



Dialogue is the only way to resolve Kashmir challenges, says Bukhari



Dumping of bodies did not increase pollution in Ganga, says Centre



Iran President-elect Ebrahim Raisi says he won't meet Biden page 11

- (suppose)

Shot-putter Tejinderpal Toor books berth for **Tokyo Olympics**

page 14



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Dushyant Chautala faces ire of farmers

The leaders of the ruling BJP-JJP regime, including Deputy CM Dushvant Chautala, faced the ire of farmers during their official programmes in three places across Haryana on Monday. NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

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Indian officials met Taliban: Qatari official

SUHASINI HAIDAR

Indian officials made a "quiet visit" to Doha to speak to the Taliban's political leadership based there, said a senior Qatari official, in what appears to be the first official confirmation of recent reports that New Delhi has engaged the Taliban directly.

"I understand that there has been a quiet visit by Indian officials to speak to the Taliban," said the official.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

SC seeks govt. decision on ex gratia payment

Centre says focus is on using funds for food, medical care

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the government whether it has taken a "decision" to not pay ex gratia to families who lost their loved ones to COVID-19.

"Is there any decision taken that there is no need to pay ex gratia? Is there a decision or is it a case of 'no decision'," Justice Ashok Bhushan asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta.

"Where is the decision that there is no need for ex gratia?"Justice M.R. Shah, the other judge on the Bench, also enquired. He even asked whether the government, by maintaining that COVID-19 was not a "one-time disaster", was inferring that the Disaster Management Act would not apply to the pandemic.

The questions from the Bench came even as the Union government clarified that it had money, but the focus was on utilising funds for food, medical care, oxygen, vaccination and pumping up the economy rather than pay a one-time compensation of ₹4 lakh each to families of people who died of COVID-19.

'Twisted on Twitter' "It is not that we do not have money... It is that our focus

Is there any decision taken that there is no need to pay ex gratia? Is there a decision or is it a case of 'no decision'?

It is not that we do not have money... It is that our focus is rather on expenditure for other things [like public health interventions, social protection and economic recovery for the affected communities] solicitor genera



If they do have the money, why should they not comply with their statutory obligation under Section 12 of the Disaster Management Act to provide ex gratia to COVID victims?

is rather on expenditure for other things [like public health interventions, social protection and economic recovery for the affected communities]," Mr. Mehta submitted.

He said the contents of the government's June 19 affidavit, explaining its financial priorities for COVID-19 management, was "twisted" and misrepresented on

Justice Shah said the government need not defend itself in court against what was said on Twitter. He, however, agreed that Mr. Mehta was right to clarify. "To say that the Centre has no money has wide repercussions," he observed.

Senior advocate S.B. Upadhyay, for the petitioners, said, "But if they do have the money, why should they not comply with their statutory obligation under Section 12 of the Disaster Management Act to provide ex gratia to COVID-19 victims?" The government had itself declared COVID-19 a disaster, national

The petitioners have highlighted a 2015 notification, which requires the government to pay an ex gratia of ₹4 lakh each to victims' families under Section 12.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Record 82 lakh shots given in a day

Scaling a new high I As many as 82.7 lakh COVID-19 vaccine doses were administered in the country

till 9 p.m. on Monday, the highest in a single day

Spike after revised guidelines came into effect: Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

More than 82 lakh COVID-19 vaccine doses were administered on Monday, the highest-ever in a day since the inoculation drive began in India. A total of 82,70,212 doses were administered across the country, including the first and second shots, till 9 p.m.

According to the Union Health Ministry, the sharp spike was due to the "new phase of universalisation of COVID-19 vaccination which commenced from Monday".

As per the revised guidelines, the Centre will buy 75% of the doses from vaccine makers and give it to the

Earlier free doses were provided by the Centre only

inoculate all adults.

to vaccinate the elderly and the frontline workers.

The revision in the vaccination policy came after the State governments for free to number of doses administered daily started declining in May. Between May 11 and 20, only 15.7 lakh doses were

'No dissent on Covishield gap'

The Centre has refuted claims that there was dissent among members of an expert panel over increasing the interval between Covishield doses. The decision was unanimous, it said in response to an RTI application. ▶ PAGE 10

administered on an average daily. The daily rate reduced due to a shortage of vaccines as most major States used 90% of all doses supplied to them.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Optional exams between Aug. 15 and Sept. 15: CBSE

Compartment exams too, it tells SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) informed the Supreme Court on Monday that optional exams for Class 12 students unhappy with their assessment will be held "anytime between" August 15 and September 15. It clarified that results after the assessment would be declared by July 31.

The Board, in a short additional affidavit, told the court that Class 12 exams for

private/patrachar/second chance compartment candidates would also be conducted between August 15 and September 15 in accordance with the assessment policy for the academic year 2019-2020.

"Their examinations shall be conducted in such a manner that they will fall within the Assessment Policy for the Academic Year 2019-2020 as approved by this court...," it said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Ahead of Oppn. conclave, Pawar meets Kishor

Poll strategist not part of today's meet

LIFE GOALS. DONE.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A day before hosting Opposition leaders at his Delhi residence, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar on Monday met election strategist Prashant Kishor, triggering speculation that a Third Front is taking shape ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

Mr. Pawar's meeting with Mr. Kishor – their second in 10 days - intensified speculation of a front where regional parties such as the NCP and the Trinamool Congress will play a key role in taking on the Narendra Modi government, without according primacy to the Congress. Mr. Kishor, however, de-

nied that Tuesday's meeting was being convened at his suggestion and clarified that he would not be part of it. The proposed meeting

will take place under the banner of Rashtra Manch.

ND-NDE

LEFT, CONG. WARY ▶ PAGE 8



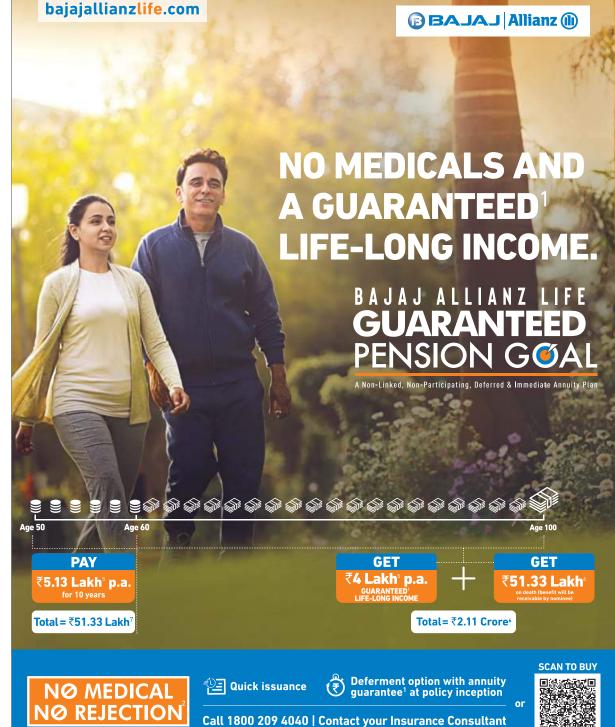
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Fire guts shoe godown, four workers missing

Officials claim delay in information led to workers being trapped in building; six rescued safely with no injuries

NEW DELHI

Four workers are suspected to be trapped inside a shoe godown in west Delhi's Udyog Vihar where a massive fire broke out on Monday morning, police said.

Search and rescue operations at the two-storey building are under way.

Earlier in the day, the police and firefighters received a call about the blaze in a factory. During an enquiry, officials said, it came to light that the building houses a godown where shoes are assembled and packed for sale. Initially, 10 workers were

trapped inside the godown. While four of them managed to come out safely, two

others were rescued later. They had minor burn injuries and were given first aid.

The remaining four workers were untraceable till Monday evening.

"We got a PCR call about a fire in a shoe factory in Udyog Nagar at 8.56 a.m. Twenty-four fire tenders



Fire-fighting operation in progress; family members of workers outside the shoe factory in west Delhi's Udyog Nagar on Monday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

were sent to the spot and 15 more vehicles were pressed into service later," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Parvinder Singh.

The police suspect the fire started from the first floor of the building and spread to other floors. The exact cause of the fire is not known yet but a short-circuit is likely to be the reason, they added.

He said the godown was

shut at the time of the incident. The operations usually start around 8.30 a.m. but the workers had arrived earlier. However, police said, no major injuries have been reported in the incident so far.

Case against owner

The owner of the godown has been identified as Pankaj Garg. A case has been registered in connection with the

incident.

Delhi Fire Services officials said over 35 fire tenders and around 140 fire personnel were eventually brought in to control the blaze.

"The fire is under control and cooling operation is under way. The building has been declared 'dangerous' by the civic body," said DFS director Atul Garg.

Two CATS ambulances are

also at the spot to attend to any emergencies.

No fire safety equipment The building did not have any fire safety equipment and was packed with highly combustible materials.

"We were not given correct information in the first place. We were not informed that workers were trapped inside. It was only after two hours into the operation, we them in a timely manner.

"While the fire has been doused, because of the heat and smoke, it's become tough to trace those reported missing," Mr. Garg added.

found out that there were people trapped inside," said Mr. Garg, adding that those trapped could have been saved in time if correct information was shared with

written

arm' of minor for not wearing mask

Police set up fact-finding committee

Constable 'breaks

HEMANI BHANDARI

A 12-year-old boy was allegedly brutally beaten up by a Constable in east Delhi's Kalyanpuri on Saturday night for not wearing a mask.

The police said they are enquiring into the matter.

Autorickshaw driver Darshan Singh (40) from Kalyanpuri said that on Saturday at 9.30 p.m., his son had stepped out of the house to play with his friends in the locality when the incident took place.

"Children are stuck at home all day and they get frustrated too. At night, he stepped out to play as there would be less crowd. He was not wearing a mask," Mr.

Singh said. A while later, he added, two Constables came to the spot and started yelling at people. "My son got scared and started to run when one of the Constables chased him down. The Constable beat him black and blue and even broke his arm. He beat him with a stick and there are witnesses to the incident," Mr. Singh wrote in his complaint addressed to District DCP.

Mr. Singh said after the incident, he informed the police. "A PCR van then took my child to Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital," he

They [police] refused to lodge our complaint. Instead, they blamed my son for selling liquor and drugs, which is a false allegation

Next, he said they went to police station but "they refused to lodge our complaint. Instead, they blamed my son for selling liquor and drugs, which is a false allegation".

Mr. Singh alleged that he was being forced to reach a compromise and was being threatened that the son will be implicated in a false case.

"Police in this area have wreaked havoc. I understand that one should wear mask, but should they beat someone to this extent?" he questioned adding that police staff is complicit in selling drugs and liquor in the

Police sources, however, said a woman who lives close to the complainant's residence sells liquor and uses children to deliver it. A raid was also conducted last week, sources added.

DCP (East) Priyanka Kashyap said a fact-finding committee has been set up. "If the staff is found complicit, strictest possible action will be taken," she said.

Miscreants loot bank of over ₹50L

STAFF REPORTER

A group of unidentified miscreants entered a bank and fled with around ₹55 lakh in Shahdara, the police said on Monday.

The accused entered the bank after breaking the wall of a neighbouring under-construction building in Shahdara, they said.

The bank officials then informed the police.

The money was kept in one of the chambers of the

A case has been registered. Sources said the accused had all the equipment, including a drill machine. It must have taken around seven to eight hours for the accused to break the wall.

"The burglars had disabled CCTV cameras installed inside the bank premises. We are trying to find out leads from other CCTVs installed in the locality, added the officer.

He added that they are also examining the role of an insider in the crime because the burglars were aware of the location of the vault and they didn't take any other valuables kept in lockers. The police said they are also taking help of technical surveillance to get clue in the case.

Four members of Nandu gang held following shoot-out

STAFF REPORTER

STAFF REPORTER

Phase 4 network.

In the last two months,

when a lockdown was in

place in the city, the Delhi

Metro Rail Corporation

(DMRC) floated four civil

tenders for underground

sections of the upcoming

of workers, the DMRC said

construction of the Phase

IV network had achieved a

DMRC completed tunneling

of 500 meters of one of the

2.8-km twin tunnels. It also

completed casting of over

50% of tunnel segments in

the casting yard. The first of

the twin tunnels on this

stretch is expected to be

completed by September

2021," a senior official said.

"During these months,

few landmarks as well.

Despite reduced strength

Four members of Nandu gang were arrested following a shoot-out in Delhi's Iaffarpur Kalan, the police said on Monday. Three of the accused sustained injuries,

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Sanjeev

DMRC floated four civil

tenders during lockdown

They are all for underground sections

Yadav said the accused have been identified as Vinav (23) from Najafgarh, Robin Baliyan (19) from Sonipat, Sumit Poonia (20) from Mahendergarh district in Haryana and Deepanshu (19) from Jaffarpur Kalan.

The accused had plans to kill a businessman in Najafgarh. "Police received infor-

The official said due to

the lockdown, the number

of workers at construction

sites had reduced from

tion of 65 kilometres of new

lines across three priority

corridors as part of its

Phase 4 expansion. These

corridors are expected to

be completed by 2025," the

After a video of a monkey

traveling on the Delhi Me-

tro surfaced online, the

DMRC on Monday said it had plans to devise an SOP

in consultation with the for-

est department to deal with

such "unexpected situa-

tions" to ensure the safety

of passengers.

Executive Engineer

at Nagrota Bagwan

Monkey inside train

"The Delhi Metro is currently engaged in construc-

4,000 to around 2,500.

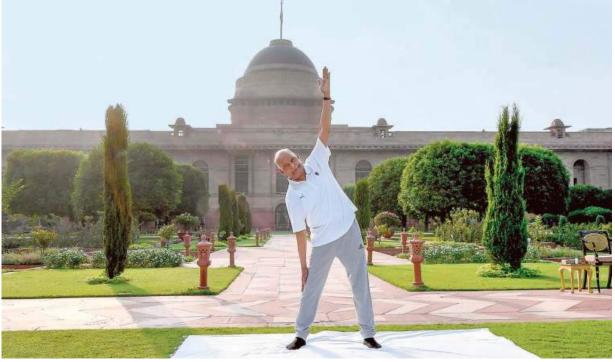
mation regarding this and a team reached the spot. Two bikes were seen coming from Kharkhari Village and heading towards Ujwa. Police tried to stop the riders, but they tried to flee from the spot," Mr. Yadav said adding that one of the motorcycle riders lost his control while the other left the veh-

icle and they tried to run away from the spot. The accused then started firing at the police party after which the officers retaliated.

During interrogation, Vinay allegedly told police that he used to provide arms and shelter to members of Nandu and Jyoti Baba gang and that Robin was assigned with the task to open fire on some businessman of Malikpur Village.

Sumit was hiding in Delhi to shoot at another businessmen and Deepanshu provided information about the targets as per the directions of Rohit Dagar, sharpshooter of Nandu Gang, the police added.

Staying fit



on Monday. The BJP organised 3,600 yoga camps in as many locations across the Capital. PTI

Member of Irani gang arrested

STAFF REPORTER

A 36-year-old member of Irani gang was arrested for allegedly posing as Crime + Branch officers and fleeing away with gold ornaments from a man after intercepting him in north Delhi's Bara Hindu Rao, the police said on Monday.

Accused Qasim Zafri alias Joju, a resident of Maharashtra was arrested from Bhopal on Saturday, they said. The Irani gang is known to have a presence across India. They are also known for posing as police officers or senior government officials to dupe people. In most of the cases, the accused operate on a group of two to four, the police said. Three more involved in the case are said to be absconding.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT *** Notice Inviting Tender ***

Sealed item rate tender on form No. 6 & 8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer. HP PWD Division Tanda at Nagrota Bagwan on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh for the following work from the approved and eligible contractors enlisted in HP PWD (B & R) whose registration stood renewed as pe revised rules so as to reach in his office on or before on 24.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M. And the same shall be opened on the same day at 11:30 A.M. in the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representatives. The tender form can be obtained from his office on cash payment (non refundable) or 23.07.2021 up to 4:00 P.M and the application for issue of tender form shall be received on 22.07.2021 up to 12:00 noon. The applications for issue of tender forms accompanied with enlistment letter or renewal etter and the earnest money in the shape of National Saving Certificates/Saving Account of the Post Office /Time Deposit account/FDR in Himachal Pradesh duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, HP PWD Division Tanda at Nagrota Bagwan.

The conditional tender and the tender received without earnest money will summarily be rejected. The offer of the tender shall be kept open for 120 days.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Time limit
1.	Construction of link road to Mehta Basti in G.P. Jalot in Distt Kangra (HP) (SH:-Construction of 900mm diaHume pipe culvert, C/O R/Wall and providing and laying cement concrete pavement)Deposit Work	498998/-	10000/-	Three months
2.	Construction of Path in SC Basti Chahari in Distt Kangra (HP) (SH:-Providing and laying interlocking tiles flooring) Deposit Work	425818/-	8550/-	Three months
3.	Construction of link road Ustehar to Khajan Chand House in Distt Kangra (HP) (Under SCSP) (SH:-Improvement of road width by providing retaining wall at RD 0/170 to 0/195 and C/O Wall at RD 0/20 to 0/235)	330201/-	6700/-	Two months
4.	Construction of Guru Ka Tiala to Tikka Ranhun Kawari Km 0/000 to 1/300 road in Distt Kangra (SH:-Construction of cement concrete cause way at RD 0/060)	370247/-	3450/-	Two months
5.	Construction of Kaisthwari Sabha Hall in Ward No Village Tharu in Tehsil Nagrota Bagwan Distt Kangra (HP) (Deposit Work)	269750/-	5400/-	Two months

The intending contractor / firm have to produce the copy of latest enlistment and renewal enlisted in If any of the date mentioned above happened to be Gazetted Holidays the same shall be processe

The Executive Engineer reserves the right to accept/reject any tender/application or all tenders without assigning any reason

HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

The Contractor will have to submit affidavit along with application for issue of tender that he has not

Next tender will be issued only after completion of previous works in hand. H.P.P.W.D. Tanda Division (On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh)

Good for health: President Ram Nath Kovind performs yoga on International Day of Yoga at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi

INTERVIEW | ASIF IQBAL TANHA

'UAPA being misused to silence voices against injustice'

With the threat of a third COVID wave, the pattern of protests will have to change, says the student activist

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ

Asif Iqbal Tanha, one of three student activists who was recently released on bail after being arrested under the UAPA for his alleged role in the Delhi riots. says the fight against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, National Population Register and National Register of Citizens is alive and the struggle for justice will continue. Excerpts.

You have been in jail for over a year. How does it feel to be free?

■ It was a feeling of immense jov to come out of prison and meet my family, friends, fellow students from Jamia Millia Islamia and other activists. I was ecstatic to know that the passion with which the work began to oppose the CAA/NPR/NRC was still alive. I sometimes felt while in prison that because I was arrested under the UAPA, those who were involved in the movement may have gotten scared, silent or backed out but I was happy to know that that was not the case.

I can now say with pride that when it comes to saving the unity and integrity of India, now or in the future, the will to fight for the cause is alive in people and they will not feel afraid to fight

to save the Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb of the country.

My friends, family or members of civil society stood by me and were fighting from outside while we were inside. While I was in jail, there were days when I was scared as I knew that getting out would be tough due to the stringent UAPA, but my legal team did a wonderful job and the High Court delivered a verdict that gave us protection.

Do you feel UAPA is being used to silence dissenting voices and keep students away from activism? Do you feel your bail order will help stop this?

■ UAPA is being misused to put people like independent journalists, students and activists who are fighting for justice into prison with the hope of silencing their voice. It is being used as a tool to silence those who are asking questions of the government. UAPA should not be misused and should be used for the purpose it was made for – to put terrorists behind bars.

Instead, those who are against violence and are raising their voice for the unity of the nation, are being but behind bars. I feel that the bail order from the Delhi High Court for



Asif Iqbal Tanha

Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita and me will help those who are innocent, political prisoners and it will bring justice to them.

You have raised a lot of questions on the condition of prisons and the way you were treated inside. Tell us about your experience.

■ For people who are outside, what all happens inside a jail is something that they will be unable to fathom. The conditions are very bad. It is not enough to iust provide food to prisoners and ask them to lead their life in prison. There is a continuous violation of human rights inside prison. People inside are not being given basic medical facilities. In the time of COVID-19, prisoners are not being given access to tests or vaccinations. If they want to complete their studies from inside, they are not being given the facilities to study. People are put in prison so that they may reform themselves and become better people but they are not being given the opportunity to reform themselves. They are just being locked up and are being given food to survive. There is no access to any aid, legal, medical or counselling for them to understand what they have done and become better.

Even when you ask for something that you are entitled to according to the jail manual, it is denied citing safety and security concerns. It is my humble request to the jail authorities that inmates should be given access to their basic human rights.

How will the movement against CAA/NRC/NPR continue, especially during the pandemic?

■ The CAA/NRC movement had a pattern across the country whether it was the Shaheen Bagh protest or the Jamia protest which used crowds to protest. Now, due to COVID-19, people cannot gather to protest. With the threat of a possible of the protest will have to change. Social media will be used more, there will be more debate and discussion on the media to make people aware so that we can all sit down together and find a solution. These discussions will throw up ideas on how to take the movement forward. If the government decides to implement NPR immediately, then we will have to find an immediate way to oppose it. We will also have legal discussions to ensure that the way forward for the movement is not against the Constitution. But as long as the threat of the pandemic remains, it will not be right to gather in large crowds.

third wave of COVID, the pattern

What is next for you when it comes to academics as well as activism?

■ To lead a good life, it is important to study. If you do not study, you will not be able to raise questions. I will be continuing my academics by doing my Masters and a PhD. When it comes to activism, I will continue with it on campus and outside by tying up with well-known activists who are fighting for similar causes across the nation.

Activism will be a part of my life. As a student or after as well.

Timings DELHI

TUESDAY, JUN. 22 RISE 05:25 SET 19:23 RISE 16:50 SET 02:58 WEDNESDAY, JUN. 23 RISE 05:25 SET 19:23

RISE 18:01 SET 03:44 THURSDAY, JUN. 24

RISE 05:25 SET 19:23 RISE 19:12 SET 04:37

Delhi Weather Delhi City

Delhi Palam Today 38°C Easy morning and hot day likely with partly cloudy sky. Moderate warm winds

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 39°C The weather will be mostly dry. A very warm and humid weather to continue. Night will be comfortable.

THE HINDU

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Four agencies approved by govt. for tree transplantation

STAFF REPORTER

The Delhi government has approved empanelment of four agencies to carry out tree transplantation in the city, authorities said on

As per the Tree Transplantation Policy (2020) which was notified late last year, during any project, tree transplantation has to be done through a technical agency empanelled by the government. An expert committee was constituted to decide the minimum technical eligibility criteria for empanelment of agencies and later examine the proposals received.

"To carry out transplantation from any project site in Delhi, the applicant shall be required to select an agency from among the empanelled agencies only. The four agencies are Green Morning Horticulture Pvt. Ltd, Hyderabad, M/s Rohit Nursery, New Delhi, M/s DD MEP Engineers, Gurugram, and RP Entrepreneurs," an official statement said.

45-60 age group residents have got the most number of doses'

Healthcare, front-line workers most likely to be covered sooner, show govt. data

Even as the Delhi government awaits the supply of extra doses to rollout the centralised vaccination drive in the Capital, residents aged between 45 and 60 have been administered the most number of COVID vaccine doses in the city so far.

According to Delhi government records, residents in this age group account for almost 32% of the total 65 lakh-plus COVID vaccine beneficiaries followed by the 18-44 age group, which accounts for around 27% and the 60-plus category constituting around 24%.

Healthcare workers, at almost 7%, were given the least number of COVID doses in the city followed by front-line workers who constitute around 11% of the total beneficiaries.

To be covered sooner

However, a closer look at vaccination data alongside the estimated population of each group of beneficiaries reveals that healthcare and front-line workers are most likely to be covered sooner than the others.



A beneficiary getting vaccinated at a centre in north Delhi.

The total number of vaccine doses administered in Delhi till June 20 stood at 65,95,009.

Number of doses

The population of residents in the 18-44 category is estimated at 92 lakh among which 17,91,758 doses have been administered.

While 15,95,283 lakh of these were first doses, 1,39,420 people have also received their second dose.

The population of citizens in the 45-plus category – including beneficiaries falling in both the 45-60 and 60plus age groups - is estimated at 57 lakh among whom 36,59,191 doses have been

As many as 26,65,730 of these have been the first and 9,83,401 the second doses.

administered.

Of their estimated population of three lakh, as many as 4,38,552 doses have been administered to healthcare workers; 2,52,051 of these have been first doses and 1.86.085 second doses.

The city also has an esti-

mated population of 6 lakh front-line workers among whom 7,05,508 doses have been administered; 4,35,324 have received the first dose and 2,69,476 the second.

Almost 17% of the 18-44 age group, over 62% of the 45+ beneficiaries, over 82% of healthcare workers and over 72% of the population of front-line workers in the city have received at least one dose of COVID vaccina-

While the Delhi government blamed the Centre for not providing adequate doses to the city for the universal vaccine drive, former North Corporation Mayor Jai Prakash, at a vaccination centre on the premises of the Bara Hindu Rao Hospital welcomed walk-in vaccine beneficiaries with a band and refreshments.

"We also took out a rally after that, telling people to step forward and walk in to our centre any day so that complacency does not set it. The North Corporation will, over the coming two to four days, be able to offer walk-in vaccination at all its centres," Mr. Jai Prakash

Sisodia attacks Central govt.'s 'messed up' inoculation drive

'It will take 15-16 more months to vaccinate all Delhiites'

Delhi needs 2.3

crore doses to

under the free

the Centre will

lutely shameful that the

Centre is providing only 15

lakh vaccines for Delhi, but

putting pressure on our offi-

cials to publish these adver-

tisements. Our country

needs vaccines, not adver-

tisements," Mr. Sisodia said

He appealed to the Central

government to provide 2.3

crore doses of vaccines for

Delhi. "Give us 2.3 crore dos-

es in the next two months,

we will inoculate everyone

and then we will put up ad-

vertisements thanking you,"

He said that if Delhi re-

ceives only 15 lakh doses of

vaccines for next month,

then it indicates that it will

take approximately 15-16

more months to vaccinate all

Mr. Sisodia said.

in a video statement.

15 lakh doses in July

doses in July

MANISH SISODIA
Deputy Chief Minister

vaccinate the entire

Capital. However,

vaccination drive,

provide only 15 lakh

STAFF REPORTER

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday criticised the Central government for calling the vaccination drive against CO-VID-19 in India as the world's largest inoculation drive.

In reality, it has become the world's "longest and most mismanaged" vaccination drive, Mr. Sisodia said.

Publish ads

He said that BJP-governed States have taken out advertisements in newspapers about the "world's largest vaccination drive", and alleged that the Central government is "pressurising" Delhi government officials to also publish advertisements thanking the Central government's inoculation drive.

"At present, Delhi needs 2.3 crore doses to vaccinate the entire Capital. However, instead, under the so-called free vaccination drive, the Central government will provide only 15 lakh doses to Delhi in July. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government has also put pressure on the Delhi government officials to advertise this BJP toolkit. It is absoresidents of the city.

"Whether the Central government-led vaccination drive is the world's largest drive or not, it is definitely India's longest vaccination drive, the most mismanaged, derailed and messedup drive. It has completely botched the whole vaccination drive in the nation," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

Mr. Sisodia said that vaccination is the only way to defeat the COVID-19 crisis in India and many countries across the world had prioritised vaccinating their citizens. They have also taken pride in announcing that their citizens can roam about mask-free as most of them are vaccinated.

"Whether it was purchasing vaccines from other nations or investing funds in vaccine manufacturing, several nations proved that inoculating their citizens on a priority basis is significant in defeating the virus. These countries are examples of how if Union governments decide, they can vaccinate their citizens and emerge as a nation with zero COVID cases. All it takes is intention and action," said the senior AAP leader..

Capital records lowest daily COVID-19 cases in over a year

'Centralised inoculation policy has had no effect on Delhi's stock'

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

New COVID-19 cases reported in 24 hours in the city dropped to 89 - the lowest in more than a year - taking the total cases to 14,32,381, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

The number of daily new cases was lower than this on April 30 last year, when 76 cases were reported in 24 hours.

The number of daily cases had peaked to 28,395 on April 20 this year and has been dropping after it.

Also, II deaths were reported in the past 24 hours and the total number of deaths stood at 24,925, the bulletin said and a total of 57,128 tests were done in a day. Of the total cases, 14,05,460 people have reco-



A woman undergoes a COVID-19 testing in north Delhi. sushil kumar verma

vered and there are 1,996 active cases. About 94.6% of the total 23,638 beds for COVID-19 treatment in the city were vacant on Monday. During the peak in April, only 5-6% of beds were vacant on many days.

AAP leader Atishi, presenting a daily bulletin on vaccination, said that Delhi's stock of Covaxin for 18-44 age group would last only for a day.

Vaccine stock "Delhi has 8,27,000 lakh

vaccines for 45+ and for 18-44, Delhi has 2,68,000 vaccines. For 45+, we have a 5 days stock of Covaxin and 57 days stock of Covishield available. For 18-44, we have one day stock of Covaxin and 13 days stock of Covishield available," Ms. Atishi said.

"From June 21, when the nationwide universal vaccination campaign has started, it has had no effect on Delhi's stock position. Delhi has not received even a single extra dose of vaccine. Delhi has been extremely vulnerable and its population density is very high," she added.

Toiling away



Daily wage labourers on their way to a construction site in west Delhi on Monday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

'Govt. schools not reopening anytime soon'

Classrooms will be equipped with best facilities when students return, says Sisodia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT Deputy Chief Minister Man-

ish Sisodia on Monday said that the Delhi government was not calling students back to school anytime soon but was ensuring that when they do return, they will enter colourful classes designed to motivate them to learn and engage.

Safety of children

"Keeping in mind the security and safety of children, we are not calling students back to school anytime soon. We are, however, ensuring that the construction work for new and improved class-



Manish Sisodia

rooms is done at a faster pace so that when children return to school, they are welcomed with new and colourful classrooms with the best facilities," Mr. Sisodia

He was speaking after visiting four newly built Delhi government schools and check on construction of classrooms and academic blocks. Mr. Sisodia directed officials to ensure that classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and that schools and classrooms should be designed keeping in mind the psyche of children.

Construction work

The Delhi government in a statement said 97% construction work in SKV Kondli School is complete and will be fully finished by June

2021. At present, 20 new classrooms are being constructed in SKV Kondli. Similarly, 97% construction work is complete in GGSS Kalyanpuri School, with 20 new classrooms in the process of being constructed. Over 90% of work to build 84 new classrooms at Government Co-ed, IP Extension, is complete and the school construction will be fully finished by July 2021. About 84% of classroom construction work is complete at Government Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Preet Vihar. It will be fully finished by August 2021 and will host 48 new classrooms.

New gas stove to bring relief for PNG consumers

Designed by IIP-Dehradun, it will help bring down monthly bills by 'up to 25%'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

In a significant development for over 10 lakh users of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) in the Capital, the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) has developed a new gas stove for domestic PNG consumers.

The new gas stove, according to the PCRA, an advisory body under the Minis-

try of Petroleum and Natural Gas, will reduce the consumption of domestic piped gas and bring down the monthly bills by up to 25%.

PCRA executive director Niranjan Kumar Singh said the new gas stove is available now on e-commerce platforms as well as in the local market.

There are about 74.20 lakh PNG connections across

the country, including 23.62 lakh in Gujarat, 18.94 lakh in Maharashtra, 10.21 lakh in Delhi, 9.21 lakh in Mumbai and Greater Mumbai, 1.21 lakh in Hyderabad and 61,000 in Lucknow.

"The new PNG gas stove has been designed by Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun. The new gas stove looks like the conventional LPG stoves meant to be used

with the LPG cylinders but reduce the wastage of gas due to the design changes in the mixing tube, nozzle, burner and pan support," the PCRA stated. "IIP-Dehradun has trans-

ferred the technology of the new gas stove to 40 manufacturing companies of which 10 have already started the commercial production," the PCRA also stated.

'Civic bodies pressuring people to pay house tax'

They should be giving relief: Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Monday alleged that the municipal corporations were pressurising people to pay house tax, instead of giving them relaxations after the CO-VID-19 pandemic and extended lockdown.

Delhi Congress vice-president and leader of the Congress party in the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Abhishek Dutt, said the civic bodies have also issued notices to shopkeepers and traders, without the consent of the House...

"Most people did not come out of their homes due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns last year and this year, and without any source of income as shops and business establishments were shut for long periods, they could not pay the taxes. It is inhumane on the part of the civic bodies to demand double the tax amount from defaulters, instead of finding some method to offer them relief," Mr. Dutt said.

He added that in addition to collecting house tax online, the municipal corporations should also start maIt is inhumane on the part of the civic bodies to demand double the tax amount from

ABHISHEK DUTT

defaulters

nual door-to-door collection of taxes.

Flash protest Delhi Congress workers

held a flash protest at ITO against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for his visits to Punjab to play politics, instead of attending to the problems in the Capital arising due to the pandemic. The party said that thousands of people had succumbed to COVID-19 in its second wave due to the Kejriwal government's incompetence and inaction but the Chief Minister was touring Punjab.

DPCC president Ch. Anil Kumar said that Mr. Kejriwal was playing politics in other States though people know that his "Delhi Model of Development" is a farce, created through public relation exercises at the expense of crores of rupees

NGT modifies order on Najafgarh lake

STAFF REPORTER

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Monday modified an earlier order pertaining to the Najafgarh lake and raised the need for a field survey to ascertain the status of the water quality.

Remove encroachment A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Adarsh Kumar Goel further directed the Chief Secretaries of Delhi and Haryana to coordinate with departments concerned and ensure removal of encroachment, prevent entry of untreated sewage into the lake and take remedial action.

"Needless to say, the water quality of the lake is the index of pollution level. There is need for field survey to find out ground status of the water quality. Information available on the flora fauna of water body including a study of CPCB [Central Pollution Control Board] carried out in 2003 can also be utilised. Periurban areas of Delhi, Haryana towns and settlements around are the possible cause of endangering the lake," the Bench said.

17 new cases in G.B. Nagar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NOIDA/GHAZIABAD

Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar recorded 17 new COVID-19 cases on Monday while neighbouring Ghaziabad had just two new infections, official data showed.

The number of active cases in Gautam Buddha Nagar now stands at 121 while it was 80 in Ghaziabad, according to Uttar Pradesh's Health Department data for a 24-hour period. The death toll from the pandemic stood at 461 in Ghaziabad and 466 in Gautam Buddha Nagar, the data showed.

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ND-NDE

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Dushyant Chautala faces ire of farmers

Haryana Deputy CM was in Sirsa to unveil a statue; protest at Education Minister's meeting venue too

The leaders of the ruling BJP-JJP regime, including Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, faced the farmers ire during their official programmes in at least three places across the State on Monday.

Haryana Education Minister Kanwar Pal did not turn up for a scheduled grievances redressal meeting in Ambala apparently due to the farmers protest.

Mr. Chautala was in Sirsa to unveil an 18-foot tall statue of former Deputy Prime Minister Chaudhary Devi Lal when a large number of farmers led by Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) Sirsa president Sikander Rori



Deputy CM Chautala

gathered outside the gates of Chaudhary Devi Lal University and raised slogans against the Deputy Chief Mi-

Mr. Rori claimed that he along with three more farmers managed to scale the



Minister Kanwar Pal

boundary wall of the university to reach the venue.

'Motivated by politics'

Mr. Chautala, in an interaction with the journalists, said the movement against the farm laws was no more conson why people were protesting against them on the

Protest in Ambala

In Ambala, a large number of farmers owing allegiance to Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) gathered at Panchayat Bhawan to protest against the scheduled visit of Education Minister Kanwar Pal to hold a grievances redressal meeting.

He, however, did not turn up for the meeting. The farmers claimed that the Minister called off his visit in view of the protest.

Deputy Commissioner of Ambala Vikram Yadav did not respond to repeated calls and messages to seek his response on the matter.

'AAP CM candidate for Punjab will be from Sikh community'

Given a chance, we will change direction of State: Kejriwal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of the Assembly polls due early next year, AAP supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said a member of the Sikh community would be party's Chief Minister face in Punjab.

He was speaking in Amritsar after inducting former IGP Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh, a member of the Special Investigating Team (SIT) probing the 2015 Kotkapuraand Behbal Kalan police firing incidents, into the party.

"Punjab needs a new leadership and deliberation within the party on this is going on. But I can definitely tell you that AAP's CM face for Punjab would be from the Sikh society, of whom Punjab will be proud," he said.

Hitting out at the ruling Congress and other parties, Mr. Kejriwal said the State has been going through a hard time. While people are suffering due to the pandemic, the ruling Congress party has been busy in internal feud. "They are fighting among themselves for power. One says I want to be the CM..the other says I want to be the

CM," he said. Mr. Kejriwal said the people earlier did not have any option, but now they have one. "The People of Punjab had given chance to traditional parties, but nothing had changed as they were only after the chair, power and corruption. I appeal to the people to give a chance to the Aam Aadmi Party once which will change the position and direction of the State definitely," he said.

'Exposed masterminds'

Mr. Kejriwal said Mr. Kunwar was instrumental in exposing the 'masterminds' behind the the Bargari sacrilege of (Guru Granth Sahib) case and the Kotkapura police firing incident of 2015. "However, the entire system ganged up against him. He resigned when he felt that nothing can be done while staying inside the system."

Man given two vaccine doses within minutes

STAFF REPORTER

A man was given two doses of COVID-19 vaccine within minutes in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district.

Though Prasanna Kumar Sahu, 50, of Bachhuripada village under the Betanoti block of Mayurbhanj did not complain of any adverse reaction, a health department team on Monday visited his home to assess his condition.

The incident occurred on Saturday when Mr. Sahu along with six fellow villagers visited the vaccination centre at Khuntapur.

Both jabs on same hand

"I was given the first dose on my left hand. While I was collecting my paper and two paracetamol tablets from a nurse following the vaccination, another nurse came from behind and administered another dose just three inch below the first vaccination spot," Mr. Sahu told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Sahu said by the time he raised an alarm, the nurse had already administered the second dose to him.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of "BHARTIYA PANCHNAD PARTY". The office of the party is located at Residential Plot No.121, Block-S, Residential Colony, known as Uppal's Southend, Sector-48 and 49, in and around village-Fazilpur, Jharsa, Ghosola, Tehsil & District-Gurgaon, Haryana-12208. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951- Name Jaddress of the office bearers of the party are as follows:
President: Surender Kumar Makkar S/o Sh. Amir Chand R/o H.No.234, Ward-6, Hansi- Tehsil- Hansi, District- Hisar, Haryana

Haryana General Secretary : Anil Kumar Girdhai S/o Sh. Arjun Das R/o H.No.373, Sector

S/o Sh. Arjun Das R/o H.No.373, Sector-38, Gurgaon, Tehsil-Gurgaon, Haryana Treasurer: Sanjay Kumar S/o Ram Dass R/o H.No.32, Ward No.1, Taoru District-Gurgaon, Haryana If anyone has any objection to the registration of "BHARTIYA PANCHNAD PARTY" they may send their objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party), Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

Pradeep Singh

Pavan Sir's classes, discussion

guidance in my Civil Service

Examination preparation for both General Studies

Delta strain predominant in Chandigarh: PGIMER

'61% of samples contain the variant'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Chandigarh-based Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) on Monday said that during the second CO-VID-19 wave, the Delta variant (B.1.617.2) and Alpha variant (B.1.1.7) were found to be present among 61% and 30% of the samples respectively, which were sent for whole genome sequencing to the National Centre for Diseases Control in New

Director of PGIMER Professor Jagat Ram said the majority of these samples (92%) belonged to residents of Chandigarh. "Thus, during the second wave in UT Chandigarh, the Delta strain was the main circulating strain," he said.

"Department of Virology, PGIMER has been carrying out the COVID-19 testing by RT-PCR since March 2020 and till date more than 2.5 lakhs samples have been tested. To study whether there was any change in the circulating strain in Union Territory-Chandigarh during the second wave, 25

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PADAM Sharma S/O Ashwani kumar

sharma born on 15 /12/1987 resid-ing at flat 32 clarinet court, 19 symphony close London , have changed my name to Adam Malek vide

affidavit dated 16/06/2021 at Lon

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Pradesh
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Vishram Lal R/o 65, Joshi Tola, Biswan,
District-Stlapur, Uttar Pradesh-201201
General Secretary: Ahmed Rushdan
S/o Md. Junaid Ansari R/o Flat No.3, Islah
Complex, Ring Road, Kamla Nehru Nagar,
(Near Badri Sarraf), Lucknow-226022, U.P.
Treasurer: Zeeshan Ahmad S/o Imtiyaz
Ahmad R/o H.No.159/A, Sujatganj, Bunkar
Nagar, Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh206013
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208013
If anyone has any objection to the registration of "URBAN & RURAL PARTY" they may send their objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party). Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

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stored positive samples of the period May 5, 2021 to May 24, 2021 were sent for whole genome sequencing to NCDC, New Delhi," he

"During the second wave Delta variant (B.1.617.2) and Alpha variant (B.1.1.7) were found to be present among 61% and 30% respectively. In two samples sequencing could not be performed due to low content of genomic material, inferring that during the second wave in UT Chandigarh Delta strain was the main circulating strain," said Prof. Ram.

'Follow guidelines'

Mr. Ram advised people to adhere to COVID-19 appropriate behaviour and also to opt for vaccination in increased numbers to break the transmission chain completely and to halt the impending threat of third wave keeping in view the emerging and fast spreading delta

and delta plus variant. "A major sign of relief is the cooling down of the second wavebut still, there is no room for complacency,"

Railwavs

File No.: TM/IM/87(GPR Tender)

Date: 21.06.2021

Odisha BJP protests over jab posters

trolled by the farmers, but

was motivated by politics. He

said that Chaudhary Devi Lal

worked for the welfare of the

farming community all his

life and those protesting

against the unveiling of his

statue could not be farmers.

In Charkhi Dadri, a large

number of farmers led by Ra-

ju Maan, a farmer leader,

showed black flags to BJP

leader and Haryana Women

Development Corporation

chairperson Babita Phogat at

International Yoga Day pro-

gramme in Janata College

of the ruling regime had lost

the confidence of the com-

mon man and this is the rea-

Mr. Maan said the leaders

Sports Stadium.

Black flags shown

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

Enraged over the absence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's photographs in the vaccination posters, the Odisha BJP staged protests at several places across the State on Monday.

Since June 21 marked a shift in the vaccination following the Centre's announcement to provide the jabs free of cost for all adults, the posters were hung at many vaccination centres.

'Only CM's photo'

However, the BJP workers were irked that the posters had only the photograph of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. They tore off the posters at some places and displayed the PM's photo prominently.

The agitations took place in Balasore, Rayagada, Koraput, Angul and Keonihar districts.

Before the formal opening of the vaccination drive at the Gandhi Smurti Bhavan in Balasore on Monday, the BIP workers forcibly cut the ribbon and inaugurated the function.

(Rahul Singh)

RDSO/Lucknow

Indira Gandhi Canal repair accomplished in record time

Work was taken up mainly in Rajasthan and partly in Punjab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In an engineering feat, the repair and relining of the Indira Gandhi Canal, the country's longest canal which terminates in irrigation facilities in Thar desert, was accomplished in a record 60day period amid the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, restoring 70 km of both the main canal and the feeder distributaries. The work was taken up mainly in Rajasthan and partly in neighbouring The project was a race

against time, as the repairs required closure of the canal system, which directly im-



Repair work of the canal in **Drogress.** • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

pacted the drinking and irrigation needs of 1.75 crore people as well as numerous cattle, Army cantonment along the international border and industrial usage in the border districts. Thoucials worked round the clock with the strict COVID protocols to achieve the target on

sands of workers and offi-

Strict deadline After the relining of about

23-km stretch was taken up in Punjab on March 30 this year for execution in 60 days, it was a herculean task for Rajasthan, which being on the downstream had only 30 days to repair a stretch of 47 km. The State government worked out a water contingency plan for two months for the affected areas and defined a strict deadline for feeder and main canal.

goes below 5% mark

Odisha's TPR

STAFF REPORTER

In what could be comforting news for Odisha, the Test Positivity Rate (TPR) came down below 5% on Monday for the first time in the past two and half months. During the past 24 hours,

3,031 samples of the 61,000 tests turned out to be positive. The TPR was reported at 4.97% on Monday which was 5.38% on Sunday. The cumulative caseload

stands at 8,80,533. However, daily COVID-19 fatalities remained around 40. Monday's reported toll of 43 took the total to 3,633. The State reported below

5% TPR on April 1 when 461 of 26,700 samples were found infected.

Bt cotton adoption showed benefits: study

'There has been reduction in insecticide use and its impact on human health'

VIKAS VASUDEVA

Amid the perpetual debate surrounding Bt cotton's positive and negative impacts, a recent study titled - 'Longterm impact of Bt cotton: An empirical evidence from North India' – has said its adoption in Punjab in the past over a decade has resulted in net economic and environmental benefits.

The research was funded by the Agricultural Extension Division of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research under extramural project "Impact evaluation of integrated pest management technologies". The study was jointly done by the

Punjab Agricultural University at Ludhiana, the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology in Jammu (SKUAST) and the Noida-based Amity University, and has been recently published in the *Jour*nal of Cleaner Production.

'Stable cotton yield' "Since the commercialisa-

tion of Bt cotton, there has been reduction in insecticide use by volume and applications, decline in environmental and human health impact associated with insecticide use, more so with the reduction in the use of highly hazardous and riskiest insecticides, and reduc-

tion in the expenses associated with insecticide use. Also, cotton yields in the past 13 years have been stable, the only exception being 2015. Yet over the past 13 years, pesticide use has gradually increased in Bt hybrids and reduced in non-Bt varieties. primarily driven by the use of fungicide, which was not applied in cotton in 2003 and 2004.

"Akin to the discovery of synthetic pesticides in the 1940s, which was proclaimed as 'silver bullet technology' by entomologists, the complete reliance on Bt cotton without incorporating it into the integrated pest management (IPM) system

led to outbreak of whitefly in northern India and pink bollworm in western India in 2015; thus, resistance to Bt cotton is yet to become a significant problem. Compatibility of Bt with IPM is not a given when we have weaker institutional setting with ad hoc IPM system and the contrarian view that Bt cotton has been a failure in India, in this case Punjab, lacks empirical evidence," professor Rajinder Peshin of SKUAST

told The Hindu. Bt (Bacillus thuringiensis) cotton has been commercially grown in India for the past 19 years. In Punjab, Bt cotton was released for cultivation in 2005.

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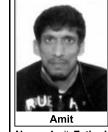
Name of Work: Monitoring health of ballast bed with the help o

Corrigendum -II, Pre-bid Minutes and Revised Tender Document has

been published on 21.06.2021, along with suitable changes in the tender

ground penetration radar technology for through

ballast renewal (TBR) and rehabilitation on Indian



General Public is hereby informed that a person namely Amit S/o Lt. Kimti lal Tondan R/o H No 4/4 Chawala Park Chander Nagar, Delhi has been missing since 07.06.2021 at 07.30 PM from the area of PS Jagatpuri, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 59A dated 12.06.2021 has been registered at PS, Jagatpuri, Delhi. The description of missing person is as under:

Name: Amit, Father's Name : Lt. Kimti Lal Tondan, Age : 28 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Fair, Wearing: Light Blue Colour T Shirt & Black Payjama Bare foot. He is mentally abnormal and physically handicapped by both hands and legs and bearing

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers. Website: http://cbi.nic.in e-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL

Complexion: Fair, Height: 5'3", Face: Round, Built:

Medium, Eyes: Black, Wearing: Yellow coloured kurta, blue

Any person having any information/Clue about this

missing girl, may inform SHO, Farsh Bazar, Delhi at E-mail:

Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 DP/479/SHD/2021

General Public is hereby informed that

one girl (depicted in the photo)

namely Komal **D/o** Mahesh **R/o** H.No.

618/5/1-C, Ravidas Gali, Pandev

Road, Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi

Aged- 19 Years has been reported

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from area of P.S. Fash Bazar, Delhi vide

DD No. 35-A Dated 15.06.2021 lodged

at Police Station Farsh Bazar, Delhi.

cic@cbi.gov.in or website : http://cbi.nic.in

Her physical description is as under:-

coloured jeans and slipper in feet.

Tele No.: 011-24368638 or 24368641

FAX No.: 011-24368639

P.S., Jagatpuri, Delhi Ph.: 011-22420363, 22420362,7065036023

Komal

SHO, Farsh Bazar, Delhi

Tel.: 011-21210828-33



girl namely Meena Kumari, D/o Shri Tej Narayan Gupta, R/o H.No. TC-132, Pandav Nagar, Delhi, Age 19 years, Height 5'6" Complexion Shallow, Face Long, Built Thin, Physical Description Mentally Weak Wearing Yellow colour suit salwar, white colour chunni and blue colour hawai chappal in feet is missing / kidnapped from the

Meena Kumari jurisdiction of PS Ranjit Nagar, Delhi since 02.06.21 at about 09:00 am. In this regard DD No. 31-A dated 05.06.21 has been lodged at PS Ranjit Nagar, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the

missing/kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail ID:cic@cbi.gov.in Tele: 011-23014046, 23015218 Fax: 011-23011334

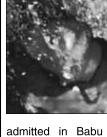
PS: Ranjit Nagar, Delhi Ph.: 011-25704008, 25704009

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL General public is hereby informed that one



SHO

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male **Age**: About 30 years, Height: 5'6", Face: Oval, Complexion: Wheatish, Build: Thin, wearing green colour T-shirt and light blue colour Jeans, was found injured on 29.05.2021 in Road Accident at GTK road, near Karnal bypass, Opp. IP CNG pump, Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi. He was Jagjivan Ram Memorial Hospital,

Jahangir Puri, Delhi, where doctor declare him brought dead. In this regard FIR No. 294/21 dated 29.05.2021 u/s 279/304-A IPC has been registered at P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about the

deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the

following address or telephone nos. SHO: P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi Ph.: 011-27811933, 27811934

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ffice Aides, The Hindu, Puducherry Passed away on 21st June, 2021. Address: No: 79, Muthaiyah Mudaliar eet. Muthialpet, Puducherry - 605003 Ph: 93458 37480

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ANEETA MADDAN DP/475/SHD/2021 Mob.: 7065036028 Place: Delhi Date: 22 - 06 - 2021 This PDF was originally uploaded to The Hindu Newspaper - ePaper (https://t.me/hindu_epaper). Subscribe now to get this edition before anyone else!! Backup channel: @news_backup

As barricades go, shoppers, tourists hit the road

Restaurants open in Karnataka, Telangana; Irani tea shops draw Hyderabadis; Kerala reports first Delta plus variant case

The end of lockdown witnessed patrons returning to hotels and a variety of shops in Karnataka and Telangana.

Karnataka on Monday relaxed norms in six more districts as the COVID-19 test positivity rate (TPR) fell to less than 5%. Udupi, Bengaluru Rural, Shivamogga, Ballari, Chitradurga, and Vijayapura districts were brought under relaxations in lockdown.

Eight districts continued to report a positivity rate above 5%, including Mysuru, with above 10%. As many as 4,867 new cases were reported in the State on Monday.

As Bengaluru city opened up traffic snarls were back on

Tanzanian national held

with three kg heroin

A Tanzanian national was

held at the Rajiv Gandhi

three kg of heroin on

International Airport with

Monday. The Directorate of

Revenue Intelligence seized

the heroin worth ₹19.5 crore

from the checked-in baggage

of the passenger who flew in

from Johannesburg via Doha.

charge in Andhra Pradesh

Four new MLCs take

Four new Members of

YSR Congress

Legislative Council (MLCs)

were sworn in on Monday in

Andhra Pradesh. The ruling

Partynominated L. Appi

Reddy. Thota Trimurthulu.

R.V. Ramesh Yadav and K.

Moshen Raju to the Council in

HYDERABAD

Monday. BBMP Civic Commissioner Gaurav Gupta said the response was good in Bengaluru. Most people wore masks and followed COVID-19-appropriate beha-

Yediyurappa's appeal

Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa urged people on Twitter to wear masks, ensure hyand sanitation. giene maintain social distance and get vaccinated. Chandrashekhar Hebbar,

president, Karnataka Regional Hotels and Restaurants' Federation, said footfalls were very low and business had not improved. Footfalls were low in jewellery, garments, books and home appliances segments.



Back to business: Traffic clogs Hudson circle in Bengaluru on Monday, as the city unlocked after two months. • K. MURALI KUMAR

Hyderabadis were back to with friends at the bustling relishing Irani chai at their cafes and restaurants. favourite roadside joints.

from home and caught up

Other business establish-City residents stepped out ments, including private traclothing, steel industry and wholesale markets at Abids, Begum Bazaar and Secunderabad were buzzing with customers. Religious places were also thrown open.

The TPR in Telangana was down to 1% as 1,197 new cases and nine deaths were reported on Monday.

Andhra Pradesh reported 44 deaths and 2,620 new infections on Monday. While relaxation hours of 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. came into force on Monday, parts of Chittoor were under complete lockdown or following 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. schedule.

Visitors thronged the waterfalls at Kailasanatha Kona in Narayanavanam mandal on the Puttur-Chennai national highway. Tourists from Tamil Nadu arrived at the spot in private vehicles.

Kerala on Monday reported its first case of a COVID-19 patient with the Delta plus variant of SARS-CoV-2. Officials said a four-year-old boy from ward 14 of the Kadapra Panchayat in Pathanamathitta was detected with the variant, with a positive test on May 24, and he had reportedly recovered.

Genome sequencing at CSIR-IGIB in New Delhi confirmed the variant.

Kerala reported 7,499 new cases on Monday. The TPR was 9.63%. The State added 94 deaths, including recent

(With inputs from Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Thiruvananthapuram bureaus)

mendations of the council. the government will revital-

ise the State's economy and

ensure that the benefits of

economic growth reach all

segments of society," Mr.

Purohit said in his address

Explaining the reason for

the decision, a government

order said the State was in

polity, and also the trends in

the Indian and the global

economy," the G.O. said.

to the Assembly.

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Sikkim, West Bengal Bihar, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Mahe, Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Muzaffarabad, east Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Chattisgarh, coastal Karnataka, Puducherry, Karaikal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Agartala	531.825.9	Kozhikode	1031.023.8
Ahmedabad	331.325.1	Kurnool	37.425.7
Aizawl	2.626.0 19.0	Lucknow	34.425.8
Allahabad	35.226.3	Madurai	39.425.4
Bengaluru	30.620.4	Mangaluru	45.729.223.0
Bhopal	33.523.0	Mumbai	2333.424.6
Bhubaneswar	3035.025.2	Mysuru	30.821.7
Chandigarh	36.526.0	New Delhi	37.425.5
Chennai	39.929.4	Patna	2032.024.3
Coimbatore	33.023.4	Port Blair	31.626.2
Dehradun	432.623.0	Puducherry	38.825.8
Gangtok	0.821.017.3	Pune	0.729.821.0
Goa	731.824.4	Raipur	35.225.2
Guwahati	0.534.626.4	Ranchi	2433.221.7
Hubballi	27.022.0	Shillong	25.118.0
Hyderabad	34.424.0	Shimla	27.018.6
Imphal	0.130.221.3	Srinagar	27.614.6
Jaipur	137.825.0	Thiruvananthapuram.	0.532.925.2
Kochi	2831.424.4	Tiruchi	39.926.4
Kohima	4827.618.8	Vijayawada	38.228.2
Kolkata	932.524.4	Visakhapatnam	38.427.2
(Rainfall data	in mm; temperature in	Celsius)	

Pollutants in the air you are breathing **CO PM2.5 PM10 CODE** .95 ..123 .1139771

4.00 p.m., Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra recorded an

making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues

Mystery shrouds death of 5 in Kozhikode road accident

Police probing links with gold smuggling rackets

STAFF REPORTER

A comprehensive investigation is under way into the suspicious circumstances that led to a road accident here in Kerala that claimed the lives of five natives of Palakkad district on Monday.

They were reportedly on their way back home from the Kozhikode International Airport when their car hit a cement-laden truck around 5 a.m. The deceased, all residents of Cherpulassery village, had gone to the airport to see off their friend.

The Feroke police have impounded a multi-purpose vehicle, which reportedly escorted the car before it



The car that collided with a truck near Ramanattukara in Kozhikode on Monday morning. •PTI

met with the accident near Ramanattukara.

The investigation team said it would check whether the victims and those who reportedly escorted them to the airport had links with gold smuggling rackets.

"It is suspicious that 15 persons came to the airport in three separate vehicles amidst lockdown regulations," said District Police Chief (Kozhikode city) A.V.

According to the truck driver, the car was moving erratically, violating the speed limit, as if chased by

Nobel laureate Esther Duflo in T.N. panel

Raghuram Rajan too in Council

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Tamil Nadu government has decided to constitute an Economic Advisory Council to the Chief Minister, comprising leading experts, including Nobel laureate Esther Duflo, to chalk out a path for rapid and inclusive economic growth in the State, Governor Banwarilal Purohit said on Monday.

Besides Ms. Duflo from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the council would have former Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan, former Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India Arvind Subramanian, development economist Jean Drèze and former Union Finance Secretary S. Narayan.

"Based on the recom-

the midst of a serious economic crisis induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The fiscal situation was also precarious, with persistently high revenue and fiscal deficits Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI) and a large overhang of 502: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system debt. "In this context, the

government requires expert advice from the best econo-NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to mists available globally, who are familiar with Tamil Nacritical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause du, its economy, society and 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 shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premati

FIR against scribe, 2 others for FB post

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Bijnor police have filed an FIR against a journalist and two others on the charge of levelling baseless allegations against senior Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Champat Rai and his brothers of grabbing land from a gaushala in the district.

Senior journalist Vineet Narain, his associate Rajneesh and Alka Lahoti, whose land Mr. Narain claimed was allegedly grabbed by Mr. Rai's family, were named in the FIR at the Nagina police station, said Bijnor SP Dharm Veer Singh. The complaint was lodged by Mr. Rai's brother, Sanjay Bansal, said the police.

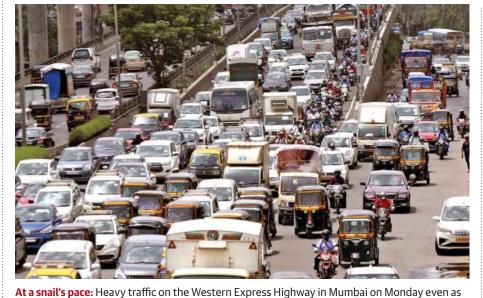
Mr. Rai is the general secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, which is entrusted with the task of building a Ram mandir in Ayodhya.

College construction

In several posts on social media, particularly on Facebook, Mr. Narain, who also runs an NGO, alleged that Mr. Rai through his brothers had grabbed the land of a gaushala worth ₹50 crore and illegally constructed a degree college on it. Head of the gaushala Alka Lahoti returned from Indonesia and tried to fight against the land grab but the administration did not help her due to pressure from Mr. Rai, alleged Mr.

"The allegations are fabricated and baseless, and prima facie so are the allegations against his family," said the SP. Investigation would be held under a gazetted officer, he added.

Number of samples tested lower than daily average; active tally goes below 1.25 lakh



the city continues to be in level 3 of restrictions. • EMMANUAL YOGINI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A robust 13,758 recoveries were reported across Maharashtra on Monday as against a surge of 6,270 new CO-VID-19 cases with the State's active cases dipping below 1.25 lakh to reach 1,24,398.

A total of 352 deaths were added to the State's progressive fatality toll of which 258 were part of the Health Department's ongoing 'reconciliation' process. As many as 77 deaths occurred in the last 48 hours and a further 17 were from the past week.

The State's total death toll has climbed to 1,18,313 with the State's case fatality rate rising to 1.98%.

The low case surge and fatalities must be viewed in the context of the lower number of samples tested – 1.55 lakh – in the last 24 hours as opposed to the daily average of more than 2.30 lakh.

The State's total cases have touched 59,79,051 while its cumulative recoveries have gone up to 57,33,215 with the recovery rate standing at 95.89%.

While a steady decline in most districts has ensured that the State's weekly case positivity rate has come down to 4.89%, Kolhapur in western Maharashtra still continues to be a virus hotbed. Its case positivity of 11.97% is the highest among all the 35 districts in the State, followed by Raigad,

Ratnagiri and Pune (still at a

high figure of 9.29%).

Pune reported a relatively low spike of more than 600 new cases taking its total case tally to 10,44,790.

Mumbai recorded 518 new cases to take its total tally to 7,20,531 while the active cases stood at 18.529. Seven fatalities took the city's death count to 15,305.

Kolhapur added than 900 new cases.

Curbs to stay in Mumbai till June 27

STAFF REPORTER

Restrictions in Mumbai would continue to remain in force till June 27, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said on Monday. The civic body's order comes despite the city being eligible to be shifted to level 1 category with a lower positivity rate and

curbs. The levels were fixed on the basis of CO-VID-19 positivity rate and occupancy of oxygen beds in respective districts or municipal corporation limits with level 1 being the lowest and 5 being the red zone. Level 3, where Mumbai currently stands, has a positivity rate between 5% and 10% and oxygen bed occupancy of more than

oxygen bed occupancy.

The State had earlier this month announced a five-phase plan to ease

6 more booked for fake vaccination camp

some adulterated liquid sub-

RAINA ASSAINAR NAVI MUMBAI

The Khar police, acting on a complaint by an employee of Tips production house, on Monday registered a case against six people in connection with a fake COVID-19 vaccination camp.

"The six accused, including Rajesh Pandey and Sanjay Gupta (29), spread false information that Kokilaben Hospital was organising a vaccination camp. They administered the beneficiaries

stance in the name of Covishield vaccine and took away ₹2.84 lakh from the production house," senior police inspector Gajanan Kabdule from Khar police station said.

Around 206 people, including the employees of Tips production house and their families, were vaccinat-

ed at a camp in Khar on June

3. The case was registered

under Sections of cheating,

causing public nuisance,

adulteration of drugs, and malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life, of the Indian Penal Code. Both Mr. Gupta and Mr.

Pandey are accused in the Kandivali and Versova cases as well. The Kandivali police have so far arrested five people identified as Mahendra Singh (39), Mr. Gupta, Chandan alias Lalit Singh (32), Nitin Mode (32) and Mohammed Kareem (19), a student of nursing.

Maharashtra adds 6,270 new cases Central leadership will decide next CM in U.P., says Minister

We will accept whoever comes: Swami Prasad Maurya

OMAR RASHID

A Cabinet Minister in the Yogi Adityanath-led government in Uttar Pradesh has said that the Chief Minister would be decided by the party's central leadership if the BJP wins again in the 2022 Assembly polls.

The comment by State Labour Minister Swami Prasad Maurya on Sunday reflects the reported difference of opinion within the State BJP

regarding the leadership of Yogi Adityanath, who was chosen as Chief Minister by the central leadership in 2017. The BJP had contested the

2017 polls without a CM face and largely on the image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The question now is if the party would enter the polls with the promise of a second term for the head priest of the Gorakshnath temple in Gorakhpur or

The reluctance of first Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya, and now Mr. Swami Prasad Maurya, to name Mr. Adityanath as the face of the campaign indicates disquiet within the ruling party.

Responding to questions by journalists, Mr. Swami Prasad Maurya said the central leadership choose the Chief Minister. "We will accept whoever comes," he said.



DIPR/DDU/R.O:619/2021-22

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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Sd/-

Chief Engineer-2, KIADB Bengaluru





A time to give

Families who lost breadwinners in COVID-19 need supportive policies and a safety net

The Centre's stated position before the Supreme Court on paying a standard ex gratia compensation to families of those who died of COVID-19 shows poor appreciation of the fallout of an unprecedented disaster. After initially asserting that such payments were beyond the Government's fiscal affordability, although there is a provision in the Disaster Management Act for compensation, and externalising the pandemic as a global, ongoing event, the Home Ministry has now averred that the issue was the manner in which funds were to be put to use. Clearly, lack of resources would be a legless argument when the Centre is pursuing expensive redevelopment projects such as the Central Vista. What the Government says it wants to do is to deploy funds in health care, enhance social protection and support economic recovery of affected communities, rather than give one-time compensation payments (₹4 lakh) or notified ex gratia sought by the petitioners. There is nothing wrong in keeping the focus on provision of essential supplies and additional health infrastructure. In fact, the second wave peak was made considerably worse by poor health infrastructure and low public health expenditure, and a policy failure recorded by the Economic Survey which called for higher public spending of 2.5%-3% of GDP on health. But lending a helping hand to families now impoverished should also be a priority. The Centre, after tying itself in knots on free vaccines, should now spell out its road map for a universal public health system.

The annual Budget included a raft of schemes under COVID-19 initiatives and claimed credit for Atmanirbhar Bharat packages, which, together with the RBI's ameliorative steps, officially amounted to 13% of GDP. But the "above-the-line" relief in terms of health care and social protection, including cash transfers, are a small share of other spending such as credit provision to several sectors, as per some estimates. The IMF analysis of policy responses says that early in the pandemic, food, fuel and cash transfers to lower-income households came to 1.2% of GDP. With the second wave marked by many deaths and nationwide closures, a review of direct benefits is urgently called for. In court, the Home Ministry has said that confining solutions to compensation would be narrow. It is no one's case that large direct cash benefits are the only good interventions. Families who have lost breadwinners need help while orphaned children need support. It also does not help that India's pension system is weakening, bank deposits have low yields and official policy expects people to essentially fend for themselves. The Centre should not hesitate to review its tax basket to rely more on the wealthiest to compensate those who have been hit the hardest.

A perpetual war U.S. should have backed Afghan govt. more

instead of pushing hard to engage the Taliban he dilemmas of ending the U.S.'s 'forever war' appeared to fall heavily upon the shoulders of Pres dent Joe Biden, who is now helming his country's rush for the exit before the self-imposed deadline of September 11, 2021, the 20-year anniversary of the WTC terror attacks. While he clearly signalled his intention to remain engaged with the war-torn country by meeting, in the first instance, Afghanistan's President, Ashraf Ghani, and Chairman of its High Council for National Reconciliation, Abdullah Abdullah, at the White House this week, the U.S.'s troop withdrawal since May 1, 2021, in a sense signals the opposite intention. There is no mistaking the Taliban's reaction, especially to Washington's plan to wind down its Afghan military presence. Ever since February 29, 2020, when the U.S. and the Taliban signed the Doha "agreement for bringing peace" to Afghanistan, Taliban-linked violence has risen steadily, U.S. intelligence reports have assessed that al-Qaeda still has a presence in Afghanistan and the terrorist outfit's decades-long ties with the Taliban have been undiminished. Meanwhile the situation on the ground is far from inspiring for anyone who hopes for peace in the region. Facing tepid resistance from the ANDSF, now with ever-reducing access to U.S. air support, the Taliban have managed to fight, hold on to and even take back the territories from the government.

This reality begs the question of what new vortexes of violence, terrorist havens and other sources of regional instability Afghanistan might play host to now, and whether the U.S. and western powers will retain enough influence to prevent events in this regard from spiralling out of control. Closer to home, a sense of concern must be pervading South Block as the last U.S. troop carriers lift off from Bagram, potentially allowing agents linked to Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment a freer hand to engage with extremist elements in Afghan with possible blowback for India. What will become of New Delhi's long-sighted, softpower investments into education, training and infrastructure and civil society development? Had the U.S. played a consistently strong hand supporting the Afghan government instead of pushing as hard as it did to engage the Taliban, that might have delayed Washington's exit plans but provided more leeway for the ANDSF to push harder and take enough territory to weaken the Taliban's overall strategic grip. Given the prospect of the ANDSF's fragmentation - already occurring in some areas – it now appears more likely that a deal may be forged between the Taliban and powerbrokers once associated with the Afghan government. This could lead to a Taliban-centric religious council that sets an overall tenor of governance based on Islamic law yet permits a semi-autonomous executive governmental power to operate within that framework.

The state of India's poor must be acknowledged

This is 'abject poverty', and if the economy is to be repaired, the number of the poor has to be meticulously counted



The son of a corn merchantturned sociologist, Charles Booth had little patience for Charles Dickens and others in his time, who used lyrical prose to describe the desperation of the poor in working class London, Booth was also angry, in 1885, over the claims made by F.D. Hyndman, the leader of the Social Democratic Federation, which after an enquiry into the working classes of London had concluded that a quarter of the population of London lived abject poverty (https:// bit.ly/3gKVNi8). Confident of showing up the claims as sensational, he set about drawing his poverty map of the city and getting people to do door-to-door surveys. Much to his horror, his own landmark 'Life and Labour of the People in London' survey concluded that the numbers were much higher and a third of London lived in abject poverty. He had, unintentionally, nailed the importance of getting the numbers right, which settled the question of which class needed maximum attention.

An imperative

In India, there is now, rightly, a consensus difficult for the Government to beat down that to be able to battle COVID-19 and secure India from successive waves, the exact numbers of the dead must be carefully documented. Something else that needs equal attention, if the state of the decrepit Indian economy is to be repaired, is to be able to meticulously count the number of the poor and to prioritise them. The World Bank \$2-aday (poverty line) might be inadequate but it would be a start and higher than the last line proposed by the C. Rangarajan

There has been hesitation for a

variety of reasons to wrestle with the rising numbers of the poor in India. Not least, the pursuit of becoming 'Vishwaguru', has hampered this as that pitch works only if the leadership is able to mask the dramatic rise in poverty. Coming to terms with how low India's median income is would disrupt the carefully constructed ride about being the biggest/largest in the world. A survey in 2013 had said India stood at 99 among 131 countries, and with a median income of \$616 per annum, it was the lowest among BRICS and fell in the lower middle-income country

There has been a slide

Since then - and we are still not talking of the novel coronavirus pandemic - three important data points have made it clear that the state of India's poor needs to be acknowledged if India is to be lifted. The first being, the fall in the monthly per capita consumption expenditure of 2017-18 for the first time since 1972-73, which the Government withheld citing concerns with the quality of data collected, then the fall of India in the Global Hunger Index to 'serious hunger' category and India's own health census data or the recently concluded National Family Health Survey or NFHS-5, which had worrying markers of increased malnutrition, infant mortality and maternal health. A fourth statistic earlier this year, of Bangladesh bettering India's average income statistics, must also be a reason for Indians to introspect. What kind of growth path has led to India sliding in the sustainable development goals index (by at least two ranks last month) as well as in the per capita income rankings? If we do not bother to know of the increased numbers sliding into poverty, there would be little possibility of moving toward a solution.

The precarious situation after the demonetisation in 2016 was rendered calamitous with the novel coronavirus pandemic and the shrinking of the economy. In 2019, the global Multidimensional Po-

verty Index reported that India lifted 271 million citizens out of poverty between 2006 and 2016. Since then, the International Monetary Fund, Hunger Watch, SWAN and several other surveys show a decided slide. In March, the Pew Research Center with the World Bank data estimated that 'the number of poor in India, on the basis of an income of \$2 per day or less in purchasing power parity, has more than doubled to 134 million from 60 million in just a year due to the pandemic-induced recession'. In 2020, India contributed 57.3% of the growth of the global poor. India contributed to 59.3% of the global middle class that slid into poverty. The last time that 'India reported an increase in poverty was in the first 25 years after Independence, when from 1951 to 1974, the population of the poor increased from 47% to 56%'. So, India is again a "country of mass poverty" after 45 years. This has thrown a spanner in the so far uninterrupted battle against poverty since the 1970s. Urgent solutions are needed within, and the starting point of that would be only when we know how many are

Poverty line debate

In India, the poverty line debate became very fraught in 2011, as the Suresh Tendulkar Committee report at a 'line' of ₹816 per capita per month for rural India and ₹1,000 per capita per month for urban India, calculated the poor at 25.7% of the population. The anger over the 2011 conclusions, led to the setting up of the C. Rangarajan Committee, which in 2014 estimated that the number of poor were below ₹47 a day in cities and ₹32 in

Reasons why numbers count Numbers matter for many reasons. The first is because knowing the numbers and making them public makes it possible to get public opinion to support massive and urgent cash transfers. The world outside India has moved onto propose high fiscal support, as economic rationale and not charity; it is debating a higher level of minimum wages than it has in the past. Spain has accorded security to its gig workers by giving delivery boys the status of workers. In India too, a dramatic reorientation would get support only once numbers are

honestly laid out. The second argument for recording the data is so that all policies can be honestly evaluated on the basis of whether they meet the needs of the majority. Is a policy such as bank write-offs of loans amounting to ₹1.53-lakh crore last year, which helped corporates overwhelmingly, beneficial to the vast majority? Or has it been just beneficial to a thin sliver of the super rich? This would be possible to transparently evaluate only when the numbers of the poor are known and established.

Third, if government data were to honestly account for the exact numbers of the poor, it may be more realistic to expect the public debate to be conducted on the concerns of the real majority and create a climate that demands accountability from public represen-

Fourth, India has clocked a massive rise in the market capitalisation and the fortunes of the richest Indian corporates, whose wealth has grown manifold in the past few years, even as millions of Indians have experienced a massive tumble into poverty. The stories of billionaires get reported regularly and prominently. To say that the stock market and the Indian economy are 'not related' is ingenuous. Indians must have the right to question whether there is a connection and if the massive

rise in riches is not coincidental, but at the back of the misery of millions of the poor, whose ranks are swelling. If billionaire lists are evaluated in detail and reported upon, the country cannot shy away from counting its poor.

See the 'bread line'

The late Arjun Sengupta, as Chairman of the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector in 2004, had concluded that 836 million Indians still remained marginalised. He spoke of the poorest of poor and the commission's recommendations on social security resulted in the enactment of the Unorganised Sector Workers Social Security Act (https://bit.ly/3vElOEl). At the time his conclusion was ignored – that 77% of India was marginalised emphasising that it was a problem of a much bigger magnitude, than the figure of 25.7% conveyed.

The 'bread line' ostensibly owes its origins to the economic depression in the United States in the 1890s and charity by New York restaurants which organised soup kitchens. The queue or line of bread seekers would be distressingly long. A physical queue on the roads needed a policy response. It could not be wished away by simply looking away. The massive slide into poverty in India that is clear in domestic and international surveys and anecdotal evidence must meet with an institutional response. The Government must gir dle up and unflinchingly quantify the slide from the 'fastest growing economy' to the country with the largest rise in the number of poor people. It must be accepted, to go back to the debate Charles Booth had with the Social Democratic Federation that it is "abject poverty" we are talking about; almost a sub-human level of existence of the majority of fellow Indians we cannot continue to be blasé about. Counting them would be a muchneeded start to convey that each life matters.

Seema Chishti is a journalist based in

With Raisi in the saddle, the road ahead for Iran

The ultra-conservative leader may be quite ambitious even as many Iranians are pessimistic about better days ahead



The head of Iran's judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi, won the presidential election in Iran on Saturday, June 19 with 61.95% of the vote. His victory has come as no surprise, especially as he was considered the main choice of the Iranian hardliners, Mr. Raisi was among seven contenders - including five conservatives – allowed by Iran's election monitoring body to run in the presidential election of June 18. Unsurprisingly, out of the estimated 592 people who registered to take part in the presidential election, only seven candidates were approved by Iran's Guardian Council. Among those barred from running were former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and former Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani.

A deeper reading

From the point of view of experts and observers of Iranian politics, this election was carefully engineered and controlled by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khaand the Iranian Guards Corps Revolutionary (IRGC) who have been influencing all decision-making concerning Iranian domestic and foreign policies. Ayatollah Khamenei is 82 and there are already rumours that the

best candidate to replace him in the long run, as the Supreme Leader of the Iranian Revolution, is Mr. Raisi. This is a decision which will certainly be desired and approved by the hardline members of the IRGC which is the most powerful support base for exporting the Islamic Revolution to other countries and breaking all resistance from social and political groups in the country.

A weakening of the reformists Mr. Raisi's election comes at a critical time for the Iranian reformists. Unlike the previous presidential elections, where the hardliners fought against pro-reform figures, the June 18 election was the final nail in the coffin of the reform movement; the idea supported by many within and outside Iran during the past three decades was that gradual political change in the Islamic Republic was possible. Mr. Raisi's victory is an important opportunity for Iranian hardliners to win control over the most important branches of government after being out of office for many years.

As a reaction to the hardline retort, the reformists even tried to pressure Hassan Khomeini, the grandson of the founder of the Islamic republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to run as a candidate, but even he had no chance to encounter the dynamics of an election fully controlled by the Supreme Leader and his gathering. As a result, none of the close collaborators of Hassan Rouhani could pass the vetting by the Guardian Council. But, anyhow, the re-

formists were to be blamed for having failed to bring in meaningful change in easing political and social restrictions in the country and helping the expected rise of the hard-liners. This is one of the main reasons why many Iranians have become increasingly disillusioned with the reformist camp of the establishment, which has been increasingly marginalised. Let us not forget that the voter turnout in last week's presidential election was 48.8%, the lowest turnout recorded for a presidential election since the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979.

The ground realities

Though unified in their support of Mr. Raisi, the Iranian hardline factions did not succeed in energising Iran's disaffected public. As a matter of fact, there was a minimal interest in the presidential election among many young Iranians who continue to struggle on a daily basis to make both ends meet amid a continually deteriorating economy that has been crushed by sanctions by the United States. Unsur-

prisingly, a high percentage of the Iranian population does not find in the new President a possibility of a better economic situation and improved ties with the West. But this is not the only reason why Iranew President.

Many Iranians, even those born after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, are quite aware of Mr. Raisi's long career in Iran's judiciary and his participation in a four-member committee which ordered the execution of thousands of Leftist and the People's Mujahedin Organization of Iran (MKO) political prisoners in 1988. These executions were never acknowledged by the Iranian government, but in August 2016, the family of the late Ayatollah Ali Montazeri, the former Deputy Supreme Leader, published an audio file in which he harshly criticised the executions in a conversation with the committee that included Mr. Raisi.

Looking ahead

On a different note, as being defiant to the normalisation of ties with the West, Mr. Raisi will certainly not plead for an immediate opening of the Iranian economy to foreign investors. Therefore, he will have great difficulty in revitalising the Iranian economy, especially because he has continuously minimised the impact of U.S. economic sanctions and even that of the COVID-19 pandemic on the difficult social and economic situation in Iran. As in foreign policy, the new President will continue good relations with Russia and

China, while he will persist in reinforcing Iran's strategic relations with Syria and Iraq. Last, but not least, although challenging the West, he will not openly and clearly oppose the Iranian nuclear nian civil society does not trust the agreement which is currently being negotiated with the Americans and the Europeans. After all, the Iranian President is a political player with very little power in the Islamic regime, since the final decision on major issues such as the nuclear agreement, comes back to the Supreme Leader of the Revolution.

But there is more to Ebrahim Raisi than what he seems to appear. Actually, as everybody knows inside Iran, he has ambitions to replace Ayatollah Khamenei as the next Supreme Leader of the Revolution.

Therefore, while he continues to be faithful to Ali Khamenei, he could be trying to consolidate his alliances with different conservative groups in Iran, Mr. Raisi's deep ties with the IRGC can be interpreted as his support for the Iranian military hegemony in the region, with a clear priority being given to the ideological interests of the Islamic regime over regional security and stability. As an ultraconservative, Mr. Raisi will certainly continue to collaborate with the IRGC decision-makers in order to play a significant role within Iran's hegemonic enterprise in West Asia.

 $Ramin\, Jahan begloo\, is\, Director,\, Mahatma$ Gandhi Centre for Peace, Jindal Global University, Sonipat

reporting sexual

MANI NATARAAJAN, Chennai

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Centre on ex gratia

The central government's stand on the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be an excuse to abdicate its responsibility to grant ex gratia to the families of COVID-19 victims. Its thesis that limiting relief to a monetary pay-off is a 'narrow and pedantic approach' is rendered spurious by the simple fact that money does matter to alleviate suffering and to survive. The contention that there is no precedent of giving ex gratia payments for a disease or a disaster

spread over a long period of time does not hold good as everything in life is not done on the basis of precedent. True, there is no certainty of an end to the pandemic. But the Government cannot cite it as a reason for refusing to consider granting ex gratia compensation. Many families are staring at a bleak future and only the Government can help them pick up the threads of life. If the Government has no qualms about spending many crores on the Central Vista, a vanity project, why

not provide relief for lakhs of families in distress? G. DAVID MILTON, Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

A changing world International politics and

diplomacy have become complicated in recent decades (Editorial page, "The comrades and their divergent perspectives", Iune 21). Up to 1991, it was quite simple to divide the world in terms of groupings and understand their rivalry and cooperation, but with the emergence of

globalisation, this has

become complex. The issue of interdependence casts its own shadow. The emergence of the Quad, and outside its tent, China, will be a deciding factor in India's engagement with the major powers. DEWANG GANESH THOSAR, Nandgaon, Raigad, Maharashtra

Milkha Singh

That Milkha Singh managed to shape his life amid very difficult circumstances, including Partition, and go down in history as one of the greatest ever performers to have ever set

foot on the track is truly inspiring. It is a matter of pride that Milkha Singh's wax statue shares space at Madame Tussauds. He poignant quote, "Hard work, dedication and will power... for a person with these qualities, [the] sky is R. SIVAKUMAR.

Need for quick justice One is stunned beyond

along with other luminaries will be remembered for his

description reading about the rise in cases of students

harassment and abuse in schools. I would suggest fast track courts for the hearing and disposal of such cases. Dragging on sensitive cases will add to the trauma of students who already have much to deal with in today's complicated world. Tamil Nadu is a State that is a haven of peace and tranquillity, and also academic excellence, and this should be safeguarded.

THE HINDU DELHI TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2021

India's vaccine policy needs clarity

In seeking to pursue conflicting objectives, the policy architecture is complex and difficult to implement



K. SUJATHA RAO

Contrary to popular perception, public policies are made without full knowledge or facts. More often than not, they embody assumptions arising from experience, an understanding of history, and present conditions. Considering the vast sea of unknowns surrounding COVID-19, it would be understandable to place a greater reliance on historical experience. Instead, India's vaccine policy appears to be one of experimentation. Despite several modifications, the final policy as articulated by the Prime Minister on June 7 continues to lack clarity in its intent, design, funding and outcomes. In seeking to pursue conflicting objectives, the policy architecture is complex, difficult to implement, and could be a nightmare for accountants.

The vaccine policy

After much loss of time, the final policy has the following elements: the stated objective is universal access to free vaccinations in all government and accredited facilities; the design for achieving the objective is creating a dual market under which the Central government will procure 75% of the total quantity manufactured, leaving the residue for commercial sale. The funding will be a mix of public finance and out-of-pocket expenditure. The outcome is to ensure that all 95 crore adults are fully vaccinated by the end of this year.

The policy has two caveats related to pricing and volume of sales. While Covishield and Covaxin are supplied to the Central government at ₹150 per dose, the price for a consumer in the private market is capped at ₹780 for Covishield, ₹1,145 for Sputnik V and ₹1,410 for Covaxin. To avoid cornering of vaccines by corporates and enable medium and small hospitals to participate in vaccination, the Central government will specify hospital-wise and State-wise quotas for private sales. Based on the quota allocated, the said hospitals will procure the vaccine directly from the manufacturer or use the option of



spelling out the population segments

that the government proposes to cov-

er, it is unclear whether the 75% pro-

curement cap refers to the stocks

manufactured or by implication the

eligible population. Clarity on this is

important. If it refers to stocks, then

the position can vary due to uncer-

tainties and externalities associated

with production. Besides, in the ab-

sence of credible information regard-

ing real-world manufacturing capaci-

ty and wide price differentials,

arriving at what that 75% of manufactured stocks would entail is difficult,

creating an unstable environment for

covered, the policy assumes that 24

crore people have the ability to pay

such high prices for a vaccine. How

far is that a realistic assumption, gi-

ven that as per data of the Pew Re-

search Centre, the number of people

earning less than \$2 a day has dou-

bled from 5.9 crore to 13.4 crore as a

result of the pandemic? Due to the

pandemic, under every income seg-

ment, the numbers have reduced -

the number of people in the high and

upper-middle class is estimated to

have fallen to 1.8 crore from 2.5

crore, the middle class to 6.6 crore

from the 9.9 crore prior to the pan-

demic, and the lower middle class to

The second policy confusion is de-

termining from where the 24 crore-

paying population is to come from

for buying the vaccine at the rates

laid down by the government. The

inequity this policy will generate bet-

ween the rich and poor, urban and

rural is embedded and will be hard

to justify, besides clouding the actual

requirement of vaccines for the go-

vernment to administer. In other

words, the demand may be more for

free vaccines while the self-imposed

ceiling of 75% of stocks may create ar-

116.2 crore from 119.7 crore.

If it is 75% of the population to be

operation and planning.

Compare this maze with the policy followed under the Universal Immunisation Programme - the Central government indicates the quantity required, the delivery schedules and the rates as per global tender, and supplies quality, ready-to-use vaccines to the States to be provided free. The manufacturer is left to dispose of excess quantity, if any, in accordance with market forces and without interference from the government. Under this system, the government has negotiated incredibly low prices due to the volume of its orders. In view of its wide reach, the private sector's participation, catering to the better-off sections which have the ability to pay, has averaged 5%-15% depending on the vaccine.

Current status of procurement

It is estimated that the Central government has procured and placed advance purchases for 79 crore doses for ₹12,405 crore (including ₹1,485 crore from PM CARES). The State governments in May procured 2.6 crore doses incurring ₹810 crore, while the private sector (nine corporate chains and 300 hospitals) procured 1.2 crore doses. Selling at ₹1,000 per dose of Covishield and an average of ₹1,400 for Covaxin, the household expenditure on vaccines comes to about ₹1,332 crore. The private sector's share in the total 82.8 crore doses procured and amount incurred is 1.45% and 9.1%, respectively.

The total number of people who got vaccinated by June 21 with a single dose was 23.2 crore and with two doses was 5.05 crore. Of the total 190 crore vaccines required for covering the eligible population with two doses and 83 crore already secured for supply till year-end, the gap is 107 crore. This brings us to the first level the National Health Authority portal, of policy confusion. In the absence of tificial scarcities.

Or is there an assumption that 75% coverage would ensure herd immunity and, with some luck, the pandemic may just blow over?

Concerns

Apart from concerns of ethics and morality, the 'two steps forward, one step backward' policy fix has given rise to another set of issues necessitating simplification of the policy design. One, the idea of manipulating markets is not as smart as it sounds. Piecemeal orders increase investment risk for a company. Besides, delivering and processing small orders by multiple small entities (private hospitals) located in remote areas would further add to costs impacting the price at the point of delivery. Since price must ensure a minimum return on investment, it is critical

that such complexities be addressed. Two, the small and medium private hospitals that have the reach in Tier 2 towns and rural areas do not have deep pockets to buy such costly vaccines. Given vaccine hesitancy, heightened by a constrained ability to pay, the mutating virus and constant shifts in vaccine dosage and periodicity due to emerging evidence, the additional burden of organising

quality assurance all add to the risk. Three, differential pricing and dual markets provide wrong incentives and result in unhealthy competition, illegal charging for vaccines in government facilities, siphoning, diversion and leakage of the free vaccines to the private markets where in large swathes of the country it is the government doctors that double up as owners of private enterprises.

Clearly, there is a need to simplify the policy with the government as the sole procurer. Implementation must be in accordance with districtlevel micro plans incorporating the public and private sector, to cover target groups as specified in accordance with epidemiological data. The objective has to be to restore normalcy, kick-start the economy, start schools and ensure people's well-being. It is not the time to ask people to share costs when the economy is tanking. Vaccines are our only lifeline. They should be freely available and accessible to all, not only to the privileged few.

K. Sujatha Rao is former Union Health

Towards a more federal structure

If States directly collect more tax, they will become less dependent on the Central government



Preserving the unity of India was a great concern at the time of independence. The rulers of Travancore, Hyderabad, Jodhpur, Bhopal and Junagadh wanted their own separate countries. In October 1947, Kashmir was invaded with the backing of a very young Pakistan government. Goa was liberated from the Portuguese only in 1961. It was natural that India opted to be a Union unlike the U.S. and many other countries which have federal governments. The essential difference is that the Central government has more authority and power in a Union government.

Revenue distribution

Direct taxes are income tax and corporate tax. In the U.S., both the federal and State governments collect such taxes from individuals and corporations. This is true in Switzerland and some other countries as well. However, in India, direct taxes go entirely to the Central government. The Central government is supposed to distribute 41% of its gross tax revenues (reduced from 42% after the formation of new Union Territories in Jammu and Kashmir) to the State governments. In the U.S., the federal government distributes about 15% of its revenues.

State governments get funds from the Central government according to the Finance Commission's recommendations. Though this is based on some formula, often politics intervenes and some States get less and some more. Usually the Central government does not meet the 41% target. We see various States either petitioning or coming into conflict with the Central government on this issue. Meanwhile, the Central government has added cess on various items which adds up to over ₹3.5 lakh crore. This is not shared with the State governments.

State governments also raise their own funds largely through taxes on liquor, property, road and vehicles. At an all-India level, the States get 26% of their total revenue from the Central government. Some of the socalled poorer States get up to 50% of their total revenue from the Central government, making them even more dependent. This gives more economic power to the Central government and allows ruling parties at the Centre to use these funds to their advantage.

Another issue is regional disparity. Maharashtra. Delhi and Karnataka contribute the lion's share of taxes to the government. These three regions along with Tamil Nadu and Gujarat contribute 72% of the tax revenue. Uttar Pradesh, which has the largest population in India, contributes only 3.12% but gets over 17% of the revenue distributed by the Central government. Revenue distribution is based on complex considerations including population and poverty levels. For every ₹100 contributed, southern States get about 51% from the Central government, whereas Bihar gets about 200%. The population growth rates in the south have come down to near zero, whereas the population in central and north India continues to grow. The cross subsidy from the south to the north will therefore grow. Meanwhile, job seekers and those looking for higher quality education are flocking to the south.

On the other hand, political power is concentrated in the north because there are more Lok Sabha seats. The number of seats in each State will be revised in 2026 perhaps based on population and other factors. This has already created apprehension in the southern States that they will be further politically marginalised. The periodic attempts to declare Hindi a national language fuels widespread resentment.

Beyond the current framework

Some experts support cross subsidy and others oppose it. Suggestions usually work within the current framework. Making the fund allocation fairer is almost impossible because of politics. We need to look beyond this framework. One step could be to provide greater economic power to the States so that they can directly collect more taxes and be less dependent on the Central government. This would improve Centre-State relations. For poorer States, a period of transition is perhaps required.

Unfortunately, politics does not depend on expert opinion. On top of an extended pandemic, negative economic growth and loss of crores of jobs, the situation is becoming ripe for rabble-rousing politicians to ask why we should subsidise those people who disrespect our language and do not give us political power. Regional differences led to violence in Yugoslavia. Sri Lanka and between East and West Pakistan. Hopefully, we may not see that kind of violence.

India's hard-won independence and unity needs to be preserved. Today there are threats from China. There may be threats from Afghanistan after the U.S. withdraws its troops. A transition to a more federal structure will allow the Centre to focus on external threats instead of internal dissensions. Our internal divisions helped invaders from West Asia and the British. Hopefully, we will learn from our history.

Trilochan Sastry is Professor, IIM Bangalore

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 22, 1971

Craze for Chinese snuff bottles

The market value of Chinese snuff bottles

here [Hong Kong, June 21] have soared fol-

lowing the sensational sale of a collection in

London last week for \$65,000 (Rs.

4.87.500). Glass and enamel snuff bottles of

recent vintage have risen more than 20 per

cent in price. Older ones of a hundred years

or more have gone up by as much as 40 per

cent. Snuff bottles have become very popu-

lar in Hong Kong in the past five years and

art collectors have been publicising the plea-

sure and profitability of collecting them. In

the colony's maze of curio shops, collectors

have been buying the bottles indiscriminate-

ly, immediately pushing up prices. Less than

ten years ago a good, late Ching dynasty

opaque glass bottle cost \$10. The same bottle

to-day would fetch \$40 or more. The popu-

larity of snuff bottles in Hong Kong has creat-

ed a booming tourist business in them.

Enormous quantities of snuff bottles have

appeared, many of them cheap and poor co-

pies of originals, but sold as "antique." Rack-

eteers have also joined the boom business.

Many innocent collectors - with more mo-

ney than knowledge of snuff bottles – have

been fooled by cheap fakes. The demand for

snuff bottles, however, has revitalised a han-

The Man Prindu.

A case to decriminalise suicide

It is time for India to repeal Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code or strike it down

RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN

India has the highest suicide rate in the Southeast Asian region, according to the World Health Organization. Depression, chronic ill health, guilt, trauma, substance abuse, failure in exams, and loss of loved ones are some of the reasons which influence a person's decision to take his or her life. A total of 1,34,516 cases of suicide were reported in 2018 in India, according to the National Crime Records Bureau. While the rate of suicide was 9.9 in 2017, it increased to 10.2 in 2018.

Crime and punishment

Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code dictates the penal provision for attempting suicide. If a person is suffering from any mental trauma or illness, he or she should be given reformative treatment rather than a deterrent punishment which is "simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year [or with fine, or with both]". India has retained much of the colonial legal legacy in its penal jurisprudence. But the fact is that the British Parliament decriminalised attempts to suicide in 1961 through the Suicide Act. In India, a Bill to repeal Section 309 was first introduced in the Rajya Sabha in 1972 but it failed to pass in the Lok Sabha because the House was dissolved.

We have witnessed a century-long tussle between two camps in which one advocates for penal provision and the other continuously demands that attempts to suicide be decriminalised. Those who favour the penal provision generally quote the judgment in Gian Kaur V. State of Punjab (1996) where the court held that the "right to life is a natural right embodied in Article 21" of the Constitution but "suicide is an unnatural termination or extinction of life and, therefore, incompatible and inconsistent with the concept of right to life". In Aruna Ramchandra Shanbaug v. Union of India (2011), the Supreme Court endorsed the earlier judgment.

On the other hand, those who argue that the act of attempting suicide should not be criminalised quote Maruti Shripati Dubal v. State of Maharashtra (1986). In this judgment, the

Bombay High Court declared Section 309 unconstitutional. It said: "For example, the freedom of speech and expression includes freedom not to speak and to remain silent. The freedom of association and movement likewise includes the freedom not to join any association or to move anywhere... If this is so, logically it must follow that right to live... will include also a right not to live or not to be forced to live."

The court also said: "If the purpose of the prescribed punishment is to prevent the prospective suicides by deterrence, it is difficult to understand how the same can be achieved by punishing those who have made the attempts... Those who make the suicide attempt on account of the mental disorders require psychiatric treatment and not confinement in prison cells." This idea was recorded in Chenna Jagadeeswar v. State of Andhra Pradesh and P. Rathinam v. Union of India (1994) where the court held that Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code is a violation of Articles 14 and 21 and is void and unconstitutional.

A solution

In 2017, Parliament passed the Mental Healthcare Act. Section 115 (1) of the Act provides, "Notwithstanding anything contained in section 309 of the Indian Penal Code, any person who attempts to commit suicide shall be presumed, unless proved otherwise, to have severe stress and shall not be tried and punished under the said Code." However, this law applies only to those suffering from mental illness. There is presumption of severe stress in case of an attempt to die by suicide.

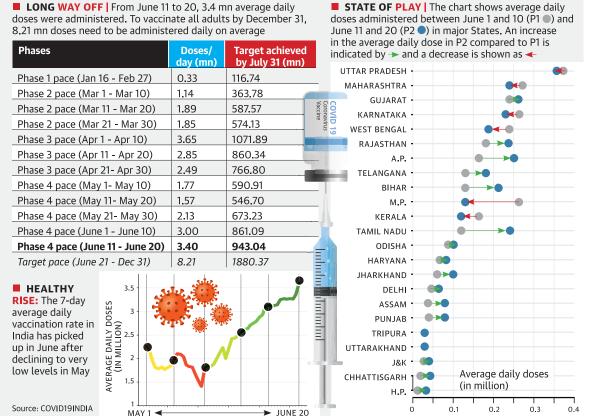
But what if severe stress is not proved? We have to shift from penalising attempts to suicide to making such cases medico-legal ones and provide psychological or mental treatment and support to the persons affected. As the issue demands a reformative stance, we need a permanent solution like repealing Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code or striking it down.

Rajmohan Unnithan is the current Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha from Kasaragoa

MEDICAL BUBBLE HOSPITAL MEDICAL INFRASTRUCTURE INSTEAD OF COMPENSATION FOR COVID DEATHS.

DATA POINT

Pace picks up but miles to go Over 8.27 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines were administered in India until 9 p.m. on Monday, the highest ever in a single day. On Sunday, 1.44 million doses were administered in Andhra Pradesh alone. After registering a slow rate in May, daily vaccinations in the country have gradually increased in June. However, by December 31, only 943 million doses can be administered at the current rate, which is half of what is required to fully vaccinate all adults. By Sumant Sen and Jasmin Nihalani



A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 22, 1921 Spinning wheel in India.

dicraft which was dying.

It is easier and, for some, more congenial to pooh pooh than to prove the possibilities of the spinning wheel. Compared with its modern competitor, the power-driven jenny, the chakra doubtless suffers from many limitations. Some of these limitations are purely imaginary. Thus, it is often said that finer varieties of cloth could not be produced with it in quantities. That this is not a fact has been stated before, but it will perhaps bear repetition once more. This is what the latest writer on the subject, Mr. A.S. Wade, in his new brochure Cotton Spinning in Pitman's "Common Commodities and Industries" Series, which gives a popular and authoritative account of the industry, says on Indian spinning. "Centuries before the Christian era," he says, "Cotton was spun and woven in India into the very finest textures; the father of history, Herodotus, mentions them. India's hand-spinning, indeed, seems to have gone on through the ages with the same degree of perfection, anticipating the delicacy and finish which came to us only when the spinning wheel was brought into being ... "

FROM PAGE ONE

SC seeks govt. decision on ex gratia payment

The Centre cannot cite financial constraints to elude its statutory duty to pay compensation now, Mr. Upadhyay contended.

Justice Shah, highlighting the petitioners' argument for framing uniform guidelines on disaster compensation, reasoned that disasters and pandemics varied in impact. One relief cannot fit all tragedies.

But Mr. Upadhyay persisted that "financial constraints" or the excuse that payment of compensation would dry up the Central government's and the States' resources could not be made a ground by the government to avoid its obligation under a statute to pay ex gratia.

Section 12

Mr. Mehta said Section 12 was only "recommendatory" in nature. He argued that the Disaster Management Act had moved away from one-time cash reliefs to larger issues of wider impact such as preparedness, risk management, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. "Instead of giving one-time relief, we have gone for a multi-pronged approach. We have prioritised on preparedness. This is not a one-time disaster," he

Mr. Mehta referred to the 15th Finance Commission report for 2021-2026 to argue that the funds for disaster management and their allocations were already

Mr. Mehta replied, "We will have to go back to Parliament. It will have to be ratified by Parliament."

Justice Shah stated, "Remember, a Finance Commission report cannot override tion 12]. You just need to keep in mind the broad aspects of the Finance Commission report while framing further guidelines [for COVID-related funding]."

petitions for judgment.

Record 82 lakh shots administered in a day

The daily rate of vaccination improved to 34 lakh doses between June 11 and June 20. However, if India is aiming to fully vaccinate all adults by 2021, 82.1 lakh daily doses are needed daily.

Around 24.9% of adults in India, 44.7% of people above 45, and 47.8% of those above 60, have been administered at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, until 8 p.m. on Monday. While 17.1% of the country's population has received at least one dose, only 3.7% are fully vaccinated. The figures are based on the estimated population in 2021.

India recorded 41,207 new COVID-19 cases and 1,126 new deaths till 9.30

* Optional exams from + Aug. 15 to Sept. 15: CBSE

"Their results shall be de- A.M. Khanwilkar, senior adclared in accordance with the said Assessment Policy. Their examinations shall also be conducted anytime between 15.08.2021 to 15.09.2021, subject to conducive situation," it added.

The CBSE affidavit said it had issued a 'Policy for Tabulation of Marks for Class XII Board Examination 2021' to ensure standardisation of

In a hearing on Monday before a Bench led by Justice

vocate Vikas Singh, who is arguing for the conduct of physical exams, said there should be uniform criteria for assessment for CBSE and ICSE marks. But Justice Khanwilkar said apples and oranges cannot be mixed.

He referred to how school performance in past years would also influence marks, saying students' performances should be based on their own work and not of past batches.

Afghanistan

conference.

Ashraf Ghani, who is set to

meet U.S. President Joseph

Biden this Friday in Wash-

ington, to discuss the situa-

tion developing ahead of the

US-NATO troops pull-out,

will also address the 3-day

To a question about

whether any talks between

India and Pakistan are

linked to the Afghan reconci-

liation process, Mr. Qahtani

said, "Afghanistan as a coun-

try should not become a

place for a proxy [fight] for

"It is in the Interest of Pakis-

tan and India to have a sta-

ble Afghanistan. Pakistan is

a neighbouring country. India is a country that we

know has assisted a lot eco-

nomically in Afghanistan

and they want it to be peace-

media reports that had

pointed to a new, direct

reach out by the Modi go-

vernment to the Taliban, af-

ter years of refusing to re-

cognise the militant group

accused of terror attacks in

Afghanistan, the MEA spo-

kesperson had said that New

Delhi is "in touch with va-

rious stakeholders in pur-

suance of its long-term com-

development and recon-

struction in Afghanistan."

In response to previous

ful and stable," he added.

other countries."

Afghan peace

President

Indian delegation met Taliban: Qatari official

Qatar's Special Envoy of the State of Oatar for Counterterrorism and Mediation of Conflict Resolution Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani was speaking at a web conference on Monday.

The statement comes after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar stopped over in Doha to meet the Qatari leadership twice in the past two weeks. The MEA declined to comment on Mr. Qahtani's statement, and did not respond to questions about what level, if any, contacts with the political leadership of the Taliban based in Doha would have been at.

In response to a question from *The Hindu* during the discussion, Mr. Qahtani said the reasoning behind the meeting was that the Taliban will have a "key" role in Afghanistan's future.

"Not that everybody thinks the Taliban is going to dominate, but because it is a key component of the future

of Afghanistan," he added. "So, I see this as the reason behind having a dialogue or talks and reaching out to all parties in Afghanis-

tan," he added. Dr. Qahtani was speaking at a conference organised by the Arab Centre in Washington and Centre for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies in Doha, on "Looking towards Peace in Afghanistan after the US-NATO Withdrawal".

submitted.

Justice Shah asked, "So, the Finance Commission fixes ₹15,000 crore on disaster management. Then CO-VID-19 happens. You need ₹25,000 crore on disaster management. Can you say that you will only spend ₹15,000 crore?'

a statutory provision [Sec-

The court reserved the

Transit anticipatory bail for Ayyub

PEERZADA ASHIQ

Monday.

Three Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)

militants, one of them a "fo-

reigner", were killed in an

overnight operation in So-

pore of north Kashmir on

tants were commanders.

Among them, Mudasir Pan-

dit [a local] was the top-most

commander, who was

known by different names.

He has been the LeT com-

mander since June 2019. He

was involved in several kill-

ings, including four civilians,

nine security forces, two ex-

militants, three sarpanches

and two belonging to the

Hurriyat and separatist

cadres," Director-General of

Police, Jammu and Kashmir,

One of the three militants

was identified by the police

Dilbag Singh said.

"All the three slain mili-

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday granted four weeks' transit anticipatory bail to journalist Rana Ayyub in a case filed by the Uttar Pradesh police for allegedly spreading fake news and creating communal tensions. The bail period will not be extended.

The FIR relates to a video that went viral on social media of an elderly man in Ghaziabad being beaten up and his beard cut. He was also allegedly

Senior advocate Mihir Desai, representing Ms. Ayyub, appeared before a single bench of Justice P.D. Naik seeking interim protection from arrest. The court said it was learnt that there was a transaction between the assailant and the victim. Mr. Desai said the FIR was registered on June 15 and Ms. Ayyub deleted the tweet on June 16



3 LeT militants gunned down

Police say they were commanders of the militant group and one was a foreigner

On the ground: Security personnel during an encounter at Sopore in Baramulla district on Monday. ■PTI

as Asrar aka Abdullah, a foreigner.

Mr. Singh said, "The trio was involved in the Sopore attack on June 12, which left two policemen and two civilians dead. Earlier, they attacked a municipality building in Sopore on March 29 and killed two councillors and one policeman."

The police said they recovered two AK-47s, one AK-56, a pistol and ammunition from the slain militants.

The security forces have killed two foreign militants in Kashmir this year, which is comparatively lower than in the previous years.

"After the abrogation of Article 370, Pandit was among the militants who tried to suppress the voice of people," Mr. Singh stated. There was a good number of foreign militants present in Kashmir and they were lying low, he noted.

The fresh ceasefire pact between India and Pakistan last February had helped check infiltration to a large extent.

"We welcome that," he added. General Officer Com-

manding, Kilo Force, Maj. Gen. H.S. Sahi, appealed to the local youngsters who have picked up guns to shun the gun culture and return to national mainstream. "If they do not wish to return to the mainstream, I assure that they will meet the same fate as was in the store for the three militants killed in the encounter," he said.

Army to get indigenous LUHs in December 2022

A.K. Suri to head Army Aviation

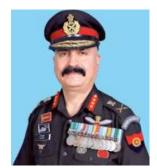
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Army, which is facing a huge shortage of light utility helicopters with the ageing fleet of Cheetah and Chetak helicopters, will receive the first batch of six indigenous Light Utility helicopter (LUH) by the end of 2022, a defence source said.

The helicopter was designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL).

In a separate development, Lt. Gen. Ajay Kumar Suri took over as the Director-General (DG) and Colonel Commandant of the Army Aviation on Monday.

"The acceptance in principle was received two months back. The Army will receive the first batch of six LUHs by December 2022,"



the source stated.

The LUH is meant to replace the ageing Cheetah and Chetak helicopters along with the Russian Ka-226T helicopters.

Since November 2019, Lt. Gen. Suri, then as a Major General, had been the Additional Director-General officiating as the Director-General of Army Aviation.

Parliament site got jabs'

More than 50% of the

workers involved in the

construction of the new

Parliament building had

received at least one dose of

the COVID-19 vaccine, Union

Mishra said on Monday. Many

had got their second dose as

workers, on and off site, were

contributing to the project,

Procure wheat in U.P. till

July 15, says Priyanka

Congress general secretary

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in a

letter to U.P. CM Yogi

Housing and Urban Affairs

Secretary Durga Shanker

well. A total of 2,180

IN BRIEF

told to chant 'Jai Shri Ram.'

after she knew of the FIR.

'Yoga a ray of hope amid COVID'

It has become a great source of inner strength, says PM on Yoga Day

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday termed voga a "ray of hope" and a source of strength in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. He was addressing a pro-

gramme to mark the 7th International Yoga Day where he also spoke of the M-Yoga application, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO). The app will have videos

of yoga training based on a Common Yoga Protocol and will be available in different languages "This will help us in making the 'One World, One

Health' motto successful," he said. "At a time when the whole world is fighting the corona virus pandemic, yoga remains a ray of hope," Mr. Mo-

"Despite the lack of major public events in countries around the world and in India for around a year and a



Up above: Himveers of the ITBP practising yoga on the banks of Pangong Tso in Ladakh on the International Day of Yoga on Monday. • PTI

half, the enthusiasm for Yoga Day has not diminished," he

Enthusiasm up

For most of the countries of the world, Yoga Day is not their age-old cultural festival and in this difficult time, people could have forgotten about it and ignored it, but

on the contrary, people's enthusiasm for yoga had increased, he said.

"When the unseen coronavirus knocked on the doors of the world, no country was prepared for it in terms of resources, capability and mental state. We all have seen that in such difficult times, yoga has become

great source of inner strength," he said.

Yoga shows us the way from stress to strength and from negativity to creativity, he asserted.

He expressed confidence that voga would continue playing its preventive as well as promotive role in health-

Police send another notice to Twitter

FIR for sharing video of U.P. assault

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Ghaziabad police on Monday sent another notice to Twitter India's head to appear before it in the case of a video of an elderly Muslim man who claimed he was beaten up and made to chant "Jai Shri Ram".

The notice to Twitter India managing director Manish Maheshwari asked him to appear by 10.30 a.m. on Thursday or face appropriate action under law.

Superintendent of Police (Rural) Iraj Raja said Twitter's response to the first notice sent on June 17 to appear at the Loni Border police station had been to offer a video call instead. The police had lodged an FIR against Twitter and several journalists for sharing the video and allegedly trying to spread discord between communities.

Twitter India's head of policy communications Pallavi Walia had "no comment" to give when asked about Monday's notice.

In its notice, the police said Mr. Maheshwari's June 18 reply showed that he was not cooperating with the police investigationThe allegations in the video had been denied by the police and it was in Twitter India's power to delete the tweets sharing the video, which it

The police asked Mr. Maheshwari, as well as Twitter's interim resident grievance officer for India Dharmendra Chatur, through a notice on Monday, to appear at the Loni Border police station by 10.30 am on Thursday under section 41 A of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Delhi HC reserves order on WhatsApp, Facebook plea

CCI had asked them to submit certain documents

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH NEW DELH

The Delhi High Court on Monday reserved its order on a fresh plea by Facebook and WhatsApp seeking to put on hold a notice issued by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) asking them to submit certain documents in relation to the probe being conducted on WhatsApp's new privacy A Vacation Bench of Jus-

tices Anup Jairam Bhambhani and Jasmeet Singh said, "We will pass an order. The matter will be listed on July The court said it was sit-

ting on a Vacation Bench, and hence did not want to go into the merits of the case.

The fresh application was made in a pending case filed

by Facebook and WhatsApp challenging the CCI's March 24 direction ordering a probe into WhatsApp's controversial new privacy policy. Facebook and WhatsApp,

in the fresh application, sought the intervention of the court to stay the CCI's June 4 notice asking them to furnish certain information for the purpose of inquiry conducted by it.

Counsel for the social media giants submitted that the last date to respond to the notice was June 21.

The CCI, represented by Additional Solicitor-General (ASG) Aman Lekhi, opposed the application on the ground that furnishing of information would not lead to any order by the CCI at this stage of inquiry.

The ASG said no threat was looming over the head of WhatsApp till the report on the inquiry was submitted with the competition watchdog. WhatsApp had said its new privacy policy came into effect from May 15. It also clarified that it would not start deleting accounts of those users who have not accepted it and would try to encourage them to get on board.

several problems faced by farmers. She said there

Adityanath on Monday, demanded that the State government guarantee wheat procurement while flagging should be a guarantee that wheat would be procured till July 15. "The procurement started from April 1, but as the wheat started reaching the centres, procurement was

Pune-based businessman

reduced to half."

The Enforcement Directorate has seized assets worth ₹40.34 crore of Pune-based businessman Avinash Bhosale and his family members under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The attached assets include equity shares and preference shares held in Classic City Investment Private Limited

W Retreat & Spa (Goa), it said. Get vaccinated as soon as possible, says Shah

Meridian (Nagpur) and Hotel

(Pune), which owns Hotel

Westin (Pune), Hotel Le

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday visited vaccination centres in his parliamentary constituency Gandhinagar and urged the citizens to get their jabs as soon as possible as the country has stepped up efforts to vaccinate all eligible citizens by the end of this year. He also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for launching the world's largest inoculation drive

CDS to chair meet on theatre commands

DINAKAR PERI NEW DELHI

Extensive studies have been undertaken and discussed over the last two years before arriving at a broad plan to create four integrated triservice commands, an official said on Monday. However, the IAF still has major reservations on the issue, said the official.

Air defence and maritime theatre commands, integrated eastern theatre and integrated western theatre commands are being planned, the official said.

As part of the ongoing deliberations, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Bipin Rawat

is scheduled to chair a meeting on Tuesday with the Vice-Chiefs of the three services, the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff and the representatives from the Ministries of Defence, Home and "After studying Indian and

western models of war fighting for over two years, table top exercises and war games were conducted and operational discussions were held to come up with the best model suited for us," the official said. The commands will have Indian characteristics, ethos and way of fighting,

the official stated. Detailed parleys have also community and think-tanks to brainstorm on the farreaching decisions, the official said. The plan has been cleared

been held with the veteran

at the highest levels of the government and the Army and the Navy are fully on board with it, two officials independently said. The IAF opposition is

based on an incorrect understanding of the concept, the first official cited earlier said. "Current IAF stance of retaining most assets and operational control under the Air headquarters and the Air Chief goes against the very essence of integration and jointmanship."

The IAF insecurity that it will lose control over its assets and operations is unfounded, the official said. "All air bases, squadrons and air assets will continue to function under IAF officials."

A committee was recently

set up comprising the Vice-Chiefs of the three services, the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee, and representatives from the Ministries concerned after issues like bringing in paramilitary forces under the purview of the theatre commands as well as financial implications were raised.

Left, Congress wary of Sinha's 'Rashtra Manch'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Despite being invited along with a host of prominent civil society leaders and politicians, leaders of the Congress and Left parties are unlikely to attend the Rashtra Manch meeting, convened by former finance minister and Trinamool Congress member Yashwant Sinha, at the Delhi residence of NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Tuesday.

The Manch is a front founded by Mr. Sinha, to the discuss "national scenario".

Though the list of invitees was not known, sources said the Manch had sent invitations to prominent Opposition leaders from across the spectrum including Farooq

jay Singh (Aam Aadmi Party), Manoj Jha (RJD) and Congress parliamentarians like Manish Tewari, Vivek Tankha and Kapil Sibal. Sources told The Hindu

Abdullah (National Confe-

rence), Sitaram Yechury

(CPI-M), D. Raja (CPI), San-

that neither Left leaders like Mr. Yechury and Mr. Raja, nor the Congress MPs would be attending the meeting.

IN BRIEF



harassment of MLAs'

A day after a letter from Shiv Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaik to Maharashtra Chief Minister **Uddhav Thackeray requesting** him to patch up with the BJP to avoid harassment by Central investigative agencies, his party said the missive has raised a serious issue. Mr. Sarnaik is being probed by the ED for alleged corruption. Responding to the letter, Sena's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut said, "An MLA has written to the Chief Minister. What should I say about this? However, he has, if the letter is authentic, raised a very important issue that MLAs of MVA are being harassed."

2 from Delhi held under anti-conversion law

Two men from New Delhi have been arrested by the Uttar Pradesh police's Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) on the charges of mass conversion of people into Islam through inducements such as marriage, job and money and mental pressure. The two were identified as Mohammad Umar Gautam and Mufti Qazi Jahangir Alam Qasmi. The arrests were announced in Lucknow by Prashant Kumar, ADG Law

BJP MP demands separate State for Jangalmahal

Days after a BJP MP from north Bengal raised the demand for a separate State or Union Territory for north Bengal, another BJP MP on Monday demanded that a separate State be carved out of the Jangalmahal region. BJP MP from Alipurduar John Barla had last week raised the demand of separate state for north Bengal while Saumitra Khan on Monday said that Jangalmahal could well be a separate State.

Cash prize announced for number of children

Mizoram Sports Minister Robert Romawia Royte has announced a cash incentive of ₹1 lakh to a living parent with the highest number of children in his constituency to encourage population growth among the demographically small Mizo communities. His declaration comes at a time when several States are advocating a population control policy. On the occasion of Father's Day on Sunday, Mr. Royte announced that he would reward such a person with a cash incentive, a certificate and a trophy. РТІ

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)

Advt. No. J.S.V. 129(2021-22)

the calendar of events

J&K parties seek durable steps

People's Conference and Apni Party say dialogue is the way forward

SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir regional parties which are not part of the Gupkar alliance held deliberations on Monday to discuss the upcoming meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and called for "durable and democratic solutions" to the challenges in Kashmir.

The J&K People's Conference, whose chief Sajjad Lone chaired a meeting in Srinagar, said there was a need for the political class to play a constructive role in ending the prevalent logjam and finding durable and democratic solutions to all the challenges facing the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The participants expressed their appreciation

We welcome the initiative of the PM. Political parties of J&K have also realised now that dialogue is the only way to resolve any issue ALTAF BUKHARI HEAD, J&K APNI PART

for the initiative of the Prime Minister and hoped that this engagement would evolve into something much bigger and facilitate a return to democracy and empowerment of the people of J&K. There is a need for creative thinking to address the pain and suffering of the people of J&K and hope that the engage-

ment will be positive, deci-

sive and result-oriented," PC

spokesman Adnan Ashraf

The participants, according to Mr. Mir, unanimously a new social contract bettions of the people of J&K.

"It is imperative to restore the credibility and sanctity of the institution of dialogue. There are many harsh ground realities that the Prime Minister should be aware of. Post August 5, there is a dire need for

scripting a new social contract between Delhi and the people of J&K," the PC spokesman said.

Altaf Bukhari, who heads the J&K Apni Party, also chaired a meeting of the party leaders. "We welcome the initiative of the PM. Political parties of J&K have also realised now that dialogue is the only way to resolve any issue," he said.

Both Mr. Lone and Mr. Bukhari have been invited by the PM for the meeting to be held in Delhi on June 24.

Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Saif-ud-din Soz on Monday said the Centre's intention to restore the statehood "will not yield any advantage".

".The real issue is the J&K special status," Mr. Soz said.

emphasised the scripting of ween Delhi and the people of J&K to address the aspira-

Surveys on learning losses by month-end, panel told

House panel on education discusses COVID-19 impact

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

The Centre is assessing how badly school students have been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and will collect States' surveys on digital education access and learning losses by the end of this month, the School Education Department told a parliamentary panel on education on Monday.

The panel asked the Centre to also assess the impact of its own guidelines and interventions, as well as the impact of schools which were reopened in some States during the lull between the two waves of the

pandemic. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Educa-Women, Children, Youth and Sports, chaired by Rajya Sabha MP Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, also held its last round of consultations on textbook reforms, hearing from right-wing think tank Public Policy Research Centre (PPRC), which was previously headed by Dr. Sahasrabuddhe himself when



The panel also asked the Centre to assess the impact of its own guidelines and interventions *PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION

he was BJP vice-president.

According to a member of the committee, the PPRC presentation complained that Mughal history is glorified in Indian textbooks, while there is an insufficient understanding of ancient Indian history. It compared history textbooks from Gujarat, Kerala and the National Council of Educational Research and Training, arguing that the latter two give too much importance to the Mughal era. The Committee has heard from 8-10 such groups - including at least four others with similar

views - and is likely to submit its report in a month's time, another member said.

School Education Department Secretary Anita Karwal briefed the committee on the learning gap caused by the pandemic and efforts to bridge it. A survey of Classes 8-12 in centrally run schools last August showed that 80-90% of students were dependent on mobiles rather than laptops for digital schooling, while 30% were affected by electricity supply disruptions. States were then asked to do a similar mapping of access.

INTERVIEW | CHIRAG PASWAN

'BJP abandoned me when I needed them'

Beleaguered LJP leader says he will not concede the party symbol or name

SOBHANA K. NAIR

Days after the coup spearheaded by his uncle Pashupati Kumar Paras, beleaguered leader of the Lok Janshakti Party Chirag Paswan speaks on role of the JD (U) and the BJP and betrayal by loved ones, insisting that most of the party is still with

Do you regret your decision to go it alone in the Bihar Assembly election in 2020 and campaign against JD(U)?

■ Not at all. The kind of support I am getting from people of my State is only because I contested that election alone. Everybody wanted an alternative to Nitish Kumar. The LJP was only offered 15 seats in the alliance. Had I agreed to it, by the time of the next election, the only option left for the LIP would have been to merge with a regional or a national party. Moreover, you cannot go ahead with someone who doesn't respect your ideology. Nitish Kumar wants to dictate his agenda without giving space to any other ally.

And most importantly how could I go with someone who has humiliated my father, tried to defame, defeat and destroy him? This is not the first time he is breaking my party. He did it in 2005, when he poached the LJP MLAs. This time, he took away the lone LJP MLA who won from Matihani.

Today whoever is claiming that Nitish Kumar is the "Vikas Purush" is actually betraying my father and going against his policies. Let them remember that LJP has never been in alliance with JD(U), except for 2019. And that too is because the JD(U) decided to return to NDA. Our alliance was with the BJP

Who do you hold responsible for breaking away from the LJP? Is it the BJP or JD (U)?

■ It is an ironical question. How can I blame anyone when my own family members deserted me? They stabbed my back - my uncle (Pashupati Kumar Paras), my brother (Prince Raj)... my brother was like a son to me. But as I said, JD(U) has always been inclined to break parties. And especially, the JD(U) has always been after dividing the Dalit leadership. They were after my father and now against me. They divided Dalits and Mahadalits, making a sub-division among Scheduled Castes. They cannot accept that a Dalit is in such a strong position. I got 25 lakh votes and 6% vote share. This when I

But didn't your calculations go awry? Your campaign affected the NDA's tally and benefited RJD. Don't you think the BJP has abandoned

only contested on 135 seats .

you just for this reason? ■ Yes, I do feel that they have abandoned me. No one from BIP has contacted me. This

(Naveen Kumar Khare)

Sd/- Executive Engineer

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER(SW)-III



I will not leave the party that my father built with his sweat and blood

hurts, because me and my father Ram Vilas Paswan wholeheartedly supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior leadership of the BJP. Nobody was ready to join hands with Narendra Modi ji. My father was the first one to cross over and hold Mr Modi's hand. Nitish Kumar, one must remember, left him. We stood by him whether it was Ram Mandir, Article 370, CAA, Triple Talaq. I doubt that JD(U) has stood with them on all these issues. Today, when I need them, I expected them to at least reach out to me. So far I haven't heard from them.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla recognised Pashupati Nath Paras' claim as parliamentary leader without any delay. Doesn't this clearly indicate BJP's

■ I would not want to read between the lines. I met Mr. Birla on Saturday and I explained the LJP's process of

hand in the coup?

selecting the parliamentary leader. I did tell him that he should have at least spoken to me before making this decision. Even the rule book of the Parliament defines this very clearly, that the parliamentary party leader has to be decided by the party, not by the members.

The charge against you by the Paras group is that you are autocratic and you were impervious to advice. Your reaction?

■ Had I been autocratic I wouldn't have had the support of 66 members of LJP's National Executive. Only nine members of the national executive, including the five MPs, left the party. Out of 135 candidates, 114 have submitted an open letter of support to me. Only four district presidents in Bihar have gone with them. If I was autocratic, then why did so many of them decide to stay back with me.

What is the way forward for you?

■ I will go back to the people of Bihar. I need their blessings now that my own elders have betrayed me. I am ready to fight this battle to the end. I will not concede my party symbol or name. I have all legal evidence to support my claim. I will not leave the party that my father built with his sweat and blood. These people have not betrayed me, they have betrayed my father.

NHRC panel to probe violence in Bengal

Committee set up after HC order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Monday set up a committee to investigate complaints of post-poll violence in West Bengal in accordance with a Calcutta High Court order on June 18.

NHRC chairperson Justice Arun Kumar Mishra constituted the committee headed by NHRC member Rajeev Iain, a statement said, National Commission for Minorities vice-chairperson Atif Rasheed, National Commission for Women member Dr. Rajulben L. Desai, NHRC Director General (Investigation) Santosh Mehra,

West Bengal State Human Rights Commission registrar Pradip Kumar Pania, West Bengal State Legal Services Authority member secretary Raju Mukherjee and NHRC DIG (Investigation) Manzil Saini would be the other members of the committee.

According to the court's directions, the committee would examine all cases of post-poll violence for which complaints have already been received by the NHRC or which may be received, the NHRC statement said. It would also look into the complaints to the West Bengal State Legal Services Authority.

Amarinder talks to AICC panel again

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH / NEW DELHI

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh arrived in Delhi on Monday to meet a panel of the AICC for resolving the factionalism in the State.

He will hold talks with the panel comprising Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, AICC general secretary (Punjab) Harish Rawat and J.P. Aggarwal on Tuesday morning for the second time in two weeks. Insiders say party workers are worried that the squabble between the CM Navjot Singh Sidhu will dent the party's electoral prospects in 2022.

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Online Bids through e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in) are invited from eligible bidders for Provision of CT Scan Services At District Headquarter Hospitals as per the particulars mentioned Bid **Bid Document** SI. Reference No. Item Name Cost inclusive

"PROVISION OF CT SCAN SERVICES AT

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OSMCL/2021-22/CT SCAN

SI.No.	Particulars	Date and time		
1.	Date & time of release of bid	19.06.2021, 6 PM		
3. 4.	Date & time of Pre-bid meeting	26.06.2021, 11 AM Venue: Conference Hall, Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd., In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar		
3.	Date & time of Online bid submission	Start Date & Time	End Date & Time	
		28.06.2021, 11 AM	16.07.2021, 5 PM	
4.	Date & time of online Technical Bid Opening	19.07.2021, 11.30 AM		
5.	Date of opening of Price Bid	To be informed to the technically qualified bidders		

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including Pregualification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: www.osmcl.nic.in and https://tendersodisha.gov.in . OSMCL reserves the right to reject or modify any conditions of the tender or cancel the tender or cancel the issued purchase order at any stage without assigning any reason thereof. sd/- Managing Director, OSMCL OIPR-10112/11/0029/2122

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW)-III SECTOR-VII, R.K. PURAM, NEW DELHI-110022 "STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene." N I T NO 08(2021-22) SW-III

	N.I.1. NO.00(2021-22) 3W-III				
S.	Description	Amount Put to	Date of release of ten-	Last date/Time of	
No.		Tender, Tender	der in E-Procurement	receipt of Tender	
		Fee	Solution)	Through E-Procure-	
				ment Solution	
1	Providing and Laying water line for	Rs. 1,36,93,989/	19.06.2021	12.07.2021	
	improvement of water supply at East and		Tender I.D. No.	At 2:00 P.M.	
	West Mehram Nagar village in Cantonment		2021_DJB_204587_1		
	area under EE(SW)-III (Re-invited)				
2	Providing and Laying water line for	Rs. 1,18,15,179/	19.06.2021	12.07.2021	
	improvement of water supply at Nangal	Rs. 1000/-	Tender I.D. No.	At 2:00 P.M.	
	village in Cantonment area under EE(SW)-		2021_DJB_204587_2		
	III (Re-invited)				

Further details in this regard can be seen at (https://govprocurement.delhi.gov.in)

VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAMA LIMITED (A Government of Karnataka Enterprise) Regd Office: Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limiterd. No.148, Emnbassy Square, Ground Floor, Infantry Road, Bangalore - 560001, CIN No: U41000KA2016SGC097260, Ph : 080-22256688/ 22289966 Fax: 080-22264477. Email: techvini@gmail.com, Website: www.vini.in/ Office of the Executive Engineer Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limted, Upper Bhadra Project Division No.1 Kadur, Ph: 08267-295207, Email Id

: eeubpdvn1@gmal.com No.VJNL/UBP/EE/D1/Kadur/Tender-1/Drip/Corri/2021-22/122 Dated: 19-06-2021

Corrigendum Notification -01 (Through e-procurement only)

Reference: This office short term tender notification no:80/2021-22 Dated: 08-06-2021
Percentage tender on Turnkey Basis thourgh e-protal in Two Cover system is invited by the Exective Engineer, VINL, UBP, Division No.1 Kadur on behalf of the Managing Director, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Ltd, Bengaluru for the work "Survey, Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Micro Irrigatio System under Tumkur Branch, canal Comprising Gravity Bulk feeders, Construction of Sump cum pupm house Supplying and installation of Pumping machineries, Terminal bay, Electrical substation, Electrical power line and other appurtenant works including construction of pipe Distribution network and automated drip irrigation system for providing irrigation facility coming under tumkur Brach canal of upper bhadra project with all accessories operation and maintenance for 5 years after the date of completion and transfer (BOMT) on Tumkey basis" -1) 12,475 Ha under Block 1, Block 2 and filling up of 34 Nos, tanks (T.B.C. Drip Package-I) (Indent No.1691) & 2) 15,115 Ha under Block 3 and filling up of 62 Nos tanks (T.B.C. Drip Package -2) (Indent No.1693) was published by this office vide reference now due to technical reason the last date o submission of completed Tender Documents & date of opening of Technical Bid are postponed and refixed as

Sl No.	Calendar of Events	Dates
a	The Last date of Submission of Completed Tender Documents (Cover-1 & Cover-2) through e-portal	29-06-2021 Up to 16.00 hrs
b	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I) in the O/o Executive Engineer, V.J.N.L, UBP, Division No.01, Kadur	30-6-2021 at 16.30 hrs
Not	e: All other terms and conditions of tender mentioned in the reference shall remain	unchanged except

e-Tenders are invited for supply of PAPER MATERIAL

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS,TIRUPATI

of different categories for 2021-2022. For tender notice and details please log on the web site http://www.tirumala.org and https://tender.ap.eprocurement.gov.in. For further details please contact

Phone:0877-2264355 (or) 0877-2264292 4/13931/Adv.No.48/PRO/2021, DT.21-08-2021 **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limited (Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)

Upper Bhadra Project Division No. 6, Somaguddu Road, Challakere. Phone/Fax No.: 08195-250307, e-mail: ubpee06@gmail.com

No.: EE/VJNL/UBP/Div-6/Challakere/J.B.C- CORRIGENDUM-1/ 2021-22/186, Date: 18.06.2021

Corrigendum to tender

On behalf of the Managing Director, VJNL, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer, VJNL., UBP Division No.06, Challakere, was invited the tenders from the VJNL Category-I enrolled contractors withreference to tender notification no.:153 dated 08.06.2021 for construction of Tank filling and Drip Irrigation project of Jagalurutaluk. Due to technical problems the following below changes are made

(1) Name of work:- Construction of Jagaluru Branch Canal and providing drip irrigation system under Jagaluru Branch Canal of upper Bhadra project by Gravity Bulk Feeder Pipe Lines to supply to zones and filling of Tanks including Construction of Pump Houses, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Pumping Machineries, Transmission line, Electrical Sub Stations, Pipe Distribution Network (MS/DI/ HDPE/PVC/LDPE) drip lines, SCADA, Fertigation System and Operation and Maintenance for 5 years after successful commissioning of the scheme on Turn-Key Basis: Jagaluru Block pipe line, filling of 9 tanks and Drip network for 18423 Ha (JBC-Package-1)(INDENT NO:1692)

(2) Last Date for Receipt of Tenders/Bids through e-protal:- 29.06.2021 at 4.00 PM. (3) Date of Opening of Technical Bid:- 30.06.2021 at 4.30 PM. (4) Date of Opening of Financial Bid:- Tentatively as 01.07.2021 or On any convenient day after obtaining approval to the technical bid from the competent authority the time and date will intimated to the contractors qualified in technical bid. Eligible contractors may obtain all the details from http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in online and submit ther bid process.

Sd/-Executive Engineer, VJNL, Upper DIPR/CTA/MCA/ Bhadra Project, Division 6, Challakere

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5,600/-

certification process: SC

Court asks Centre to explain how errors can be rectified

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Union government what it plans to do in cases of COVID-19 patients whose death certificates cited some other reason for the cause of death.

"What is the remedy in the case of COVID patients who have already been issued death certificates showing some other reason as cause of death?" Justice M.R. Shah, who accompanied Justice Ashok Bhushan on the Bench, asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta.

The court suggested that the government should simplify the process for certification COVID-19 deaths. It asked the government whether the reason of death could be given as COVID-19 in the certificate if the family could produce a COVID-19 report, no matter whether the patient died in a hospital or outside. The court pointed out that some patients



were not even given their medical records.

Mr. Mehta reiterated the government's stand that any lapse in stating COVID-19 as the cause of demise in a death certificate would have penal consequences for those found responsible, inthe certifying

In its affidavit on Sunday, the Centre said: "It is mandated that any death resulting from COVID-19 shall have to be so certified i.e. as CO-VID death, failing which, everyone responsible, including the certifying doctor, shall be responsible for penal consequences."

The government stated that deaths with the diagnosis of COVID-19, irrespective of comorbidities, have to be certified as pandemic deaths. The only exception to the rule was when there was a clear alternative cause of death, for example, accidental trauma, poisoning,

The Supreme Court re-

cently told the Centre that the death certificates of those who died of COVID-19 often did not reveal that fact. "The death certificates of persons who die from CO-VID-19 in hospitals show the reason as lung or heart problem or something else," Justice Shah had told Mr.

"All deaths with the diagnosis of COVID-19, irrespective of co-morbidities, are to be classified as deaths due to COVID-19," the Centre had clarified in the affidavit.

Simplify COVID-19 death | Corpses did not add to Ganga pollution: Centre

Jal Shakti Ministry report on water quality based on responses from PCBs of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar

ЈАСОВ КОЅНҮ

The dumping of bodies in the Ganga, allegedly of those who died of COVID-19, did not increase pollution in the river, the Jal Shakti Ministry has said.

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) had solicited reports in May from the Centre, the State Pollution Control Boards of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and the Central Water Commission on whether the disposal of corpses in the river had affected water quality. Data for April-June sug-

gested that the water quality in terms of pH, DO (dissolved oxygen), BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) conformed with the bathing water quality criteria except "marginal deviations at few locations" and these were not dissimilar from the water quality observed in previous years. They may not be attributed to incidents of floating bodies, the NMCG said in a report based on responses from these departments. The Hindu has viewed this



Revered rivers: Pilgrims at the Sangam, the confluence of rivers Ganga and Yamuna, during Ganga Dussehra festival in Prayagraj on Sunday. • AP

On May 14, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had asked the Centre and the Bihar and the Uttar Pradesh State governments to furnish a report following a complaint by a private citizen that several unclaimed or unidentified, unburnt/ partially burnt bodies were found floating in the "sacred" river Ganga. Some of the bodies were suspected to be of COVID-19 victims.

The complainant alleged

that the disposal of bodies in and around the river would not only pollute the river but also seriously affect all those persons who are dependent on the river.

Sample study

Along with assessing water quality, the Secretary, Jal Shakti Ministry decided after a meeting with the Chief Secretaries of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar on May 18 to study if the river water was contaminated with SARS-CoV-2 from the bodies being disposed in it. They also wanted to know if the virus could spread and infect those who came into contact with the

The ICMR-National Institute of Virology was approached to study water samples from the river but they declined to take part in the study. The CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (IITR), Lucknow has now been entrusted with the project.

Results awaited

They have collected samples from burial sites (Kannauj, Unnao, Kanpur, Prayagraj and Ghazipur districts) in Uttar Pradesh and Buxor and Saran districts in Bihar though results of the analysis are not yet public.

Previous studies from the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad have shown that the coronavirus can be found in sewage and wastewater, and these have been used to estimate the prevalence of the infection in other urban locations.

The NMCG, a Jal Shakti Ministry body, is the nodal agency tasked with coordinating the over ₹20,000 crore initiative to clean the Ganga, a flagship programme of the government. One of the measures employed is to discourage a practice of disposing bodies in the river. To this end, the NMCG had funded projects to improve crematoria along the banks of the river in riparian States.

Amarnath Yatra not to be held this year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Monday decided to cancel Amarnath Yatra, the annual pilgrimage in the Valley, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 56-day yatra was scheduled to start on June

"Shri Amarnathji Yatra has been cancelled in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision was taken after a discussion with the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board members. The yatra will be symbolic only. However, all the traditional religious rituals shall be performed at the holy cave shrine as per past practice," Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha

Mr. Sinha, who is also the chairman of the Board, had detailed deliberations with Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta, Director General of Police Dilbag Singh, Principal Secretary Home Shaleen Kabra, and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lt. Governor, on Monday.

"It's important to save people's lives. So, it is not advisable to conduct this year's pilgrimage in the larger public interest. The Board shall continue live telecast of the morning and evening *aarti* from the holy cave shrine," the Lt. Governor said.

ACROSS

No dissent on Covishield doses interval: Ministry

RTI application had sought documents on scientific studies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry has said there is no document available in the COVID vaccination cell about "data concerning the effects of a gap beyond 12 weeks" for Covishield vaccine.

The Ministry, in response to a Right to Information appeal by Shivangi Malhotra, said the decision on increasing the interval is based on the fundamental scientific reason regarding behaviour of adenovector vaccines, and refuted any claims that there was dissent by any member of the COVID-19 Working Group and Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI).

Releasing minutes of the meeting, it said that records clearly show that the recommended 12-16 weeks dosing interval for Covishield was a unanimous decision.

The RTI response said that "in view of the emerging scientific evidence the interval between two doses of Covishield was revisited by the COVID working group of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization and subsequently by National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 (NEGVAC) in its



Quick jab: A health worker administering a dose of Covishield in Srinagar. • NISSAR AHMAD

meeting held on May 12. NEGVAC recommended revision in the schedule of Covishield to administer a second dose at intervals of 12-16 weeks after the first dose. This recommendation was admitted by the Central

Working group

The Health Ministry said, "It may be noted that the decision of increasing the gap is based on the scientific reason regarding behaviour of adenovector vaccines and has been discussed thoroughly in meetings of CO-VID-19 Working Group and Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of NTAGI with no dissent from any

member," the Ministry said. 'The 22nd meeting of CO-VID-19 Working Group of NTAGI was held on May 10, 2021. This COVID-19 Work-

ing Group considered a proposal for a change in dose interval for Covishield used under the National Vaccination Policy. It recommended that based on the real-life evidence, particularly from the United Kingdom, the CO-Working Group agreed for increasing the dosing interval to 12-16 weeks between two doses of Covishield Vaccine," noted

the Health Ministry. It added that this recommendation of COVID-19 Working Group was further taken up for discussion in the 31st meeting of Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of NTAGI which was held under the joint chairpersonship of Secretary, Department of Biotechnology Renu Swarup and Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Balram

SCAN TO PLAY

PF trusts await clarity on advance

Firms say there is no official notification or circular from the EPFO on the issue

VIKAS DHOOT

Three weeks after the government announced that Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) members can take a second COVID-19 advance from their retirement savings accounts, companies managing their own EPF trusts are reluctant to process requests from employees who have sought the

Over 76 lakh COVID-19 advance claims worth ₹18,698 crore were cleared since the special withdrawal provisions to cope with the pandemic were introduced in March 2020. EPF members were permitted to make nonrefundable withdrawals to the extent of basic wages and dearness allowances for

Dipping into savings

76 lakh COVID-19 advance claims worth ₹18,698 crore were cleared since March 2020

EPF members were permitted to make non-refundable withdrawals to the extent of basic wages and dearness allowances for three months, or up to 75% of their EPF balance

A second such advance is being allowed due to the second COVID-19 wave, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said

three months, or up to 75% of their EPF balance, whichever is less.

On May 31, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said a second such advance was being allowed 'considering the urgent need of members for financial support in these trying times', referring to the second COVID-19 wave as well as the emergence of the 'mucormycosis' or 'black fungus' epidemic.

"Several employees have been asking us for this advance to cope with the second wave's medical costs and fresh income losses in

their households. But there is no official notification or circular from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation that is hindering establishments with their own PF trusts from implementing the fresh COVID-19 advance," said the finance head of a leading employer with over 5,000 employees that manages their EPF accounts in-house. While EP-FO's regional offices have made a modification in their software to allow the advance, companies managing EPF accounts on their own cannot proceed simply on + the basis of a press release, said an industry compliance adviser. "We are hoping that the EPFO will resolve this soon with a clear communique," he added.

'Use electronic machines to weigh rations'

Centre asks States to buy them with dealers' margin

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI The Centre wants States to start linking the electronic Point of Sale devices (ePoS) used at ration shops to electronic weighing machines to promote transparency and reduce foodgrain leakages. It wants States to pay for these machines by using the ₹17 per quintal margin already

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SUDOKU

provided for Fair Price Shops (FPS) for installing and using ePoS machines, according to an amendment of the National Food Security Act rules last week.

According to the rules, ₹17 per quintal of foodgrain sold through ePoS is provided as "Fair Price Shop dealers margin" and is meant to go "towards the cost of purchase, operation and maintenance of the point of sale device, its running expenses and incentive for its use."

The amendment, notified

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DIFFICULTY RATING:

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Electronic point of sale devices are used to improve transparency.

on June 18, adds the words "and any savings if accrued could be utilised for purchase, operations and maintenance of electronic weighscales and their

integration with the Point of Sale device".

When asked how savings could accrue from money paid as an incentive to FPS dealers, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey clarified that the additional margin is only being paid to States according to actual expenditure. As technology is evolving fast, it is now cheaper to operate ePoS than it was earlier, and States which are able to cut operating costs can now use the extra money to integrate weighing machines, he said.

TH CROSSWORD+ 13280 Never go off the grid. We are digital now. Come solve online.

1 Turning excited on cocaine, gets into fight in bar tour (3,5)

10 Musical instrument in case picked up by versatile ace (7)

14 On beer and pot, let loose — it's what drinker needs (6-6)

13 Trouble all round after associate faces depression temporarily (2,7)

5 Loads volcanic rock aboard steamer (6)

12 Puzzle's fine, can decipher at last (5)

11 Sea cucumber's flavour enthrals agent (7)

18 Knocking back liquor on the house, boors go berserk in American

@ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn



23 Asian city overwhelmed by outbreak as overcrowding returns (5)

24 Naive young woman and boy killed in bungee jumping (7) 25 How a Conservative MP might describe self as romantic (7)

26 Body found in restroom at terminus (6)

DOWN

1 Quick to embrace single female and soothe (6)

might be? (4,2,3,5) 6 Greek character almost catches fellow shoplifting (5) 7 Notorious ex-convict managed to enter empty flat (8)

8 Native American chief upset about reactionary slogan used by

15 Speak at length about early sign of femoral rupture (9) 16 Unusually mobile, small mass causes obstruction of blood vessel

illumination (8) 19 Sozzled actor popping bit of Viagra in romp (6)

20 Brief film about onset of war (6) 22 Bones in middle of trunk alongside seedy lane (5)

27 Suspicious cartons contain drug precursor (8)

2 Cry of pain after charges surge (6) 3 River or sea perhaps, not a lake (9)

4 Overcome by strong emotion, like a person with osteoarthritis

9 Make a deal with effort, acquiring a furniture company by take-over (6,1,7)

17 Amateur correctly grips both sides of coil in device providing

Solution to puzzle 13279 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6

5



FAITH

A devotee is rewarded

The life and works of Appayya Dikshitar reflect his multi-faceted personality. He had authored many spiritual texts of great value and carried on the tradition of Advaita Vedanta established by Adi Sankara. He chose to live in Chidambaram and prayed to Siva to grant him the boon of just meditating on Him with no other desire. That is, he only longed to attain Siva Pada. This strong yearning was already expressed in his powerful hymn Atmarpana Stuti, said Sri Mani Dravid Sastrigal in a discourse. Herein he had pointed out that it is possible for a jivatma to be blessed to remember God at the last moments and attain liberation if only God chooses to grace him.

This wish is granted to him when God makes true his prayer and takes him in His fold in the presence of a host of devotees on one Chitra Pournami day in Chidambaram. It happened when the early morning 'deepa aradhana' was being performed for the deity Nataraja. Overwhelmed by the experience of the vision of the effulgence of the Lord's feet which appeared to him as bright and shining like the young rising sun, Appayya Dikshitar began to compose a verse. At that instant all present were wonderstruck by the extraordinary spectacle that unfolded. Appayya Dikshitar had merged with the Lord's jyoti. What better reward for such devotion than being thus embraced and enveloped in the divine grace and compassion of the Lord? It is said his eldest son completed the verse his father had begun. He compares the jivatma's tryst with samsara to dark night where old age and death are pisachas that take the hold on people. The jivatma who continues in this dreadful state in every birth is released from this situation when the grace of Lord like the suryodaya puts an end to the dark night of samsara.

Raisi for nuclear talks, rules out Biden meet

Iran's President says 'no obstacles' to resuming diplomatic relations with Riyadh, after 5 years of tensions

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Iran's President-elect Ebrahim Raisi said on Monday he will not allow nuclear negotiations for the sake of negotiations, in his first news conference since winning election last week.

Mr. Raisi also ruled out meeting U.S. President Joe Biden but said there were "no obstacles" to resuming diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, the Sunniruled regional rival of Shiite Iran, which have been severed for five years.

Mr. Raisi, 60, won Friday's election in which more than half the voters stayed away after many political heavyweights had been barred from running and as an economic crisis driven by U.S. sanctions has battered the country.

Mr. Raisi, an ultraconser-



In control: Ebrahim Raisi ahead of his first news conference following victory in the presidential election in Tehran. • AP

vative cleric who heads Iran's judiciary, will replace moderate President Hassan Rouhani – whose landmark achievement was a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers – in August.

Vienna talks

"Any negotiations that guarantee national interests will

certainly be supported, but... we will not allow negotiations to be for negotiations' sake," Mr. Raisi said of the nuclear talks.

"Any meeting must produce a result... for the Iranian nation," he added.

The 2015 deal saw Iran accept curbs on its nuclear capabilities in return for an

easing of sanctions, but Mr. Raisi said he has no informer U.S. president Dotentions of meeting Mr. nald Trump unilaterally Biden. "No," was his flat response withdrew three years later and ramped up sanctions,

to a question from an American media outlet on whether he they would meet in the event the talks lead to the U.S. lifting sanctions on Iran, and to try and "fix" the issues between the two arch enemies.

Mr. Raisi also said his administration would be open to restoring ties with Iran's regional foe Saudi Arabia.

"There are no obstacles from Iran's side to re-opening Embassies... there are no obstacles to ties with Saudi Arabia," he said.

Ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia were cut in 2016 after Iranian protesters attacked Saudi diplomatic missions following the Kingdom's execution of a revered

Armenia PM wins majority in polls despite anger over war

He was widely blamed for ceding territory to Azerbaijan

REUTERS

Armenia's acting prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan, kept power in a parliamentary election that boosted his authority despite being widely blamed for a military defeat last year in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, results showed on Monday.

Mr. Pashinyan's Civil Contract party won 53.92% of votes cast in Sunday's snap election, according to preliminary results on Monday. Former President Robert Kocharyan's Armenia Alliance trailed on 21.04%, and questioned the credibility of the result, the Interfax news agency reported.

The government called the election to try to end a political crisis that began when ethnic Armenian forces ceded territory to Azerbaijan in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in six weeks of fighting last year.



Nikol Pashinyan

The hostilities caused international concern because the wider South Caucasus region is a corridor for pipelines carrying natural oil and gas to world markets. It is also a geopolitical arena with Russia, the U.S., the European Union and Turkey all jostling for influence.

Mr. Pashinyan, 46, faced protests after the defeat and demands for his resignation over the terms of a peace agreement under which Azerbaijan regained control of territory it had lost during a war in the early 1990s.

He described the deal as a disaster but said he had been compelled to sign it in order to prevent greater hu-

man and territorial losses. He wrote on Twitter on Monday that his party would have a constitutional majority - at least 71 deputies out of 105 - and "will form a government led by me.'

Mr. Pashinyan said Armenia would strengthen ties with Russia-led regional groups, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

"We are determined to work on improving, deepening and developing relations (with CSTO and EAEU countries), and we will definitely move in this direction," Russia's RIA news agency quoted Mr. Pashinyan as saying in an address broadcast on Facebook.



Facebook rolls out 'live audio', podcasts in U.S.

Facebook on Monday began rolling out its service for people seeking audio-based connections in a challenge to the social platform Clubhouse. The "live audio rooms" will enable users to listen to, and sometimes participate in, conversations led by celebrities and "influencers" or create a fundraiser on the platform. Facebook has tapped a number of celebrities. including rapper D Smoke, wellness guru Dr. Jess. AFP

HK's *Apple Daily* says it may shut down

Board to decide future after asset freeze left the group unable to pay staff salaries

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong's embattled prodemocracy newspaper Apple Daily reported on Monday that its board of directors has asked authorities to unfreeze some assets so it can pay salaries and avoid labour violations, and that the board will meet again on Friday to decide if the newspaper will cease operations.

Police last week arrested five top editors and executives of Apple Daily under the city's tough national security law on suspicion of foreign collusion, searched its offices and froze \$2.3 million worth of assets of three companies linked to the newspaper.

The arrests and freezing of assets came as Hong Kong authorities crack down on dissenting voices as Beijing tightens control over the territory in what critics say is an erosion of freedoms it promised the city for 50 years when the former British colony was handed over to China in 1997.

Defending democracy

Apple Daily has been outspoken in defending Hong Kong's freedoms, and in recent years has often criticized the Chinese and Hong Kong governments for limiting the city's democratic freedoms as well as constricting the rights of free speech and assembly not found on mainland China.

prompting the Islamic repu-

blic to pull back from its nu-

Biden has signalled his readi-

ness to return to the deal and

state parties – also including

Britain, China, France, Ger-

many and Russia - have late-

ly been negotiating its revival

Mora said on Sunday that

those involved in the talks

were "closer" to saving the

Iran nuclear deal but that

Shia Muslim clerical esta-

blishment, Mr. Raisi smiled

and raised his hands as he ar-

rived for Monday's press

An austere figure from the

sticking points remain.

EU negotiator Enrique

Mr. Trump's successor Mr.

clear commitments.

in Vienna

The newspaper said in an article on its website on Monday that if its board decides on Friday to cease operations of the newspaper, its website could stop publishing as early as Saturday morning, and Saturday's print edition of the newspaper would be its last.

An internal memo sent to some employees at Apple Daily also stated that those who wish to resign immediately could do so.

Apple Daily said in an arti-

cle on Sunday that it may challenge the decision to freeze its assets in court if the city's Security Bureau denies its request.

The Security Bureau said it would not comment on the details of the case because legal proceedings were on-

It said endangering national security is a "very serious crime.'

"We handle such crimes according to the law, targeting at illegal acts, and invoke the power to freeze offenserelated properties based on need and the law," the bureau said in an English-language statement.

Myanmar's Suu Kyi thanks supporters for flower protests

People replicated her floral hairstyle to celebrate birthday

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Deposed Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Monday thanked her supporters for defying the junta to celebrate her 76th birthday with flower protests, as her trial on a raft of criminal charges

A mass uprising in Myanmar against a February military putsch has been met

resumed.

with a brutal crackdown that has killed more than 870 civilians, according to a local monitoring group.

Protesters across country on Saturday donned flowers in their hair – long a signature Suu Kyi look - to mark the birthday of the democracy icon, who turned 76 under junta house arrest.

Many replicated the floral hairstyle and uploaded pictures onto social media. Ms. Suu Kyi told her lawyers "to convey her thanks

and share her wishes for the people", her lawyer Khin Maung Zaw said, adding that she was "in good health". Since last week, she has

been on trial facing accusations of illegally possessing walkie-talkie radios and breaching coronavirus regulations while campaigning.

Russian _ scientist held in Germany

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

German police have arrested a Russian scientist working at an unidentified university, accusing him of spying for Moscow, prosec utors said on Monday, in a case that risks further inflaming bilateral tensions.

Federal prosecutors said in a statement that the suspect, identified as Ilnur N., had been taken into custody on Friday on suspicion of "working for a Russian secret service since October 2020 at the latest". Ilnur N. was employed as a research assistant at a natural sciences and technology department at the unnamed German university. The suspect appeared before a judge on Saturday who remanded him in custody.

Jordan 'coup plot': two suspects plead not guilty

They are accused of helping Hamzah

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Two officials accused of helping Jordan's Prince Hamzah try to overthrow his halt-brother King Abdul lah II have pleaded not guilty, one of their lawyers said on Monday as the trial

Former royal court chief Bassem Awadallah, who also holds Saudi nationality, and a former special envoy to Riyadh, Sharif Hassan bin Zaid, are charged with attempting to "destabilise the kingdom's security", acdocuments.

The trial began behind closed doors at the State Security Court and will continue on Tuesday, an official

According to state televi-

sion, the court heard two out of a total of six witnesses – four military personnel and two civilians.

Mr. Awadallah's lawyer Mohammad Afit said the defendants both pleaded not

Prince Hamzah, who is accused of attempting to overthrow the King and of seeking help from Saudi Arabia to do so, is not facing trial. Prince Hamzah, 41, "was determined to satisfy his personal ambition to rule, in violation of the constitution and Hashemite (Jordanian ruling family) custom," according to an indictment. "To succeed, he sought to exploit the concerns and problems of the population and to arouse

sedition and frustration in

society," it added

U.S. is committed to supporting Afghan people: White House

Amid troops pullout, Biden to meet Ghani and Abdullah

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

U.S. President Joe Biden will meet Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani and the Chairman of its High Council for National Reconciliation, Abdullah Abdullah, at the White House on Friday, Press Secretary Jen Psaki said on Sunday in a statement released by the White House. The visit comes after the U.S. began withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan, a process that began on May 1 and is expected to be completed by September 11, the 20th anniversary of the World Trade Center terror attacks in New York City.

"The United States is committed to supporting the Afghan people by providing di-



plomatic, economic, and humanitarian assistance to support the Afghan people, including Afghan women, girls and minorities," Ms. Psaki said on Sunday.

Peace talks in Qatar between the Afghan government and the Taliban have not made significant progress. The Taliban said on Sunday that they were committed to peace talks and

wanted a "genuine Islamic system" in the country and that they would "accommodate" the rights of all – including women – in line with that system. However, violence has continued to rock the country, with the Taliban claiming to have captured over 40 districts.

On Sunday, Ms. Psaki said the U.S. would continue to engage the Afghan government to prevent the country from becoming a safe haven for terror groups who pose a threat to the U.S. "The United States continues to fully support the ongoing peace process and encourages all Afghan parties to participate meaningfully in negotiations to bring an end to the con-

Taliban, Afghan forces clash near Kunduz city

Insurgents claim control of 50 districts

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

The Taliban and Afghan forces clashed on Monday on the outskirts of the strategic northern city of Kunduz, with the insurgents claiming to have captured three districts in the region in a week

Taliban have launched major offensives targeting government forces since early May when the U.S. military began its final troop withdrawal, and claim to have seized more than 50 country's of the districts.

Many of their claims are disputed by the government, and independent verification is difficult.

"The Taliban fighters are at the gates of the city and they are fighting Afghan

forces," said Amruddin Wali, a Kunduz provincial council member.

He said the insurgents have also taken up positions on highways that connect Kunduz city to neighbouring provinces.

On Monday, the Taliban claimed they had captured the Imam Sahib district of the province, the third to be taken in a week.

Kunduz police spokes man Inamuddin Rahmani confirmed the fighting, and said his forces had killed about 50 Taliban fighters in the past 24 hours.

The Taliban have repeatedly attempted to capture the city, located not far from Tajikistan border. The insurgents briefly held Kunduz twice before - in September 2015, and again a year later.

Exports resume from Gaza as Israel eases blockade

The curbs impacted thousands of Palestinian farmers

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Trucks carrying clothes and fabric rolled out of the Palestinian enclave of Gaza on Monday as Israel lifted some restrictions it had imposed during last month's conflict. The crowded Mediterra-

nean territory, home to around two million Palestinians, has been under an Israeli blockade since 2007. The resumption of some trade and the postal service

came one month after a cea-

sefire between Israel and the enclave's Hamas rulers to end an 11-day conflict. An AFP reporter Monday

saw trucks loaded with fabric go through the Kerem Shalom crossing while Palestinians in the Gaza Strip reported that some mail also nad been allowed in. On Sunday, the Israeli mil-



itary body that administers civilian affairs in the Palestinian territories, COGAT, said it will allow the "limited export" of farm produce from

Extra restrictions since intense violence last month has meant Gaza's farmers have been unable to export goods as usual, creating a glut of produce such as tomatoes and strawberries, causing prices to tumble.

COGAT added that "this

civil affairs committee that controls the borders, said Israel had informed him that mail would be allowed in and out of the enclave, but COGAT did not confirm the announcement.

civilian measure, which was approved by the political echelon, is conditional upon the preservation of security stability" Saleh al-Zaq, head of the

China cracks down on crypto mining

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

China has broadened a crackdown on its massive cryptocurrency mining industry with a ban on mines in a key southwestern province.

Chinese mines power nearly 80% of the global trade in cryptocurrencies despite a domestic trading ban since 2017, but in recent months several provinces have ordered mines to close as Beijing turns a sharp eye to the industry.

Authorities in the province of Sichuan ordered the closure of 26 mines last week, according to a notice widely circulated on Chinese social media and confirmed by a former bitcoin miner. The notice reportedly instructed power companies to stop supplying electricity to all cryptocurrency mines by Sunday. It vowed a "complete clean-up"

Fresh sanctions on Belarus "All the tenders issued by CIL and it's Subsidiaries for procuremen

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

The EU, US, Britain and Canada imposed coordinated sanctions on Belarus on Monday after the forced landing of a Ryanair airlin-

Coal India Limited

(A Maharatna Company)

of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal

ndia Ltd <u>www.coalindia.in</u> respective Subsidiary Company CIL e-procurement porta https://coalindiatenders.nic.in and Central Public Procuremen Portal https://eprocure.gov.in In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal https://gem.gov.in"

"e-Procurement Tender Notice

Tenders are invited from APEPDCL registered vendors for supply of Spot collection machines, MS Materials, Insulators, Capacitor Banks, Fabrication materials, Cable AB switches, VCB spares, Transformers & HG Fuse sets through e-Procurement For further details please visit www.apeprocurement.gov.in

Ph. No.: 0891-2582302/3/4, Email: cgm_pmm@apeasternpower.com Chief General Manager (P&MM)

ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PHED NCR REGION ALWAR Manu Marg ALWAR(RAJ.) E-Mail- ace.alw.ph NOTICE INVITING BID (Nit No. 29-31/2021-22)

Bids for Work of construction of Sources, rising main pipelines, CWRs, Pum nouses, ESRs, internal village distribution pipeline and FHTC including one yea Defect Liability period of Various Villages under Panchayat samiti Kathumar Panchayat samiti Rajgarh Panchayat samiti Reni under JJM in the jurisdiction PHED Division Rajgarh are invited from interested bidders upto 05:00 PM on Date 22-07-2021. Other particulars of the Bid may be visited on the proce https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state and

nttps://phedwater.rajasthan.gov.in departmental website PHE2122WLOB03753 PHE2122WLOB03754 (Sunil Kumar Garg) DIPR/C/5810



P3-13249/2009

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

INVITATION OF BIDS Providing Professional Management & Coordination of activities including upgradation by own Developments (New Construction & Refurbishments)

Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala intends to select an agency for the Operation and Maintenance of Sargaalaya Arts & Crafts Village at Iringal in Kozhikkode District, Kerala State. Competent firms can submit their bid through e-tender portal of Government of Kerala (www.etenders.kerala.gov.in). RFP document can be lownloaded from the e-tender portal. Last date for the submission of bid is

<u>and operation on lease basis for a period of 25 years & Transfer the Sargaalaya</u>

Arts & Crafts Village at Iringal in Kozhikkode District

22/07/2021, 3.00 PM. Tender Id: 2021_T0UR_426557_1

Date: 18/06/2021

Director

ND-NDE

kerala.



nviting Expression of Interest (EoI) from well established Regional/National level Institutions and any other eligible Lega entities with proven experience and expertise in the cluste development activities to empanel as "Technical Agencies (TAs) for the Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI), under PPDC Agra, to provide technical and handholding support for SFURTI Clusters.

For further details and Terms of Reference visit our website http://www.ppdcagra.dcmsme.gov.in/. The last date of receipt of Eol in sealed cover is 14.07.2021 before 5.00 p.m

PRINCIPAL DIRECTOR

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on June 21				
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELI		
US Dollar	73.90	74.22		
Euro	87.90	88.31		
British Pound	102.57	103.02		
Japanese Yen (100)	67.11	67.40		
Chinese Yuan	11.43	11.48		
Swiss Franc	80.23	80.58		
Singapore Dollar	54.96	55.22		
Canadian Dollar	59.50	59.76		
Malaysian Ringitt	17.82	17.91		

. 6775.50.

UltraTech Cement

Nissan starts exporting

Magnite SUVs

Nissan Motor India has commenced exports of sub-compact sport utility Indonesia, South Africa and Nepal. Nissan said it had so far produced 15.010 Magnite SUVs of which 13.790 were for India and 1,220 for exports. Following the overwhelming response for Magnite, it plans to explore new export markets, said Sinan Ozkok, president.

Honeywell tech to aid fight against fake drugs

BENGALURU Tech firm Honeywell said it would develop a digital authentication technology to battle counterfeit pharmaceutical products in India. According to Honeywell, the solution would comprise a digital code that is embedded in the packaging of pharmaceutical products. The user can verify product authenticity by scanning the digital code using a smartphone

IP Rings turns ₹4.09-cr. profit in fourth quarter

IP Rings Ltd. reported a standalone net profit of ₹4.09 crore for Q4 FY21 on account of a substantial rise in revenue. It had incurred a loss of ₹1.09 crore in Q4FY20. Revenue from operations rose 69% to ₹76 crore. The board declared a dividend of ₹1.50 per share. FY22 looks promising with new orders from European and North American clients said Ram Venkataramani, MD

Grofers to raise tech team pay by 33%

NEW DELHI Grofers on Monday said it will offer a 33% hike in salary to its tech team effective July, along with a "hefty ESOP allocation" as the online grocery delivery platform looks to retain staff and woo more tech talent. The SoftBank-backed company, which plans to launch an initial public offering (IPO), also hinted that it has secured a new funding round. PT

'Need to support households, SMEs on brink'

CII's Narendran urges relaxing FCRA norms, expanding GST relief on COVID-19 imports to prepare for future waves

VIKAS DHOOT

Larger businesses in several COVID-19-affected sectors may make it through the pandemic's deleterious effects, but smaller companies may not survive as income and job losses pile up and weaken demand, said Tata Steel chief and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) president T.V. Narendran, seeking urgent measures to pre-empt a meltdown.

"Most families have spent more on medical expenditure than they planned, and many families are impacted by job losses or salary freezes or cuts," Mr. Narendran said in an interview. "So there would be a tendency to postpone expenditure, just to deal with the current situation," he added, urging temporary cuts in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates for the worst-affected contact-intensive sectors and on consumer durables so as to spur demand.

To be better prepared for future COVID-19 waves, the government must relax the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) norms that were holding up global aid flows and ground level relief efforts of well-meaning NGOs, he suggested. Critical COVID-19 supplies imported by industry and others at the peak of the second wave, should also be exempted from GST levies.

In order to ramp up vaccine supplies and accelerate the pace of inoculations, the industry group said the Union government, as the largest buyer, should do 'whatever it takes' to help producers, including issuing



Spending squeeze: Most families have spent more on medical expenditure than they planned, says CII chief. •PTI

confirmed orders and advance payments.

While the CII has sought excise duty cuts on fuel products along with a package of other measures to give some respite to households and small businesses, the Tata

Steel MD said a more targeted approach was needed for high-contact sectors like hospitality, retail and aviation which had 'really struggled' through the pandemic.

"They are big employment generators, creating both formal and informal jobs. So we need to make sure that some of them get the support they need. The bigger companies will still survive, but it's a large number of smaller ones who will struggle," he said.

'Extend ECLGS validity'

While the government has expanded the ₹3 lakh crore emergency credit line guarantee scheme to several more sectors, including aviation, and extended its validity till September, Mr. Narendran said it would be better to extend it till March 31 and enhance the corpus.

"We should extend it till March, so that people have some more time to recover, because you also don't know if there's a [third wave] happening in October-November or earlier, so it's better to

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Bharti Airtel and Tata Group

on Monday announced a

strategic partnership for im-

plementing 5G network so-

(DoT) gave permission to te-

lecom service providers to

became the first telco in In-

dia to demonstrate 5G over

its network in Hyderabad.

The company has started 5G

trials in major cities using

spectrum allocated by the

DoT, it said in a statement.

loped a 'state of the art' O-

RAN (Radio Access Net-

'Tata Group has deve-

Earlier this year, Airtel

In May, the Department

Telecommunications

lutions for India.

conduct 5G trials.

provide the support... and then take a call by March next year, where we are on vaccination," he said. "Let's use it where it can be most helpful," he stressed.

The CII chief backed Nasscom's call for easing FCRA norms on overseas donations till the pandemic subsides, asserting that India was losing out on global aid.

"A lot of work that is currently getting probably held up by good, well-meaning NGOs... That's actually not helping anybody," he said.

Calling for wider GST relief, he said, "If some of this (tax exemptions) encourages industry to do more and be better prepared, we should certainly do that. Because the last thing we need is to be underprepared... I'd rather that we are all prepared and there's no third wave".

work) based radio and N on-

Standalone Architecture

(NSA) and Standalone Archi-

tecture (SA) core and has in-

tegrated a totally indigenous

telecom stack. This will be

available for commercial de-

velopment starting January

2022," Tata Group said in a

Airtel will pilot and de-

ploy this solution as part of

its 5G roll-out plans in India

and start the pilot in January

es is helping align the solu-

tion to both Third Genera-

tion Partnership Project and

O-RAN standards, as the

network and equipment are

increasingly embedded into

Tata Consultancy Servic-

statement

2022, it stated.

Bharti, Tata partner for

5G network solutions

Telco to begin pilot in January

SAT overrules SEBI, allows PNB HF's EGM on Carlyle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Setting aside SEBI's direction, the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Monday allowed PNB Housing Finance to go ahead with the shareholders' meeting on Tuesday to consider the proposed ₹4,000 crore-investment by private equity firm Carlyle and others in the mortgage firm.

However, results of the shareholders' voting will not be disclosed till further directions from tribunal.

On appeal

The ruling comes hours after PNB Housing informed stock exchanges that it had appealed against SEBI's direction on June 18 wherein it was asked to defer consideration of the proposed capital infusion proposal till a valuation of the company's shares is done by a registered independent

The Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) is scheduled for Tuesday.

SEBI had not only restrained PNB Housing from going ahead with voting on the proposal but also directed that the matter should be placed afresh before the company's board of directors and a decision be taken on the basis of the independent valuation.

Under the deal, PNB Housing will allot securities worth ₹4,000 crore to Carlyle group and other entities, a deal that will eventually result in the private equity firm becoming a major shareholder.

On Monday, the shares of PNB Housing Finance declined 5% to ₹702.40 apiece, its lower circuit limit, on the BSE.

Vistara urges unified norm for vaccinated airline passengers

Issue raised with Civil Aviation Ministry, says carrier's CCO

JAGRITI CHANDRA

Airlines will need a "unified" solution for domestic and international air travel to enable hassle-free movement for fully vaccinated passengers, said Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) Vinod Kannan.

The remark comes at a time when the Ministry of Civil Aviation is learnt to be examining a proposal to do away with RT-PCR test requirements for fully vaccinated passengers for domestic air travel. "The question around what should be done to enable domestic travel when passengers have been

'Retail to be

next growth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

engine for RIL'

With a potential for a 10x

growth in pre-tax profit

from the business over the

next decade, retail, includ-

ing e-commerce, will be

the next growth engine for

Reliance Industries Ltd.

(RIL), Goldman Sachs said.

FY16-FY20, it's core retail

revenue growth took a

pause in FY21 due to CO-

The conglomerate run

by billionaire Mukesh Am-

bani used the period to

build strong digital capabil-

ities of the retail business

while continuing to expand

ness (including e-com) is

set to be the next growth

engine for RIL, with poten-

tial for retail EBITDA to

grow 10x over the next 10 years," the brokerage said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HCL Technologies has ap-

pointed senior level sales

personnel in South Korea,

Vietnam and Taiwan to ac-

it has onboarded Joonho

Moon, Terry Tai and

Nguyen Ha Tuan as country

sales heads of South Korea,

Taiwan and Vietnam, res-

and Vietnam are growth

markets for HCL as we see

immense potential for our

products and services in

these countries," said San-

jay Gupta, corporate VP,

South Korea is known for

its innovation and leads in

new digital technologies

HCL Technologies.

"South Korea, Taiwan

pectively, to drive growth.

The technology firm said

celerate its growth in Asia.

HCL hires sales heads in

Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan

Firm aims to accelerate growth in Asia

C. Vijayakumar

such as 5G and IOT, Taiwan

is the nerve centre of the

global semiconductor in-

dustry while Vietnam is one

of the fastest growing digital

expanding its global foot-

print with its next-genera-

tion services and products,"

said C. Vijayakumar, CEO,

"HCL has been actively

economies, said HCL.

HCL Technologies.

"We believe retail busi-

its physical reach, it said.

VID-related

headwinds.

After growing 5x over



vaccinated has been raised with the Ministry and that is something they are working on," Mr. Kannan said.

'We hope there will be a unified solution for domestic and international travel. What that solution will be, whether it will be a solution that IATA is proposing, or

there will be another, that is something we are waiting to hear," he told The Hindu when asked if airlines were discussing vaccine passports to make air travel easier. A vaccine passport is a document that proves a passenger has been vaccinated. However, international

travel is likely to continue in the form of air bubble arrangements India has with 27 countries, he said. "May be till the last quarter of this year, they are here to stay because one of the big determinants [of reopening international flights] will be how ed," Mr. Kannan said.

Maruti to raise prices in Q2 as costs increase

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India said it will raise the prices of its entire product portfolio in the second quarter of the current fiscal due to rise in prices of various essential commodities.

"The prices of steel and precious metals like rhodi um have gone up substantially. In April, we passed on a part of the increased input costs to consumers thinking that the prices of the commodities will come down eventually. But that has not happened and as a last resort, we are doing it to safeguard the firm's nancial health," ED (sales and marketing) Shashank Srivastava told PTI.

SBI gets board nod to raise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

₹14,000 crore

The country's largest lender SBI said its central board has approved a proposal to raise up to ₹14,000 crore by issuing Basel-IIIcompliant bonds.

The bonds are proposed to be raised in Indian or U.S. currency.

'The central board of the bank at its meeting held today on June 21, accorded approval for raising capital by way of issuance of Basel III-compliant debt instruments in USD and/or INR during FY22," SBI said in a regulatory filing.

Under this, the bank plans to raise fresh additional tier I capital up to an amount of ₹14,000 crore subject to the Government of India concurrence, it

The scrip of SBI closed 1.64% higher at ₹419.55

Windfall treasury gains added + to PSB profits in FY21: ICRA

Rate cuts, liquidity aided trading profits in bond portfolios

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The onset of COVID-19 resulted in windfall gains for public sector banks (PSBs). with trading profits on their bond portfolios rising sharply after the steep cut in policy rates by the RBI in March 2020, ratings agency ICRA

The repo rate and the reverse repo rate were cumulatively cut by 115 basis points (bps) and 155 bps, respectively, in March 2020 and May 2020 to 4% and 3.35%, respectively, by May 2020. (100 basis points = 1 percentage point)

With a year-on-year deposit growth of 11.4% and muted credit growth of 5.5% in FY21, the liquidity in the banking system remained abundant at ₹5-7 trillion in FY2021, ICRA said in a re-

12 public sector banks reported a profit in FY21 after five consecutive years of losses port. "With the rate cuts and

abundant liquidity, the daily average for the benchmark 10-year government securities declined from 6.42% in Q4 FY20 to 6.00% in Q1 FY21, 5.93% in Q2 FY21 and 5.9% in Q3 FY21 before rising to 6.06% in Q4 FY21," the ratings agency said.

The significant volatility in bond yields also provided banks with ample trading opportunities, ICRA added.

According to ICRA's estimates, public sector banks booked profits of ₹316 billion from this source (treasury operations), compared with the overall PBT of ₹459 bil-

On an aggregate, the lion in FY21. "As banks booked gains on their bond holdings, their fresh investments are closer to the market rates, thereby aligning the yield on their bond portfolios closer to the market rates," said Anil Gupta, VP, Financial Sector Ratings.

On an aggregate, the 12 PSBs reported a profit in FY21 after five consecutive years of losses (FY16-20). "Apart from trading gains, the return to profitability was supported by lower credit provisions on their legacy non-performing assets, after the high provisions made [in] the last few years," ICRA said in the report.

"Notably, the trading gains for public banks in FY21 exceeded the capital infusion of ₹200 billion received from the Government

stake in Vini Cosmetics WestBridge to increase holding SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KKR to buy \$625-million

Global investment firm KKR will buy a maiority stake in Vini Cosmetics for about \$625 million (₹4,600 crore) KKR and Vini Cosmetics

signed an agreement under which Vini's founder group led by Darshan Patel, chairman and joint MD and Dipam Patel, joint MD - and Sequoia Capital would sell stakes in the company.

The co-founders would continue to hold a significant stake in Vini and collaborate with KKR in the next phase of its growth.

In addition, existing investor WestBridge Capital would acquire further stake from the founder group to increase its shareholding in Vini. Vini manufactures, markets and distributes deodorants, cosmetics and toiletries under its FOGG, OS-SUM and GlamUp brands.



Gaurav Trehan

Mr. Darshan Patel would continue as the chairman and Dipam Patel would be the vice-chairman.

"We look forward to leveraging their global platform, resources and operational expertise to take Vini to the next level," said Mr. Darshan Patel said.

"Our investment underscores our long-term commitment to support India's innovative firms," Gaurav Trehan, partner, KKR, said.

Siva Industries' promoters offer is better option: lenders

Promoters tell NCLT: 'Will clear all dues within 180 days'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The promoters of Siva Industries Holdings Ltd. have told the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) that they would clear all dues, within 180 days, as per the terms of agreed out-of-court settlement with the lenders. The NCLT had sought explanation from lenders on the rationale behind accepting the one-time settlement offer.

In 2019, NCLT had admitted insolvency proceedings against the C. Sivasankaran promoted company in a case filed by IDBI Bank Limited. Later, the majority of the

committee of lenders had

approved a one-time settle-

ment offer from the promo-

ruptcy Code (IBC). As per legal filings, there



ters, which had been filed before the NCLT as per 12A of the Insolvency and Bank-

was a total claim of about ₹4,863 crore. Of this, claims of ₹644 crore by IDBI are in dispute and are to be settled based on court proceedings.

The remaining claims of about ₹4,200 crore are proposed to be settled through payment of ₹323 crore by Siva Industries and ₹555 crore from third-party guarantors. Blackstone's International

ARC and Abu Dhabi's Masdar hold 40% of the claims. Indian public sector banks would get 26% of their claims as per the one-time settlement proposal.

The lenders had told the NCLT that the promoters' settlement offer gave them a much better recovery compared with other options like liquidation or an alternative resolution plan to take over the company.

The tribunal will hear the matter again on June 24.

Centre moots ban on 'flash sales' on e-com sites

Ministry says has received complaints

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

To monitor deep discounts offered on e-commerce websites, the government on Monday proposed changes to the Consumer Protection (e-commerce) Rules 2020, banning all "flash sales".

The proposed changes have been put up on the website of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs calling for public comments till July 6.

The Ministry clarified that the 'conventional' flash sale had not been banned, but that only 'predatory' ones would be banned. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs said in a statement it had been receiving several complaints against widespread cheating and unfair

trade practices being observed in the e-commerce ecosystem.

"Conventional flash sales by third party sellers are not banned on e-commerce platform. But certain e-commerce entities are engaging in limiting consumer choice by indulging in 'back-toback' or 'flash' sales wherein one seller on a platform does not carry any inventory or order fulfilment capability but merely places a 'flash or back-to-back' order with another seller controlled by the platform. This prevents a level playing field and ultimately limits customer choice and increases prices," the Ministry said.

It was not clear if this meant suspension of the big festival sales on the sites.

Not a ball bowled on fourth day Conway has what it takes to go places

Rain and wet conditions continue to play spoilsport in summit clash

WTC FINAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SOUTHAMPTON

The fickle English weather played spoilsport yet again as day four of the inaugural World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand was washed out due to rain.

For the second time in the summit clash, a whole day was lost. No play was possible on the opening day too.

With the weather not improving since morning at the Ageas Bowl, the umpires took a call almost four hours and 30 minutes after the scheduled start time of 3 p.m. IST.

"Day four of the #WTC21 Final has been abandoned due to persistent rain," read an ICC update.

Disappointed fans

The fans who were patiently waiting for the action to start had to leave disappointed. "We thank our fans who turned up and kept the tempo high. See you again, tomorrow," the BCCI added.

Rain is not forecast for the remaining two days of the big final but it is likely to remain overcast, the way it has been so far in the contest. On days two and three, bad light had stopped play.

The final was well-poised at stumps on day three with New Zealand reaching 101 for two in reply to India's 217

Maximum of 196 overs

A maximum of 196 overs can be played in the game in order to find a result. The trophy will be shared if the game is drawn.

The match, the culmination of the inaugural World Test Championship that has spanned two years with contests between leading Test nations, is worth \$1.6 million to the winner and \$800,000 to the runner-up.

SCOREBOARD

India - 1st innings: 217 in 92.1

New Zealand - 1st innings: Tom Latham c Kohli b Ashwin 30 (104b, 3x4), Devon Conway c Shami b Ishant 54 (153b, 6x4), Kane Williamson (batting) 12 (37b, 1x4), Ross Taylor (batting) 0 (2b); Extras (lb-3, nb-2): 5; Total (for two wkts. in 49 ov-

Fall of wickets: 1-70 (Latham, 34.2), 2-101 (Conway, 48.4). India bowling: Ishant 12-4-19-1, Bumrah 11-3-34-0, Shami 11-4-19-0, Ashwin 12-5-20-1, Jadeja



Killing time: Rahane and Pujara take a stroll across the Ageas Bowl outfield on a rained-out Monday. • GETTY IMAGES

Hard to miss the Kiwi's insatiable appetite for runs and ice-cool temperament

S. DINAKAR

Inclement weather washing Lout Monday's play in the ICC World Test Championship final lent time to reflect on Devon Conway's early achievements and the possibility of him emerging as a significant batsman of merit.

The 29-year-old left-hander, who moved from South Africa to New Zealand in 2016, has an insatiable appetite for runs. And it is not about statistics but the sight he presents at the crease, with an ice-cool temperament which is so reassuring the New Zealand supporters.

Solid and organised

Opening the innings, he is solid and organised with footwork and balance. He knows his off-stump whether he plays or leaves, whips deliveries on the leg-side, with his rear leg up as he executes the stroke, and can the short-pitched deliveries.

He allows the ball to come to him, plays it late and can take the sting off the bowling. His push-drives in the 'V' have fetched him a lot of runs, so have the coverdrives where his foot reaches out to the ball's pitch.



Exceptional talent: For someone new to the highest level, the sight Devon Conway presents at the crease is reassuring. • AFP

His initial numbers are mind-boggling. He began his Test career with a recent 200 at the hallowed Lord's against an incisive English pace attack.

This was followed by a series-clinching 80 in the second Test at Edgbaston. And he appeared calm and efficient against a probing Indian attack in demanding conditions at Southampton, when his strength, the whiplash flick, led to his dismissal for a well-made 54.

Staggering numbers

A look at Conway's numbers in New Zealand's domestic competitions, across formats, is staggering. Last season he was the highest scorer in all three formats with 701 runs in six First Class matches in the Plunket Shield, New Zealand's First Class cricket, 553 runs in 10 innings in the List-A Ford Trophy and 543 runs in 11 matches of the Super Smash T20 tournament.

Batting conditions in New Zealand's domestic cricket are never easy, but Conway relished the challenge. His 327 not out for Wellington against Canterbury made sure the New Zealand selectors offered him a Central Contract. An ODI hundred against Bangladesh in Wellington, an unbeaten 99 versus Australia in the T20 international at Christchurch followed.

A natural run-getter, formats do not bother him and he adjusts seamlessly because of sound fundamentals. Is Conway destined for a shot at greatness? The initial signs seem good.

They point out that the 'previous experience' with the Sports Ministry was far from pleasant

AMOL KARHADKAR

The Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI's) decision to release ₹10 crore for assisting India's Olympic campaign in Tokyo has not gone down too well with some of its members.

While none of the State association representatives voiced their concern over the proposal during zonal videoconferencing meets on Sunday before the apex council stamped the decision, some units pointed out that the "previous experience" with the Sports Ministry was far from pleasant. In 2008, the BCCI had set

aside a corpus of ₹50 crore for a joint venture along with the ministry for what was to be called the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF). But according to Ratnakar Shetty, BCCI's chief administrative officer then, the ministry never provided details of how the fund was utilised.

"The NSDF was to be formed with a corpus of ₹80 crore – with the Sports Ministry to contribute ₹30 crore. After the 2010 Commonwealth Games, there was no detailed report about utilisation of funds," Shetty told *The Hindu* on Monday. "I filed an RTI in personal capacity and the reply was shocking. Only ₹8 crore was spent. It is obviously nice that the BCCI wants to support other sports but it should first ask what happened to the money that was already donated. What was it utilised for?"

Shetty also pointed out that it was the contribution of ₹50 crore to the NSDF that resulted in the Income Tax authorities revoking tax exemption for the BCCI. "It was remarked that

supporting other sports was not an object of the BCCI as defined in the memorandum of association, and the BCCI's appeal is still pending in the Bombay High Court."

BCCI gesture irks some State units Maharaj hat-trick sends Windies hurtling to defeat



Royal show: Maharaj, right, is gung-ho after dismissing Holder, the second of his three victims. • AFP

South Africa wins second Test by 158 runs, clinches series 2-0

SA IN WI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GROS ISLET

Keshav Maharaj became just the second South African to take a hat-trick in Test cricket and the team registered a 2-0 series victory as West Indies was shot out for 165 in the second session on day four of the second Test on Monday.

West Indies had been set a target of 324.

Maharaj's hat-trick came in the penultimate over of the first session.

He claimed a big breakthrough when Kieran Powell was caught near the squareleg boundary for 51. But the spinner added the wickets of Jason Holder and Joshua Da Silva off his next two balls.

Wiaan Mulder took a onehanded catch low down to his right at leg-slip to seal the hat-trick and send Maharaj running and sliding, soccerstyle, on his chest on the grass in celebration. Maharaj finished with five for 36 off

The only previous South African to take a hat trick in Tests was Geoff Griffin against England at Lord's in 1960.

Rabada shines

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada took the first three wickets of the session as West Indies which started the day on 15/0 in its second innings, fell away quickly. Rabada sent West Indies

captain Kraigg Brathwaite (6) and Shai Hope (2) back quickly before picking up the key wicket of Kyle Mayers for 34, ending his stand of 64 with Powell.

On Sunday, South Africa made 174 in its second innings after dismissing the West Indies for 149. Rassie van der Dussen top-scored with an unbeaten 75.

The scores: South Africa 298 & 174 in 53 overs (Rassie van der Dussen 75 n.o., Kagiso Rabada 40, Kemar Roach 4/52, Kyle Mayers 3/24) bt West Indies 149 & 165 in 58.3 overs (Kieran Powell 51, Kyle Mayers 34, Kagiso Rabada 3/44, Keshav Maharaj 5/36, incl. a hat-trick).

Jeev's emotional tribute to father Milkha

Says it will need a lifetime of resilience to deal with the loss



funeral pyre of Milkha Singh. • AFF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDIGARH

Ace golfer Jeev Milkha Singh paid tribute to his father Milkha Singh, who died of COVID-19 complications last week, saying he would need a lifetime of resilience to deal with the loss of his best friend, guide, and mentor.

The 49-year-old Jeev said Father's Day on Sunday was "another sad reminder of what I've lost".

"Dad was much more than my father – he was my best friend, my guide, my mentor," Jeev said in a

"I hope I've the same resilience and inner strength to overcome all odds. I really need it now. And I will need it for the rest of my life," he added.

Milkha was cremated here on Saturday evening with full State honours, with Jeev lighting the pyre. Milkha also had three

daughters.

"Somehow, I don't remember much of Dad's funeral procession, but one sight I will never forget. A military van coming to a stop and these soldiers getting out and giving dad the salute.

"The Milkha family has always been grateful of the Indian Army, and I want to thank them again," said

Jeev had had earlier described his mother's death as the "loss of family's backbone." The seasoned golfer thanked people for the outpouring "I lost my mom and

dad. But what has been even more emotional is the thousands of messages we have been getting from people as if they have lost someone of their own," he said. "Thank you to all dad's fans and well-wishers for supporting us at this

The Dutch are in cruise mode

Austria to make knockout debut after defeating Ukraine

EURO 2020

REUTERS AMSTERDAM

Georginio Wijnaldum scored a second-half double as the Netherlands defeated North Macedonia 3-0 to keep its perfect record on way to the European Championship knockout stages on Monday.

The Netherlands had already sealed top spot in Group C after beating Ukraine and Austria, and it will play its last-16 game in Budapest on Sunday against one of the best third-placed finishers from Groups D, E

Much improved

North Macedonia, which was out of contention for the last 16 after back-to-back defeats, made a much-improved start as Ivan Trickovski's early strike was ruled out for offside before Aleksandar Trajkovski smacked the post from 20 yards.

But Igor Angelovski's side was soon caught out by a stunning Dutch counterattack when PSV Eindhoven forward Donyell Malen charged upfield to set up Memphis Depay, who slotted it home for his second goal of the tournament.

Wijnaldum doubled the Dutch advantage with a tap in from close range and added a third just before the hour mark to put the result beyond doubt in front of a partisan crowd at the Johan Cruyff Arena.

country.

Guard of honour

North Macedonia's Goran Pandev received a guard of honour from his team mates when he was substituted off about 10 minutes later, in what he has said would be his final appearance for his In Bucharest, Austria ad-

vanced to the knockouts for the first time beating Ukraine 1-0 in their final group match to finish second and set up a last 16 clash with

The Netherlands finished with nine points while Austria has six from two wins.

Christoph Baumgartner, who looked shaken after a clash of heads with Illia Zabarnvi minutes earlier. scored in the 21st minute from a corner when he beat the Ukrainian defender to prod home from a teasing David Alaba delivery.

Ukraine, which was sloppy in possession and rarely threatened in the final third, has three points and must wait to see if it advances as one of the four best thirdplaced teams.

The results: Group C: North Macedonia O lost to the Netherlands 3 (Depay 24, Wijnaldum 51, 58); Ukraine O lost to Austria 1 (Baumgartner 21).



Leading from the front: Dutch skipper Georginio Wijnaldum's brace was the highlight of the

England unlikely to take risks against Czech Republic

Croatia and Scotland need a win to boost their chances

AGENCIES MANCHESTER

England manager Gareth Southgate looks likely to resist the clamour for a major change in approach for Tuesday's final Euro 2020 Group D match against the Czech Republic at Wembley.

The disappointing performance in Friday's goalless draw with Scotland has led to calls from pundits and fans for Southgate to adopt a more positive style. But while some personnel

changes could be on the cards, it is not expected that the England manager will switch to the kind of attacking line-up some of his critics have been demanding.

The Czechs are top of the

TODAY'S MATCHES

GROUP D Croatia vs Scotland 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

Czech Republic vs England 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday) Live on Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD)

table on four points, ahead of England on goal difference, and a draw would see both teams advance.

On Sunday, Southgate took the unusual step of announcing that captain Harry Kane, whose sluggish displays have worried England fans, will definitely start against the Czechs.

In Glasgow, Scotland will be looking to give its boister-

ous fans something to really cheer about, when it faces Croatia with both teams needing to win to have any chance of advancing. The Scots will have to play

without Billy Gilmour, however, as he has tested positive for the coronavirus. Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic

has been facing questions about his future with the national team in the build-up to Tuesday's match. The players wants to set

things right on Tuesday, and Croatia defender Josko Gvardiol was apologetic about the performances so far. "We have to give everyth-

ing we can to 'die' on the pitch, and hope we can go through," said Gvardiol.

Tokyo organisers set a limit of 10,000 fans for all venues

Spectators may be barred if the situation changes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Tokyo Olympics will allow some local fans to attend when the Games open in just over a month, organising committee officials and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said on

Organisers set a limit of 50% of capacity up to a maximum of 10,000 fans for all Olympic venues.

The decision was announced after so-called Five Party talks online with local



Seiko Hashimoto. • AFP

organisers, IOC, International Paralympic Committee, Japanese government and

to acknowledge the uncertainty around the pandemic during the Games. "If there is any abrupt

government of metropolitan

Local organising commit-

tee president Seiko Hashi-

moto said it was important

change in the situation, we will hold five-party meetings

again to make other decisions," Hashimoto said. "If there is an announcement of a state of emergency during the Games, no-spectator Games will be examined."

WTC 2021 final: India vs New Zealand: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3 p.m. **Euro 2020**: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

IN BRIEF



Usain Bolt has twin boys

KINGSTON (JAMAICA) All-time Olympic great sprinter Usain Bolt and his partner Kasi Bennett announced on Sunday the birth of twin boys, who have been named Thunder Bolt and Saint Leo Bolt. Bolt revealed the news on Instagram with a Father's Day family photo, showing a lightning bolt emoji next to each of his children's names in the caption, without stating when the twins were

Increased prize money for 2022 & 23 athletics Worlds

EUGENE World Athletics will use ₹2 million in doping fines it has received from Russia to increase the prize pool at the next two World championships. WA chief Seb Coe said on Sunday that prize money would increase by ₹1 million at the Worlds in 2022 (Eugene) and 2023



Super League project still alive, insists Laporta BARCELONA

Barcelona president Joan Laporta insisted on Sunday that the controversial Supe League project "is still alive" despite it being widely condemned as a crude land grab. "The project is alive," Laporta said at a meeting of club members where he claimed the competition would be worth "a minimum of €700 million (\$830.3 million) per season for Barcelona".AFP

Only vaccinated fans at WC 2022: Qatar

Qatar will only allow people fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to attend next year's World Cup and is in talks to secure one million doses in case global immunisation efforts lag, the prime minister said. The Gulf Arab state hosts the four-week tournament in November 2022 and the president of global soccer body FIFA has said the matches would be held in full stadiums. REUTERS

Sajan's new personal best in 100m butterfly



Sajan Prakash. • FILE РНОТО

SPORTS BUREAU

India's Sajan Prakash came up with a new personal best timing in 100m butterfly to win gold at the Belgrade Trophy swimming competition on Sunday.

The timing of 53.27 helped Sajan breach the Bmark Olympic Qualification Time (53.52), but he will need to secure the Amark (51.96) for automatic qualification for Tokyo.

Also at the competition, Maana Patel and Kenisha Gupta came up with new Best Indian Performances 100m backstroke (1:03.77) and 100m freestyle (57.39) events respectively, bettering their own previous records.

Toor finally books Tokyo ticket, in style

Shot-putter heaves to a National record; Kamalpreet and Dutee also set new marks

INDIAN GRAND PRIX

UTHRA GANESAN

Tajinderpal Shot-putter Singh Toor made the long wait count, finally booking a Tokyo Olympics ticket in style with a new National record of 21.49m at the fourth Indian Grand Prix at Patiala on Monday and bettering the Olympic qualifying mark by some distance.

The Olympic mark is set at 21.10m.

It had been a frustrating wait for the athlete who kept insisting he was in fine form during training and had the confidence of his coach M.S. Dhillon to make the cut.

During the Federation Cup in April, Dhillon had said it was not a question of if but when Toor would do it. A series of cancelled foreign trips for training and competition did not make things easier.

In fact, every one of his four valid throws went past the Olympic mark – a series of 21.28m and a couple of 21.13m throws.

"My target was close to 21.50m and I got it on my first throw. Still, there is a



Commanding show: Every one of Tajinderpal Singh Toor's four valid throws went past the Olympic qualification mark. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

long way to go for me and my target is at least 22m. I hope to do even better at the inter-State championships," Toor said after the event.

Discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur, meanwhile, improved her own three-month old National record by more than a metre, managing a 66.59m throw that, if replicated, would make her a serious medal contender at Tokyo going by the last two editions. That she was the only competitor in her event affect not performance

Also setting a new National record was Dutee Chand in the 100m with a timing of 11.17 seconds, agonisingly missing the Olympic mark of

Hima wins in style Dutee, who was expected to be in a showdown with Hima Das in the 200m, did not start that race even as Hima won in 22.88s, the fastest by an Indian woman over the distance since Saraswati Saha's national record of 22.82s in 2002. The Olympic mark is 22.80s.

The results:

Men, 400m: 1. Sarthak Bhambri (47.45): 2. Amit Balavan (47.52): 3. A. Alex (47.55); 1,500m: 1. Ajay Kumar Saroj (3:43.46); 2. Ishu Solanki (3:53.55): 3. Sukhan Preet Singh (3:56.31); 400m hurdles: M.P. Jabir (50.51s); 4x400m: 1. India-A (3:02.61); 2. India-B (3:11.77); 3. Maldives-C (3:37.38); 3,000m steeplechase: 1. Shankar Lal Swami (8:34.40): 2. Mohd. Nur Hasan (9:19.18); 3. Parveen Dhanda (9:24.86); Long jump: 1. M. Sreeshankar (7.74); 2. Yugant Shekhar Singh (7.67); 3. Mohd. Anees Yahiya (7.60); Triple jump: 1. Eldhose Paul (16.62); 2. U. Karthik (16.21); 3. Abdulla Aboobacker (15.90); Shot put: 1. Tajinderpal Singh Toor (21.49); 2. Karanveer Singh (20); 3. Vanam Sharma (19.93); Javelin: 1. Rohit Yadav (75.83); 2. Arshdeep Singh (75.58); 3. Rajender Singh (74.28).

Women, 100m: 1. Dutee Chand (11.17); 2. A.T. Dhaneshwari (11.48); 3. Himashri Roy (11.71); 200m: 1. Hima Das (22.88); 2. Dhanalakshmi (23.14); 3. Archana Suseendran (23.26); 400m: 1. M.R. Poovamma (53.78); 2. V. Revathi Veeramani (54.28); 3. Kiran Pahal (54.48); 1,500m: 1. Harmilan Bains (4:08.27); 2. P.U. Chitra (4:25.31).

5,000m: 1. Parul Chaudhary (16:01.37); 2. Pooja Harijan (16:51.84); 4x100m: 1. India-A (43.37); 2. India-B (48.02); 3. Maldives-C (50.74); Discus: Kamalpreet Kaur (66.59); Javelin: 1. Annu Rani (60.58): 2. Saniana Choudhary (53.54); 3. Shilpa Rani (48.74).

Allyson Felix set for her fifth Olympics

Makes it by finishing second in 400m at the U.S. trials

REUTERS EUGENE (USA)

U.S. track star Allyson Felix is going to the Olympics for a fifth time.

35-year-old punched her ticket to Tokyo on Sunday, finishing second in the 400m at the U.S. trials in 50.02 seconds to claim her spot for the Summer Games, extending a glittering career with nine Olympic medals already in her coffers.

With her 2-1/2-year-old daughter, Camryn, watching from the stands, Felix once again showed why she is the most decorated female track athlete in American history, exploding off the blocks and fending off a stacked field.

"It has been a fight to get here and one thing I know how to do is fight," Felix said after the race. "To make the fifth one - so special."

Fighting hard

Her chance of competing in Tokyo appeared in doubt as she trailed going



Allyson Felix, seen with her daughter Camryn. • AP

into the final 50m, but she fought to the finish line, before rolling onto her back and kicking her legs in the air in celebration.

Felix, who picked up a record 13th gold at the 2019 Worlds, will be joined in Tokyo by Quanera Hayes, who won in 49.78, and Wadeline Jonathas, who finished third in 50.03.

Rudy Winkler set an American record of 82.71 metres in the hammer throw, winning the U.S. trials for a second time in a

Tejaswini wins

title in style

Hubbard is first trans athlete at Olympics



Creating history: At 43, Hubbard will also be the oldest weightlifter at the Games. • FILE РНОТО

ASSOCIATED PRESS WELLINGTON

Laurel Hubbard hefted 628 pounds (185 kilograms) in two lifts on the way to qualifying in the women's superheavyweight division for the Tokyo Olympics.

She became the first transgender athlete to compete at an Olympic Games.

Hubbard was among five weightlifters confirmed on Monday in New Zealand's team for Tokyo. At 43, she will also be the oldest weightlifter at the games, and will be ranked fourth in

the competition on Aug. 2 for women 87 kilograms (192 pounds) and over.

Hubbard won a silver medal at the 2017 World Championships and gold in the 2019 Pacific Games in Samoa. She competed at the Commonwealth Games but sustained a serious injury that set back her career.

I am grateful and humbled by the kindness and support that has been given to me by so many New Zealanders," Hubbard said in a

Rani to lead women's hockey team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

India on Monday named striker Rani Rampal as skipper and Deep Grace Ekka and Savita as two vice-captains of the national women's hockey team for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.

India announced a 16member team for the Tokyo Games last week, but refrained from naming the captain.

"It is a huge honour to lead the Indian team at the Olympic Games. In these past years my role as a captain was made easy with teammates who have shared the responsibilities as senior players," Rani said in a statement issued by Hockey

Under Rani's captaincy India won the Asia Cup in 2017, a silver medal at the Asian Games in 2018, silver at the 2018 Asian Champions Trophy as well as winning the FIH Series Final in

Mina own goal sinks Colombia

Peru the beneficiary; Venezuela & Ecuador game drawn

COPA AMERICA

REUTERS GOIANIA (BRAZIL)

Yerry Mina's own goal in the second half saw Colombia crash to a 2-1 defeat by Peru in an absorbing Copa America clash on Sunday.

Peru, which reached the final of the last Copa America but had won just two of its 12 games since, took the lead after 17 minutes when Sergio Pena hammered home a Yoshimar Yotun shot that had come back off the post. The goal ended Colom-

bia's run of seven Copa America games without conceding but it grabbed a deserved equaliser eight minutes into the second half when Miguel Borja was brought down in the box as he tried to go round keeper Pedro Gallese.

The referee pointed to the spot and Borja coolly sent the keeper the wrong way.

Colombia had not lost any of its last 10 matches against Peru but was undone by an



Defender's nightmare: Colombia's Yerry Mina, second left, turns back to see the ball bounce off him and past his own goalkeeper David Ospina. • AFP

own goal from Everton defender Mina.

The result lifts Peru into third place in the five-team Group B with three points from two games, one behind Colombia which has played a game more.

In Rio De laneiro, Ronald Hernandez scored his first international goal in stoppage time to give Venezuela a dramatic 2-2 draw against

The result means Ecuador has one point from two games and Venezuela two from three.

With four of five teams going through to the quarterfinals it promises a nail-biting finale in the group. The results: Group B: Venezue

la 2 (Castillo 51, Hernandez 90+1) drew with Ecuador 2 (Preciado 39, Plata 71). Colombia 1 (Borja 53-pen)

lost to Peru 2 (Pena 17, Mina

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT Winning 10 successive

rounds, Tamil Nadu's G. Teiaswini ensured the National girls' (under-14) online rapid chess title with a round to spare on Monday.

G. Teiaswini. • FILE PHOTO

In the 11th and final round, seventh seed Tejaswini drew with Stuti Aishwary to tally 10.5 points. Stuti took the second spot after topping a four-way tie, involving Saparya Ghosh, Shubhi Gupta and Elakshi Srivastava, at nine

Sara Bangla Daba Sangstha comes into being

CHESS

Y.B. SARANGI

The formation of Sara Bangla Daba Sangstha (SBDS), an All India Chess Federation (AICF) affiliated body, was announced here on Monday.

"Our new organisation, SBDS, has been granted affiliation by the AICF in its Annual General Meeting held on June 10, 2021.

"This means that we have now the responsibility to function as the apex body of West Bengal chess," said a

Haider Ali and Ashit Chatterjee are the interim-president and secretary of the new body respectively.

A 15-member interim committee has been formed to run the chess affairs in the State and conduct elections within three months.

The SBDS website was inaugurated here on Monday in the presence of AICF president Sanjay Kapoor, secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan and Grandmasters Surya

Sekhar Ganguly and Dibyen du Barua.

Three tournaments

"Dr. Kapoor announced that three major tournaments would be allocated to SBDS to be conducted within 2022," said the March release.

According to an announcement made by Chauhan, the AICF disaffiliated the previous body, Bengal Chess Association, in the state for 'not complying' with its norms and National Sports

Bottas furious with one-stop strategy

Says Mercedes did not listen to him

REUTERS

Valtteri Bottas railed at Mercedes' strategy on Sunday in a radio message accusing the F-1 champions of not listening to him.

The Finn finished a frustrated fourth in a French GP won by Red Bull's Max Verstappen, whose gamble on stopping twice paid off while Mercedes paid the price for staying out on fad-

"Why does no one listen to me when I say it's going to be a two-stopper?!," Bottas said in a radio outburst fea-

turing several expletives. "I think the winning strategy today was two stop. Easy to say afterwards but that's how it is," he said. "I think as a team we're too focused on just completing the one stop. I had no front tyres left for the last 10-15 laps so it was really just trying to get the car home."

consecutive pars after a bo-

gey on the par-3 11th, but a

bogey on No. 17 pretty much

ended his chances unless he

could produce an eagle on

the last hole. He settled for

Harris English finished

third at 3-under, while

Brooks Koepka, Collin Mori-

kawa, and Italy's Guido Mi-

gliozzi shared fourth place.

Final standings: 278: Jon Rahm

Koepka (USA) 69-73-71-69.

Collin Morikawa (USA) 75-67-

birdie and a final-round 71.

Suns take the lead in WC finals

Hawks get the better of 76ers



Pivotal player: Devin Booker's triple-double highlighted Phoenix Suns' win on Sunday. • AFF

NBA AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

bounds and 11 assists for his first career triple-double as the Suns won despite the absence of all-star guard Chris Paul, who has been quarantining due to the COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

points while Mikal Bridges (14 points), Jae Crowder (13 points) and Cameron Johnson (12 points) also chipped

playoffs – every next game is the biggest game."

to win every game possible,"

said Booker. "I've been say-

ing this since the start of the

Devin Booker delivered a 40-point triple-double as Phoenix Suns shook off some playoff rust to beat the fourth-seeded Los Angeles Clippers 120-114 in the opening game of the Western Conference finals here on Sunday.

Booker also had 13 re-

Deandre Ayton scored 20

Huerter on a high

Kevin Huerter scored a playoff career-high 27 points as the upstart Atlanta Hawks punched its ticket to a first Eastern Conference finals in six years, with a 103-96 game seven win over host Philadelphia 76ers.

Trae Young finished with 21 points, John Collins had 14 and Danilo Gallinari came scored 17 points for the Hawks, who won three games in Philadelphia to take the series 4-3. The results: WC finals: Phoenix

Suns 120 bt Los Angeles Clippers 114. Suns lead series 1-0. EC semifinals: Atlanta Hawks 103 bt Philadelphia 76ers 96. Hawks win 4-3.

Spaniard Jon Rahm birdies his way to maiden Major glory

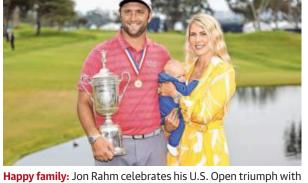
Becomes World No. 1; heartbreak for Louis Oosthuizen as he finishes runner-up again

U.S. OPEN GOLF

REUTERS

From a significant disappointment earlier in the month, Jon Rahm of Spain told himself that something good would come from that. It sure didn't take long for that to unfold for one of the world's emerging golf stars.

Rahm shot 4-under-par 67, with remarkable birdies in the last two holes, in the last round of the U.S. Open to cap a remarkable turnaround from two weeks ago and capture his first Major championship on Sunday at Torrey Pines. The win also



wife Kelley and son Kepa. • AFP helped the third-ranked Spa-

niard to became the new World No.1 displacing Dustin

"I'm a big believer in karma," Rahm said. "After what happened a couple of weeks ago, I stayed really positive

dealt with devastation when a positive COVID-19 test meant he was forced to with-

coming.

draw from the Memorial despite holding a six-shot lead after three rounds. Rahm's four-round total of 6-under 278 was good for a one-shot victory on South

knowing big things were

Two weekends ago, Rahm

African Louis Oosthuizen. Rahm had birdies on the final two holes – both with putts of more than 18 feet – to move to the front.

But Oosthuizen, who was in the final pairing, had three holes to play at that point. Oosthuizen secured five

279: Louis Oosthuizen (RSA) 67-71-70-71. 281: Harris English (USA) 72-70-71-68; 282: Guido Migliozzi (Ita) 71-70-73-68. Brooks

(Esp) 69-70-72-67.

"I'm just going out there

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ND-NDE