — is the natural home of the Hindus of the world, where all others must resign themselves to the fate of being less equal).

The RSS lays claims to being exalted. Its propagandists and adherents have prided themselves on being seekers of a higher morality and ethical conduct in the family, society, and the "nation", the last being an expression which in its most recent manifestation in India has been so thoroughly weaponised as to cause unease among "citizens" — namely, those Indians who are not swayed by their religious identity alone in the running of public affairs and policymaking.

It was expected that the self-appointed custodians of the "culture" of the Hindus would object to such weaponisation in the interest of political hygiene and harmony in society. They have not done so.

When after an election, newly elected MLAs of non-BJP parties are pur-

sued with serious intent to switch sides so that the BJP may unfairly get to form the government and make a mockery of the people who voted for them and against the BJP, a small hint from the top levels of the RSS leadership may have done wonders. It would have worked as a discouraging factor. But the RSS top brass have little to say.

The inference is that they approve of dishonourable conduct in the interest of making an ideological conquest.

Whether it is an election to a panchayat, a district board, a trade union, a social club, a professional association — and not just the state or national legislature — the BJP uses every trick in the book to "capture" the body. Only then can it pass rules, regulations, laws, to influence civil society as well as the government.

More, only then does it gain the formal legitimacy and the authority to direct the making of budgets and play the lead hand in the disbursal of funds to its favourite schemes and outfits. The stamp of approval is thus gained to promote unworthy communal agendas. The general media tomtoms this, rather than interrogate the phenomenon.

Awestruck by the energy brought to bear by the BJP to win all elections, big or small, some commentators have urged other parties to emulate the saffron party's methods. This is misconceived advice. It leaves out of account the fundamental proposition — that the BJP is unlike any other party that we know.

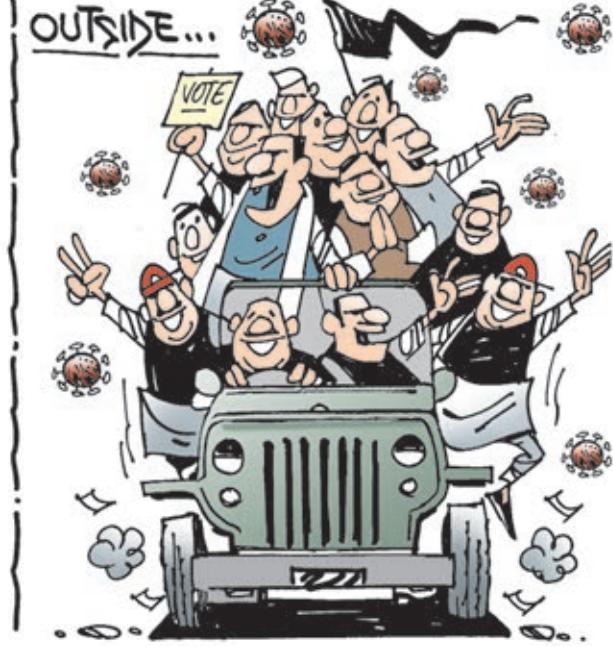
It sanctions the use of majoritarian force (which may be unseen), rather than the commonly understood constitutional methods. Ordinary civil society sometimes transforms into uncivil society under its gaze. This is a phenomenon that is anathema to a democratic order.

In both Assam and West Bengal, the political actors in the fray, as well as the general public, need to remain alert to the "capture" and "takeover" syndrome. A successful takeover bid may be expected to give rise to the unbridled spread of communal fires in (fragile) border states. The Congress and the Left parties have given little evidence of understanding the parallelogram of forces at work, especially in West Bengal. They may live to rue the day.

INSIDE...



Subhani



## Ideology or competence: What do the voters want?



Sanjaya Baru

**Sanjayovacha**

**T**here are many versions of Murphy's Law. The most popular ones states that if something can go wrong, it will. Among the many versions the oldest one is attributed to a British merchant, engineer and owner of ships, Alfred Holt, who told his fellow engineers in 1877: "It is found that anything that can go wrong at sea generally does go wrong sooner or later."

So, why should it surprise anyone that the voter has come to terms with the incompetent management of the Covid-19 pandemic and that this is not a defining issue in the ongoing elections to state legislatures? Caste and communal identity, allegations of corruption and nepotism seem to ignite political passions more during elections than the competence or incompetence of contending candidates in handling a pandemic.

India is no exception. Consider the fact that in the United States, Donald Trump secured more votes in the 2020 election compared to the 2016 election even though every medical professional in the United States will vouch for the fact that his administration's response to the Covid-19 pandemic was "incompetent". Mr Trump's incompetence did not defeat him. The unity of non-white voters finally did.

As an analyst of Indian political, economic, social and governance systems I have long held the view that in India Murphy's Law works with a vengeance. Anything that can go wrong, invariably goes wrong. The unfortunate downside to that reality is that most Indians have come to accept a certain degree of incompetence in most systems. Given the generally high level of citizens' tolerance for incompetence, it rarely becomes an election issue.

Politicians are voted in and voted out for a variety of reasons, ranging from their charisma, caste, community, money power and so on, but rarely have they been voted out for incompetence. The Indian voter has come to live with power outages, limited access to drinking water, uncollected garbage in the neighbourhood, inadequate law and order, difficulty in securing access to education and healthcare, and so on. Rarely have any of these become issues that determine the outcome of elections. I

In part this could be because, as the old adage

goes, *iss hamaam mein sab nangay hain*. In short, all political parties in government across different states have been equally guilty of an incompetent response. Many public health experts believe Kerala is an exception, but it is interesting that the Left Front's competence in dealing with the pandemic has not been an overt political issue in the recent elections.

As more and more evidence mounts up of administrative and political incompetence in dealing with the pandemic, it remains to be seen if Indian voters will just shrug their shoulders, throw up their hands, point to the gods above and quote Murphy's Law. Or, will they hold their elected representatives and governments accountable?

In the last two years more doctors and nurses have died fighting the pandemic than soldiers in fighting the nation's enemies. While politicians become all patriotic when it comes to the death of soldiers and demand votes in the name of nationalism, why don't the deaths caused by incompetence stir voters' emotions?

There have been many examples of competent crisis management in the past and they stand in contrast to the present incompetence in dealing with the pandemic.

In India, the gap between political power and administrative competence has widened with an increasing number of elected politicians taking charge of day-to-day functioning of the government and an increasing number of civil servants either abdicating their responsibilities or doing the bidding of politicians in office without consideration for the merits of a policy or a decision. All this gets revealed in times of a crisis. Covid-19 mismanagement reveals either administrative incompetence or the fear of professionals to speak their mind to politicians in power. Either way, the citizen pays the price.

**Covid-19 mismanagement reveals either administrative incompetence or the fear of professionals to speak their mind to politicians in power. Either way, the citizen pays the price.**

## LETTERS VOTES, VOTERS

Voters are more important than votes. The government should ban all religious gatherings and political rallies. It must shut down gyms, swimming pools and religious places. States are requesting oxygen and vaccines but Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah are busy with the elections. Funds must be provided to vaccine firms to ramp up production. The age limits for vaccination must be removed.

**Vikas Panchareddy**  
Hyderabad

The lack of concern shown by the government to address the health crisis has never been more evident as it is now. It is a shame that leaders consider opponents as enemies instead of the deadly virus.

**Kshirasagara Balaji Rao**  
Hyderabad

**VACCINE SHORTFALL**  
It is shocking that vaccine is not available for our own people (*TS runs out of vaccine, halts the drive for a day*, DC, April 19). Will the government at the Centre and state take steps to ensure its availability? We not only need vaccines but also hospital facilities quickly.

**Dr G.V. Kumar**  
Hyderabad

The Centre must take steps to increase vaccine supply, even if it has to import them and step up production. Also, elections to civic bodies must be postponed to avoid rallies and people gathering.

**P.R. Ravinder**  
Hyderabad

**50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle**  
It is shocking that vaccine is not available for our own people (*TS runs out of vaccine, halts the drive for a day*, DC, April 19). Will the government at the Centre and state take steps to ensure its availability? We not only need vaccines but also hospital facilities quickly.

**The writer is an economist, a best-selling author and former adviser to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. His latest book is India's Power Elite: Class, Caste and a Cultural Revolution.**

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## SHORT TAKES

## RAIPUR HOSPITAL FIRE: PROBE ORDERED

Raipur, April 18: Authorities have ordered an investigation after five Coronavirus patients died in a fire at the Covid-19 ward of a private hospital in Chhattisgarh's capital city Raipur, police said on Sunday.

Raipur collector Dr S. Bharathi Dasan has ordered an investigation into the incident. Officials have been directed to conduct safety check at Coronavirus hospitals in the city.

The fire broke out at Raipur's Rajdhani hospital on Saturday, police said. "Five Coronavirus patients died in the incident. One was charred to death and the others died due to suffocation," a police official said, adding a case of negligence will be registered against the owners of the hospital.

A supervisor saw smoke coming out of the ward and informed the hospital authorities, who alerted the police. The fire brigade and hospital staff rescued the other patients. "The fire broke out in the Covid-19 ward of Rajdhani Super Speciality Hospital located at Pachpedi Naka under Tikrapara police station at 4.30 pm and was brought under control by the firefighters in 20 minutes," tikrapara station house officer Sanjeev Mishra said.

When the fire broke out, there were around 30 patients in the ward, Mishra said. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel expressed grief over the incident and announced a compensation of ₹4 lakh each to the families of the deceased.

## CENTRE NOD TO BOOST MEDICAL OXYGEN SUPPLY

New Delhi, April 18: The Centre has sanctioned installation of 162 pressure swing adsorption (PSA) plants in public health facilities in all states, the health ministry said on Sunday, as demand of medical oxygen goes through the roof amid spiralling Coronavirus cases in the country.

The PSA plants manufacture oxygen and help hospitals become self-sufficient in their requirement for medical oxygen, while also reducing the burden on the national grid for its supply of medical oxygen.

A total of 162 PSA plants have been sanctioned by the government for installation in public health facilities in all states, the ministry tweeted. "These will augment medical oxygen capacity by 154.19 MT."

Thirty-three of the 162 PSA plants have been installed — five in Madhya Pradesh, four in Himachal Pradesh, three each in Chandigarh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand; two each in Bihar, Karnataka and Telangana; and one each in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Puducherry, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, it said.

Fifty-nine more PSA plants will be installed by April-end, while 80 more will be installed by May-end.

## BSY IN HOSP FOR COVID, STABLE AND RECOVERING

Bengaluru, April 18: Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa who is undergoing treatment for Coronavirus at a private hospital is now stable and recovering, his office said on Sunday.

"The Chief Minister who was admitted in a hospital on Friday for Covid treatment is being monitored by a team of expert doctors. The health of the Chief Minister is stable and he is recovering," the office of the Chief Minister tweeted on Sunday.

Yediyurappa is spending his time in the hospital reading his favourite books and is in touch with officials to give them necessary directions, the tweet further said.

The Chief Minister had fever on Friday and when he got himself tested, the report came positive for Coronavirus.

Accordingly, he got admitted to the hospital.

This is the second time Yediyurappa contracted Coronavirus.

This was despite the fact that the Chief Minister took the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine.

He was supposed to chair an all-party meeting on Sunday to take a stringent measure in view of rising Coronavirus cases in Bengaluru.

However, the meeting has been postponed to Monday and revenue minister R. Ashoka will now preside over the meeting.



City streets wear a deserted look during weekend lockdown to curb Covid-19 cases in Agra on Sunday. — PTI

# With 2.71 lakh new cases, India sees highest ever rise

States running out of beds, oxygen, drugs; govts scrambling to save lives

VINEETA PANDEY | DC with agency inputs  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

With 2,71,204 new cases, India saw the highest ever daily spike of Covid-19 on Sunday. The daily positivity rate in the last 12 days has doubled from 8 per cent to 16.69 per cent and the death in the last 24 hours due to the virus was 1,570. As states are running out of hospital beds, medical oxygen, and several life saving drugs, the union and state governments are scrambling to save lives.

Railways is gearing up to transport Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) and Oxygen Cylinders through "Oxygen Express" via green corridors to ensure fast movement of these trains. This came after Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra state governments approached the Ministry of Railways to explore whether Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) tankers could be moved through it.

In Delhi, the weekend curfew ends on Monday but traders in Chandni Chowk have decided to pull the shutters down till Sunday. Delhi government has filed FIR against four airlines under DDMA Act

## Delhi oxygen quota given to other states: Kejriwal

New Delhi, April 18: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said Delhi is facing an "acute shortage" of oxygen for Covid-19 patients and alleged that the quota of the city has been diverted to other states.

The Chief Minister's remarks came hours after he wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his help in enhancing the number of hospital beds and immediate oxygen supply for patients in Delhi.

A central government official has rejected Kejriwal's claims as "blatant lies" and said there was no panic situation in industries minister Piyush Goyal urging him to ensure "uninterrupted" supply of 700MT of oxygen on daily basis and restore supply of 140MT of oxygen by a supplier INOX.

The output of INOX, one of the major suppliers to Delhi hospitals, has been "diverted" to other states which has already started causing "critical shortages", he charged in the letter.

According to official figures, Delhi hospitals received 254 MT of medical oxygen on April 16 and 612 MT on April 17. As of April 17, the daily demand of oxygen from Delhi was 197 MT. The total stock at INOX and Goyal Gas, Linde, Air Liquide for Delhi is 311 MT and the total stock position of oxygen in the capital is 700 MT. — PTI

for not checking RT-PCR negative reports of incoming passengers. It is expected that the Delhi government may extend the weekend curfew for few more days as huge surges in daily cases continue. The decision in this regard is expected after a meeting between Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal on Monday.

Maharashtra minister Aditya Thackeray said the state is preparing for a third wave though it cannot be determined now if it will be as strong or weak. "We have come to the genuine belief that under-reporting is not going to help...Now we are preparing for the third wave. We have five lakh beds, 70 per cent of them oxygenated," said

Thackeray.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday held a review meeting to see Covid containment measures in his constituency Varanasi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi announced to suspend all his election public rallies in view of rising cases.

Meanwhile, facing acute shortage of Covid-19 vaccines, Odisha government

on Saturday halted its inoculation drive in over 1,000 session sites including in the hotspot Nuapada district, a senior health department official said. The states vaccine stocks will be exhausted in two days, family welfare director Bijay Panigrahi said.

Only 56,472 people were given jabs at 465 session sites on Saturday against 91,195 who had been vaccinated in 781 centres on Friday, he said. The state has so far vaccinated 49,58,447 people, the health department official said.

Panigrahi said that the vaccination drive could not be taken up in rural Odisha due to the scarcity of Covishield vaccines. Covaxin is being administered in Bhubaneswar, while it is Covishield in the rest of the state.

More than 6,000 people have been vaccinated against Covid-19 at 'mandis' in Covid-19 during the ongoing procurement of crops, according to an official statement on Sunday.

In addition to putting in place adequate protocols at the 154 mandis (wholesale markets), the state government has started special camps to inoculate all stakeholders and has so far vaccinated more than 6,000 eligible persons.

The whole country is witnessing a surge in the number of Covid-19 cases. Spurt in the number of cases in the neighbouring states specially Chhattisgarh is affecting the border districts of Odisha," said director of public health Nirajan Mishra.

"As Kumbh mela has ended, it is expected that many participants will return to the state and it may worsen the situation. A list of the returnees has been prepared and it has been sent to all the district administrations.

All the returnees have to stay in compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Even the quarantine period is mandatory for the returnees with Covid-19 negative certificates," said Mishra.

If situation gets out of control in these states, the migratory Odias working there will be forced to return to the state. Odisha government is preparing a master plan to deal with any kind of eventualities," added Mishra.

Meanwhile, Delhi residents who have visited the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar or are planning to do so will have to undergo compulsory 14-day home quarantine on their return and upload their details on an official

## TN imposes night curfew from April 20, full lockdown Sundays

### STALIN URGES MODI TO SUPPLY 20L DOSES OF VACCINE FOR TAMIL NADU

Chennai, April 18: DMK president M.K. Stalin on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to direct officials to send 20 lakh Covid-19 vaccine doses "requisitioned" by the Tamil Nadu government immediately and ensure supplies commensurate with the state's population.

In a statement released late evening, the government spelt out the measures it will be putting in place to try and stem the tide of the Coronavirus that has been infecting close to 8,000 people a day in its second wave before exploding past the 10,000-mark.

The decision to impose new restrictions was taken after a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Briefing reporters after his meetings with the health ministers and administrative officials, Kumar said "the decision has been taken to control the surge in Coronavirus cases. Government and private offices will be open till 5 pm. Market places and mandis have also been asked to close after 5 pm. Bihar government has also decided to provide one month salary as a bonus to all health workers who have been working for the safety of people across the state".

Officials said that the steep rise in cases across the state has prompted the Bihar government to impose new restrictions in the state.

Gujarat deputy chief minister Nitin Patel on Sunday admitted that the present requirement of beds and other healthcare facilities in the wake of the spike in Coronavirus cases is more than the state's administration's capacity.

Patel, who handles health portfolio, said though the state government is adding more facilities and beds at regular intervals to accommodate

more patients, it fell short of demand.

"Over 9,000 new Coronavirus cases are emerging in Gujarat everyday. Though we are adding new facilities and beds at regular intervals, it falls short against the demand as the inflow of Coronavirus patients is much higher," Patel told reporters at civil hospital campus here.

"Requirement for beds and other healthcare facilities in the present situation is higher than the

health department and administration's capacity. In view of the spike in cases, we are adding more beds to accommodate the patients," he said.

Commenting on the long queue of ambulances carrying Coronavirus patients outside the civil hospital, Patel said it is the government's obligation to save each and every patient turned away by other hospitals.

"Long queues happen because other hospitals refuse to admit patients. Such patients then come to us for treatment. Such queues are not a pleasant sight, but it is our obligation to save each and every patient. Till they are admitted in the hospital, till they are in ambulance, we try to keep them alive by giving oxygen," he added.

Gujarat reported 10,340 cases and 110 deaths on Sunday, the highest one-day case count and death toll for the state since the pandemic began. — PTI

Gujarat reported 10,340 new Covid-19 cases and 110 deaths on Sunday

## Guj Dy CM admits shortage of beds, health infra

Ahmedabad, April 18:

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## MP: Row over death of 10 in govt hospital

RABINDRA NATH CHAUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, APRIL 18

● KIN OF the deceased, however, claimed some patients in the ICU were seen gasping for oxygen when the pressure in the oxygen supply system had gone down.

The incident took place in the medical college hospital in Shahdol late on Saturday night.

While six patients died around midnight on Saturday, four others passed away in the early morning.

"Six people admitted in the ICU died last night. The deaths were not due to lack of oxygen. There were 62 patients in the ICU. Overall, there were 255 Covid-19 patients in the Covid hospital last night. Out of them, 155 were on oxygen", Milind Shiralkar, dean of the medical college hospital said on Sunday.

The hospital has its own oxygen plant.

He, however, said the oxygen pressure was going down in the system since Saturday evening. He has reported the matter to the local administration and sought liquid oxygen pillars to resume

State medical education minister Vishwas Sarang denied that lack of oxygen had caused the death of ten Covid-19 patients in Shahdol medical college hospital.

## 14-day quarantine must for Kumbh mela returnees

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC with agency inputs BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 18

Apparently worried over the sudden surge in Covid-19 cases across Odisha and Delhi, the state governments on Sunday made 14-day quarantine mandatory for Kumbh Mela returnees.

Several thousands of people, most of them from western Odisha, had visited Kumbh mela at Haridwar and Uttarakhand.

"All residents of Delhi who have visited or are going to visit Kumbh 2021 at Haridwar shall be required to compulsorily home quarantine themselves for 14 days on arrival to Delhi," said the order issued by Vijay Dev, chief secretary and chairman of DDMC.

If a person returning from Haridwar Kumbh fails to upload his particulars on the Delhi government portal, he will be sent to institutional quarantine centre for 14 days by district magistrates, the order said.

Violators of the DDMC order will be liable to be proceeded against under the Disaster Management Act 2005 and other legal provisions, it added.

A total of 1,701 people had tested positive for Covid-19 in the Haridwar Kumbh Mela area from April 10 to 14 confirming fears that one of the world's largest religious gatherings may contribute further to the rapid rise in Coronavirus cases.

A majority of the 48,51 lakh people who took part in the last two royal baths (shahi snan) held on the occasion of Somavati Amavasya on April 12 and Mesh Sankranti on April 14 were seen openly violating norms like wearing of face masks and social distancing.



A Covid patient receives primary treatment outside Kanpur LLR Hospital in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday. — PTI

**IN BRIEF**  
**Afghan mosque hit kills eight**

Jalalabad, Afghanistan, April 18: Eight members of the same family were gunned down in an attack on a mosque in eastern Afghanistan, officials said Sunday. The shooting happened on Saturday night in the city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province, and was believed to be over a land dispute, the province's governor Zaiulhaq Amarkhil said.

Five brothers and three of their male cousins were killed.

"The incident is under investigation but initial information shows a land dispute has caused the incident," Amarkhil said. Fareed Khan, a spokesman for Nangarhar police, confirmed the attack.

**4 cops sprayed, hospitalised**

Sacramento (US), April 18: Four Sacramento police officers were hospitalised with injuries after they were sprayed with a liquid irritant during protests Saturday night, police told KCRA TV.

The demonstrators had gathered at the state Capitol downtown to protest the police shooting deaths of Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, and Adam Toledo in Chicago. Protesters met at the Capitol Rose Garden after 8 p.m. and began marching around the downtown area later in the night, KCRA reported.

Demonstrators briefly sat in the streets in the Lavender Heights area before marching back toward the Capitol. The protest ended about 11 p.m.

**Syria prez poll on May 26**

Damascus, April 18: (AP) Syria's parliament speaker announced Sunday that presidential elections in the war-ravaged country will be held on May 26.

Speaker Hammoud Sabbagh said the window for nominations will be open for 10 days starting Monday. Syrians abroad will vote May 20, he said. The election is widely expected to give President Bashar Assad a fourth seven-year term.

It is unclear whether any candidates will run against him but any such runs would be symbolic.

The United States last month warned Assad that the Biden administration will not recognise the result of its presidential election unless the voting is free, fair, supervised by the United Nations and represents all of Syrian society.

Syria has been in the throes of civil war since 2011.

**JIHADISTS KILL FIVE NIGERIAN SOLDIERS**

Kano, Nigeria, April 18: Five Nigerian soldiers were killed, four injured and dozens missing when IS-aligned jihadists attacked a military base in northeast Nigeria's Bornu state, two military officers told AFP Saturday.

Fighters from the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) on Friday dislodged troops from a base in Kamuya village, 35 kilometres (22 miles) from regional district Biu after a gunfight.

"The terrorists killed five soldiers and injured four others in the attack on the Kamuya base," a military officer told AFP. The insurgents sacked the base, forcing troops to withdraw in disarray, said a second military officer, who gave the same toll.

"So far 41 troops have returned while 58 are still missing and are presumed to have escaped the attack," said the second military officer.

Search and rescue operation was ongoing to "locate the missing soldiers", the officer added. Kamuya is the home village of Nigeria's former army chief Lieutenant-General Tukur Buratai which has been repeatedly targeted by jihadists, prompting the setting up of a base to end the attacks. ISWAP has focused on targeting military installations and troops since it split from mainstream Boko Haram in 2016 and rose to become a dominant group.

More than 20 people were killed following days of attacks on the town of Damasak this week where the militants burnt offices of international aid agencies and several homes. The attacks have forced 65,000 residents to flee into neighbouring Niger, according to the UN.

The 12-year jihadist conflict has killed 36,000 people and displaced around two million from their homes in Nigeria's northeast. The violence has spread to neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

# Masks off as Israel vaunts virus win

Marks key milestone as the country vaccinates its way out of a Coronavirus nightmare

Jerusalem, April 18: Israelis stepped into the streets without masks on Sunday for the first time in a year, a key milestone as the country vaccinates its way out of a Coronavirus nightmare.

"It's very strange but it's very nice," said Eliana Gamulka, 26, after getting off a bus near the busy Jerusalem shopping boulevard of Jaffa Street and removing her face covering. "You can't pretend that you don't know anyone anymore," she smiled.

With over half the population fully vaccinated in one of the world's fastest anti-Covid-19 inoculation campaigns, the health ministry announced on Thursday that masks would no longer be required in public outdoor spaces.

For Gamulka, a project manager, the good news came at the perfect time: just two weeks before her wedding. It will be "very nice to celebrate with everyone, now without masks," she said. "The pictures will be great! I'm very relieved. We can start living again."

The vaccination of close to five million people has sent Israel's Coronavirus caseload tumbling from some 10,000 new infections per day as recently as mid-Jan., to around 200 cases a day. That has allowed the re-opening of schools, bars, restaurants and other indoor gatherings — although masks are still required in indoor public spaces.

And even before Health Minister Yuli Edelstein's announcement came into effect, punters in the popular bars of Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market were mask-free and smiling on Thursday evening.

Yet on Sunday, office worker Ester Malka said she wasn't quite ready to let down her guard. "We're allowed, but I'm still afraid, I got used to (wearing a mask)," she said.

"I feel like it's part of my life. We'll see what happens when everyone has taken them off. If it goes well for a couple of months, then I'll remove mine."

Israel just months ago had the world's highest infection rate, a Coronavirus outbreak that left 6,300 people dead among 836,000 cases.

But the Jewish state sent its coronavirus caseload tumbling after striking a deal for a vast stock of Pfizer/BioNTech jabs.

In exchange, it agreed to pay above market price and share data it gathers on the recipients, using one of the world's most



A woman walks along a closed vaccination centre in the city of Nice, France, on Sunday, amid the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. The centre closed due to a lack of candidates for the proposed vaccination. — AFP

sophisticated medical data systems.

Since Dec., some 53 percent of Israel's 9.3 million people have received both doses of the jab, including around four-fifths of the population aged over 20.

As recently as Jan. it was registering 10,000 cases per day. But as the effects of mass vaccination kicked in, by March it was able to implement a gradual reopening.

"There's no better advertisement for Pfizer," said Shalom Yatzkan, a computer programmer who had been in quarantine after catching the virus.

"I was sick for three days, I had neck pains and felt weak," he said as he walked through central Jerusalem. "I just hope the new variants don't catch up with us."

Another Sunday landmark in Israel's exit from Coronavirus restrictions was the full resumption of the country's educational system, without restrictions on the numbers of pupils in classrooms.

Speaking at a Jerusalem high school, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed the "festivity" of the day for the schools, while warning of complacency. "We're not done with the Coronavirus yet, since it can return," he said, stressing the need to obtain "millions more vaccinations".

"Sooner or later, we'll need another vaccination (dose)," he said. The situation in Israel is in stark contrast to the occupied West Bank. His office says it is also dedicated to the

## Canada records second case of rare blood clot

● **BLOOD CLOT** formations linked to the AstraZeneca vaccine "remain very rare" and Canada still believes that the vaccine's benefits "outweigh the potential risks".

The patient, who lives in the western province of Alberta and received a version of the AstraZeneca vaccine supplied by the Serum Institute of India,

"has received treatment and is recovering," Canadian health authorities wrote on Twitter.

Canada reported its first case of blood clotting associated with low platelets on Tuesday in a Quebec

would "continue to monitor the use of all #COV-19 vaccines closely and examine and assess any new safety concerns."

At the end of March Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunisation (NACI) recommended suspending the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine in people under the age of 55 while it evaluated the risks.

Health Canada said that limiting the use of the vaccine to certain populations was not necessary for the moment.

After a slow start, Canada's vaccine campaign is gaining momentum.

— AFP

## HIGHEST DAILY SPIKE OF 6,000 CASES IN PAK

Islamabad, April 18: Pakistan on Sunday reported its highest single-day Coronavirus spike this year with over 6,000 new cases and about 149 deaths, as the country struggled to speed up its vaccination programme.

The previous highest surge was recorded last year on June 20 when the country reported 6,825 infections and 153 deaths.

The country on Sunday reported 6,127 new cases, pushing the country's infection tally to 756,285. The death toll rose to 16,243 with 149 more fatalities. The government announced that it will start vaccinating people in the 50-59 age group from April 21. — PTI



Alexei Navalny

## 'CONSEQUENCES' IF NAVALNY DIES, WARNS U.S.

Washington, April 18: US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan warned Sunday that Russia will face "consequences" if hunger-striking Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny dies.

Jailed opposition leader Navalny, President Vladimir Putin's most prominent opponent, was arrested in Jan. upon returning to Russia after recovering from a near-fatal poisoning attack he says was orchestrated by Moscow.

"In terms of the specific measures we would undertake, we are looking at a variety of different costs that we would impose, and I'm not going to telegraph that publicly at this point," Sullivan told CNN.

"But we have communicated that there will be consequences if Mr. Navalny dies." The 44-year-old Russian began a hunger strike on March 31 to demand proper medical treatment for his legs and hands.

On Saturday, Navalny's doctors said his health had rapidly deteriorated and demanded prison officials grant them immediate access.

"Our patient can die any minute," cardiologist Yaroslav Ashikhmin said, pointing to Navalny's high potassium levels and saying he should be moved to intensive care. Both France and Germany on Sunday joined a growing international chorus of protest at Navalny's treatment.

Sullivan said the White House had told the Kremlin that Moscow would be "held accountable by the international community" for what happens to Navalny while in Russian custody. US President Joe Biden said that Navalny's situation was "totally unfair," but he is facing criticism for not bringing up the dissident's treatment in a phone call to Putin last week or being more forthright in his public comments. — AP

## 80K Germans remembered

Berlin, April 18: Germany is paying tribute on Sunday to the nearly 80,000 people it has lost to the Coronavirus, even as the country struggles and is recovering.

President Frank-Walter Steinmeier will lead a memorial event with other top officials at Berlin's Konzerthaus concert hall. His office says it is also dedicated to the

bereaved who could not accompany their relatives when they died and for whom important and comforting rituals of mourning were not possible.

Germany's confirmed death toll from Covid-19 stood at 79,914 on Sunday, an increase of 67 over the previous day. That is the fifth-highest total in Europe, after the UK, Italy, Russia and France.

Germany had a compar-

atively small number of deaths in the pandemic's first phase, but saw much higher infection levels in the fall and winter. In Jan., more than 1,000 deaths per day were reported at times in the country of 83 million people.

Infections have increased again over the past two months as a more contagious Coronavirus variant first detected in Britain took hold. Germany has

reported 3.14 million cases since the pandemic began.

Chancellor Angela Merkel is trying to get a bill through parliament that would mandate an emergency brake in areas where there are more than 100 weekly new cases per 100,000 inhabitants. The nationwide rate stood at 162 on Sunday. It would require the closure of stores, cultural and sports facilities. — AP

## Sikhs seek probe into shooting

### Wisconsin shooting claims three lives

Washington, April 18: Influential American lawmakers and Sikh community leaders have sought a thorough investigation into the mass shooting at a FedEx facility in the US state of Indiana as a potential hate crime that killed eight people, including four Sikhs.

Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi on Saturday called for investigation of potential anti-Sikh motivations in the incident that took place late Thursday night.

While the Indianapolis and Sikh communities continue to mourn, and as the rest of our country mourns with them, investigators must also determine if this mass shooting was a hate-motivated attack.

— PTI

Kenosha, April 18: A shooting at a tavern in Wisconsin killed three people and seriously injured two others early Sunday, a sheriff's department official said.

The shooting happened at Somers House Tavern in the Village of Somers, Kenosha County. Sgt. David Wright said. The suspected shooter was not immediately captured. Wright said the shooting appeared to be a "targeted and isolated incident," and authorities didn't believe the general public was in danger.

Officials were still working to determine the identities of the people who died. The two people who were wounded were taken to area hospitals, Wright said.

The road leading up to the tavern remained closed early Sunday as officials investigated the latest in a string of recent shootings. Last month, four people were killed at an office shooting in California, eight people were fatally shot at massage businesses in the Atlanta area, and 10 died in gunfire at a supermarket in Boulder, Colorado. — AP

## Mission equal to Wright Brothers' 1903 flight

### Nasa Mars copter flight 'today'

Washington, April 18: Nasa's Ingenuity Mars Helicopter could make its first flight over the Red Planet as soon as Monday, the US space agency reported, following a delay of more than a week due to a possible technical issue.

The mini-helicopter's trip will mark the first-ever powered, controlled flight on another planet, and will help Nasa reap invaluable data about the conditions on Mars.

"Nasa is targeting no earlier than Monday, April

● **A PIECE** of fabric from that plane has been tucked inside Ingenuity in honour of that feat.

19, for the first flight of its Ingenuity Mars Helicopter," the space agency reported Saturday.

Data will return to Earth

touched down on February 18. After the helicopter's flight, Ingenuity will send Perseverance technical data on what it has done, and that information will be transmitted back to Earth.

The helicopter mission is to be the equivalent on Mars of the first powered flight on Earth — by the Wright brothers in 1903 in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. A piece of fabric from that plane has been tucked inside Ingenuity in honour of that feat. — AFP



**SANDHYA 35MM**  
R.T.C X ROAD

**ARJUN 70MM**  
KUKATPALLY

**MEGHA 70MM**  
DILSHUKNAGAR

PRASAD MULTIPLEX - Khairtabad

AMB CINEMAS - Gachibowli

TIVOLI CINEMAS - Secunderabad

FORUM - Kukatpally | ICON - Hitech  
MOOSARAMBAGH | IRRUM MANZIL  
GALLERIA | CENTRAL - Punjagutta  
RK - Banjara | INORBIT - Cyberbad

GPR - Kukatpally | SHA - Chintal  
RADHIKA - Kapra | M CUBE - Attapur |  
CINEPLANET - Komppally |  
CINESQUARE - Uppal |  
SHIVAGANGA - Dilsukhnagar

LAXMIKALA - Moosapet

SWAPNA - Kattedan

INOX - GV - Banjara | GSM - Miyapur |  
MP MALL - Kachiguda |

DSL - Uppal | MANTRA - Attapur |  
CCPL - Malkajgiri |

BHUJANGA 70MM JEEDIMETLA

JYOTHI 70MM R.C PURAM

RAJYALAXMI 70MM UPPAL

SREERAMANA COMPLEX AMBERPET

SAMPOORNA 70 VANASTALIPURAM

VYJAYANTHI 70MM NACHARAM

SAI RANGA 70MM MIYAPUR

AMBA 70MM MEHDIPATNAM

BR HITECH 70MM MADHAPUR

SUPER 70MM BALAPUR

VIMAL 70MM BALANAGAR

SRI SAI POOJA 70 SURRAM

VLS SRIDEVI 70 CHILKALGUDA

LAXMI 70MM SHAMSHABAD

SRI LAXMIKALA MANDIR ALVAL



**SANDHYA 35MM**  
(ENJOY 4K LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS)

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

**ARJUN 70-11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM**

**RAJADHANI COMPLEX**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

**TARAKARAMA** 6.00, 9.00PM

OAMB - 2.00, 4.50, 10.25PM

Cinesquare - 4.20, 10.15PM

Gpr - 1.30, 10.20PM

Forum - 1.30, 11.00PM

Inorbit - 1.25, 6.35, 9.00PM

Central - 10.35, 8.25PM

RK - 2.55, 11.00PM | Hitech - 4.50, 10.10PM

Galleria - 11.05, 5.40, 8.05, 10.30PM

Irrummanzil - 12.45, 6.05, 10.20PM

Moosarambagh - 1.15, 10.00PM

Preston - 1.50, 10.15PM

GVK MALL - 10.30, 4.30, 10.50PM

MP - 10.40, 3.30, 10.40PM

GSM - 11.00, 7.00, 10.00PM

Cinepolis - 3.25, 9.30PM

MANTRA - 12.00, 5.00PM

SUDHA - 1.00, 6.35PM | DSL - 1.20, 6.25PM

TIVOLI - 11.30, 4.30, 10.10PM

SHALINI - 11.40, 8.10PM

CHANDANAGAR - 10.15PM

BALANAGAR - 11.40, 8.10, 10.40PM

SRI LAXMIKALA MANDIR - 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM

SAPNA CINEMA ABIDS - 6.00 & 9.15PM

SIVASAKTHI 70 - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

RAJYALAXMI - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

JYOTHI RC PURAM - 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

AARADHANA 70 - 11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00

KUMAR 70MM - 11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00

METRO 70MM - 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.00

ANJALI 70MM - 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

AMBA 70MM - 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

SENSATION INSO - 11.45, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45

TALLURI 70MM - 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SREEPREMA 70 - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

LAKSHMI 70MM - 11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00

YAKUTH MAHAL - 12.30, 3.30, 6.00, 9.00PM

CONTACT: 9839151717

## U.S. ORDERS DIPLOMATS TO LEAVE CHAD AS REBELS NEAR CAPITAL

Washington, April 18: The State Department on Saturday ordered non-essential diplomats at the U.S. Embassy in Chad to leave the African nation due to potential insurgent attacks.

It also ordered the families of American personnel stationed there to leave. — AP

**BLOCKBUSTER**  
2nd WEEK

**SUDARSHAN 35MM**  
(ENJOY 4K PROJECTION AND DOLBY ATMOS)  
11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15pm

**VISWANATH 70MM**  
11.45am, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45pm  
**BRAHMARAMBA 70**  
11.30am, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30pm  
**RAJADHANI DELUXE**  
11.00am, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm

**INDRA VENKATRAMANA**  
10.45am, 2.15, 5.45, 9.15pm  
**INDRA RAMAKRISHNA 70MM**  
11.30am, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00pm

**MAHALAXMI**, 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**EESHWAR**, 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SANGEETHA**, 11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00  
**SRI LAXMI**, 12.00, 3.00, 7.00, 10.00

**MANJU 70MM**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SRI SAI RAM 70**  
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15  
**RANGA 70MM**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**GOKUL 70MM**  
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

**ASIAN SWAPNA**  
11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15  
**SRI KRISHNA 70**  
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15  
**NARTAKI 70**  
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

**VYJAYANTHI 70**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**ALANKAR PRATAP**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**ASIAN MUKUND**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

**SRI SAI POOJA**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SRI KRISHNA 70**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**SAI RANGA 70**  
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

**GANESH 70MM**  
11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15  
**SUSHMA 70MM**  
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

**SAPNA CINEMA ABIDS**  
6.00 & 9.15PM  
**SHALINI** - 11.40, 8.10PM  
**CHANDANAGAR** - 10.15PM  
**BALANAGAR** - 11.40, 8.10, 10.40PM

**SRI LAXMIKALA MANDIR** - 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30  
**SAPNA CINEMA ABIDS** - 6.00 & 9.15PM  
**SIVASAKTHI 70** - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**RAJYALAXMI** - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**JYOTHI RC PURAM** - 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

**AARADHANA 70** - 11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00  
**KUMAR 70MM** - 11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00  
**ANJALI 70MM** - 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15  
**SENSATION INSO** - 11.45, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45  
**TALLURI 70MM** - 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

**SREEPREMA 70** - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00  
**LAKSHMI 70MM** - 11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00  
**YAKUTH MAHAL** - 12.30, 3.30, 6.00, 9.00PM

CONTACT: 9839151717

**Contact 7013388396**

**வார்தா வினா விடையும்**  
RUNNING SUCCESSFULLY IN THEATRES

**2ND WEEK**  
**வார்தா வினா விடையும்**  
**SUDARSHAN 35MM**  
(ENJOY 4K PROJECTION AND DOLBY ATMOS)  
11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15pm

**PRASAD MULTIPLEX** - 12.30, 1.45, 3.30, 4.45, 6.30, 7.45, 9.45, 10.30I

**AMB CINEMAS** - 11.00, 1.30, 4.20, 7.05, 10.05I

**PVR**

**FORUM** - Kukatpally - 10.20, 11.40, 12.40, 1.30, 2.15, 3.15, 4.40, 6.00, 7.00, 7.15, 9.10, 10.10, 11.00I

**INORBIT** - Cyberbad - 11.40, 12.45, 1.10, 2.50, 4.20, 6.00, 6.30, 7.30, 9.10, 10.40I

**CENTRAL** - Punjagutta - 10.20, 11.25, 1.30, 4.40, 7.50, 10.20, 11.00I

**RK** - Banjara - 10.20, 11.45, 1.30, 4.40, 7.50, 10.00, 11.00I

**ICON** - Hitech - 11.20, 12.20, 1.10, 2.40, 3.40, 6.00, 7.00, 7.30, 9.20, 10.20I

**GALLERIA** - Punjagutta - 10.20, 11.20, 12.30, 1.30, 2.30, 3.40, 4.40, 6.50, 7.50, 10.00, 11.00I

**IRRUM MANZIL** - 12.10, 1.10, 3.20, 4.20, 6.30, 7.30, 8.30, 9.40, 10.40I

**MOSARAMBAGH** - 12.00, 1.00, 3.10, 4.10, 6.20, 7.20, 9.00, 9.30, 10.30I

**PRESTON** - Gachibowli - 12.00, 1.00, 3.10, 4.10, 6.20, 7.20, 9.30, 10.30I

## IN BRIEF

## Greece busts trafficking gang

Athens, April 18: Greek police have dismantled a migrant trafficking network accused of abducting and torturing two people, the Athens News Agency reported Sunday.

Police operations early Saturday targeted four houses in the northern city of Thessaloniki, during which 13 foreigners aged 19 to 26 were arrested.

A 20-year-old man believed to be the mastermind of a ring that allegedly transported migrants within Greece and abroad was among those detained.

According to police, the traffickers had transported 22 migrants between mid-March and mid-April.

## Colombia rebel clash: 15 dead

Bogota, April 18: At least 14 guerrillas and one soldier were killed Saturday in clashes in southwest Colombia between the army and dissidents from the FARC ex-rebel force, which disarmed after signing a 2016 peace deal.

"In military operations, 14 people were neutralised" in the town of Algeria, Cauca department, Defence Minister Diego Molano said during a public event.

On Twitter, General Eduardo Zapatero, the army's commander, identified the deceased as members of a FARC splinter group that rejects the terms of the peace deal.

The dead soldier was identified as Corporal Diego Ricardo Gomez Chavez.

## 19 civilians killed in Niger

Niamey, April 18: Nineteen civilians were killed when armed men raided a village in west Niger close to the border with Mali, a local official said.

"For the moment, the number of dead stands at 19 and two people have been wounded in an attack by armed men on motorbikes in the village of Gaigorou" in the Tillaberi region on Saturday evening, said the municipal official from Dessa.

An unknown number of unidentified assailants, known locally as bandits, initially attacked people attending a funeral at a cemetery, before going on to the village where they "shot at everyone they saw," the official said.

The Tillaberi region is situated on the lawless "three-border" zone where the frontiers of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso converge and has regularly been the target of jihadist groups.

## FIGHTING RAGES IN TWO YEMENI PROVINCES

Sanaa, April 18: Fighting between forces of Yemen's internationally recognised government and Houthi rebels raged in the provinces of Marib and Taiz, killing at least 70 fighters on both sides, officials said Sunday.

The increase in violence came over the past 24 hours and at least 85 others were wounded, military officials from the two sides said.

The Iranian-backed rebels in February renewed their offensive on the oil-rich province of Marib, an anti-Houthi stronghold held by the internationally recognized government.

But they have not made substantial progress amid fierce resistance and heavy losses, mostly the result of airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition countering the advance.

The attack on Marib stirred up violence in other areas, including government-held Taiz province, which is besieged by the Houthis. Clashes also took place in the province of Hajjah and the port city of Hodeida.

The officials said at least 42 fighters were killed in Marib and 28 in Taiz.

Most of the dead were rebel fighters, they said. The military officials from both sides spoke on the condition of anonymity as they were not authorised to talk to the media.

Abdu Abdullah Magli, a spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces, said they staved off Houthi attacks over the weekend in the district of Sorooh in Marib, and reclaimed territory from the rebels.

The Houthi offensive on Marib has threatened to worsen the already severe humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

The province is sheltering about a million Yemenis who have fled Houthi offensives elsewhere in the country.

The Iranian-backed rebels have also stepped up their cross-border attacks by missiles and explosive-laden drones on Saudi Arabia.

## Arrest Natanz suspect, Iran asks Interpol

Teheran, April 18: Iran has asked Interpol to help arrest a suspect in a sabotage attack on its Natanz nuclear facility which it blames on Israel, a local newspaper reported Sunday.

National television has published a photo and identified the man as 43-year-old Reza Karimi, saying the intelligence ministry had established his role in last week's "sabotage" at Natanz.

The broadcaster said the suspect had "fled the country before the incident" and that "legal procedures to arrest and return him to the country are currently underway."

Neither state TV nor other media provided further details on the suspect. The intelligence ministry has not issued an official statement.

The ultraconservative Kayhan daily reported in its Sunday edition that "intelligence and judicial authorities" are engaged in the process. It added that "after his identity was established, necessary measures were taken through Interpol to arrest and return" the suspect.

Kayhan did not specify what form of Interpol assistance had been requested. Contacted by AFP in Lyon, Interpol did not confirm or deny such a request being filed by Iran. "Interpol does not... comment on specific cases or individuals except

## 3 killed in police crackdown on banned party TLP in Pak

Outfit wants govt to expel French envoy over blasphemous caricature

Lahore, April 18: Three workers of banned radical Islamist party Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) were killed and scores injured in a fresh operation launched by Pakistani security forces here on Sunday against the outfit that carried out violent protests to force the government to expel the French ambassador over a blasphemous caricature published in France last year.

Rangers and police on Sunday morning launched the operation at the TLP headquarters (Chowk Yatmeem Khan) Lahore to remove thousands of workers camped there, blocking the main Multan Road.

During the operation, three TLP activists were killed and dozens injured. A senior police officer is among several law enforcers suffered injuries, a senior police officer told PTI. As the number of TLP supporters was in thousands the Rangers and police could not manage to disperse them in a three-hour operation, he said, adding that the law enforcers ended the operation fearing loss of more lives.

During the operation, the protesters also held a senior police officer, Omar Farooq Baloch, hostage and tortured him, he said.

In a video message released by the TLP, Baloch, who had head injury, urged the Imran Khan government not to kill fellow Muslims and abide by the agreement his government signed with the TLP over expulsion of the French ambassador.

Today in the early morning, miscreants (TLP workers) attacked Nawankot Police Station (which is



Supporters of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, a banned Islamist party, block a road and shout slogans protesting the arrest of their party leader Saad Rizvi, in Lahore, on Sunday. — AP/PTI

close to TLP headquarters) where Rangers and police officers were trapped inside the police station and Deputy Superintendent Police (Omar Farooq Baloch) was kidnapped and taken to the TLP Markaz (headquarters), the Punjab police said in a statement issued here on Sunday afternoon.

One oil tanker with 50,000 litres of petrol has been taken by the miscreants to the Markaz. The miscreants were armed and attacked Rangers and police with petrol bombs. Police and Rangers pushed them back and took back the possession of the police station. Police did not plan or conduct any operation against the mosque or seminary, the statement said.

In a video message, a TLP spokesperson Shafiq Ameen said: Police attacked us at Lahore Markaz on Sunday morning

bury our dead till the French ambassador is expelled and our agreement with the government is implemented."

The government on Friday had announced completion of the operation against TLP in the country which had begun Monday last. After completion of the operation, Prime Minister Imran Khan had said four policemen were killed and over 600 injured in the four-day violent clashes.

— PTI

## Moscow summons Czech envoy in wake of expulsions

Moscow, April 18: Russia on Sunday said it would retaliate against the Czech government's "unprecedented" decision to expel 18 Russian diplomats identified as secret agents and summoned the Czech ambassador.

"We will take retaliatory measures that will force the authors of this provocation to understand their full responsibility for destroying the basis of normal relations between our countries," the Russian foreign ministry said in a statement.

The ministry did not specify which measures would be taken, but called the Czech announcement "absurd". A source told AFP on Sunday that the Czech ambassador in Russia had been summoned to the foreign ministry.

The United States announced sanctions and the expulsion of 10 Russian diplomats in retaliation for what Washington said was the Kremlin's US election interference, a massive cyber attack and other hostile activity.

Russia on Saturday said it would expel a Ukrainian diplomat, prompting an immediate pledge of retaliation from Kiev, further escalating tensions over Moscow's troop build-up on Ukraine's eastern flank.

The detention of a Ukrainian consul in the second city Saint Petersburg comes at a time of global concern of a repeat of Moscow's 2014 aggression, when Russia annexed the peninsula of Crimea and backed separatists in Ukraine's east.

Moscow claimed the Ukrainian diplomat had been caught "red-handed" trying to obtain sensitive information. In response, the Ukrainian foreign ministry protested the "illegal" detention of its diplomat and said Kiev would expel a senior Russian diplomat.

Kiev has been battling Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine since 2014 and clashes intensified early this year, effectively shredding a ceasefire agreed last July.

Around 30 Ukrainian troops have been killed since the start of the year. — AFP



**BIDEN PLAYS GOLF FOR 1ST TIME AS PREZ**

Wilmington (US), Apr 18: President Joe Biden has taken his first swing at a presidential pastime: Golf.

Biden, once an avid golfer, played Saturday at the Wilmington Country Club, not far from his Delaware home where he was spending the weekend. It was his first time playing golf since taking office in January.

The president played with senior advisor Steve Ricchetti and Ron Olivere, father-in-law of Biden's late son Beau, the White House said. Biden's handicap index is just over 6, according to the United States Golf Association. But he has not logged a round since 2018.

Biden is a member of the country club and played golf frequently as vice president. But his ability was mocked by former Ohio Gov. John Kasich, who said once at the GOP convention that Joe Biden told me that he was a good golfer.

And I've played golf with Joe Biden, Kasich continued. I can tell you that's not true. — AP

Seoul, April 18: The

United States and China, the world's two biggest carbon polluters, agreed to cooperate to curb climate change with urgency, just days before President Joe Biden hosts a virtual summit of world leaders to discuss the issue.

The agreement was reached by US special envoy for climate John Kerry and his Chinese counterpart Xie Zhenhua during two days of talks in Shanghai last week, according to a joint statement.

The two countries are committed to cooperating with each other and with other countries to tackle the climate crisis, which must be addressed with the seriousness and urgency that it demands, the

statement said. China is the world's biggest carbon emitter, followed by the United States. The two countries pump out nearly half of the fossil fuel fumes that are warming the planet's atmosphere.

Their cooperation is key to a success of global efforts to curb climate change, but frayed ties over human rights, trade and China's territorial claims to Taiwan and the South China Sea have been threatening to undermine such efforts.

Meeting with reporters in Seoul on Sunday, Kerry said the language in the statement is strong and that the two countries agreed on critical elements on where we have to

go. But the former secretary of state said, I learned in diplomacy that you don't put your back on the words, you put on actions. We all need to see what happens. Noting that China is the world's biggest coal user, Kerry said he and Chinese officials had a lot of discussions on how to accelerate a global energy transition.

I have never shied away from expressing our views shared by many, many people that it is imperative to reduce coal, everywhere, he said.

Biden has invited 40 world leaders, including Chinese President Xi Jinping, to the April 22-23 summit. The US and other countries are expected to announce more ambitious

## Climate cooperation by US, China

Cairo, April 18: A passenger train derailed Sunday north of Cairo, injuring around 100 people, Egyptian authorities said. It was the latest of several rail accidents to hit the country in recent years.

Four train wagons ran off the railway at the city of Banha in Qalyubia province, just north of Cairo, the railway authority said in a statement.

Videos on social media purportedly showed wagons overturned and passengers escaping to safety along the railway. The

train was travelling to Nile Delta city of Mansoura from the Egyptian capital, the statement said.

The health ministry said in a statement that least 97 people were injured.

Around 60 ambulances were sent to the scene and the injured were taken to nearby hospitals, the ministry added.

It was not immediately clear what caused the train to derail.

Prosecutors said they were investigating the causes of the crash. — AP

## Train derails in Egypt, 100 hurt

train was travelling to Nile Delta city of Mansoura from the Egyptian capital, the statement said. The health ministry said in a statement that least 97 people were injured.

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solve the Myanmar situation, they are not going to achieve anything without consulting and negotiating with the NUG, which is supported by the people and has full legitimacy," he told Voice of America's Burmese service.

"It's important that this military council is not recognised. This needs to be handled carefully." Meanwhile, the junta continued targeting the media on Sunday, arresting Japanese freelance reporter Yuki Kitazumi.

He was arrested at his home in Yangon on Sunday evening, his assistant said in a message.

In Feb., he was beaten up and briefly detained during a crackdown on protesters but was later released. The number of reporters arrested so far has totalled more than 65 and at least 34 remain in custody, according to monitoring group Reporting ASEAN.

Authorities announced Sunday night on state-run television 20 more celebrities and 20 more doctors would be added to their arrest warrant list of 420 prominent people.

Earlier unrest continued across the country on Sunday.

"If ASEAN wants to help

## Adobe founder, PDF developer is dead



Charles Chuck Geschke

ing the ubiquitous PDF, Acrobat, Illustrator, Premiere Pro and Photoshop.

His wife said Geschke was also proud of his family. He was a famous businessman, the founder of a major company in the U.S. and the world, and of course he was very, very proud of that and it was huge achievement in his life, but it wasn't his focus really, his family was, Nancy Nan Geschke, 78, told the Mercury News on Saturday. He always called himself the luckiest man in the world.

In 2009, President Barack Obama awarded Geschke and Warnock the National Medal of Technology.

In 1992, Geschke survived a kidnapping, the Mercury News reported.

— AP

## INNOVATIVE | TECH

## Prez Obama awarded Geschke National Medal of Technology

Los Altos (US), April 18: Charles Chuck Geschke the co-founder of the major software company Adobe Inc. who helped develop Portable Document Format technology, or PDFs died at age 81.

Geschke, who lived in the San Francisco Bay Area suburb of Los Altos, died Friday, the company said.

This is a huge loss for the entire Adobe community and the technology industry, for whom he has been a guide and hero for decades, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayan wrote

in an email to the company's employees.

As co-founders of Adobe, Chuck and John Warnock developed groundbreaking software that has revolutionised how people create and communicate," Narayan said.

Their first product was Adobe PostScript, an innovative technology that provided a radical new way to print text and images on paper and sparked the desktop publishing revolution. Chuck instilled a relentless drive for innovation in the company,

resulting in some of the most transformative software inventions, includ-

ing the ubiquitous PDF, Acrobat, Illustrator, Premiere Pro and Photoshop.

After earning a doctorate from Carnegie Mellon University, Geschke began working at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center, where he met Warnock, the Mercury News reported. The men left the company in 1982 to found Adobe, developing software together.

In 2009, President Barack Obama awarded Geschke and Warnock the National Medal of Technology.

In 1992, Geschke survived a kidnapping, the Mercury News reported.

— AP

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## quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	48,832.03
Nifty 50	14,617.90
S&P 500*	4,185.47
Dollar (₹)	74.35
Pound Sterling (₹)	102.46
Euro (₹)	89.06
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,431▼ 9.00
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	66.82
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.088
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.578
* As of Friday/Saturday	

**Steel prices may take 2 yrs to cool down: JSPL MD**

Steel prices might take at least two years to cool down as its demand is consistently increasing. In the current financial year, the demand for steel in India is also expected to exceed the production numbers. Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) managing director V. R. Sharma told PTI. While the demand in FY22 will be in the range of 140-150 million tonnes, the country's production is expected to be somewhere around 125 mt, he said.

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## ■ Govt holds 93% stake in Pune-based bank, may sell 51% now BoM seen as first selloff pick

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 18

With the bank privatisation process gaining speed, state-owned lender Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged out to be the first strong candidate for the government's proposed disinvestment plan. Weighing in all options, both Niti Ayog and the finance ministry officials have already discussed the pros and cons of privatisation, a top finance ministry source said.

"The government is actively looking for ways to elicit strong interest from investors for state-run banks that are up for privatisation. Though we have shortlisted four public sector banks, initially we received huge response



from the prospective investors for Bank of Maharashtra," the source said.

There is a wide media speculation that the four PSBs shortlisted are Bank

of Maharashtra, Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank and the Central Bank of India. It is also expected that the government is considering mid-sized or small banks for

the first round of privatisation, and may later go with large banks for divestment.

The Bank of Maharashtra stock moved up nearly 70 per cent from mid-February when an agency report named the lender among the privatisation candidates. Last Tuesday, the BoM stock moved up nearly 20 per cent with high volumes on renewed market buzz about its privatisation.

Attempts made by *Financial Chronicle* to reach out to the bank's MD & CEO A.S. Rajeev proved futile. He had earlier told the media that BoM would aim at growing at 10 per cent per annum and that only Rs 1,000 crore loan book now against Rs 15,000 crore in 2016 were required to be restruc-

tured. The government currently holds 93 per cent stake in the Pune-based BoM. Additionally, LIC holds 4 per cent. The remaining 3 per cent holding is with the public.

The government is likely to divest 51 per cent in the current round and reap the benefits of privatisation in the balance 42 per cent holding in later years.

As per a report by Denofwealth, Pune-based corporate giant Bajaj Group, which has a significant presence in the financial sector, could be a strong aspirant for the BoM buyout. Besides, two other corporates that are also reportedly throwing their hats into the ring are Tata Capital and Catholic Syrian Bank.



nificant financial stability risks to the business. Hence, the restructuring of the debt is crucial and essential," it said in a stock exchange filing.

The resolution plan, already approved by the lenders, is subject to the approval of the expert committee under the chairmanship of K. V. Kamath.

The debt raised through the non-convertible debentures also will be restructured. The company has received the written consent of all the holders of the NCDs to amend the terms and conditions of the NCDs as per the resolution plan.

Debt from 28 banks and financial institutions, including working capital demand loans, term loans, cash credit, short term loans, NCDs, purchase bill discounting limits, other working capital loans and unpaid interest which became overdue will be restructured.

According to an industry insider, the diamond certification process is causing the current delay in shipments and the backlog is swelling owing to fewer staff.

Part of the labour force in Surat's polishing units also have gone to their hometown to leave their family back there, fearing a lock-down, said Dinesh Navdiya of the GJEPC.

## Global jewellery brands fear inventory delay

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, APRIL 18

ed these short-term impacts; however, if the duration and magnitude of these inventory slowdowns intensify, there could be future negative impacts on the company's full year guidance," Signet cautioned.

Signet had posted stronger-than-expected conversion and average ticket values in the first quarter and also upped its full-year revenue guidance.

Similarly, French luxury goods Louis Vuitton's watches and jewellery division recorded revenue growth of 138 per cent in the March quarter com-



pared to the same quarter of 2020 and 80 per cent compared to that of 2019.

Russian diamond miner Alrosa too saw demand from end consumers for diamond jewellery showing robust growth across

key markets like the US and China owing to Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year and improved consumer sentiment.

This robust demand had reflected in the March exports of cut and polished diamonds, which grew 123.55 per cent compared to the same month in 2020.

However, chances of disruption in exports cannot be dismissed. Bharat Diamond Bourse was closed in the first week of April due to rising Covid cases in Mumbai. BDB has been closed and if Mumbai port is also

closed, then it can affect the exports," said Prakash Pincha, chairman, eastern region, Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

Lower frequency of flights too can hit exports.

According to an industry insider, the diamond certification process is causing the current delay in shipments and the backlog is swelling owing to fewer staff.

Part of the labour force in Surat's polishing units also have gone to their hometown to leave their family back there, fearing a lock-down, said Dinesh Navdiya of the GJEPC.

## GAMES

### SHORT TAKES

#### Srihari creates national record

Tashkent: Ace Indian swimmer Srihari Nataraj created a national record in 50m backstroke while winning his second gold of the Uzbekistan Open Championship here. The 20-year-old clocked 25.11 seconds to bag the top prize in the FINA-accredited Olympic qualifying event on Saturday night. Indian swimmers enjoyed a rich haul of 29 medals – 18 gold, seven silver and four bronze – in the meet.

It was Srihari's third national record in two days as the Bengaluru swimmer had rewritten the national marks twice in 100m backstroke, his pet event, earlier this week. — PTI

#### Krishna Poonia tests covid positive

New Delhi: Delhi Commonwealth Games gold medallist and sitting Rajasthan MLA Krishna Poonia on Sunday tested positive for Covid-19 and is undergoing treatment at a Jaipur hospital. The 43-year-old Krishna, who became the first Indian woman to bag an individual gold in the CWG by winning the discus throw event in 2010, is now admitted at the Rajasthan University of Health Sciences hospital. "She had cough and mild fever and she took a test on Saturday but the virus could not be detected. Today, we went to RHUS and doctors there took a CT scan from which it was diagnosed for Covid-19," her husband Virender Poonia said. — PTI

#### Federer confirms French Open entry

Paris: Roger Federer confirmed Sunday that he will play the French Open at Roland Garros this year having skipped the 2020 edition to recover from knee surgery. "Hi everyone! Happy to let you know that I will play Geneva and Paris. Until then I will use the time to train. Can't wait to play in Switzerland again," the 39-year-old said on Twitter. Federer, a 20-time Grand Slam winner, captured Roland Garros for the only time in 2009. In March, Federer competed at the Qatar Open in Doha, marking his first tournament since the 2020 Australian Open. — AFP

## Nketiah saves Arsenal blushes

### Eddie scores last-gasp equaliser to earn a 1-1 draw against lowly Fulham



Arsenal's Eddie Nketiah (right) scores against Fulham in an English Premier League match at the Emirates Stadium in London on Sunday. — AFP

### BLUES END CITY'S QUEST TO REACH FA CUP FINAL

London, April 18: Chelsea ended Manchester City's quest for a historic quadruple of trophies as Hakim Ziyech's goal earned a 1-0 win to take the Blues into the FA Cup final in victory, with Messi at his devasting best.

A damaging day for City also saw them lose Kevin De Bruyne to an ankle injury just over a week away from the League Cup final, where they face Tottenham, and the first leg of their Champions League semi-final against Paris Saint-Germain.

Chelsea were good value for another impressive win under Thomas Tuchel and will be favourites for the German's first silverware in English football when they face Leicester at Southampton May 15.

Tuchel could land an even bigger prize in the Champions League just months after replacing the sacked Frank Lampard in January.

His side showed they can get the better of City in what could be a dress rehearsal for the Champions League final should the English clubs see off PSG and Real Madrid in the last four. — AFP

## Messi wins Copa crown for Barca

It remains to be seen if his seventh *Copa del Rey* triumph is the last trophy Messi lifts in Barcelona colours but if this was to be a final flourish, the 33-year-old crafted a fitting farewell.

beyond the summer.

"To win a title is important for me," Koeman admitted afterwards.

Yet Laporta was noticeably evasive when asked about Koeman's future.

"He is doing well," he said.

Koeman took over a team at rock bottom, humiliated by an historic loss to Bayern Munich and wounded by the attempts of Messi to leave the club for free.

But this 31st *Copa del Rey* success for the club is a testament to progress made and Koeman will hope it not only helps convince Messi to stay but gives Barca momentum now in a neck-and-neck title race in La Liga.

"Despite the changes at the club and the young players, at Barca you have to always fight for trophies," Koeman said.

— AFP

## FIVE INDIAN BOXERS ENTER QUARTERS OF YOUTH WORLDS

New Delhi, April 18: Five Indian boxers advanced to the quarterfinals of the youth world championships for men and women after clinching comfortable victories in their last-16 stage bouts in Kielce, Poland.

Among the women, Gitika (48kg) made the last eight on Saturday.

From the men's contingent, Asian silver-medalist Ankit Narwal (64kg), Bishwamitra Chongtham (49kg), Sachin (56kg) and Vishal Gupta (91kg) stood

## Jhilli lifts gold at Asian meet

Tashkent, April 18: India's Jhilli Dalabhera clinched the gold medal in the 45kg category in a severely depleted two-lifter field at the Asian Weightlifting Championship here on Sunday.

Jhilli, a junior world champion, lifted 69kg in the snatch and followed that up by 88kg in clean jerk for a total of 157kg to finish on top of the podium in all three categories of the gold level Olympic qualifier event which was postponed last year due to the pandemic.

The 20-year-old from Odisha lifted a total of 164kg (71kg+93kg) in the four-woman field. Her final standing will be determined after the end of the group A proceedings.

Jhilli's gold was India's second medal of the tournament as star weightlifter Mirabai Chanu had smashed the world record in the clean and jerk category enroute a bronze medal on Saturday. The Olympic-bound Chanu lifted 86kg in snatch and a world record of 119kg in clean and jerk for a total of 205kg. — PTI

## VERSTAPPEN EMERGES ON TOP IN CHAOTIC IMOLA RACE

Imola (Italy), April 18: Max Verstappen kept his cool to claim a chaotic rain-hit Emilia Romagna Grand Prix on Sunday as seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton recovered from a rare mistake to sneak in second. Red Bull driver Verstappen muscled past pole sitter Hamilton on the first corner at Imola to set up his impressive first win of the season.

"I surprised myself. We worked really hard to make that better. In these tricky conditions we did a great job," Verstappen said.

Lando Norris in a McLaren took third for the Briton's second successive podium ahead of Charles Leclerc for Ferrari. The outcome of a compelling second leg of the Formula One season confirmed Verstappen's stature as a formidable obstacle to Hamilton's quest for an unprecedented eighth drivers' crown. After winning the season-opener in Bahrain and putting in the fastest lap on Sunday, Hamilton leads Verstappen by one point ahead of the Portuguese Grand Prix next time out. — AFP



• CHENNAI SUPER KINGS • DELHI CAPITALS • KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS • MUMBAI INDIANS • PUNJAB KINGS  
• RAJASTHAN ROYALS • ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE • SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

DECCAN CHRONICLE, HYDERABAD, MONDAY, 19 APRIL 2021

pg 12

ORANGE	
Shikhar Dhawan, DC	186
Glenn Maxwell, RCB	176
KL Rahul, PBKS	157

PURPLE	
Harshal Patel, RCB	9
Rahul Chahar, MI	7
Avesh Khan, DC	6

### Off the field



Robin Uthappa's son Neale Nolan sports a CSK jersey.

### Murali undergoes angioplasty

Sri Lankan cricket legend Muttiah Muralitharan, who is part of the SRH support staff in the ongoing IPL, has undergone an angioplasty at a private hospital in Chennai.

ESPNcricinfo reported that the champion off-spinner "had a stent fitted to unblock an artery and will rejoin SRH when discharged".

He is the leading wicket-taker in international cricket with 1347 scalps. Muralitharan represented Sri Lanka in 133 Tests.

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# DHAWAN & ONLY

Shikhar's 49-ball 92 powers Delhi to 6-wicket win over Punjab

Mumbai, April 18: Delhi Capitals beat Punjab Kings by six wickets in the IPL here on Sunday. Mayank Agarwal top-scored for Punjab with 69 off 36 balls while his opening partner and skipper K.L. Rahul made 61 off 51 balls, taking them to 195 for four.

In response, Delhi Capitals chased down the target rather comfortably in 18.2 overs with Shikhar Dhawan scoring 92 off 49 balls.

Dhawan said: "It was a conscious effort from my side to increase the strike-rate and I started taking more risks. I'm not afraid of changes. I'm always open towards changes and I make sure I give it a good try in the nets and then in the games. I've worked on the leg-side shots, coming in the crease, using the pace of the bowler."

Earlier, Mayank and captain Rahul stitched a century-run opening stand to guide Punjab Kings to a challenging 195 for four. Agarwal made 69 off 36 balls, while Rahul scored 61 off 51 deliveries as Punjab made a flying start to their innings.

Delhi Capitals skipper Rishabh Pant's decision to bowl after winning the toss backfired as the opening duo of Agarwal and Rahul took the attack to the opposition bowlers from the onset, hitting boundaries and sixes at will.

While Agarwal was the aggressor of the two initially, Rahul upped the ante after a relatively sedate start.

Agarwal and Rahul adopted an aggressive approach against debutant Lukeman Meriwala and Kagiso Rabada, taking their team to 94 for no loss in 10 overs.

Agarwal was looking dangerous during his 36-ball knock and ended up hitting seven boundaries and four hits over the fence.

But Delhi Capitals dismissed both the batsmen in quick succession to make a comeback into the match.

While Agarwal was the



Delhi Capitals opener Shikhar Dhawan plays a shot during the match against Punjab Kings in the IPL on Sunday.

### SCORECARD

**Punjab Kings:** KL Rahul c Stoinks b Rabada 61, Mayank Agarwal c Dhawan b Meriwala 69, Chris Gayle c sub (RV Patel) b Woakes 11, Deepak Hooda (not out) 22, Nicholas Pooran c Rabada b Avesh Khan 9, Shahrukh Khan (not out) 15. Extras (lb 6, nb 2) 8. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 195.

FoW: 1-122, 2-141, 3-158, 4-179.

**Bowling:** Chris Woakes 4-0-42-1, Lukman Meriwala 3-0-32-1, R. Ashwin 4-0-28-0, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-43-1, Lalit Yadav 1-0-11-0, Avesh Khan 4-0-33-1.

**Delhi Capitals:** P. Shaw c Gayle b Arshdeep Singh 32, Shikhar Dhawan b Richardson 92, Steven Smith c Richardson b Meredith 9, Rishabh Pant c Hooda b Richardson 15, M. Stoinks (not out) 27, L. Yadav (not out) 12. Extras (lb 2, nb 3, w 6) 11. Total (for four wickets in 18.2 overs) 198.

FoW: 1-59, 2-107, 3-152, 4-180.

**Bowling:** Arshdeep 3-0-22-1, M. Shami 4-0-53-0, J. Saxena 3-0-27-0, Jhye Richardson 4-0-41-2, Deepak Hooda 2-0-18-0, R. Meredith 2-0-35-1.

— IPL

POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Points	Net RR
RCB	3	3	0	0	6	+0.750
DC	3	2	1	0	4	+0.453
MI	3	2	1	0	4	+0.367
CSK	2	1	1	0	2	+0.616
RR	2	1	1	0	2	+0.052
KKR	3	1	2	0	2	-0.633
PBKS	3	1	2	0	2	-0.967
SRH	3	0	3	0	0	-0.483

# Virat RCB make it three in three

Chennai, April 18: Glenn Maxwell was good but AB de Villiers was better as RCB bested KKR by 38 runs in their IPL match here on Sunday. Batting first, De Villiers' master class and Maxwell's counter-attacking half-century propelled RCB to an imposing 204 for four. In reply, KKR were stopped at 166 for eight as RCB regained the top spot in the pecking order.

RCB smashed 56 runs in the last three overs, including 21 in the final six deliveries, thanks to de Villiers' 34-ball 76 not out. Maxwell blazed away to 78 off 49 deliveries, hitting nine boundaries and three maximums before the genius from South Africa strode in and struck the same number of fours and sixes as his teammate from Australia.

KKR were off to a brilliant start with leg-break bowler Varun Chakravarthy leaving RCB in early trouble at 9/2 with the big wickets of skipper Virat Kohli (5) and Rajat Patidar (1) in the second over. Harbhajan Singh bowled a tight line and length to stifle the RCB batsmen in his first two overs. After Chakravarthy lured Kohli to go over cover with a tossed-up delivery that drifted away from the right-hander, Rahul Tripathi pulled off a sensational catch running back from extra-cover. The top batsman was nowhere close to the ball.

Chakravarthy then went through the defence of Patidar with one that darted back on landing. Mixing aggression with caution, Maxwell and Devdutt Padikkal (25) revived the RCB innings after the early blows. While the young Indian seemed content playing the second fiddle, the swash-

### SCORECARD

**Royal Challengers Bangalore:** Virat Kohli c Tripathi b Varun 5, Devdutt Padikkal c Tripathi b Prasidh Krishna 25, Rajat Patidar b Varun 1, Glenn Maxwell c Harbhajan Singh b Cummings 78, AB de Villiers (not out) 76, Kyle Jamieson (not out) 11. Extras (lb 3, w 5) 8. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 204.

FoW: 1-6, 2-9, 3-95, 4-148.

**Bowling:** Harbhajan 4-0-38-0, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-39-2, Shakib Al Hasan 2-0-24-0, Pat Cummings 4-0-34-1, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-31-1, Andre Russell 2-0-58-0.

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** Nitish Rana c Tripathi b Chahal 18, Shubman Gill c sub (DT Christian) b Jameson 21, Rajat Tripathi c Mohammed Siraj b Washington Sundar 25, Eoin Morgan 29, Dinesh Karthik lbw b Chahal 2, Shakib Al Hasan b Jameson 26, Andre Russell b Patel 31, Pat Cummings c de Villiers b Jameson 6, Harbhajan Singh (not out) 2, Varun Chakravarthy (not out) 2. Extras (w 4) 4. Total (for eight wickets in 20 overs) 166.

FoW: 1-23, 2-57, 3-66, 4-74, 5-114, 6-155, 7-161, 8-162.

**Bowling:** Mohammed Siraj 3-0-17-0, Kyle Jamieson 3-0-41-3, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-34-2, Washington Sundar 4-0-33-1, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-24-0, Harshal Patel 4-0-17-2.

buckling Australian counter-attacked in fine fashion and played the big shots with consummate ease.

The in-form Maxwell upped the ante when he cleared his front leg to plonk Shakib Al Hasan over long-on for his first maximum in the sixth over.

The one bowled by Shakib turned out to be a productive over for RCB as they got 17 runs off it.

Morgan's decision to take out both Chakravarthy and Harbhajan at a time when they were bowling well was baffling, but RCB didn't mind at all as they capitalised on the surprising move.

— Agencies

# CSK, RAJASTHAN IN BATTLE ROYALE

Live on TV

Chennai Super Kings vs Rajasthan Royals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

over Both teams would be eyeing a second win to give their campaign a boost.

CSK hit back superbly after a chastening defeat to Capitals with Deepak Chahar putting his hand up with a four-wicket haul to break the back of the Punjab batting line-up.

The Super Kings will expect Chahar to continue the good work.

setting up a six-wicket victory.

Skipper Dhoni would have been happy with the bowlers' performance after they had been taken to the cleaners by Prithvi Shaw and Shikhar Dhawan in the opener.

Chahar, in particular, came up with a fine spell, which helped CSK restrict its opponent to a below par 106 which the batsmen chased down without much trouble.

The Super Kings will expect Chahar to continue the good work.

— PTI



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