

IN BRIEF



Telangana police foil Sharmila's procession bid

HYDRABAD The Hyderabad police on Thursday foiled attempts by Y.S. Sharmila, sister of YSRCP chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, to take out a procession. After undertaking a fast, demanding issuance of notification for government jobs for unemployed youths by the Telangana government, Sharmila decided to take out a procession but was stopped.

Driver, co-driver of truck charred to death

HYDRABAD Two persons, the driver and the second driver, of a private-owned truck were charred to death when the vehicle crashed into a lorry moving in the same direction near Himayatsagar and caught fire on Thursday. Muzunaja Yadav of Thane and Sarja Kumar from Uttar Pradesh were proceeding towards Mumbai.

Crude oil stolen from ONGC pipeline

HYDRABAD The East Godavari police on Thursday seized nearly 500 l of crude oil, reportedly stolen by a gang from the pipeline of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in the Vijayanagara area under the Jugalapattanam police limits. The police teaming into action after locals alerted them about the theft.

16-year-old stabbed to death during temple fest

KUPPAHALI A 16-year-old boy was stabbed to death at Valluram in Kerala's Alappuzha on Wednesday. According to the police, a gang staged Abhimanyu during a festival at the Padayavetom temple. The police suspect it to be a sequel to a clash involving Abhimanyu's brother Anand, a DNTV activist.

Kerala fixes 9 p.m. curfew for shops

Eateries, cinemas to close at deadline; 6.28 lakh people vaccinated in A.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Kerala on Thursday announced a raft of restrictions to arrest the post-Assembly election surge in COVID-19 cases.

The measures ranged from closing of bars, restaurants, cinema halls, malls, shops and commercial establishments at 9 p.m. to limiting indoor and outdoor events to 75 and 150 people respectively, the Chief Secretary, V.P. Jay, said.

Larger functions would require recent COVID-19 negative certification. No prior permission was required for weddings or social events, but local police should be informed. Kerala's test positivity rate (TPR) jumped from 2% to 13% over the past two weeks.

Kerala added 8,126 new cases on Thursday with a TPR of 13.4%. Cumulative cases were 11,97,301, and active cases 63,650.

In Andhra Pradesh, a record 6.28 lakh people were vaccinated on Wednesday, and the target should be at least six lakh daily, said Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday.

The Chief Minister instructed officials to fix the charges at which private hospitals treat COVID-19 patients.

Hospitals empaneled in the Aarogya programme and private hospitals should record beds available. Treatment changes and cost of medicines should be displayed at hospitals.

The State reported 5,086 infections and 14 deaths on Thursday. The daily TPR was 14.23%, the highest in seven months, from 35,741 samples. Chittoor again reported five deaths, the highest, and highest single-day infections at 835.

The Karnataka High Court said COVID-19 norms notified under the Karnataka Epidemic Diseases Act, 2020 seem cognisable and non-bailable and the DGP and IGP must enforce FIRs and register for violations.

The court directed the DGP and IGP to educate the police on enforcement and to monitor FIRs and investigation of violations like not wearing masks, failure to maintain social distancing, and gathering in large numbers.

Karnataka reported its sharpest spike of 14,738 fresh cases and 66 fatalities, bringing total infections to 11,09 lakh and the toll to 13,112 on Thursday.



Helpline to the rescue: Staff at the new COVID-19 helpline 1912 that has been opened in Bengaluru.

The State recorded 29 deaths of which eight were registered in Chennai. So far, 12,999 people have succumbed to the infection. Seven of the deceased did not have co-morbidities.

Chennai continued to top the table with 2,558 fresh cases. For the first time since the vaccination programme started on January 16, Tamil Nadu vaccinated over two lakh people on Thursday.

(With inputs from Vijayawada, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai bureaus)

A few corporate hospitals in Hyderabad resumed hotel isolation for patients who were asymptomatic or had mild symptoms.

Telangana recorded 3,307 cases on Wednesday, a new high. For the second day, eight more patients died.

Tamil Nadu registered another new high in daily COVID-19 cases on Thursday as 7,987 people tested positive.

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(With inputs from Vijayawada, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai bureaus)

BJP accuses Pinarayi of violating COVID protocol

Health Minister denies the charge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The BJP on Thursday accused Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan of wilfully disregarding the COVID-19 protocol and endangering public safety.

Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan alleged that Mr. Vijayan had contracted COVID-19 on April 4. However, he had concealed his medical condition and campaigned on April 5. On April 6, the Chief Minister and his family had turned up with an entourage of party workers and neighbours to vote. Who diagnosed with CO-

VID-19, Mr. Vijayan travelled to the hospital in a group. Mr. Vijayan repeated the pattern when hospital authorities discharged him. Mr. Vijayan's wife, who was COVID-19 positive, travelled in the same car with him home, Mr. Muraleedharan alleged.

Meanwhile, Health Minister K.K. Shylaja said in Kannur that Mr. Vijayan did not violate the protocol. He was discharged from hospital after turning negative. He did not participate in any functions and would remain in quarantine, she added.

(With inputs from Kannur bureau)

COVID-19 vaccine shortage hits Kerala, Andhra Pradesh

Local lockdowns may be needed in some areas of Kerala

STAFF REPORTER KANUR
Health Minister K.K. Shylaja said on Thursday that there was a shortage of vaccine in the State and the government had requested the Centre for more supplies.

After attending an emergency online meeting called by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Ms. Shylaja told the media that there was a worrying situation in the State due to the shortage of vaccines and that localised lockdowns might be required in areas where the disease was severe.

Andhra Pradesh had exhausted its stock of COVID-19 vaccine on Thursday and only about 24,672 doses could be administered be-

fore the vaccine centres shut doors.

Of the 6.4 lakh doses received by the State, 6.28 lakh were used on a single day on Wednesday, the last day of 'Tika Utsav', according to the Health Department.

Karnataka has used nearly 63.5 lakh of the 76 lakh doses of vaccine received so far. Karnataka Health Commissioner K.V. Trilok Chandra said there is no shortage of vaccine in the State as of now.

(With inputs from Vijayawada and Bengaluru bureaus)

WEATHER WATCH



Forecast for Friday: Thunderstorm with lightning, hail and gusty wind at isolated places over Delhi, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh; and with lightning and gusty wind at isolated places over Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	37.5	21.8	Kolkata	4.6	37.8	24.8
Ahmedabad	—	40.5	24.3	Madurai	0.1	37.1	24.6
Aizawl	—	30.5	16.0	Lucknow	—	41.4	26.1
Alibabai	—	42.8	21.1	Mumbai	—	36.2	25.6
Bhopal	0.2	32.6	19.8	Patna	—	33.5	23.5
Bhubaneswar	—	37.8	23.5	Surat	—	39.0	25.5
Chennai	—	39.2	24.9	Thiruvananthapuram	—	36.0	21.7
Chennai	24.1	35.1	23.1	Trichy	—	39.6	24.2
Coimbatore	13.4	34.0	23.8	Udaipur	—	32.2	21.8
Dehradun	—	36.6	18.8	Vadodra	1.8	37.0	27.0
Durgam	1.8	32.7	13.9	Vijayawada	—	35.1	23.1
Gangtok	—	18.2	23.7	Warangal	—	36.8	23.0
Gwalior	—	32.6	21.3	Yamuna	—	36.8	24.0
Hydrabad	—	34.0	22.0	Yashwantrao Chavan	1.2	27.5	17.3
Hydrabad	—	35.8	22.2	Yashwantrao Chavan	—	24.8	15.5
Imphal	—	31.1	15.2	Yashwantrao Chavan	—	31.0	18.8
Jammu	—	39.0	23.6	Yashwantrao Chavan	—	33.1	25.1
Kohima	—	32.8	25.2	Yashwantrao Chavan	—	36.3	24.1
Kolkata	1.4	27.4	17.2	Yashwantrao Chavan	—	33.2	21.4
Kolkata	—	38.0	27.0	Yashwantrao Chavan	—	37.0	26.6

(Detailed data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITY	00	06	12	18	24	00	06	12	18	24
Ahmedabad	—	—	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bhopal	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chennai	—	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Delhi	—	—	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hydrabad	—	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kolkata	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lucknow	—	—	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mumbai	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Patna	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vijayawada	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Air Quality Index: Poor Moderate Good (Shaded areas indicate average AQI) **SO₂:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other particles to form haze and can stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments. **NO₂:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes drinking water. **CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air replaces oxygen supply in critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death. **PM2.5 & PM10:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and wheezing of the lungs, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

Second-highest surge of 61,695 cases, 349 deaths in Maharashtra

Active case tally surges past 6.20 lakh; Mumbai reports 8,209 fresh infections

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PUNE

Maharashtra posted its second-highest single-day jump of 61,695 cases on Thursday, taking its active case tally to 6,20,060.

A high fatality spike of 349 deaths (211 of which were reported in the last 48 hours, while the rest were from an earlier period) pushed the total death toll to 59,153.

A robust number of recoveries — 53,328 — was also reported. The State's recovery rate stands at 81.3%. While the case tally has reached 35,87,478, the total recovered stand at 29,59,056.

"Of 2,30,26,682 laboratory samples tested thus far, 35,87,478 (with the average case positivity rising to 15.8%) have returned positive, with over 2.34 lakh samples being tested in the last 24 hours," said State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradheep



One with nature: A life guard patrols a deserted Juhu beach after COVID-19 curbs were enforced on Thursday.

As its total case tally reached 3,02,835, of which 69,305 are active. The district reported 30 fatalities to take its death toll to 4,415.

Aurangabad in Maharashtra reported over 1,300 new cases to take its tally to 1,04,260, of which 14,087 are active. No deaths were reported as the total toll remained constant at 1,511.

However, Ahmednagar reported 29 deaths and nearly 3,000 cases as its total death toll rose to 1,381 and the total case tally to 1,24,310 of which 15,295 are active.

Nashik in north Maharashtra reported a huge surge of more than 8,900 new cases, taking its total tally to 2,36,829 of which 47,117 are active while 24 deaths pushed its toll to 2,518.

A total of 35,87,478 people across the State are in home quarantine and 27,273 are in institutional quarantine.

airlines for further queries," the CSMA said.

The CSMA said it had been working closely with its stakeholders and relevant regulatory and government bodies to curb the spread of the virus.

After the resumption of domestic passenger services late last year, following a nearly two-month shutdown due to the pandemic, the flight services were being operated only from Terminal 2 till March 9 of this year. From March 10, GoAir, Star Air, Air Asia and Trigat resumed all their domestic operations from Terminal 1.

In addition, while IndiGo was operating most of its flights from Terminal 2, its base flights were being operated through Terminal 1.

(With PTT inputs)

Mumbai airport to shift T1 domestic operations to T2

Move will come into effect on April 21

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

In view of the rapid spread of COVID-19 cases in Mumbai and the Maharashtra government imposing multiple restrictions to handle the situation, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMA) has decided to shift all domestic passenger flights at Terminal 1 to Terminal 2.

The CSMA will be operating all international as well as domestic flights through its Terminal 2 from April 21.

As a result, all domestic flights of GoAir, Star Air, Air Asia, Trigat and IndiGo, operating from Terminal 1, will be moved to Terminal 2.

"All passengers of GoAir, Star Air, Air Asia, Trigat and IndiGo are requested to get in touch with the respective

Bombay HC to govt.: reply to plea to allow Jain community to collect food from temples

State, trusts directed to find solution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BOMBAY

The Bombay High Court on Thursday asked the Maharashtra government to reply to a petition seeking permission for the Jain community to take away parcels of boiled food from their temples during the Ayaz-e-Milad.

A Division Bench of Justices S.C. Gupte and Abhay Ahuja was hearing a petition filed by two Jain trusts — the Shree Trustee Anand Kasmal Laxmi-Bhaurajiwajji Jain Gyanmandir Trust, and the Shree Motish Religious and Charitable Trust.

They were seeking permission to "take away plous boiled cooked food from the premises of the religious trust" for nine days starting

April 19. The plea urged the court to allow four other trusts to open Jain temples with standard operating procedures (SOP) under the 'Break The Chain' drive on April 13.

The advocate, appearing for the trusts, told the court that restaurants were allowed takeaways, but religious trusts were not. Additional government pleader Jyoti Chavan opposed the plea and said home delivery through online orders was allowed, but no one was allowed to go personally.

"Devotes cannot come... The idea behind the SOP is to avoid congregations," the court said. The matter has been postponed to be heard on Friday.

Jaslok Hospital to be dedicated COVID-19 facility

BMC, pvt. hospitals to identify five-star hotels where step-down facilities will be set up

STAFF REPORTER MUMBAI

Jaslok Hospital will now be a dedicated COVID-19 hospital, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) announced on Thursday.

The decision was taken in view of the current surge in positive cases and the need to increase the number of beds with advanced critical care in Mumbai.

The civic body has also decided that patients who do not require emergency med-



Jaslok Hospital.

which will be set up in four- or five-star hotels that will be jointly identified by the BMC and private hospitals.

hal, such step-down facilities can be set up with the active participation of private hospitals as an integral part of these hospitals.

The general instructions issued by the civic body said that private hospitals would provide 24x7 doctor consultations, nursing care, medicines, biomedical waste management and ambulance transfer in these facilities. These facilities can charge a maximum of Rs. 4,000 per day/bed to be

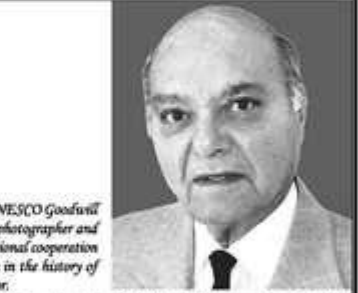
other incidental charges. In case of close relative sharing two beds, the charge will be Rs.6,000. The duration of stay in such facilities will be decided on medical advice.

Only those patients who do not require oxygen, ICU and ventilator can be transferred to step-down facilities. The facilities are to admit patients referred only by hospitals with whom they have tied up. They will be responsible for providing round-the-clock hospital-

Remembering
UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador
Madanjeet Singh
(April 16, 1924 - January 6, 2013)
On his
97th Birth Anniversary

South Asia Foundation fondly remembers the visionary, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Madanjeet Singh, author, diplomat, painter, photographer and philanthropist who dedicated his life to the principle of regional cooperation among the countries of South Asia. He is the first Indian in the history of UNESCO to be nominated UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador. The South Asia Foundation pays tribute to the memory of its Founder and dedicates itself to achieving his vision for the Region.

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"I do believe that history is not merely a series of accidents. It is a never-ending struggle between the reactionary, divisive warmongers and the people striving to realise their dream to live peacefully in cooperation with each other in a society where men and women live reason, despite hatred and violence."