

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | 5 APRIL 2020

## WEATHER

Max: 31.2°C  
Min: 24.2°C  
RH: 49%  
Rain: Nil  
Forecast: Partly cloudy sky.  
Moderate rain likely  
Max/Min temp. 36/25°C

## CORONA COUNT

CASES 3072  
DEATHS 91  
TS: 272  
AP: 190

## WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

1,122,320  
DEATHS 60,000+  
COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES 190

## ASTROGUIDE

Saravi: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Chaitra Suddha Dvadasa till 7:20 pm  
Star: Magha 1:52 pm  
Varjyam: 9:59 pm to 11:24 pm  
Durmuhurtam: 4:48 pm to 5:37 pm  
Rahukalam: 4:30 pm to 6 pm  
MURUGA CALENDAR  
Shabam 10:44 AM  
PRAYERS  
Fajar: 5:07 am  
Zohar: 12:29 pm  
Asar: 4:40 pm  
Maghrib: 6:35 pm  
Isha: 7:44 pm  
SUNSET TODAY 6:39 PM  
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6:07 AM  
MOONRISE TODAY 4:49 PM  
MOONSET TOMORROW 3:57 AM

## COUNTER POINT



How nice would it be if we had something for dinner, in candle light!

## IN BRIEF

### Diagnostic kits export banned

**New Delhi:** The government on Saturday put curbs on exports of diagnostic kits to discourage shipments amid the coronavirus outbreak. "The export of diagnostic kits (diagnostic or laboratory reagents on a backing, preparation diagnostic or laboratory reagents)... is restricted with immediate effect," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

### Railways, zones differ on service

**New Delhi:** The railways on Saturday said no final decision was taken on restoration of train services, even as its zones have resumed drawing up plans to restore passenger services, which were suspended for 21 days due to the ongoing nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus. All 17 railway zones and divisions are preparing plans to identify trains and resume services from April 15, taking into account the availability of rakes.

### I-T gives time for forms 15G, 15H

**New Delhi:** The Income-Tax department has allowed individuals to submit Form 15G and 15H for the current fiscal after June 30 for claiming exemption from TDS on interest income to mitigate hardship of people amid the Covid-19 crisis. Forms 15G and 15H are filed by persons whose incomes are below taxable threshold, to seek exemption from TDS on interest income.



### Trump advocates masks but won't wear it



### Fifa puts off India's U-17 women's world cup

### Sex in the locked-down city



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# India logs 700 cases, 12 deaths

## Toll at 91 on 11th day of lockdown; 22,000 TJ members quarantined: Centre

SHASHI BHUSHAN | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

On Saturday, the 11th day of the nationwide lockdown, the number of coronavirus positive cases crossed the 3,000 mark with around 700 people testing positive and 12 patients succumbing to Covid-19 related complications in 24 hours, the highest in India in a single day.

The total coronavirus related deaths in India now stand at 91 as per covid19india.org, a crowd sourced website updating the toll frequently. The Union health ministry said on Saturday that the total number of confirmed cases coronavirus cases are 3,072, including 57 foreign nationals.

Officials, however, assured citizens that there is no need to panic as the rate of spread is less than in many other countries and that just "one place", the Tablighi Jamaat, accounts for 30 per cent of India's total positive cases.

Union home ministry said that nearly 22,000 Tablighi Jamaat members and their primary contacts have been quarantined across the country till now.

Punya Sahla Srivastava, the secretary in the Union home ministry, said that the government undertakes massive efforts in coordinating with states to trace the Jamaat members and their contacts to contain the spread of Covid-19. "Of the total positive cases, 1,023 confirmed cases of infection have been found to be linked to the Tablighi Jamaat congregation in the national capital last month. Maharashtra (490), Delhi (445), Tamil Nadu (411), Kerala (285) and Rajasthan (200) remain the states with the highest number of positive cases. "Fifty-eight patients in the country, mostly from Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, are currently in critical condition," Union health ministry's joint secretary Law Agrawal said, adding that most of the patients who have died so far were old and had co-morbid conditions like diabetes, hypertension, kidney or cardiac issues.

Contrary to the general belief that the elderly are at higher risk of infection, government data revealed that the maximum Covid-19 patients, almost 42 per cent, are in the 21-40 age bracket. "Thirty-three per cent patients are of 41-60 years, 17 per cent are above 60 years and 9 per cent patients are in the 0-20 age bracket," Mr Agrawal said.

OF THE total positive cases, 1,023 confirmed cases of infection have been found to be linked to the Tablighi Jamaat congregation

## INDIANS ADVISED TO WEAR 'COVER' ON THEIR FACES

New Delhi, April 4: As India witnesses a spike in the spread of Covid-19, the Central government on Saturday issued an advisory asking people to wear "homemade face covers", particularly when they step out of their houses in order to curb the spread of Covid-19.

In the 'Advisory on the use of Homemade Protective Cover for Face and Mouth', the government said the use of such masks will help in protecting the community at large, and that certain countries have claimed benefits of homemade face masks for the general public.

The Indian government's advisory underlined that usage of homemade masks certainly will help in maintaining overall hygiene, while cautioning that "this face cover is not recommended for either health workers or those working with or in contact with Covid-19 patients or are patients themselves in these categories of people are required to wear specified protective gear".

The advisory also has a manual issued by the office of the government's Principal Scientific Advisor on homemade protective cover for face and mouth for curbing the spread of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. The manual suggested that "wearing face covers is especially recommended for people living in densely populated areas in India". — PTT



## MODI CALLS FOR ALL-PARTY MEET ON CORONAVIRUS

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will for the first time confer with leaders of Opposition parties on Saturday to discuss ways to tackle the coronavirus on April 8.

The meeting will be held through video-conferencing at 11 am next Wednesday. All parties who have more than five members in both Houses of Parliament were invited for the meeting. Parliamentary affairs minister Prahlad Joshi said in a statement on Saturday.

Page 5: Modi, Trump discuss Covid-19



Police helplessly watch as people ignore social distancing norms at Malakpet Palton for free ration being supplied at Government Fair Price shops on Saturday. With servers down for a significant amount of time, there were lot of arguments with the police and Fair Price shop owners. — P.SURENDRA

# Telangana reports 43 new +ve cases

## Surgeons sew up safety gear funds

BALU PULIPAKA and DURGA PRAKASH SUNKU | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Telangana state registered yet another steep climb in the number of coronavirus-positive cases with the government announcing late on Saturday evening that 43 more persons were identified as being affected with Covid-19.

"This takes the total number of Covid-19 cases, including 11 deaths and 33 recovered and discharged patients, to 272. "Every one of these new cases," health minister Etala Rajendar said in a statement, "were either those who were in contact with the two patients from Shadnagar and Secunderabad who died due to Covid-19."

Page 4: Positive patient attended Markaz

## 15 OGH DOCS, STAFF INSTRUCTED TO GO INTO QUARANTINE

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Fifteen house surgeons, resident doctors and paramedical staff from Osmania General Hospital were asked to quarantine themselves as they came in contact with the two patients from Shadnagar and Secunderabad who died due to Covid-19. The doctors and paramedical staff on duty on March 31 and April 1 were segregated and asked to stay at home.

Page 4: Positive patient attended Markaz

## Surgeons sew up safety gear funds

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The Association of Surgeons of India (ASI) is stepping up in help for hospitals designated as Covid-19 centres across the country, raising between ₹30 to ₹35 lakh so far. "The surgeons' body, in a bid to slice through the supply chain clutter, said that personal protective equipment (PPE) will be delivered from a manufacturer in Karnataka directly to the ASI state chapters for the amount it contributed.

## Surgeons sew up safety gear funds

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

and hand over the PPE directly to under-served government hospitals designated as Covid-19 centres. ASI president Dr P Raghunath said, "We expect the total fund to get larger in the next day or two," he added. Each PPE kit, costing ₹1,000 and procured from a government of India-approved manufacturer, consists of a single-use, full body protective suit, a pair of hand gloves, eye glasses and a triple-layered surgical mask. Incidentally, each ASI state chapter will get PPEs for the amount it contributed.

# Lights off won't harm power grid, says state

S.A. ISHAQI | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

majority of households to switch off lights after 9 pm. Social media has been abuzz with rumours that the power grid would collapse due to the sudden drop in electricity use. Mr Rao told a press conference that it was a misconception and asked people to switch off the lights to express their solidarity in the fight against the coronavirus. He advised people to continue to operate their household electrical appliances, including fans and refrigerators. He explained that the 'lighting load,' the power

TSGENCO chairman D. Prabhakar Rao asked people to continue to operate their household electrical appliances, including fans and refrigerators while switching off lights

used for lights, was 700 MW. "Ever since the lockdown, the state has recorded a peak consumption of 9,000 MW to 10,000 MW. During the last week, the power consumption has been around 6,000 MW. We are prepared to meet demand up to

13,500 MW. With all lights being turned off, we will have a reduction of power consumption by only 700 MW-750 MW which will not have any adverse impact on the power grid."

He said that the state had an advanced isolated grid system which would be able to bear the load, if required, the authorities were making arrangements to switch on the power-consuming pumps of Kaleshwaram lift irrigation scheme as well reverse pumping at Srisailem and Nagarjunasagar projects

to balance the power consumption during the nine-minute period. He said that the state power utilities were taking precautions to minimise any adverse impact of the nine-minute blackout. He recalled that during the solar eclipse recently, people had switched off the lights resulting in reduction in power usage by 800 MW which had no impact on the power grid.

He urged people to cooperate with the electricity department staff and pay electricity bills online.

# Centre amends J&K domicile law

## Jobs at stake All govt jobs kept open to local residents, new entrants only

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, APRIL 4

Following widespread criticism by political parties and public outcry, the Centre on late Friday night amended the recently notified domicile law for Jammu & Kashmir, reserving all government jobs for its residents. The Centre's decision was welcomed by political parties continue to be dissatisfied and even enraged and have demanded a complete rollback of the entire domicile law and restoration of J&K's statehood. They have asserted that vital issues like who can be domicile of the erstwhile state stripped of its special constitutional status and split up into Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir should be left to a duly elected Assembly to decide. The Centre's decision on the March 31 evening, while defining new domicile rule for J&K, made a

person residing in the UT for at least 15 years or having studied for a period of seven years and appeared in Class 10th/12th examinations at a local educational institution eligible to be a domicile of it. The definition expands to include "children of those Central government officials, all India services officers, officials of PSUs and autonomous body of Central government, public sector banks, officials of

statutory bodies, officials of Central universities and also said that all Indian citizens including J&K domiciles would be eligible for remaining non-gazetted and gazetted posts. Before August 5 last year, all jobs in J&K were exclusively reserved for permanent residents of the erstwhile state. The Ladakh region of the erstwhile state which is now a separate UT was not included in the gazetted notification.

on class-4th and non-gazetted posts, however, it also said that all Indian citizens including J&K domiciles would be eligible for remaining non-gazetted and gazetted posts. Before August 5 last year, all jobs in J&K were exclusively reserved for permanent residents of the erstwhile state. The Ladakh region of the erstwhile state which is now a separate UT was not included in the gazetted notification.

Senior MP health officials test +ve

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4  
In a major development, two senior IAS officers holding key charges in state health department on Saturday tested positive for Covid-19 seriously hitting operation of war room established by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to fight coronavirus in Madhya Pradesh.

A day after young IAS officer J. Vijay Kumar tested positive for Covid-19, state health secretary Pallavi Jain Govil and additional health director Veena Sinha on Saturday tested positive for the virus, creating ripple in the state administration here. The development has forced the state government to put 14 senior IAS officers in quarantine.

**SHORT TAKES**

**RULES TO OBTAIN KITS FOR COVID RELIEF RELAXED**

S.A. ISHAQUI I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The state government on Saturday issued an order relaxing certain provisions of Article 125 of the Telangana State Financial Code to be able to procure diagnostic, surgical and other medical equipment, drugs and pharmaceutical and other essential services and related supplies on priority for undertaking Covid-19 relief operations.

According to Chief Secretary Sunesh Kumar, the prevailing health emergency would require this. Any delays in procurement would result in loss of lives and hence there is a paramount public interest in ensuring that the necessary goods, services and supplies are procured in the quickest possible manner and the procurement procedures have to be adapted.

The government order stipulates that the procurement may in the first instance be made either from suppliers already empanelled on rate contract or through the government e-marketplace (GEM), if they meet the required time lines and quantities.

If the procurement from a supplier is not possible under the above provision, it may be undertaken from any other source, either at the lowest contract or GEM rates, or at rates deemed reasonable by the medical and health department, duly recording the non-feasibility of procurement under the first sources and reasonableness.

Procurement may simultaneously be undertaken from more than one source, if the entire quantity required is not feasible from a single source.

In such cases, the rates of the goods and services may also be different for different sources.

Procurement from a single source may be resorted to, if in the medical and health department's assessment only that particular firm is the manufacturer of the required goods and services due to reasons of availability and timely supplies in the prevailing emergency conditions.

The term essential supplies will include any items deemed appropriate by the department necessary for Covid-19 relief operations and this has to be recorded.

The competent authority for making the procurements shall duly record the reasons for invoking the above provisions in the orders permitted under this order in respect of such procurement.

The relaxations permitted under this order shall be in force from March 14 till May 31 or any date as may be prescribed by the government through subsequent orders.

**PROCUREMENT FROM A SINGLE SOURCE MAY BE RESORTED TO, IF IN THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT ONLY THAT PARTICULAR FIRM IS THE MANUFACTURER OF THE REQUIRED GOODS AND SERVICES DUE TO REASONS OF AVAILABILITY AND TIMELY SUPPLIES IN THE PREVAILING EMERGENCY CONDITIONS.**

The special committee, appointed by the state government to dispose bodies of those who died of either suspected or confirmed coronavirus, has clarified that only four members will be allowed at the cremation and that two with each maintaining a minimum distance of four metres from one another.

**NO DELAY IN EVALUATION OF INTER PAPERS**

HARLEEN MINOCHA I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The Telangana Intermediate Board Secretary and Commissioner of Intermediate Education, Syed Omar Jaleel quashed a notification doing the rounds on social media, saying that "the answer paper correction for intermediate students has been postponed till April 15, in view of the Covid-19 spread".

Mr Jaleel reacting strongly to this fake news said, "We started the evaluation a day before the lockdown was announced on March 24, and the process goes on as planned."

There are no plans to postpone the evaluation process for intermediate students. He further added that he will file a police complaint against whoever is found guilty of spreading the misinformation.

The fake notification doing the rounds on social media also read, "Due to Covid-19, Board of Intermediate has decided to release results in May second or third week, so we are doing to announce the improvements and supplementary exams are not held for this year (2019-20)."

**Rush for essentials**



A large number of customers buy vegetables and other essential items amid a nationwide lockdown at the Monda market without maintaining social distance, crucial to control the spread of Covid-19, in Secunderabad on Saturday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

**Plea to allow pvt labs to conduct Covid test**

There is a fear that data on rising cases will be leaked out

KANJIA GARARI I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

There is a gap of 20 to 24 hours between the time a person is tested for the novel coronavirus disease Covid-19 and obtaining a report at state-level facilities. Private hospitals which have got permission from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) but not from state government are appealing that they must be allowed to test to reduce the waiting time.

Vijaya Diagnostics and a private laboratory have been granted permission by ICMR and the state government to conduct the Covid-19 test.

Due to the high load of patients, the testing is taking time. A molecular laboratory is required to test the samples.

Two private hospitals in the state which have the facilities have been demanding permission to test but are not being

allowed as there is a fear that data on the rising number of cases will be leaked out.

Despite assurances that data will not be leaked, and there will be strict compliance, the state government is not willing to give permission.

A senior doctor said, "We have to make patients wait and they do not know why. The results take at least 24 hours and that leads to a delay in treatment. If we test in private hospitals, the time period will range from 3 to 6 hours. This will help in early intervention in cases with co-morbid conditions of diabetes, cancer and auto-immune disorders."

There is another worry on the part of state government that there will be unwanted testing carried out if private hospitals are given approval. A government health official said that the tests will be carried out in private hospitals on those who have no symptoms but want to check that they do not have the coronavirus.

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**● TWO PRIVATE** hospitals in the state which have the facilities have been demanding permission to test but are not being allowed.

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**CLINICS SEIZED FOR COVID-19 PATIENT'S DEATH**

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Ranga Reddy medical and health officials seized private clinics which had treated the woman in Chegur village who died while undergoing treatment in Osmania hospital on March 31. She later tested positive for Covid-19.

Her final rites were performed at Chegur of Nandigama mandal in Shadnagar Assembly constituency on Thursday. It was attended by her family members and other villagers.

After her samples tested positive for the novel coronavirus disease, the villagers are in panic.

Accusing the private doctors, Dr Prasad Reddy and Dr Vithalliah, for not informing authorities regarding the Covid case and treating her, clinics were sealed and cases booked against them.

The government order stated that if any private clinic is found flouting norms, it will be booked under the IPC, Disaster Management Act 2005 and Epidemic Disease Act.

**Migrants sidelined at ration shops**

ADITYA CHUNDURU I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

Migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and even the general Telugu public have alleged that TRS leaders were playing favourites at ration shops during rice distribution.

They said TRS leaders overseeing the distribution operation at most of the shops are giving out tokens according to their discretion, often at the expense of migrants, even though they have ration cards.

At a ration shop in Kavaddiguda, very few people were able to get tokens, even though they had been waiting there since early in the morning.

Mintu, a Bihar migrant living in the locality, said he was unable to get a token even though he had been waiting in line since 8 am. "Only a few people were able to get tokens. After that, the local TRS leader gave the rest of them to people close to him."

Onlookers who overheard the statement were angered in agreement. The TRS leader, on seeing Mintu complaining to this reporter and attracting attention, took Mintu aside and discreetly put a token in his hand to assuage him.

Raju Ojha of the Bihar Samaj, an activist group for the welfare of migrants from that state, said he had been to multiple ration shops in the city and the situation was the same in almost all places.

"At all the places, the local politician, mostly the corporator, is overseeing the distribution. They are favouring locals over migrant, who possess ration cards but don't understand Telugu and can be easily fooled. It is all about canvassing for votes," he said.

At Bansilalpet, there were at least 70-80 people, mostly women, waiting in line to receive their rations.

They had been there since the previous day. When asked, all of them said Lakshminipati, the husband of TRS corporator for Bansilalpet, was distributed tokens the previous day.

Life was even tougher for migrants who don't possess ration cards. The civil supplies department and GHMC have arranged rice distribution for them at separate locations but little migrants have had little luck so far.

In the Musheerabad area, the migrants were asked to go to the Musheerabad playground. However, the counters have rarely opened since April 1.

Lokesh Das, a migrant from Odisha, who had come there along with his wife and daughter, said, "The counter was opened only for a few hours since April 1. Whenever we came here, they asked us to leave and return the next day."

Das, a daily wage labourer, said he is running low on savings as he hasn't made any money since the lockdown began.

A group of migrants from Madhya Pradesh said they, too, had waited for long hours at the ration counter on Friday and Saturday but were unable to get any rice or cash.

Beneficiaries show their tokens as they wait in line to receive ration on Saturday. — DC

**Kin can't touch Covid victim's dead body**

MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4

The special committee, appointed by the state government to dispose bodies of those who died of either suspected or confirmed coronavirus, has clarified that only four members will be allowed at the cremation and that two with each maintaining a minimum distance of four metres from one another.

A dedicated Covid-19 vehicle and teams will carry bodies from the hospital to the graveyard and a wooden barricading with a rope hindering the entry of any person has been made mandatory at the burial or electric cremation site.

At the burial site, the body will once again be dipped in disinfection chemical for electrical cremation or burial. The Covid-19 teams would be sanitised with sodium

allowed to touch the body. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) would be mandatory for the special teams consisting of all hospitals in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits. The suspected or corona positive body will be dipped in sodium hypochlorite (disinfection chemical) prior to shifting it in a two-litre wrapping with a white cloth. This wrap would be made with the plastic cover which would be easy to shift the body from the hospital in a zipper bag.

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hypochlorite prior and post the final rites. A committee member told *Deccan Chronicle* that the same guidelines have been

sent to all nodal agencies, including the four collectors of Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Sangareddy districts besides the GHMC zonal commissioners. He said similar guidelines were given to major city hospitals, which have been asked to use a SOP should be followed for 19 vehicle for carrying the body. The official said that the state government has customised disposal guidelines and adapted them to local conditions.

He said similar guidelines will be followed across the state and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) should be followed by the district authorities.

However, the million-dollar dilemma is that neither the GHMC nor the district authorities in the

Greater Hyderabad limits has constructed special crematoriums or burial grounds. Burying in the existing 981 graveyards would be extremely difficult since they are already running short of space even for a normal death.

On being queried, the committee member said that they would follow SOP at the place allowed for cremation or burial. The authorities are clueless about the cascading effect after burying Covid-19-hit bodies.

"The ash of electric cremation is safe but we are not sure about the measures to be taken after burial in graveyards. We have not framed any guidelines. There is confusion over whether family members can collect ash post cremation," the official added.

**VIRUS | SCARE Most of the patients had attended religious meeting of Tablighi Jamaat at Nizamuddin in Delhi**

**In a first, Badi masjid turns into quarantine facility**

VIKRAM SHARMA I DC HYDERABAD APRIL 4

In a strange development, at least 25 Tablighi Jamaat members who tested negative for coronavirus after undergoing swab tests at Gandhi Hospital were shifted to the Badi masjid in Malapally where they are expected to remain in isolation for 14 days.

Besides the men, three children and women who were along with them have been moved to an empty building adjacent to the masjid.

It is not known whether the Tablighi Jamaat members themselves requested that they be shifted to the mosque or whether the state administration decided to leave them there, at a time when social distancing is the norm.

Most of them had attended the religious meeting at the Tablighi Jamaat headquarters in Nizamuddin, Delhi, which has turned into a coronavirus hotspot.

Top sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that more than 30 of them were discharged from the Gandhi Hospital on Friday afternoon. However, concerns

were raised by the doctors who advised them quarantine as they could develop symptoms at a later stage.

"Some officials in the administration were of the view that allowing them to go back to their houses could mean that they could spread the virus at a later stage," sources said adding that it was unclear whether a choice was given to them in the form of Badi masjid. All mosques have been closed for the public since the lockdown began.

By evening, they were made to board an air-conditioned RTC bus

belonging to the Ranigunj depot at Gandhi Hospital and taken to the Badi masjid, which is also known as the Tablighi Jamaat mosque.

"What intriguing is who chose the venue. While sources at the Gandhi Hospital said they were not aware of the decision, officials finalised the venue, officials in Hyderabad collectorate said they were not aware of the decision. Contacted by *Deccan Chronicle*, Hyderabad collectorate spokesman said he was not aware of the decision and said the doctors at the hospital would

**● IT IS** not known whether the Tablighi Jamaat members themselves requested that they be shifted to the mosque or whether the state administration decided to leave them there, at a time when social distancing is the norm.

be in better position to provide the details. But Gandhi Hospital sources maintained that they have no say where patients go

once they leave the hospital, except that they may advise quarantine. Policeemen from Habbabnagar, whose jurisdiction covers the Badi masjid, confirmed that 30 people had been dropped at the mosque on Friday evening.

"We are not aware why and at whose behest they were shifted to mosque. It is indeed strange that at this critical time so many people will be confined in a mosque and there is no one to check on them. We will not go inside and our information is that no doctors or medical staff is

going to visit them. They are on their own now," a police officer said.

The official confirmed that women have been moved to a building right next to the mosque as they cannot be allowed inside the place of worship. The mosque is spacious and there is a separate hall as well.

The mosque premises is spacious and there is a separate hall. But we are not aware whether the Tablighi members requested for or the administration moved them here," the official said.

**IN BRIEF**

**GOI issues new EPF notification**

**Hyderabad:** The Government of India has issued a gazette notification allowing Employees Provident Fund members to avail non-refundable advance not exceeding the basic wages and dearness allowance for three months or up to 75 per cent of the amount standing to member's credit in the EPF account. This provision was announced on March 27 to enable EPF members and their families to avail themselves of some relief on account of the outbreak of the coronavirus. The provision for availing this benefit as non-refundable advance comes under sub-para 3 under Para 68L of EPF Rules, according to an official release.

**Covid volunteer cell inaugurated**

**Hyderabad:** To help people who are starving due to the lockdown, the Rachakonda police has started a cell to connect donors with beneficiaries. Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat said, "We have started a Covid volunteer cell at Rachakonda commissionerate with the objective of connecting registered donors with beneficiaries." Mr Bhagwat said the cell is handled by civic volunteers who enrolled with the Rachakonda police who trained and guided and are supervising them. The Rachakonda police has verified 2,274 persons out of a total of 2,501 suspected of Covid-19. Of these, seven have tested positive and 2,149 are in home quarantine. He said 118 passports have been deposited with the authorities concerned. Thirteen cases of quarantine violation and 11 petty cases have been booked in the commissionerate.

**UoH RELEASES ADMISSION NOTIFICATION**

**HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

Amidst the student body's opposition to the admission notification at the University of Hyderabad, the varsity released another notification on Friday inviting online applications for entrance examinations and admissions to various courses for 2020-21. The admission process that started on April 1 is to run till April 30 for 2,400 seats across 126 courses. The university will not conduct its entrance exam at centres where the number of applications is less than 200. The entrance exams will be held at 31 centres between June 2 and June 6. Applications have been invited for 16 integrated courses, 41 PG courses, 15 MPhil and MTech and 46 PhD programmes. The university has introduced 17 new courses like MEd Education, MA Gender Studies, PhD in Social Exclusion and Inclusion Policy and PhD in Cognitive Science.

**UNIDENTIFIED DUO ATTACK COP, INVESTIGATION ON**

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

Two unidentified persons attacked a police constable in Chandrayangutta while he was on bandobast on Saturday. Police said constable P. Praveen was attacked with sticks and sustained a severe head injury in the attack which took place at about 5 pm. Police said Mr Praveen was post near an ATM kiosk when he came under attack from a duo that was wearing masks and came on a two-wheeler. They quickly escaped from the spot. Mr Praveen was shifted to the DRDO hospital for treatment and his condition is said to be stable. Chandrayangutta police booked a case and a man hunt was launched to nab the accused. The police is checking CCTV footage in the surrounding areas to track them down.

**POLICE SAID MR PRAVEEN WAS POST NEAR AN ATM KIOSK WHEN HE CAME UNDER ATTACK FROM THE DUO THAT WAS WEARING MASKS AND CAME ON A TWO-WHEELER. THEY QUICKLY ESCAPED.**



People moving around the city without following any restrictions despite the continuation of lockdown. — P. SURENDRA

**Amidst lockdown, people roam freely across city**

Some are travelling long distances for packet of curd, wheat flour

**MADHY DEEKSHITH | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

People in the city seem to be 'enjoying' driving on the empty roads capitalising on the time that has been given during the Covid-19 lockdown period. Most of them are unmindful of the alarming increase in the number of coronavirus positive cases in the city and giving absurd reasons to step out of their homes for a joy ride.

Ironically, many have been flashing a doctor's prescription when stopped by the police manning the streets. "We have been toiling hard to prevent movement of citizens. However, 99 per cent of them are armed with a medical prescription and get into confrontations when asked to stop at the temporary check post", said a police official near Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) in Secunderabad. He said that a couple on a two-wheeler was in a hurry to get a packet of curd from Uppal since ration shops and super markets nearer home were running out of stock.

**MANY HAVE BEEN FLASHING A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE MANNING THE STREETS.**

**POLICE AT CHECKPOINTS NEAR RTC CROSSROADS, LIBERTY CIRCLE, TARNAKA, HABSIGUDA, MUSHERABAD AND SEVERAL OTHER PLACES SAID THAT PEOPLE HAVE BEEN STEPPING OUT LIKE ANY OTHER NORMAL DAY.**

Police at checkpoints near RTC crossroads, Liberty Circle, Tarnaka, Habsiguda, Musherabad and several other places said that people have been stepping out like any other normal day. "We have been toiling hard to prevent movement of citizens. However, 99 per cent of them are armed with a medical prescription and get into confrontations when asked to stop at the temporary check post", said a police official near Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) in Secunderabad. He said that a couple on a two-wheeler was in a hurry to get a packet of curd from Uppal since ration shops and super markets nearer home were running out of stock.

stop at the temporary check post", said a police official near Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) in Secunderabad. He said that a couple on a two-wheeler was in a hurry to get a packet of curd from Uppal since ration shops and super markets nearer home were running out of stock. "Though police mandate that two persons should not travel on two-wheelers, many came a hoot. A person, accompanied by an eight-year-old, said that he was rushing to a pharmacy near Clock Tower to purchase medicine for his child. When he was caught at the check post a little later, cops were shocked to learn that he had gone to purchase boric acid as his child was feeling bored during the lockdown period. "Police at checkpoints near RTC crossroads, Liberty Circle, Tarnaka, Habsiguda, Musherabad

and several other places said that people have been stepping out like any other normal day. The helplessness of the police is that everybody is citing medical reasons for venturing out. However, cops said that they have been booking cases for some ridiculous reasons. Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, city police commissioner Anjali Kumar said that it has become an even more herculean task to contain people than checking the spread of coronavirus. "We have been booking 12,000 cases on a daily basis for violation of Covid-19 guidelines. People in Old City roughed up a constable when they forward to contain the virus and I urge the media to publicise about the coronavirus spread," he added.

**Police patrol cars get sanitised**

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

The Hyderabad police has started a 10-day drive to disinfect patrol cars which are used for shifting persons suspected of coronavirus and for other purposes. Stating that the patrol staff was the pillar of the police, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjali Kumar said "Disinfecting the patrol vehicles and Blue Colt vehicles are a much-needed step in protecting our police officers who are out every day patrolling the city to ensure the health and safety of citizens safely without worrying about themselves. They are requested to sanitise their vehicles before and after usage. The sanitisation teams will use 3M Germklean to sanitise the high contact points that include door

- **THE SANITISATION teams will use 3M Germklean to sanitise the high contact points that include door handles, arm rests, steering wheel, gear knob and the dashboard**
- **ON AN AVERAGE, 35 patrol cars and 10 Blue Colt vehicles were sanitised**

handles, arm rests, steering wheel gear knob and the dashboard.

On an average, 35 patrol cars and 10 Blue Colt vehicles were sanitised. Three vans and two-wheeler teams from the Mahavir group will conduct the disinfection process. Mr Kumar launched the programme on Saturday in front of the commissionerate at Basheerbagh.

**COP AWARDED FOR HELPING WOMAN**

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

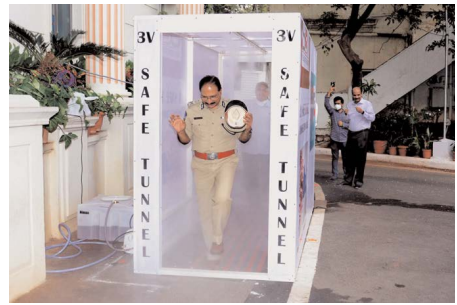
Hyderabad police commissioner Anjali Kumar has appreciated constable P. Mohan Rao (7238, 2010 batch) of Marredpally police station for shifting a pregnant woman to Apollo Hospital in medical emergency. Mr Kumar awarded Mr Rao ₹5,000 and a memento. On Thursday, Patrol Car-1 of the Marredpally police station received a Dial 100 call from one Rekha who said she was in labour and needed to be rushed to hospital. The patrol rushed to her house and called an ambulance. Since the 108 ambulance service did not respond, the patrol took her in the car to Apollo Hospital where she delivered a baby. The mother and baby are in good health, an official said.

**New disinfectant device set up at DGP's office**

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

A first-of-its-kind disinfectant device, '3V Safe Tunnel', was installed at the Director General of Police office by 3V and Vascular Technologies Private Limited. The solution has been proved to be effective against infections such as SARS, MERS and Ebola viruses. The 3V tunnel uses aerosol technology. The flow pattern of the disinfectant solution is designed to provide maximum protection to people passing through the tunnel in around 20 seconds.

The disinfectant is non-volatile, having no detectable vapor pressure, forms a film which releases free iodine, thus enabling prolonged viricidal and bactericidal activity and sanitizing the surfaces. Police personnel and healthcare professionals are being trained in the fight against Covid-19 and installing this disinfectant tunnel is a step towards protecting them by minimizing transmission, a senior official said.



Director General of Police M. Mahendar Reddy walking through the newly installed '3V Safe Tunnel' on Saturday.

**Tipplers go crazy, loot 3 wine shops**

**DURGA PRASAD SUNKU | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

Thieves and tipplers, desperate to get a high, are resorting to looting wine shops under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits. In the last few days, three wine shops were looted and an unsuccessful attempt made to rob a fourth one. The Telangana Wine Dealers' Association (TWDA) was forced to bring this issue to Hyderabad police commissioner's notice.



The wine shop in Bhoiguda near Gandhi Hospital which was looted on Saturday. — S. SURENDR REDDY

On Saturday, a wine shop owner in Bhoiguda noticed that his shop was looted and approached the Gandhinagar police to lodge a complaint. During the investigation, police found that the theft happened on April 1. Amid the lockdown, excise police sealed all wine shops to prevent shop owners from violating norms. The shop owner was checking the CCTV cameras installed in and around the shop through his mobile phone as the shop remained locked due to the lockdown. The owner noticed that the feed from two cameras was not coming through. Suspicious, he went to the shop and noticed the wires connected to the CCTV cameras were disconnected. The shop owner immediately informed the excise police and the law and order police who reached the spot, broke open the seal and found liquor bottles and cases worth lakhs missing from the shop. On March 27, a wine shop worker attempted to steal liquor bottles

allegedly to be sold to customers at Himayathnagar in the early hours. The manager was alerted by suspicious movement on the CCTV cameras installed in the wine shop premises and rushed to the spot. He found his employee, Shiva Lingam, inside shop packing the liquor bottles into cartons. On seeing the manager, he fled, leaving the boxes. In another incident, alcoholies tried to break the shutter of a wine shop to get access to the booze. However, their attempt

**THE TWDA HAS STATED THAT THERE ARE THEFTS AND BREAKING OF MANY WINE SHOPS IN THE CITY BY THIEVES, LIQUOR ADDICTS**

was foiled due to intense patrolling by the Chikkadpally police. Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, TWDA president D. Venkateshwara Rao, said, "Most shop owners do not come out and lodge a formal complaint due to various fears. One, they might be having excess stock, and another is concerned officials. Another is workers of the shop who commit the thefts might reveal that the shop is being opened illegally. Due various reasons like these, they do not come out and file a case." The TWDA has stated that there are thefts and breakings of many wine shops in the city by thieves and liquor addicts. "We requested higher officials to kindly deploy patrolling police officers in local areas to keep an eye on wine shops, which will ensure our shops' safety," said Mr Rao.

**Destitute women get food for lunch**

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

Additional commissioner of police (crime) Shikha Goel on Saturday visited the Fatima Old Age Home, Jangamurti, and distributed food to the inmates. HelpAge India, an NGO, had organised the distribution of lunch. Ms Goel, Bandlaguda mandal revenue officer Farheen Shaik and Chaitralina, an inspector R. Vidyaasagar Reddy distributed the food packets to about 50

aged destitute women. They interacted with the women and inquired about the need of medicines. Ms Goel appreciated the services rendered by the management of the old age home towards elders of the society. Ms Shaik said the arrangement being done by Mr Syed Wasif, Ms Humera Fatima and Arshiya Fatima.

**NO QUARANTINE AT HAJ HOUSE: WAKF BOARD**

**ATHER MOIN I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

State Wakf Board Chief Executive Officer Mohammed Khasim has opposed the idea of converting the Haj House building into a quarantine centre for those suspected of coronavirus. The ministry of minority affairs under the instructions of minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has addressed a letter to Haj Committees of all states seeking details of occupancy for utilising them as quarantine centres. The TS Haj Committee opposed the matter to the Wakf Board which owns the building. Mr Khasim disagreed with the proposal stating that the Haj House houses the offices of the Haj Committee, Urdu Academy, Minorities Finance Corporation and District Minority Welfare Office (DMWO) apart from the Wakf Board. He said the building was not suitable to host the quarantine centre. "The ministry of minority affairs under the instructions of minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has addressed a letter to Haj Committees of all states seeking details of occupancy for utilising them as quarantine centres. The TS Haj Committee opposed the matter to the Wakf Board which owns the building. Mr Khasim disagreed with the proposal stating that the Haj House houses the offices of the Haj Committee, Urdu Academy, Minorities Finance Corporation and DMWO.

**MED | CHALLENGE | The impact is specially severe on biological medicines used to treat cancer**

**Lockdown hits supply of pharma ingredients**

**KANIZA GARAR | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4**

The effect on pharmaceutical companies of the national lockdown in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic is substantial as the supply of active pharmaceutical ingredients is heavily impacted and the export of drugs to Europe and the United States of America has been curtailed. Pharmaceutical companies here are dependent on China for supply of active pharmaceutical ingredients and the production of many medicines has been stalled as the supply has dwindled with China being the first country to be

badly hit by the coronavirus. The impact is particularly severe on biological medicines such as those used in the treatment of cancer, as its transport is by air and has been suspended. Dr Arjun Singh, an economist, explains that "raw material dependency on China is creating uncer-

ainty regarding normalisation of supply chains. Since 85 per cent of active pharmaceutical ingredients come from China, till the lockdown in India ends,

this problem will continue. Bulk drug intermediaries are imported from China (68 per cent), United States (four per cent) and Italy (three per cent). These too have been badly impacted. The production of in-house materials which are 10 per cent is continuing and that will ensure that the supply chain does not get too badly affected. The effect is moderate in the case of vaccines and anti-viral drugs and other generic medicines for consumption in the country. Pharma companies are rotating their staff, one coming to work for office and laboratory work for a certain number of days

and working from home on other days when another lot works in the office. Production schedules have been chalked out according to the availability of the work force as many employees are not able to come to work. Rajiv Nath, former coordinator of the Association of Indian Medical Device Industry said, "We have got some relief from states after continuous dialogue with them and with the local administration in the last one week. But there are many workers and officials who live close to interstate borders and are unable to move despite having a pass."

Drug formulations and biologicals are also affected as these are imported from Switzerland, USA, Belgium, Germany and China. Panic buying of medicines has led to unnecessary shortages as there are stocks to last for three to six months in India. "The demand cannot be supplied due to the lockdown."



IN BRIEF  
ADVOCATES TO GET FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
Telangana state Bar Council asked the advocates, those who do not able to meet their daily expenses due to the Lockdown, to make application before to get financial assistance. Prescribed Application format is available on Bar Council website and filled applications will be received by April 10. However, it made clear that due to the limited funds available for this purpose, only needy advocates should apply and if any ineligible advocates claims it, that would be treated as misconduct.

SCR OPERATES MILK EXPRESS TO CAPITAL

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
South Central Railways (SCR) operated a special train, named the 'Doodh Durao Special', to transport milk from Renigunta to Delhi on Saturday. The train consisted of six tankers which cumulatively held 2.4 lakh litres of milk. It also had a parcel van loaded with mangoes from Renigunta and Secunderabad and musk melons from Guntakal. The train commenced its journey from Renigunta at 8 am and is expected to reach its destination in 36 hours. The special train is being run at 110 kmph, on par with the fastest passenger trains, due to the lack of congestion on the rail network. In an attempt to keep the wheels turning, SCR has been running an average of 180 trains daily. SCR officials said the staff were taking all precautions of social distancing and sanitation while on duty.

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PANCHAYAT PENALISES VIOLATORS

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
A tribal gram panchayat in Adilabad district has imposed a fine of ₹500 each on three separate bike-owners for entering its village in violation of the lockdown and instructions issued by the state and central governments. The Gondguda gram panchayat of Uttoor mandal imposed the fine on the three arriving in the village on Friday evening and going around without any purpose. Of the three, two are from the village in Uttoor mandal and one is from Narsapur Gotti village.

On receipt of information, the village secretary stopped them at the check post and collected the fines. The village sarpanch Atram Rahul said villages have been under self-isolation following declaration of the total lockdown. The Gondguda gram panchayat of Uttoor mandal imposed the fine on the three for arriving in the village on Friday evening and going around without any purpose.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that the... (Legal notice text regarding property and legal matters)

AP, TS fear Covid-19 heat

Prolonged lockdown if coronavirus cases are not kept under control

S.N.C.N. ACHARYULU | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 4  
Even as the Centre is planning to lift the nationwide lockdown in a phased manner from April 14 in states that do not register new coronavirus cases, the increasing number of Covid-19 positive cases in the Telugu states is causing major worry for the two governments. In the beginning, the two

states, particularly AP, were in control of the situation. However, since the last three days, the number of coronavirus positive cases has seen a sudden jump in AP and Telangana state. While the total number of cases in AP has crossed 180, the figure in Telangana state is 170 plus. Three days ago, going by the decreasing trend, Telangana state's Chief Minister K. Chandr-

ashekar Rao had expressed the hope that the state could be free of Covid-19 by April 7. Around the time, Andhra Pradesh too had recorded a small number of cases. But many followers of the Tablighi Jamaat returning from Delhi after their meeting with coronavirus has changed the scenario for the two states. The administrations have decided to intensify their operations against

coronavirus in the coming 10 days. Their aim is to bring down the number of new cases to a minimum, so that they could start lifting the lockdown from April 14. However, if the Covid-19 cases continue rising, the states will have no choice but to prolong the lockdown. Both TS and AP have been losing revenues heavily due to the lockdown, particularly when they

are facing a cash crunch. A lockdown beyond April 14 will mean the financial situation of both the states will go from bad to worse. The two states have decided to take drastic measures to contain coronavirus by strictly implementing the lockdown. The number of deaths recorded in TS has already entered double digits while AP registered its first death two days ago.

RETAIN MGNREGA FIELD ASSTS, SAYS UTTAM

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
Telangana Pradesh Congress committee president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Saturday demanded that the state government restore the services of 7,500 field assistants who work for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in view of the Covid situation. In an open letter to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, he said that the MGNREGS field assistants went on strike following the imposition of new conditions for renewal of their contract in 36 hours. The TPCC chief noted in the letter that the circular proposed that the contracts of field assistants who fail to meet the targets would not be renewed. In view of the situation that has emerged in the coronavirus, the field assistants have offered to call off the strike unconditionally and rejoin duties. Mr Reddy said that the ongoing lockdown to prevent the spread of the coronavirus had a negative impact on the labourers in rural areas. The state government needs to undertake lot of work under MGNREGS to provide them with work as well as increase their income as per the package announced recently by the Centre as a part of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. He urged Mr Rao to restore the services of 7,500 field assistants and utilise their services to begin MGNREGS work in rural areas.

Safety measures



GHMC workers spray chemicals around the Covid-19 patient, who died recently, at Bansilalpet on Saturday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Positive patient attended Markaz

From Page 1  
The man, was among six who attended the Markaz event from that area. The test results on five others is pending, officials said. Incidentally, as Deccan Chronicle reported earlier, the number of people who attended Tablighi event from Telangana state would go up to the health minister said that as on Saturday the government had identified 1,069 such individuals. The original figure released a few days ago by the government was 1,030. Mr Reddy also said that the government will take strict action on anyone who attacks, intimidates, or prevents doctors and medical personnel from discharging their duty in the state. He said the state had adequate critical equipment such as personal protection equipment kits. The government has purchased five lakh N-95 masks for use by doctors and staff directly treating Covid-19 patients, four

SEVERAL TEAMS FIGHTING THE COVID MEANCE

1,376 Medical/other teams deployed	1,07,658 Households surveyed	4,45,938 Individuals surveyed/evaluated	6 Testing labs working
<b>GROWING LIST</b>	Hyderabad: 104	Bhadra-Kothagudem: 4	
The district-wise break-up of Covid-19 patients, including active cases and those discharged	Warangal Urban: 22	Mahbubnagar: 4	
	Nizamabad: 17	Nagarkurnool: 2	
	Karimnagar: 17	Jagtial: 2	
	Ranga Reddy: 16	Jangaon: 2	
	Medchal-Malkajiri: 13	Warangal Rural: 2	
	Nalgonda: 14	Vikarabad: 2	
	Kamareddy: 10	Jayashankar-Bhupalpalli: 1	
	Adilabad: 9	Mahbubabad: 1	
	Sangareddy: 6	Siddipet: 1	
	Jogulamba-Gadwal: 5	Suryapet: 1	
	Medak: 5		

lakh testing kits, 500 ventilators, 20 lakh surgical masks, and 25 lakh hand sanitizers. The government has purchased five lakh N-95 masks for use by doctors and staff directly treating Covid-19 patients, four

Power cos set for Modi's lights off

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to the people to switch off all lights at their homes for nine minutes, beginning 9 pm on Sunday set officials of all electricity utilities scurrying to ensure that the anticipated sudden fall in demand for power at around 9 pm, and the consequent sudden surge a little later, does not damage the power grids at the local, state, regional and national levels. The Power System Operation Corporation Limited (PSOCL), which oversees the functional of all regional, state and local Load Dispatch Centres (LDCs), has issued a 13-page note to the do's and don'ts to ensure electricity supply and grid stability. The Countrywide the demand for power is expected to fall by 12,879 mega Watts (MW), while for Telangana state, PSOCL estimated that the total reduction in demand would be 172 MW at the consumer level and 352 MW at the grid level for the night-minute lights off exercise. Telangana state, according to PSOCL, has 61,57,000 rural and 4,42,654 urban households, who each on an average consume 308 MW and 44 MW of power each day. Though the power sector officials have been at pains all day to assure

consumers that nothing will happen to the supply post the lights off period, PSOCL on its part, issued a minute-by-minute set of instructions to keep electricity humming along the wires across the country in the run up to 9 pm, and post 9.09 pm. It told states to cut down on hydel generation from 6.10 pm to 8 pm while thermal and gas generating stations have been instructed that their output be scheduled in a manner so as to manage the peak. After the peak hours, generation at all thermal, state generating stations would be gradually reduced to near technical minimum level of 60 per cent by 8.55 pm while hydel generation is to be at the power utilities on the do's and don'ts to ensure electricity supply and grid stability. A mere two minutes later, starting at 8.57 pm, PSOCL said, hydel and gas generation must be ramped down keeping a steady eye on the system frequency. Hydel units will be brought at this time between zero and 10 per cent of their rating while gas powered generating stations are to be kept at the minimum production level. Seven minutes later, at 9.05 pm, thermal stations must be ramped up and from 9.09 pm, hydel stations too should step up production to meet the increase in demand for electricity with people switching lights back on in their homes.

CONG DEMANDS FULL SALARY FOR MORE DEPARTMENTS

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
TPCC treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy on Saturday demanded that the state government pay full salaries to employees of revenue, panchayat raj and municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) department. He pointed out that just like the staff of the medical and health and police departments, who are being paid their full salary, the revenue, panchayat raj and MA&UD personnel too have been working on almost round the clock in anti-coronavirus operations. The TPCC treasurer said employees of these

departments were taking care of lockdown and providing other support. Municipal personnel are taking part in spraying operations and other activities. Revenue and panchayat raj staff are playing a crucial role in rural areas. The TPCC disabled persons cell has also taken to CM K. Chandrashekar Rao seeking payment of pensions to disabled persons, destitutes, widows, old age, and toddy tappers for three months, instead of only for February. Disabled persons cell chairman Muttineni Veeriah said that due to the lockdown disabled persons, like the 38.76 lakh pensioners in Assara, are facing severe hardships.

ABIDE BY PM'S APPEAL, URGES GOVERNOR

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
In response to a call given by PM Narendra Modi, Governor Dr. Tamisarasankaran has appealed to the people to turn off the lights in their homes at 9 pm on Sunday and light candles, or diyas, torches or mobile flashlights for nine minutes. She requested the people to "express our solidarity and to demonstrate the country's collective will to fight coronavirus." The Governor requested the citizens not to assemble in groups and out on the roads while participating in the programme and urged them to do it at the doorstep or balconies of their homes.

TS to supply fruits through 3,500 mobile rythu bazaars

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
In view of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's appeal to the people to consume fruits to improve immunity, the horticulture department is taking steps to supply fruits through 3,500 mobile rythu bazaars in the city. The department has estimated that 1.2 lakh metric tonnes of mangoes and sweet limes are required for consumption in the state. The horticulture and marketing departments have been procuring fruits and the stocks have been transported to various places across the state, including Hyderabad, with support of district collectors and police.



THE DEPARTMENT has estimated that 1.2 lakh metric tonnes of mangoes and sweet limes are required for consumption in the state. THE HORTICULTURE and marketing departments have been procuring fruits.

CS discusses hosp facilities with docs

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
Chief Secretary Suresh Kumar on Saturday discussed problems being faced in hospitals related to personal protection gear, security, sanitation, travel arrangements and accommodation of the staff and management issues related to the patients. He was holding a tele-conference with doctors of various hospitals treating Covid patients and testing laboratories. He explained the steps taken up by the government for healthcare, municipal, police and fire authorities, besides purchase of thermal scanners, ventilators, air purifiers and consumables for government hospitals. The home ministry said the SDRF could also be used for providing food and shelter to homeless, including migrants, labourers stranded due to the lockdown in various states.

50th BIRTHDAY OF THE DEPARTED  
NIRANJAN PATWARI  
Died 4.11.64 (DOD) 12.1.1988  
This unfortunate old man lost all the three life lines.  
1. A own double storied building.  
2. A smart engineer son.  
3. A serving day minded better half.  
V.R. PATWARI, 6309765747  
(S2021/00002)

COVID FUNDS  
Central govt releases ₹17,287.08 crore under SDRF  
Major relief for cash-starved states

Deccan Correspondent Hyderabad, April 4  
In a major relief for cash-starved Andhra Pradesh, the Centre has released ₹17,287.08 crore under SDRF and revenue deficit grant to various state governments for dealing with Covid-19. Of this, ₹6,157.74 crore has gone as revenue deficit grant to 14 states as per recommendations of the Union Finance Commission. Union finance department director Bhartiendu

Kumar Singh in his orders said the revenue deficit grant for April 2020. Kerala has got the highest funds under this category at ₹1,276 crore, followed by Himachal Pradesh ₹62 crore, Punjab ₹638 crore, Assam ₹611 crore, AP ₹491 crore, Uttarakhand ₹423 crore and West Bengal ₹417 crore. The Centre also released ₹1,092 crore in advance under SDRF, according to the Union home affairs ministry

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OBITUARY  
Mrs Prasuna Reddy  
Retired Principal of Shankari Memorial School  
W/o Late Dr. C.S. Reddi (Orthopaedic Surgeon)  
Recipient of Gov of India Best Teacher Award  
Passed away on March 29, 2020, in New York  
Her gift of literacy to countless children and adults, her kind & generous heart & infectious smile will be deeply missed and mourned by everyone she touched.  
Survived by Daughters: Dr. Tanu Reddi (914-525-6033)  
Sarla Reddy (203-918-6981)  
Son Dr. Pavan Reddy (Bablon) (540-915-8604)

SHORT TAKES

RAJ: PEOPLE SPREADING VIRUS SHOULD BE KILLED

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, APRIL 4

Maharashtra Navinram Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray on Saturday made a controversial statement suggesting that people who are trying to spread coronavirus should be gunned down.

Speaking for the first time on the issue of coronavirus pandemic, the MNS chief said in a bid to spread the disease, some people were seen spitting on vegetables. Such 'perverts' should be gunned down immediately. Those who are saying religion is bigger than the country should also be dealt with in the same manner, he added.

Mr Thackeray also slammed the Tablighi Markaz over the reports of their corona-affected supporters spitting at nurses and getting into the front of them. Such people should not be given treatment at all, he added.

"People who are violating lockdown should be strictly punished. Some of the miscreants in the Muslim community are not cooperating with the state government deliberately. They should be heavily thrashed and also be dealt with in the same manner, he added. This is a very serious situation and people who are following lockdown should not suffer due to the mistake of some anti-socials," he said.

CENTRE, WB DIFFER ON NO. OF CASES IN STATE

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, APRIL 4

Close on the heels of its flip-flop on the Covid-19 death toll in West Bengal, the Mamata Banerjee government has been found to be inconsistent again after its data of the total confirmed cases in the state differed with that of the Centre.

On Saturday, state chief secretary Rajiva Sinha informed that the total figure of active cases rose from 89 to 90. The list includes 11 fresh infected among whom is a Tablighi Jamaat participant, the first such confirmed case in the state.

The total number of confirmed cases in the state stood at 89 on the Union health ministry's website.

On the mismatch in the statistics, Mr Sinha said, "We are not hiding anything. No one would inflate or deflate data at this juncture. It is a matter of time. We will ask those sending data to the Centre to check it."

Meanwhile the Kolkata Port Trust said that a person infected with Tablighi Jamaat participant is an employee of one of its contractors who was with the virus on April 2 in Haldia of East Midnapore.

SOCIAL ACTIVISTS SEEK MGNREGA PAYMENT

PARMODO KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

Social activists Aruna Roy and Nikhil Dey have moved the Supreme Court seeking payment of wages to 7.6 crore active MGNREGA workers for 21 days lockdown period.

The matter was mentioned by lawyer Prashant Bhushan after the hearing of the migrant workers on Friday and the PIL is likely to be listed for hearing on April 7, said his office on Saturday.

Besides seeking the payment of wages to active MGNREGA workers invoking fundamental right to health and livelihood guaranteed under Articles 14 and 21, the petitioners have sought directions for the issuance of temporary individual MGNREGA job cards to the migrant workers who have returned to their villages.

Active MGNREGA workers are those who have been working under the rural employment guarantee scheme for last two years. At present, there are 12.2 crore workers who work under MGNREGA every year.

The petitioners have also sought doubling the entitlement of household work from existing 100 days of work to 200 days of work under the rural livelihood during the 'emerging economic crisis'.

DOCTOR STAYS AT THE DOOR DURING RARE VISIT HOME

Chandigarh, April 4: His last meeting with the family was just a few minutes long - the time it takes to take a cup of tea. And this was slipped outside the front door.

Dr Gurpal Kataria is posted at Punjab government hospital in Nawanshahr, a coronavirus hotspot. The doctor and his team are taking care of the 18 infected patients admitted at the isolation ward there.

The doctor has little time now to visit his family in Jalandhar, 60 km away. He keeps in touch over the phone but the last, brief visit was two weeks back.

I did not enter the home as a precautionary measure, says Kataria. He and his team returned on the day he says.

Kataria's wife is a dentist in Hoshiarpur civil hospital. My daughter, who has given the class 10 exam, advised me to take care. She also feels proud that her parents are serving people, he says.

Nawanshahr has reported 19 coronavirus cases so far, the highest number from any district in Punjab where the country has 53 on Saturday morning.

A 70-year-old patient has died in Nawanshahr. Eighteen others, including a two-and-a-half-year-old child and three women, are in the isolation ward of the civil hospital, waiting for the day their tests results show negative.

Kataria says a major concern is the patients' morale. They often ask doctors about the coronavirus count, worrying how many people have died each day.

For us this is like a place of worship, where we get a sense of satisfaction that we are helping on the faces of our patients, says the 54-year-old doctor.

We counsel our patients on a regular basis and tell them there is no need to be scared that they will be taken away. We try to keep them in positive frame of mind and instill their morale, he says.

Kataria says. We do not let them feel that they are stuck here. Why will they go back from here, they will certainly remember us, he says.

He says all arrangements are in place at the government hospital to deal with any coronavirus eventuality. - PTI



People stand in a queue outside a bank during the nation-wide lockdown in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak in Solapur on Saturday. - PTI

1/3rd of total cases linked to Tablighi

New Delhi, April 4: As many as 1,023 Covid-19 positive cases found in 17 states have been traced to the Tablighi Jamaat congregation, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday, underlining that about 30 per cent of the total novel coronavirus cases in the country are linked to "one particular place".

Joint Secretary in the ministry Lav Agarwal at the daily media briefing said the rate of doubling of Covid-19 cases in the country is pretty less as compared to other countries.

He said there has been a rise of 601 Covid-19 positive cases since Friday. The total number of novel coronavirus cases is 2,902 in the country, he said.

Giving the age profile of the cases reported so far, he said 68.82 per cent of the cases are in the age group of 0-20 years, 41.88 per cent between 21 and 40 years, 32.82 per cent between 41 and 60 years and 16.69 per cent are above 60 years of age.

The government of India's response has been proactive, preemptive and graded and the rate of doubling of Covid-19 cases in India is "pretty" low as compared to other countries, Agarwal said. Fifty-eight patients in the country are currently in critical condition, he said. - PTI

Switch off only lights, not gadgets: Centre

Oppn fears grid may trip; Power ministry allays fears

DC CORRESPONDENT WITH AGENCY INPUTS NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

On Saturday, soon after Opposition parties raised the spectre of the collapse of the national power grid and a blackout owing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's order to switch off all lights for 9 minutes at 9 pm on Sunday, the Union power ministry clarified that citizens are supposed to switch off only lights and not other power utilities like fans, computers, air conditioners.

Mr Modi had in a video message earlier this week asked people across India to switch off their lights and hold candles, lamps or mobile flashlights at 9 pm on Sunday for 9 minutes in a show of solidarity to fight the "darkness of coronavirus".

A day after his appeal, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said that as somebody who has been associated with the power sector for almost three decades, including as minister, the call to dark for 9 minutes can have a deep impact on the grid and its stability. CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram

Yechury asked the Prime Minister to ensure that the national power transmission grid is not adversely affected by switching off lights on April 5.

This can play havoc with the provision of health services vital to combat this pandemic. If the grid trips, India will have to face consequences of no electricity and no conduct to fight the epidemic, he tweeted.

Some apprehensions have been expressed that the Prime Minister's appeal in the grid and fluctuation in voltage which may harm electrical appliances. These apprehensions are misplaced," the power ministry said in a statement.

Allaying fears of voltage fluctuation on Sunday, the statement said, "The appeal of the Prime Minister is to simply switch off the lights in homes from 9 pm to 9.09 pm. There is no call to switch off other street lights or appliances like computers, TVs, fans, refrigerators and ACs in homes. Lights in hospitals and all other essential services like public utilities, municipal services, offices, police stations, manufacturing facilities will remain on. All local bodies have been advised to keep streetlights on for public safety."

"The Indian electricity grid is robust and stable and adequate arrangements and protocols are in place to handle the variation in demand," it added.

Meanwhile, the State Load Dispatch Centre of Uttar Pradesh has written to state utilities to take a series of steps to deal with the possibility of a sudden drop in power demand.

MODI: INDIA, U.S. TO FIGHT COVID JOINTLY

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

With the United States having become one of the global hotspots of the Coronavirus and thousands of lives lost there, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday spoke to US President Donald Trump and both 'agreed to deploy the full strength of the India-US partnership to fight COVID-19'.

"Had an extensive telephone conversation with President @realDonaldTrump. We had a good discussion, agreed to deploy the full strength of the India-US partnership to fight COVID-19. Modi tweeted on Saturday evening.

Besides this, Modi had several phone conversations with both Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra and Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro.

The SLDC in its letter asked the utilities to keep all the reactors of state grid on and to keep capacitor banks inoperational.

The letter states these instructions have been given in view of the call by the Prime Minister to switch off lights for 9 pm for nine minutes.

The SLDC has also asked them to start load shedding from 8 pm to 9 pm on Sunday in a staggered manner.

Similar instructions have been given by the Tamil Nadu Transmission Corporation in a letter to its operational executives, saying that availability of sufficient staff should be ensured in view of the call by the Prime Minister. The corporation also asked them to adhere to SLDC's instructions.

Meanwhile, an official on the condition of anonymity said, power demand may fall by 10 GW to 12 GW during the blackout, which will have no bearing on stability of the national power grid.

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The country had gone through a grid failure in 2012 due to technical reasons.

Yechury asked the Prime Minister to ensure that the national power transmission grid is not adversely affected by switching off lights on April 5.

Lens on role of 'samosawali chachi' for Indore attack

RABINDRA NATH CHOWDHURY | DC BHOPAL, APRIL 4

Role of an elderly woman in a locality in Indore, popularly known as samosawali chachi (aunt who sells samosas) in the April 1 attack on a medical team was under scanner, a senior police officer said on Saturday.

Interrogation of the arrested accused has led to disclosure that the woman allegedly instigated mob fury leading to the attack on doctors, a senior police officer told this newspaper requesting anonymity.

"Samosawali chachi" raised an alarm when the medical team reached in the particular colony to conduct health screening of a local youth, leading to a mob to gather there. The gathering was misguided by her that provided the trigger for mob violence," the accused were Palkhivala, a senior police officer said on Saturday.

"We are looking for the woman. Her arrest may clarify if there was any conspiracy behind the incident," police said. The police was examining the video footage of the incident to identify "each and every" member involved in the attack, including some women.

Meanwhile, nine more people were arrested in connection with the incident on Saturday, taking the total number of arrests to 13.

The state government has slapped "National Security Act" against the four accused arrested in connection with the incident on Friday and sent them to jail in Rewa. In another development, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan late on Friday held a meeting with leaders of all religions here seeking their cooperation in carrying out medical examination of the locals. Chouhan also visited the doctors of the team which was attacked saying that he was proud of them for rendering service courageously at this juncture.

Covid +ve woman delivers baby

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

A day after a resident doctor and his wife tested positive for coronavirus at All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) in the national capital, the couple was blessed with healthy baby boy on Friday evening.

A professor in the department of obstetrics and gynaecology, AIIMS, Dr Neeraja Bhatla, who led the team which carried out the delivery, said the baby boy was born through C-section and is doing fine so far.

According to doctors, this is the first baby to be born to a coronavirus-infected woman in Delhi. When asked if the baby's sample would be tested for Covid-19, she said, "We are going to monitor his condition and look out for symptoms. So far the baby is doing fine."

The woman was nine months pregnant when she tested positive on April 2. Thereafter she has been kept in isolation at the hospital, along with her three-year-old daughter, and the husband, besides her brothers-in-law, are infected with the disease.

Morning walkers spotted by drone, arrested

QILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 4

Police in Ernakulam district on Saturday cracked whip on morning walkers by detecting 100 illegally morning walk norms in the state.

The Ernakulam police on Saturday arrested 41 persons who went out for morning walk in violation of the restrictions imposed as part of the lockdown. The morning walkers were caught on the drone camera footage by the police. The arrested were later granted bail on personal surety.

should be given to Railway Board," an official said. This decision was taken in a video conference meeting of Railway Minister Piyush Goyal with the Chairman, Railway Board on Friday, officials said.

Trains, however, will begin operations only after receiving a green signal from the government which had formed a Group of Ministers on the issue.

All 17 zones are preparing plans to identify trains and resume their services taking into account the availability of rakes. Sources said the Railways is likely to also conduct health screening on all passengers and follow all protocols as advised by the government.

Senior officials, however, said no fresh orders have been issued and since cancellations were only up to April 14 "no fresh orders were issued for the period later this week, April 15."

Sources said a concrete action plan will be sent to the zones later this week. In an unprecedented move, the railways had cancelled the services of 13,523 trains for 21 days.

As many as 50 persons have been successfully treated and discharged from hospitals. As on Saturday 1.71 persons are under surveillance of which 1.70 are Palkhivala and 754 in hospitals. Of the 9,744 samples sent for tests so far, 6,586 samples have been found negative. State Police Chief Loknath Behara said strict action would be taken against those spreading fake news. Those caught posting fake news more than twice will have their pictures published in news papers and aired on TV channels.

Rlys yet to take call on resumption of services

New Delhi, April 4: Railways on Saturday said no final decision has been taken yet on restoration of train services and that a call on it would be taken in a few days.

The statement comes amidst railway zones preparing action plans to restart the services. The lockdown in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

"Train services will be resumed only on specific approval of each train from Railway Board. Suggestions on phase-wise planning

police decided to take direct action. Cases are also being reported from Kerala under the Epidemic Diseases Ordinance 2020.

As per the provisions of the ordinance, a person who violates the law is liable for punishment of up to two years imprisonment or ₹10,000 penalty or both. The police can resort to direct action in the event of such violations coming to their notice.

Meanwhile, 11 more cases of Covid-19 were reported in Kerala on Saturday even as the total number of persons who contracted the infection in

the state crossed the 300 mark. Of the 11 cases, six were reported from Kasargod and one each from Kannur, Ernakulam, Alappuzha, Kollam and Palakkad respectively.

Five of the infected persons came from Dubai, three are those who returned after attending Tablighi conference in Nizamuddin and rest three from Kerala.

So far, 306 persons have contracted Covid-19 in the state. Of these the total number of active cases are 254. Two persons had succumbed to the infection recently.

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IN BRIEF

63 terrorists killed in Niger clash

Namexy: Four Nigerian soldiers and 63 terrorists were killed in fighting between the army and heavily armed men in western Niger...

Priests suspended over abuse claim

Bogota: The Catholic Church in Colombia has suspended 15 priests accused of sexual abuse, the archdiocese said on Friday...

Italy seeks help from new robots

Varese: The shiny new robots gently check the pulses of highly infectious patients on life support in the Italian epicentre of Covid-19...

Shoe designer Rossi dies due to virus

Los Angeles: Celebrated Italian shoe designer Sergio Rossi has died at the age of 84 from complications over novel coronavirus...

UN ASSEMBLY MEETINGS POSTPONED

United Nations, April 4: UN General Assembly meetings scheduled for the months of April and May have been postponed...

US records 562 deaths in single day

City alone has 52,289 coronavirus patients, state's toll has nearly increased in last three days, says report

New York, April 4: The New York State reported its highest number of 562 Covid-19 deaths in a single day...

single day between April 2 and 3, Cuomo said. The death toll in the state now stands at 2,935, an increase of 562 deaths in just one day...

The curve continues to go up... Cuomo said while addressing reporters on Friday. The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the state now stand at 102,863...

BRITAIN ON Saturday reported 708 more deaths from Covid-19 - the fourth successive daily high - as the number of confirmed cases rose to nearly 42,000...

THE CORONAVIRUS pandemic has killed over 60,000 people worldwide, nearly three quarters of them in Europe, since it emerged in China in December...

It is unbelievable to me that in New York State, in the United States of America, we can't make these materials and that we're all competing against each other...

about them as if they're very complicated," he said, adding that "it can't be that we can't make these... It can't be that companies in this country and in this state can't transition to make those supplies quickly..."

Trump says wear masks but he won't wear one

Washington, April 4: All Americans should cover their faces with scarves or homemade cloth masks...

CHINA MOURNS CORONAVIRUS VICTIMS

Beijing, April 4: China paid homage Saturday to victims of the coronavirus in the place where the global pandemic began...

Washington, April 4: The WHO and IMF chiefs insisted Friday that saving lives was a "prerequisite" to saving livelihoods in the coronavirus pandemic...

Spain says virus deaths down for second day at 809

Madrid, April 4: Spain recorded a second successive daily drop in coronavirus-related deaths with 809 fatalities...

US terms Russian medical aid as trade deal shipment

Washington, April 4: An old new front in the US-Russian rivalry has emerged as a Russian military cargo plane bearing a load of urgently needed medical supplies landed this week at New York's JFK airport...

China mourns



People and policemen bow their heads during a national moment of mourning for victims of coronavirus in Wuhan in central China's Hubei Province, on Saturday

WHO, IMF say saving lives is must

Geneva, April 4: The WHO and IMF chiefs insisted Friday that saving lives was a "prerequisite" to saving livelihoods in the coronavirus pandemic...

Spain says virus deaths down for second day at 809

US terms Russian medical aid as trade deal shipment

UKRAINE CASE: TRUMP FIRES INTEL OFFICIAL

Washington, April 4: President Donald Trump has fired intelligence official Andrew Atkins...

PRINCE CHARLES' OFFICE REFUTES INDIAN MINISTER

London, April 4: Prince Charles, who came out of self-isolation to reemerge in the UK's first makeshift National Health Service field hospital here on Friday...

PUT OFF

Montreal, April 4: This year's Montreal Jazz Festival, the world's largest and other popular summer jamborees in Canada's francophone metropolises were cancelled Friday due to the Covid-19 pandemic...

PUT OFF

This year's Montreal fest rescheduled due to virus pandemic

World's largest jazz festival cancelled

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SWISS FIRM OFFERS LUXURY ISOLATION STAYS

Geneva, April 4: The hotel and tourism industries have been all but flattened by the coronavirus pandemic, but one Swiss firm has found a way to stay afloat...

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SHORT TAKES

Xavi donates 1m euros to hospital

Madrid: Former Barcelona and Spain footballer Xavi Hernandez and his wife have donated one million euros (\$1.08 million) to the city's Hospital Clinic to help the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Tom picks Rohit, Warner to open

New Delhi: Former all-rounder Tom Moody on Saturday named India's Rohit Sharma and fellow Australian David Warner as best opening batsmen in T20.

Sportsmen join Covid-19 battle

London: Renowned cricketers Wasim Akram and Darren Gough have joined other sporting greats such as Jack Nicklaus and Michael Phelps in auctioning their items of memorabilia and help raise funds for the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

ANAND, HUMPY TO PLAY ONLINE TO RAISE FUNDS

Chennai: Former world champion Viswanathan Anand and five other leading Indian players will compete in an online chess exhibition on April 11 to raise funds for country's fight against Covid-19.

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Women's Cup off

Fifa postpones U-17 Indian edition indefinitely

New Delhi, April 4: The FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup to be held in India in November was on Saturday postponed by football's governing body due to the worsening Covid-19 pandemic across the globe.



The Indian Under-17 women's team attend a training session in this file photo.

The women's age group showpiece was to be held at five venues in the country — Kolkata, Guwahati, Bhubaneswar, Ahmedabad and Navi Mumbai — from November 2-21.

It was to be India's maiden appearance in the U-17 Women's World Cup. The decision was taken by the FIFA Confederations working group which was recently established by the Bureau of the FIFA Council to address the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The world body which took the decision includes the FIFA administration and Secretary Generals and top executives from all confederations.

Over 50,000 deaths have been caused by the deadly outbreak so far. The official schedule of the tournament was announced in February and Navi Mumbai was to host the final.

Having previously given a tentative — and improbable — return date of April 30, the world's richest league said the season would not be resuming at the start of May and "will only return when it is safe and appropriate to do so."

HI donates ₹1cr for the big fight

New Delhi, April 4: Hockey India on Saturday donated an additional ₹75 lakhs towards the PM CARES Fund to take its total contribution to ₹1 crore to tackle worsening Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

"In the wake of this crisis, it is the need of the hour to step up and come together to stand with the Government of India who are doing everything they can to fight the Covid-19 pandemic."

"Over the years, we have received tremendous support from the people of this country who have kept us motivated through various challenges. This is the time to give back to the people of India in whatever way we can."

EPL is not likely to resume soon

London, April 4: The English Premier League was suspended on Friday following a meeting of its 20 clubs, who discussed financial painkillers measures including asking players to take a substantial pay cut during the coronavirus outbreak.

Having previously given a tentative — and improbable — return date of April 30, the world's richest league said the season would not be resuming at the start of May and "will only return when it is safe and appropriate to do so."

Boxer Khan Eyes Pacquiao Swansong

London, April 4: Former world champion Amir Khan said on Friday that he is eager to end his boxing career with a lucrative bout against ring great Manny Pacquiao in an all-British contest with Kell Brook.

Tarun takes aim at Tokyo via Tube

Kolkata, April 4: Amid the nationwide lockdown, veteran Indian archer Tarundeep Rai is busy building shoulder muscles and train at the Army Sports Institute in Pune, which he believes will keep him in shape for Tokyo Olympics now postponed to next year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Asian Games mascots released

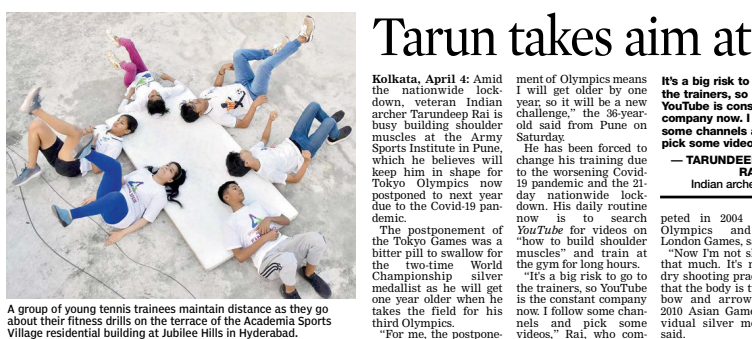
Hangzhou (China), April 4: Representing the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Hangzhou in eastern China, were unveiled as the official mascots of the 2022 Asian Games here on Friday.

The mascots — Congcong, Lianlian and Chenchen — which reflect the internet prowess of Hangzhou city and Zhejiang province, were unveiled at a digital ceremony in the wake of the pandemic that has brought the whole world to a standstill.

The robot triplets — Chenchen (from left), Congcong and Lianlian — representing the three UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Hangzhou were released as the official mascots of the 2022 Asian Games.

The third mascot is 'Chenchen', which represents the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal. It takes its name from the Gongchen Bridge, a landmark structure in the Hangzhou section of the Grand Canal.

The organising committee received 4,633 submissions for the mascot designs and the robot characters were the creations of Zhang Wen and Yang Hongyi, lecturers from the China Academy of Art.



A group of young tennis trainees maintain distance as they go about their fitness drills on the terrace of the Academia Sports Village residential building at Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad.

Rai, along with India national team captain Atanu Das and his Army colleague Pravin Jadhav, had clinched quota place for the men's team while winning a silver at the World Championships at Den Bosch in the Netherlands last year.

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