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New platform to track infectious diseases

Vandana Nampoothiri

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Monday, April 5, launched the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP), the revised next-generation Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) digital platform, across the country via video conferencing.

The digital platform is expected to help in tracking and monitoring any potential outbreak or epidemic digitally.

"Such an advanced digital platform for scouting the earliest signs of disease spread in the smallest of villages and blocks in the country will immensely help in tracking any potential outbreak or epidemic" said the minister at the launch.

The launch comes a day after daily new Covid-19 infections in the country crossed the 1-lakh mark for the first time since the pandemic started last year.

IDSP was launched in 2018 in selected states to track, detect and respond to 18 infectious diseases.

The module now analyses as many as 33 infectious diseases that are reported in the country.

IDSP is part of the 2017 National Health Policy and the National Digital Health Mission.

LG to end global mobile phone business

Alwin Benjamin Soji

BENGALURU: Global electronic-goods maker LG announced on Monday, April 5, that it will be shutting down its mobile phone business worldwide.

This decision was approved by its Board of Directors in the early hours of Monday.

LG in a statement said, "LG's strategic decision to exit the incredibly competitive mobile phone sector will enable the company to focus resources in growth areas such as electric vehicle components, connected devices, smart homes, robotics, artificial intelligence and business-to-business solutions, as well as platforms and services."

It also said the current LG



LG
Life's Good

Representational Image

phone inventory would still be available for sale.

Support services and software updates would be provided to existing

customers but the time period for them would differ from region to region, it explained.

The statement also said, "Moving forward, LG will

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continue to leverage its mobile expertise and develop mobility-related technologies such as 6G to help further strengthen competitiveness in

other business areas. Core technologies developed during the two decades of LG's mobile business operations will also be retained and applied to existing and future products."

It added: "The wind down of the mobile phone business is expected to be completed by July 31 although inventory of some existing models may still be available after that."

LG launched its first smartphone, called the LG Eve, in 2009. It ran the Android operating system.

The latest smartphone from LG was the W41 Pro, launched on February 22. They are the first major mobile brand to completely withdraw from the market.

Pandemic challenges student athletes

Pavithra Prabhu

BENGALURU: On the eve of National Student Athlete Day on April 6, students shed light on the challenges they faced during the pandemic, how they adapted to the changes, and stayed fit and in touch with the sport.

Aditya V Nair, a basketball player from Amrita University, said, "As a basketball player, [I feel] the availability of courts and basketball facilities in our country is very low."

He added, "The support we get for sports in this country is close to non-existent."



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Sanjana Krishnamurthy, a basketball player for Mount Carmel College, pointed out the challenges faced by athletes during the pandemic.

"A lot of people lost a year due to age categories such as

under-13, under-16, and under-18. That was a major problem. Then, of course, we can't practise and there's no tournament," she explained.

Thus it is that they make use of zoom meetings for their practice.

Goldsmiths parry metal price drop

Sudarshani

BIDAR (KARNATAKA): Most goldsmiths in Bidar have opted the traditional way of purchasing gold after customers order in order to avoid loss as gold rate falls.

Somnath Patne, a local gold shop owner, told The Beacon: "We buy gold only if the customer gives an order and pays 50 percent of the amount in advance. We don't purchase gold in advance as it could be a huge loss if the price drops."

The owner of Balaji Jewellers in Bidar, Arun (name changed) said, "We are in retail. Fluctuation of gold price doesn't really affect us. Gold price is

dependent on the international market. We go by the day-to-day rates. Our shop does not buy gold in advance; we invest in gold only when customers buy from us."

Another gold shop owner, Raju Patil Gadgi, said, "We buy gold in advance, but when the price drops there is a huge loss as we are supposed to sell at the current price in the market."

He explained, "If I bought the gold for Rs 58,000 and I wanted to sell it at that price [after the actual price dropped], then no one would want to buy it from me. The loss due to price drop will be covered when the gold rates increase."



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People of colour sweep top acting SAG Awards

Arakkal Shada Amina

The 27th Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards saw a record this year, with people of colour (PoCs) bagging the honours for the four major acting categories in motion pictures: Viola Davis, Chadwick Boseman, Daniel Kaluuya and Youn Yuh-jung.

This is the first time in the 27-year history of the SAG Awards that the four major wins in film have been bagged by PoCs.

The SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Leading



Viola Davis at 2015 SAG awards

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Role was awarded to the late Chadwick Boseman, and the award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Leading Role to

Viola Davis, both for their performance in the film Ma Rainey's Black Bottom.

The award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor

in a Supporting Role went to Daniel Kaluuya for his performance in the film Judas and the Black Messiah.

The award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role went to Youn Yuh-jung for her role in the film Minari.

This is Viola Davis' second SAG Award for best actress in a leading role. The previous one was for her performance The Help in 2012.

Davis is the only black woman to have received the award twice, and only the second black woman to receive it at all.