

## SB says yes to Yes Bank

To buy 49% stake; withdrawal cap to stay for 30 days; banks face Fitch downgrade

FALAKNAZ SYED & MADHUSUDAN SAHOO  
MUMBAI/NEW DELHI,  
MARCH 6

At the end of a chaotic day that saw the stock market crash and government, depositors, and investors wrung hands in despair and spent tense hours, hope emerged that the crisis triggered by the overnight moratorium on Yes Bank would have a quick resolution that may come within a month.

A draft scheme announced on Friday by the Reserve Bank of India for a revival of the cash-strapped private lender said the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) shall pick up a 49 per cent stake in the reconstituted Yes Bank for about ₹2,450 crore and stay invested for at least three years.

RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said the 30-day moratorium imposed on Yes Bank Thursday night is an "outer limit" highlighting that the restrictions placed on the bank would be lifted before that. He reiterated that the interests of depositors will be "fully protected".

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said deposits and liabilities of all depositors will be honoured and jobs and salaries of Yes Bank staff will be protected for at least one year.

"We are working to protect the interests of the depositors and also those who invested in Yes Bank. Our immediate priority is to ensure that Yes Bank's customers are able to withdraw money within the stipulated cap," the minister said.

She said the government has asked the Reserve Bank to look into what went wrong at Yes Bank and fix individual responsibilities. Global rating agency Fitch said that the takeover of Yes Bank casts light on governance risks in India's banking sector and assigned a negative outlook to India's banking sector and lowered the sector's operating environment rating from "bb-" to "bb+ in 2019."

"The banking sector could suffer further if the government's efforts to tackle problems in the bank fail," Fitch said.

■ Page 10: Obligations, rights to stay unchanged



Account holders wait outside the Fort branch of Yes Bank in Mumbai on Friday to withdraw money. — PTI

## Yes Bank crisis trips PhonePe for many hours

Customers enraged over payment failure

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC  
HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

To the chagrin of the city's roadside vendors and retail shop owners, customers could not use PhonePe, the digital payments application, for much of Friday. Not a single transaction went through. In December, the company claimed over 18.5 crore unique users. The story was same everywhere.

Few were aware that the Yes Bank crisis was behind this. Until now, PhonePe only used Yes Bank's application programme interface (API) to facilitate digital payments. With no Yes Bank to support it, Walmart-owned PhonePe was forced to suspend all services.

Raju, a pan shop vendor in Secunderabad, was bewildered when a customer tried using PhonePe in the morning. "He kept saying that the transaction never went through," Raju said. "I thought it was one-off, but not a single PhonePe transaction has worked." Like many other retailers, he tied up only with PhonePe, shunning competitor PayTM. He was clueless about why PhonePe was down and told customers throughout the day that "the server is down". PhonePe's situation caused outrage and confusion on social media. People criticised the company for depending on the back-end support of only one bank. Sameer Nigam, the CEO of PhonePe, tried soothing their nerves. In a tweet, he "regretted the long outage" and blamed it entirely on Yes Bank. By late evening, it made alternate arrangements and got its debit, credit card and Wallet services.

■ Page 2: PhonePe's UPI still not working

## Investors lose ₹3.2 lakh cr in Yes Bank-led market crash

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD & ASHWIN J. PUNNEN | DC  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

A sharp fall in equity markets across the world due to the rapid spread of coronavirus cases globally and RBI curbs on withdrawals from Yes Bank led to a panic-selling in Indian market by foreign investors.

The Sensex hit a low of 37,011.09 as it fell 1459.52

points intra-day and Nifty-50 sank well below 11,000 mark to 10,827. Recovering the ground partially later in the day, the Sensex closed 893.99 per cent down and the Nifty-50 closed 279.55 points low.

Tracking the plunge in the indices, the market capitalisation of the BSE-listed companies dropped by ₹3,28,684.5 crore.

Overnight action by the RBI to save Yes Bank from

falling dented sentiments among domestic investors and lead to heavy selling in the financial sector stocks. Yes Bank shares fell 85 per cent intra-day to a low of ₹5.55 on the BSE but ended the day 56.04 per cent down at ₹16.20. The fiasco has also hit mutual fund debt as the latter's exposure to the cash-strapped bank at ₹3,345 crore.

■ Full coverage on Page 10

## Another Delhiite joins virus infected list, total rises to 31

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

One more suspect tested positive for Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) on Friday, taking the overall number of cases in India to 31. The patient has a history of travelling to Thailand and Malaysia. According to the Union health minister, the patient is in quarantine and is stable.

Meanwhile, an additional 13-member group of tourists from Italy have been quarantined at a hotel in Amritsar. They have been asked to not leave till their medical examination is complete, a Punjab government official said. "We are conducting a proper

medical examination. If any of them are found symptomatic (for coronavirus) then samples will be taken," an officer said.

Already a group of 16 Italians is undergoing treatment in India after having tested positive for Covid-19. An Irishman suspected of the Covid-19 infection fled from a Cuttack hospital but was traced to a Bhubaneswar hotel where he is in isolation with another person that he had come into contact with, officials said. In accordance with the protocol, they will be in mandatory isolation for 14 days.

The rising cases have led to a widespread cancellation of events. IIFA 2020

and the Lotus Makeup India Fashion Week have been postponed. The CISF postponed its anniversary celebrations at Gharaziabad on March 13, while the CRPF deferred its March 8 event.

Wings India 2020, a major event of the civil aviation sector from March 12-15 in Hyderabad, will be truncated and large public gatherings would be avoided. In view of travel restrictions, only local representatives of companies will attend.

The BSF is going ahead with its daily Retreat Ceremony at the Attari border with Pakistan, but the public will not be allowed to attend in line with government guidelines.

DC CORRESPONDENTS  
WARANGAL/HYDERABAD,  
MARCH 6

Four cases of suspected coronavirus have been traced to Gandhi Hospital from the districts. One from Warangal, one from Jangam and two from Khammam have self-reported after cough and cold.

They had a travel history to the Covid-19 affected, Dubai, Italy and Germany. They reported to the local hospital and doctors found that their travel history required further investigation and asked them to give samples at Gandhi Hospital for testing.

■ Full report on Page 2

## Corona scare enters Assembly

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC  
HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

There were light moments on the first day of the Budget session of the Telangana Legislative Assembly on Friday. Coronavirus appeared to weigh heavily on the conversations between ministers K.T. Rama Rao, T. Harish Rao, Etala Rajendar and Talasani Srinivas Yadav were chatting.

Mr Rama Rao refrained from shaking hands with his colleagues right from the moment he stepped out of his car. When he left the House after the Governor's address, he greets all with a "Namaste". Mr Yadav

tried to hug Mr Rama Rao, but was foiled with a smile and a word that did the latter want to kill the former.

Mr Harish Rao shook hands with colleagues and also gave a consolation hug to Mr Yadav. During their conversation, Mr Harish Rao rested his hand on the health minister's shoulder, at which point Mr Rama Rao cautioned him that coronavirus can stay on clothes for a period of time. Mr Harish Rao jerked away his hand from

Mr Rajendar's shoulder. Mr Rajendar neither shook hands with fellow ministers, MLAs or MLCs in the House. He kept his hands, folded, behind his back, and gestured to fellow members with vigorous shaking of his head — from the moment he entered the House till the time he left the premises.

Most members in the lobbies of the House were also seen washing fellow members with a simple "Namaste".

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Four cases of suspected coronavirus have been traced to Gandhi Hospital from the districts. One from Warangal, one from Jangam and two from Khammam have self-reported after cough and cold.

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■ Full report on Page 2

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WEATHER



Max: 34.0°C  
Min: 22.1°C  
RH: 37%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky. Rain or thunderstorm likely. Max/Min temp. 35/22°C

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Uttarayana  
Titih: Phalguna Shuddha Dwadasa till 9.25 am and Trayodasha till 6.50 am  
Star: Pushyami till 9.01 pm  
Varjyam: 8.39 pm to 10.07 pm  
Durmuhurtam: 6.33 am to 8.07 am  
Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am  
HJRI CALENDAR  
Rajjab 11,1441 AH  
PRAYERS  
Fajar: 5.30 am  
Zahar: 12.37 am  
Asar: 4.44 am  
Maghrib: 6.30 pm  
Isha: 7.37 pm  
SUNSET TODAY 6.24 PM  
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.29 AM  
MOONRISE TODAY 4.03 PM  
MOONSET TODAY 4.28 AM

COUNTER POINT



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IN BRIEF

PhonePe's UPI still not working

From Page 1  
It was, at the time of reporting, still unable to bring its UPI (Unified Payments Interface), supported by Yes Bank, back online. Not just PhonePe, but other digital payment applications faced similar issues. Users of BharatPe (a payment app supporting UPI), RazorPay and Cashfree (major payment gateways) also faced issues. However, these applications used APIs provided by other banks as well, helping them manage the chaos. Twitter users claimed even Swiggy customers would face trouble, but the food-delivery company's representative told Deccan Chronicle it faced no payment failures.

TS TEAM IN KERALA TO STUDY VIRUS CONTROL

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 6

A high-level delegation of officials from Telangana State began a two-day visit to Kerala to study the model being adopted here for tackling Covid-19. The members of the delegation called on health minister K.K. Shailaja and held detailed discussions on prevention, diagnosis, surveillance and treatment of coronavirus cases. The officials will visit hospitals, primary health centres and medical colleges to study the safety protocol being implemented in these places. Kerala has seen all three Covid-19-positive cases, all of whom were treated successfully. One of the three later died due to complications from pneumonia.

11 pilgrims stranded in Iran, relatives seek TS govt help

ATHER MOIN | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Pilgrims from Hyderabad have been stranded in the Iranian city of Mashhad due to the cancellation of flights from Iran in the wake of the spread of the novel coronavirus Covid-19. Eight members from the family of Mr Syed Taqi Hyder, a Hyderabad resident, and three other Indians went to Iran last month on a pilgrimage. Their return flight was scheduled on March 7, but it has now been cancelled. Among 11 pilgrims, eight are

● **SOME OF them want to return to their homes but are facing difficulties due to the havoc created by the pandemic. Advocate Syed Ali Jafery appealed to the government to intervene into the matter and arrange for their safe return from Iran.**

women. Mr Keyhan Hyder said his brother, sisters and aunts were stranded in Mashhad as flights from Iran have been cancelled. "When we contacted the

Indian Embassy in Tehran, they assured that they would be screened. If they tested negative, arrangements will be made for their return within a week," Mr Keyhan Hyder said. It is learnt that there are 240 Hyderabad students studying in the Iranian city of Qom. Some of them want to return to their homes but are facing difficulties due to the pandemic. The department of City advocate Syed Ali Jafery appealed to the TS government to intervene in the matter and arrange for their safe return from Iran.



Gandhi Hospital wears a deserted look on Friday as many patients stayed away from getting treatment due to the fear of coronavirus.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

New WHO Covid-19 report scary

Mortality rate revised upwards to 3.4% after more deaths emerged from world over

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The mortality rate for Covid-19 has been revised from 2.9 per cent to 3.4 per cent by the World Health Organisation as the deaths outside China are high. The revision was carried out as deaths in Italy rose to more than 45 and in Iran, more than 16 deaths were reported as on March 6. Dr K.K. Aggarwal, president of the Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania explained, "The mortality rate is high outside China as the experience of SARS made the Chinese better equipped to handle the crisis. They have medical equipment, hospitals and the ability to create an infrastructure to tackle the situation. But countries like Iran and Italy have poor public health systems and for that reason the deaths recorded in these countries is higher."

The revision by WHO is because there are more deaths being recorded as containment policies are not in place. A senior doctor from the government health department said: "The death rate is going to increase to six per cent as it spreads to countries whose public health systems are weak. In India, we have seen a good control in Kerala, but the spread in other states will bring out a different picture as their preparedness is not up to the mark." The problem being seen worldwide is that those who are self-reporting are being tested while those who have been in contact but have not reported the contact are the spreaders and super spreaders. They could be asymptomatic but have a high viral load in their body. The other challenge is at the hospital level where medical equipment for testing, ventilator support and other infection control measures is limited.



To protect themselves from infection, people try different varieties of masks which have flooded the market.

— P. SURENDRA

WHO'S LATEST REPORT

- 89 Total countries affected
- Seasonal flu mortality rate (in normal cases) is 1% only.
- WHO has revised the mortality rate in Covid-19 from 2% to 3.4%.
- Mortality rate in China in February was 3.8%

Screening of bus, train passengers a challenge

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Domestic passengers coming in from Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh must also be screened, stated health minister Etala Rajendra in a video-conference with the health minister. With these states reporting Covid-19 cases, there must be screening at the airport for domestic passengers coming in from those areas. But the central government has said that since it is not a local transmission yet, creating panic is not going to

● **SCR HAS put the Railway medical team on alert and they will check people who report very sick. Information about the symptoms and the need to self-report to station officials will be available.**

help. It has asked the Telangana government to be alert and if required, local screening will be facilitated too. The South Central Railway has put the Railway medical team on alert and they will check people who report very sick. Education information about the symptoms and the need to self-report to station officials will be available. A separate isolation ward is also going to be created in zonal railway hospitals and six divisional hospitals. Private bus service providers are giving masks and hand sanitizers to their passengers who travel to different states. They are keen that by the people use road transport and have decided to provide protective gear.

4 new suspects at Gandhi Hospital

DC CORRESPONDENTS WARANGAL/HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Four cases of suspected coronavirus have come to Gandhi Hospital from the districts. One from Warangal, one from Janagan and two from Khammam have self-reported after cough and cold. They had a travel history to the Covid 19 affected Dubai, Italy and Germany. They reported to the local hospital and doctors found that their travel history required further investigation and asked them to give samples at Gandhi Hospital for testing. The Janagan patient panicked as people started clicking his pictures. He ran away. The patient was traced by the local government hospital and the family was counselled that he must get himself tested. The family members persuaded the patient to rule out all possibilities and not get worked up by doctors that his identity would not be revealed. The tests are throat and nasal swabs. The tests check the viral load in the body. According to guidelines, if the viral load is more than 55 per cent, the samples will be sent to the National Institute of Virology, Pune, for a second test. Telangana health minister Etala Rajendra said, "Each tests takes 10 hours. The second test is conducted by NIV if the state test turns up positive. The declaration of a positive case is by the central health ministry. Even if it is negative and there is a viral load we

As of March 6, a total of **4,058** samples from 3,404 individuals have been tested. **1,308** samples from 654 individuals evacuated from Wuhan in China were tested twice on day 0 and day 14.

**236** individuals evacuated from Wuhan and the Diamond Princess Ship were tested on day 0.

- The load of samples is rising as more and more people reporting at all centres, so NIV is only testing positive cases.
- The tests are throat and nasal swabs.

have asked people to self-isolate. The self-isolation of 14 days must be observed so that there are no further symptoms. So far there is only one confirmed case in Telangana." Nine more people self-reported to Gandhi Hospital on Friday as they had travelled to Covid-19 affected countries. Most of them were suffering from cough and cold.

COVID-19 SCARE FAILS TO DETERGYMS-GOERS

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Premium gyms continue to be full and regular sports activities are going on at the LB stadium, the main centre for the Sports Authority of Telangana, despite the coronavirus scare emptying markets and cinema halls. Most activities are going on as usual, whether gymnastics, boxing, skating or athletics. There is no shortage among the regular trainees because of Covid-19. If the attendance seems sparse, it is because since the last week of February exams are on and for some its Board exams, says Mr Omkar Yadav, national boxing coach from this centre. The physiotherapy centre is also full as usual and players are getting rehabilitated same as regular days according to Mr Syed Hasham Hussaini, international sports physiotherapist. The premium gyms also doing well in spite of the scare around the city. Gold's Gym at Hyderabad has all the trainees working out without any panic. Mr Jeetender Jain and his wife Chandra at the gym said that initially they were apprehensive but they made it to the gym as they maintain all the hygiene necessary. Ms Kiranmayee, general manager of the gym, said "We have to make sure that all the international standards are maintained, since this is an epidemic. We have taken all the prescribed cautions. Extra manpower has been deployed for mopping constantly, after every use of equipment, sanitisers been sprayed over it, to ensure the safety of our clients."

MARATHI FOOD FESTIVAL POSTPONED

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), has taken a toll on many events, and its latest victim is the annual Maharashtra Food Festival organised by the Maharashtra Mandal in Ramkote. "There are over 12,000 people of Maharashtra descent who are part of our group Mitranagan. The food fest was organised with the aim of bringing Marathi flavours to Telangana. But, now after the case (of Covid-19) in the IT corridor, the vendors who were to set up the sites are backing out," Akhlesh Wadhkar, a member of the group told Deccan Chronicle. Mital Pav, Pav Bhaji and Pita Bhakri, were on the menu among other favourites. "We are not a carrier of the disease but we are planning to reschedule the event and have it next month. But it all depends on when the temperatures begin to rise, since the virus doesn't survive in warm temperatures," he said.

- **MISAL PAV, Pav Bhaji and Pita Bhakri, were on the menu, among other favourites**

LESS RISK Fears of coronavirus spreading through pets found baseless

Pets safe from virus, claim experts

GEETA VALABOJU | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Experts from world organisation for animal health have declared that there's no need for pet owners to panic because there is currently no evidence that pet animals can be sources of infection of Covid-19 or that they can become sick. "To be safe, the agriculture and conservation department (AFCD) recommends that pet owners wash their hands after being around their animals and avoid kissing them. The department also strongly advises

that pets of people infected with coronavirus should be quarantined. Veterinarian doctor. Mutyala Madhusudan, said that there is no evidence of pets becoming sick with Covid-19. Even when infected public are advised to understand that being infected does not equal being infectious and capable of spreading the virus. "There were such fears over the coronavirus spreading through pets when the outbreak of coronavirus first unfolded." "Dogs and cats do get coronavirus but they are usually not the same

- **ACCORDING TO WHO, owners should wash their hands with soap and water after touching pets.**

viruses associated with this outbreak. The strains dogs and cats have typically don't cause respiratory problems," Madhusudan said. "Present evidence suggests that dogs are not a risk in spreading the coronavirus and the main way the disease is spreading is from person to person either from people close together or from respiratory

droplets when an infected person coughs and sneezes," Madhusudan added. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), owners should wash their hands with soap and water after touching pets. If dog owners are particularly concerned, they can wipe their dog's paws with antiseptic wipes after they have had a walk outside. Laxman Singh, a pet owner, said that although many precautions have been offered by doctors, there is still that kind of panic in people's minds.

"Already many people have quit eating meat, although it is clear that meat is not a carrier of the coronavirus," he said. Similarly, many people fear coming into contact with pets as the idea that the disease is carried from pets persists. "Tejovanth, an animal lover, said "Animals have been brutally killed in most parts of the city. I know dogs will not be infected but if the virus goes on their skin or fur, it will stay there. People are supposed to think, beware there is still that kind of harm to voiceless animals."

SHORT TAKES

IMD PREDICTS PRE-MONSOON RAINS OVER 48 HRS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The pre-monsoon season has made its presence felt over South India, say meteorologists. The months of March, April and May are also identified as the pre-monsoon period across the entire peninsula. "Though erratic in the beginning, the rainfall activity gathers steam, and several parts of south India witness light to moderate rainfall," Mahesh Palawat, chief meteorologist, Skymet (a private weather forecaster) told Deccan Chronicle. The onset of the pre-monsoon season has also seen the local Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), issue a rainfall warning for the next 48 hours. In its warning for the next 48 hours, it said that a thunderstorm accompanied with lightning was very likely to occur in the districts of Nalgonda, Jangam, Warangal, Mahbubnagar, Bhadrachalam, Kothagudem, Yadadri, Kammanam and a few other surrounding areas.

HC RESERVES ORDER ON RAZING TS SECRETARIAT

VULJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The Division Bench headed by the Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice A. Abhishek Reddy on Friday reserved judgment in a batch of Public Interest Litigations and petitions seeking judicial intervention in the impending demolition of the existing Secretariat buildings at Saifabad. The Telangana government wants to construct a new, integrated Secretariat at the same place. Some of the petitions urged the court to restrain the shifting of offices at from the secretariat to various places around the city. Congress MP A. Revanthi Reddy, T. Jeevan Reddy, MLC Congress party, T. Rajnikanth Reddy, advocate practising in the High Court, Prof. P. L. Vishweswar Rao, convenor of the Telangana Democratic Forum and vice president of the Telangana Jana Samithi, and the Forum For Good Governance represented by its secretary M. Padmanabha Reddy filed the PILs and petitions in 2016 and 2019. These pleas had been heard over five months before the court gave an interim direction in February of this year, directing the state not to demolish the existing buildings until further orders. However, the state had requested the court for an early adjudication of these pleas, and the Bench had held continuous hearings for two days. As the arguments were completed from both sides, on Friday, the bench reserved its judgment.

Women's day special



Women take part in a run organised by Hyderabad police's SHE Teams at Charminar ahead of the Women's Day on Friday. — P. SURENDR

Muslim groups appeal to KCR to stop NPR process

ATHER MOIN | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Public resolutions were passed in several mosques of the city on Friday demanding that Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu stay on implementing the National Population Register (NPR) in the state. The resolution was passed in several mosques after the Juma sermon. The "Telangana Resolution" sought the state government's intervention in the important matter related to the nationality of Indians. It demanded repeal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, and withdrawal of the new format of the NPR. Thousands of Muslims demonstrated in front of mosques after the Juma prayer in many places and young people demonstrated in Mehdiapatnam, Bandlaguda, Saidabad, Barkas and other places.

PUBLIC RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED IN SEVERAL MOSQUES OF THE CITY ON FRIDAY AFTER THE JUMA SERMON

In Saidabad, placards and black flags were held aloft and a human chain was formed, organised by Wahadat-e-Islami, and Moulana Naseeruddin. The demonstrators raised slogans against the Prime Minister and Home Minister. Moulana Naseeruddin warned that whoever behaves like Hitler, his end will be the same as Hitler. "Our elders laid down their lives for the sake of this nation. We fought against British imperialism and now we are being asked to prove our nationality," said Moulana Naseeruddin. He said the amendments to the Citizenship Act are contrary to international norms of citizenship. The amendments discriminate against citizens based on religion. "We are protesting against the injustice peacefully. The government is constructing detention centres across the country," he said. In Khairatabad, Muslims signed a petition after the prayers in 70 mosques, requesting the TRS government to pass a resolution in the Assembly and Legislative Council against the Citizenship Act (Amendment) Act 2019 and also the implementation of the National Population Register in the state. They contended that amendments to the Citizenship Act are unconstitutional, discriminatory and violate the constitutional rights of Indian citizens. They requested the TRS government to intervene in the matter and challenge the constitutionality of the said Act in the Supreme Court to safeguard the democratic and secular fabric of the nation. A petitioner had lodged a criminal complaint on February 27 against Mr Pathan for allegedly delivering a hate speech against the Hindu community under the instruction of Mr Owaisi. He also named Mr Mishra for instigating violence in Delhi, but no case was registered against them. He approached the court against the inaction by the police.

HATE SPEECH FIR AGAINST OWAISI, PATHAN, MISHRA

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Advocate Mohamed Quavi Abbas, treasurer of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-e-Millat, on Friday said that the Hyderabad Eighth Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate has ordered the Mughalpur police to register an FIR against MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, former party MLA Waris Pathan and former BJP MLA Kapil Mishra against whom a complaint was lodged. The petitioner had lodged a criminal complaint on February 27 against Mr Pathan for allegedly delivering a hate speech against the Hindu community under the instruction of Mr Owaisi. He also named Mr Mishra for instigating violence in Delhi, but no case was registered against them. He approached the court against the inaction by the police.

Delhi riots fund: 6 from Eflu held

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Six students from English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) were reportedly detained by Hussaini Alam police near Charminar for trying to raise funds for victims of the recent riots in Delhi.

They were detained at the Charminar police station, which was the closest, for over an hour and taken back to the campus. An EFLU student, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said five men and a woman had reached Charminar to collect donations. "They had a letter indicating they were representatives of EFLU's student body. But the police took them away before they could collect any money," he said. The student said the cops questioned them for "doing such things in a sensitive area like Charminar." Meanwhile, there was confusion among the cops. When contacted, Charminar SHO Gursu Naidu told this reporter to contact the Hussaini Alam police. Hussaini Alam SHO Ramesh Kotwal said he did not have details and refused to talk. Charminar ACP B. Anajah denied the students were detained.

SC verdict boosts Bitcoin holders

Await government, RBI guidelines to trade in cryptocurrencies after many years in hiding

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Two years ago, in April 2018, Raviteja, a software professional from the city, withdrew all his cryptocurrency holdings from various exchanges, converted them into physical form and locked them up in a safe. His actions were a response to a Reserve Bank of India circular which banned banks from dealing with anyone dealing in cryptocurrencies. Crypto-enthusiasts like Raviteja had gone underground after this "banking ban". But they are slowly starting to resurface now, after the Supreme Court revoked it on Wednesday. "Since 2018, the government has made many announcements that holding cryptocurrency amounted to a crime. I got scared and stopped buying them," said a relieved Raviteja. Manish, a part-time Bitcoin trader who used to sell Bitcoins to many in Hyderabad, said, "Since the verdict, many people have called me to ask if I can resume selling Bitcoin to them." After April 2018, since Manish could not work with Indian banks, he started transacting in Dubai in the UAE. "I am considering moving my business back to India. But I will wait for a few more months for clarity," he said. Gopi, a teacher from

Visakhapatnam who made a handsome sum by trading Bitcoin and other currencies in 2017, said he was relieved by the verdict. "I still hold a lot of currencies, mainly Bitcoin. I didn't know what to do. Converting them to cash is not an issue but the government claimed that holding them is a crime. Now there is some relief since the SC has reversed the ban," he said. Gopi said he might get back in the game. "I have been thinking about it seriously since I heard about the verdict," he said. Indeed, there seems to be a huge spike in interest again. Namish Sanghvi, founder of Coconure cryptocurrency and blockchain news portal, said his website had seen a 900 per cent rise in traffic since the verdict. Mr Sanghvi explained that the RBI regulations, coupled with lacklustre global cryptocurrency market after 2017, had sounded the death knell to many Indian crypto exchanges. "There is no doubt there will be a huge spike in interest. It's just a matter of how quickly this happens; the industry is moving very fast," he said. Mr Sanghvi added a word of caution for budding enthusiasts: "It is better if you go for Bitcoin. It was the first cryptocurrency. It has no CEO or leadership team; it is truly decentralised. Its network is the

strongest." The startup ecosystem too is expected to see a flurry of activity in cryptocurrency. Raghu Mohan, CEO of IBC Media, a company that promotes and assists startups in the blockchain space, said the SC verdict has brought some measure of legitimacy to cryptocurrencies. "There is a general sense of happiness in existing startups in the crypto space that their business does not have a blanket illegality hanging over their heads," he said. Mr Mohan said there were several use cases which cryptocurrencies can address. "There are so many government needs to do to solve problems using (crypt) which were looking at other countries in terms of jurisdiction since they don't know how to work with the banking system here," he said. Mr Mohan, Mr Sanghvi and Manish, the trader, said there is still a lot that the government needs to do to make the cryptocurrency space better. Manish said, "It's only a legal verdict. The government or RBI still needs to devise guidelines to govern cryptocurrencies before they can be truly legitimate. We have seen how hostile they have been so far. The RBI has reportedly decided to seek a review of the verdict. It will be at least a year before we have workable guidelines."

LEOPARD ON PROWL KILLS 30 SHEEP

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

A leopard on the prowl claimed the lives of over 30 sheep in the Shivnagudem village, Marri-guda mandal, Nalgonda district, in the last 24 hours. The attacks have triggered panic amongst residents of the village. As residents recall, the livestock was alive and well when they were put inside the pen, but it seems the carnivore attacked the sheep after dusk. "The animals were kept inside the pen, but we got the fright of our lives when they were all lying on the ground with blood seeping out of bite marks on their bodies. We think it is a leopard that has attacked them. Spotting a leopard in this area is a common affair," said Rajeev Matthew, a resident of the area.

CAT '20/21 advertisement with details about TIME students in IIMs, discounts, and contact information.

REQUIRED SCHOOL BUSES ON LEASE advertisement for G.R. CHINMAYA VIDYALAYA.



Dileep Konatham receives the award from Karnataka minister for home Basavaraj Bommai.

Konatham wins Chanakya award

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Dileep Konatham, director, digital media of the state government, was on Friday conferred with the coveted Chanakya Excellence in Digital Communications award by the Public Relations Council of India (PRCI). Responding to the honour, Mr Konatham thanked Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu and IT minister K.T. Rama Rao for the opportunity to serve the people of the state.

ed for the award for the work he and his team has done in promoting initiatives of the Telangana state government on digital media platform. The PRCI gives away Chanakya awards annually for media and communications professionals from the corporate, PSUs and the government sector.

TOYOTA advertisement for the Glanza car, featuring 'GET SET. GO!' slogan, 'Zero Down Payment' offer, and contact details for various dealerships.



SHORT TAKES

CLP TO RAISE WELFARE ISSUES DURING BUDGET

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The Congress Legislative Party (CLP) on Friday resolved to raise the issues of irrigation, unemployment, fee reimbursement, drinking water problem and liquor sales during the Assembly Budget session.

The CLP meeting chaired by party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka allocated different subjects to the MLAs. After the meeting, Mr Hegatti told the media that he will participate in the discussions on irrigation, employment, fee reimbursement, and education and M.L.A. K. Rajagopal Reddy in the discussion on water problem, liquor issue and puts in Hyderabad.

He said Mr D. Sridhar Babu will take part in the discussion on farmers' problems, education and unemployment, and M.L.A. D. Anasuya alias Seethakka on women problems and women and child welfare subjects. Senior MLA Podem Veeriah will participate in the discussion on tribal issues and M.L.A. T. Jayaprakash Reddy will raise the issue of double bedroom houses and patta lands for the poor.

EC ISSUES NOTICE ON 2 RS SEATS IN TS, 4 SEATS IN AP

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The Election Commission on Friday issued the notification for elections to two Rajya Sabha seats in Telangana state and four in Andhra Pradesh. The suspense will end by March 13, the last date for filing nominations.

The announcement of the Rajya Sabha election schedule two weeks ago triggered speculations in the Telangana Rashtra Samiti and VSC Congress in AP regarding the candidates. The two ruling parties are expected to win all the seats since the Opposition parties do not have the numbers.

Rajya Sabha members from Telangana state are P. Ramachandra Rao (Congress) and Garikapati Mohan Rao (BJP) will be retiring apart from Dr T. Subhramani (Congress), Khan (both Congress), Dr K Kesava Rao (TRS) and Seetharama Lakshmi from AP in April. The elections are being held to fill the vacancies.

The aspirants for the tickets in Telangana state and AP are putting pressure on their respective Chief Ministers.

● THE TWO ruling parties of TS and AP are expected to win all the seats since the Opposition parties do not have the numbers

Tribute to martyrs



Minister for IT, K.T. Rama Rao pays tribute to Telangana martyrs at Gun park on Friday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

No mention of CAA in Guv's speech

S.N.C.N. ACHARYULU | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

No mention of controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Population Register (NPR) or National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the governor's address has surprised political circles.

Opposing the CAA, NRC and NPR, Chief Minister, K. Chandrababbarao, recently announced that the assembly will pass a resolution against CAA.

● OPPOSING THE CAA, NRC and NPR, Chief Minister, K. Chandrababbarao, recently announced that the assembly will pass a resolution against CAA.

However, the state government has decided to pass resolutions in the ongoing assembly budget session against CAA, NRC and NPR.

Without mentioning the issue in the address, the state government said, "Telangana state is the symbol of communal harmony. The government is fully committed to uphold the unity among its people and to protect the secular fabric of the state."

Meanwhile, sources said that Rao is not in a confrontational mood with the centre. A senior politician said mentioning it in the governor's address is different from passing the resolution in the assembly against CAA, NRC and NPR.

He said mentioning it in the governor's address indicates direct confrontation with the centre, but in the resolution the state government 'requests' the centre to amend and not to implement the CAA, NPR and NRC.

Fiscal discipline helped TS beat downturn: Guv

Tamilisai says TRS govt will fulfil promises made to people

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundarajan on Friday said that the severe economic challenges in the country for the past several months had an impact on the state as well. Due to the strong administrative policies and fiscal discipline, the state was able to withstand the situation, she said.

Addressing the joint sitting of the Assembly and the Legislative Council at the start of the Budget session, she said, "While other states are showing negative economic growth, Telangana state is able to stick its neck out. My government has decided to pursue fiscal discipline due to the prevailing economic scenario in the country."

"My government will fulfil its promises made to the people all the programmes and schemes will be continued and the search for new avenues will be undertaken to better our revenue sources," she said. On the irrigation sector, the Governor said that the new Revenue Act was being



Kaleshwaram project would be completed in its entirety shortly and works are going on rapidly to lift 3 tnc ft (thousand million cubic feet of water) per day from the Godavari River.

Dr Tamilisai said the government had decided to rechristen the Rythu Samanvaya Samitis as "Rythu Bandhu Samitis." Stating that the state government had brought out new urban and rural policies to increase accountability among the representatives and to activate the local bodies, she said that her government had enacted the new Municipalities Act and new Panchayat Raj Act. The Governor said the new Revenue Act was being

contemplated which would give any scope for corruption and red-tape and the government was getting ready with a new Land Administration and Management Policy.

Dr Tamilisai said that construction and allotment of double bedroom houses with 100 per cent government expenditure was happening only in the state. The government had so far sanctioned 2,72,763 houses and construction was in full swing.

"The measures taken by my government to make Telangana the ideal destination and paradise for investments have been yielding good results. The TS-IPass, the single window policy, which accords all the required permis-

sions for industry within 15 days, has already won accolades across the world," she said.

She announced that 12,427 industries had got permissions under the TS-IPass policy. With this, the state got ₹2.04 lakh crore worth investments and 14 lakh additional employment has been generated.

The Governor told the House that the state had become a force to reckon as far as the information technology sector is concerned and renowned companies were coming to establish their companies in the state.

Dr Tamilisai pointed out that IT exports which were ₹57,000 crore in 2013-14 had increased to ₹1.09 lakh crore in 2018-19. Last year, the average growth rate in sanctioned 2,72,763 houses and construction was in full swing. The Governor started the speech by greeting the members with "Namaskaram" for investments have been yielding good results. The TS-IPass, the single window policy, which accords all the required permis-

Assembly set to vote against CAA

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The Assembly will pass a resolution against the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Population Register (NPR) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) during the ongoing budget session.

The Telangana legislative affairs minister, Venkatesh Prashanth Reddy, on Friday told press reporters that the business advisory committee (BAC) meeting chaired by the state assembly Speaker, Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, decided to take up the issue for discussion and get the resolution passed.

This was then seconded by the AIMIM and the Congress. He said Rao declared that the government was not initiating the discussion on CAA, NPR, NRC in the assembly, followed by a meaningful and detailed discussion on the repercussions of the Act.

The minister said, "The government will then pass a resolution demanding the scrapping of CAA and also denouncing the proposed NPR and NRC." Prashanth Reddy disclosed during the BAC meeting that the current sessions of the legislative assembly will work for 12 calendar dates till March 20 and the state annual budget for the financial year 2020-21 will be presented on March 9. He said there will be three holidays, including March 9, Holi, March 10 and March 15, a Sunday.

Cong outraged over Reddy arrest

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Several senior leaders of the Congress, including Ghulam Nabi Azad, leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha, and all India Congress committee (AICC) in-charge for the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), R. Chandrababbarao, Congress legislator, party (CLP) leader, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, and others, condemned the arrest of Congress MP A. Revanth Reddy, on Friday, sought unconditional withdrawal of the cases slapped against the Malkajgiri MP and demanded his immediate release.

Azad said that the high-handedness on the part of the state government is highly deplorable. He demanded the immediate release of Revanth Reddy. Khuntia said that arresting the MP for raising his voice against the illegal construction undertaken by the ruling party leaders was undemocratic.

Vikramarka alleged that the arrest was an act of vengeful politics. He said, "This is probably the first time that an MP is arrested and sent to jail based on mere allegations and no proof."

He further said the TPCC chief N. Uttam Kumar Reddy already brought Revanth's arrest to the notice of Lok Sabha

Revanth approaches local court seeking bail

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

A day after his arrest by the Narsingi police for using a drone camera to take pictures and videos of a private farmhouse belonging to a prominent TRS leader, Congress Malkajgiri MP A. Revanth Reddy on Friday approached a local court seeking bail.

The court posted the matter to Tuesday but granted bail to others who were arrested in the case. On Thursday, Mr Revanth Reddy was arrested by the Narsingi police when he surrendered at the station. The MP had reportedly argued with the police for including his name in the case of unauthorised use of a drone camera to take pictures of the TRS leader's farmhouse without permission.

On Wednesday, the police had arrested six persons P. Praveenpal Reddy, M. Jaipal Reddy, M. Vijay Simha Reddy, D. Rajesh, E. Shiva and Om Prakash. Following their plea on Friday, a court at Rajendranagar granted bail to all of them.

Narsingi police said that the three others involved in the case — Krishna Reddy, Vijaypal Reddy, and Veeresh — are yet to be arrested.

Venkat Reddy, former MP, Konda Vishveswar Reddy, and TPCC treasurer, Gudur Narayana Reddy, termed the arrest illegal. Friday, they demanded scrapping of GO 111 on demolition of structures built near water bodies. Revanth Reddy said he will raise the issue of Revanth's arrest in parliament.

Congress M.L.C. T. Jeevan Reddy, demanded action against the ruling party leaders for violating GO 111.

Speaker, Om Biriba. Addressing a press conference at Gandhi Bhavan, Congress MP Komatireddy

HC CLOSES 2 WRIT PETITIONS BY REVANTH, KONDAL

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

The Telangana High Court closed the writ petitions filed by Congress MP A. Revanth Reddy and his brother Kondal Reddy, after the government assured that no action would be taken against the possession of land in Gopampally by the petitioners without following due procedure.

The brothers had filed two writ petitions in the court seeking the government to act on Thursday by way of lunch motion, aggrieved by the action of the Serilingampally revenue divisional officer who without issuing notice had threatened to vacate the land. The court rejected the government counsel to get instructions on the petitions.

On Friday, Advocate-General B.S. Prasad informed the court that no action will be taken against the petitioners' land measuring 61.5 guntas in Survey No. 127 of Gopampally in Serilingampally mandal.

With a Justice A. Rajashekar Reddy closed the two petitions by recording the assurance given by the state. ● ON FRIDAY, Advocate-General B.S. Prasad informed the court that no action will be taken against the petitioners' land in Gopampally

KTR reviews Pattana Pragathi programme

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 6

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development K.T. Rama Rao held a review meeting for the recently concluded Pattana Pragathi programme at Dr MCR HRD Institute here on Friday.

The minister reviewed works in each district with the Additional Collectors and enquired about the status. He instructed officials to come up with an action

plan to resolve the identified problems. He instructed the officials to focus on green plans, sanitation plans, and water audits.

The minister also mentioned that a lot of problems pertaining to sanitation were being addressed during the ten-day programme, which has shown great results in a short span of time. The Pattana Pragathi Programme is the step towards the upliftment of towns and cities of Telangana," he said.

Advertisement for TIME, the national leader in entrance exam training, featuring CAT, ICET/Bank Exams, and IIT-Foundations.

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Advertisement for Silk Mark - An initiative of Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, featuring a handloom expo of 100% pure silk handloom products.



SHORT TAKES ALL-WOMEN TEAM TO RUN KERALA TRAIN

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 6

In a first of its kind initiative in Kerala, an all-woman team will take complete control of the operation of a train to mark International Women's Day on March 8...

The team includes the locomotive pilot, assistant pilot, pointsperson, gatekeeper and track women. Women will also be deployed at the ticket booking office, information centre, signal, carriage and wagon sections.

"I congratulate the railways for taking such a significant step as part of International Women's Day. I extend my wishes to all women who have been entrusted with the special duty. This will give more power to women," health minister K.K. Shailaja said.

Through the train will start from Thiruvananthapuram, it will be handed over to the all-women crew at Ernakulam who will be in control till Shornamur. Railways officials will receive the women staff at 10.15 am at Ernakulam South station. The staff include locomotive pilot, assistant pilot, assistant locomotive pilot Vidya Das; guard M. Sheeja; TTE Geeta Kumari; platform station master Vinod; cabin SM Neethu; pointsperson Praseeda and Rajani; mechanical staff VR Veena. Besides, Kamalasanan, T.K. Vineetha, Shalini Raju and Archana will handle different responsibilities.

FREE BUS RIDES FOR WOMEN IN ASSAM

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, MARCH 6

In his last pre-poll budget, Assam finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma here on Friday presented the budget for 2020-21 in the state assembly with no new tax proposals as he announced...

Mr Sarma in his initial remarks said, "New era has dawned in Assam — an era of hope, of aspiration, of development and of a promise for a future that embraces everyone."

Announcing a gift of a scooter to 20,000 girl toppers in plus two state board examination, the minister in his long budget speech said that ₹3,000 each will be transferred to 72,465 bank accounts of tea garden workers.

Defending the charges of opposition of budget leak, Mr Sarma said that state has registered a growth rate of 13 per cent in last financial year and the opposition BJP here, a lawmaker of the government has spent ₹73,000 crore in 2019-20 financial year. "We have increased total expenditure by ₹20,000 crore over last three years which has a multiplier effect on the economy," he said.

Amid political drama in MP, BJP MLA fears for his life

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURI | DC BHOPAL, MARCH 6

Amid trading of charges of horse-trading by the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP here, a lawmaker of the government has spent ₹73,000 crore in 2019-20 financial year. "We have increased total expenditure by ₹20,000 crore over last three years which has a multiplier effect on the economy," he said.

The MLA, Mr Sanjay Pathak, a mining baronet-turned-politician, also said he feared a threat to his life. He did not identify the source of the threat. Mr Pathak released a video to "set the record straight". His clarification comes in the wake of reports appearing in the media that he vis-

Concern over ₹546 cr of Jagannath deposits

Amount with Yes Bank is in form of fixed deposits; Temple wants to shift funds to nationalised bank

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUVANESWAR, MARCH 6

With Yes Bank getting placed under the Centre's moratorium from March 5, the fate of the ₹546-crore deposits of the Lord Jagannath temple of Puri now hangs in the balance.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in a press release on Thursday, announced that Yes Bank has been placed under the Centre's moratorium "owing to the potential

loan losses and resultant downgrades."

As per the RBI directive, depositors can't withdraw more than ₹50,000 from their bank accounts for a month starting March 5.

While the announcement has triggered panic among Yes Bank customers who are rushing to withdraw cash from the bank ATMs, it stoked fear among the servants and devotees of the Jagannath temple, who said there is uncertainty over the massive deposit.

Expressing his anger over the development, senior Daitapati (priest) Binayak Das Mohapatra on Friday said, "Keeping such a huge amount in a private bank was a mistake. The person responsible for this should be punished."

Mr Priyadarshan Pattnaik, convener of Jagannath Sena, a cultural organisation, also criticised the Odisha government saying, "It is illegal to deposit Lord Jagannath's funds in a private bank. Nobody, including the managing committee of temple, knew about this gross irregularity."

Reacting on the issue, Odisha law minister Pratap Jena said, "The amount parked in Yes Bank is in the form of fixed deposits. It has been decided by the temple managing committee that the money will be transferred to a nationalised bank once the deposits mature later this month."

Ex-Puri MLA Maheswar Mohanty said, "The then chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) did a big mistake by depositing the money in the private bank in order to get more interest. The present situation is worrisome, so SJTA should discuss with RBI to withdraw the money."

Mr. Mohanty said, "The then chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) did a big mistake by depositing the money in the private bank in order to get more interest. The present situation is worrisome, so SJTA should discuss with RBI to withdraw the money."



Critics said that it is illegal to deposit Lord Jagannath's funds in a private bank.

TMC's Derek gives speech in Parl corridors

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

Unable to speak in the Rajya Sabha on the Delhi riots, TMC Congress MP Derek O'Brien on Friday found a novel way to be heard — by giving a minute speech from the Parliament corridors instead of in House — to protest the government's "reluctance" to discuss the state of violence in the national capital.

Despite massive protests from the Opposition in both Houses of Parliament demanding immediate discussion on the riots in which over 50 people are said to have lost their lives, the government has stuck to its decision to not discuss any such discussion would be held only after Holl. Rajya Sabha Chairperson M. Venkaiah Naidu has already announced March 12 as the date for the discussion in the Upper House.

Mr O'Brien, who is the leader of his party in Rajya Sabha, said that Opposition parties have given notices five days in a row to discuss the issue, but these have not been accepted.

Accusing the government of stalling work in both Houses, he said, "I have been ready with the speech on behalf of the TMC. My Chairman sir what can I do, the government is stalling Parliament. Today, on Friday, I need to make my speech and I am making it not in the chamber downstairs but on the first floor. We have to look at different ways to have our voices heard. So here I am."

Mr O'Brien said that the last time a notice of an Opposition member to discuss issues was accepted was in November 2016.

"What does an Opposition member do in desperate times like this? I am not going to wait. I hope this speech goes out to the young people of India. I want to ask where is the Prime Minister? It took him 48 hours after the genocide to respond, that too on Twitter. We are making a laughing stock of ourselves," he said.

The TMC MP also uploaded the video of his speech on social media in which he spoke about different stories of pain and loss during the violence in northeast Delhi.

Students distort song, booked

RABIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, MARCH 6

Rabindra Bharati University (RBU) officials lodged an FIR with the Sintehe police in north Kolkata on Friday against a group of college students for disturbing a famous Bengali song of the poet laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore by prefixing a line with vulgar words and flaunting them in saabir (coloured powders) on their body during the Basanta Utsab (Holi) celebration on its BT Road campus on Thursday.

Fearing arrest, five out of the six, learnt to be students of Serampore College in Hooghly, later rushed to the RBU campus to confess and apologise.

One of the five students who turned up at the campus was a woman. All of them are residents of Chandannagar and Chinsurah of the district, according to sources. They were seen sitting with their faces covered in a room on the RBU campus.

A controversy broke when the images and the words of the students displaying the obscene words disturbing the line of Chand Utshehilo Gogone (the moon rose in the sky)," went viral.

among four ruling party MLAs who have gone 'missing' three days ago and are believed to be in Bengaluru. He is yet to surface to clarify on his resignation. Both Congress and BJP have been trying to contact their legislators to prevent poaching by the rivals. Sources in both the parties conceded that they have asked their MLAs to present themselves before their respective leaderships in the state. The Congress has a strength of 114 in the 230-member MP Assembly, falling short of two members of the half-way mark. The Congress government supporters are by two Bahujan Samaj Party MLAs, a Samajwadi Party legislator and four Independents. The BJP has 107 MLAs.

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Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Missile Complex Defence Research & Development Organisation Government of India, Ministry of Defence PO Kanchanbagh, Hyderabad - 500 058 Phone: 040 - 24188039

Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., Category, Essential Qualification, No. of Apprentices, Stipend (₹/M). Lists various engineering and technical categories for apprenticeship.

Note: (1) For the above mentioned vacancies, reservation for SC / ST / OBC / PWD / EWS categories will be applicable as per provisions of Apprentices Act 1961. (2) The No. of vacancies mentioned above are only indicative and may change at a later stage depending on the final assessment of eligible applications received.

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Form with fields for Registration No., Post, Branch, Name, Father's Name, Nationality, Date of Birth, Category, E-mail address, etc.

I understand that the post applied for, by me is purely a temporary one and hereby declare that the statements made and information furnished in the application are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. Date: (Signature of Candidate)

IN BRIEF

Ice-cream licker held for social media joke

Houston: A 24-year-old man in Texas who filmed himself licking ice cream and putting it back in the freezer of a Walmart supermarket has been jailed for 30 days and fined \$1,000, according to US media reports. The video of D'Arcien Anderson licking the ice cream was shared on social media last August. After the video went viral, several health and safety questions were raised. The clip received over 157,000 views on Facebook before it was taken down. The Post Arthur News reported on Wednesday. Surveillance cameras at the outlet showed he later took the ice cream back out of the freezer and bought it.

Pakistan hitting collapse toll hits 18

Karachi: The death toll from a building collapse in a congested residential area of Karachi on Friday rose to 18, mostly women and children, as rescuers pulled out more bodies from the rubble. A top government official said the casualties were high as residents had illegally built the three-stories building on a 30 square yard plot in a congested lane of the city's Gulshar area. "The third floor portion collapsed and it brought down the entire building. Rescue work is still continuing at the site and it has been a difficult and slow process as the lane where the incident occurred is narrow and we have been unable to get ambulances and other heavy machinery through it," he said.

Suicide bombers strike US embassy

Tunis: A double suicide attack shook the Tunisian capital on Friday as assailants wounded police guards including police guarding the US embassy, authorities said. An explosion rocked the Berges du Lac district where the embassy is located around midday, causing panic among pedestrians and motorists in the area. Two assailants died in the attack, the first to hit the capital since June 2019, officials said. Police said one attacker tried to enter the diplomatic mission but was prevented by police officers. A policeman who witnessed the attack said a suicide bomber who was travelling on a motorcycle was killed. Body parts were seen strewn on the ground.

GREEK-TURKEY BORDER SEES CLASHES ERUPT

Kastanies, March 6: Clashes erupted on the Greek-Turkish border on Friday as tensions with Greek authorities using tear gas and a water cannon to repulse an attempt by migrants to push through the border into Greece, while Turkish authorities fired volleys of tear gas onto the Greek side of the border.

Thousands of migrants and refugees have been trying to get into Greece through the country's eastern land border over the past week, after Turkey declared its previously guarded borders with Europe were open.

After months of threats, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his country would no longer be the gatekeeper for Europe. He has demanded Europe shoulder more of the burden of caring for refugees, although the EU insists it is abiding by a deal in which it disbursed billions of euros for care in return for Turkey keeping the refugees on its soil.

His decision and its aftermath on the border with Greece have alarmed governments in Europe, which is still seeing political fallout from mass migration over the past five years ago. Erdogan's move to open the border came amid a Syrian government offensive in Syria's northwestern Idlib province, where Turkish troops are fighting. The Russia-backed offensive has killed dozens of Turkish troops and sent nearly a million Syrian civilians toward Turkey's southern border. A cease-fire in Idlib brokered by Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday went into effect at midnight. Opposition activists and a war monitor reported a complete absence of Russian and Syrian government warplanes in the skies of Idlib and a relative calm in the area.



British soldiers with NATO-led Resolute Support Mission forces arrive near the site of an attack in Kabul, Afghanistan on Friday. An Afghan official said gunmen in Afghanistan's capital attacked a remembrance ceremony for a minority Shiite leader. — AP

27 killed in attack on Kabul rally as peace deal kicks in

Glaring lack of security in heavily fortified Afghan capital stands exposed

Kabul, March 6: At least 27 people were killed in an attack on a political rally in Kabul on Friday, officials said, in the deadliest assault in Afghanistan since the US signed a withdrawal deal with the Taliban. The attack highlights the glaring lack of security in the heavily fortified Afghan capital, just 14 months ahead of the scheduled withdrawal of all foreign forces under an agreement signed on February 29 by the US and the Taliban.

Interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said women and children were among the dead with an additional 29 wounded, adding that "special forces units are carrying out clearance operations against the attackers." The figures will change," he said. Nizamuddin Jallil, a health ministry official, gave a slightly higher toll.

THE TALIBAN immediately denied responsibility for the assault, which occurred at the commemoration ceremony for Abdul Ali Mazari — a politician from the Hazara ethnic group, most of whom are from the Shiite community.

saying 29 people had been killed and 30 others wounded. The Taliban immediately denied responsibility for the assault, which occurred at the commemoration ceremony for Abdul Ali Mazari — a politician from the Hazara ethnic group, most of whom are Shiite. An Islamic State group claimed attack on the same ceremony last year saw a barrage of mortar fire kill at least 11 people.

Rahimi had earlier said that gunfire had erupted from a construction site

US PRESIDENT DONALD Trump on Friday said that the Taliban could "possibly" overrule the Afghan government after the United States withdraws from the country. "Countries will have to take care of themselves," he said.

near the ceremony in the city's west, which is large for the Shiite. Photos on social media showed the attack. President Ashraf Ghani condemned the massacre, calling it a "crime against humanity." The ceremony was attended by many of the country's political elite, including Afghanistan's chief executive Abdullah Abdullah. The interior ministry later confirmed to reporters that "all the high-ranking officials

were safely evacuated from the scene." "We left the ceremony following the gunfire, and a number of people were wounded, but I do not have any reports of martyred people for now," Hazara leader Mohammad Mojaq said.

The incident comes less than a week after the US and Taliban signed a deal that would pave the way for the complete withdrawal of foreign troops in 14 months. The US withdrawal hinges to a great extent on the Taliban being able to control jihadist forces such as the Islamic State group.

If such groups remain, so too does the American military. Since the much-trumpeted deal signing, fighting has continued to rage across Afghanistan, casting a pall over hopes the agreement would lead to a reduction in violence

and talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government. IS, which follows a radical Sunni interpretation of Islam, first became active in Afghanistan in 2015 and for years held territory in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

It has claimed responsibility for a string of horrific bombings, including several in Kabul targeting the city's Shiite community.

In recent months the group has been hit by mounting setbacks after being hunted for years by US and Afghan forces along with multiple Taliban offensives targeting their fighters. Still, IS remains in Afghanistan, notably in eastern Kunar province near the Pakistan border, which also neighbours Nangarhar, as well as in Kabul. — AFP

EU welcomes Syria ceasefire, urges aid access

Zagreb, March 6: EU countries on Friday gave a cautious welcome to a Russian-Turkish ceasefire in Syria as a sign of goodwill but urged the warring parties to allow in more humanitarian aid.

Foreign ministers from the 27 EU states are meeting for talks in Zagreb on the crisis in Syria's north-western Idlib province, where Ankara is battling Moscow-backed government forces.

A ceasefire came into force at midnight aiming to halt intense fighting that has sparked a humanitarian crisis and raised fears of Turkish and Russian armies clashing — and it appears to be holding. "For sure I am pleased for the ceasefire, the ceasefire is good news. At least it's good will — let's see how it works," Josep Borrell, EU's foreign policy chief, said as he arrived for talks. Nearly a million civilians have fled their homes due to the fighting in Idlib, with the United Nations describing it as the worst humanitarian emergency since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011.

"It is important now to concentrate on humanitarian aid and I would welcome if Russia would respect the concept of humanitarian aid corridors to be widened," Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu said. Ireland's Simon Coveney said there was "relief" among EU countries at news of the ceasefire. "But there's still an extraordinary humanitarian challenge that I

THE CEASEFIRE came into force at midnight aiming to halt intense fighting that has sparked a humanitarian crisis and raised fears of Turkish and Russian armies clashing — and it appears to be holding.

think we all face in terms of the sheer numbers of refugees that had been displaced because of the conflict there," Coveney added.

Some EU countries, notably the Netherlands, have called for a no-fly zone over Idlib to stop the regime bombing civilian targets. "EU countries are willing to provide humanitarian aid to Idlib. The challenge is to get aid into the area and that's where the ceasefire might help. A no-fly zone might help even more," Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok said.

But the EU has no power to implement or enforce such a measure and officials in Idlib, with the United Nations describing it as the worst humanitarian emergency since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011.

"A no-fly zone always sounds nice but needs to be militarily enforced. Who would do that?" Intense fighting has killed dozens of Turkish soldiers in Idlib in recent weeks, as Ankara launched a direct offensive against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces for the first time. — AFP

Court verdict on Pervez disputed

Islamabad, March 6: The Pakistan Bar Council has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the Lahore High Court's ruling to cancel the death penalty of self-exiled former dictator Pervez Musharraf in a treason case. A media report said on Friday.

A special court in Islamabad on December 17 last year handed down the death penalty to the 74-year-old retired general Musharraf, now based in Dubai, after six years of hearing the high-profile treason case against him.

However, on January 13 Musharraf's trial in the high treason case was declared "unconstitutional" by the LHC, leading to the annulment of the death sentence against the former president. The Pakistan Bar Council on Thursday filed a petition against the LHC order.

The petition filed on behalf of PBC vice chairman Abid Saqi and supported by Supreme Court Bar Association president Syed Qaib-e-Hassan among others has sought the apex court to set aside the LHC judgement, and questioned whether high court enjoys territorial



Pervez Musharraf

Netanyahu short of majority in polls again

Jerusalem, March 6: Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu has again fallen short of a parliamentary majority with his hard-line allies, final election results confirmed on Thursday. Netanyahu's coalition, extending the country's year-old political deadlock and weakening the long-standing pact as he prepares to go on trial for corruption charges. The embattled Netanyahu had been looking for a decisive victory in Monday's vote, and initial exit polls had indicated his Likud party and smaller religious and nationalist allies had captured 60 seats, just one short of a majority required to form

a new government. Netanyahu triumphantly declared a "huge victory." But a final count announced by the election commission determined that Netanyahu's coalition was premature. Likud emerged as the largest individual party, with 36 seats, ahead of 53 seats for the rival Blue and White Party. But with his smaller allies, Netanyahu's right-wing bloc captured just 58 seats, well short of the 61-seat majority. In a video statement, Netanyahu continued to claim victory on Thursday. "The Likud and the right won the election in a knockout," he said. He

accused his opponents of trying to "steal the decision from the masses of Israeli citizens who gave the Likud under my leadership a crushing victory." While Netanyahu's opponents control a majority of seats, they are deeply divided, with a hard-line nationalist party and the predominantly Arab Joint List. The Joint List captured 15 seats, making it the third largest party in parliament — its best performance ever. Those divisions could make it difficult for Blue and White's leader, former military chief Benny Gantz, to establish an alternative coalition. — AP



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu listens to Israeli interior minister Aryeh Deri during a meeting with his nationalist allies and his Likud party members, at the Knesset, Israeli Parliament, in Jerusalem. — AP

MH17 trial raises hopes of justice Video of black man's arrest sparks anger

Amsterdam, March 6: United by grief across oceans and continents, families who lost loved ones when Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down in 2014 hope that a trial starting next week will finally deliver something that has remained elusive ever since. The truth. A trial starts Monday in the Netherlands for three Russians linked to their country's security and intelligence services and a Ukrainian rebel commander. They are accused of mass murder for their alleged roles in shooting down the Boeing 777 on July 17, 2014, as it passed over conflict-ridden eastern Ukraine, killing all 298 passengers and crew. — AP

For the families of the victims, the trial is the latest development in a constant stream of news since they received devastating phone calls telling them that their loved ones had been killed. Silene Fredriksz-Hoogzand's life as she knew it ended that summer day. Her son Bryce and his girlfriend Daisy were killed when a missile fired from territory controlled by pro-Russian rebels tore the passenger jet apart, sending wreckage and bodies raining down onto fields of sunflowers in eastern Ukraine. The debris field spread across some 130 square kilometers (20 square miles). — AP

New York, March 6: Video showing New York City police officers arresting a young black man sparked outrage and elicited questions about the amount of force used to make the arrest in a city where mistrust of police remains high more than five years after Eric Garner's death from an officer's chokehold. Fitzroy Gayle, 20, pleaded for help in the video, recorded by a woman who then tweeted it, as several officers wrestle him into submission on Wednesday evening on a Brooklyn sidewalk. When Gayle asked a lone plainclothes officer why he was being stopped, the officer did not appear to answer before uniformed backup rushed

in. Police commissioner Dermot Shea said on Thursday he was ordering an internal investigation. "This was painful to watch," Mayor Bill de Blasio tweeted. "We still need to get all the facts about this case and a full investigation is underway, but I don't like what I saw. It doesn't reflect what we're building in New York City." The city's largest police union responded on Twitter, calling de Blasio's remarks "anti-police rhetoric" and accusing him of "inflaming the situation" with a rush to judgment. The man in the video had fled officers who approached him and another man as they were smoking marijuana in a

park around 7 p.m. Shea said. The officers were responding to an automated alert to gunshots. Shea said. Both men were later apprehended, but there is no indication they were linked to the gunfire, he said. Gayle was arrested and charged with resisting arrest, obstructing government administration and marijuana possession. The second man, whom police have not identified, was issued a summons. The episode is under internal review. Shea said there were "some disturbing points" to the video. One of the officers could be seen standing on the man's ankle, he said, offering a possible explanation for why Gayle screamed during the scum. — AP



In this image made from video, New York City police officers forcefully arrest 20-year-old Fitzroy Gayle in the Brooklyn borough of New York. — AP



IN BRIEF

Pregnant women give birth alone

Beijing: Scared of the deadly new coronavirus, pregnant women and new mothers are giving birth alone, keeping their newborns inside and switching to pricier private hospitals to avoid the risk of infection. One new mother, surnamed Xie, said she gave birth to her baby girl in Wuhan earlier this month alone, because nobody from her family was allowed to come with her to the hospital in the quarantine. With roads blocked, she had been unable to attend pre-natal checks and was afraid to go to hospitals for fear of cross-infection. "They let you out when you are delivering a baby," Xie said, saying she had chosen a special gynaecology hospital to give birth. "When I got there, there was only one ward left," she said. "During my time there I wore masks and gloves all the time and washed my hands very often. I seldom left my ward."

Netherlands sees 1st virus death

The Hague: The Netherlands has recorded its first death in the novel coronavirus outbreak, health officials said on Friday. "An 85-year-old man with Covid-19 was admitted to the Ikaazia hospital in Rotterdam as died," the National Institute for Public Health (RIVM) said. "This is the first patient in the Netherlands to die of the coronavirus," the institute said, adding that the source of the patient's contamination was unknown. The Netherlands has seen a jump in cases from 82 to 128 over the last two days. "The man was isolated as soon as it became clear that he had Covid-19," the RIVM said. Everyone who had contact with the patient - including visitors and health workers - is being questioned about their health, the institute said.

S.Korea, Japan fight over visas

Seoul: Seoul suspended a visa-waiver programme for Japanese nationals on Friday in retaliation for what it called an "irrational" plan by Tokyo to deal with the coronavirus outbreak escalating a diplomatic row over their containment measures. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday announced that foreign arrivals who have recently been in China or South Korea would be required to spend 14 days in quarantine. The South's two biggest airlines, Korean Air and Asiana, on Friday announced the cancellations of most or all of their flights to Japan once the measure comes into force, and K-pop band Super Junior indefinitely postponed their upcoming shows in the country. Seoul responded by announcing a suspension of its visa-waiver scheme and said it would also invalidate any travel permits issued.

RESIDENTS OF WUHAN DECRY 'FAKE' WORK

Beijing: Videos showing residents at the centre of China's coronavirus epidemic haranguing a top Chinese official have highlighted persistent anger at how authorities have handled the crisis. "The clips, which were circulating online since Tuesday, show occupants of an apartment block in the city of Wuhan yelling 'it's all fake' from windows during an official neighbourhood inspection by Vice Premier Sun Chunlan. According to Chinese media, the complaints were an outcry against the community's property management, who were allegedly only pretending to have volunteers deliver vegetables and meat to inhabitants of the towers in the lockdown city. Surprisingly, China's censors, usually quick to scrub any criticism of government officials, have allowed the homemade videos to remain on Weibo, the country's Twitter-like social media platform. But the central government appears to be using the videos to craft a narrative that Beijing is listening to the demands of its people and that local authorities are to blame for the mistakes. State news agency Xinhua reported late Thursday that Sun has asked for "in-depth investigations" to address problems raised by Wuhan residents, although there is no mention of the video.



Few tourists walk in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Friday. A Vatican spokesman confirmed the first case of coronavirus at the city-state. Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said on Friday that non-emergency medical services at the Vatican were closed so they can be sanitised. The healing baths in Lourdes, France, have been closed due to fears they may aid in spreading the coronavirus. — AP

CHINESE MEDICS SEE SUCCESS IN DRUGS ON TRIAL

Beijing, March 6: China has expanded and optimised the utilisation of drugs and therapies in the treatment of the novel coronavirus disease to block the conversion of mild cases to severe cases and save critically ill patients, health officials said. Tocilizumab, with the common brand name Actemra, was included in China's latest version of diagnosis and treatment guidelines on COVID-19, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Zhou Qi, deputy secretary-general and an academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said on Friday that the drug Tocilizumab has been found effective to block the inducement of the inflammatory storm. In an initial clinical trial, Tocilizumab was used in 20 severe Covid-19 cases. And the body temperatures of all the patients dropped within one day. Nineteen of the patients were discharged from the hospital within two weeks while one got better. Zhou was quoted as saying, "Currently, the drug is used in clinical trials in 14 hospitals in Wuhan, China." Ever since the virus started spreading fiercely after it reportedly originated from a wild animal market in Wuhan in December last year, medical professionals in China and abroad are making frantic efforts to find a cure to treat thousands of patients while efforts are underway to produce a vaccine to halt it in its tracks. China's National Health Commission (NHC) said on Friday that the death toll in the novel coronavirus outbreak has touched 3,042 with 30 new fatalities while the confirmed cases rose to 80,552 and signs that the dreaded COVID-19 was stabilising, including Hubei. — PTI

17 new deaths due to virus in Iran, toll at 124

1,234 cases confirmed over 24 hours raising total to 4,747

Tehran, March 6: Iran on Friday announced a surge in coronavirus cases and 17 more deaths including an advisor to the foreign minister, raising the total number of people killed to 124. The Islamic republic is battling the world's deadliest outbreak of the disease outside China where it originated. Iran has confirmed 1,234 new cases over the past 24 hours, raising the total number of infections to 4,747, health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour told a news conference. The new cases "are probably those who had been infected with the virus two weeks ago and... just came to us with symptoms," he added. Iran has tested more than 15,980 people for novel coronavirus since it emerged in the country, Jahanpour said. "The number of those who have recovered from the disease has reached more than 913," he added. Iran has been scrambling to contain the rapid spread of coronavirus which has infected people in all 31 of its provinces. Jahanpour said Tehran has 1,413 confirmed cases so far, which

Adviser to Iran's foreign min dies

Tehran, March 6: An adviser to Iran's foreign minister who took part in the 1979 US embassy hostage crisis has died from the virus late Thursday, state news agency IRNA reported. A former ambassador to Syria, he also served as deputy foreign minister from 1981 to 1987, Sheikhholeslam was also one of the students involved in the 1979 Iran hostage crisis, when they stormed the US embassy in Tehran and took 52 Americans hostage. This prompted Washington to sever diplomatic ties with Iran in 1980. The hostages were freed in January 1981, after 444 days in captivity. — AFP

elling to Mazandaran and Gilan - other than residents of those provinces returning from elsewhere - will be turned back. Gilan is one of the country's worst-hit provinces. Six of those who died from the virus are politicians or government officials. Before his death, Sheikhholeslam was adviser to foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. Other officials who have died of coronavirus include lawmaker Mohammad Ali Ramezani and Mojtaba Pourkhanali, an agriculture ministry official, both from Gilan. The others were Ahmad Toyserkani, an adviser to the judiciary chief, Hadi Khoshroshahi, a former envoy to the Vatican, and Mojtaba Fazel, a secretary to a senior cleric. Tehran MP Fatemeh Rahbar is in a coma after being infected, according to ISNA. A host of other officials were infected and are under quarantine, including vice-president Masoumeh Ebtekar, deputy health minister Iraj Harirchi and grand ayatollah Musa Shobari Zanjani, one of Iran's highest religious authorities. — AFP

Respect rights in virus lockdown: UN

Geneva, March 6: Governments using lockdowns and quarantines to fight the deadly new coronavirus must ensure people's rights are respected and avoid unintended consequences, the UN rights chief said on Friday. Michelle Bachelet said the response to the Covid-19 disease must be based on the principle that the virus must place human dignity and rights at its centre. Her office said lockdowns, quarantines

and similar measures "should always be carried out in strict accordance with human rights standards and in a way that is necessary and proportionate". Bachelet's comments came as the number of people infected worldwide crossed 100,000 across 89 nations, with more than 3,400 lives lost. "As a medical doctor, I understand the need for a range of steps to combat Covid-19, and as a former

head of government, I understand the often difficult balancing act when hard decisions need to be taken," Bachelet said. "However our efforts to combat this virus won't be successful unless we approach it holistically." She said the most vulnerable must be protected, particularly those with low incomes or existing illnesses, older people and those living in institutions. — AFP

CHINA LIKELY TO LIFT QUARANTINE OVER HUBEI PROVINCE VERY SOON

Beijing, March 6: China may soon lift the quarantine for more than a month, a senior government official hinted on Friday. Asked about the draconian

Covid-19 cases cross lakh mark

Bangkok, March 6: Crossing more borders, the new coronavirus hit a milestone Friday, infecting more than 100,000 people worldwide as it wove itself deeper into the daily lives of millions, infecting the powerful, the unprotected poor and the vast masses in between. The virus, which has killed nearly 3,400 people, edged into more and more US states, popped up in at least four new countries and even breached the halls of the Vatican. It forced mosques in Iran and beyond to halt weekly Muslim prayers. It brought Israeli and Palestinian authorities together to block pilgrims from Jesus' birthplace in Bethlehem. And it upended Japan's plans for the Olympic torch parade. "Who is going to feed their families?" asked Elias al-Arja, head of a hotel owners' union in Bethlehem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where tourists were banned and the storied Church of Nativity shuttered. The 100,000 figure of global infections is largely symbolic but dwarfs other major outbreaks in recent decades. SARS, MERS and Ebola affected far fewer people but had higher mortality rates. The head of the UN's food agency, the World Food Programme, warned of the potential for "absolute devastation" as the outbreak spreads ripple through Africa and the Middle East. US health officials said they expect a far lower death rate than the World Health Organisation's international estimate of 3.4 per cent, a high rate that doesn't account for mild cases that go uncounted. The fear and crackdowns that swept through China are now shifting westward, as authorities in Europe and the US stay home, authorities vigorously sanitise public places and consumers flock to stores for household staples. "The Western world is now following some of China's playbook," said a market analyst at the financial firm IG. The spectacle of a cruise ship ordered to stay at sea off the California coast over virus fears replicated other outbreaks on the other side of the globe in which hundreds of people were infected on a ship even during a quarantine. — AP

● The 1 lakh figure of global infections is largely symbolic but dwarfs other major outbreaks in recent decades.

● In Mecca's Grand Mosque, Islam's holiest site, attendance at Friday prayers was hit due to various steps

TWITTER FLAGS 'DEHUMANISING' COMMENTS

San Francisco, March 6: Twitter expanded its ban on "dehumanising language" to include coronavirus tweets. A rule barring such hate speech targeting religious groups now applies to language that dehumanises on the basis of age, disability, or disease," the Twitter CEO said. The focus is on addressing risks of offline harm, and research shows that dehumanising language increases that risk," it said. Twitter will delete tweets that break the rules, relying on users to report offending comments. Examples of rule-breaking tweets included posts that refer to people with a disease as "rats that contaminate" or "people with a particular disability as 'subhuman.'" — AFP



US President Donald Trump signs a \$8 billion emergency funding bill to combat COVID-19

TRUMP SIGNS \$8.3B BILL TO FIGHT VIRUS

Washington, March 6: US President Donald Trump on Friday signed an \$8.3 billion measure to help tackle the coronavirus outbreak that has killed 12 people in the US and infected more than 200.

The legislation provides federal public health agencies with money for vaccines, tests and potential treatments and helps state and local governments prepare and respond to the virus. The rapid spread of the virus has rocked financial markets, interrupted travel and threatens to affect everyday life in the US. "Trump had planned to sign the Bill during a visit to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. But he told reporters Friday that concerns were raised about 'one person who was potentially infected' who worked at the CDC. Trump said the person has since tested negative for the virus. — AP

Tsunami ceremony in Japan cancelled

Tokyo, March 6: Japan is cancelling an annual ceremony marking the anniversary of a deadly tsunami and nuclear disaster as the country steps up efforts to curb the new coronavirus, officials said Friday. For the past eight years, the Prime Minister, lawmakers, and family members who lost loved ones in the disaster have attended the nationally televised ceremony. "We had been exploring ways to hold the commemorative ceremony up to the last minute, for example by downsizing the event," top government spokesman Yoshihide Suga told reporters on Friday. "However, given the current situation, now is the time that we should do everything we can to prevent the spread of the infection," he said. — AFP

● FOR THE past eight years the prime minister, lawmakers, and family members who lost loved ones in the disaster have attended the nationally televised ceremony.

HEALTH | CRISIS Governments told to take charge, not leave it to health ministry

Beijing, March 6: World health officials have warned that countries are not taking the coronavirus crisis seriously enough, as outbreaks surged across Europe and in the US where medical workers sounded warnings over a disturbing lack of hospital preparedness. Cases soared in Italy, France, Greece and Iran, while a cruise ship was held off the coast of California to test passengers showing symptoms of the disease - echoing a harrowing episode in Japan several weeks ago that saw hundreds infected on a luxury liner. The epidemic has wreaked havoc on international business, tourism,

● CASES SOARED in Italy, France, Greece and Iran

● BETHLEHEM placed under lockdown

● WHO WARNED a long list of countries were not showing "the level of political commitment" needed to "match the level of the threat we all face"

● SPORTS events and schools, with almost 300 million students sent home worldwide. Even religion is affected. The Vatican said Pope Francis may have to change his schedule. Bethlehem was placed under lockdown, and Saudi Arabia emptied

Islam's holiest site in Mecca and other sites. China - where the virus emerged late last year - still accounts for the majority of cases and deaths, but infections are now rising faster abroad, with South Korea, Iran and Italy major hotspots. The WHO warned Thursday that a "long list" of countries were not showing "the level of political commitment" needed to "match the level of the threat we all face". WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters. "This epidemic is a threat for every country, rich and poor." Tedros called on the heads of government in every

country to take charge of the response and "coordinate all sectors", rather than leaving it to health ministries. What is needed, he said, is "aggressive preparedness". In the US, the largest nursing union said a survey of thousands of nurses at hospitals showed "truly disturbing" results. "They show that a large percentage of our nation's hospitals are unprepared to safely handle COVID-19," said Jane Thomas, a hygiene and infection control specialist with the union. Nurses are working without necessary personal protective equipment and lack education and training for handling the disease, said National Nurses United director

Bonnie Castillo. "The people are infected in the US. But President Donald Trump has downplayed the risk, saying 'WHO's conclusion of a 3.4 per cent mortality rate was false'." Admiral Brett Giroir, the health secretary, estimated the death rate at "somewhere between 1 per cent and one per cent" due to a high number of unreported cases. A National Guard helicopter dropped test kits on the deck of the Grand Princess cruise ship off the coast of San Francisco to determine if any of the nearly 3,500 guests and crew had contracted the new coronavirus. — AFP



SHORT TAKES



Mitchell Starc with his wife Alyssa Healy.

Starc leaves SA to watch wife at WC

Melbourne: Top Australia pacer Mitchell Starc will miss the final ODI against South Africa to watch wife Alyssa Healy play the Women's Twenty20 World Cup final against India here on Sunday. Wicketkeeper-batter Healy will be a part of Australia who will take on an in-form Indian side at the MCG. The four-time champion home team would be aiming to defend the title against first-time finalists. There to support Healy would be Starc, who will miss the third and final ODI scheduled to be played in Potchefstroom on Saturday to be in Melbourne. "It is a once-in-a-lifetime chance for Mitch to watch Alyssa in a home World Cup final and so we were happy to allow him to return home to support his wife and be part of a fantastic occasion," Australia men's team coach, Justin Langer said, adding, "Mitch has had a considerable workload in three formats, his heading home a couple of days ahead means he'll have a chance to refresh ahead of our ODI and T20 against New Zealand." — PTI



Chennai Super Kings captain M. S. Dhoni leaves for a training session. — TWITTER

IPL is very much on, says Ganguly

Kolkata: The Indian Premier League (IPL) is "very much on schedule", BCCI President Sourav Ganguly said on Friday, asserting that all measures will be in place to tackle the rapidly-spreading novel coronavirus threat which has wreaked havoc on sporting calendars globally. The T20 event, featuring both Indian and international stars, gets underway on March 29 in Mumbai. India's coronavirus patient count currently stands at 31, including 16 Italian tourists. Internationally, the deadly outbreak has so far killed more than 3,300 people and infected nearly 100,000 in about 85 countries. "IPL is very much on. Everywhere, the tournaments are going on. England are already in Sri Lanka. South Africa are here. There are no issues," Ganguly asserted. "County teams are travelling all over the world. They are travelling to Abu Dhabi, UAE to play so there is no problem," he added. — PTI

HARDIK SLAMS 158 OFF 55

Navi Mumbai, March 6: Fit-again India all-rounder Hardik Pandya blazed his way to an unbeaten 158 off just 55 balls on Tuesday for Reliance One. Pandya was in a red-hot form on Friday also as he demolished BPL bowlers. The BPL bowlers were hammered by Hardik, who looks all set to make a comeback to the ODI team versus South Africa.

One post 238/4 in their 20 overs. He had smashed his way to a sensational 105 off just 39 balls on Tuesday for Reliance One. Pandya was in a red-hot form on Friday also as he demolished BPL bowlers. The BPL bowlers were hammered by Hardik, who looks all set to make a comeback to the ODI team versus South Africa. — PTI

CITY CLIPS

Rajeshwar-Arya win doubles title

Telangana's Patilolla Rajeshwar Reddy and Arya Bhattacharya, his partner from West Bengal, won the boys doubles title at the All India Tennis Association (AITA) Super Series held in Kolkata. Rajeshwar and Arya beat Keshav Goel and Thaman Nath of West Bengal 4-6, 6-4, (10-7) in the final. In the singles final, Arunava Majumdar of West Bengal beat his staminate Arya Bhattacharya with a 6-2, 2-6, 6-3 scoreline.



Rajeshwar Reddy (right) and Arya.

Tennis camp at Riding Club courts

Academia Sports Village and Status One Projects are jointly organising a three-day Tennis Clinic for budding players from schools, colleges and private tennis clubs in the age group of 5-29 years on the synthetic courts at Hyderabad Polo & Riding Club Sports Complex in Aziz Nagar on the outskirts of the city from March 7 to 9. Training will be held in two sessions — 7 to 10 am and 4 to 7 pm. Trainees can opt for any one of the sessions for all three days. Those registering online (www.sports-villageclub.com) stand to win a wildcard entry to the High Voltage Croatia Camp scheduled next month. Further details can be had on phone number 9515125592.



Indian captain Harmanpreet Kaur (left) and her Australian counterpart Meg Lanning take a selfie ahead of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup final to be played on Sunday. — TWITTER

Tale of two captains

Harmanpreet is on the cusp of making history

Melbourne, March 6: Just one win away from ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020 glory, Harmanpreet Kaur could be about to throw the biggest birthday bash of her life. But regardless of whether or not she lifts the trophy on her 31st birthday, the India captain knows the occasion will be one to savour forever. Kaur is on the brink of making history. When she leads India onto the MCG on Sunday, she will become the first woman to ever captain India in a T20 World Cup Final. It's not just her country's first appearance in the showpiece, but also one that could break history in setting a world record attendance for a women's sporting event. But it's not just about the history books, either: Sunday will be a special day for the skipper in more ways than one with her parents travelling from Moga to see her in action — her mother due to watch her play cricket for the first time. If she was to mark the celebration with a win with the

TRENDSETTER

Harmanpreet brought more attention to women's cricket in India than ever before when she hit 171 not out to knock Australia out of ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2017. Fans all over the world will have that defining innings in mind when she leads her country in an ICC Women's T20 World Cup Final for the first time at the MCG on Sunday. Kaur celebrates her 31st birthday on the day of the 8 March Final, also International Women's Day.

As a kid, Kaur used to get teased for saying she wanted to be a cricketer when she grew up. But that clearly only fuelled her with more motiva-

tion to achieve new levels of greatness. She featured in the inaugural Women's T20 World Cup in 2009, but it took a while, and plenty of patience fine-tuning her game as a go-to batter and off-spinner, for Kaur to establish herself as a name in the side. In the wake of a disappointing Women's World Cup, where India won just one game in the group stages, Kaur was handed the captaincy reins in 2016 — and that's where it all changed. Kaur's innings of an unbeaten 171 to flatten Australia in the 2017 World Cup semi-final sparked a new triumph for women's cricket in India. It did more than that to the sold-out final at Lord's. Harmanpreet was trending on Twitter and suddenly she was the leading voice to take women's cricket to the next level, both at elite and grassroots level. In 2016, she became the first Indian woman to sign an overseas T20 contract when she signed for inaugural Women's Big Bash League champions Sydney Thunder. — Agencies

Lanning just loves to lead Australia from the front

Melbourne, March 6: The sign of a true leader is how they respond in the dark days if already. Thursday's performance proved Meg Lanning was born to carry the orders. With her side pushed to their limits in the pressure-cooker of a World Cup semi-final against South Africa in Sydney, the Australia skipper once again stood up when her country needed it most. Her unbeaten 49 set the Aussies on their way to Sunday's Final against India at the MCG, their 134 for five enough to seal their spot at potentially the biggest day in their history. The Player of the Match then snaffled two catches and rotated her bowlers superbly to withstand the Proteas' late pressure and let the whole of Australia breathe a sigh of relief. One can look long and hard, but it'll be difficult to come by a better captain's performance in this year's tournament than that. But Lanning has always been the proven pressure player, just ask Beth Mooney and Megan Schutt.

SPEARHEAD

Meg Lanning's Player of the Match performance against South Africa sealed Australia's spot in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Final. The Aussie skipper has a prolific record in T20I knockout matches, smashing 332 runs in the nine she has featured in since 2012. She could become the third Australia captain to win a World Cup on home soil on Sunday if the hosts beat India at the MCG. "She's the ultimate clutch player," said opener Mooney. "She's got this steely look in her face and when you're in the opposition, as I have been in WBBL and domestic cricket. It's not a good sight to see." Schutt added: "She's a true leader and it comes out in her cricket in moments like that. She's just so determined to do things and set the bar high for us."

"She's an outstanding leader, an outstanding batter and thank God she's on our team," Schutt said. Take a look at her T20I knockout record, and you'll see that Lanning saving the day was never not in the script. In the nine semi-finals and finals she has been a part of since the 2012 event, Lanning has smacked 322 runs, putting her top of the scoring charts with England's Charlotte Edwards coming in closest in second with 175. The scariest part is, she's yet to turn 28. The Australia captain's ability to perform brilliantly under pressure has set her apart during her illustrious career — but now she's about to face her biggest test yet. A Home World Cup is an once-in-a-career opportunity and winning it is an even rarer feat. Lyn Larsen and Michael Clarke the only Australian captains to have done so on home soil. And even then, they didn't have the pressure of performing in front of a potential record crowd for their sport. — Agencies

Advertisement for the 2020 Ford Range, featuring models like Ford Endeavour, Ford Aspire, Ford Freestyle, Ford EcoSport, and Ford Figo. Includes the slogan 'Go Further' and 'Introducing 2020 Ford Range Available in Diesel & Petrol'. Lists various Ford models and their prices across different cities like Hyderabad, Karimnagar, Mahabubnagar, Mancheriyal, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Tirupati, and Warangal.

# United drub Derby

## Ighalo shines as Manchester win 3-0

**Derby, March 6:** Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has challenged Manchester United to compete on three fronts after they moved into the FA Cup quarterfinals with a 3-0 win at Wayne Rooney's Derby on Thursday.

Solskjaer's side were never in danger of a shock fifth round exit against the second tier Rams as Luke Shaw's opener and Odion Ighalo's double booked a quarterfinal trip to Norwich.

Rooney, United's record goalscorer, is back in English football after moving to Derby from DC United in January and he was twice denied by Sergio Romero in his first meeting with his old club since 2018.

But United were always on top and extended their unbeaten run in all competitions to nine games ahead of Sunday's derby showdown with Manchester City at Old Trafford.

They remain in the hunt for the FA Cup, the Europa League and still have a chance of qualifying for the Champions League via the Premier League.

United are fifth, three points behind Chelsea, and Solskjaer has urged his players to keep their foot on the gas as they look to turn a troubled season into a memorable one.

United are chasing a record-equalling 13th FA Cup triumph. They took control at Pride Park after 33 minutes when Shaw scored just his second career goal, his volley bouncing over Kelle Roos via a deflection of Jesse Lingard.

Nigerian striker Ighalo, signed on loan from Shanghai Shenhua in January, got the second goal seven minutes later. Former England star Rooney who left United to rejoin Everton in 2017, almost grabbed a consolation but Romero produced an excellent stop to turn his late free-kick over. — AFP

### THE RESULT

**Derby** **0**  
**Manchester United** **3**  
(Luke Shaw 33, Odion Ighalo 41, 70)



Liverpool's Mohammed Salah (from left), Roberto Firmino and Georginio Wijnaldum during a practice session at Anfield on Friday. — LIVERPOOL

# Reds have task cut out against Bournemouth

**London, March 6:** Sadio Mane has urged Liverpool to use the worst week of their season as fuel to power the Premier League leaders a step closer to the title when they face Bournemouth on Saturday.

Jürgen Klopp's side crashed to a stunning 0-3 defeat against struggling Watford last weekend that ended their hopes of going unbeaten through the entire league campaign.

The Reds' limp display at Vicarage Road was followed by another underwhelming effort on Tuesday as Chelsea knocked them out of the FA Cup with a 2-0 fifth round victory.

Klopp was willing to sacrifice the FA Cup to rest several of his players, even if it prolonged Liverpool's slump. Mohamed Salah, Roberto Firmino, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Alisson Becker were among the stars missing from the starting lineup at Stamford Bridge.

Whether that proves a wise gamble will become clearer over the course of the next week. With Liverpool's 0-1 Champions League last 16 first leg loss at Atletico Madrid having triggered this unexpected dip, the European champions have now endured three defeats from their last four games in all competitions. Even their lone win in that sequence was hardly convincing as they needed a blunder from West Ham keeper Lukasz Fabianski to spark a come from behind 3-2 success. Liverpool have been so dominant in the league —

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winning 18 successive games before the Watford debacle — that it is understandable if they have lost a little intensity with the title almost in their grasp. They are 22 points clear of second-placed Manchester City and need just four more wins to end their 30-year wait to be crowned kings of English football.

Atletico are due at Anfield for the decisive second leg on Wednesday, but Liverpool winger Mane knows it is important to get back on track domestically before turning to their defence of the Champions League.

Meanwhile, Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp has confirmed that Brazilian goalkeeper Alisson Becker will miss Wednesday's crucial Champions League clash against Atletico Madrid after suffering a hip injury. Alisson sustained the muscle problem in training this week and was sidelined for Liverpool's FA Cup fifth-round defeat at Chelsea on Tuesday. — AFP

# Shooting WC in Delhi is put off after virus scare

**New Delhi, March 6:** The upcoming combined shooting World Cup in the national capital was on Friday postponed to May while an Olympic test event in Tokyo stood cancelled due to the global novel coronavirus outbreak.

The tournament, sanctioned by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), was to be held from March 15 to 25 in the capital's Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range. The Olympic Test event was scheduled to be held from April 16. The World Cup will now be held in two parts before the Olympic Games.

"It is proposed to divide the World Cup in two parts and hold Rifle and Pistol competitions on May 5-12,

2020, while Shotgun competitions are June 2-9, 2020," the ISSF said in a statement. The decision was taken after the tournament organisers National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) approached the ISSF with a proposal to postpone the event.

The development comes after the government imposed travel restrictions on the entry of travellers from affected countries such as China, Italy, South Korea, Japan and Iran, in a bid to contain the coronavirus outbreak. Considering the extraordinary situation, the ISSF has also requested the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to prolong the internal Olympic qualification period in

order to ensure all shooters get equal chances of making it to the Games. In all, 22 countries had pulled out of the Delhi event. **SAI SUSPENDS BIOMETRICS AT ALL ITS CENTRES** Alarmed by the rising cases of novel coronavirus outbreak, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) is set to suspend biometric attendance at its centres across the country. India has so far reported 31 cases.

"The coronavirus is taking a gigantic shape. In a day or two, we will come out with an order to temporarily suspend biometric attendance for our employees in all our centres. It is one of the precautionary measures we are taking to control," a top SAI official said. —PTI

# VIKAS PUNCHES HARD, MAKES SECOND ROUND

**New Delhi, March 6:** Compromised Games gold medalist Vikas Krishan (69kg) put up a dominating performance to begin his campaign with a 5-0 victory against Kyrgyzstan's Nursultan Mamataly at the Asian-Oceania Olympic Qualifiers in Amman, Jordan on Friday.

The former Asian Games gold medalist hardly put a foot wrong in a powerful display to storm into the quarterfinals, where he will meet the third seed Quincy Mensah. **SEVONRETS OKAZAWA OF JAPAN** One more win for the soup-will see Krishan book his trip to Tokyo. Krishan has so far competed in 2012 and 2016 Olympics. —PTI



Harika Dronavalli studies the board during her fourth round match against Nana Dzagnidze at the FIDE Women's Grand Prix chess tournament in Lausanne on Friday.

# Harika gets second win, is in joint lead

**Lausanne, March 6:** Indian Grandmaster Dronavalli Harika posted a second straight win, beating Nana Dzagnidze in the fourth round to remain in joint lead at the FIDE Women's Grand Prix chess tournament here. Harika, the World No. 9, has three points after four rounds and shares the lead with Aleksandra Goryachkina of Russia, who beat Antoneta Stefanova (Bulgaria). Harika outclassed her Georgian opponent late on Thursday in 27 moves in a queen pawn opening capturing on an error in the 25th move. She faces the 21-year-old Goryachkina in the fifth round.

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