

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | MONDAY | 5 APRIL 2021

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

Vol. 84 No. 94 Established 1938 | 20 PAGES | ₹6.00

**NALLAGANDLA'S
NEW ICONIC
GATED COMMUNITY**
Now open for bookings

84999 58063 / 70953 33335 www.aparnaconstructions.com

Apara
sarovar
zicon
The lifestyle icon
Apartments @ NALLAGANDLA

2, 3 & 4 BHK
1240 - 2875 Sft.
3024 Total Apts.

₹6999*/Sft.
BOOK TODAY

A
APARNA
Lead the future

Marketing Office open on Sunday also
TS RERA Reg. No.: P02400002673 *T&C Apply. Images used are
for illustrative purpose only.

WEATHER

Max: 38.2°C
Min: 25.2°C
RH: 21%
Rainfall: Nil
Forecast: Partly cloudy sky.
Max/Min temp. 39/23°C

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttaramaya
Tithi: Magha Shuddha Chaturdashi till 3.57 pm

Star: Pushyami till 10 pm
Variyam: 7.17 am to 8.46 am
Durmuhurtam: 6.49 am to 8.20 am

Rahu Kalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

HJRI CALENDAR

Sab'ban 22, 1442 AH

PRAVERS

Fajar: 5.07 am

Zohar: 12.29 pm

Asar: 4.40 pm

Maghrib: 6.35 pm

Isha: 7.44 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.30 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.06 AM

MOONRISE 1.27 AM

MOONSET 12.46 PM

COUNTER POINT



Like father, like son...
your dad used to
snatch ballot boxes!

SHORT TAKES

TS forests under siege

Hyderabad: The forests in TS are under siege, from thousands of fires chewing through hundreds of acres regularly, to illegal occupation, demands from cattle herders and sheep rearers to be allowed to graze their animals, and from people demanding patta to a few lakh acres they have occupied on which they practice 'podu', or shifting cultivation, reports our correspondent.

■ Report on Page 5

Free water only in GHMC limits

Hyderabad: Residents living in the area between the GHMC border and Outer Ring Road (ORR) and who are anxious to avail of the 20 kilolitre (kl) free drinking water scheme per month have some bad news, reports our correspondent. The government has decided to restrict the scheme only to those living in the GHMC limits.

■ Report on Page 3

Several killed in Indonesia floods

Jakarta: More than 50 people were killed after flash floods and landslides swept through eastern Indonesia and Timor Leste on Sunday, authorities said, warning the toll could rise further. Floods sparked by torrential rain wreaked havoc and destruction on islands stretching from Flores Island in Indonesia to Timor Leste, a small nation east of the Indonesian archipelago.

■ Earlier reports on Page 10



CRPF personnel carry the coffin of a paramilitary soldier who lost his life in Saturday's encounter with Maoists, in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh, on Sunday. — PTI

Maoists used rockets in ambush on jawans; toll 22

RABINDRA NATH CHOURHURY I DC RAIPUR, APRIL 4

SHAH IN A HUDDLE, TELLS FORCES TO TAKE OUT MAOIST COMMANDER HIDMA

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

A day after Maoists ambushed a joint team of security forces in the Terram area along the Sukma-Bijapur border in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar region, the bodies of 20 jawans slain in the encounter were recovered at the attack site on Sunday. With this, the toll of security personnel attack has mounted to 22.

"Two bodies (of jawans) were recovered on Saturday and 20 on Sunday. One (jawan) was still missing," DGP of Chhattisgarh D.M. Awasthi told reporters.

The slain jawans included seven commandos of the CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action) of the CRPF, eight personnel of District Reserve Group (DRG), six jawans belonging to the Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) and one from CRPF's Bastaria Battalion, said Kamal Lochan Kashyap, SP of south Bastar district of Bijapur. A commando of the

firmed use of sophisticated weapons like AK and Insas rifles, Light Machine Gun (LMG) and rocket launchers by Maoists in the brutal attack.

Following these instructions a massive operation has been launched by security forces along the Sukma-Bijapur border. One of the soldiers is still said to be missing and a combing operation is on to trace him. Director-general CRPF, Kuldip Singh, reached Chhattisgarh early Sunday morning to review the situation.

■ Full report on Page 7

CoBRA unit, identified as Rakeswar Singh Mahhas, was still missing, he added. Thirty-one jawans were injured, seven of them seriously, in the incident. "Reinforcements were rushed to the attack site on Sunday morning to

recover the bodies of the jawans. A Mi-7 helicopter evacuated the bodies," a senior police officer posted in Bastar told this newspaper.

■ Page 4: Search party walks into 2-km ambush

Cong offers Didi support if 22 TMC nominees pull out

PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI I DC BERHAMPORE, APRIL 4

In a dramatic twist, the Congress has indicated that it would look into offering support to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to tackle the BJP but only if she withdrew all 22 Trinamul Congress candidates in Murshidabad as a "favour". The Congress is fighting the West Bengal Assembly elections in alliance with the Left Front and the Indian Secular Front of Furfura cleric Peerzada Abbas Siddiqui.

WB Congress chief

Ranjan Chowdhury, MP from Berhampore, who has been a key face in forming the alliance, Sanjukta Morcha, made the conditional offer on Sunday to the TMC chief in wake of her open letter to UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi and many others for support. His calculated move, however, has raised eyebrows of the Left and ISF which see the Trinamul and the BJP as common enemies in the poll battle. At Berhampore, Chowdhury said, "Ms Banerjee has been scared of her defeat in Nandigram. That is why

she wrote to Ms Gandhi to get the support of the Congress to combat the communal BJP here. But I request the CM: You first withdraw all the 22 TMC candidates in this district in favour of Congress. Then we will think about supporting you."

He added, "Ms Banerjee, who has realised of her failure to fight the BJP alone, back-stabbed our party earlier by poaching many of our MLAs and taking control of municipalities and Panchayat bodies, which were won by us, with the help of her former protege Shuvendu Adhikari."

Rao had said, "The Telangana government would put in place an administrative arrangement on the lines of Kerala for welfare of those from Telangana who work in the Gulf. A special team has visited Kerala to study the policies being adopted by the government there. Based on its report, the government will initiate measures for welfare of Gulf workers."

In his Budget speech, finance minister T. Harish

finance minister Guggilla

government is dilly-dallying

Ravi Goud, convenor of the Telangana Gulf Workers Joint Action Committee, said, "It's been more than four years since the government promised to form a committee. Although the committee visited Kerala and submitted its report, nothing has happened on the ground level."

The visit to Kerala by the committee of activists comes against this backdrop.

Ravi said, "The govern-

TS, banks spar over govt land of loan defaulters

No auction of allotted land to recover loan, says TS

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The Telangana state government and several public sector banks are at loggerheads over mortgaged government lands and assets developed on them by loan defaulters, which is collectively worth thousands of crores.

The latest Trident scam, in which Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) booked the developers of the hotel project near Hitec City on charges of a ₹1,285 crore bank fraud, will only add to the ongoing tussle between the state government and the banks.

Initially a five-star hotel, Trident was to be built at a cost of ₹214 crore but the

state tries to regain ownership of land parcels in situations wherein developers defeat the purpose for which the allocation was made, banks argue that the government had permitted mortgage of the property and hence cannot reclaim the land or the assets built on them.

Documents available with *Deccan Chronicle* revealed that the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh government leased about five acres to a consortium of companies to build, operate and transfer (BOT) the hotel project after 33 years.

scope was extended, involving two hotels — Trident and Oberoi. Though the second hotel remained incomplete, the project cost shot up to nearly ₹1,300 crore.

As the construction of the second hotel was

stopped midway, the hotel building has a mysterious look. Half of it is just a skeletal structure, adjoining the Trident. Documents also revealed that Golden Jubilee Hotels Pvt Ltd, against which the CBI booked the case, had given an undertaking to lenders that it would deposit the entire sales turnover into an escrow account with the Bank of Baroda.

Later, however, it alleged that the operating company had diverted the amounts to a separate bank account without its knowledge and approval.

■ Page 4: Banks fighting several cases

Modi wants 100% use of mask to be implemented

VINEETA PANDEY I DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

With fresh cases of the Covid-19 reaching alarming levels, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that a five-fold strategy of testing, tracing, treatment, Covid-appropriate behaviour and vaccination, if implemented with utmost seriousness and commitment, would be effective in curbing the spread of the virus.

The Prime Minister directed that for sustainable Covid-19 management, awareness of the community and its involvement needed for which a special campaign for appropriate behaviour with emphasis on 100 per

cent mask usage, personal hygiene and sanitation at public places, workplaces and health facilities will be organised from April 6-14. He called the attention

of health authorities to avoid mortality under all circumstances.

■ Page 3: Modi calls for mission mode to fight Covid

Jana Reddy on campaign trail



K. Jana Reddy, Congress' candidate for the Nagarjunasagar bypoll, speaks at a coordination meet in Nagarjunasagar on Sunday. Among those who attended the meet were PCC president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy and party leaders Shabbir Ali, T. Jeevan Reddy, J. Kusum Kumar and Chinna Reddy.

— P. ANIL KUMAR

Team to visit Kerala to study model for protection of migrants

Activists nudge TS for Gulf welfare panel

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Gulf migrant rights activists from Telangana state would be visiting Kerala to understand the best practices and Gulf migration management system there. They aim to draft and submit a report to the TS government for initiation of suitable measures here too.

In his Budget speech, finance minister T. Harish

Swadeshi

government is dilly-dallying

about the plan to establish a Gulf welfare board. So we would submit a report after careful examination of the Kerala model."

Ravi added, "The needs of Telangana and Kerala Gulf migrants are different. For example, in Kerala, an ex gratia of ₹1 lakh would be awarded in the event of a migrant's death. However, the Telangana government had promised ₹5 lakh to such families."

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*,

Swadeshi

about the plan to establish a Gulf welfare board. So we would submit a report after careful examination of the Kerala model."

Ravi added, "The needs of Telangana and Kerala Gulf migrants are different. For example, in Kerala, an ex gratia of ₹1 lakh would be awarded in the event of a migrant's death. However, the Telangana government had promised ₹5 lakh to such families."

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*,

Swadeshi

about the plan to establish a Gulf welfare board. So we would submit a report after careful examination of the Kerala model."

Ravi added, "The needs of Telangana and Kerala Gulf migrants are different. For example, in Kerala, an ex gratia of ₹1 lakh would be awarded in the event of a migrant's death. However, the Telangana government had promised ₹5 lakh to such families."

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*,

Swadeshi

about the plan to establish a Gulf welfare board. So we would submit a report after careful examination of the Kerala model."

Ravi added, "The needs of Telangana and Kerala Gulf migrants are different. For example, in Kerala, an ex gratia of ₹1 lakh would be awarded in the event of a migrant's death. However, the Telangana government had promised ₹5 lakh to such families."

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*,

Swadeshi

about the plan to establish a Gulf welfare board. So we would submit a report after careful examination of the Kerala model."

Ravi added, "The needs of Telangana and Kerala Gulf migrants are different. For example, in Kerala, an ex gratia of ₹1 lakh would be awarded in the event of a migrant's death. However, the Telangana government had promised ₹5 lakh to such families."

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*,

Swadeshi

about the plan to establish a Gulf welfare board. So we would submit a report after careful examination of the Kerala model."

Ravi added, "The needs of Telangana and Kerala Gulf migrants are different. For example, in Kerala, an ex gratia of ₹1 lakh would be awarded in the event of a migrant's death. However, the Telangana government had promised ₹5 lakh to such families."

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*,

Swadeshi

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE AUTOMOTIVE

COMMERCIAL

MAHINDRA 26 Seater Bus of 2005 (AP-11W9162) is for Sale in as is where is Condition. Interested Parties may inspect the Bus at Princess Esin Girls High School, Purani Haveli & Submi Sealed Quotations for Purchase to Finance Manager, NHWA Trust, Purani Haveli, Hyderabad-500002. Mobile: 9483545280 Before 12-4-2021. (HYCL/2122/C00094)

FOUR WHEELERS

ARMY OFFICERS' Brio VX, mt-2017, Handled 20000 Kms. Condition Excellent. Five Lakh negotiable. Only individual buyers contact: 9889200512. No Dealers. (HYMM/2021/C08539)

FOR SALE PROPERTY

COMMERCIAL

GACHIBOWLI Independent Building for sale/lease. Opposite Central mall, beautiful glass & marble elevation, total 10000 sq ft, 650sqft carpet area, G+3 plus 2BHK stay office space, 2Side roads & 2Entrance, lift, 430Sqfts land, 9Car & 10Two Wheeler parking. Suitable Restaurants, Software, Furniture, lights, Jewellery Showroom, mall concept, hospitals, Clear title. Ph: 9502003226. (HYMM/2122/C00059)

KOMPALLY, 3000 Sq.yards, East Facing, Commercial Plot for sale. Main Road, 100% Vastu. Ph: 8522015555/ 9704222345. (HYCL/2122/C0004)

FARM HOUSES-SITES

OFFER 2 DAYS. 303 farm villa plot 303sqysd 13Iacs. 605sqysd 25.50Iacs. fruits sandalwood, Customize villas & resorts, Mumbai H/W sadashivpet mrf. Ph: 7416613247 (HYMM/2122/C00172)

FLATS

DOUBLE BEDROOM

FLAT FOR SALE At Aliens Space Station- Tellapur, 3rd Floor, Station-8, 2191 St. Kindly Contact: 9966554010 (HYMM/2122/C00005)

THREE & MORE

SALE OF new 4BHK Ultra modern corner East facing flat, 3607sqft, 100% Vastu, Good view, 2Car parking in Legend Blue Hope Condominium, 2BHK flats available Meena Bazaar, Contact: 9121366901/ 8340044333 (HYMM/2122/C00057)

SAINIKPURI 3 & 4 BHK flats, 1500 sf to 2460 sf with all amenities, 100% vastu. Ready to occupy, gated community www.happyhomeshyderabad.com, Ph: 7729999728 & 7729999732. (S/2021/C02793)

TARNAKA 2 & 3 BHK flats 1225 sf to 1725 sf with all amenities, 100% vastu, ready to occupy, gated community www.happyhomeshyderabad.com, Ph: 7729999728 & 7729999732. (S/2021/C02792)

INDEPENDENT HOUSE

PREMIUM VILLAS in Gated community for Sale at Mokkila @ 1.80crs (Special Offer Available). For further details, Contact: 7353585358 (HYMM/2122/C00206)

PLOTS

PATANCHEVU- SULTANPUR HMDA Approved Layout, LP No.00145/LD/Pg/HMDA/2020, Near to M.G. Chandrababu Naidu BHEL Bank Layout. Ph: 8698023402/ 8688021020 (HYCL/2122/C00032)

PLOT FOR SALE Dundigal Municipality Near ORR 214Sds Plot W/S Facing roads 40feet & 30feet roads 28000 neg per Sqyd. Ph: 9912220567 (HYMM/2122/C00114)

REAL ESTATE

CONSULTANCY

REPUTED CONSTRUCTION Firms Offers rooms for Rent Developed Farms at Moimbabadi Required Land for Development in and around Hyderabad & Outskirts. Ph: 7893122348, 8309077956. (B/2122/C00030)

RENTALS

COMMERCIAL

PREMIER OFFICE space for lease at banjara hills road no.2, 3000 1500 sqft, cabins & workstations plug & play contact: 9885550009 (HYMM/2122/C00082)

PG ROAD, Babupur colony commercial space available with furniture for offices on 2ndfloor with lift and furniture around 1600sf contact: 9391040134/ 9849201580. (HYCL/2122/C00022)

✓123SSF FULLY furnished central AC office space at Begumpet for immediate occupation. Contact: 9849165045, (W/2021/AT001362)

Hi-TECH CITY- Plug & Play near Tech Mahindra. Suitable for IT Companies 520 SF, 72 Trunked Workstations, Conference room, 4 Cabins, Pantry, Server Room, Reception, Fully Air Conditioned. Ready to Occupy. Contact: 9849030457. (A/2122/C00005)

✓SANTOSH NAGAR, G+5 Building (11,100 sqft including parking area) available with carpet area for Commerce Lease. Owaisi Hospital 400 mts. IS Sadan 150mts. Main Road 50 mts. Ideal for Colleges Schools Office Spaces Backend offices for Corporate & Banks. Ph: 9849254582, 9381119164 (W/2021/AT001364)

OFFICE SPACE 450 sf/ 900 sf and 1045 sf on Rent/ Lease on First Floor, 125, M.G.Road, Secunderabad. Contact: 040-27841766/ 27849322 between 10:00 am & 3:30 pm on working days. (S/2021/C00006)

COMMERCIAL SPACE For Rent, 1000 sf, For Both Distributors and Others, 2nd Floor- 3850Sq feet. New Building, At M.G.Road, Secunderabad, Ph: 9849025294/ 9908199546 (HYMM/2122/C00052)

OFFICE SPACE available 2000 sf, for rent in Somajiguda lane beside Khazanai Jewellery. A/C, Plug and play. Contact: 9479587066. (A/2021/C00089)

FLATS

DOUBLE BEDROOM

AMEEREPUR 2BHK WITH car parking on first floor led. Lumbini Apartments. Rs.13,000/- Available from 5/4/2021. Contact: 9867547772/ 9871101178. (W/2021/AT001365)

THREE & MORE

3BHk APARTMENT of 1550sf, East Facing, Located Vasthu, Furnished, 2Balconies, 2Car parks. Comfortable for a Family of 2+2. Contact: 9980933939. 9849167072. (HYCL/2122/C00023)

LEASE

COMMERCIAL

✓OFFICE SPACE for lease 5500 sqft, ready to work, 60 workstations (3rd floor north east corner) in 3 cube towers at Madhipur. Contact: 9052443312. (S/2021/C00018)

SITUATION VACANT

ACCOUNTANT: **COMMERCE** Graduate in Computer Knowledge with 5 years Experience in Maintaining Accounts in Tally, Preparing Vouchers Monthly Statements of Receipts & Payments. Handling Banking Transactions & all other Matters Relating to Maintenance of Accounting, GST etc. Should be in the age group of 25-30years. Salary negotiable. Apply with resume. Photograph to: Lumbini.spring@gmail.com (HYCL/2122/C00204)

WANTED: 3FEMALE experience/ fresher tally accounts operator with excel knowledge good salary for right candidates @elite grains malakpet ph: 9391535352 (HYMM/2122/C00174)

ADVT. SALES & MKTG.

WANTED FRESHER Experienced Marketing Executives. Age 20-40 years. Own Bike, Telugu, Hindi, English Speaking. Whatsapp Details 9105375869. unk@industries9@gmail.com (B/2122/C00009)

ENGINEERS

IMMEDIATELY REQUIRED Production Engineer/ Supervisors Bachelors/ Diploma degree in Production Engineering. Must have skills including skills in M.S.Office. Min.5years hands on experience in production of steel fabrication (Pre-Engineering Buildings). Contact: 812122560/ 7331171704. (W/2122/C00008)

LECTURERS

WANTED FACULTY for Commerce (Accounting Papers), English, Computer Science Subjects. Contact: Siddhartha Degree & PG College, Kukatpally, Hyd. Ph: 6302991178, 9440385848. (HYCL/2122/C00199)

MANAGERS

FACILITIES MANAGER Required for A Gated Community in Gachibowli. Any Graduate, Should be able to interact with Residents fluently in English, Hindi & Telugu. Responsible for over all Supervision of Works in the Community. House Staff, Salary Negotiable. Should be in the age group of 35-40yrs. Apply with resume & photograph to: Lumbini.spring@gmail.com (HYCL/2122/C00203)

WANTED OFFICER Manager For Textile Factory. Raymond Distressed. Contact: Ph: 9849025294. (HYCL/2122/C00053)

MEDICAL

A COCKROACH repellent chalk (i.e.Cypermethrin 1% chalk) manufacturer company at IDA Uppal, Hyderabad require Chemist with minimum qualification M.Sc (Chemistry) who is capable and authorised for lab testing of our product. Mail your resume to: uttaranshinternational@yahoo.com. Phone: +916099168101. (HYMM/2122/C00043)

MULTIPLE VACANCIES

THE LEADING Group requires Mechanical Engineers- 2Nos, Electronics Siemens PLC- 4Nos, Electrical Engineer- 1No & MSc Chemistry- 6Nos. Experience 10-15 Years, Location near chennai, Tambaram District. B.E/B.Tech to 60% completion. Contact: 9810401343/ 9406208283. Email: idealedu@gmail.com (HYCL/2122/C00075)

POULTRY

VENCOPPA CHICKEN rich in protein, great in taste eat & enjoy. Vencoppa, Hyderabad require Chemist with minimum qualification M.Sc (Chemistry) who is capable and authorised for lab testing of our product. Mail your resume to: uttaranshinternational@yahoo.com. Phone: +916099168101. (HYCL/2122/C00219)

PEST CONTROL

REDDRINKS PEST Experitised Antipest Treatments: Cockroaches, Termites, Woodborers, Bedbugs, Ants, Rodentrats, Honeybees, Lizards, Mosquitos, Centipedes, Spiders, Insects, Sanitization. 9885567578. (HYMM/2122/C00148)

PACKERS & MOVERS

SURYA PACKERS & Movers Professional in Packing & Moving of Household Goods, Cars for Local & Countrywide. Ph: 9849478333, 8008478333. 040-27244117. www.suryapackersmovers.com. E-mail: suryapackers6@gmail.com (HYMM/2021/C00809)

TUITION

TUITION FOR Ladies Standard from 1st- 5th Class for All Subjects, ICSE at Banjara Hills. Contact: 8500685011. (HYMM/2122/C00040)

WATER PROOFING

WE DO All kind of Building Structural Problems including Waterproofing, Wall Repairs & Roof Repairs. Call: 9849025294. (HYCL/2122/C00027)

REQUIRED DRA

Non DRA Collection Executives, Tele-Callers and Team Leaders for Bank collections. Two wheeler is must for Executives & Team Leaders. Ph: 9702422444. (S/2021/C02780)

TELECALLERS, FIELD

Team Leaders, Skip Tracers, Office Manager urgently required for MNC Pvt Collection, Car Loan, Business Loan, Home Loan, Personal Loan purpose. Market knowledge. Good skill person contact immediately 3-5-7yrs exp. 93-101/1A, 2nd floor, beside Shanthi Narayana. Ph: 9793131896. walk-in on 17-04-2021 2pm-5pm. (HYCL/2122/C00027)

WEBSITE

✓WEBSITE @ Rs. 7,999/- Domain, 10 GB, 5 Pages, 10 Webmails, Google promotions @ Rs. 3500 /month Ph: 9866882829, 8885956666 (W/2122/AT00006)

NOTICE

Readers are advised to make appropriate enquiries while responding to advertisements in these columns. Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd. does not vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers. The Printer, Publisher, Editor and Owner of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd. shall not be held responsible / liable for any consequences, in case such claims are found to be false.

OTHER VACANCIES

WANTED COURIER Delivery Boys Immediately. Preferably residing nearby L.B.Nagar. Ph: 9905058897, Basheerbagh. Ph: 9885777033. Across Hyderabad. (HYCL/2122/C00095)

WALK-IN INTERVIEW: Male Godown Supervisor for our Balanagar godown. ESI & PF available. Graduates minimum 3-5 years work experience in handling of stock and dispatches. Age below 50 years. Contact: 8886666512/ 519 (Between 10am to 6pm). (S/2021/C02816)

NEED ELECTRICIAN

Experience: 3-4years. Skills: Electrician experience in production plant or any industrial plant. At Rotomaker India Pvt Ltd. Smily Kiddos Pvt Ltd plant. Mouli Ali. Contact: 916271000 (HYMM/2122/C00049)

SECURITY

IMMEDIATELY APPOINTMENT Civilians, Ex-servicemen Residing At Secunderabad Area. Experience in Production Operation, Manager At Statutory, Labour Laws, E-Tendering, E-Procurement, Online(Gortal), Gem-portal, Marketing/ Business Manager(BDM), Drivers, Digital Marketing Executives, Stenographer, Computer Operator (speed-50) Telecallers, Office Boy (With Aadhar), Field Officers, Work in Security, Security Guard, Security Officer, E-Procurement, Appointee, Head of Department, E-Mail, Ph: 9781312348, 8309077956. (B/2122/C00351)

TEACHERS

MATHILID VIDHYA Bhavan, Muneebnabav Village, Medchal Requires Headmistress, Office Manager, Pre-Primary Teacher, Primary Teacher. If interested kindly call: 7075991684 or Send your CV to: mathilidhr@gmail.com (HYCL/2021/C03532)

DISTRACTORS

SBI BUSINESS Opportunity Earn Regular Income, any Govt. Private Employees, Retired, Housewives, Businessman, Self-employed Real Estate, Insurance, M/F Agents, Ph: 9347519452 (HYMM/2122/C00060)

EDUCATIONAL

SHORT TAKES
POLICE SET UP TEAMS TO NAB SATNAM KILLERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The Chikkadpally police has formed two teams to nab the prime suspect in the murder of Sardar Satnam Singh, a city eatery owner, last week. Sources said that the suspect, Nishanth Singh, 18, who used to work at the eatery, is heading towards Punjab. Satnam Singh, 38, was found stabbed at his residence in Chikkadpally late on Wednesday night. His family had gone to stay in a gurudwara at Gowliguda on March 10. Nishanth Singh, 18, who worked in Satnam Singh's eatery, was staying with him and went missing after the murder.

"We have received a tip off that he is heading towards Punjab and our teams are working on tracking and nabbing at the earliest," police sources revealed.

THREE ARRESTED FOR ONLINE TRADING FRAUD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The cybercrime police of CCS Hyderabad arrested three men from Indore, Madhya Pradesh, for their alleged involvement in an online trading fraud. The officials seized three mobile phones, debit and credit cards from the accused, Tarun Prajapathi, 24, Bablu Chouhan, 26, and Sandeep Bansode, 27, all natives of Madhya Pradesh.

K.V.M. Prasad, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Hyderabad cybercrimes, said that the victim received notification through a Facebook account last year in the name of Sakshi Mehta, consultant with 'Central Trade Research' who promised high returns in investment.

The online fraudsters kept demanding money from the victim under different heats. The victim paid a total of ₹1.2 crore over a period of time before realising she had been duped and lodged a complaint with the police.

Police said the trio had opened accounts in various banks in Madhya Pradesh to facilitate transfer of money after conning gullible persons.

MODI CALLS FOR MISSION MODE TO FIGHT COVID

From Page 1

Prime Minister Modi called for ramping up of healthcare infrastructure, through availability of oxygen, ventilators besides required logistics, and ensuring that clinical management protocols are followed across all hospitals as well as for those in-home care.

The Prime Minister directed officials to continue with the mission-mode approach in the states and districts reporting high cases so that the collective gains of Covid-19 management in the country in the last 15 months are not squandered.

He highlighted the need to ensure effective implementation of containment measures and urged states to take stringent measures with comprehensive restrictions in places witnessing high surge to curb the spread.

The Prime Minister directed Central teams consisting of public health specialists and clinicians should be sent to Maharashtra in view of high case load and deaths, and to Punjab and Chhattisgarh because of the disproportionate number of deaths being reported there.

During the meeting a detailed presentation was made highlighting alarming rate of growth of Covid-19 cases and deaths in the country with 10 states contributing to more than 91 per cent of cases and deaths. It was noted that the situation in Maharashtra, Punjab and Chhattisgarh was of serious concern.

As of date, Maharashtra has contributed 57 per cent of total cases in the country in the last 14 days and 47 per cent of deaths in the country during the same period.

The Prime Minister was informed that vaccine manufacturers are ramping up their production capacity and are also in discussion with other domestic and offshore companies to augment the same. It was highlighted that all efforts are underway to secure adequate quantities of vaccines to meet the rising domestic requirements as well as to meet the genuine needs of other countries.

Free water for GHMC area residents only

It will not benefit those living between GHMC, ORR

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Residents living in the area between the GHMC border and Outer Ring Road (ORR) and who are anxious to avail of the 20 kilolitre (kl) free drinking water scheme per month have some bad news.

The state government has decided to restrict the scheme only to those living in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits. The earlier announcement was that the 20 kl free water scheme would be available in the areas till the ORR.

Consumers outside GHMC limits have been already receiving water bills. Municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) officials said the scheme cannot be implemented till ORR limits as it would not only add

to the burden of catering to another 9.08 lakh consumers but also involves an additional expenditure of ₹500 crore annually. The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) serves 10.08 lakh consumers in the GHMC limits.

The government, despite ₹250 crore for drinking water to new colonies within ORR limits in its budgetary allocation, has now decided to restrict the project to only GHMC limits. According to highly placed sources, those living in GHMC limits and whose Aadhaar seeding

was not completed would also receive water bills for January, February and March and the amount would be adjusted or reverted based on their respective arrears.

In the last three months, the water board has only managed to complete seeding of about 1 lakh Aadhaar cards and only those consumers are now eligible to get the benefit of the free drinking water scheme.

As per government guidelines, all domestic-slum, domestic-individual, domestic-multi-storied building (MSB)/bulk connections are eligible for the 20 KL free water supply once they link their customer account numbers (CAN) with Aadhaar as per G.O.Ms. No.211 (Dec 2, 2020).

Domestic-slum connections are not required to fix metres for availing the

scheme, but other domestic-individual, domestic-MSB/bulk connections would get metres fixed to their connections for attaining scheme-eligibility.

However, data prepared by HMWSSB revealed that 1.96 lakh consumers residing in the city could enjoy drinking water free of cost and get a benefit of ₹4.78 crore per month. Another 7.87 lakh individual domestic consumers have to fix 2.20 lakh water metres, which would save them ₹6.91 crore a month and 24,967 domestic apartments and bulk connection have to fix 17,192 metres, which would help save ₹8.23 crore per month.

Overall 10.08 lakh consumers have to fix 2.37 lakh metres in the city limits, which would save them ₹19.92 crore a month towards water bills.

Phone harassment plaints flood SHE teams in March

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The SHE teams of Cyberabad have received as many as 154 complaints last month. Almost half of them were about harassment by phone. Of the 154 cases, 68 were registered, including 15 criminal cases and 53 petty ones.

According to statistics, SHE teams of Cyberabad received the highest number of petitions regarding phone harassment (70) followed by blackmailing and harassment (17) and stalking (15). The other complaints were related to misbehaving, cheating and passing lewd comments.

In addition to that SHE teams conducted 591 decoy operations at various public places like bus stops, shopping malls, railway stations, tutorials and colleges.

IN ADDITION to that SHE teams conducted 591 decoy operations at various public places like bus stops, shopping malls, railway stations, tutorials and colleges.

AROUND 66 persons were caught red-handed at public places. In night time decoy operations, they caught seven. All the miscreants were counseled, subsequently.

In night time decoy operations, they caught seven. All the miscreants were counseled, subsequently.

Some of the important cases include a decoy operation at Balajinagar bus stop, Kukatpally, where SHE teams nabbed a 60-year-old Venkateswar Rao while making indecent gestures to young girls and asking to come with him for a movie and dinner. A case was registered against him.

In another case when SHE teams were conducting an awareness programme in a school at Balanagar, a ninth standard girl opened up about

the harassment she was facing from a relative. During lockdown when she went to her native place the accused took personal pictures and recently he came to the city and started harassing her while she was on her way to school. The SHE team Balanagar conducted decoy operation near her school, apprehended him and registered a case at DUNDIGAL police station.

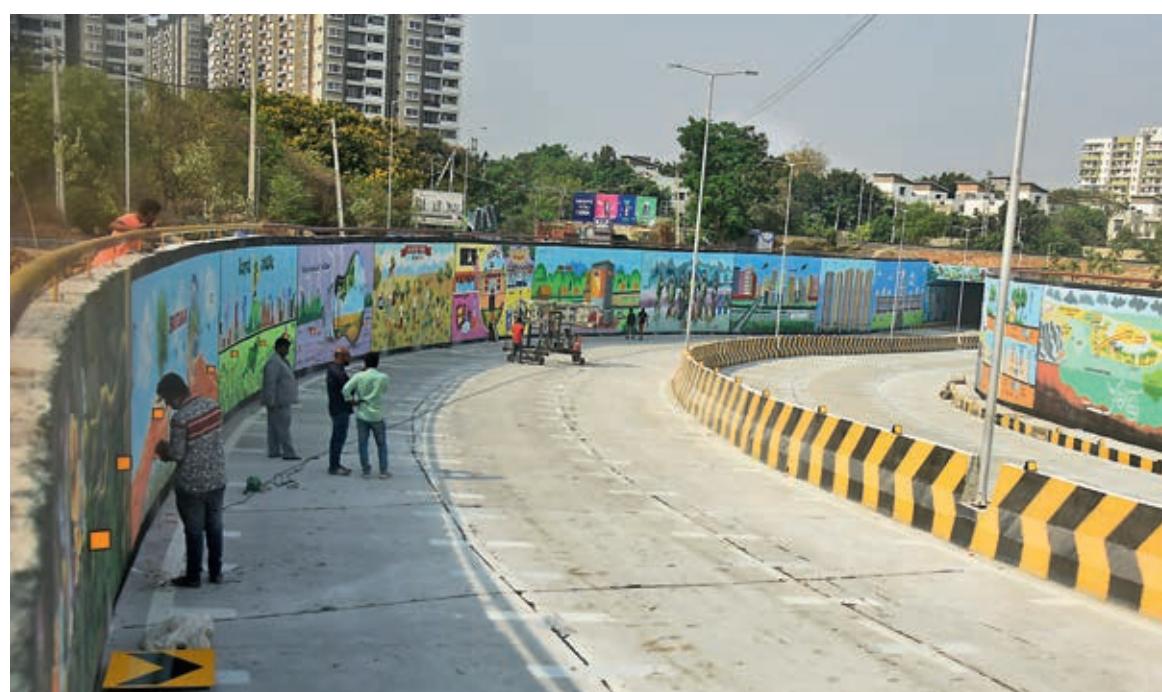
Cyberabad SHE Teams appealed to all women suffering from teasing, stalking or the likes to approach them by sending WhatsApp messages to 94906-17444.

STATE LIKELY TO RECEIVE RAIN: IMD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The state might witness rain and thunderstorms for the next 24 hours, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Sunday. This will come as a break from the sweltering heat over the past week. The IMD in its caution said: "Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are very likely to occur at isolated places in the districts of Jayashankar Bhupalapalle, Mulugu, Bhadrak-Kothagudem, Khammam, Suryapet, Mahbubabad, Warangal Rural and Warangal Urban." According to the TS Development Planning Society, the warmest place in the city over the last 24 hours was Secunderabad at 41°Celsius. In the state, Kagaznagar topped the heat charts with the mercury at 42.3°C.

Final touches



Workers give finishing touches to the new underpass near the Hitec City MMTS station on Sunday. The road is expected to be inaugurated on April 6. — R. PAVAN

Clean Air Pollution Board reviews status of the industries Civil works, not cement plants, pollute Tandur more, NGT told

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Civil works in Tandur town are majorly responsible for the rise in air pollution and not cement factories as alleged, the Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB) has informed the southern bench of the National Green Tribunal.

"As per the continuous monitoring system values, the parameters (Particulate Matter 2.5, Particulate Matter 10, sulphur dioxide SO₂ and

nitrogen oxide NO_x) are well within the limits for India Cement Ltd, and exceeded by a few times in case of Cement Corporation of India Ltd and Penna Cements Ltd.

The board has reviewed the status of the industries, issued directions and also levied the environmental compensation to the non-complying industries (Cement Corporation of India Ltd and Penna Cements Ltd). The industries also paid environmental compensation. The cement industries

are directly not causing pollution to Tandur. However, the heavy vehicles carrying some of the raw materials and products are plying through the town, which are causing air pollution in the town, it said. While giving a clean chit to the cement factories, the officials of the TSPCB monitored the air quality levels at three locations in Tandur. As per the analysis reports, all the parameters (PM₁₀, SO₂ & NO_x) at all three locations are well within the limits as against National AQ

Standards, except for the PM₁₀ at HP Petrol Bunk of Faiyaz & Co. (Adjacent to Leo-9 Fuel Station), Gouthapur, Tandur has exceeded due to the dust generated from the vehicular movement, as the road work is under maintenance," it said. TSPCB officials also wrote to officials of the roads and buildings (R&B) department about the rise in pollution. To this, the authorities of the R & B department said the road work will be completed within a month's time, by May 31.



1. Devotees at the St Mary's Church in Secunderabad on Easter Sunday. 2. Christians pray to Lord Jesus Christ. 3. A priest distributes bread to the devotees.

S. SURENDER REDDY

Easter Sunday celebrated, no special services held

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC

HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The day of resurrection of Jesus Christ was celebrated by the faithful across the city on Easter Sunday. Churches did not arrange special services so as to avoid congregations in view of the Covid-19 worries.

Prayers at the churches

and by priests sought an end to the Coronavirus pandemic and relief for families affected by Covid-19 as also for frontline warriors rendering their services to humanity in

these trying times.

Last year, Easter was celebrated despite the tight lockdown conditions.

Families recollect those days. Families have ensured that only close relatives were included in the gatherings as part of the celebrations. The St Mary's Basilica held the mass for Easter Sunday, but the church has taken various precautions.

At the CSI Garrison Wesley in Thirumurli,

the church held the sunrise service at 4.30 am, but fewer people were allowed in because of the Covid-19 restrictions.

was telecast online for the faithful to watch it from their homes.

Stephen Gundu, who is chairman of Bethany MB Church Shahabad, said a few of the faithful gathered on a small hill close to the ORR. The sunrise service started there at 4 am and ended at 6 am. Praise and worship were involved in this," he said.

Simon John, employee with a private firm, said, "We used to have a good gathering of friends for the celebrations, but this time we limited the celebrations to those within the family."

HMDA to widen jetty for yacht club

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) will widen the jetty for Yacht Club at Sanjevaiah Park to facilitate sailors.

The jetty, which is about 30 metres now, will be widened to 50 metres. This will accommodate 20 new boats in addition to the existing fleet of 11 Optimist-29ers, the world's most popular boat model, Enterprise class and recreational boats. Officials said that the estimated cost for the project is about ₹29.7r lakh and would be completed in a span of three months.

THIS WILL ACCOMMODATE 20 new boats in addition to the existing fleet of 11 Optimist-29ers, the world's most popular boat model, Enterprise class and recreational boats.

New software to suspend driving licences faster

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC

HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The Telangana state transport and traffic police department are working on an update in their software, which will make it easier and quicker for drivers to suspend licenses of drunk drivers involved in drunk driving cases.

According to Traffic Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) of Cyberabad, S. Vijay Kumar, the update will help them to suspend licences of drunk drivers in real time, as opposed to the present system of submitting case details to court, which in turn passes orders to the transport department.

"The software updates are getting integrated and are in the final stages now. It will save us from tedious manual work," explained the official. "The workload of the traffic police and time-frame will be reduced," he said.

SHORT TAKES
BANKS FIGHTING SEVERAL CASES

From Page 1

"The agreement is clear that the project is built on a BOT basis and will become state property after the end of the concession period. We have to immediately move to protect our interests," a senior tourism official told this correspondent.

In a similar case, the state government issued orders for resuming five acres which were gifted by the then Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy government to one Dr Krishna Swaroop Reddy in the prime Khajaguda area for a mere ₹55 lakh under the pretext that he would build a state-of-the-art hospital and treat the poor in it. A former Rajya Sabha member who enjoyed huge powers during the YSR term, is said to have made a killing out of this deal.

Three years later, the doctor mortgaged the property to Andhra Bank for ₹90 crore and then defaulted on repayments. The lender approached the High Court against the government order resuming the five-acre land. "We have been fighting several such cases," a bank official said on condition of anonymity.

FORUM ASKS FOR ORDER AGAINST FAKE PAPERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Peoples' Governance Forum (PGF), an independent group of cyber sleuths, has sought prohibitory orders against fake government orders, and the identification of people behind such acts and punishment for them.

PGF general secretary Ravi Kumar said, "We have taken up the cause of Swachh Digital Bharat/Telangana with the aim of ensuring a cybercrime-free India." The Central and state governments should release white papers on the diffusion of such documents to create awareness on this issue among the general public, PGF said.

The group claims that it has published 40 case studies of fake government orders including two orders way back in 2014, which were among the first of their kind.

The PGF's call comes after a fake order purported to have been issued by the state government imposing restrictions on opening of shops and business establishments made the rounds on social media on April 2.

KHAMMAM LAGS BEHIND IN CENTRAL SCHEMES

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, APRIL 4

Administrative dereliction in using Central schemes in eradicating poverty in municipal areas has turned into a curse for the poor people, including vendors, construction and hotel workers and rag-pickers in the limits of the corporation.

It has been noticed that officials of Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA) are going slow in conducting meetings and extending benefits to the eligible sections. Central departments like financial services, health and family affairs, women and child development and labour and employment have been implementing PM Surekha Bima Yojana, PM Jan Dan Yojana, PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana, and PM Shram Yogi Mandan Yojana.

Some states made use of these schemes and extended it to the poor in urban areas. The officials in municipalities and corporations should work seriously to get the scheme implemented in their respective areas.

Uttam: Jana will win with 50,000 majority

Says it's time for voters to acknowledge Cong. man's work

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

TPCC president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, the Nalgonda MP, said on Sunday that the Congress would win the Nagarjunasagar bypoll hands down.

"There is no cause for concern as regards the results. I got more votes than the TRS candidate in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from the Nagarjunasagar Assembly segment," the Nalgonda MP said while addressing the campaign coordination committee meeting of the Congress at Nagarjunasagar.

Uttam Kumar Reddy exuded confidence that the Congress nominee K. Jana Reddy, a veteran of the party in the constituency and seven-time winner, would win the seat with a huge majority of 50,000 votes this time.

The TPCC president said Jana Reddy's win is a historic need for the state as a whole to keep

● UTTAM KUMAR
Reddy exuded confidence that the Congress nominee K. Jana Reddy, a veteran of the party in the constituency and seven-time winner, would win the seat with a huge majority of 50,000 votes this time.

The Congress nominee said he did much for the development of the constituency during his past innings as its MLA. "A drinking water scheme with an outlay of ₹25 crore was sanctioned for Nagarjunasagar during the Congress rule in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh due to my efforts," he claimed.

Stating that the land was under the purview of public works department in the past, Jana Reddy said he had succeeded in persuading the government in 1983 to provide ownership to the residents of 2,000 quarters in Nagarjunasagar at a nominal payment of ₹100.

development of the Assembly constituency and succeeded in solving many issues faced by the people. He noted that the constituency was surrounded by forests and the irrigation project. There was no other village within a 15-km radius.

The Congress leader reminded one and all that a residential school was set up at Nagarjunasagar 35 years ago upon his initiative as a Congressman. "Of the three residential schools set up in the united Andhra Pradesh then, one residential school came up in Nagarjunasagar due to my efforts," he said.

Congress leader Ramreddy Damodhar Reddy alleged that the TRS was acting as the B team of the BJP. These two parties were harming the interests of the unemployed youth and playing with religious sentiments of the people. "They are playing with fire," he said.

"Due to my efforts, penalties imposed on people under the pretext of unauthorized constructions were also cancelled by the state government in 1985, and this has helped a lot of ordinary people in the constituency," he said.

The Congress leader reminded one and all that a residential school was set up at Nagarjunasagar 35 years ago upon his initiative as a Congressman. "Of the three residential schools set up in the united Andhra Pradesh then, one residential school came up in Nagarjunasagar due to my efforts," he said.

CRPF search party walks into 2-km Maoists' ambush

From Page 1

Hidma along with his militiamen in the area.

One of the search parties walked into a two-km ambush laid by the Maoists near Jonguda hills when they were returning to their base camp, a senior police officer posted in Bastar said.

"Naxals used under-barrel grenade launcher and light machine gun (LMG) during the ambush. They fired mortars and bullets initially. Several security personnel were injured. The rest of the search party formed a box formation and took the injured to safety," he said.

The Maoists opened fire from the side of a village, leading to heavy casualties, CRPF Director-General Kuldeep Singh, who visited Chhattisgarh on Sunday.

Question are being asked



Women greet BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar at the party's OBC Morcha state executive meeting at Malkajgiri on Sunday.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

CM knows about drug racket, says Bandi

From Page 1

He said that the Congress implemented four per cent reservation for Muslims is unfair and an injustice to BCs who formed a large community in the state.

Sanjay reacted sarcastically to the drugs case in which five legislators were reported to have travelled to Bengaluru to take part in the racket, he said.

Srinivas Goud said now Nagarjunasagar water was reaching the last of the lands of farmers under the left bank canal.

Jagadish Reddy said Congress candidate K. Jana Reddy, a seven-time legislator, would lose the bypoll. "He was elected seven times from this constituency but did too little for development of the area. The TRS will win the polls with a huge majority in the bypoll," he claimed.

● SRINIVAS GOUD
Srinivas Goud said now Nagarjunasagar water was reaching the last of the lands of farmers under the left bank canal.

He said that

the CM's announcement of 12 per cent reservation for Muslims is unfair and an injustice to BCs who formed a large community in the state.

Sanjay reacted sarcastically to the drugs case in which five legislators were reported to have travelled to Bengaluru to take part in the racket, he said.

Srinivas Goud said now Nagarjunasagar water was reaching the last of the lands of farmers under the left bank canal.

Narsinghanand Saraswati, the head priest of Desara Devi temple at Ghaziabad, had given a statement in the Press Club of India against Prophet Muhammad deliberately and maliciously.

Muslims all around the world respect and value the Prophet more than their own lives, and Narsinghanand made a public statement by

calling the name of the Prophet Muhammad disrespectfully, made false allegations against him, abused him and insulted the Muslim community," the MLA said in the complaint.

As per the complaint, a case was registered by the police under Section 153A and 295A of the IPC and an investigation was taken up.

Pragathi programme. However, they were not considered and village panchayats that carry recommendations are selected, he pointed out.

Mallesh alleged that the state and central award committee members did not inspect villages from the grassroot levels but went by recommendations and submitted biased reports.

He said the selection

FARMERS TURN TO PALM TREE CULTIVATION AS RETURNS ARE HIGH

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOTHAGUDEM, APRIL 4

The increase in prices of palm fruit bunches is encouraging farmers to go for palm tree cultivation in place of traditional crops. This is evident largely in Dammappet and Aswaraopet areas.

The price of palm fruit bunches per tonne is ₹17,341 as of now. This is the highest price so far and there were occasions in the past when the farmers demanded an increase in the price from ₹10,000.

The price of palm oil fruit per tonne went up from ₹10,809 to ₹12,031 per tonne in March last year. The hike then was a record of sorts.

The continuous increase in the price is tempting farmers to go for palm tree cultivation in larger areas. Palm tree cultivation is spread over 50,000 acres in Dammappet and Aswaraopet mandals at present.

The case of Thota Satyanarayana in Mustibanda village in Dammappet mandal is worth citing. Satyanarayana said he raised palm trees on his five acre land. In the past, he raised maize.

Palm tree cultivation will cover nearly 3,000 acres this year. Farmers are buying the saplings from private nurseries as the government nurseries failed to supply them as per demand. Jakkam Srinivasa, another farmer, took the same decision as Satyanarayana.

The lease amount for palm tree cultivation has increased to ₹80,000 per acre from ₹50,000. Adapa Lachaa Dora, who has ten acres under palm, said, "The palm tree stands in the list of most profitable horticulture crops and the price is very encouraging. I knew farmers moved earth and heaven to increase the price of palm fruit bunches by ₹200 per tonne."

MLA files plaint against priest for hate remarks

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

MLAs and ministers are involved in the drugs racket, he alleged and asked why the Chief Minister was not taking action against such leaders. He said the CM knew of the drugs racket but was maintaining silence on the issue. The government should suspend the MLAs involved in the racket, he said.

Sanjay reacted sarcastically to the drugs case in which five legislators were reported to have travelled to Bengaluru to take part in the racket, he said.

Srinivas Goud said now Nagarjunasagar water was reaching the last of the lands of farmers under the left bank canal.

Narsinghanand Saraswati, the head priest of Desara Devi temple at Ghaziabad, had given a statement in the Press Club of India against Prophet Muhammad deliberately and maliciously.

Muslims all around the world respect and value the Prophet more than their own lives, and Narsinghanand made a public statement by

calling the name of the Prophet Muhammad disrespectfully, made false allegations against him, abused him and insulted the Muslim community," the MLA said in the complaint.

As per the complaint, a case was registered by the police under Section 153A and 295A of the IPC and an investigation was taken up.

Pragathi programme. However, they were not considered and village panchayats that carry recommendations are selected, he pointed out.

He said the selection

The death of saints is precious in the sight of the Lord - PS : 116:15

IN REMEMBRANCE

"I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever" - Ps. 23:6

Mr. JEREMY VICTOR (DOD: 5.4.2015)

Those who Love do not go away,

They walk beside us every day,

Unseen, unheard but always near,

Still loved, still missed and ever dear.

We miss you "DAADU"

Your Ever Loving Wife Beulah Jeremy.

Daughters: Hannah Grace Jeremy & Meryl Mercy Jeremy.

LAMA TEA - LAMS TEA

FOREVER REMEMBERED BY LOVING FAMILY

ALEXANDER FREDERICKS

DOB: 13-10-1968 DOD: 04-04-2021

S/o. Kalpathi Fredericks

Joseph Kalpathi - 8977247102

FOREVER REMEMBERED BY LOVING FAMILY

RAMESH LAKHANI

DOB: 13-04-1968 DOD: 02-04-2021

Pray for his soul from Home

at 5pm to 5.30pm on Monday 05-04-2021

Suman Lakhani (Wife)

Ganesh & Manish Lakhani (Son's)

And Complete Lakhani Family.

IN REMEMBRANCE

"I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever" - Ps. 23:6

Mr. RAMESH LAKHANI

DOB: 13-04-1968 DOD: 02-04-2021

Pray for his soul from Home

at 5pm to 5.30pm on Monday 05-04-2021

Suman Lakhani (Wife)

Ganesh & Manish Lakhani (Son's)

And Complete Lakhani Family.

FOREVER REMEMBERED BY LOVING FAMILY

ALEXANDER FREDERICKS

DOB: 13-10-1968 DOD: 04-04-2021

S/o. Kalpathi Fredericks

Joseph Kalpathi - 8977247102

FOREVER REMEMBERED BY LOVING FAMILY

RAMESH LAKHANI

DOB: 13-04-1968 DOD: 02-04-2021

Pray for his soul from Home

at 5pm to 5.30pm on Monday 05-04-2021

Suman Lakhani (Wife)

Ganesh & Manish Lakhani (Son's)

And Complete Lakhani Family.

IN BRIEF

STUNTMAN SCARES PEOPLE WITH TOY GUNDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 4

A movie stuntman, Pradeep Swain of Bhubaneswar, Odisha, terrorised people by wielding a toy gun at Korlam village of Sompeta mandal in Srikakulam district on Sunday.

Police said that Swain was shooting a Odiya movie in Jeypore and sustained minor injuries while riding a horse. He was returning to Bhubaneswar in a private travel bus for treatment. The bus stopped at a hotel in Korlam village for breakfast. Swain got down and started urinating next to the hotel.

When the staff of the hotel objected, he argued with them, took out the pistol and threatened them. People ran to the bus and the hotel and took shelter.

On information from the hotel staff, police reached the spot and took Swain to custody. It was later found to be a toy pistol. After booking a case under Section 41A at Baruva police station, the police let him go.

HC VERDICT ON AP LOCAL POLLS TOMORROWDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 4

The Andhra Pradesh High Court has reserved its verdict on the house motion petition regarding the MPTC and ZPTC elections in the state.

The court heard the arguments on Sunday and said the decision will be announced on Tuesday, April 6.

The petition against the Parishad elections was filed by the Jana Sena, the BJP and several others after the suspended process was resumed by new state election commissioner Nilam Sawhney soon after she took charge on April 1.

Political parties have pleaded that the elections be held afresh after cancelling wholesale the earlier processes including the provision for unanimous elections. The parties favoured filing of nominations afresh, alleging that the ruling YSRC had prevented them from filing their nominations.

Advocates representing the JSP, the BJP and others presented their arguments on Saturday. The state election commission (SEC) presented its arguments on Sunday.

The Telugu Desam had announced a boycott of the elections while candidates of the BJP, JSP and the two Communist parties are continuing in the election fray. Former SEC, N Ramesh Kumar who retired on March 31, did not cancel the previous processes despite pleas for the same from political parties. The new SEC has only resumed the process for the elections that was postponed by the previous SEC in March last year in view of the pandemic's spread.

UNCERTAINTY LOOMS OVER 3 CAPITALS ISSUEDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 4

Efforts to resolve the Amaravati and three capitals issues are heading nowhere and appear to be back to square one. The government is planning to execute three capitals plan under which the executive capital would be shifted to Visakhapatnam and judicial capital to Kurnool, leaving Amaravati as the legislative capital.

A speedy verdict on cases pertaining to Amaravati in the High Court is hope for in government circles so as to start the shifting government process on Ugadi. However, the High Court has decided to start hearing the Amaravati case from scratch and postponed the hearing to May 3 thereby dashing the hopes of the state government.

The High Court bench comprising Chief Justice Arup Kumar Goswami and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and N Jayasurya decided to start afresh online and physical hearing of the petitions.

According to reports, more than 100 petitions have been filed by farmers from the Amaravati region against the three capital proposal.

The pro-Amaravati farmers are conducting protests and agitations continuously for the past 474 days in Velagapudi, Mandadam and Rayapudi.

TELANGANA'S FORESTS: LOST IN THE WOODS

Podu land claimants kept in the dark

91,942 claims for podu rights, involving 3.27L acres, rejected but applicants were not told

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The forests in Telangana state are under siege, from thousands of fires chewing through hundreds of acres regularly to illegal occupation, demands from cattle herders and sheep rearers to be allowed to graze their animals, and from people demanding patta to a few lakh acres they have occupied on which they practice 'podu', or shifting, cultivation.

The issue of podu lands has been one of the most vexatious in the state which, over the past few years, has resulted in many run-ins between the forest department officials and forest land occupants

in several districts. Such incidents have sometimes ended up in department staff being beaten up by the people, and counter allegations of people being attacked by the staff.

It is not that people filing claims seeking rights to continue farming in occupied forest lands have never been approved. Under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, the tribal welfare department, the nodal agency for identifying eligible applicants, had processed 96,676 claims and approved farming rights over 3.08 lakh acres of forest land in the state.

These claims were from

FOREST STATISTICS

Forests in Telangana state: 66,64,161 acres

Forests under encroachment: 7,00,111 acres

ROFR** claims approved: 2.04 lakh covering 6.90 lakh

ROFR claims pending: 15,558 covering 53,565 acres

ROFR claims rejected: 91,942 covering 3.27 lakh acres

*Figures up to September 2020

**Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006

the 2.04 lakh-odd claims filed under the Act seeking hereditary rights to be allowed to cultivate occupied forest lands that cover 6.90 lakh acres. As on date, there are 15,558 claims covering 53,565 acres spread over

Adilabad, Komaram Bheem-Asifabad, Bhadrakothagudem, and Nagarkurnool district are pending inquiry.

Also, as many as 91,942 claims for Podu rights, involving 3.27 lakh acres have been rejected.

With only some 15,000-odd claims pending, one would not expect a large hue and cry as the state goes about its job in examining these claims. But the real problem lies in the rejected claims. None of the tribals, who filed the rejected 91,942 claims have been informed that their applications are no longer valid. This has resulted in tens of thousands of tribals, with saved pieces of paper of acknowledgements of claims filed, hoping that their claims may still be honoured, while this is not the case.

As per Supreme Court directions, every tribal whose claim has been rejected needs to receive what are called 'speaking

orders', the decision of a rejected claim that is also read out to ensure that the decision is properly understood by the claimant. Though the state government has repeatedly said that it will address once and for all the issue of podu lands and provide 'some kind of patta' to the claimants, it might not be as simple as it sounds. If the 91,942 claims, rejected by the tribal welfare department have to be honoured, then the forest land needs to be despatched, a next to impossible task as the state will have to provide in return,

3.27 lakh acres of afforestation-capable land to the forest department as per Central rules. The other option would mean

that the government will need to find this whopping amount of arable land outside of forest areas for distribution among the rejected claimants.

Meanwhile, with strict instructions from the government to the forest department not to interfere with podu cultivation, it is learnt from the field that in several parts of the state, more forest land acreage is being cleared in the hopes that the government will give patta to the land.

Incidentally, though rights to use the already cleared forest land by those whose claims were officially approved are in force, the fact remains that patta cannot be given in forest land to anyone.

Sheer negligence



Garbage piles up on the busy road near Koti Women's College and Esamia Bazaar. The sanitation staff of GHMC is not clearing the garbage in time. — P.SURENDRA

No frenzy, money, without TD in election contest

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, APRIL 4

Anantapur cadre unhappy with TD

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, APRIL 4

With the Telugu Desam Party abruptly announcing a boycott of the Parishad elections, the political heat for the polls has abated in the district.

Elections for 24 of the 50 mandals in the district have been unanimous. Voting will be held only for the remaining 26 mandals. Out of the 50 ZPTC seats, 38 are unanimously elected, while only 12 ZPTCs are contested.

Elections are also being held for 117 MPTC seats in 26 mandals across the district, with a total of 427 candidates in the fray.

District collector Chevuru Harikiran and Zilla Parishad CEO Srinivasareddy held meetings with election officials and staff and made several suggestions. A total of 3,170 staff were recruited for the holding of elections. Some 637 polling booths were set up. As many as 4,71,379 voters are eligible to vote.

As unanimous elections were held last year in 38 of the 50 ZPTC seats in the district, polling will be held only for the remaining ZPTC seats. Some 49 candidates are in the fray.

As for the 554 MPTC seats, 432 seats were unanimously elected.

Elections for the remaining 122 seats are to be

held. Due to court disputes, death of candidates, non-filing of nominations, polls to Konduapuram Mandal Sugamanchipalle MPTC seats, as also to the Obannapalle, Sundupalle

Vijayapura (Hubli), Ballari and Haveri districts. Charitable institutions and private individuals set up kiosks to offer free food to the pilgrims on the road to Atmakur before they enter the Nallamala forests.

At least seven lakh pilgrims visit Srisailam during the Ugadi festivities.

At Kothalam village in Adoni division, bordering Karnataka, pilgrims were

seen walking under the baking hot sun with devotion, grit and determination as they still had about 300 km to cover before reaching the temple.

Mallikarjua, a pilgrim said some of them are carrying rice bags to donate to charities that are cooking food on their way to Srisailam. He said specially made 'Kambis' were used to carry the provisions.

They walk from as far away as Dharwad, Hubballi

(Bijapur), Vijayapura (Hubli), Ballari and Haveri districts. Charitable institutions and private individuals set up kiosks to offer free food to the pilgrims on the road to Atmakur before they enter the Nallamala forests.

At least seven lakh pilgrims visit Srisailam during the Ugadi festivities.

At Kothalam village in Adoni division, bordering Karnataka, pilgrims were seen walking under the baking hot sun with devotion, grit and determination as they still had about 300 km to cover before reaching the temple.

Mallikarjua, a pilgrim said some of them are carrying rice bags to donate to charities that are cooking food on their way to Srisailam. He said specially made 'Kambis' were used to carry the provisions.

"We have to reach

DEEKSHITHULU THANKS CM FOR REINSTATEMENT

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, APRIL 4

Former Tirumala temple chief priest Dr A.V. Ramana Deekshithulu profoundly thanked Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for reinstating him and other hereditary archakas of the TTD, who were forced to quit during the tenure of the previous government.

Stressing that the CM had protected the hereditary rights of archakas, similar to the archakas of Alampur. Almighty safeguarding dharma, he said he would pray to Lord Venkateswara for the well-being of Jagan Mohan Reddy and his family.

Speaking to media persons at Tirumala on Sunday, the reinstated Chief Priest expressed confidence in the restoration of the previous glory to Tirumala and other shrines under the TTD.

"It is wrong to make use of temples and archakas for political advantage" Dr Deekshithulu stated, finding fault with those politicising their reinstatement.

He said archakas had suffered a lot because of the sudden decision of the previous government to remove them.

Elections are being held for the remaining 117 seats. Some 378 candidates are in the fray.

Mandal Sontamvaripalle and Proddatur Mandal Nanganur MPTC seats will not be held.

Officials open parks and open places to accommodate pilgrims. About 540 toilets have been made ready for the pilgrims, he said.

To provide darshan, the temple authorities are registering the pilgrims at Pechervu and they are given wrist bands.

On arrival at Srisailam, these pilgrims are provided special darshan through a separate queue, he said.

Vax distribution is skewed in AP

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 4

Lack of proper distribution of Covid-19 vaccine doses among vaccination centres seems to be resulting in short supply in some districts in the state.

The demand for Covid-19 vaccines is increasing given the steady rise in the number of Coronavirus infections, the death of infected persons and the addition of a new group of people aged above 45 years as well as addition of ward and village secretariats.

In Anantapur district, Covaxin stocks have been exhausted and the health authorities are looking for fresh supply. Anantapur district medical and health officer Dr Y. Kameswara Prasad said, "We have nearly 40,000 doses of Covishield at present." So is the case in East Godavari, which is facing a short supply of Covaxin in some parts of the district.

East Godavari district medical and health officer Dr P. S. Suryanarayana said, "We have got 80,000 doses of both the vaccine. We are adjusting stocks of vaccine doses from other with surplus stocks."

Dr K.V.S. Gowriswara Rao said, "We have 40,200 doses of Covishield and 10,500 doses of Covaxin at present.

We are adjusting doses based on need from centres having more stocks to those where less stocks are available. We are not turning away any eligible person for want of stocks."

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi opted for a Covaxin jab, there is a huge demand for the vaccine with people assuming that it is relatively safe and having few side-effects.

In Visakhapatnam district, the opening of vaccination for those above 45 years of age without comorbidities, the daily requirement has doubled to 20,000 from 10,000 per day earlier.

Visakhapatnam district medical and health officer Dr P. S. Suryanarayana said, "We have got 80,000 doses of both the vaccine. We are adjusting stocks of vaccine doses from other with surplus stocks."

TEAM TO VISIT KERALA FROM APRIL 7 TO 11

FROM PAGE 1

Parkipandla added: "We keep reiterating that rehabilitation and reintegration of Gulf workers are important for development of the state. Many migrated to Gulf as unskilled and returned as skilled workers. It is important for the state to make use of those skills. The Gulf welfare board will help in the rehabilitation and reintegration of the Gulf workers."

Apart from Ravi and Parkipandla, the team consists of G. Muralidhar Reddy, Kuwait returnee; Nangi Devender Reddy, president, Telangana Gulf Workers' Association; J. Kumara Swamy, activist, Koheda; and Perugu Mallikarjun, vice-president, Telangana Gulf Karmikula Samiti and would be visiting Kerala for three days from April 7-11.

The team would draft a study report based on the visit and submit it to the Telangana state government.

FESTIVAL | POWER Pilgrims march for over 750 kms braving heatwave conditions to reach the temple

D. SIVA RAMI REDDY | DC
KURNOOL APRIL 4

Braving the heatwave conditions, thousands of people are walking along the highway from different places in Karnataka to Srisailam in time for the Ugadi festival. Some 49 pilgrims will have walked a total of 750 kms by the time they reach the temple.

They walk from as far away as Dharwad, Hubballi

(Hubli), Vijayapura (Bijapur), Ballari and Haveri districts. Charitable institutions and private individuals set up kiosks to offer free food to the pilgrims on the road to Atmakur before they enter the Nallamala forests.

At least seven lakh pilgrims visit Srisailam during the Ugadi festivities.

At Kothalam village in Adoni division, bordering Karnataka, pilgrims were seen walking under the baking hot sun with devotion, grit and determination as they still had about 300 km to cover before reaching the temple.

Mallikarjua, a pilgrim said some of them are carrying rice bags to donate to charities that are cooking food on their way to Srisailam. He said specially made 'Kambis' were used to carry the provisions.

"We have to reach

Srisailam by Amavasya (March 13) and our journey is planned on this deadline," said Anil Kumar, another pilgrim.

Meanwhile, some of the early pilgrims from Karnataka have already arrived at Srisailam and were seen having a holy bath at the Pathala Ganga.

A temple official said these pilgrims would stay on till Ugadi.

When the lakhs of pilgrims enter Srisailam,

officials open parks and open places to accommodate pilgrims. About 540 toilets have been made ready for the pilgrims, he said.

To provide darshan, the temple authorities are registering the pilgrims at Pechervu and they are given wrist bands.

SHORT TAKES

WILL QUIT FILMS IF THEY BECOME A HURDLE: KAMAL

Coimbatore, April 4: Actor-turned-politician and Makkal Neethi Maiam (MNM) founder Kamal Hassan on Sunday said he is ready to quit cinema if it becomes a hurdle to his political career, which was meant for serving the people.

"I will finish all my present assignments and quit films, if they become a hurdle to my political career," he told reporters. Saying his entry into politics was historic as he was one among the 30 per cent who remained aloof from politics, he said that late chief minister M.G. Ramachandran had as MLA acted in many films to propagate his ideals and to achieve his goal of serving people.

However, if cinema was becoming an obstacle, Haasan said he would leave it to serve people, adding that many of his fellow candidates were of the opinion that he would disappear from politics and re-enter cinema.

"Let us see who will disappear, which has to be decided by the people," Hassan added. Claiming that he had received some threats from various quarters, about which he refused to elaborate, the actor-politician said that being an honest party, he has submitted the real expenses incurred during the campaign, which was lauded by a few elections officials.

FUEL, LPG PRICES FALLING, WILL DROP FURTHER: PRADHAN

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, APRIL 4

Union petroleum minister Dharmandra Pradhan on Sunday claimed that the rising prices of petrol, diesel and LPG have been on the decline and would drop further in future.

"Over the last few days the prices of petrol, diesel and LPG have started falling. We earlier announced that whenever there is a drop in the international crude oil price, we will extend its total benefits to the consumers. According to our promises, the prices of petrol and diesel have started dropping and we have also started providing its benefits to the consumers also. The LPG price has also started falling. In the coming days it will drop further," Pradhan told the media at Dakshineswar in Kolkata.

He also said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi provided LPG to all without judging who is Hindu and who is Muslim." On Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's attack on the Centre over the continuous fuel price hike, the union minister added, "That issue is not alive now. The prices have started falling. It will drop further in the coming days."

On Sunday petrol price per litre stood at ₹90.56 in New Delhi, ₹96.98 in Mumbai, ₹92.58 in Chennai and ₹90.77 in Kolkata, remaining unchanged from the previous levels. Diesel prices in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai were unchanged at ₹80.87, ₹87.96, ₹85.88 and ₹83.75 per litre, respectively.

BJP'S CAMPAIGN IN ASSAM FULL OF NEGATIVITY: CONG

Guwahati, April 4: Senior Congress leader Jitendra Singh on Sunday claimed that the BJP's campaign in Assam has been full of negativity and the language used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah during canvassing was aimed at dividing the Assamese society.

Asserting that the Congress-led Grand Alliance will sweep the assembly polls in the state, Singh alleged that the recent incidents such as reduction of punishment of the BJP minister Himanta Biswa Sarma proved that the Election Commission is acting "like the agent" of the saffron party.

Addressing a joint press conference of the constituents of the 10-party opposition grouping before closing of the campaigning for the third and final phase of polls on April 6, the AICC's in-charge of Assam claimed that the Grand Alliance is on its way to accomplish target of winning 101 seats in 126-member Assembly.

The Congress, which was in power for 15 years in Assam since 2001, has formed a Grand Alliance with the AIUDF, BPF, CPI(M), CPI, CPI(ML), Anchalik Gana Morcha (AGM), RJD, Adivasi National Party (ANP) and the Jimochayon (Deori) Peoples Party (JPP) to fight the Assembly election against the BJP-led NDA.



DMK president M.K. Stalin during a roadshow in support of his son Udhayanidhi Stalin, party Youth Wing leader and candidate from Chepauk-Thiruvallikeni constituency, in Chennai on Sunday. — PTI

Women a prime target of parties in TN polls

Gripping campaign keeps parties on the edge of their seats

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, APRIL 4

The unfolding of the over 36-day long colourful, acrimonious and noisy carnival, popularly called as the campaign for the April 6 Assembly elections, saw almost all the political parties trying to tell the electorate how much they were concerned about women.

Though the otherwise gripping campaign kept political parties in the edge of their seats, one of their main targets was obviously the women.

Manifestos with grandiose promises for women's welfare, speeches on women's safety, allotting 50 per cent seats for women and picking on patches of campaign speeches to paint an anti-women colour were some of the indicators of the parties' aspirations to win over the women voters.

Otherwise, the major parties had blown the bugle even before the elections were announced. But for some parties the real campaign was delayed as seat-sharing and candidate selection processes dragged almost close to the late day for nomination which was March 19.

However, the battle lines were drawn much earlier

with the two Dravidian majors, the ruling AIADMK and the opposition DMK, gearing up to fight each other with the other parties, including the BJP and Congress, aligning with one of them as partners.

So, though technically it was a five-cornered contest, the actually fight was between the two alliances led by the AIADMK and the DMK for the other alliances in the fray could not match up to the political might of the Dravidian majors.

Vignettes of the BJP and Congress asking for higher number of seats from their respective coalition leaders and other smaller parties involved in long drawn negotiations were indicative of the supremacy of the DMK and AIADMK in the state's political landscape.

Thus, DMK's M.K. Stalin and AIADMK's Edappadi K. Palaniswami emerged as the top contenders for the Chief Minister's post, while Makkal Neethi Maiam's Kamal Haasan, Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam's T.T.V. Dinakaran and Naam Tamizhar Katchi's Seeman were seen as mere aspirants for the job.

While each of the Chief Ministerial candidates professed their own action plans for their govern-

ments in their own styles, the prime ideological twist given was to make the election look like a war between Hindutva forces and those opposed to it.

That discourse gained credence as the BJP showed its apparent desperation to make a mark in the polls by dispatching its top leaders for campaign and the other parties took on the BJP at the Centre and its policies, some of them going against the interest of Tamil Nadu, to gain popular support.

In fact even the AIADMK, despite being an ally of the BJP, had to meekly speak against the overall policies of the BJP. The top honchos of the BJP, who descended the State with gusto, too targeted the DMK, accusing it of corruption and practicing dynasty, making the electoral fight look like one between DMK and BJP.

Apart from BJP leaders like Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Yogi Adityanath, Smriti Irani, Nirmala Sitharaman and J.P. Nadda coming down for campaigns, even Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury were in the State to swing voters to their sides.

Though there are candidates and Chief Ministerial aspirants from the film industry, not many campaigners from tinsel town were noticed this time as in earlier elections.

Despite the primary

fight between Stalin and Palaniswami witnessing regular slanging matches with each accusing the other of corruption and inefficiency, the DMK and its alliance partners took on the BJP at the Centre and its policies, some of them going against the interest of Tamil Nadu, to gain popular support.

In fact even the AIADMK, despite being an ally of the BJP, had to meekly speak against the overall policies of the BJP. The top honchos of the BJP, who descended the State with gusto, too targeted the DMK, accusing it of corruption and practicing dynasty, making the electoral fight look like one between DMK and BJP.

Apart from BJP leaders like Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Yogi Adityanath, Smriti Irani, Nirmala Sitharaman and J.P. Nadda coming down for campaigns, even Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury were in the State to swing voters to their sides.

Though there are candidates and Chief Ministerial aspirants from the film industry, not many campaigners from tinsel town were noticed this time as in earlier elections.



Union home minister Amit Shah with Assam CM Sarbananda Sonowal and Himanta Biswa Sharma at Sualkuchi in Kamrup on Sunday. — PTI

Shah: Cong. has no agenda for growth

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, APRIL 4

state. They have no vision for development."

Asserting that in the last five years the state has started moving on the path of development, Shah said, "I had come to you five years ago and urged you to repose faith in the Prime Minister and promised we will end violence and agitations. The BJP government in the state and Modiji has ensured this during the last five years."

Reiterating that in the next term, the NDA is committed to make the state flood-free, Shah said that the Prime Minister has already initiated the process.

Shah further said, "Let me share another good news with you. Elections are being held in West Bengal too and 'didi ja rahi hain aur BJP aah rahi hain' (Didi, referring to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, is going and BJP is coming). The BJP will win more than 200 seats in the neighbouring state."

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, APRIL 4

The Bodoland People's Front (BPF) on Sunday moved the Supreme Court seeking postponement of polling in Tamulpur Assembly seat, after its candidate — Rangia Khungur Basumatary — defected to the BJP less than a week before voting and after the deadline for withdrawal of nominations.

Tamulpur, a constituency in Bodoland Territorial Council is scheduled to vote on Tuesday in the third and final phase of the elections in Assam.

Earlier, the BPF chief Hagrama Mohilary in a letter had pleaded to the

Election Commission, seeking permission to change the BPF's candidate for the Tamulpur seat.

Mohilary contesting the polls in alliance with Congress led grand alliance wrote, "Since the candidate nominated by my party has changed his political allegiance barely a few days before polling through illegal inducements including bribery, he is no longer entitled to receive the votes under the BPF symbol."

He also argued that Basumatary's defection after the last date of withdrawal of nomination was an "act of fraud" that violated the "core requirement of fairness in elections".

ASSEMBLY | POLLS

Despite ban by EC mass participation was seen in final events

Kerala sees massive roadshows

Thiruvananthapuram, April 4: Massive road shows and long rallies, led by top national and state leaders on Sunday marked the finale of the open poll campaigning used to be a jamboree in the southern state in which every political party would try to show off their strength by bringing a maximum number of supporters to add colour to the show.

Despite a ban imposed by the Election Commission on the customary crowded culmination of the open poll campaigning in view of the Covid-19 situation, mass participation of party workers could be seen in the final events in most of the 140 constituencies.

Known as 'Kottikalasham' in local parlance, the finale of the open poll campaigning used to be a jamboree in the southern state.

Most of the 140 constituencies in northern Kozhikode district and in Nemom in Thiruvananthapuram, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan led a massive one at Dharmadam in Kannur, his home constituency.

Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala also took part in a road show at Nedumkandam in Idukki district.

Are you god or superhuman: Mamata takes a swipe at PM

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, APRIL 4

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday dared Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to order her government officials to start preparations over his wish to attend the oath-taking ceremony if the BJP comes to power in the state. Advising Modi to restrain himself, the Trinamul Congress supremo also wondered if he considers himself to be "God or a Superhuman."

Her blistering attack on the PM comes on a day her party roped in actor-turned-parliamentarian Jaya Bachchan as a star campaigner with a Bengal face for the polls against Mithun Chakraborty of the BJP. Bachchan is likely to start campaigning from Monday.

Banerjee said at Khanakul in Hooghly, "How can you, as a PM, direct the state government officers by violating the Model Code of Conduct to be ready and prepare the date 'since I would come here to attend the oath taking ceremony and will do this and that work?' Does it suit a PM, who was here yesterday, to talk like this? Don't you feel ashamed of yourself to give orders to state government officers? Who are you? Go and restrain your officers first. Will it be fine and correct if I give directions to your officers? No this is not correct."

She told Modi, "First you take care of Delhi. You have destroyed Delhi. You went to Bangladesh only for three days and triggered a riot there too. First you check yourself. You have no right to give any instruction to my state government. This is illegal and unconstitutional. How dare you to give instructions to my state government workers while the election has been underway? What do you think about yourself? Are you God or a superhuman?"

Accusing the PM of spreading lies in his

corruption and root for progress and development as winds of change blows across the state," tweeted senior BJP leader and information and broadcasting minister, Prakash Javadekar.

Out of the eight phases, West Bengal has gone through two phases and the third phase of polling is scheduled on April 6 when 31 Assembly seats will go to polls. Counting of votes will take place on May 2.

The BJP claimed that Banerjee's "desperate appeal" to the minority community is realisation of her imminent defeat.

"There is a reason for this desperate appeal. Ever since the news of Mamata Banerjee's imminent defeat from Nandigram has gone across the state, there is growing buzz in the minority community to vote for the Abbas coalition (Grand alliance of Left parties, Congress and cleric Abbas Siddiqui's fledgling). This means that TMC could well end up in third position," tweeted BJP's co-charge of the state and IT cell head, Amit Malviya.

quent poll campaign in the state, the CM alleged, "He also can make a very good drama as he sheds tears soon after triggering riot. He could have become a great actor! But BJP has lost totally and will be defeated absolutely in the polls here. They will lose their deposit in several seats."



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses an election rally in support of the party candidate Lovely Moitra at Sonarpur of the South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on Sunday. — DC

BHAIP GOT ₹900 CRORE FROM SMUGGLING, CLAIMS SHUVENDU

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, APRIL 4

arrested by the CBI. There is much information, which surfaced their conversation, relating to the CM nephew. Around ₹900 crore were sent to Bhaipo (nephew) by Vinay and Ashok Mishra, a cop arrested by the Enforcement Directorate, as part of the coal-cattle-sand smuggling network which flourished in 2012-13 in the state. I also had complained earlier that a section of the police personnel, whom Bhaipo kept posted in various areas through her Pishi in Nabanna as part of his chain, helped in reaching the money directly to him," Adhikari pleaded.

Mohilary requested the EC that polling for Tamulpur assembly segment should be cancelled and that an FIR (first information report) be filed against Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, who were present as Basumatary joined the BJP.

"While the suspect Ganesh Bagaria has been grilled by central agencies, Vinay is absconding with his brother Vikash in custody after getting

arrested by the CBI. There is much information, which surfaced their conversation, relating to the CM nephew. Around ₹900 crore were sent to Bhaipo (nephew) by Vinay and Ashok Mishra, a cop arrested by the Enforcement Directorate, as part of the coal-cattle-sand smuggling network which flourished in 2012-13 in the state. I also had complained earlier that a section of the police personnel, whom Bhaipo kept posted in various areas through her Pishi in Nabanna as part of his chain, helped in reaching the money directly to him," Adhikari argued. He reasoned, "Bhaipo is the main architect of this state-sponsored scam under the patronage of the CM while others are suppliers."

roadshow in northern Kozhikode district and in Nemom in Thiruvananthapuram, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan led a massive one at Dharmadam in Kannur, his home constituency.

Women, children and elderly who stepped out to get a glimpse of the final spectacle were also not less in many places.

At Dharmadam, in this marxist bastion in Kannur, where Vijayan travelled in an open red jeep, waving to his supporters lined up on either side of the road.

SHORT TAKES

MAHA: MINOR FIRE IN COVID CENTRE, NO CASUALTIESSONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC
MUMBAI, APRIL 4

A minor fire broke out at a Jumbo Covid centre in Mumbai on Sunday. No injuries and casualties were reported.

According to the fire control room, the fire broke out around 12.07 pm in jumbo Covid centre at Dahisar, Mumbai. All of the 49 patients, who were admitted in the affected area were immediately shifted to a safe area of the centre.

The fire was spotted by a ward boy who immediately alerted security guards, who in turn called up the Fire Brigade.

An official from the fire control room said that the prima facie appears that the fire broke out because of the short circuit. But the detailed report is awaited.

He also said that the security personnel had controlled the flames using the fire extinguishers installed at the center. "With use of 20 fire extinguishers and one quick response vehicle and one water mist machine, which were stationed in Covid Centre, the flames were doused by Fire personnel after a brief operation," he added.

Three fire tenders were sent to the spot by the control room but the fire was controlled without their use.

ASSAM: COVID TEST MUST FOR AIR, TRAIN TRAVELLERS

Guwahati, April 4: A day after Assam health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma claimed that there is no Covid in the state and hence no need to wear mask now, the health and family welfare department on Sunday issued fresh notifications for mandatory testing of air and train passengers coming to the state from Mumbai and Bengaluru to check the spread of virus.

Separate orders have been issued for air and train passengers and the rates for Covid testing by the department's principal secretary Samir Sinha.

The minister had on Saturday said that there is no Covid in Assam and so there is no need to wear a mask now which triggered widespread criticism. Subsequently Sarma tweeted, "those who are making fun of my statement on mask, must come to Assam and see how we have contained Covid-19 in comparison to states like Delhi, Kerala and Maharashtra along with an impressive recovery of our economy". "We will celebrate Bihu with the same enthusiasm this year", he added. Bihu, the Assamese new year is falling on April 14.

According to the order issued, all air passengers from Mumbai and Bengaluru disembarking in any airport of Assam will mandatorily need to carry a negative RT-PCR report, conducted within 72 hours prior to undertaking the journey and the test report should be verifiable using QR code or otherwise.

TAKE CUSTODY OF MUKHTAR ANSARI: PUNJAB TO UP

Barnabanki/Ballia/Chandigarh, April 4: Punjab's home department has asked the Uttar Pradesh government to take custody of gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari from the Rupnagar jail on April 8, with BSP MP Afzal Ansari on Sunday saying that his brother's "safety" is now the responsibility of the judiciary and the Yogi Adityanath dispensation.

The police team that will bring Mukhtar Ansari to Uttar Pradesh will leave from Banda for Punjab on Monday, a senior police official said.

Mukhtar Ansari, who is wanted in various cases in Uttar Pradesh, has been lodged in the Rupnagar district jail in Punjab since January 2019 in connection with an alleged extortion case. In a letter to the Uttar Pradesh additional chief secretary (Home), the home department of Punjab asked for suitable arrangements to be made for the transfer of under-trial prisoner Mukhtar Ansari.

"The said handover is to be made at district jail Rupnagar on/before April 8," the letter stated. It also said that Mukhtar Ansari suffers from certain medical conditions and the same may be kept in mind while making arrangements for his transport from Rupnagar jail to Banda jail in Uttar Pradesh.

— PTI

Shah directs forces to launch ops against Maoist plotter

Specific instructions have been given to eliminate Maoist commander Hidma

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

Union home minister Amit Shah cut short his visit to Assam in the wake of the Maoist attack in Chhattisgarh and asked security forces to launch a massive operation against Maoist outfits in Chhattisgarh following detailed discussions with top intelligence and security officials. Specific instructions have been given to eliminate top Maoist commander Hidma who is said to be behind the attack that left 22 jawans dead.

Initial investigations have confirmed use of sophisticated weapons like AK and INSAS rifles, Light Machine Gun (LMG) and rocket launchers by Maoists in the brutal attack.

Following these instructions a massive operation has been launched by security forces along the Sukma-Bijapur border. One of the soldiers is still said to be missing and a combing operation is on to trace him.

Director-general CRPF, Kuldeep Singh, reached Chhattisgarh early Sunday morning to review the situation. Singh along with CRPF ADG (HQ) Zulfiqar Hassan and IG (Operations) Nalin Prabhakar and senior officials of the Chhattisgarh Police held a meeting to decide on future strategy for anti-Maoist operations.

Senior security officials claimed that after this massive attack the Maoists managed to escape with weapons, bullet-proof jackets, and even the shoes of those killed in the incident. Reports suggest that Maoist too suffered heavy casualties. Sources claim that anything between 9-15 Maoists were killed in the encounter even as security forces were trying to establish the exact figure.

Shah condoled the deaths of security personnel in Chhattisgarh. "We will continue our fight against these enemies of peace & progress," he said. Subsequently Sarma tweeted, "those who are making fun of my statement on mask, must come to Assam and see how we have contained Covid-19 in comparison to states like Delhi, Kerala and Maharashtra along with an impressive recovery of our economy". "We will celebrate Bihu with the same enthusiasm this year", he added. Bihu, the Assamese new year is falling on April 14.

According to the order issued, all air passengers from Mumbai and Bengaluru disembarking in any airport of Assam will mandatorily need to carry a negative RT-PCR report, conducted within 72 hours prior to undertaking the journey and the test report should be verifiable using QR code or otherwise.

VETERAN ACTOR SHASHIKALA DIES AT 88

Mumbai, April 4:

Veteran actor Shashikala, best known for her supporting roles in 1960s-70s films like "Aarti", "Gumrah" and "Chhote Sarkar", passed away on Sunday at the age of 88.

B.N. Tiwari, president of the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE), confirmed the news of her death. "Shashikala ji has passed away. She was 88. We don't know the exact details of her demise," Tiwari said.

When contacted, filmmaker and president of the Indian Film & Television Directors' Association (IFTDA), Ashoke Pandit said, "Shashikala ji has passed away."

Born in Solapur, Maharashtra, Shashikala Jawalkar started acting on stage at the age of five in her hometown. After her father went bankrupt, she moved to Bombay (now Mumbai) with her family and started to look for work in movies.

She made her first big screen appearance in the 1945 movie "Zeenat", directed by legendary actor Noor Jehan's husband Syed Shaukat Hussain Rizvi.

Better known by her first name, Shashikala starred in over a hundred films in her career spanning around six decades.

— PTI



— PTI

Rise of Hidma, kingpin of Terram attack

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC RAIPUR, APRIL 4

Madvi Hidma, who has been accused of masterminding the ambush in which 22 jawans were killed in the Terram area on the Sukma-Bijapur border in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar region on Saturday, rose rapidly in the Maoist ranks in the past two decades.

Hidma, hailing from Puvarti village in south Bastar district of Sukma, is literally a 'born Maoist' being graduated from a Maoist school in Jagargunda area, declared as "Liberated Zone" by the rebels, before being initiated into Leftwing extremism in early 1990s.

"He is the only 'desi'

tweeted. The home minister also had a detailed telephonic discussion with Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel following the attack.

The encounter took place along the Sukma-Bijapur border in Chhattisgarh on Saturday afternoon near Jonnaguda village. Security forces got trapped



Madvi Hidma

(home grown) Maoist leader who rose rapidly in the ranks of Maoists in Bastar. He posed a serious challenge for security forces not for being a skilled combat strategist only but also being a home grown tribal rebel", a senior police officer involved in crafting counterinsurgency strategies, told this newspaper.

Hidma has virtually become a myth in Bastar. No one was sure if the real Hidma is alive or dead.

Andhra Pradesh have hitherto been taking leadership of Leftwing cadres of Bastar in the last three decades, prompting security forces in Chhattisgarh to create a narrative of 'locals vs outsiders' to woo local tribal cadres away from the rebel fold.

Hidma, now in mid forties, has threatened to counter that narrative by claiming him as the 'desi' Maoist leader to arrest Maoist leader in Tadmetla in 2010 Maoist attack on a CRPF party in Tadmetla in Sukma district killing 76 jawans, was second in-command of late Ramanna who was then secretary of Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKZC).

Hidma has grown as a ruthless Maoist leader and military strategist under the tutelage of Ramanna, who died last year.

Nobody knows how many Hidmas have been created by Maoists. Maoists as per their strategy try to promote and preserve the image of a leader to sway their cadres". Dr Girish Kant Pandey, who has done his PhD on Leftwing extremism in Bastar, told this newspaper.

Hidma, who shot into limelight for his involvement in 2010 Maoist attack on a CRPF party in Tadmetla in Sukma district killing 76 jawans, was second in-command of late Ramanna who was then secretary of Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKZC).

Hidma has grown as a ruthless Maoist leader and military strategist under the tutelage of Ramanna, who died last year.

along a two-km long stretch of the forest area. The exact spot where the incident happened was barely 15 km from the Tarrem base camp of

security forces. The ambush, security sources said, was similar to the one carried out by Maoists in Tadmetla in 2010 and Minapa in 2020.

NIA recovers documents detailing 'monthly bribes' paid to police

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC WITH AGENCEY INPUTS MUMBAI, APRIL 4



Shashikala

The NIA, which is investigating the Mukesh Ambani security scare case, has seized documents that show payments of alleged monthly bribes being made to officials in the Mumbai Police and the administration. The agency is scrutinising the documents unearthed during a raid on a club in South Mumbai.

According to the NIA, arrested police officer Sachin Waze frequented the bar from which these documents have been recovered.

The agency has further stated that if needed the documents would be shared with the Income Tax and CBI authorities for further probe as the NIA is supposed to investigate anti-terror cases only. One of the documents shows the name of the office as well as officers by designation.

designation and there was an amount mentioned against their names, and the same had been tabulated month-wise, the officials said.

The investigators suspect that the amounts mentioned against office and officers could be the bribe money paid every month.

The NIA is scrutinising the documents unearthed during a raid on Thursday on a club at Girgaum in South Mumbai to probe further the role of Waze,

who is in the custody of the NIA till April 7.

Before sharing further details, the NIA is likely to seek an explanation from the club-owner and others about the documents.

The NIA had on Thursday also recovered documents pertaining to SIM cards procured through Gaur for his personal use.

Gaur is alleged to have procured the SIM cards from Ahmedabad in Gujarat and these were handed over to Waze through Shinde, an officer said.

One of these SIM cards was used by Waze to give a call to Hirani, which turned out to be Hirani's last call before his murder.

The body of Hirani, who was in possession of the SUV used in the security scare incident, was found in a creek in the Mumbai town of the neighbouring Thane district on March 5.

Hirani was allegedly killed by Waze after reports started surfacing

that the case may be handed over to the central agency for probe.

Initial investigations suggested that Hirani was killed at a place where he was made unconscious with the help of some drugs before being smothered to death.

His vehicle was found outside Ambani's house in Mumbai on February 25 with gelatin sticks and a threat note.

The NIA has said in the court that Waze had taken the car from Hirani before allegedly planting the explosives and parking it outside Ambani's house on February 25.

Waze was arrested on March 15 by the NIA and is at present in the custody of the agency till April 7.

The Maharashtra ATS, which was initially probing the Hirani murder case, had arrested Gor and Shinde. This case was also taken over by the NIA and the duo are in the custody of the agency till April 10.

of death, "which is a matter of serious concern".

Similarly, though Chhattisgarh has contributed 4.3 per cent of total cases in the country over the last 14 days, its contribution in total deaths has exceeded 7 per cent during the same period. The 10 high-burden states and UTs are contributing 91.4 per cent of total cases and 90.9 per cent of total deaths in the country, Union health ministry officials said.

It was emphasised that the reasons for the sharper rise in cases could be mainly attributed to the severe decline in compliances of Covid-appropriate behaviour primarily in terms of use of masks and maintaining social distancing, pandemic fatigue and lack of effective implementation of containment measures at the field level.

Although the exact contribution of mutant strains to the escalation of cases in some states remains speculative, the measures to control the pandemic remain the same and hence implementation of various protocols for Covid-19 management are all the more critical in those areas," officials said.

FOREST FIRE Over 1,000 personnel of ODRAF, fire services, officials engaged in dousing flames

Fire rages in Odisha's Similipal Park

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, APRIL 4

Large-scale forest fire incidents have been reported from different ranges in Odisha's Similipal National Park. Billowing smoke has enveloped the area triggering health concerns, reports said on Sunday.

Besides, the forest fire has resulted in the rise of temperature in the region.

As per reports, as many as 52 fresh fire spots have come up in different ranges of the wild. Several fire points have been identified at Pandabandha and Champapulia under Nawana Range of the forest.

Similarly, fire spots have been detected at different places in Bareipani, Chohala, Gurugudia and Kendumundi forest ranges.

Even as over 1,000 personnel of Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF), Fire services and forest officials have been engaged in extinguishing the inferno in the national park, they have reportedly failed to bring the flames completely under control, said reports.

Earlier on March 31, as many as 50 fire spots were reported in Similipal. While 28 fire points were identified in Similipal Tiger Reserve South, 6 were noticed in STR North.

Notably, the Similipal Tiger Reserve was affected by a massive wildfire for 10 long days in February and damaged over thousands of medicinal trees.

While the state is still battling to contain the forest fire devouring the valuable woods in different areas, the back to back fire incidents at Similipal have raised concern among the people and environmentalists across the globe.



— DC

KING NAGARJUNA'S BLOCKBUSTER

INDIA'S BIGGEST UNDERCOVER OPERATION

Just watched Wild Dog. It's an edge of the seat thriller. A nice gem from Telugu Cinema, that will make us proud.
- Sankalp Director - GHAZI, ANTARAKSHAM

I enjoyed watching Wild Dog. It is very gripping. Couldn't take my eyes off the screen. Never seen this side of Nagarjuna Sir. He is at another level in this film.
- Ravikarthi Perugu Director - KSHANAM, KRISHNA AND HIS LEELA

An out of the box script with edge of the seat action sequences. The film has been made with utmost sincerity and dedication.
- Swaroop RSJ Director - AGENT SAI SRINIVAS ATHREYA

WILD DOG

SANDHYA 35MM

11.00am, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm

SHANTI 70MM

11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15pm

ARJUN 70MM

11.30am, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30pm

KONARK 70MM

11.15am, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15pm

SHIVAPARVATHY 70MM

11.30am, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45pm

INDRA VENKATARAMANA

11.15am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.30pm

MANJU 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

RAMAKRISHNA 35

11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.15

SHARADA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

GOKUL 70MM

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SENSATION INSOMNIA

11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

VYJAYANTHI 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

VIJETHA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

BR HITECH 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SV CINESQUARE

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SRI PREMA 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

ASIAN SWAPNA

11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00

JAGDAMBA 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

JYOTHI IDA BOLARAM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

MAHESHWARI

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

VENKATESHWARA

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

ASIAN MUKUND

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

CLASSY THRILLER

INDIA'S BIGGEST UNDERCOVER OPERATION

Just watched Wild Dog. It's an edge of the seat thriller. A nice gem from Telugu Cinema, that will make us proud.
- Sankalp Director - GHAZI, ANTARAKSHAM

I enjoyed watching Wild Dog. It is very gripping. Couldn't take my eyes off the screen. Never seen this side of Nagarjuna Sir. He is at another level in this film.
- Ravikarthi Perugu Director - KSHANAM, KRISHNA AND HIS LEELA

An out of the box script with edge of the seat action sequences. The film has been made with utmost sincerity and dedication.
- Swaroop RSJ Director - AGENT SAI SRINIVAS ATHREYA

WILD DOG

MAHALAXMI - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 I

SANGEETHA - 11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00 I

EESHWAR - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 I

SRI LAXMI - 12.00, 3.00, 7.00, 10.00 I

PRASADS - 10.30, 1.00, 3.30, 6.00, 8.30, 11.00pm

AMB - 10.30, 1.25, 4.25, 7.30, 10.10pm

TIVOLI - 10.50, 1.40, 4.30, 7.20, 10.10pm

CINEPLANET - 10.30, 1.20, 4.40, 7.15, 10.00 I

CINESQUARE - 10.20, 1.20, 4.20, 7.10, 10.05 I

RADHIKA - 10.40, 1.20, 4.10, 7.10, 10.10 I

M CUBE - 10.20, 1.20, 4.20, 7.15, 10.10 I

GPR - 10.30, 1.20, 4.45, 7.20, 10.10 I

MUR - 10.40, 1.20, 4.10, 7.10, 10.10 I

SHA - 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30 I

SHIVAGANGA - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 I

LAXMIKALA - 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30 I

PVR

FORUM - 11.20, 2.15, 4.15, 5.10, 7.10, 8.05, 10.05, 11.00 I

INORBIT - 10.10, 11.10, 2.05, 5.00, 7.05, 7.55, 10.50 I

GALLERIA - 10.05, 11.10, 2.05, 5.00, 7.25, 7.55, 10.50 I

ICON - 12.45, 1.45, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30

MOOSARAMBAGH - 12.10, 1.30, 4.25, 7.20, 10.15 I

IRRUM MANZIL - 12.45, 1.55, 4.50, 7.45, 10.40 I

CENTRAL - 10.30, 1.10, 4.05, 8.05, 11.00 I

RK - 10.20, 1.15, 4.10, 7.05, 10.00 I

PRESTONE - 12.15, 1.45, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30 I

S2 MALLPUR - 10.20, 1.15, 4.10, 7.05, 10.00 I

MIRAJ - Balanagar - 11.30, 2.20, 5.10, 8.00, 10.50 I

MIRAJ - Chandigarh - 12.30, 3.45, 7.00, 10.15 I

GVK - 10.00, 10.40, 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.40 I

INOX - 12.00, 1.20, 3.10, 4.30, 7.40, 10.50 I

GSM - 12.00, 1.20, 3.10, 4.30, 6.20, 7.40, 9.30, 10.50 I

DSL - 12.00, 1.20, 3.10, 4.30, 7.40, 10.50 I

MANTRA - 10.00, 11.00, 1.20, 4.20, 7.20, 10.40

CCPL - 10.00, 11.20, 12.55, 5.50, 7.35, 9.40 I

SUDHA - 10.00, 11.10, 2.05, 5.00, 7.55, 10.40 I

AMEERPET - 10.15, 1.30, 4.15, 7.25, 10.30pm

BVK MULTIPLEX - 11.00, 1.50, 4.40, 7.30, 10.20pm



WORLD

DECCAN CHRONICLE | HYDERABAD | MONDAY | 5 APRIL 2021

pg 8

Boris plans 'Covid passport' trials to reopen mass events

PM wants matches, night clubs to resume as lockdown eases in phases

London, April 4: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is set to unveil a series of measures including so-called "Covid passports" to allow mass events such as sports matches and night clubs to resume safely as England's lockdown is eased in phases.

In announcements expected on Monday, Johnson is expected to lay out details of trial events in the coming months that will explore how ventilation and testing before and after events could help audiences back into arenas and auditoriums over a year after being shut down to control the spread of the deadly virus.

The pilot schemes involving what is being dubbed as "Covid-status certification" will include the football FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium in London and are expected to involve a smartphone app or a paper certificate.

The trials will last until mid-May, when the next phase of lockdown easing is scheduled before a complete easing of restrictions by June 21 under Johnson's roadmap.

Vaccination is a huge, powerful tool, but it can never provide 100 per cent protection. That is why we need to look at every option potentially available to ensure the fastest, safest and most sustainable road back to normality, writes Cabinet Office minister Michael Gove in *The Sunday Telegraph*. "Given the hit the night-time economy and the entertainment sector has taken over the last year, anything which might help businesses reopen sooner must be worth considering."

Despite vaccine rollouts gathering pace in many richer countries, dramatic spikes in cases have seen deeply unpopular restrictions enforced from Canada to Europe and South America.

Vaccination was "an essential tool" in the fight against the virus,



Pope Francis swings a thurible of incense as he prepares to celebrate the Eucharist during Easter Mass on Sunday at St. Peter's Basilica in The Vatican during the Covid-19 pandemic.

— AFP

Pope urges jabs for the poor

Rome, April 4:

Millions of Christians around the world celebrated a second Easter under Coronavirus restrictions on Sunday with Pope Francis calling for vaccines to be shared among the poorest nations as Covid-19 surges. Despite vaccine rollouts gathering pace in many richer countries, dramatic spikes in cases have seen deeply unpopular restrictions enforced from Canada to Europe and South America.

There is very much possibility of regression threatening the democratic republic system hard earned by the people through various movements, as Prime Minister Oli's unconstitutional move has posed a threat to democracy, he added.

The Central Working Committee of the Nepali Congress (NC) on Saturday decided to take initiative to form a new government under its leadership, according to party's senior leader Prakash Man Singh. The NC will ask PM Oli to step down and allow formation of a new government, said Singh.

If he does not resign, the NC will move a

trust motion against him in the House of Representatives and take initiative to form a new government under its leadership with the support of the CPN-Maoist Centre and other parties.

The political scenario in the country worsened after the Supreme Court last month nullified CPN-MC's merger with CPN-UML. The two parties had merged in May 2018 to form a unified Nepal Communist Party following the victory of their alliance in the 2017 general elections.

"We will hold talks with all pro-democracy parties before forming a new government," Singh said.

Stricter curbs have come into effect in Belgium as well as in France, where authorities are scrambling to

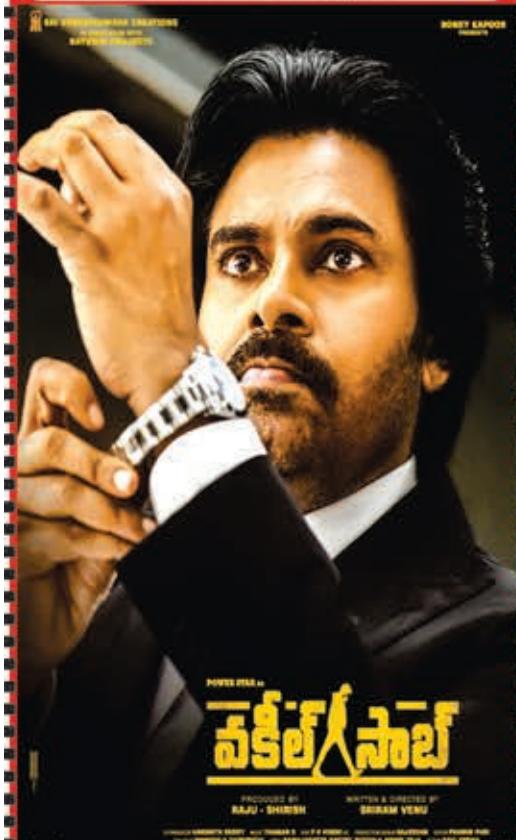
deal with a serious spike in cases that has overwhelmed hospitals in Paris. In the Covid-19 intensive care unit of the Antoni Private Hospital south of Paris, no bed stays free for long.

Nurse Louisa Pinto gestured to a vacated room where a cleaner was already at work, scrubbing down the mattress for the next arrival. "The bed won't even have time to cool down," she said.

Across the Atlantic, Canada crossed the threshold of one million Coronavirus cases, forcing several provinces to tighten restrictions for

the Easter weekend. And

WORLDWIDE RELEASING
9TH APRIL



SUDARSHAN 35MM
[ENJOY 4K PROJECTION AND DOLBY ATMOS]
R.T.C X ROAD

SANDHYA 70MM
R.T.C X ROAD

SHANTI 70MM
NARAYANGUDA

KACHIGUDA

TARAKARAMA 70MM
INDRA VENKATARAMANA

ABIDS

RAMAKRISHNA 70MM
MUKTA RAMAKRISHNA 35

PRASAD MULTIPLEX - Khairatabad

AMB CINEMAS - Gachibowli

TIVOLI CINEMAS - Secunderabad

FORUM - Kukatpally I ICON - Hitech

MOOSARAMBAGH I IRRUM MANZIL

GALLERIA I CENTRAL - Punjagutta

RK - Banjara I INORBIT - Cyberbad

GPR - Kukatpally I SHA - Chintal

RADHIKA - Kapra I M CUBE - Attapur

CINEPLANET - Kompa I

CINESQUARE - Uppal I

SHIVAGANGA - Dilukhnagar

LAXMIKALA - Moosapet I SWAPNA I

INOX - GVK - Banjara I GSM - Miyapur

MP MALL - Kachiguda

DSL - Uppal I MANTRA - Attapur

CCPL - Malkajgiri

MIRAJ - Balangar I Chandanagar

CARNIVAL CINEMAS - Ameerpet

S2 CINEMAS - Mallapur

TALLURI THEATRES - Ecil X Road

ADVANCE BOOKING OPEN NOW

POWER STAR
ARRIVING ON
9TH APRIL



SUDARSHAN 35MM
[ENJOY 4K PROJECTION AND DOLBY ATMOS]
R.T.C X ROAD

KUKATPALLY

VISWANATH 70MM
SHIVAPARVATHI 70MM

MALLIKARJUNA 70MM
BHRAMARAMBA 70MM

ARJUN 70MM

DILSHUKNAGAR
MEGHA 70MM

RAJADHANI DELUXE
KONARK 70MM

MAHALAXMI, Kothapet

EESHWAR, Attapur

SANGEETHA, R.C Puram

SRI LAXMI, Karmanghat

IN CINEMAS
THIS FRIDAY



SUDARSHAN 35MM
[ENJOY 4K PROJECTION AND DOLBY ATMOS]
R.T.C X ROAD

MANJU 70MM SECUNDERABAD

SRI RAMULU 70MM MOOSAPET

SRI SAI RAM 70MM MALKAJGIRI

SHARADA 70MM KAPRA

RANGA 70MM JEEDIMETLA

BHUJANGA 70MM JEEDIMETLA

GOKUL 70MM ERRAGADA

SRIDEVI 70MM R.C PURAM

SRI LATHA 70MM R.C PURAM

SRI KRISHNA 70MM RAJYALAXMI 70MM

UPPAL UPPAL

NARTAKI 70MM ALWAL

LAXMIKALA MANDIR ALWAL

SENSATION INSOMNIA I SUNSHINE KHAIRTABAD

SREERAMANA 70MM I 35MM AMBERPET

YADGIRI 70MM VLS SRIDEVI 70MM CHIKALGUDA

SRI PREMA 70MM TUKUGUDA

KRISHNA CINEMA NAGARAM

ASIAN MUKUND MEDCHAL

PRIYA 70MM MALLEPALLY

SANTOSH 70MM IBRAHIMPATNAM

JAGADAMBA 70MM GHATKESAR

SRI KRISHNA 70MM SHIVARANJANI ISNAPUR

VENKATESHWARA GUMMADIDALA

GANESH 70MM SHAMSHABAD

SUSHMA 70MM VANASTALIPURAM

SAMPOORNA 70MM VANASTALIPURAM

VYJAYANTHI 70MM NACHARAM

SAI RANGA 70MM MIYAPUR

SANTOSH 70MM ABIDS

AMBA 70MM MEHDIPATNAM

ALANKAR PRATAP LANGERHOUSE

VIJETHA 70MM BORABANDA

BR HITECH 70MM MADHAPUR

SUPER 70MM MADHAPUR

ARADHANA 70MM TARNAKA

VIMAL 70MM BALANAGAR

SV CINESQUARE PATANCHERU

SRI SAI POOJA SURRAM

ADVANCE BOOKING

OPEN IN FULL SWING

WORLD

DECCAN CHRONICLE | HYDERABAD |
MONDAY | 5 APRIL 2021

pg 9

Easter egg stir in Myanmar

Yangon, April 4: Anti-coup demonstrators in Myanmar decorated boiled eggs on Easter Sunday in the latest protest against the country's military junta.

Myanmar has been gripped by turmoil since a Feb. 1 coup ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Security forces have sought to quell a mass uprising with lethal force, with the death toll reaching 557 as of Saturday, according to local monitoring group Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAP).

To coincide with Easter Sunday, scores of Myanmar protesters decorated eggs with political messages and left them on neighbour's doorsteps and hanging in bags on front of gates.

Pictures posted on social media showed eggs adorned with Suu Kyi's likeness and three-finger salutes — a symbol of the resistance — while others said "save our people" and "democracy".

"I am Buddhist but I have joined this campaign because it is easy to get hold of eggs. I spent almost one hour decorating my eggs," one Yangon based egg decorator said.

"I am praying for Myanmar's current situation to get back to democracy." One Facebook group promoting the egg protest urged people to be respectful of Christian traditions on Easter Sunday.

Myanmar's most senior Catholic, Cardinal Charles Bo, posted an Easter message on Twitter: "Jesus has risen: Hallelujah. Myanmar will rise again!" Early bird protesters also hit the streets of Mandalay Sunday.

Pictures posted on social media showed eggs adorned with Suu Kyi's likeness and three-finger salutes — a symbol of the resistance — while others said "save our people" and "democracy".

MALICIOUS PLOT UNCOVERED, SAYS JORDAN FM

Jerusalem, April 4: A senior Jordanian official on Sunday accused the country's former crown prince of conspiring with foreign elements in a "malicious plot" that threatened national security.

Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi told reporters that the plot had been foiled at the "zero hour." Then it was clear they moved from design and planning into action," Safadi said. He said some 14-16 people are under arrest, in addition to two senior officials close to Prince Hamza.

TERROR PLOT: 5 WOMEN HELD IN FRANCE

Paris, April 4: Police in southern France have arrested four women and a girl as part of an anti-terrorist investigation into a suspected attack plot targeting the city of Montpellier. A police official in the Herault region confirmed the overnight arrests in the city of Beziers, and said Sunday that the DGSI domestic intelligence service and national anti-terrorist prosecutor's office are handling the probe.

Investigators centred on an 18-year-old woman living in a housing project in Beziers who is suspected of plotting an attack.

500 MILLION FB A/C DATA FOUND ONLINE

New York, April 4: Details from more than 500 million Facebook users have been found available on a website for hackers.

The information appears to be several years old, but it is another example of the vast amount of information collected by Facebook and other social media sites, and the limits to how secure that information is.

The availability of the data set was first reported by Business Insider.

According to that publication, it has information from 106 countries including phone numbers, Facebook IDs, full names, locations, birthdates, and email addresses.

MAN HURLS ANTI-ASIAN EXPLETIVES

New York City police asked for the public's help Saturday in finding a man wanted for yelling anti-Asian slurs at a 44-year-old woman and her three children, spitting at her and kicking her cellphone off a subway train.

Police are calling Tuesday's incident a hate crime.

Authorities described the suspect as a dark-skinned man who is 50 to 55 years old, about 6 feet (1.8 metres) tall and about 150 pounds (68 kilograms).

He was last seen wearing a dark camouflage sweater, dark sweatpants and black sandals.

Police said he was wearing a black sock on his left foot and a white sock on his right foot.

— PTI

Tokyo, April 4: Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on Sunday said Taiwan's peace and stability is key to the region and that Japan will cooperate with the United States to calm rising tensions between China and Taiwan.

Suga is set to meet with President Joe Biden in Washington next week, the US leader's first in-person summit since taking office in Jan.

Tokyo considers its US alliance to be the cornerstone of its diplomatic and security policies, and is eager to develop close relations with the new US administration.

Taiwan is expected to be on the agenda as the leaders seek ways to deal with China's growing security threat in the region.

Chinese warplanes are increasingly entering Taiwanese airspace, and China has protested an agreement to bolster cooperation between the US and Taiwanese coast guards that followed Washington's new sales of arms equipment to Taipei.

It is important for Japan and the United States to cooperate and use deterrence to create an environment where Taiwan and China can find a peaceful solution," Suga said on a television talk show Sunday. China claims Taiwan as its own territory, to be brought under Beijing's control by force if necessary, and it has worked to internationally isolate the island.

Japan considers China's growing activity to be a security threat and opposes Beijing's claim to the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands, called Diaoyu in China, in the East China Sea and its increased activity in the disputed area.

China also claims ownership over virtually the entire South China Sea and has built military installations on reefs and atolls by covering them with sand and concrete.

China has denied it is expansionist and has said it is only defending its territorial rights.

— AP

Indonesia rains trigger landslide, floods; 44 dead

Jakarta, April 4: Landslides and flash floods from torrential rains in eastern Indonesia killed at least 44 people and displaced thousands, a disaster relief agency said Sunday. Several others were still missing.

Mud tumbled down onto dozens of houses in Lamenele village from the surrounding hills shortly after midnight on Flores Island in East Nusa Tenggara province. Rescuers recovered

ed 38 bodies and five injured, said Lenny Ola, who heads the local disaster agency.

The bodies of three people were found after being swept away by flash floods in Oyang Bayang village as 40 houses were destroyed, she said. Hundreds of people fled submerged homes, some of which were carried off by the floodwaters. Seasonal downpours cause frequent landslides and

floods and kill dozens each year in Indonesia, a chain of 17,000 islands where millions of people live in mountainous areas or near fertile flood plains.

In another village, Waiburak, three people were killed and seven remained missing when overnight rains caused rivers to burst their banks, sending muddy water into large areas of East Flores district, Ola said.

— AP

DECCAN Chronicle

5 APRIL 2021

EC's perverse inaction bodes ill for democracy

With the polling scheduled tomorrow in various states and the UT of Puducherry, the current round of Assembly polls would conclude in the country, leaving only the last five phases of the election in West Bengal, the last of which is slotted for April 29. But even in that state, the areas where the BJP is likely to mount a credible challenge to the ruling Trinamul Congress of chief minister Mamata Banerjee would have voted by Tuesday. For all practical purposes April 6 thus marks the end of spicetime this election season.

Since the contest between the TMC and the BJP is thought to be sharp, virtually leaving out the Congress-Left-ISF combine on the periphery of the proceedings, the national leadership of the Congress in the shape of the Gandhis had given West Bengal the go-by. They had confined their campaigning to Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Assam. Perhaps, if they are so inclined, they may now choose to canvass for their party in the state without attracting the charge of indirectly helping BJP by laying into Trinamul Congress — which they would have to do, being the opposition.

The campaigning in all states has been vigorous, and in West Bengal also indecorous — thanks to the degrading levels to which BJP and TMC took it — and violent. In Assam too, the BJP campaign language appeared shrill. But the Election Commission of India does not appear to fully use the authority it has to straighten out the election process and electioneering. Therefore, there's not much use hoping that it would move to cut out the gangster-lingo and style in campaigns, a wholly new trend we have come to associate with the past six years. It is futile to expect that the era of chief election commissioners like T.N. Seshan and James Michael Lyngdoh is about to return anytime soon.

If truth be told, the ECI's conduct was being judged by the people as much as that of political parties in the fray. In West Bengal, the EC practically placed the burden of the conduct of the polls at the law and order level on the central forces, edging out the state police in order to ensure impartiality. However, the central forces sat mute as CM Mamata Banerjee got confined to one polling booth as violent TMC and BJP mobs were rampaging. The central forces were doing aerial surveillance as well. What use was all this is a question that needs to be looked at by all concerned.

The ECI also watched mutely as the central investigating agencies — Income Tax and the Enforcement Directorate — conducted searches on prominent Opposition politicians in Tamil Nadu and in West Bengal on senior leaders of the TMC, against which the BJP is ranged. In Assam, ECI's local officials placed EVMS full of ballots after the polling into the vehicle of the local BJP candidate. What does it say for India's democracy? Similar objections have been raised by Opposition parties in previous elections, too.

Also in Assam, with alacrity the ECI took a lenient view and relaxed the penalty it had imposed on Himanta Biswa Sarma, the most important state BJP leader who had been barred for campaigning for 48 hours since he was accused of threatening an Opposition leader. In Tamil Nadu, it refused to give similar relief to DMK leader A. Raja. A stiffening of the ECI's spine is needed for the health of our democracy.

Hong Kong for 'patriots'

China's takeover of Hong Kong will be complete nearly 25 years after Britain handed the colony back to the mainland in 1997. Last week, China passed sweeping changes to the electoral rules to tighten control over the city by which only "patriotic" citizens can run for positions of power. In effect, this is a takeover of Parliament ensuring that pro-democracy legislators and other opponents of the regime are kept out. This means the end of democracy is at hand though Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam promises that the vetting committee will not keep people out based only on their political views. The first vote under the new configuration of the Legislative Council is to be held in December.

China's moves to bring the Hong Kong legislature under its thumb were predictably aligned to the current scene when the world is still busy fighting recurring waves of the pandemic triggered by newer variants. While the number of directly elected members of the legislature has been brought down to 20 from 35, the council itself expands to 90 seats from 70 but all members will presumably be pro-China as a double vetting system would eliminate most critics of Beijing. The movement for greater freedoms under the Basic Laws of Hong Kong in 2019 has been brought to heel through police brutality that broke the spirit of the demonstrators even before fears of Covid-19 forced the people on to the back foot in the early days of the 2020 pandemic.

The "one country, two systems" promise of 1997 is just a dim memory now. The former British colony was considered a model of enterprise in a free market. While the economy of the city may not suffer under China, the wide reaching national security law that bans "secession, subversion and collusion with foreign forces" will ensure Hong Kong's halcyon days of political freedoms are over. The world must fear now over which other areas China's ambitions will soar to as the country, now economically more powerful, casts its eyes wider through the Belt & Road initiative.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

K. SUDHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax: 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamatra, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234
Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2552334
Rajahmundry: Venagiri, Dhawalewaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 0854-276903; Fax: 0854-276904
Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2220433
Nellore: Survey No.52/2, Burrapur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemmudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/ 48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325
Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255
Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08

Mahir Ali

A man's world: Discomfiture of Oz PM reflects a global defect

It wasn't a particularly sensitive choice of words when the Australian Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, declared on Monday that his government would henceforth look towards women through a "fresh lens".

Not just because the male gaze, with or without the benefit of any kind of lens, is a huge part of the problem when it comes to women, but also since an accusation against one of his MP's involves taking inappropriate photographs of women.

Several other accusations have been made against the MP, who has agreed not to contest further elections. But Morrison has resisted calls to dump him right away, because were he to do so, the ruling Liberal-National party coalition would lose its parliamentary majority.

If that's a lame excuse for clinging on to Andrew Laming, the Prime Minister has other related woes to countenance. He announced a cabinet reshuffle on Monday, demoting but not sidelining two of his most prominent ministers. One of them, former

attorney general Christian Porter, faces an allegation of rape as a teenager. The other, former defence minister Linda Reynolds, has apologised for belittling a staff member who was allegedly raped by a colleague in Canberra's parliament house.

Not surprisingly, the response to these allegations has focused on political management of the consequences. And Mr Morrison's clumsy reactions have tended to underline his discomfort with such matters. In responding to the rape allegation by the former Liberal Party staffer, for instance, he claimed to have been alerted to its enormity by his wife, who apparently asked him to contemplate the consequences if something like that had happened to one of his daughters.

The implication was that a man needs a wife and daughters to grasp the gravity of such situations. When women across Australia, including outside parliament, were agitating for their rights, the Prime Minister compounded his faux pas by celebrating the fact that in Australia protesters at least weren't being shot in the streets.

What an amazing concession. By the same token, one could conclude that women in Australia should consider themselves fortunate not to be in the same predicament as women in, say, Saudi Arabia — or, for that matter, the subcontinent. Ladies, count your blessings. It ought to go without saying that some of the issues highlighted in Australia are by no means exclusive to it. Misogyny and patriarchy are common to cultures across the world. And, by some standards, their manifestation in Australia is mild compared with other countries.

That can hardly serve as a valid excuse, though, for trying to brush the issue under the carpet. Australia was very much a part of the first wave of Western feminism in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and significant advances in women's rights have been registered since Gough Whitlam's game-changing government in 1972. It has equally been clear since that legislation does not necessarily change very much. Almost a half century on, even basic advances made back then, such as equal pay for

equal work, remain unimplemented in a meaningful sense.

Notwithstanding a few exceptions, the same story can be told about much of the Western world. It's even worse elsewhere. The formidable Egyptian feminist and writer Nawal El-Saadawi died at the age of 89 this month with too many of her hopes unfulfilled. Just days later, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan annulled Turkey's ratification of the Istanbul convention on violence against women. The absurd backlash against this month's Aurat March falls in the same category. Subtly or otherwise, the world we live in still thrives on sexism and patriarchy, because all too many men remain trapped in a chauvinist mindset everywhere.

Obviously, there are vast differences between, say, Saudi Arabia — where women have only recently been afforded (by men) the right to drive cars — and Australia. Nonetheless, the fact that Australia's latest woes in this sphere have emerged amid the highest echelons of political power provides cause for a pause to ponder

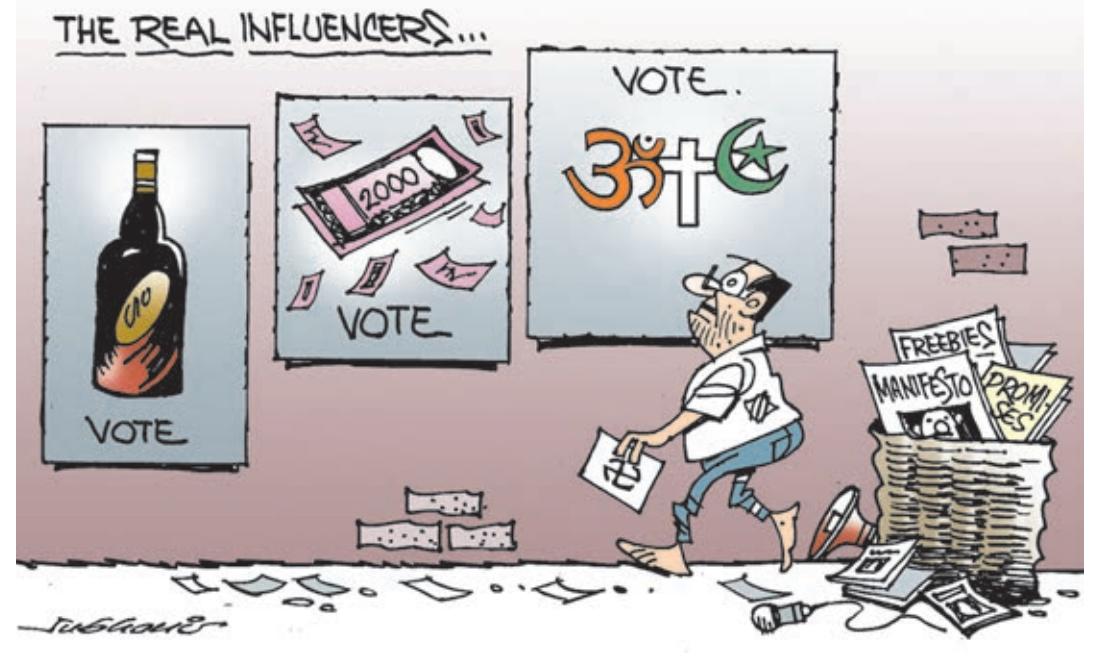
all that has gone wrong in the past 50 years.

The biggest risk is that while a few heads might roll — although even that seems dubious — nothing will substantially change in the way women are treated in parliament and in homes and workplaces across the nation, beyond occasional lip service and hand-wringing by the very same people (again mostly, but not exclusively, men) who help to perpetuate the status quo.

Sure, there has been progress over the decades, but never enough to eradicate centuries of sexist prejudices, let alone to clearly illuminate the intersections of class, race and gender that continue to guide the destiny of individuals. My granddaughter turned two yesterday, and I would like to think she will come of age in a very different Australia and a world substantially changed for the better, for all human beings. There are depressingly few grounds, though, for imagining such a future.

By arrangement with Dawn

Subhani



Quad Quandary: Of social intimacy, political conflict



Sanjaya Baru

Sanjayovacha

Even at the height of the Cold War and the anti-Communist McCarthyism of the 1950s in the United States, when Americans were warned to look for "Reds under the bed", Hollywood never dreamt up a story in which a high-level Soviet woman spy makes it to the US defence secretary's bedroom. So an Australian television series, *Secret City*, that shows the wife of the Chinese ambassador in Canberra, an attractive Mata Hari doubling up as a Chinese secret agent, having a torrid affair with none less than the defence minister of Australia, shows how intimate have been the links between the power elites of China and Australia.

Social intimacy between the Chinese power elite and their Australian, Japanese and even American counterparts has been cemented over four decades of intense diplomatic, business and people-to-people engagement between them. By contrast, the very limited social contact between Indian and Chinese elites sets India aside from its partners — Australia, Japan and the United States — in the four-member Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, that has come to be known as the "Quad". This despite India's increased social and business interaction with China over the past three decades.

Many analysts have pointed to the key paradox in the Quad — that each of the four countries have extensive economic links with China that they cannot wish away even as they seek to engage in what some have termed the "geo-economic containment" of China. All four coun-

tries have been trying to reduce their economic dependence on China even as China is itself trying to reduce its dependence on external trade. While the numbers are changing, the magnitudes are still large.

India cannot ignore the fact that Australia, Japan and the United States continue to do far more business with China than they do with India. It could take a long time before their trade and investment links with India are large enough for them to ignore China. Till that happens, India must expect that its three Quad partners will hedge their bets in dealing with China.

Apart from the business and economic links, it is the social links with China that set Japan, Australia and the United States apart from India in a significant way. Japan and China have had centuries old and intimate social and cultural links that continue to manifest in high level of people-to-people interaction between the two neighbours. Millions of Chinese and Japanese travel to each other's countries. Chinese students are to be found in the thousands in Japan and vice versa. Taken together, the business and social relations between the two have created an influential pro-China constituency within the Japanese elite. The level of social and cultural interaction between Indian and Japanese elites is woefully limited.

As for Down Under, the plot of *Secret City* has not been conjured out of thin air. It reflects the kind of social intimacy that the Chinese and Australian elites have established over the past century. As with Japan so with Australia, inter-

elite interactions with China remain far in excess of such interaction with India. While an increasing number of Indians now study and work in Australia and Indo-Australian relations have improved over the past decade, there are few among the Australian elite who take a more favourable view of India than they do of China.

The US is in a special class of its own when it comes to "Sinomania". Indeed, it's recent "Sinophobia" has not yet turned China into the kind of object of hate and derision that the much less powerful Russia still is. US-China people-to-people relations have had a long history. Chinatowns and chop suey have been an important part of American social life from New York to San Francisco. Millions of American and Chinese students and tourists have visited each other's countries for close to a half century now. Several US universities and think tanks are funded by Chinese businesses.

The more limited interaction that Indian elites have had with their Chinese counterparts over the past couple of decades of increased social and economic interaction will now only atrophy given the deterioration in the bilateral relationship in recent months. The behaviour of the Chinese authorities would seem to suggest that they do not really care if their business and social relations with India will suffer on account of the geopolitical differences. That will be a pity.

Consider next the geopolitical space within which the Quad functions, namely the Indo-Pacific. This too is a

India cannot ignore the fact that Australia, Japan and the United States continue to do far more business with China than they do with India

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*.

LETTERS

MAOIST MENACE

Maoist menace could not be curbed by successive governments and as a result the country is losing the precious lives of innocent security personnel (5 jawans killed in Maoist ambush, DC, April 4). For how long do we blame it on foreign countries, without introspecting ourselves? One wonders why the Modi government failed to address this burning problem when it could resolve issues like Ayodhya, Article 370, triple talaq successfully. Further, the government's contention of "demonetisation curbed Maoist activities" has been proved wrong again.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao
Hyderabad

RETIREMENT AGE

We being a nation with a large number of youth and with the unemployment rate at an all-time high, is this not a stupid and politically motivated decision to increase the age of retirement of government staff? Since the time of the Telangana agitation, locals were under the belief that one day a separate state would be achieved and they would get what they deserve, but it's not so. The government must not play with the sentiments of the youth and must not underestimate them. They can rewrite history.

K.R. Heeralal
Secunderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Mujib's men capture many towns

AGARTALA, April 4 Bangla Desh Liberation Forces engaged Pakistani troops over large areas today as the army, confined mostly to cantonments, made a bid to recapture as much area as possible before the monsoon set in.

The Liberation Forces registered a major success when they took control of Dinajpur town after inflicting heavy casualties on the Pakistani troops. The army captured Chachira, an important trijunction near Jessore, after a fierce battle late last night.

The Pakistanis continued aerial bombardment of towns they had not lost to the freedom-fighters.



quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	50029.83
Nifty 50	14867.40
S&P 500*	4,019.87
Dollar (\$)	73.11
Pound Sterling (\$)	101.03
Euro (\$)	85.99
Gold (10gm)* (\$)	44,865▲228
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	64.86
IN 10-Yr bond yield*	6.177
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.714
* As of 9:30 PM IST	0.035

SBI Card sees 50% transaction from online payments

SBI Cards and Payment Services MD and CEO Rama Mohan Rao Amara said his company has been seeing over 50 per cent of its transactions via online payments such as on groceries, utility bills, insurance premium, and hopes the trend to go up further as point of sale purchases are yet to pick up. However, he said it would be too early to say whether it will have any bearing on people's purchasing behaviour.

Reliance-BP seeks buyers for its gas from KG-D6 well



Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner BP Plc of UK have sought bids for sale of 5.5 million standard cubic meters per day of additional natural gas that will be available for sale from their eastern offshore KG-D6 block. The e-auction is slated for April 23 and the gas supply will start from late April or early May, according to the tender document. Bidders will have to quote a price linked to Platts JKM for spot cargoes.

India's crude steel output is 19 MT in January, February

India's crude steel output fell by 1 per cent to 19.1 million tonnes (MT) during the first two months of 2021, according to worldsteel. The country had produced 18.9 MT crude steel during the same period last year. The production for the 64 countries reporting to the worldsteel was 313.1 MT in January–February 2021, registering a 5 per cent increase compared to 297.7 MT in the year ago period.

Trai plans survey to assess utility of tariff plans

Telecom regulator TRAI is planning to conduct a consumer-facing survey to assess if tariff plans offered by operators are meeting actual requirements of varied categories of users, a top official said. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) may rope in an agency to conduct the survey for it. The survey is expected to start soon, said an official with Trai, who is privy to the development.

Printed & Published by K Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press at Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd, #563/9/D89/E, Behind Andhra Bank Pet Basheerbagh, Komappally, Ranga Reddy Dist. Editor: T Venkatram Reddy, RNI Reg No. APENG/2008/24282. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle ® is prohibited.

Brokerages bullish on IT firms

Expect double-digit guidance for current fiscal due to strong revenue growth

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, APRIL 4

Brokerages expect IT companies to report healthy fourth quarter (Q4FY21) revenues and strongest fourth quarter performance in the last five years, thanks to acceleration in digital technologies, improved demand post Covid-19, ramp up of previous deal wins and migration to cloud (delivery of IT services over the internet).

At the same time wage hikes to employees may impact Q4FY21 profit margins for IT companies, according to analysts.

"We expect bigger IT companies (tier I) to report revenue growth between 2.5 per cent and 3.4 per cent quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) on constant currency term, their strongest Q4FY21 performance in the last five years. Mid-sized (tier II) IT companies should deliver 3.3-5.2 per cent QoQ revenue growth," said Motilal Oswal in its fourth quarter preview.

ICICI Securities expects the IT companies to report healthy Q4FY21 revenues also due to improved traction in BFSI, retail, manu-



facturing, hi tech and life-science that will drive revenues in the quarter.

"This, coupled with cross currency tailwind, will further boost revenue growth in the quarter," The managements of IT companies may provide double-digit growth outlook in their guidance for FY22 based on strong topline growth in Q2/Q3FY21 as well as Q4FY21 and highlight plans to add to their workforce as higher demand and elevated utilisation should lead to the strongest employee addition in the recent past, the brokerages said.

ICICI Securities said. Infosys and Wipro are expected to register decline in profit margins due to wage hike, lower utilisation, higher travel and facility cost.

HCL Technologies is expected to report around 375 basis points decline due to partial wage hike and one-time bonus of ₹700 crore.

However, TCS is expected to report higher profit margins due to absence of wage hikes in the previous quarter as it announced wage hike during the third quarter.

The managements of IT companies may provide double-digit growth outlook in their guidance for FY22 based on strong topline growth in Q2/Q3FY21 as well as Q4FY21 and highlight plans to add to their workforce as higher demand and elevated utilisation should lead to the strongest employee addition in the recent past, the brokerages said.

FPIs turn net buyers for 3rd month in line

SANGEETHA G.
CHENNAI, APRIL 4

New Delhi, April 4: Continuing the spree for the third consecutive month, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have invested ₹17,304 crore in Indian markets so far in March.

According to depositaries, FPIs invested ₹10,482 crore into equities and ₹6,822 crore in the debt segment during March 1 and March 31.

The total net investment stood at ₹17,304 crore during the period under review. Previously, overseas investors had invested ₹23,663 crore in Indian markets in February and ₹14,649 crore in January, on a net basis. Groww COO Harsh Jain said markets have been relatively stable despite growth in Covid cases.

— PTI

M&A deals in hospitality to hit \$1b in 2021



- Hotel assets and companies going for liquidation under NCLT are expected to contribute significantly along with large ticket hotel transactions and portfolio transactions.

- Hotel rebranding or conversion has been a growing trend in the Indian hotels sector over the last few years.

- As a result, over the past five years more than 230 hotels have been converted either from a standalone property to a brand or migrated from one brand to another.

from a standalone property to a brand or migrated from one brand to another. However, the rate of conversions has not increased much during this period. Brand conversions still constitute only 20-25 per cent of the total signings in the country. But, conversions could see a jump in 2021.

Around 60 hotels with 6,000 keys are scheduled to be opened in 2021 against 49 hotels with 4,537 keys in 2020. However, it will be still lower than 9,316 keys in 2019 and 7,215 keys in 2018.

The Hyatt Group has announced to add over 3,600 keys by 2023 to its existing portfolio of 32 hotels with over 20 executed managed and franchised agreements.

GST on gift cards during redemption

New Delhi, April 4: Clearing the air over taxability of gift cards or vouchers, the Tamil Nadu bench of the AAAR has ruled that GST would be levied on the underlying goods/services at the time of redemption of such pre-paid instruments.

Kalyan Jewellers India has approached the Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling against the ruling by the TN state Authority for Advance Ruling, which had said that GST at 12 per cent or 18 per cent would be levied depending on whether on such pre-paid instruments was paper-based or magnetic strip based.

The AAAR has clarified that GST will be levied not on the supply of vouchers.

— PTI

Centre may demand more money from Cairn



petroleum since May 15, 2020," he said. "The exact amount is being calculated but it will be in tens of millions of dollars."

When contacted, a company spokesperson said, "We are in the process of reviewing the court's order, and will assess any next course of action" after that.

The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in March 2017 approved a policy for extension of production sharing contracts (PSCs) for oil and gas blocks beyond their initial term. This policy provided that the government's share of profit petroleum (earning from sale of oil and gas after deducting all expenses) would be 10 per cent more during the extended period.

Narendra Modi had in March 2017 approved a policy for extension of production sharing contracts (PSCs) for oil and gas blocks beyond their initial term. This policy provided that the extension has to be on same terms and conditions as the original licence.

The government challenged the order before a division bench, which on March 26 this year ruled that "there cannot be extension of the Production Sharing Contract unconditionally, on the same terms which were prevailing 25 years ago." It set aside the May 2018 single judge order.

TikTok's owner calls freeze on bank A/Cs a harassment



accounts in a Mumbai court.

None of ByteDance India's employees have been paid their March salaries due to the account freeze, said two people familiar with the matter. The company told the court it has a workforce of 1,335, including outsourced personnel.

An Indian tax intelligence unit in mid-March ordered HSBC and Citibank in Mumbai to freeze bank accounts of ByteDance India as it probed some of the unit's financial dealings. ByteDance has challenged the freeze on the four

blocks of accounts in a Mumbai court.

ByteDance India's employees have been paid their March salaries due to the account freeze, said two people familiar with the matter. The company told the court it has a workforce of 1,335, including outsourced personnel.

In the 209-page court filing lodged on March 25, ByteDance told the High Court in Mumbai that the authorities acted against the company without any material evidence and

gave no prior notice, as required by Indian law, before such "drastic action".

Blocking accounts "during the process of investigation amounts (to) applying undue coercion," ByteDance argued. It is "intended, improperly, to harass the petitioner."

India's Directorate General of Goods & Services Tax Intelligence, and the finance ministry which oversees it, did not immediately respond to requests for comment over the weekend.

— Reuters

JC-Hitachi eyes 20% growth in fiscal 2022

New Delhi, April 4: Cooling products maker Johnson Controls-Hitachi Air Conditioning India is looking for around 20 per cent growth in the current financial year, in comparison to the 2019-20 level, said a top company official.

In the interim, the firm's Barmer basin block licence, whose initial 25-year term ended on May 15, 2020, has been given an eighth interim extension, the official, who wished not to be identified, said. "Now that the Delhi High Court has upheld the government policy, we will issue recovery notices seeking higher profit

hikes since May 15, 2020," he said. "The exact amount is being calculated but it will be in tens of millions of dollars."

When contacted, a company spokesperson said, "We are in the process of reviewing the court's order, and will assess any next course of action" after that.

The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in March 2017 approved a policy for extension of production sharing contracts (PSCs) for oil and gas blocks beyond their initial term. This policy provided that the extension has to be on same terms and conditions as the original licence.

Johnson Controls-Hitachi Air Conditioning is also working on reducing its dependence on imports for components by half as part of its commitment towards indigenisation. "We had clocked ₹2,200 crore in the last year (FY 2019-20), in which a big chunk of sales from March was lost. So, we are just about similar to last year. If we would

have been okay then we should have clocked at least ₹2,500 crore."

"For the next fiscal year (FY 2021-22), I am sure that we should be reaching at least 20 per cent growth (by value) from FY 2019-20," said Johnson Controls-Hitachi Air Conditioning India chairman and managing director Gurmeet Singh.

Like other players, Johnson Controls-Hitachi Air Conditioning has also gone for a price increase of 3-5 per cent to ward off the inflationary pressure on raw materials, including copper, aluminium, steel and plastics, and expects another price hike coming soon. "The price of copper is almost 50 per cent higher than at the start of the year. Aluminium and steel have both increased" and diesel prices are going up. All combined have put tremendous pressure on the entire ecosystem.

— PTI

have been okay then we should have clocked at least ₹2,500 crore."

— PTI

Police verification requests jump from 3% in 2018 to 19% in 2020

Staff background check worst in IT sector

New Delhi, April 4: Eight out of 100 candidates misled or misinformed on job applications in 2020 with the IT sector witnessing the highest discrepancy in employee background verification at 16.60 per cent, according to identity management and business intelligence firm AuthBridge.

Despite a drop in the overall discrepancy in the last three years, AuthBridge said in its sixth annual trend report that the healthcare sector had the second-highest discrepancy at 12 per cent, followed by retail at 10.22 per cent and BFSI (banking, financial services and insurance) and pharma with discrepancy

of 9.76 per cent and 9.65 per cent, respectively.

The travel and hospitality sector with 9.58 per cent also featured in the list of sectors with the highest discrepancy ratios, the report said.

"Eight out of 100 candidates lie or misinform during job application," the report said.

Candidates between the age of 35 to 39 years have the highest discrepancy rate at 9.09 per cent, indicating bigger incentives for candidates in this age bracket to fudge their credentials for better job opportunities, it added.

Candidates between the age of 35 to 39 years have the highest discrepancy rate at 9.09 per cent, indicating bigger incentives for candidates in this age bracket to fudge their credentials for better job opportunities, it added.

Candidates between the age of 35 to 39 years have the highest discrepancy rate at 9.09 per cent, indicating bigger incentives for candidates in this age bracket to fudge their credentials for better job opportunities, it added.

Candidates between the age of 35 to 39 years have the highest discrepancy rate at 9.09 per cent, indicating bigger incentives for candidates in this age bracket to fudge their credentials for better job opportunities, it added.

Candidates between the age of 35 to 39 years have the highest discrepancy rate at 9.09 per cent, indicating bigger incentives for candidates in this age bracket to fudge their credentials for better job opportunities, it added.

Candidates between the age of 35 to 39 years have the highest discrepancy rate at 9.09 per cent, indicating bigger incentives for candidates in this age bracket to f

SHORT TAKES

Proteas down Pak despite Zaman ton

Johannesburg: South Africa levelled the series with a 17-run win in the second one-day international against Pakistan at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on Sunday despite a spectacular innings by Pakistan opening batsman Fakhar Zaman. Fakhar hit 193 off 155 balls with 10 sixes and 18 fours but he lacked support as Pakistan made 324 for nine in reply to South Africa's 341 for six. Quinton de Kock, captain Temba Bavuma, Rassie van der Dussen and David Miller hit half-centuries for South Africa, who were sent in. Pakistan's chances seemed to be minimal when fast bowler Anrich Nortje dismissed captain Babar Azam for 31 in his first over and followed up with two more quick wickets to reduce the tourists to 85 for four. — AFP

Brief scores: South Africa 341/6 in 50 overs (Q. de Kock 80, T. Bavuma 92; H. Rauf 3/54) bt Pakistan 324/9 in 50 overs (Fakhar Zaman 193; A. Nortje 3/63).

Mithali's Railways win national title

Rajkot: The formidable Indian Railways once again annexed the National One Day

Championships title with a crushing seven-wicket victory over Jharkhand in the final here on Sunday. Out of 14 editions of National One Dayers, Railways women have won 12 titles, which is a testimony to their dominance in women's cricket. Such was Railways' control on the proceedings that they chased the paltry target of 168 in only 37 overs. India international Punam Raut's patient 59 off 94 balls laid the platform

for Sneha Rana to finish the game in a jiffy, smashing 34 not out off 22 balls. Rana was also the most successful Railways bowler taking 3 for 34. — PTI

Brief scores: Jharkhand 167 in 50 overs (Indrani Roy 49; Sneha Rana 3/33) lost to Railways 169/3 in 37 overs (Sabbbhini Meghana 53, Punam Raut 59).

Repsol Honda seek improved show

Doha: Conditions were again the talk of the day in the Doha MotoGP as the Repsol Honda Team worked towards race day with Stefan Bradl lining up his machine 11th on the grid. There was no escaping the dust and wind in Free Practice 3 as the entire Losail International Circuit was engulfed in a fierce windstorm. While the wind was manageable, huge amounts of dust and sand were blown across the track and meant there was little information to find in the first session of the day and certainly no chance of improving on FP2 times.

Bradl's Pol Espargaro will line up 15th on the grid for Sunday's race.

An improved performance on Sunday remains the focus for the Repsol Honda Team, both Bradl and Espargaro showed impressive pace on the previous Sunday. The racing is again guaranteed to be close but the pair of RC213V riders are prepared to fight.

Manu to represent India in Olympics

New Delhi: World number one Elavenil Vilarivan was on Sunday included in a 15-member Indian shooting contingent for the Tokyo Olympics where the highly accomplished Manu Bhaker will represent the country in three events. However, Olympic quota winner Chinki Yadav could not make the main team despite winning a gold medal in the Delhi World Cup last month.

It was decided by the national selection committee that the quota won by Chinki in the women's 25m pistol would be swapped in favour of Anjum Moudgil, to enable her to compete in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event as India's second entry alongside former world champion Tejaswini Sawant. — PTI

Live on TV

FOOTBALL
English Premier League: Everton vs Crystal Palace from 10.30 pm; Wolverhampton Wanderers vs West Ham United from 12.45 am (Tuesday) on Star Sports Select 1

Regd. No. HQ/SD/509/2021-23
Printed and Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Plot No. 9 Alwal Village, Vallabh Nagar Taluk, Medchal Malkajgiri Dist, Telangana and Published at 36, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-3. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Kaushik Mitter

Show will go on

BCCI is confident that IPL will go ahead as scheduled

New Delhi, April 4: Despite a rise in Coronavirus cases, the vice-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India Rajeev Shukla is confident that the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League will go ahead "without any problem".

"That's the concern that coronavirus cases are rising. That's why BCCI has already taken all the precautions. That's why only six venues have been kept and bio-bubble has been created. The number of members of the squad has also been increased, keeping in mind that in the future if the coronavirus case rises then all the precautions can be taken," Shukla said.

"So, keeping in mind all the precautions, the tournament will go on without any problem. Bio-bubble has been created, those who are in bio-bubble, they are getting tested now and then and I think the tournament will take place without spectators," he added.

Maharashtra is witnessing a rise in Coronavirus cases but Shukla said that so far, no decision has been taken regarding the shifting of Mumbai matches to some other venues for the upcoming IPL, set to begin on April 9.

"So far, no decision has been taken to shift Mumbai venue. It will take place in Mumbai because all the arrangements have been done. In the future, as you know there are standby venues also if there is any problem then we will think but currently, there is no such decision which has been taken. The first stand-by stadium is in Lucknow now then Hyderabad and Indore are there and some others also. Nothing has been decided and it will take place as per the earlier decision," he said.

Wankhede is set to host 10 IPL games this season from April 10-25. The first match at the Mumbai stadium is slated to be played on April 10 between Delhi Capitals and Chennai Super Kings. Four franchises — Delhi Capitals, Chennai Super Kings, Punjab Kings and Rajasthan Royals — have set up their base in Mumbai as of now. Moreover, the Delhi-based franchise suffered a huge blow on Saturday as all-rounder Axar Patel tested positive for Covid-19.



KKR's Sunil Narine (left) and his teammate Varun Chakravarthy during a practice session on Sunday. — KPTI

VACCINES FOR PLAYERS

Shukla said the BCCI will get in touch with Health ministry for players' vaccination. "In order to cope with this coronavirus rise, I think the only solution is to get vaccinated. BCCI is also

thinking on those lines that players should be vaccinated. Nobody knows when the virus will end and you can't give a deadline, it will not be there so players can play easily. So, I think now will have to think over that. Vaccination should be done for the players also,"

Shukla said. When asked if BCCI has written to the Health Ministry regarding players' vaccination, Shukla said the BCCI is mulling over the idea and they will definitely get in touch with the ministry that players should be vaccinated. — Agencies

Will Kedar be 'x' factor in SRH middle-order?

New Delhi, April 4: One of the most consistent teams in the Indian Premier League over the last five years, Sunrisers Hyderabad would look to improve upon their middle-order batting during this edition of the tournament.

The main strength of SRH is the balance they possess, especially a fantastic top order.

With the likes of David Warner, Jonny Bairstow, Jason Roy, Kane Williamson, Manish Pandey and Wriddhiman Saha up their ranks, SRH have one of the most destructive batting line-ups.

Warner and Bairstow forms one of the most feared opening pairs in

the IPL. The duo has no qualms in taking the opposition attack from ball one and if they get going, no target is unachievable and is a treat to watch for spectators.

SRH's bowling too looks impressive with fit-again Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Rashid leading the pack. The presence of Afghan star Mujeeb-ur Rahman and yorker king T Natarajan adds the much-needed impetus to their attack.

The major weakness of SRH is the absence of a finisher in their line-up. The middle-order too looked shaky in the last IPL in the UAE and that is where SRH would be banking on Williamson's

vast experience. Even though SRH has roped in Kedar Jadhav this year, it remains to be seen whether the Maharashtra all-rounder can prove his worth considering the fact that he is very much short of practice.

Wriddhiman Saha if given a promotion in the batting order would look at it as an opportunity to show his range of strokes. SRH is heavily reliant on its top-order to provide a good start and God forbids if the likes of Warner, Bairstow, Pandey and Williamson fails for long, the pressure would shift to the team's middle and lower order. — PTI

Chennai Super Kings have agreed to a request by England all-rounder Moeen Ali to not wear SNJ 10000 logo, a surrogate product brand of Chennai-based SNJ Distilleries, on his match jersey because of his faith's ban on alcohol.

Moeen who was bought by CSK for a whopping ₹7 crore doesn't promote logos of alcohol brands, be it for his country England or any other leagues. He has often been spotted stepping away from the podium whenever England celebrated spraying the champagne. "The request from a player is nothing new in IPL though. In the past few players decided not to display logos which hurt their religious sentiments and teams didn't have any issues," said a team official. In fact, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Moeen's last season team, had accepted the England all-rounder's request.



Moeen Ali

IPL franchises need to be wary of players' bubble fatigue



Hemant Kenkre
Silly Point

Lights, camera and action! It's the moment that cricket fans have been waiting for. The blockbuster of the year is about to start with the Indian Premier League (IPL) set for a kick-off a few days from now. The last edition of the tournament ended in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in November last year, the successful phase giving a big boost to the sagging spirits affected by the global pandemic.

The decision of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to

host the fourteenth act of IPL at home was welcomed by fans and many who believed that a domestic tournament (what the IPL is) has to be played at home. The tourney that showcases Indian cricket (with International flavours) has undoubtedly played a big role in developing raw youngsters, who spend quality time with reputed international cricketers getting the education of a lifetime.

As what happens in most scripts that depict tales on silver screens, loosely translated as cricket's ver-

sion of pulp fiction, the drama element of the IPL has already begun. The villain in terms of the 'black empire' trying to play spoilsport in the story came in guise of a few cricketers — Axar Patel and Devdutt Padikkal — and ground staff of Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium testing positive to the dreaded virus.

With Mumbai hosting a big chunk of the games that are slated for the tournament, the early entry by the villainous virus has caused a furrow on the brow of the organisers.

With ten matches (of the scheduled 52) to be played in Mumbai, India's commercial capital and the home of cricket, BCCI's

plans may see changes with the alarming number of virus cases rising in the maximum city. Sources

within the BCCI say that they have their eyes on each venue and have kept two back-up centres — Hyderabad and Indore on standby in case the situation gets out of hand, keeping in mind the safety of players and all involved in the tournament.

While the BCCI's wait and watch policy is what one would expect from the organisation, it still leaves many questions open.

For instance what if their Plan B, of shifting

venues, fails with virus

cases increasing in the

marked cities too?

The organisation has put in

various checks in place to

ensure that the tourna-

ment is held as per their

agenda. BCCI officials

have moved from their

office to a five-star facil-

ity and have watchdogs desig-

nated as Bubble Integrity

Managers who are to report any breach in the bio security protocol to BCCI's Chief Medical Officer. While it is too late for the BCCI to take any extreme decision vis-a-vis the holding of the IPL, the tournament will go on irrespective of any more vile benchmen making appearances in the script, there is another element which will bother team

franchises as the tourna-

ment progress — bubble

fatigue. The players (the

major ones) have been

moving from one bio-bub-

ble to another from the

13th edition of the IPL.

The next two months, till

the final scheduled in

Ahmedabad on May 30,

is going to be a big test for

them as they have had no

time for any kind of pro-

perty rest and recreation.

Breaking the 'brain fag'

caused by transiting from one secure environment to another is something the cricketers will be wary of. The major job for all teams, therefore, will be to keep their players fresh and eager to take on new challenges day after day, match after match.

The pressures of per-

forming in the IPL are

manifold and keeping play-

ers on their toes is going to

be a big ask for all teams

going forward to ensure

that key players do not get

jaded and perform by rote.

The past thirteen edi-

tions of the IPL have given

Indian cricket and those of

other countries many

breakthroughs in terms of

strengthening upcoming

talent. In a recent inter-

view, former England play-

er, David Gower acknowl-

edged IPL's role in the

development of new talent

in his country. Calling the it an extraordinary experience that offered players education, he gave the tournament a big thumbs up in helping players like Jos Buttler to emerge.

Considering the new challenges faced by modern cricketers while flit-

ting from one secure bub-

ble to another, it does look

like the 2021 version is

going to be one which will

further boost local and

newer talent. For starters,

they will be raring to go,

determined to make their

mark in world cricket and

maybe find a place in the

Indian squad for the im-

pending World T20 chal-

lenge.

Their fresh, eager beaver

approach may well coerce

the senior pros to shake off

their fatigue and provide

entertaining cricket once