

Max: 32.2°C
Min: 23.1°C
RH: 60%
Rain: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Rain likely. Max/Min temp. 32/22°C

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Uttarayanam
Thithi: Phalguna Suddha Pournami till 11.15 pm
Star: Purnvashaguni till 1.07 am
Varjyam: 11.08 am to 12.31 pm
Durmuhurtam: 12.50 noon to 1.37 pm and 3.12 pm to 3.59 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
HURJI CALENDAR
Rajjib 13,1441 AH
PRATYAKSH
Fajr: 5:29 am
Zohar: 12:37 pm
Asar: 4:44 pm
Maghrib: 6:20 pm
Isha: 7:37 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6:24 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6:27 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 6:11 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 6:10 AM

BRIEF

F1 race without spectators
Dubai: The Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix will go ahead on March 22 without fans due to the coronavirus crisis, a blow to the Gulf Arab state's important tourism sector. Bahrain is the second F1 race casualty of the virus. The Chinese Grand Prix scheduled for April 19 has already been postponed. Racing without fans will be a first for the sport. Accredited media, however, can attend. — Reuters

J&K gets new political party

Srinagar: Former PDP leader Altaf Bukhari on Sunday launched the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP). The former PDP leader vowed to work towards restoring Jammu & Kashmir's statehood and ensure domestic rights of people in jobs and education, and said that demoting the state to a Union Territory by the Centre was "unpleasant and bitter". — PTI

Another missing MP MLA returns

Bhopal/Indore: Bisahlal Singh of the ruling Congress in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday became the eighth MLA to return after remaining 'missing' for the last six days, prompting state Home Minister Bala Bachchan to say that the BJP's bid to topple the government has failed. With the return of Singh, all but two MLAs of the Congress are now accounted for. — PTI

India, 12th for woman directors

Mumbai: With more and more organisations in the country realising the importance of gender parity, a recent study has revealed that India ranks 12th globally in women member presence on board. According to a recent study, India ranked 12th worldwide in women member presence on board. This study was done amongst 7,824 listed companies across 36 countries. — PTI

COUNTER POINT



Don't panic... bank is closed due to Holi!

Yes Bank's Rana Kapoor arrested

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, MARCH 8
A court on Sunday remanded Yes Bank founder Rana Kapoor to the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) custody till March 11 after he was arrested on charges in the early hours of Sunday. "The ED, which had summoned Kapoor to its office on Saturday afternoon after raids at his and his daughters' residences in Mumbai and Delhi, arrested him following several hours of interrogation. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has, meanwhile, begun a probe into Yes Bank's affairs as officials started collecting documents on the matter, sources said Sunday. They said the officials have refused to comment on the developments. CBI wants complete secrecy before any search that it might be planning. The sources refused to elaborate on the nature of the probe — preliminary



Yes Bank former promoter Rana Kapoor being taken to a court after being arrested by the Enforcement Directorate under money laundering charges in Mumbai on Sunday. — PTI

DRIVER OFFERS TO DROP WOMAN HOME, RAPES HER

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8
A 33-year-old cab driver allegedly raped a woman in his car after taking her to an isolated spot on the pretext of giving her a lift to her village on Friday. On Sunday, he was nabbed by police. The victim, a 23-year-old labourer from Chandanavally village in Shadab mandal, had gone to a nearby village on a personal errand. By the time she was to return, it was evening, and she was waiting for an auto. Praveen (30), the cab driver (also from Chandanavally), noticed her and offered her a lift home. As she knew Praveen, she accepted. She also wanted to charge her mobile phone. After she boarded, Praveen took another route after travelling a distance and took her to an isolated area before assaulting her in the car, she told police. "The woman alleged that she tried to fight him, but Praveen overpowered her and sexually assaulted before abandoning her," said B. Shankaraiiah, Shabad police inspector. "That night, she managed to get home and on Saturday lodged a complaint." She was sent for medical examination. On apprehending the accused, the police seized the car to collect traces of semen. The clothes of the accused, allegedly committed suicide on Saturday. His body was discovered on Sunday morning in the Arya Vaishya Bhavan in Khairatabad. Rao had checked into the Bhavan on Saturday, police said. On Sunday morning, housekeeping staff knocked on his room's door but with no response, called on Rao's driver sleeping in his vehicle in the parking area. "The driver then phoned Rao's wife sub-inspector A. Sanki Devi of Hyderabad Police Station said." She asked the driver and staff to inform the police. When the cops arrived, the Bhavan staff broke open the door to find Rao dead on the bed. Finding vomit in the room, police suspected Rao

WORLD 12
Rival Kamala backs Joe Biden's Prez bid

SPORTS | 16
Hardik, Dhawan back in one-day squad

TABLET
Playing by their own rules

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Village to get more money

FM gives ₹1.38 lakh-cr for day-to-day expenses, ₹22,061cr for asset creation

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Telangana finance minister T. Harish Rao on Sunday presented his maiden budget for the 2020-21 Budget in the Assembly on Sunday, with a total outlay of ₹1,82,914.42 crore. Of this, the revenue expenditure (day to day) is ₹1,38,669.82 crore, while the capital expenditure (for long-term projects) is ₹22,061.16 crore. The budget prioritises panchayat raj, municipal administration, irrigation, education and the health sector, as well as the government signature plans such as the construction of double bedroom houses and the Rythu Bandhu programme. "The government is directly allocating funds to strengthen gram panchayats," Mr Rao said during his budget presentation. "The government is providing matching funds to that provided by the Centre as well as the Finance Commission's funds. Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, a monthly ₹65 crore will be allocated."

The finance minister said ₹205 crore was proposed for panchayat raj and rural development. Another ₹14,809 crore is for the municipal department, besides the monthly ₹148 crore for the development of towns and cities. "Under the Urban Mission Bhagrathi 800 crore, we are proposing ₹86 crore for the remaining 58 municipalities," said the finance minister during the Assembly. **■ Page 5: 28HK project gets ₹11,000cr, schools ₹10,000cr**



Finance minister T. Harish Rao (left) takes the blessings of Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu before the presentation of the state budget for fiscal 2020-21 in the Legislative Assembly in Hyderabad on Sunday. — DC

Hyderabad projects get funds ahead of civic polls

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8
As reported by Deccan Chronicle a week back, the government on Sunday proposed a strong city-centric element in the 2020-21 Budget in view of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections towards the end of this year. Finance Minister T. Harish Rao earmarked ₹10,000 crore for the Musi River purification and the Musi River Front Project as well as for other special projects and works in Hyderabad Urban agglomeration area. Maintaining that the Hyderabad Metro Rail entered the history books as the biggest metro rail project after Delhi's, Mr Rao noted in the Assembly that the metro corridors between Miyapur and LB Nagar, Nagole and Ameerpet, and Raidurg, and Jubilee Bus Station and Ilmbun have become operational. The last five kilometers covering the old city will soon be complete. In the second phase, plans are for the metro rail from Raidurg to Shamshabad and from BHEL to Lakdikapul. "Hyderabad is the jewel of Telangana," the finance minister said. "This city with 400 years of history is known as the most affordable and livable city. Hyderabad has a moderate climate and a cosmopolitan culture is getting worldwide appreciation. He blamed the city's current turmoil due to the policies of the erstwhile AP. Facilities have not improved in proportion to the population's growth. **■ Page 5: Hyderabad needs ₹50,000cr in five years**

Virus: Ship denied entry in Mangaluru

Mangaluru, March 8: A cruise ship with a Panama flag has been turned back at the New Mangalore port here following the Centre's advisory in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, officials said. The vessel *MSC Lirica* was sent back on Saturday as the Union ministry of shipping had directed all ports not to allow any cruise ship from foreign destinations to call on the port here during the cruise season. Cruise ships are being denied access to ports across the world as the virus infected 1,07,947 people and killed 3,666 across 105 countries. On Saturday, an Italian cruise ship was denied permission to dock in both Thailand and Malaysia. It was carrying 1400 Italians for less than 14 days. Covid-19 requires more than 14 days to show up symptoms. Agencies

Kerala finds 5 Covid-19 patients

A family of 3 skips screening at airport, infects 2 relatives
DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8
Five people from Kerala tested positive for coronavirus on Sunday, taking India's total number of infections to 28. Out of the five persons, three have a recent travel history to Italy while two others were their relatives. The three people — a couple and their son — had evaded health screening at the airport on their return on February 29 despite having symptoms. All the five had from Pathnamthitta district. Another person from Tamil Nadu has been diagnosed with fever during screening at the airport and has been sent to a hospital for observation. The 35-year-old boy arrived in Chennai from the US via Doha on Sunday. Authorities sent him to RGGH for examining him in a special ward set up in the airport and tests were being conducted to ascertain if the boy has coronavirus. As for the Kerala case, the five infected people had been isolated at Pathnamthitta general hospital and the state has been put under high alert. Incidentally, India's first three positive cases too had been reported from Kerala. "The three people, who had returned from Venice, had not informed authorities that they had come back from Italy. When their relatives at the airport sought treatment at private and taluk hospitals with virus symptoms, the health authorities came to know about the travel history of the people who returned to India. They had evaded screening at the airport and were reluctant to get admitted at the hospital initially. Kerala health minister said such practices have to be stopped. "The Italy-returned family hid their travel details from the health authorities. Such practices have to be seen as a crime. Those who come from countries like Iran, Italy, South Korea and China should report to the health department immediately," health minister K. Shailaja said. **■ Page 5: Officials were agnost over slip**

CASTE | ROW Police find no poison bottle or suicide note in Maruti Rao's room, rule out foul play

Man who got Dalit son-in-law killed ends life

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8
Maruthi Rao, the primary accused in the 2018 Perumalla Pranay murder case, allegedly committed suicide on Saturday. His body was discovered on Sunday morning in the Arya Vaishya Bhavan in Khairatabad. Rao had checked into the Bhavan on Saturday, police said. On Sunday morning, housekeeping staff knocked on his room's door but with no response, called on Rao's driver sleeping in his vehicle in the parking area. "The driver then phoned Rao's wife sub-inspector A. Sanki Devi of Hyderabad Police Station said." She asked the driver and staff to inform the police. When the cops arrived, the Bhavan staff broke open the door to find Rao dead on the bed. Finding vomit in the room, police suspected Rao



Maruthi Rao

Reddy said there did not appear to be any foul play. "The door was locked from the inside," he said. No suicide note was found. Rao had been accused by his daughter Amrutha of killing her husband Pranay, a 24-year-old Dalit. Pranay was hacked to death on September 14, 2018, in front of their pregnant wife Amrutha. She was an upper caste and was leaving a hospital in Nalgonda when the couple had eloped in January 2018 as her family was against the relationship. A day after the murder, Amrutha blamed her father. Rao had allegedly contracted killers for ₹1 crore to get rid of Pranay. P. Sankarajun, receptionist at the Bhavan, said Rao was a regular at the Bhavan though over the past two years he had rarely visited. He said Rao had died on Saturday at around 4.30 pm. Rao left his residence in Miryalaguda and reached the city after about two hours and checked into the room. **■ Page 4: Trial may have put pressure on him, says brother**

IN BRIEF

Tiger spotted in Adilabad

Adilabad: A tiger was again found moving in the villages bordering Bheemur in Adilabad district. It is said that the tiger, which is suspected to have migrated from Maharashtra, is moving in the villages along the river Penganga in Bheemur, Jainad and Bela mandals. Forest staff intensified patrols for the safety of the people for the tiger that surfaced near the Tamsi (K) and Gollaghat villages in Bheemur mandal.

3 AWAIT TEST FOR COVID-19 AT GANDHI

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Three persons are currently under isolation at Gandhi General Hospital awaiting results of tests for possible novel coronavirus infection, the health department said on Sunday. Results of tests for seven others were also awaited but these individuals were sent back home with instructions to follow the quarantine protocol, the department said.

Meanwhile, health minister Erala Rajendar on Sunday called on department officials to be on extra alert with five new cases of Covid-19 being reported from Keralas. Mr Rajendar was speaking during an inspection at the Government Chest Hospital at Yousufguda here.

He urged officials to complete setting up the isolation ward at the hospital at the earliest. All the district and sub-city hospitals too must be ready with isolation wards, Mr Rajendar said.

The Chest Hospital will have four individual rooms in addition to 56 beds distributed in four wards. There will be a total of eight ventilators that will be available for treating potential Covid-19 patients at the hospital.

Elsewhere, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation started a campaign to educate citizens to create awareness about Covid-19 disease. The corporation said it has erected several hoardings with information on the disease and its prevention of its spread across the city.

It also said that it distributed pamphlets about Covid-19 in Urdu, Telugu, and Hindi in private and government educational institutes.

The GIMC staff has also been deputed to visit all slums and educate people about the disease.

The corporation urged people that anyone with flu like symptoms including fever, cough or cold, should approach a doctor for a check-up and those who arrived from other Covid-19 affected countries, should call the 104 helpline for further guidance.

CHHOTA BHEEM JOINS FIGHT AGAINST VIRUS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

The pint-sized animated superhero Chhota Bheem, has thrown his considerable weight among children in the battle to contain the spread of novel coronavirus in the country.

In a 1.37 minute short film *Safety Measures Against Coronavirus* released on Saturday, Chhota Bheem talks about the "major scare" about coronavirus and lists out simple steps of hygiene that everyone should practice to keep the virus away from them. The short film highlights how the disease spreads and what everyone can do, including educating those who cannot sneeze without taking adequate precautions like covering their mouth with a tissue or handkerchief.

"It just so happened that the idea of us doing something to create awareness about the disease came up during a discussion with IT minister K.T. Rama Rao who suggested the possibility," Mr Rajiv Chilaka, the founder and CEO of Green Gold Animation Pvt. Limited, said.

"It also just so happened that the discussion with Ministers Rao happened on the day when there was a scare in the IT sector about the virus and we got working on it and released the video today," Mr Chilaka said. While the first version released was in English, it will also be released in Hindi, Telugu and other languages. "Children need this kind of awareness," he said.



A family wears masks while on a drive in the city on Sunday. While many people have preferred staying indoors, some are wearing masks and venturing out after a techie tested positive for coronavirus. — P. SURENDRA

Coronavirus strikes at tur out at theatres

Covid-19 impact: Malls also report reduced footfalls

Whatsapp university full of fake cures for Covid-19

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL I DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

The news of a coronavirus positive case created havoc all over the city. The impact was so huge that the ripples touched even cinema halls and bars. Most of the malls were deserted as well.

Before the pandemic entered the subcontinent, social media took over real news and created an atmosphere of fear amongst the public.

Ticket sales at cinema halls are as low as 30 per cent to 40 per cent. Even though there are premium theatres where the management is ensuring all the safety and precautionary measures, the turnout remains poor. Infocss, a software company, cancelled a bulk booking.

"They booked 70 tickets and later cancelled it as the news of a coronavirus positive patient broke out," said the manager of Asian Mukta Cinemas, MJR Square, Narapally.

The crisis created by the virus is not just affecting the state or the country but global cinema is also feeling the shock. James Bond is also a victim of the coronavirus. The epidemic has shaken and stirred the British, as the movie's release dates have been pushed to November. Earlier *No Time To Die* was slated for release in March 2020. Coronavirus is the real villain in the producers \$30 million loss caused by the postponement.

"Producers' investments are huge in cinema, generating a lot of employment along with the most affordable entertainment. If this continues, producers are the ones who will end up in the losses," said Mr P Kiran, a prominent producer in South India.

"We maintain all the hygiene and making sure canteens are safe, following the guidelines of WHO. But still there is no turn out despite the cine being at regular intervals," said Mr Sunil Narang, owner of Asian Theatres. "We have 40 theatres and we maintain the best standards. If this continues, we will face huge losses."

The Film Development Corporation is planning a meeting on this issue. Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, the chairman, Mr P Rammoan Rao, said "The fear around the virus has affected the cinema market. The numbers are very low in the theatres which affect, the distributors, exhibitors, mostly. If this continues, we will have to close the theatres for a few days." Bars too are feeling the heat of Covid-19. Customers are down to a trickle because of the fear of this virus. There is a drop of 30 per cent in daily sales. About 50 to 70 people work in a bar. It affects all, mostly

Whatsapp university full of fake cures for Covid-19

VIKRAM SHARMA I DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

- Pasupu (haldi/turmeric):** 40 grams
- Jerra (cumin seeds):** 40 grams
- Miryala (pepper):** 10 grams
- Santini (ginger):** 40 grams
- Mix them and consume in warm water for protection from coronavirus...**

MANY CURES

● A BJP MLA from Assam, Suman Haripriya, has suggested people to use inevitable *gaumutra* or cow urine and dung to treat the deadly virus.

● The Centre's Ayush Ministry has been criticised for advocating Ayurvedic, Homeopathy and Unani medicines to ward off coronavirus.

● Arsenicum Album 30, a homeopathic medicine is in huge demand to treat the virus.

● People are also purchasing another tablet Phosphorus 30.

● WhatsApp forwards suggest a mixture of turmeric, ginger, pepper, and garlic, all excellent in themselves, but hardly cures for a virus.

So goes one of many bizarre forwards on the messaging service, WhatsApp. Mixed in with the more scientific advice on the importance of face masks and sanitizers, are the many 'life saving' concoctions like the one above, which the inventors assure will give you immunity from the deadly Coronavirus. Since India has probably the most gullible people on the planet, many believe that these home-made remedies will protect them from the dangerous virus. There is an increasing demand for Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and Unani medicines for prevention and cure of Coronavirus which is actually being sold by the government run Department of Ayush centres in Hyderabad.

Sources in the health department disclosed to *Deccan Chronicle* that the business of self-proclaimed Ayurvedic practitioners and hakeems across the state has suddenly begun to flourish like never before. "Of late this activity has increased across Hyderabad and the rest of

the state. But when people want to believe in them, there is nothing we can do unless there are specific complaints or cases where the concoctions have harmed the user. In times like this, people are willing to buy anything that comes with an assurance that it can prevent and cure Coronavirus. It is a peculiar situation," said an official.

The magic potions come in a variety of colours -

Attendance falls at funerals in city

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

A strange fallout of the coronavirus scare is that fewer people are attending funerals at burial grounds. Ever since a coronavirus case was identified in the city, Christian cemeteries in the twin cities are seeing very low attendance, said Mr Jakkargari Gabriel, secretary and in charge of the Christian graveyard at Narayaguda. "Burial services usually have 700 to 1,200 people coming to pay their respects, but this whole week we failed to see that crowd," said Mr T. Devadas at the Narayaguda cemetery. "Only the close relatives of the deceased or close

● Only about 300 persons are attending funerals, against about 1,200 earlier. There is no shortage of people attending church services

buddies are attending, and they keep away from the crowd even after coming here," said Mr Mitari Raju, an assistant at the graveyard. However, there is no shortage of people attending church services. "On Wednesday, we have a special service as the Lent Season is going on. We had the regular number of the congregation, and even in the Sunday service there is no shortage of people," said Mr B. Vasanth Rao, secretary of the Coordination Committee.

Shaheen women have set an example, says Sahay

HARLEEN MINOCHA I DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Hailing the power of women during International Women's Day celebrations at the Hyderabad Press Club on Sunday, Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy said the government is taking all steps to ensure a safe environment for all women across the country. Mr Reddy recalled the heinous 2017 Nirbhaya case as well as the Disha rape case last year and said that the need of the hour is to make amendments in the Constitution in order to ensure swift justice to the victims. "The government is looking into the matter of petitions filed by the Nirbhaya convicts and I have also personally spoken to the state administration in Telangana to ensure that the law is put down to the victims effectively," he said. "What especially caught my attention was that though, was Mr Anand Sahay, president of the Press Club of India, hailed the Shaheen Bagh protests. He added that he hoped to see the day when a woman officer leads the



Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy, Press Club of India president and DC columnist Anand Sahay and secretary Anant Bagtikar participate at an International Women's Day event in the city on Sunday.

"The women of Shaheen Bagh have set an example for women across the country by coming out on the streets. So many Shaheen Bagh-like protests have erupted led by women. Women have come out on the streets, agitating against an issue that is important to them," Mr Sahay, a *Deccan Chronicle* columnist, said in the presence of the minister whose government has tried its best to put down the Shaheen Bagh protests. He added that he hoped to see the day when a woman officer leads the

armed forces. Mr Anant Bagtikar, general secretary of the Press Club of India, appealed to the minister to ensure that the Maternity Benefit Act is implemented effectively for women across the country. "Maternity Benefit Act especially in the private sector is not being implemented which leads to a lot of difficulty for women professionals. The government must ensure that laws concerning the safety of women are implemented with utmost urgency," Mr Bagtikar said.

Something special about our land, air: Venkaiah

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, on the occasion of International Women's Day, said there was a need to return to systems of 'the past' when women of the country were respected. He was speaking at an event organised to launch a platform to support women innovators. The event was also attended by Governor Tamilsai Soundararajan.

Mr Naidu said that one day wasn't enough to celebrate women. "We have forgotten our roots. Women's day, parents' day, mother's day. All these are symbols of the past." Somewhere, western culture has crept in," he said. Mr Naidu said many people were under the wrong impression that Indian women needed to just look after the home and not do anything else. "People say this is Indian culture. Who told you that? Look at our Vedas, Upanishads, Gargi and Maitreyi were at the forefront, leading people. Also, notice how most rivers are named after women. How can you say it is not our culture," he asked.

Mr Naidu said the country needed to revert to its past. "Ours is one of the oldest surviving civilisations. I am not talking



Vice President Venkaiah Naidu sharing a light moment with BJP leader Karuna Gopal at an event organised by the International Women Innovators Network on Sunday.

about religion; it is only a way of worship. I am talking about culture, the way of life. Look at the heads of MNCs. They are mostly Indian. There is something special about our land, water and air," he said.

The Vice President said a societal change was necessary to empower women and stop the atrocities against them. "Whenever a horrible crime happens, like Nirbhaya or Disha, people ask for new laws. That isn't necessary. We need political will and a societal change in values," he said. Governor Soundararajan, in his brief address, spoke entirely about Mr Naidu. She credited his guidance for her successful political career and her current position as governor of the state. Mr Venkaiah Naidu, said the country needn't fear about the coronavirus situation. He said the temperature of the country was high and didn't support the virus survival. He said Indian 'food habits' would also 'help Indians eat only cooked food, not raw food. You can eat whatever kind of food you want, but cooked food is safe," he said.

State honours achievers, among them 3 state staff

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Thirty women were on Sunday recognised for their achievements in various fields and were honoured for their services on the occasion of International Women's Day at a special programme organised event at Raamudra.

This was one of several events organised in the city to celebrate the day. Giving away the awards, minister for women's welfare Satyavathi Rathod complimented the awardees for their service and setting standards in their various fields of work. "She said the state government has launched several initiatives for women's welfare. For the first time this year, three women from the women's welfare department were among those selected for the honours. These were an anganwadi supervisor, a teacher and an ayah. All the awardees were presented with a certificate and ₹1 lakh.



Minister Satyavathi Rathod presents a cheque for ₹1 lakh and a certificate to a woman achiever at an event in Hyderabad on Sunday.

Fused lights, dirty water, wrong challans

No BSNL timings board at Lingampalli

There is no board regarding timings at the BSNL Customer Service Centre at Lingampalli, (Chandanagar), which is causing a lot of inconvenience to customers. My repeated posts on Twitter to the BSNL Corporate Office, BSNL Telangana and BSNL Chairman and Managing Director have not yielded results. My personal interactions with the CSC executive also went in vain. I request BSNL to wake up from deep slumber and install the board.

— S. Murali Sudhakar
Chandanagar, Hyderabad

Fused, defunct streetlights at Yamjal

Through your esteemed newspaper I would like to draw the attention of the authorities towards the poor condition of streetlights in Injapur, Yamjal, in Ranga Reddy district. Almost all the bulbs have been fused or damaged. The wiring has suffered wear and tear as they have not been repaired for a long time. After it gets dark, moving on the roads is dangerous and risky. Some individuals trip and fall. The non-availability of proper lighting increases the chances of accidents. The Chief Minister should include the functioning of streetlights in the Panna Pragathi programme.

— Lakkaraju Sri Harsha
Injapur

Forced to buy books from pvt schools

It is to bring in your notice that a few of the reputed private schools in Hyderabad are making it compulsory to buy notebooks and textbooks from the school. This is a clear violation of consumer rights.

— Anonymous

Mistakes in pattadar book not rectified

I have visited the Mandal Revenue Office of Mulugu mandal of Siddipet district several times for my wife's new pattadar passbook. The passbook by the MRO has mistakes and these have not been rectified. I sent a message to the Chief Minister's Office but it was of no use. Even posting a message on Twitter to minister K.T. Rama Rao was not of use. I request Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu to look into the matter.

— Abdul Razzak
Basapur village, Mulugu mandal, Siddipet

Traffic signals necessary at Yapral mandir

It is learnt that the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation will be soon fulfilling a long-awaited need of commuters in the twin cities by installing 155 signalling systems at crucial road junctions.

One of the most accident-prone and dangerous crossroads is located in front of the Hanuman Mandir in Yapral where the Yapral-Kowkoo main road crosses the Balajinagar-Yapral road. There is a precarious slope at this junction when coming from Balajinagar, making it a potential hazard. We the residents of Yapral, Balajinagar, and Kowkoo appeal to the authorities in the GHMC to install a traffic signal system at this accident-prone junction on priority.

We had brought this issue to the notice of our legislator and the corporator for necessary help last year. We appeal to them again for expediting our request and prevent potential accidents.

— Maj. Gen. Rajendra Singh (Retired)
28, Prakruthik Vihar,
Yapral.



Was wearing helmet, cops fined me for helmetless driving

I am a resident of Attapur. Two weeks back, while I was travelling near Aramgarh crossroads on a two-wheeler, my photograph was

clicked by a traffic constable and I was fined ₹135 for violation of not wearing helmet even though I was wearing one at that time. The photograph (in photo

above) clearly shows that I was wearing a helmet. I have reported this matter to the higher-ups but nothing has been done. I am a senior citizen and a

responsible retired government servant. I request the traffic authorities concerned to rectify the error and do the needful as early as possible.

— Virender Singh
Retd joint commissioner,
prohibition and excise
Flat No. 903, Pearl
Heights, Attapur,
Hyderabad



Sanathnagar flyover appears bombed

The Sanathnagar flyover, a three-way flyover connecting Balakompet, Sanathnagar and Fathenagar, is in a very bad condition. The road is full of potholes making driving inconvenient for motorists travelling on the flyover. This is an extremely busy flyover especially in the mornings and evenings, the bad roads lead to traffic congestion. Last year, the flyover was closed for repairs but nothing has changed; in fact, the condition has worsened since then.

Heavy vehicles also use the flyover, which is not permitted due to its bad condition. Some parts of the bridge are covered with steel sheets due to the small gaps that have opened up. If the potholes and gaps are not fixed properly, it is likely to cause an accident. As citizens, we request the GHMC to fix these roads quickly for easier and safe commute.

— Sheba Alle
Hyderabad.



Streetlights on during the day

Officials should take note that every day some streetlights remain switched on even during the day in Yapral circle.

— Prem Raj
Hyderabad

Osmanpura overhead tanks, sumps, overflow

Tap water is overflowing from the overhead tanks and sumps on Osmanpura Road in Daberpura. This is causing water stagnation and unhygienic conditions on the road. Complaints to the GHMC to fix this have not led to any action.

— D.K. Jaiswal
Hyderabad



Sewage water flows at MS Maqtha always

I would like to draw the attention of the authorities of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board towards the overflowing sewage water for years near MS Maqtha at Somajiguda. No official is responding to our problem. It is causing viral diseases and other health problems in my locality. I request the officials to resolve this issue.

— Shaik, Hyderabad



Shop at Feelkhana under repair for long

I want to report this complaint that the road in front of our shops is under repair for the last 20 days. The work is progressing very slowly. We are facing a problem because of the dust. No one is taking any action.

— Jinesh
Feelkhana,
Hyderabad

Garbage thrown on land owned by agri varsity

I live in Rajendranagar. Behind my house is a land belonging to the agriculture university where nearby residents throw waste. This is causing a problem for us.

Several complaints to the GHMC have gone unheard. I request officials to take action.

— Vijayalaxmi
Rajendranagar

TCS, Vamsidhar School drivers are rash

On the stretch of road from Badanepet to Nadergul, buses hired by TCS and those belonging to Vamsidhar School are driven in a very rash and negligent manner. We were almost hit by a bus of TCS once. TCS has turned a deaf ear to our communications regarding this. There is

no police patrol or traffic to control the bus drivers on this road. I request the police to look into this matter and protect others on the road.

— Badrinath Tulsii
H. No. 227r, Sri Sai Nagar,
Jillelaguda,
RR district.

Metro Rail must help senior citizens

As a senior citizen who often uses the Metro Rail, I find that younger commuters are rather insensitive to the needs of the elderly to their entitlement of a seat in the dedicated coaches. Why do we not have a dedicated team of marshals in the coaches to ensure there is smooth implementation of seats assigned to senior travellers? If some group health

insurance and dignified work conditions are offered, I am sure some of us senior citizens who have the time to spare would be willing to volunteer. Hyderabad Metro Rail managing director N.V.S. Reddy has been very innovative. Is he listening?

— Suresh Arcakatty,
402A Sri Sai Srinivasa
Estate, West Marredpally,
Secunderabad



Autos are overloaded near Chatta Bazaar

Local auto-rickshaws are carrying heavy equipment in Chatta Bazaar which is very dangerous to other road users. The traffic police should take action and prevent the practice.

— Suffiyansharif
Akberbagh, Malakpet

Dirty Manjeera water at Fathenagar

We the resident of Fathenagar, Balanagar are experiencing a drinking water problem. The Manjeera water supplied to us has a very bad odour every time it is released. The water isn't supplied regularly either, it is released only once a week. This makes it difficult for us citizens.

This problem hasn't been resolved even after constant complaints to the municipal and water board authorities. The water if consumed might cause health problems. We request the officials that this issue should be looked into quickly.

— A. Sheba
Hyderabad

I gave Uber driver ₹1K for a fare of ₹670

I had booked a Uber cab from my residence to Madhapur on March 1 and was assigned a car (TS09 UA 0610, driver Madhu). I did not have enough cash to pay and I stopped him on the way and withdrew cash from an ATM. After completing the trip, I gave him ₹1,000 for the trip costing ₹670. Before I could realise he drove off with-

out returning the change. I tried several times to reach the Uber customer care number, but there was no response. I raised a complaint on their website, but to no avail. I hope the officials concerned will look into the matter and do the needful.

— P. Raj Benhur
Neredmet, Hyderabad

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SHORT TAKES
FAMILY SAYS PUSHED OUT DUE TO CASTE

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

A couple, Bikhshapathy and Sulochana Devi, alleged that they were forcefully removed from a flat in which they were living as tenants in Bachupally because one of the flat owners in the building objected to their caste.

Bikhshapathy, who works as a mason on a daily wage, used to live in Nizampet and moved his family to Bachupally because it was more convenient. He found rented accommodation and moved in on March 6.

Uma Rani who is a flat owner in the same building, on the first floor, quarrelled with Bikhshapathy saying that he has no right to stay there because he belongs to a "lower caste" and has two sons.

Ms Sulochana Devi said, "Nowhere have we had any fights or quarrels. It sounds strange that a couple like us, here. She (Uma Rani) always got into arguments with us as if she is the owner of the flat."

"Rani, who is the owner of the Bikhshapathy's flat, said, "We are residents of Ameerpet and we usually don't stay in Bachupally. Uma Rani has been disputing saying that she only allows who she likes to stay there." No case was registered, the local police said.

221 DRUNK DRIVERS HELD IN CYBERABAD

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

A total of 221 motorists were caught by Cyberabad traffic police during enforcement drives against drunk drivers in the first weekend of March. The highest number of cases at 50 was in Madhapur while one person each was caught by Shadnagar and Amangal traffic police.

Cyberabad traffic police contacted the driver's traffic police station limits across the commissionerate. Of those caught, 161 were two-wheeler riders, 46 four-wheeler drivers and 11 autorickshaw drivers.

Twenty-five were IT employees, 43 were drivers by profession, 31 labourers, 17 businessmen and nine students, while 81 were from diverse professions.

After Madhapur, the maximum violators came from Kukattally (39), Miyapur (28) and Gachibowli (24). The data says that 119 of the total violators held were aged between 21 and 30, and 86 persons were between 31 and 40 years.

"It is sad to note that many citizens are resorting to this dangerous activity without any concern for safety. Many youngsters are riding two-wheelers in a drunken condition without helmets and triple riding on the highways," said a Cyberabad police official on Sunday.

STUDENT ENDS LIFE AHEAD OF RETURN TO OZ

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

A student pursuing his masters in Australia committed suicide at his residence in Vanasthalipuram on Sunday morning.

The victim, Rachamalla Sai Tharun, is the younger son of sub-inspector R. Shankaraiiah, who is working at the Rachakonda commissionerate.

According to the police, Sai Tharun completed his engineering in the city and went to Australia for his masters. He came to Hyderabad a month ago and was to depart for Australia in the next three days. His flight tickets had also been booked.

On Saturday, Tharun complained to his parents that he was ill. He got himself checked at a hospital and returned home. On Sunday, he spoke to his family members while they were busy. His parents were in one bedroom, his brother in the other, while Tharun was in the hall. When his parents came out, they found him hanging from the ceiling fan in the hall. Tharun was immediately brought down and rushed to a nearby private hospital, where he was declared brought dead.

His parents had no clue what drove him to suicide. Police suspects he took the step as he was unwilling to leave his parents. The suicide note has been found. Police are enquiring from Tharun's parents and brother whether he exhibited any abnormal behaviour on Saturday.

Baby not named? NPR will record the intended name

Norms drawn up; enumerators will help zero down on date of birth

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

COUPLES WILL have to specify if it is their first marriage. Those separated have to record their status. If the birthday is not known, enumerators will help estimate a date of birth.

Have you forgotten your date of birth? No problem, enumerators of the National Population Register (NPR) will tell you. If you are married, you will have to state if it is your first marriage or a subsequent one. If you have not named your newborn child, you have to mention the intended name.

These are some points in the 40-page guidelines document issued by the union home ministry to all states for collecting NPR data.

The union home ministry said that the NPR will contain the details of all the 'usual residents' of the country, regardless of whether or not they are citizens. The home ministry asked the state governments to collect NPR data along with house-listing and housing census during April-September 2020.

The ministry said that the date of birth is one of the most important items of information being collected in the NPR. In case a person does not know the exact date of birth, enumerators should ascertain it from documents such as Aadhaar card, voter ID, PAN card and relevant documents.

If they still do not find the date of birth, asking the person whether he/she was born before the rainy season or not, during any important festivals like Maha Shivaratri, Ramnavami, Makara Sankranti and so on will be useful and based on that, enumerators might estimate the date of birth.

Indian passport number and driving license number, if available, on a voluntarily basis.

The Centre said that visitors, domestic servants, tenants, drivers or other such persons found to be residing with the household who fulfil the above three criteria should be included in the enumeration.

It is important that every person, male or female, aged or infant, is counted only once, without omission or duplication. The Centre said that NPR will not cover foreign nationals having diplomatic status. However, foreign nationals not enjoying diplomatic status and Indian nationals having diplomatic status and staying with them in the foreign missions will be covered. It would therefore, be necessary to cover every household.

Households of defence and similar service personnel will be eligible for enumeration if they are residing in civilian areas. The enumeration of defence and similar service personnel who are living in strictly military or restricted areas (special charges) will not be conducted while undertaking update of NPR.

If the father, mother and spouse are not enumerated in this household, or are not alive, enumerators should write their names and date(s) of birth. If the place of birth is within India, enumerators should record the state and district of birthplace for father and mother. If place of birth is outside India, the name of the country in which the person presently resides is to be written.

Stay NPR, Uttam writes to KCR

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy has urged Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu to stay all activities related to the National Population Register (NPR) in the state by issuing a government order on the lines of the one issued by the Kerala government.

On Sunday, Mr Reddy wrote an open letter to the Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu in which he stated, "While we welcome a resolution by the Telangana Assembly against NPR, NRC and CAA, this alone may not suffice to stop the NPR work in Telangana State. To clear any ambiguity in the State Government officials, a clear G.O. should be passed by the Government of Telangana as has been done in some other states. The G.O. (MS) No. 247/2019/GAD dated 20.12.2019 of the Government of Kerala says, "Considering that the apprehensions among the general public about the conduct of National Population Register (NPR) related activities leads to National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the wake of Citizenship Amendment Act-2019, the State Government orders to stay all the activities connected with the update of National Population Register in the State forthwith," he said in the letter.

The TPCC chief said that the Congress would be in full support of the resolution to be passed by the Government of Telangana against NPR, National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

"We believe that it is important that the Government of Telangana take a definitive stand against any steps taken by the Central Government to communalise public discourse and polarise Indian citizens against each other. In light of this, we believe that the resolution passed by the Government of Telangana, while a step in the right direction is not an adequate response to the threat of communalisation," Mr Reddy wrote.

Mr Reddy said that like Kerala, other states have issued government orders to stay all activities related to the NPR. "It is my sincere request to you that the Government of Telangana do the same. Apart from being more effective in its resolution, this will send a strong message that the State of Telangana, which has one of the extremely diverse population, stands firmly opposed to the communalisation agenda of the Central Government," he wrote.

Happy Women's Day



A traffic policeman greets a woman with flowers and a gift coupon during a special drive to mark International Women's Day at Sangatee crossroads, Secunderabad, on Sunday.

RAILWAY COP SAVES DRUNK AT STATION

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

A 36-year-old drunken man, who tried to board the Narsapur Express while it was moving, lost his footing and nearly went under the train's wheels. He was pulled up by a railway police constable on Saturday.

Head constable M. David Raju told *Deccan Chronicle*, "I was on duty at platform number 1 of Secunderabad station. Suddenly, I noticed a person who was trying to board the running train. He fell and was being dragged by the train. I rushed and pulled him out before he could slip on to the tracks."

Mr Raju said the person, K. Yalamanda Rao, was under the influence of alcohol. He suffered injuries on his leg and was given first aid. The passenger later took the early morning Intercity Express to Vijayawada.

Trial may have put pressure: Kin

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

In a heartening start to the International Women's Day celebrations, a Saifabad police patrol rushed a pregnant woman who was in labour to a hospital early on Sunday morning.

The woman gave birth to a baby girl later in the day.

The patrol saw the woman, Urnila, a helper at a private school in Malakpet, undergoing delivery pains near DBR Apartments. "We immediately shifted her to the Red Cross Hospital in Dilshuknagar in our patrol car. The hospital staff took care of her and she gave birth to a baby girl. Both mother and baby are healthy and safe," said Saifabad inspector of police K. Srinivas.

POLICE HELPS OUT WOMAN IN LABOUR

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

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OBITUARY
The Hyderabad Public School, Society Members deeply mourn the sudden demise of Sri A. Ranga Rao, former President of The Hyderabad Public School Society. Our prayers are with the bereaved family.

Sri A. RANGA RAO
DOB: 24/9/1931 DOD: 03/03/2020
President HPS SOCIETY from Oct 2008 to Sept 2012
President, Office Bearers & Members HPS Society.

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE
We strongly mourn the sudden & sad demise of **SRI A. RANGA RAO** Former Vice-President, Exhibition Society and Economic Committee AP.

Our heartfelt condolences to his family members. Your memories always be with us. May his soul rest in peace.

Condolence Meeting on 03.03.2020 at 6.00 p.m., Golden Jubilee Block, Exhibition Grounds.

Members of Exhibition Society Osmania Graduates' Association Economic Committee AP

4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
UTHAVANA
Sri D.T. ANJANIL JI (Baburaja) S/o Late D.T. Ghansalji Passed away on Friday, 06 March 2020 at 04:30 p.m. at Sri Hanuman Nivas, Lakdikapul, Khairatabad, Hyderabad. In Grief.
D.T. Ramesh & Bro (Brothers) D.T. Rajender Kumar & Bro (Sons) D.T. Abhil Kumar & Bro (Grandsons) D.T. Sanath & Bro (Great Grandsons)

OBITUARY
I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race.
2 Timothy 4:7

BANDUGULA JANARDHAN D.O.B: 17.12.1956 D.O.D: 07.03.2020
Passed away on Friday, 06 March 2020 at 04:30 p.m. at Sri Hanuman Nivas, Lakdikapul, Khairatabad, Hyderabad. In Grief.
D.T. Ramesh & Bro (Brothers) D.T. Rajender Kumar & Bro (Sons) D.T. Abhil Kumar & Bro (Grandsons) D.T. Sanath & Bro (Great Grandsons)

OBITUARY
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Passed away on Friday, 06 March 2020 at 04:30 p.m. at Sri Hanuman Nivas, Lakdikapul, Khairatabad, Hyderabad. In Grief.

Danghi Thakur Family
Sri Hanuman Nivas, Lakdikapul, Pul, Khairatabad Hyderabad.

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE
I know we all will die one day, but I never thought you would go like this. It's the body that does not die, but the soul always lives with you. There is nothing that can do for you from praying. May God bless your soul.

In Grief.
Rajesh vasani (son), Pratik vasani (son), Harsh vasani (son), Rishabh vasani (son), Dhara vasani (daughter)

Sri D.T. ANJANIL JI (Baburaja) In Grief by:
Smt & Sri Rajender Kumar Sharma (Sons-in-law), Ram, Harish & Sharma Family (Jains (Maharashtra))

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY
UTHAVANA
Sri D.T. ANJANIL JI (Baburaja) S/o Late D.T. Ghansalji Passed away on Friday, 06 March 2020 at 04:30 p.m. at Sri Hanuman Nivas, Lakdikapul, Khairatabad, Hyderabad. In Grief.

Gopisetty RAJESHWAR RAO
Death Date: 20-03-2019
In Grief by:
Gopisetty Ashok, Anand P. Renuka, P. Vijaya
Cell: 9705325072

12th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
DEEPAK N VASANI
Expatriate on 09/03/2019
I know we all will die one day, but I never thought you would go like this. It's the body that does not die, but the soul always lives with you. There is nothing that can do for you from praying. May God bless your soul.

In Grief.
Rajesh vasani (son), Pratik vasani (son), Harsh vasani (son), Rishabh vasani (son), Dhara vasani (daughter)

Sri A. RANGA RAO D.O.B: 24/9/1931 D.O.D: 03/03/2020
President HPS SOCIETY from Oct 2008 to Sept 2012
The Jagadgurur College and Old Students Association of The Hyderabad Public School, Begumpet, deeply mourn the sudden demise of Sri A. Ranga Rao, former President, Office Bearers & Members of Jagadgurur College and Old Students Association of The Hyderabad Public School. Our prayers are with the bereaved family.

Mr. DINESH BABU NAIR
Assoc. Comdr. CRPF
Jagadgurur College and Old Students Association of The Hyderabad Public School, Begumpet, Hyderabad, India. Tel: 73429322

9th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
I fell dead in the house of the Lord Jesus

Rev. K.A. JAMES CHRISTOPHER
D.O.B: 25-12-1932 - D.O.D: 09-03-2011
Wife, Children, Grand Children

SHORT TAKES
2BHK PROJECT GETS ₹11K-CR, SCHOOLS ₹10K-CR

Referring to Chief Minister K Chandrashekar...

Referring to Chief Minister K Chandrashekar...

Referring to Chief Minister K Chandrashekar...

FM: Need to keep up growth momentum

Harish: Budget in backdrop of economic slowdown

SA. ISHAQI I DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8 Finance Minister T. Harish Rao on Sunday announced from the floor...

MAJOR ALLOCATIONS

Table with 2 columns: Allocation Category and Amount. Includes Panchayat Raj and Rural Development (₹23,005 cr), SC Sub Plan (₹16,534.97 cr), etc.

than that of the decline in national GDP growth...

BJP FINALLY NAMES 19 DIST UNIT CHIEFS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

TS BJP state president Dr K. Laxman on Sunday named 19 district unit presidents...

VISHWESHWAR ASKS TS TO CLARIFY ON LEADER'S LAND

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Former MP Vishweshwar Reddy said the Congress will launch an agitation to expose the corrupt practices...

THE JUTE CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED (A Government of India Enterprise) INVITES Application for the post of Asst. Manager (Finance) - 8 Nos. Post...

DEFENCE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (Deemed to be University under Section 3 of UGC Act, 1956) POST GRADUATE PROGRAMMES - 2020

Imaginary figures in Budget: Cong

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8 Congress legislature party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka has accused finance minister T. Harish Rao of presenting imaginary figures in the 2020-21 Budget...

Number juggery, ridicules BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8 The Budget proposed by the TRS government is nothing but a juggery of numbers, far from ground-reality and expectations of the public...

DEFENCE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (Deemed to be University under Section 3 of UGC Act, 1956) POST GRADUATE PROGRAMMES - 2020

ఆంధ్రపూలు సచివ్ వారపత్రిక ఎఫ్ఎస్ఎస్ ఇవ్వడానికి సి రియల్డ్ అర్హులైన వారిని తెలియజేస్తున్నాం...

Ruling party ministers, MLAs praise Budget

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 8 Agriculture minister S. Niranjan Reddy said he was happy about the Budget as allocation for the Rythu Bandhu scheme...



IN BRIEF

Passenger booked for smuggling gold

Hyderabad: An passenger who attempted to smuggle gold worth ₹41 lakh concealed in a mixer-grinder in the baggage of the passenger, Prem Chand Gupta, was seized and he was arrested. Gupta had arrived at about 1.40 am on a flight from Dubai. Airport Customs officer K.D.L. Bhavani grew suspicious about the mixer grinder and checked his baggage. Officer found 8 gold bars weighing 932 grams.

Mantri's tweet heats up pakora politics again

Modi had extolled pakora makers who take home ₹200 a day, Harsh Vardhan says they spoil health

BALU PULIPAKA IDC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Two years after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the making and selling of pakoras by the unemployed an issue, Union health minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan has said eating pakoras is not advisable. Eating pakoras is harmful to health, the health minister said. In a tweet on March 5 posted from his official Twitter handle @drharshvardhan, Dr Harsh Vardhan called

on people to avoid eating common Indian snacks like samosa, patties, alu bonda and pakoras. The reason, these fried snacks, popular across the country, "have trans fats that are not nutritious and on the contrary 'spoil your health.'" Dr Harsh Vardhan warned.

Mr Modi, in an interview marking his four years as Prime Minister two years ago, had told a Hindi news channel while answering a question on employment generation that if an indi-

vidual is selling pakoras and taking home about ₹200 a day, that too should be considered as employment.

Mr Modi said: "If someone outside your TV studios is selling pakoras and in the evening takes home ₹200, will you consider this individual as employed or not? Show me in which register will it be recorded that a man here earns ₹200 in the evening?" The full interview of the Prime Minister was posted on



Representational picture.

YouTube by the Bharatiya Janata Party on January 19, 2018. The comment had then taken a life of their own with anti and pro-pakora

● **IN A TWEET** on March 5 posted from his official Twitter handle @drharshvardhan, called on people to avoid eating common Indian snacks like samosa, patties, alu bonda and pakoras.

selling proponents dis-satisfied on several social media platforms. Union home minister Amit Shah had defended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comments in

● **THE REASON** these fried snacks are popular across the country is because they "have trans fats that are not nutritious and on the contrary spoil your health," Dr Harsh Vardhan warned.

the Rajya Sabha while countering jibes from the Congress on the subject. Amit Shah had told the Rajya Sabha that is it better that a youth, instead of begging, starts

making pakoras and makes a living out of it. Mr Shah had referred to how tens of thousands of youth are gainfully employed making pakoras and selling them, while criticizing the opposition parties for making an issue out of Mr Modi's comments. Foods that contain trans fats, or trans-fatty acids, have been established as one of the primary drivers of heart disease resulting in blocked blood vessels and fatal heart attacks.

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ATAPUR	KONDAPUR	K. PURAM	GUNTUR
PALENOOR	KOTHAPET	SEC 9 ROAD	KANAKADA
SUNJANA HILLS	KURATAPALLY	SARAI BELI BANDA	MELLISE
SUN BEST NAGAR	LADY RAO POOL	SHANKARANAGAR	NEELAMBERRY
BOOUPAL	M. G. ROAD	SR NAGAR	TILIPATI
CHANDRA NAGAR	MAZUNGOUDA	SUN CITY	ULAKUNDA-1
CHENTLA	MALAPET	TELEKOM	WING FIVE
DILSUKHANAGAR	MOTAPUR	TRINITY SUPERMART	ULAKUNDA-2
FOOT	MUSUNUR	ULSIPODO	ULSIPODO
FOOTMALL	NAGOLE	KARUNAGAR	ULSI-1
GACHIBOWLI	NALLAKURTA	KRISHNAPUR	SHARADA PARK
HANASIGUDA	NALPET	MAHABUB NAGAR	ULSI-2
HYDERABAD	PUNJAGUTTA	NEELAMBERRY	DANDAPARTY

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IN BRIEF

Moderate rainfall likely today

Hyderabad: Strong winds and light rainfall lashed parts of the city on Sunday evening. According to Telangana State Development Planning Society, the highest rainfall till 8.45 pm was registered at Rajendrapuram at 17 mm of rainfall. Meteorologists say that the rains were due to an upper air trough, which was extending from Vidarbha to TN. As per the forecast generated by Skymet, a private weather forecasting outfit, Telangana state, AP, TN and south interior Karnataka will continue to receive light to moderate rains in the coming 18 to 24 hours. Rains are very likely to be accompanied by strong wind.

Festival of colours



Youngsters celebrate the festival of colours ahead of Holi which is on March 10 in the city on Sunday. — S. SURENDR REDDY

Drivers upset with SCR

They say new permits for parking at stations are very costly, restricted

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Auto drivers, and to some extent taxi drivers, are upset with a circular issued by the Secunderabad division of the South Central Railway (SCR). The circular, issued on December 23, 2019 proposes a new system to regulate the entry and parking of taxis and autos vehicles at railway stations. Drivers are required to apply for permits that will allow them to enter the stations and wait for passengers to hire their services. The system is expected to

be brought into effect within a few weeks. As per the proposed system, auto drivers will be required to pay up to ₹3,500 and taxi drivers ₹5,400 per station for a half-yearly permit. Also, the permits are specific to particular stations. The circular claims this is being done to streamline the existing parking system. However, taxi and auto drivers say the fee is far too high and will eat into their income. A Sathi Reddy, general secretary of the Telangana Auto Drivers Samakhya, said auto drivers barely make ₹500 a day, and mak-

ing them pay up to ₹7,000 is impractical. "Most drivers rent their autos. This costs ₹250-400 a day. In fact, even the Telangana government acknowledges our difficulty. A few years ago, it exempted autos from road tax. So is such a high parking fee at stations valid?" he asked. Taxi drivers, though unhappy with the rule, said it wouldn't affect them too much. Shaik Salauddin, general secretary of the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers, said there is already very little space at railway stations so most taxis don't

park there for long. The circular, though, specifically states that separate spaces will be demarcated for autos and taxis with permits to park. An SCR official said drivers were making a fuss without knowing the full details. Most importantly, he said, the system would not be implemented at Secunderabad Railway Station, something most auto drivers do not seem to know or are choosing to ignore. "Secunderabad station is being managed by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation.

Hence, SCR does not handle subjects such as parking infrastructure there directly. The new system will be implemented in the rest of the stations in the division such as Hyderabad (Nampally) and Kazipet," he said. The official said traffic has become a legitimate issue in most stations and needs to be addressed with concrete moves. "Similar permit-based systems have already been implemented in other SCR divisions such as Guntakal. In fact, it was delayed in Secunderabad division. It is inevitable and cannot be stopped," he said.

Novel idea to bring spark back into dead tubelights

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 8

Meet the state's own innovator who has figured out a way to bring the spark back into dead tubelights. The inventor is Neeraj Chary, 39, a resident of Navipet mandal in Nizamabad district. He says he has helped revive 10 lakh tubelights with his patented technology.

IN ORDER to make a tubelight glow, there needs to be several parts like a choke, a starter and a few filaments. If these items refuse to work in cohesion, the tube light will not glow.

A TUBELIGHT requires 230 volts of charge to function. But at the start it needs a boost of anywhere between 1800-2000 volts.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Mr Chary said: "In order to make a tubelight glow, there needs to be several parts like a choke, a starter and a few filaments. If these items refuse to work in cohesion, the tube light will not glow. To tackle this issue I removed these parts and created a circuit using resistors, diodes, nichrome springs, capacitors, resistors and other electrical components. This circuitry doesn't require a choke or a starter or any of the other things that are required to light up a conventional tube light."

His innovation relies on leftover mercury in the tubelight. "Usually a tubelight has anywhere between 14 and 16 milligrams of mercury.

When this amount goes down over a period of time, the tubelight does not respond to the voltage that passes through the holder. But when a tube light goes defunct it still has at least six mg of mercury in it.

The circuit is connected to the blackened part of the tubelight, and current is passed through it. This system enhances the life of the light by another five years, until the residual mercury runs out," he said.

Apart from being economical, this system also plays a massive role in protecting the environment, said Mr Chary, since the residual mercury is often discarded when the tubelight is thrown out. "Mercury, in any quantity, if exposed to the environment, could

have devastating consequences on our ecology and health. This is an ingenious way to use up all the residual mercury in the light until it's safe to discard it," he explains.

"A tubelight requires 230 volts of charge to function. But at the start it needs a boost of anywhere between 1800-2000 volts.

This current causes the electrodes within the light to heat up and makes it glow. In a regular fluorescent tubelight, this is taken care of by the starter, which gives the initial surge of voltage that is required to heat the cathodes and the stabilizer that stabilises voltage for the lights to function.

The action causes the light to flicker before lighting up. But what makes the light glow, is the milligrams of mercury gas present in the tubelight that keeps it glowing for 90,000 hours. But it needs all the other connections to function properly, otherwise it will fail to glow," says a video clip on Chary's work by a reputed TV channel specialising in science programming.

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SHORT TAKES

3 Infy techies held for taking I-T bribes

Bengaluru: Three Infosys employees, attached to the Income Tax department's Centralised Processing Centre here, were arrested for allegedly taking bribes from tax-payers for speedy processing of their refund, police said on Sunday. According to police, the key accused among the three was attached to the CPC's data division and had demanded and collected money through his friends from some major taxpayers with whom he had contact over phone for processing their I-T refund claims at the earliest. He would allegedly charge them four per cent of the refund money as his commission, they added.

Caught with BF, girl jumps off window

Mumbai: A teen girl who was with her boyfriend jumped off from her first floor flat in Kurla in Mumbai after her mother walked in on them, police said on Sunday. The incident took place on Friday in Bait Bazaar area, an official said. "The 17-year-old girl was with her boyfriend in her bedroom. When she realised her mother had come, she asked the boyfriend to flee and jumped out of the window, fracturing her left leg," he said. She confessed to her family that her boyfriend, Sunil Zhende, 20, was in her bedroom and so she panicked. "After we got a complaint, we arrested Zhende for rape and house trespass under IPC and the POCSO Act," the V.B. Nagar police station official said.

Disposal bags for sanitary napkins

Pune: Union minister Prakash Javadekar on Sunday said the Centre would make it mandatory for sanitary napkin companies to provide bio-degradable disposal bags from January next year. He was speaking at an International Women's Day event in Pune attended by waste collectors, who he referred to as "saints and sevakas". "I have observed that despite repeated appeal to sanitary pad manufacturers, they are still not providing bio degradable disposal bags. From January, 2021, the Union government will make such bags mandatory," said the Union minister of environment, forest and climate change. He said channelling norms in force in municipal areas will now be applicable to villages having a population of more than 5,000.

PMO: UPDATE CRIMINALS' DATA ON CCTNS

ANIMESH SINGH | DC NEW DELHI, MARCH 8
Amid rising sexual offences across the country, the inability of several states to digitise and update data under the Crime and Criminals Tracking and Networks (CCTNS) has irked the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). It has directed all states, especially in North Territories to share their data with the national database to strengthen the system. The Union Home Ministry has been asked to coordinate with all states and Union territories (including the newly created Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh), to ensure faster implementation of CCTNS on a priority basis, they said. The concern of the PMO is all the more significant in the wake of the nation-wide furor over the kidnapping and rape of a 26-year-old veterinarian on the outskirts of Hyderabad on November 26, 2019. The four accused in the case were later killed in an alleged exchange of fire, as claimed by police, during the week hours of December 6, 2019.

The facility of Investigating Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO) portal is provided to all states to help investigate sexual offences. However, as it is based on CCTNS, the PMO has urged all states to transfer their data and records to it as soon as possible. States like Bihar and Rajasthan have especially been asked to expedite the process by March 2020. Highly placed sources informed that the PMO has especially highlighted the lagged attitude of these two states towards digitising their records, at a high level meeting held recently.



Sardarni Mann Kaur tries to jog after receiving Nari Shakti Puraskar 2019 on International Women's Day as President Ram Nath Kovind. First Lady Savita Kovind, Union ministers Smriti Irani and Nirmala Sitharaman look on at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. Known as a Miracle from Chandigarh Kaur has started her athletic career at the age of 53.

Another 'missing' MP MLA found in Bengaluru, returns

Close aide of Digvijay Singh brought to Bhopal from Indore in state plane

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOHAL, MARCH 8

One more legislator from Madhya Pradesh, who went missing along with three other lawmakers five days ago creating a ripple in the ruling Congress here, surfaced in Bengaluru and was brought to Bhopal on Sunday. The Congress lawmaker Beshahul Singh, a close aide of former chief minister Digvijay Singh, arrived in Indore from Bengaluru in the afternoon and later brought to Bhopal in the state plane. State tourism minister Surendra Singh air dashed to Bengaluru to bring Mr Singh back to Madhya Pradesh.

The MLA proceeded straight to Chief Minister Kamal Nath's official residence here from Bhopal

MP CABINET LIKELY TO BE EXPANDED

Bhopal, March 8: Against the backdrop of alleged poaching attempts by the BJP, the Congress-led Madhya Pradesh government will expand its Cabinet soon, a senior leader of the state's ruling party said on Sunday. The Congress recently alleged that the BJP "abducted" 14 MLAs from the Kamal Nath government in the state. However, the BJP denied the allegation, saying it has nothing to do with the development, which it claimed was the result of "infitting"

airport for a meeting with Mr Nath. He later told reporters that "I am with Congress and will be in Congress". However, two more

MLAs — Hardeep Singh Dang and Raghuraj Kansana (both from Congress) were living in Jamia Nagar in Delhi, he said, indicating that the political drama, currently

witnessed in the state, may prolong. Mr Dang has earlier sent his resignation letter to Speaker of Assembly N.P. Prajapati and Mr Nath. In a new twist to the ongoing drama, independent MLA Surendra Singh Sera, who appeared in Bhopal on Saturday after 'missing' for four days, returned to Bengaluru in the same night, creating ripple in the political circles here. However, a senior Congress leader said Mr Sera was sent to Bengaluru by the party leadership here to convince the 'missing' MLAs to return to Bhopal and swear their loyalty to the party. In another development, the Kamal Nath government has constituted a high level official team to probe various omissions and commissions allegedly committed by some BJP

leaders during the previous Shivraj Singh Chouhan government, authoritative sources told this newspaper here on Sunday. The probe team would dig out irregularities committed during the Chouhan government and fix accountability on the erring persons. Kamal Nath government enjoys slender majority in the House. Opposition BJP has 107 MLAs. Two MLAs, one each from Congress and BJP, passed away recently reducing the strength of the house to 228.

Bukhari launches new party in J&K

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, MARCH 8

A new political party bringing together mainly 'disgruntled' politicians including several former lawmakers and ministers until recently associated with the PPP-BJP government known for its close proximity to the corridors of power in New Delhi, the core agenda of the new party, as an alternative to traditional regional political parties such as National Conference (NC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP), would be the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and to secure its residents domicile rights on land and jobs.

As claimed by Mr Bukhari, a former minister in the PPP-BJP government known for his close proximity to the corridors of power in New Delhi, the core agenda of the new party, as an alternative to traditional regional political parties such as National Conference (NC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP), would be the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and to secure its residents domicile rights on land and jobs. He also said the new party christened as 'Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party' would seek to preserve the self-respect and dignity of people of the erstwhile state, dignified return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and empowerment of youth and women.

"We're not here to sell dreams and fantasies but will always be pragmatic, honest and fair in our approach. We have resolved to create a political platform where people are real stakeholders of the political process," he told reporters here. He added that the launch of new party "puts a lot of responsibility on us as the expectations and challenges are huge". He assured the people of J&K that the new party has not been created by a family — a reference to the Valley's iconic Sheikh and Mufti families — but "is by the commoners and the commoners and of the commoners".

Hence, there will be total restriction that anybody who becomes president of party cannot be elected more than twice. Mr Bukhari was earlier elected as president of the party at a formal meeting of its founders held at his residence here.

The prominent among those who have joined the new party include former ministers Gulam Hassan Mir, Muhammad Dilhasan Mir, Choudhary Zulfikar Ahmad, Muhammad Ahsraf Mir, Abdul Majeed Paddar, Aijaz Khan and Usman Majeed.

President of JK Apni Party Syed Altaf Bukhari addressing media on the formation of the party at his residence on Sunday. He is flanked by former legislators and ministers who have joined him. — H.U. Naqsh

Couple linked to IS held in Delhi

New Delhi, March 8: A couple linked to the Islamic State's Khorrasan module was arrested from south Delhi's Jamia Nagar on Sunday for allegedly instigating anti-CAA protests in the national capital, police said.

They have been identified as Jahanjeh Sami, 36, and his wife Hina Bashir Beg, 39, said Pramod Singh Kushwah, deputy

commissioner of police (Special Cell). The couple from Srinagar were living in Jamia Nagar in Delhi, he said. Promoting the IS ideology of hatred, they were inciting Muslims to take up violent struggle against the state. They were also involved in instigating protests against the amended citizenship law, Kushwah said. —PTI

Women drugged to join stir: Ghosh

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, MARCH 8

Triggering a controversy once again, West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Sunday claimed that young women are "being drugged" towards movements resulting in them being ignorant of culture and self esteem. He even argued that such women would fall prey to violence on the streets of their indecent behaviour. Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim condemned the

Midnapore BJP MP's comments. Asking the state BJP chief if he takes drugs, the Trinamool Congress minister called the people to boycott him. On the vulgar part in movements sitting in the front. They are shouting for the whole day. As a result, they have forgotten our culture, good and bad and even their self esteem. So all of us including the school and college authorities and guardians and education minister have a responsibility"

blaming anyone. It is a social decay. "We need to think where our society is heading to. If these women behave on the road like this, what treatment will they get from the public? They will become victims of violence." Mr Hakim, however, said, "He is uncivilised and barbaric. He cannot live in a civilised society. The way he talks about women taking drugs, it has posed a question whether he is on drugs or not."

W. BENGAL GUV DENIES INFO ON V-C RESIGNATION

DC CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA, MARCH 8

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar has complained that he has received no information from the Mamata Banerjee government about the resignation of Rabindra Bharati University Vice-Chancellor Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhuri over the vulgar distortion of a famous Rabindrasangeet song during the Basanta Utsob (spring festival) celebration at the university's BT Road campus.

Mr Dhankhar also cautioned the state government against infringing on his rights as the Chancellor.

On Sunday the Raj Bhavan stated that Mr Dhankhar has neither any information nor any communication about the RBU V-C's resignation. It said, "It is clarified that under the stipulations of the Rabindra Bharati Act, 1961 the issue of resignation of Vice-Chancellor is in the exclusive domain of the Chancellor." Slamming state education minister Partha Chatterjee, he said that reports of Prof. Basu Ray Chaudhuri's resignation "having been decided or not accepted by the minister thus is not in consonance with the Charter and thus has no legal sanction."

Modi meets 15 Nari Shakti awardees, shares brief videos on their achievement

7 women take centre stage on PM's social media

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

Seven women achievers shared their life journey and interacted with social media users through Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Twitter handle and other social media platforms, including Facebook, on International Women's Day on Sunday. Mr Modi also interacted with 15 awardees of the 'Nari Shakti Puraskar' conferred by President Ram Nath Kovind on the occasion. Signing off for the day to let his social media platforms be used to share the achievements of women and to let their struggles and aspirations motivate millions," Mr

Modi saluted the "spirit and accomplishments of Nari Shakti".

"Greetings on International Women's Day! We salute the spirit and accomplishments of our Nari Shakti. As I'd said a few days ago, I'm signing off. Through the day, seven women achievers will share their life journeys and perhaps interact with you through my social media accounts... India has outstanding women achievers in all parts of the nation. These women have done great work in a wide range of sectors. Their struggles and aspirations motivate millions. Let us keep celebrating the achievements of such women and learning from them. #SheInspiresUs," tweeted the PM.

ITJUA URGES PM TO SPARE TOKENISM OF HASHTAG THEATRICS

Srinagar, March 8: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's daughter, Itija Mufti, on Sunday asked the Centre to spare the "tokenism of women hashtag theatrics" as it was women who the government was scared of the most. Itija, who uses her mother's verified Twitter handle to comment on developments and events, said the government "illegally" jailed the first woman chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir. "Spare us tokenism of women hashtag theatrics. GOI (government of India) illegally jailed the first woman CM of J&K, encourages rape & death threats against brave female journoes & is petrified of daadis at Shaveen Bagh. For all their talk of Nari Shakti, it is truly women they fear the most," she tweeted. The comments come as Prime Minister Narendra

Jammu and Kashmir. "Spare us tokenism of women hashtag theatrics. GOI (government of India) illegally jailed the first woman CM of J&K, encourages rape & death threats against brave female journoes & is petrified of daadis at Shaveen Bagh. For all their talk of Nari Shakti, it is truly women they fear the most," she tweeted. The comments come as Prime Minister Narendra

Modi announced that he would hand over all his social media accounts to women as part of International Women's Day. Itija has been tweeting from Mehbooba Mufti's Twitter handle after the PDP president and former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister was taken into custody on August 5 last year following abrogation of Article 370. —PTI

103-year-old athlete Mann Kaur, farmers' Padala Bhudeti and Bix Devi, mason Kalavati Devi and 88-year-old Karthyayini Amma, who topped the list, were named in 2018. Earlier during the day,

IN BRIEF

Former Union law minister dead

New Delhi: Former Law minister and senior Congress leader Hans Raj Bhardwaj died after a cardiac arrest at a hospital here on Sunday evening...

₹13 lakh in coins seized from man

Valsad: Coins in denominations of ₹5 and ₹10 and collectively worth ₹13.80 lakh were seized from two persons who were carrying them in a car without valid documents in Gujarat's Valsad city on Sunday, police said...

TMC nominates 4 for RS elections

Kolkata: Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee on Sunday announced the names of Arpita Ghosh, Mausam Noor, Dinesh Trivedi and Subrata Bakshi as the party candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls...

NEERI COLLECTS YAMUNA WATER SAMPLES

Mathura (UP), March 8: Officials of the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute here collected water samples from Yamuna river here on directions from the Supreme Court regarding overflowing drains in the Taj Trapezium Zone, an activist said...



Medics screen tourists in the wake of the novel coronavirus scare, at a hotel in Bikaner on Sunday.

It's testing time for NIV scientists

Pune, March 8: Armed with special protective gear — including safety goggles, spectacles, N-95 masks and gloves — scientists at the National Institute of Virology (NIV) here are working "round-the-clock" to ensure smooth testing of samples for the deadly coronavirus, while hand-holding centres spread across the country...

Health worker dead, Covid-19 suspected

ARUNACHAL BANS FOREIGNERS TO PREVENT VIRUS
MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, MARCH 8
A day after Assan confirmed the visit of a Covid-19 suspect from the US, the frontier state of Arunachal Pradesh on Sunday banned the entry of foreigners...

BJP, Congress spar over Yes Bank

Husain's painting at centre of allegations on Priyanka

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 8
THE CONGRESS said the entire amount was received from Rana Kapoor in cheque and was fully disclosed in Income Tax returns of 2010 by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra...

Cong slams Centre on BPCL stake sale

New Delhi, March 8: The Congress on Sunday attacked the government over its bid to sell stake in India's second largest oil refiner Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL), asking if this was also an election promise made to "crony capitalists"...

WOMAN COP ON ₹200 CR HACKING CASE TRAIL FIRED AT

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, MARCH 8
An unknown person on Saturday night fired at a woman police officer who is investigating a case in which an attempt was made to hack a ₹200 crore account of a corporate entity...

OFFICIALS WERE AGHAST AT SLIP FROM AIRPORT

Dr Yardhan had mentioned the robust systems while inaugurating a new institutional campus at the National Institute of Public Health Travelled from Venice to HTRD in Navi Mumbai. He spoke of the robust contact tracing and screening systems...

HC objects to banners on anti-CAA protesters

Allahabad, March 8: The Allahabad High Court on Sunday termed the action of Uttar Pradesh authorities as "highly unjust" and said it was an absolute encroachment on personal liberty of individuals...

WOMAN LECTURER GOES BALD FOR JOB REGULARISATION

Bhopal, March 8: A woman guest lecturer shaved off her head in Bhopal on the occasion of International Women's Day demanding regularisation of her college job...

Move as many students found addicted to substance abuse

UGC wants anti-drug panels in varsities

New Delhi, March 8: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has directed varsities in the country to constitute "say no to drugs" student bodies to ensure there is no usage or supply of drugs on campus...

DECCAN Chronicle

9 MARCH 2020

Blamegame won't end crisis in banking sector

The RBI-brokered bailout of Yes Bank on Thursday has set off a new blamegame between the ruling BJP and the Congress-led Opposition parties over who is responsible for the current state of the country's banking sector. Finance Minister Narendrabhai Sitaraman ordered the RBI to fix responsibility for the Yes Bank crisis, and the ED raided the house of the cash-strapped bank's former promoter Rana Kapoor. All this happened in just 48 hours. This makes one wonder why the government didn't act over the past 48 months when Yes Bank's wobbling finances were obvious.

In fact, if fixing responsibility was the way to solve the crisis, why didn't the government order a probe into the finances of all state-run and private banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) five years ago? An early solution might have prevented the public sector banks after the 2008 global recession because of deteriorating finances. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the RBI governor have been playing host to bankers and top officials of NBFCs every year for two days in the form of a "Gyan Sangam" since 2015. But the banks and NBFCs still remained tethered to the government and the RBI are either clueless about a solution or simply not interested in finding one.

To find a solution, one needs an honest diagnosis of the root cause — and the answer is surely not in politics or blamegame. India's four balance-sheet problems began with its current national debt — by corporates who borrowed between 2006 and 2014 — were caused by their criminal intent to steal public money, it cannot set up the bad loan bank for fear of public reprisals. But without such swift action, there would be no immediate solution to the banking crisis, which would continue to drag on the economy.

Bad business judgments — taken based on easy money and optimistic business assessments in the pre-2008 period — were the reason for corporate defaults, which spilled over to the banking sector later. Among the prominent groups facing bankruptcy, for example, is the ANL Ambani Group, and it will be preposterous to assume that the person who was once the country's third richest man wanted to steal public money just because his companies had defaulted on loans. The same logic applies to most other business groups and to the banks. There may have been kickbacks for sanctioning loans in some cases, but that doesn't mean the entire intent was to dupe the bank. Unless the government understands this, it cannot find an immediate solution to India's banking crisis.

Creating public sector asset restructuring companies to take over bad loans from banks and NBFCs was part of a six-point solution suggested by former chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian. However, if the BJP wants to continue with its current national debt, it cannot allow the government to be rewarded between 2006 and 2014 — were caused by their criminal intent to steal public money, it cannot set up the bad loan bank for fear of public reprisals. But without such swift action, there would be no immediate solution to the banking crisis, which would continue to drag on the economy.

Govt acts in haste, regrets

The lightning speed with which the Union government imposed a 48-hour ban on Malayalam news channels, Asianet News and Media One, for their coverage of Delhi riots and its revocation in hours betrays a deep-rooted malaise that has come to engulf the Narendra Modi government. The order of the ministry of I&B on March 6 had said Asianet News failed to do a balanced job in the coverage. It has pointed out an instance in which a reporter narrated stories that reflected on the inaction of the Delhi police as well as communal nature of the criminal gangs that went around attacking. The ministry has no case that the channel broadcast falsehood.

The charge on Media One was all the more ludicrous: "Channel's reporting on Delhi violence seems to be biased as it is deliberately focusing on the vandalism of CAA supporters. It also questions RSS and alleges Delhi Police inaction. Channel seems to be taking the channel broadest falsehood."

Union minister for information and broadcasting Prakash Javadekar, who the very next morning announced the withdrawal of the ban, said he was not informed about the decision of his ministry to keep in abeyance the fundamental right to speech and expression granted to citizens under Article 19(1)(A). All the more alarming was his statement that even Prime Minister Narendra Modi was concerned about this. This minister has promised to look into the episode thoroughly, and he must.

In our scheme of things, decisions such as this with such wider ramifications on the democratic functioning of the country should have the political executive in the loop; freedom of speech and expression is not a small merely some mandarins seated in the central secretariat bestowed on hapless people. The government must also be worried if important decisions are taken behind the back of the elected representatives. The "mukhota" barb on then PM Atal Behari Vajpayee is not something the BJP would like Mr Modi, too, to face.

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Nellore: Survey No 5272, Banapur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennakallu Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82. Telefax: 0861-2348580
Chennai: 8P-3 Develop Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032. Ph: 044-2225447/485951. Adv Fax: 2225446/2225476/2225325
Bangalore: 5th Floor, BMTCL Commercial Complex, 80 Feet Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560 095 Ph: 080-4346550; Fax: 080-2296052
Coinbatore: 71, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009. Ph: 0422-2312525
Kochi: No-3-B, 3rd Floor of DD TRAMMAGE TOWER, Kaloorkkadavathara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039488
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Bihar 2020: Alliances hold the key to victory

Sanjay Kumar and Neel Madhav

The recent chain of events and statements issued by leaders suggest that the political focus has shifted. Bihar is at the centre of discussions as of the moment. This has happened close on the heels of the Delhi election results.

Only a few days ago, Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar announced that the Janata Dal (United) would contest the forthcoming Assembly elections in alliance with the BJP and that this alliance would sweep the elections. Mr Kumar went on to state that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) would win over 200 seats. Addressing a public meeting in Vaishali, Bihar, he said that the mid-January as part of the BJP's ongoing Jan Jagran Abhiyan on the citizenship law, home minister Amit Shah went on record saying that the NDA would contest the Bihar Assembly elections under the leadership of Mr Kumar.

The two statements clearly indicate that both the BJP and the JD(U) need each other. Any ifs and buts about their electoral success are put to rest with Ram Vises Paswan giving sufficient hints that his Lok Janshakti Party intends to remain a part of the NDA alliance. Given the current mood of the voters, this indeed is an alliance that is extremely difficult to defeat — even if all the other political parties manage to come together.

After recent defeats in Assembly elections, the BJP has realised the importance of having a strong local leadership for state-level elections. With protests raging across the country over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed National

The RJD has lost its support base. With the new leadership infamous for internal fights, it will be interesting to watch how the RJD negotiates a happy seat-sharing deal with any partner.

equation. One should not forget that during the 2015 Assembly elections, the AIMIM contested in six seats and polled eight per cent votes. The party has remained active in pockets having sizeable Muslim populations, especially in Seemanchal. During the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, AIMIM candidate Akhtarul Iman polled over 25 per cent votes in the Kishanganj Lok Sabha constituency and its victory in the Kishanganj Assembly seat during by-polls in October 2019 is an indication of its increased presence in this region. The local leadership of different political parties who led the anti-CAA protests might also shape the mind of the Muslim voters in the regional parties like LJP, RSP, HAM and JAP have a support base limited to specific caste communities, but these parties could play an important role depending on which alliance they choose to be a part of.

The results of the Bihar elections would pave the way for the Assembly elections to be held in summer of 2021. Assam and West Bengal in the east and Tamil Nadu and Kerala down south go to polls in May 2020. The stakes for the BJP are going to be very high in Assam and West Bengal — states with significant Muslim numbers. While in Assam, the BJP would defend its incumbent government, the challenge for it in West Bengal would be to snatch power from the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress. The verdict of Bihar would signal and shape the strategy of how the BJP would like to contest those elections.

The results of the Bihar elections would have bearing on the Assembly elections to be held in summer of 2021 when Assam and West Bengal in the east and Tamil Nadu and Kerala down south go to polls

Sanjay Kumar is a professor at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi. He is also a political analyst and a well-known psephologist. The views expressed are personal. Neel Madhav is associated with the Lokmitra Research Programme of CSDS.

LETTERS

CITIZENSHIP BLUES

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has a point. How can ordinary people without proper records prove their citizenship? (CM has no birth record, DC, March 8). Any record/school record/or even a statement before a notary or self-declaration should be acceptable for enrolling under the NRC in extreme cases. The Centre has already made an announcement on this. Whether one calls it a National Citizenship Register or NRC, after all it should have some data.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao
Hyderabad

ED RAIDS

As was the case in previous governments, all ED cases during the present government may end up inconclusive (ED continues to grill Rana, DC, March 8). For six years the ED has conducted several raids and booked cases. However, how many of them reached a logical end or recoveries made with individuals being punished?

Baratam Raghunatha Rao
Hyderabad

GHMC WORK

Even though the whole world is changing its work culture, the GHMC has not changed after five decades (HC slams GHMC chief, DC, March 8). It is time the Telangana government seriously thought of privatising the municipality to improve efficiency and eliminate corruption.

S.S. Rama Chandra Murty
Hyderabad

Land reforms being speeded up in states

NEW DELHI, March 8. The States have taken a number of steps to speed up land reforms since the conference of the Chief Ministers in November last.

According to the information available here, Andhra Pradesh is taking certain steps to introduce 50 YEARS AGO IN ryotwari tenure set-
CHRONICLE

various part of the scheduled areas of the States. This follows the passing of the legislation to abolish mutadati tenure. Assam has proposed further reduction in the ceiling limit and tightening of the provisions relating to exemptions and transfers with a view to preventing evasion of the ceiling provisions.

Anita Katyal Political Gup-Shup

Piyush cuts his teeth as fixer; Nitish extracts pound of flesh

Its railway and commerce minister Piyush Goyal now emerging as the Narendra Modi government's new troubleshooter, a role played admirably by the late Arun Jaitley in the past? That's the buzz in the capital's political circles as Mr Goyal was dispatched last week to mediate with floor leaders of Opposition parties who have held up parliamentary proceedings to press their demand for an immediate debate on the recent Delhi violence. Mr Goyal obviously met with no success as the first week of the second leg of the Budget Session proved to be a total rout for the government. He was not in the same league as Mr Jaitley, who had, over the years, cultivated friends across party lines. However, the Bharatiya Janata Party has no choice but to turn to Mr Goyal as there is no one else who can be entrusted with this responsibility. In fact, the young minister is also being deployed to "pull up" media houses if they step out of line and tip off "friendly" media-persons with information

that serves the government's interests.

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi dwelt at length on the different traits of people hailing from Tamil Nadu and Kerala in a recent informal conversation with party MPs from the two states. According to the Nehruvian scientist, Kerala people are more flexible while Tamilians are extremely rigid. In this regard, Rahul Gandhi added as an afterthought, he is a lot like the Tamil people as he is equally uncompromising. He made it clear that he does not wish to return as Congress president and that people had not understood that he intends to stand by this decision. He had spoken in the same vein when Congress leaders tried to persuade him to change his mind after he stepped down as party president last year. "You obviously don't realise it scientist, Kerala people are more flexible than the Tamilians," he repeatedly told the pleading leaders. Rahul Gandhi's casual observation assumes significance as there is a section in the

Congress that is pressing him to take over the party presidency once again.

Ever to get back his old kursi, former Madhya Pradesh chief Shriya Singh Chouhan had been urging the Bharatiya Janata Party leadership to give him the go-ahead to dislodge the Kamal Nath-led state government ever since the Congress came to power over a year ago with a water-tight majority. However, he was held back from doing this because his party leaders (read Amit Shah) were not keen to hand over the state to Mr Chouhan again as he had fallen out of favour. But the conditions have now changed. The Rashtriya Swamsevayak Sangh came to Mr Chouhan's rescue and brokered a truce between him and the party's current leadership. As a result, the former chief minister was given the necessary green signal to proceed with plans to dislodge the Congress government. This explains the recent flurry of activity in Bhopal when the BJP went into overdrive to poach

Opposition MLAs to bring down Kamal Nath. This project also acquired a new urgency as the next round of Rajya Sabha elections are around the corner and the BJP is determined to win a maximum number of seats to push up its strength in the Upper House.

Bihar chief minister and Union Agriculture Minister Nitish Kumar was sending out feelers to his former alliance partner, the Rashtriya Janata Dal, just two months ago about a possible patch-up before this year's Assembly elections. But Nitish Kumar seems to have cooled off that the "works" are basically declared that the JD(U) president would be their chief ministerial face. From the way events have unfolded, it is clear that Nitish Kumar was essentially hobnobbing with the RJD to exert pressure on the BJP to concede to his demands. He realised that the BJP, which is more vulnerable after a string of losses in Assembly polls, cannot afford to let him go and has no choice but to accommodate him.

It was precisely for this reason that Nitish Kumar recently ensured the smooth passage of the legislation in the Bihar Assembly rejecting the National Register of Citizens and the National Population Register in its present form while helpless BJP lawmakers were forced to support it.

BJP insiders maintain that the collected works of Prime Minister Narendra Modi are currently being put together and edited by former journalist Kanchan Gupta who is chairman of the Kolkata-based Raja Ram Mohun Roy Library. It is being assumed that the "works" are basically a collection of Mr Modi's speeches as the Prime Minister is not known to be a writer. It's a big assignment for Gupta who was initially cold-shouldered by the Modi government because of his earlier proximity to veteran leader L.K. Advani who was rehabilitated after a long wait.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

SHORT TAKES

RESEARCHERS PRINT 3D BRAIN TUMOUR

New York, March 8: Researchers have 3D printed a complex brain tumour to closely model what happens inside the fast-growing tissue, an advance that may lead to better ways of testing and developing drugs against the malignant disease.

The study, published in Science Advances, describes a methodology that combines the 3D printing and imaging of glioblastoma cells in a cost-effective way to more closely model what happens inside the human body.

They said the blood vessel network in these cells allowed the printed tissue to live and mature, enabling researchers to study it under a microscope.

OLD ANDROID VERSIONS AT RISK: REPORT

Millions of Android tablets are at the risk of being hacked, since they no longer get security updates, a report in Techradar has noted. According to data released by an analytics firm, one in every eight tablets still runs on Android 4.4, which was released in October 2013.

Tech-based lifestyles enable 'safe escape' from Covid-19

Such solutions are gaining traction as more people work from home

San Francisco, March 8: For people hunkering down to the Covid-19 epidemic, the tech sector has become their new best friend with an array of lifestyle solutions making "social distancing" easier.



More people could also start getting restaurant meals delivered from services such as Uber Eats and DoorDash instead of going out to restaurants. "None of this undermines the horror of the virus but for those who want to stay home and not venture outside it works," Moorhead said.

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McAfee Mobile Threat Report Q1 2020

Table with 2 columns: Country and Global LEIFACCESS DETECTIONS. Rows include USA (943), Brazil (286), India (90), Mexico (74), Argentina (65), and Colombia (44).

2020 - The year of mobile sneak attacks. Example of fake review: Super Clean - Phone Booster, Junk Cleaner & CPU Cooler.

LeifAccess or Shopper malware. LeifAccess or Shopper abuses single sign-on and accessibility services to create accounts and post fake reviews.

Hidden ads malware: Android-based malware that hides itself and redirects users to ads, then gets them to click on ads to collect fraudulent ad revenue.

COVID-19 AUDIO MESSAGE NOW AS CALLER TUNE

New Delhi, March 8: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has ordered all telecom firms to make a 30-second audio clip on Covid-19 as caller tune for mobile phone users to create awareness among masses about the epidemic.

Bill targeting online child abuse puts encryption in crosshairs

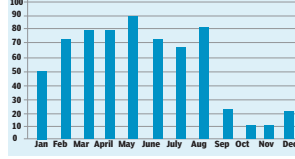
Washington, March 8: A bill aimed at curbing online child sex abuse is pitting the US government against the tech sector, in a battle about encryption and liability for illegal online content.

The bipartisan measure unveiled by US senators Thursday ties together two separate issues - law enforcement's access to encrypted online content, and tech platforms' legal immunity for what users post.

This bill is a major first step. For the first time, you will have to earn liability protection when it comes to protecting minors. Our goal is to do this in a balanced way that doesn't overly inhibit innovation, but forcibly deals with child exploitation.



HIDDEN ADS DETECTIONS



Brain network in infants found

London, March 8: Researchers have identified the brain network which emerges in infants around four years of age and enables them to predict what others think. "This enables advance that may lead to better understanding of developmental disorders like autism."

"Online service providers would almost certainly err on the side of caution and take down anything - including a lot of lawful, constitutionally protected speech." Encryption has been a point of contention between tech firms and law enforcement for decades.

The proposal "aims to kneecap encryption under the guise of protecting children online, while capitalizing on the techlash," said Riana Pfefferkorn of the Stanford University Center for Internet and

critics say the bill, if enacted, could lead to draconian internet regulation. "You shouldn't need to get a pass from a commission of law enforcement agencies just to set up a website," said Joe Mullin of the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

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LEGAL MOVE Amazon contends contract awarded to Microsoft under Trump's influence

Amazon may win contract challenge: Judge

Washington, March 8: A US judge said Amazon Inc is likely to succeed on a key argument of its challenge to a contract awarded to Microsoft Corp.

The opinion by US Court of Federal Claims Judge Patricia Campbell-Smith was unsealed on Friday. On February 13, she issued an order blocking Amazon from the contract pending resolution of Amazon's court challenge.

improper influence by President Donald Trump. The opinion did not mention Trump or address Amazon's claim of improper influence, but instead focused on how the Pentagon assessed Microsoft's data storage in one price scenario.

issue cited by the judge. "The government makes clear that in their view Microsoft's solution met the technical standards and performed as needed."

As part of the lawsuit, Amazon asked the court to halt the execution of the contract, known as the Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure Cloud, or JEDI. The contract is a result of improper pressure from President Donald Trump.

Amazon head Jeff Bezos and repeatedly criticized the giant online retailer.

The Amazon lawsuit said the Defense Department's decision was full of "egregious errors," which were a result of improper pressure from President Donald Trump.



IN BRIEF

Avalanches kill six in Austria: Police

Vienne: Avalanches killed six people in Austria Sunday in two separate incidents, police said. At least five people were swept away Sunday morning by a large avalanche on a mountain in Upper Austria, part of a group walking in snow shoes on the Dachstein range. Local police said five bodies had been recovered from the avalanche, which began 2,800 metres up. The victims were thought to be from the Czech Republic, they added. Although they did not think there were other victims, mountain rescue workers were searching the site, team leader Christoph Preimesberger said.

Senior Al-Shabaab commander killed

Nairobi: Senior Al-Shabaab commander was killed in a recent US air strike in Somalia, the director of US African Command (Africom) said Sunday. Major General Mohamed Mahamoud was a senior operational leader responsible for exporting terror in Somalia as well as attacks into Kenya, said Africom director Colonel Christopher Karns. Karns has been a senior al-Shabaab member for more than a decade. "Bashir was killed in a February 22 air strike," Karns, describing him as an "individual (who) had a role in planning and directing terrorist operations in Somalia and on the Kenya border region". Bashir also was suspected of having had a role in a January attack on a US-Kenyan military base in southeastern Kenya in which three Americans were killed, he added. General Cloutier, commander of US land forces in Africa, recently declared al-Shabaab to be "one of the biggest threats on the continent".

Pakistan: 20 perish after torrential rain

Peshawar: At least 20 people in Pakistan are dead and dozens more injured after torrential rains in the north-western province of FATA. Heavy rains have lashed stretches of the country since Wednesday. A border since Thursday. Fourteen children and three women were killed in "rain-related incidents" in the west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, local relief official Taimur Ali said. The National Disaster Management Authority confirmed those deaths, adding that three more people had died in separate incidents in Balochistan province. In the worst single incident, five children were killed when the roof of their home collapsed in northern Dargai town. Rain also damaged another 51 houses and snowfall blocked several roads in Islamabad-administered Kashmir, officials said.

LATIFA KIDNAP: SCOTLAND YARD TO PROBE

London, March 8: The lawyers for Princess Latifa, who was allegedly abducted in Dubai while working for her father, the UAE's powerful ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, said they are writing to Scotland Yard chief to launch a criminal investigation following a London High Court finding that the Emir had kidnapped his daughters. Last week, a judge in the Family Court division ruled that the Sheikh had "orchestrated" the kidnap of Latifa, who had escaped from Dubai in 2018 before being snatched from a boat in the Arabian Sea. "On two occasions in June 2002 and February 2018, the father ordered and orchestrated the forcible return of his daughter Princess Latifa to the family home in Dubai," the court order said. "In 2002 the return was from the border of Dubai with Oman, and in 2018 it was by an armed commando assault at a villa near the coast of India," notes the court order by Judge Andrew McFarlane dated March 5. The ruling followed a long-drawn custody battle between the Sheikh and his sixth and youngest wife, 45-year-old Princess Haya Sheikh, who is a Saudi national who did not attend court, denies any wrongdoing. Radha Stirling, a lawyer who represents Latifa, reports that she would be writing to the Metropolitan Police commissioner to raise the plight of the princess and her sister Shamah, who was kidnapped from a street in Cambridge in 2000.

March for gender equality



Women hold signs and shout slogans during a rally for gender equality and over violence against women to mark the International Women's Day in Pristina, Kosovo on Sunday.

'Coup plot': Saudi releases king's pics

Riyadh, March 8: Saudi Arabia released images of King Salman carrying out his royal duties on Sunday, after a stunning purge of at least three princes including his brother and nephew for allegedly plotting a coup. Saudi royal guards on Friday detained the trio, multiple sources said in a move that signals Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's tightening grip on power. The detentions also raised speculation about the health of the 84-year-old king and whether Prince Mohammed's succession to the Arab world's most powerful throne was imminent. But the official Saudi Press Agency posted photos of the king presiding over the swearing-in ceremony of newly appointed Saudi ambassadors to Ukraine and Uruguay. A source close to the Saudi leadership said on Saturday that the "king is healthy and fine" and the detentions were meant to enforce "discipline" within the royal family. The crown prince is "in control" and the purge was carried out "after an accumulation of negative behaviour by the two

Key phase in Democrats' race

Biden and Sanders to go head-to-head as field narrows to two candidates

St. Louis, March 8: Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders on Saturday began what amounts to a fresh campaign for the Democratic nomination for president, as the septuagenarians prepared to head to the polls for the first time since the field narrowed to two credible candidates.



Joe Biden



Bernie Sanders

Biden, the 77-year-old former vice president, spoke to a large crowd of supporters in Missouri, one of six states that will hold Democratic primaries on Tuesday, one week after the "Super Tuesday" elections brought about a dramatic reversal of fortunes in his favor. Standing on an outdoor stage on a sunny day in St. Louis, at times wearing his signature aviator sunglasses, the politically moderate Biden savored his spectacular revival in the race for

the White House. Sanders, speaking to an equally enthusiastic crowd in Chicago, underlined his differences with Biden, without directly attacking him. "Joe Biden is a friend," he said. "I have known him for many years. But we have records, we have a different vision. The American people will hear about it." With the primary now "down to two people," the progressive Vermont senator said, "it is important

for the American people to understand the differences between us — in terms of our record, in terms of our vision for the future." Sanders is a democratic socialist who wears his uncompromising positions — government-run health care for all, higher taxes on the wealthy and free university tuition — proudly on his sleeve. Biden is a centrist who prides himself on his ability to work with Republicans. — AFP

Bibi to press on despite shortfall in poll majority

Jerusalem, March 8: A defiant Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Saturday he was "not going anywhere" even after he again fell short of a parliamentary majority with his hard-line allies in his country's third election in less than a year. Convening what he called an "emergency conference," Netanyahu accused his opponents of trying to "steal the elections" by aligning with Arab-led parties he said were hostile to the state. The election results looked to extend the country's year-old political deadlock and weaken the longtime leader as he prepares to go on trial for corruption charges later this month. 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 58 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 jubilation was premature. Likud emerged as the largest individual party, with 36 seats, ahead of 33 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. While Netanyahu's opponents control a majority of seats, they are deeply divided, with a hard-line nationalist party and the long-time Arab-Joint List among them. The Joint List captured 15 seats, making it the right-wing party in parliament — its best performance ever. Those divisions could make it difficult for Netanyahu's leader, former military chief Benny Gantz, to establish an alternative coalition. — AFP

Kamala Harris endorses Biden for US President

Washington, March 8: Indian-origin California Senator Kamala Harris on Sunday endorsed Joe Biden for president, asserting that there is no one better prepared than him to steer America through "turbulent times" and she would do "everything" in her power to help elect the former US vice-president. In less than a week, Harris on Sunday became the fourth Democratic presidential aspirant to support 77-year-old Biden in his third bid at the White House. The three others being Senator Amy Klobuchar, former Mayor of Indiana Pete Buttigieg, and former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. "There is no one better prepared than Joe to steer our nation through these times and restore truth, honour, and decency to the Oval Office," Harris said in a statement. "I believe in Joe Biden and will do everything in my power to help elect him the next president of the US," she said. The California Senator had dropped out of the Democratic presidential race even before the start of the primaries. She had made an impressive performance against Biden during the first Democratic party presidential debate last summer. — PTI

MH17 PROTEST: KIN PLACE 298 EMPTY CHAIRS

The Hague, March 8: The families of people killed when a missile shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014 set up 298 white chairs outside the Russian embassy on Sunday in a silent protest against Moscow's lack of cooperation in the probe on to the downing of the passenger jet. Each chair represented one of the victims who died when a Buk missile fired from territory controlled by pro-Russian separatists rebel shot down the Amsterdam-to-Kuala Lumpur flight on July 17, 2014. The families also held two minutes of silence. The protest came on the eve of the start of a Dutch trial for three Russians and a Ukrainian charged with murders for their alleged roles in the missile strike. — AP

Refugee shelter burns as Greece rolls out new asylum restrictions

Lesbos Island (Greece), March 8: A fire ignited at a refugee shelter on the island of Lesbos as Greece announced further restrictions towards asylum seekers in response to a migration surge enabled by Turkey. The fire on Saturday at One Happy Family, a Swiss-operated family aid group, represented one of the victims who died when a Buk missile fired from territory controlled by pro-Russian separatists rebel shot down the Amsterdam-to-Kuala Lumpur flight on July 17, 2014. The families also held two minutes of silence. The protest came on the eve of the start of a Dutch trial for three Russians and a Ukrainian charged with murders for their alleged roles in the missile strike. — AP

Aegean islands from Turkey over the past week, adding to the 38,000 already crammed into makeshift refugee centres. The new surge has ramped up already high tensions on Lesbos, an island that has been on the migration frontline for years. Frustration exploded into violence last week with mobs setting up roadblocks, attacking cars and beating journalists. Earlier Saturday, the Greek migration minister announced plans for new camps to house asylum-seekers who arrived after March 1, when Turkey announced it would no longer prevent people from trying to cross into the European Union. On the land border with Turkey, tens of thousands

OVER 1,700 migrants have landed on Lesbos and four other Aegean islands from Turkey over the past week, adding to the 38,000 already crammed into makeshift and overstretched refugee centres. Frustration exploded into violence last weekend with mobs setting up roadblocks, attacking cars carrying NGO workers and beating journalists. "Accommodation and benefits for those granted asylum will be interrupted within a month. From then on, they will have to work for a living. This makes our country a less attractive destination for migration flows," the minister said. — AFP

STANDING OVATION The Duke and Duchess of Sussex were guests of honour at the Mountbatten Festival

Harry, Meghan attend one of final official events

London, March 8: Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan were the guests of a resounding standing ovation during one of their final official engagements as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex were the guests of honour at the Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall in London on Saturday when the couple received a particularly long round of applause from the audience as they took their seats in the royal box. Prince Harry, 35,

appeared in a Royal Marines officer's red mess jacket, matched by his 39-year-old wife's designer red dress. The music festival brings together world-class musicians, composers and conductors of the Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines and the Royal Marines Association — the Royal Marines Charity and CLIC for girls was to "speak up for what is right". According to reports, she used her visit to the Robert Clack School to highlight her favourite themes of women's empowerment, social justice and gender equality. According to "The Sunday Times", the school assembly had been told it would be addressed by a "mystery guest". There

were cheers when Meghan appeared and called for "the women of our future" to "believe in themselves" and "really stand in your truth, to stand for what is right to continue to respect each other". The couple will next join Queen Elizabeth II and the rest of the royal family for the annual Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey on Monday to mark women's empowerment. It would be the first time the entire royal family is seen together in public since Harry and Meghan announced they were stepping down from royal duties.



Britain's Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex arrive to attend The Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall, London. — AFP

IN BRIEF

Pope's support for virus victims

Vatican City: Pope Francis expressed solidarity with the victims of the novel Covid-19 in his first livestreamed prayer and message from the Vatican...

Maldives shuts 2 resort islands

Male: Maldives has curbed movement on several islands, authorities said on Sunday, after the country reported its first two cases of Covid-19...

2 ill at Canada care home

Vancouver: Canadian officials have declared an outbreak of the new Covid-19 at a long-term care home in North Vancouver after health officials said two elderly residents were diagnosed with the illness...

NORTH KOREA RELEASES 3.6K QUARANTINED

Seoul, March 7: North Korea has released more than 3,600 people quarantined over the new Covid-19, reports said Sunday, as the disease spread to 85 countries...

23 killed in China hotel collapse

It was used as quarantine facility; rescue work on for remaining 23 trapped

Beijing, March 8: Ten people were killed after a quarantine facility used as a hotel collapsed in southern China's Fujian province, official media reported on Sunday...



A couple takes selfie pictures in front of a screen live-broadcasting Pope Francis' Sunday Angelus prayer at the Vatican on Sunday.

QUARTER OF ITALIANS ON LOCKDOWN

Rome, March 8: A quarter of the Italian population was locked down on Sunday as the government takes drastic steps to stop the spread of the deadly new Covid-19...

The quarantine zones are home to more than 15 million people and include the regions around Venice and financial capital Milan...

Iran reports 49 new virus deaths

Tehran, March 8: Iran's health ministry on Sunday reported 49 new deaths from the novel Covid-19, the highest toll within 24 hours since the start of the outbreak...

Health emergency in New York; ship to dock

Los Angeles, March 8: A US cruise ship hit by Covid-19 was given permission to dock on Saturday, while New York announced a state of emergency as confirmed cases across the country surged past 400...

Attendee at summit with Trump is +ve

Washington, March 8: A person who attended a gathering of top US political conservatives, including President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, has tested positive for the new Covid-19...

27 fatalities reported in Beijing, March 8: China on Sunday reported 27 new deaths from Covid-19...

South Africa's tally at 3 Johannesburg, March 8: The wife of South Africa's first novel Covid-19 patient tested positive on Sunday becoming the third confirmed case in the country...

12 more in Singapore, March 8: A dozen new cases of Covid-19 have been reported in Singapore, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in the country to 150...

Paris, March 8: Another five people have died from the Covid-19 in France bringing the total to 16, the health ministry has announced Saturday...

French toll up to 5 to 16

Paris, March 8: Another five people have died from the Covid-19 in France bringing the total to 16, the health ministry has announced Saturday...

Temples in Dubai put on hold Holi revelry

Pilgrims pray during quarantine

Dubai, March 8: Hindu temples in Bur Dubai have cancelled Holi celebrations and advised against throwing colours to prevent the spread of Covid-19...

Jerusalem, March 8: A group of Christian pilgrims from Alabama is turning to prayer and positive thinking as they cope with an open-ended Covid-19 quarantine...

Finally: "We're really sad that things turned out the way they did," Bell said. "It's not a great situation, but we're trying to make the best of it."

Community has helped them get through the ordeal. He said the group is confined to one floor of the hotel...

quarantined and treated aboard the ship, the company added. Around half of the vessel's 1,100 crew hall from the Philippines and several are among those diagnosed with the virus...

will instead go to nearby Oakland on Monday and begin disembarking passengers in need of "acute medical treatment", vessel owner Princess Cruises said in a statement.

Meeting goes viral on social media after Sheikh Hamdan posts picture with Abdullah Hussain, asks about treatment

Cancer-hit 'Hyd' boy's wish to meet Dubai Crown Prince fulfilled

Dubai, March 7: The wish of a seven-year-old cancer-stricken Indian boy came true when Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan met him in a heart-touching gesture and posted their picture on social media...

ABDULLAH'S MOTHER Nausheen Fatima said the young fan has grown fonder of his idol after the meeting which went viral on social media after Sheikh Hamdan posted his picture with Abdullah...

Prince," said Nausheen. She said the family was touched by "Sheikh Hamdan's simplicity, kindness, the way he talked to Abdullah and his younger brother Ahmed, and his polite and playful nature."

"Abdullah's father Mohd Tajamal Hussain, a businessman, had brought over a portrait of Sheikh Hamdan with a name and golden replica of Charminar, an iconic monument in Hyderabad, for gifting them to the Crown Prince. Sheikh Hamdan received the gifts and posed for pictures with the family during the 15-minute meeting," she said.

Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan (2nd L) with Abdullah Hussain (holding picture) and his family.





Taniya Bhatia (right) walks off the field after suffering a concussion in the T20 World Cup final on Sunday. — AP

Bhatia suffers concussion in final

Melbourne: Wicket-keeper Taniya Bhatia on Sunday suffered a concussion following a hit on her neck in the final of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup against Australia at the MCC here. Chasing a mammoth 185, Bhatia came into bat after the dismissal of Shafali Verma in the very first over. But Bhatia's stay was shortlived as she had to retire hurt in the second over after getting hit on her helmet by left-arm spinner Jess Jonassen. Taniya looked rattled after she was hit on her helmet while going for a sweep, forcing the Indian team's doctor and physio to rush out to check on her and subsequently taking her off the field. This was after Australia posted a challenging 184 for four, riding on blistering half-centuries from openers Beth Mooney (78) and Alyssa Healy (75). — PTI

It's time to review captaincy: Shantha

Rajkot: Former skipper Shantha Rangaswamy feels the time has come for Harmanpreet Kaur to take a call on her captaincy future as she is much more important to the Indian women's team as a batter than a leader. Another women's cricket veteran Diana Edulji called for "introspection" following the team's crushing loss in the T20 World Cup final against Australia, while former coach Tushar Arothe slammed the decision to send Tania Bhatia at number three. "I am very disappointed that such high calibre batters like Smriti, Jemimah, Harman did not click at all. It was a consistent failure of Harman, Smriti, Jemimah and Veda," Shantha said after India's heavy loss in their maiden final. "Shafali was the only one who made significant contributions while the others just chipped in which is not good enough to win a world title." "I am sure she will know when to give up captaincy and it is time for her review her captaincy. She is a mature person because she definitely is needed in the team much more as a batter than captain, especially in T20. It is worth pondering over," she added. — PTI

Team need to be left alone: Smriti

Melbourne: Senior India player Smriti Mandhana called for the team to be left alone after its 85-run mauling by Australia in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup final here on Sunday. "This is a time to introspect. Failure teaches you a lot more than success. The team needs to be left alone and think of how we can be better in the next few years," Mandhana said after her team's loss. Mandhana believed India are a transformed team in the shortest format, and she attributed it to head coach WV Raman. "T20 was never our best format, one day was definitely the preferred format. Now we're playing each format equally well. That is one thing the coach has helped us with and we've developed massively," she said. "The youngsters coming in have totally changed the set-up and the best part of the tournament was it was a complete team performance. That's one thing Raman has done — developing us as a team not just one or two players. Today, it didn't work out but we've grown as a team, not just as one or two players." Mandhana's disappointing T20 World Cup — that saw her manage a top score of 17 in four innings — continued as India sunk to 99 all out. — PTI



Australian women celebrate winning the ICC T20 World Cup in Melbourne on Sunday. They beat India by 85 runs in the final to take their fifth T20 title. — AP

Billion hearts break

Aussies dash Indian women's hopes of bringing home their first ICC World Cup

Melbourne, March 8: India saved their worst for the last as a brutal Australian side outclassed them by 85 runs for an unprecedented fifth T20 World Cup triumph in a final that promised much, but delivered very little here Sunday. Batting first after the coin landed in Meg Lanning's favour, Australia came out in scintillating fashion with their openers Alyssa Healy (75 off 39 balls) and Beth Mooney (78 off 54 balls) laying the foundation with a 115-run partnership in double quick time. Stirred up by the grand occasion, their onslaught fired Australia to a formidable 184 for four in the stipulated 20 overs. Overwhelmed by the occasion, India crumbled to 99 all out in front of a turnout of 86,174 at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground, a record in women's cricket history. What worked in the home team's favour was that their openers easily neutralised the threat posed by the in-form spin-

ner Poonam Yadav with percentage game while taking the likes of medium-paceer Shikha Pandey and Deepthi Sharma to the cleaners. On the day, Pandey was smashed for 32 runs in her four overs. Half the battle was won there for the formidable Australians, who, in stark contrast to the India, saved their best for the last. The manner and magnitude of the defeat, including a few sub-plots, were reminiscent of the 2003 men's World Cup final when Ricky Ponting's Australia thrashed Sourav Ganguly's India in an anti-climactic title clash. Like Zaheer Khan in his opening over at the Wanderers against Adam Gilchrist and Matthew Hayden, Deepthi Sharma was all nerves when up against Mooney and Healy, who blasted massive sixes as the beaming husband Mitchell Starc watched from the stands. "The match was as good as over when India were 18/3 in the fourth over, which became four for 4/30 when skipper



Shafali Verma (from left), Jemimah Rodrigues and Radha Yadav are dejected after India's 85-run defeat to Australia in the Twenty20 World Cup final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Sunday. — AP

SCORECARD

Australia: Alyssa Healy c Krishnamurthy b Radha Yadav 75, Beth Mooney (not out) 78, Meg Lanning c S Pandey b D Sharma 16, Ashleigh Gardner c T Bhatia b D Sharma 2, Rachael Haynes b D Yadav 4, Nicola Carey (not out) 5. **Extras (B-L-W-2-NB-0): 4. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 184.**
India: Shafali Verma c Healy b Schutt 2, Smriti Mandhana c Carey b Molineux 11, Taniya Bhatia ret'd hurt 2, Jemimah Rodrigues c Carey b Jonassen 0, Harmanpreet Kaur c Gardner b Jonassen 4, Deepthi Sharma c Mooney b Carey 33, Veda Krishnamurthy c Jonassen b Schutt 1, Rishabh Gavaskar (not out) 1. **Extras (B-L-W-0): 6. Total (in 18.1 overs) 99.**
Bowling: Schutt 3-10-18-4, Jonassen 4-0-20-3, Molineux 4-0-21-1, Kimmince 4-0-17-1, Carey 4-0-22-1.
India: Shafali Verma c Healy b Schutt 2, Smriti Mandhana c Carey b Molineux 11, Taniya Bhatia ret'd hurt 2, Jemimah Rodrigues c Carey b Jonassen 0, Harmanpreet Kaur c Gardner b Jonassen 4, Deepthi Sharma c Mooney b Carey 33, Veda Krishnamurthy c Jonassen b Schutt 1, Rishabh Gavaskar (not out) 1. **Extras (B-L-W-0): 6. Total (in 18.1 overs) 99.**
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IAN BISHOP: Instead of being over-awed by the expectation of a home World Cup final at a packed MCG, Australia have thrived on it. Healy calmed the nerves early. India looked intimidated unfortunately. They will learn from it one hopes.



VVS LAXMAN: Congratulations @Aus Women Cricket on winning the #T20WorldCup. To the @BCCIWomen team, we all are very proud of your achievement. Really enjoyed the way you all played throughout the tournament.



SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS: Never be let down. You have been amazing throughout and you'll shall have the trophy at your hand one day. Keep believing! @BCCIWomen



Virat Kohli: Proud of all the efforts put in by the Indian Women's Cricket Team throughout their #T20WorldCup campaign. I'm confident that you girls will bounce back stronger than ever. Raising hands @BCCIWomen



Mithali Raj: Not the result all of us expected. Gutted. Nonetheless the wonderful campaign. I congratulate captain @imHarmanpreet and the girls. Request everyone to continue supporting women's cricket.

Harman backs team despite loss

Melbourne, March 8: India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur on Sunday said she do well in future. "The way we played in the league games was outstanding. I still have a lot of faith in my team," Harmanpreet said. "It's part of the game, sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. You have to keep learning. But I trust this team," she added. Kaur said that the team

needs to work in the fielding department and learn from the mistakes. "Today it was unfortunate that we dropped these catches. The upcoming one-and-a-half years is very important. We need to focus in fielding." Kaur reckoned her side need to learn how to win high-stakes clashes. "If we talk about the last T20 World Cup, we got to the semis, and this time to the final. I think we're on the

right path. Every year we are improving. We just need to think of how we play with focus in the main games. Sometimes we don't manage that," the skipper said. **Skipper bats for Shafali** Kaur backed 16-year-old Shafali Verma after her dropped catch of Alyssa Healy cost India dear in the final. "Verma is only 16, she's playing her first World Cup. She did really, really well and performed for us. For a 16-year-old kid, it's difficult to keep thinking positively and stay in the game." — PTI

WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP WINNERS

Year	Venue	Winners	Runners-up
2009	London	England	New Zealand
2010	Bridgetown	Australia	New Zealand
2012	Colombo	Australia	England
2014	Dhaka	Australia	England
2016	Kolkata	West Indies	Australia
2018	North Sound	Australia	England
2020	Melbourne	Australia	India

Stats: S. PERVEZ QAISER



American pop superstar Katy Perry performs at the 2020 T20 World Cup final in Melbourne on Sunday. — AP

Final will spark new era for women's sport

Melbourne, March 8: The blockbuster final between India and Australia on Sunday changed women's cricket forever. In fact, that's an understatement as the ICC T20 World Cup final will be seen as the day which marked the dawn of a new era for women's sport worldwide. Five years in the making, the most highly-anticipated occasion in the sport's history lived up to its billing by setting a new attendance record not just for a women's sporting event in Australia, but for women's cricket globally. It may have fallen just



Tennis star Billie Jean King (left) with Megan Schutt.

short of beating the world record attendance for a women's sporting event but 86,174 fans filling the iconic MCG is a sight for any sports fan to behold. In the six previous editions of the tournament, the highest Final crowd came in 2009 when 12,177 watched England beat New Zealand in Sydney. And seeing 73,000 more turn up in Melbourne for the same event 11 years later is a true testament to how far the game has come. What the match had

achieved was apparent before the stadium gates had opened as fans streamed into Melbourne Park in their hundreds up to seven hours before the first ball was bowled. Seas of yellow and blue engulfed the concourse as fans from all walks of life — male and female, boys and girls, young and old — came together through a love of cricket. But it was when those fans entered the bowl that the real weight of the achievement hit home. The noise was deafening from the offset — let alone when Alyssa Healy hit back-to-back sixes to set Australia on their way to lifting the title on home soil. The crowd figures will be talked about for years to come, but you don't have to look far to realise that filling the MCG for a women's sport fixture will be a one-off. — Agencies

86,174 watched Australia beat India at the MCG.

The attendance also marked the highest turnout for a women's sporting event in Australia as the hosts won their fifth T20 World title in front of the home crowd.

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