

OPINION 6
LIKUD OXYGEN
FOR ISRAEL'S POLITY

WORLD 8
CHINA HAS ABILITY TO TRY TO 'DISTURB'
RULES-BASED ORDER: BLINKEN

SPORT 12
KANE OUT OF
2ND TEST

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AXONE IS PATH
BREAKING:
SAYANI GUPTA
10 VIVACITY

Brahmins back in focus as UP readies for polls

Jitin Prasada's entry into BJP, another Brahmin as EC may cut community ire against Yogi raj

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

With Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh just seven months away, the contour of caste politics has started taking shape with focus now on Brahmins, who account for almost 10 per cent of the vote in this politically sensitive State.

Two important developments happened on Wednesday. One, former Union Minister and two-time former MP Jitin Prasada joined the BJP. Second, a retired IAS officer of 1984 batch of UP cadre Anoop Chandra Pandey joined as Election Commissioner. Both are Brahmins.

When Jitin was in the Congress, he had launched Brahmin Chetna Parishad in 2020, an umbrella organisation that had given a voice to the Brahmins in central UP. Then he talked about persecution of Brahmins in the Yogi Raj. With his joining the BJP, the saffron

party can now go to the town claiming that Brahmins are still with the ruling party.

Prasada, who represented Shahjahanpur Lok Sabha Constituency in UP in 2004, joined the BJP at party headquarters here in the presence of Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday.

"I felt the party I was in was not helping and working for people. I realised I cannot work for people being in the Congress party. What is the relevance of staying in a party if you can't protect interests of your people or work for them. I thank people in the Congress who blessed me all these years but now I'll work as a dedicated BJP worker," said Prasada after joining the BJP.

Anoop Chandra Pandey, on the other hand, was the Chief Secretary in Yogi's initial term and had successfully organised Investors' Summit. His performance was even appreciated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It is no longer a secret that Brahmins are upset with the BJP and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for dominance of Thakurs in every sphere of Government administration, particularly at the lower level.



Congress leader Jitin Prasada joins the BJP in the presence of Union Minister Piyush Goyal at BJP HQ in New Delhi on Wednesday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Cong refuses to learn lesson

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

The exit of former Union Minister Jitin Prasada, yet another tall leader of the Congress, on Wednesday, was well summed up by his erstwhile party colleague and now Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who noted that the grand old party as a wrecked and rudderless "Titanic" which continues to sink.

The Congress high command seems to have learned no lesson from the exit of the likes of Jyotiraditya Scindia and rebellion of Sachin Pilot. Scindia

defected to the BJP and brought down the Congress Government in Madhya Pradesh while the Congress leadership remained clueless.

Pilot did nearly the same, only to be persuaded to stay back. But after that the Congress leadership has done nothing to rehabilitate him.

With this latest "exit" more than 50 top and prominent leaders which includes former Union Ministers, Chief Ministers, State party presidents have quit the grand old party and joined the BJP ever since the run up to the Lok Sabha elections of 2014 when the country witnessed "Modi wave".

Delta can reinfect even after full vaccine doses

Severity and death possibilities reduce after vaccination

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Even if you have received both doses of Covaxin or Covishield vaccines against Covid-19, you can still get re-infected with the virus.

Blame it on the highly contagious Delta variant (B.1.617.2) of SARS-COV-2, the version first detected in India in October last year.

Separate studies by AIIMS (Delhi) and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), which are yet to be peer reviewed, have indicated that the Delta variant is the most common factor behind majority of "breakthrough" infections in India. However, no death has been reported among those vaccinated.

A breakthrough infection is a Covid-19 infection occurring in people who are vaccinated against the disease.



Research, including one by British health authorities, say that Delta variant is between 40 and 50 per cent more infectious than the "Alpha" version first reported from the UK. Health experts feel there is nothing to be worried about as

vaccination reduces the severity impact as has also been shown by the study. Of the 63 cases of vaccine breakthrough infections in the study, including 36 who received full doses, not a single person succumbed to Covid-19.

WHAT IS DELTA VARIANT?

New Delhi: Scientifically termed as B.1.617.2 of the Covid-19 infections, the Delta variant refers to the merging of two mutations of a virus strain that go on to form a third, super-infectious strain. The B.1.617.2 variant contains mutations from two separate virus variants, namely E484Q and L452R, according to reports. The Delta variant is highly transmissible (50% more than alpha) and has significant immune escape properties.

With the help of genome

sequencing and sample testing, the first case of double mutation in India was discovered in Maharashtra.

The "double mutant" virus or the "Indian variant", was officially assigned the name "Delta variant" by the World Health Organisation in order to avoid any confusion regarding the same. Hence, the first mutant virus detected in Kent, UK, is now called "Alpha", whereas the South African and Brazilian Variant are known as 'Beta' and 'Gamma' respectively.

Delta spreads to 60 countries

New Delhi: WHO's technical lead on Covid-19 Maria Van Kerkhove has said the Delta variant first found in India has now been seen in over 60 countries and is more transmissible than the alpha variant found in the UK.

It is also said to be casting shadow over Australia's efforts to contain the infections where cases are on rise recently.

Kerkhove blamed "worrying trends of increased transmissibility, increasing social

mixing, relaxing of public health and social measures, and eleven and inequitable vaccine distribution around the world."

In India, the Delta variant of coronavirus is said to be present in all States across the country but has infected people mostly in Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Telangana, which were the worst hit in the second wave of the deadly pandemic.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 2,91,77,840 (+89,598)

DEATHS: 3,59,501 (+5,944)

RECOVERED: 2,76,36,065 (+1,39,816)

ACTIVE: 11,70,609

MAHA: 58,63,880 (+10,989)

K'TAKA: 27,28,248 (+10,959)

KERALA: 26,74,166 (+16,204)

TN: 22,02,025 (+17,321)

DELHI: 14,30,128 (+337)

CAPSULE

THREAT TO HIJACK PLANES: MAN DETAINED

Bhopal: Police have detained a 34-year-old man for allegedly threatening to hijack planes from Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal and Indore airports and take them to Pakistan, an official said.

DELHI RECORDS HIGHEST MIN TEMP

New Delhi: At 31.4 degrees Celsius, Delhi recorded highest minimum temperature this year so far, according to the India Meteorological Department.

MARRIAGE 'NOT LEGAL, VALID': NUSRAT JAHAN

Kolkata/New Delhi: Nusrat Jahan, Trinamool MP and actor, on Wednesday said her wedding with businessman Nikhil Jain in Turkey two years ago, is "invalid". Amid recent reports of their strained relationship, she said their separation happened long ago and that she did not speak about it as she wanted to keep her private life to herself.

Daily Covid count slips to 453, 7-day positivity rate to 0.8% in MP

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the corona infection in the State is now nearing its end. New cases of corona have come down below 500 in the State and weekly positivity rate has come down to below 2% in 50 districts. The state ranks 23rd in the country in terms of infection. The recovery rate of the state has gone up to 98%.

Chouhan said that such efforts should now be made so that the third wave of corona, even if it hits the state, may not have any effect or may have negligible impact.

The basic mantra to prevent corona infection is more and more testing. Testing should be done by going to the people and treatment should be provided by isolating after looking for each and every patient of corona.

Chouhan said that vaccine is a protective shield against Corona. Intensive campaign of corona vaccination should

be carried out in the state. Chouhan was reviewing the situation and arrangements of Corona in Mantralaya. Medical Education Minister Vishwas Sarang, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary Health Mohammad Suleman and Health Commissioner Akash Tripathi were present in the meeting.

Number of new cases less than 500

The number of new cases of corona in the state has come down to less than 500. Today 453 new cases have come and 1329 patients have become healthy. Active cases have come down to 7071. The seven-day positivity rate is 0.8% and today's positivity rate is 0.6%.

Continued on Page 3

COVID IN MADHYA PRADESH

Dists	Total Cases	Fresh Cases
Bhopal	122310	104
Indore	152095	144
Gwalior	53010	5

Know the mystery girl linked with fugitive Choksi's kidnapping

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diamond was a common link between Mehul Jarabik and the mystery woman Barbara Choksi, whose role in Choksi's flight from Antigua to Dominica is under scanner.

She is a Hungarian national settled in London and runs a company known as Cullinan Designs Ltd.

Her passport details and company data show that her surname is Jarabik and not Jarabica, as reported in the media. Her original name is Barbara Jarabik.

Jarabik was born in December 1989 in Budapest. She also ran a company G&J Britton Consulting Ltd in the UK. After leaving from the consulting firm, she joined Cullinan Designs as Director from October 2017. According to the website of the Cullinan Designs, (which stopped working from Tuesday), the company is engaged in advertising and marketing and sales of digital Mirror. Incidentally, several diamond companies are also shown as their clients.



Priest asked to produce Aadhaar of God at mandi!

PREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■ LUCKNOW

In a bizarre incident, a priest who went to a Government procurement centre to sell wheat grown on a temple land, was asked to produce the Aadhaar card of the deity. The incident took place two days ago in Kurhara village in Attara tehsil in Banda.

Mahant Ramkumar Das, the priest and chief caretaker of the Ram Janki temple, said he wanted to sell 100 quintals of wheat in a Government mandi. He had done the online registration with the help of others.

The seven-hectare land is registered in the name of Lord Ram and Janki.

"The registration was cancelled as I could not produce the Aadhaar card, where do I get Aadhaar of the Lord?" he asked.

The priest said he spoke to sub divisional magistrate (SDM) Saurabh Shukla. "He told me the registration cannot be done without Aadhaar and that is why it has been cancelled by his office," he said.

The priest said last year, he sold 150 quintals of produce at the Government mandi. He said he has been selling the produce for the last several years, but never faced a situation like this.

Meanwhile, district supply officer Govind Upadhyaya said the rules were clear that produce from mutts and temples could not be purchased.

50-62% rise in MSP OK'd to increase farmers' income

Crops	MSP in 2020-21	MSP in 2021-22	Increase in ₹
Paddy (common)	1,868	1,940	72
Paddy (Grade A)	1,888	1,960	72
Jowar	2,620	2,738	118
Bajra	2,150	2,250	100
Ragi	3,295	3,377	82
Maize	1,850	1,870	20
Tur/Arhar	6,000	6,300	300
Moong	7,196	7,275	79
Urad	6,000	6,300	300
Soyabean (yellow)	3,880	3,950	70

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to increase the farmers' income, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday approved an increase in minimum support prices (MSP) for various kharif crops or the summer-sown crops ranging between 50 per cent and 62 per cent for marketing season 2021-22.

The Centre has hiked paddy MSP by ₹72 to ₹1,940 per quintal for 2021-22 crop year from ₹1,868 per quintal last year. The highest absolute

increase in MSP over the previous year has been recommended for sesamum (₹452 per quintal) followed by tur and urad (₹300 per quintal each).

The MSP is the rate at which the Government buys grains from the farmers to prevent exploitation and distress sale to private traders.

The price of common grade paddy has been increased from ₹1,868 a quin-

tal to ₹1,940 a quintal, a rise of ₹72 a quintal. For grade A the support price has been increased from ₹1,888 a quintal to ₹1,960 a quintal, again an increase of ₹72 per quintal.

Paddy is the main kharif crop, the sowing of which has begun with the onset of the Southwest monsoon. The hike is in sync with the Government's plan to encourage farmers to go for coarse cereals (nutri-cereals), oilseeds and pulses in a big way.

...now we don't want help: Orphaned siblings

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Tales of despair

PART III

No one came to help us when we were struggling to get bed for my father and mother... Now when we have lost my parents, my younger brother and my grandmother, we do not need anyone's sympathy," lamented 21-year-old Ruby Srivastava.

Ruby lost her mother, father, and younger brother in three days — April 22 to 24 — and grandmother on April 28. Now, she and her brother Himanshu, 24, are left to mourn their loved ones.

of financial assistance from the Government.

They were a happy family with three brothers and sisters. Their father worked with the tax department in Ayodhya. They had their own house and grandmother lived with them.

"We were having a jolly good time. My parents were very loving. Being the only daughter in the family, my mother did not let me enter kitchen. She used to say ghar mein arram kar le, sasural mein to kaam karna hi hai. But now, woho ghar hi khatam ho gaya. We are alone ... all alone," said Ruby.

Her father was deputed for panchayat election in Ayodhya. "On April 5, when my father was in election training duty, he fell ill. He requested his seniors to relieve him of duty. They refused saying he is faking his illness. They wanted him to work because election was round the corner," Ruby said emphasising on the pressure under which his father was made to work.

Himanshu intercepted to say that his father's condition deteriorated as he was running a high fever and had cough. The seniors asked him to get the RT-PCR done. The test report came negative but the fever did not subside.

"On April 8 he fainted in the office. The seniors then allowed him to go home. We

gave him medicine believing he had viral fever and does not have Covid because his RT-PCR was negative. When we bought an oximeter and checked his SPO2 level. It was 60. We got scared and took him to hospital, first to a private and then a Government hospital," Ruby said.

She took a long break as if to re-collect her thoughts.

"The state run hospital did not treat him well. Despite telling them his oxygen was low, he was not treated as a Covid patient. As there was scarcity of beds, they shifted him from one bed to another. On one occasion, doctors made him to sleep on a bed where a few minutes ago a person had died. This irked my father and he asked us to take him home," he said.



Himanshu Srivastava



BJP leader and MP Jyotiraditya Scindia meets BJP State President VD Sharma at his residence in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

'Large Paddy milling units to be set up in MP'

CM says farmers to be trained to plant profitable varieties of paddy, reduce breakage in paddy

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that there is a need to increase the capacity of paddy milling in the State. For this, large milling units will be set up. Farmers will also be trained to plant profitable varieties of paddy and reduce breakage in paddy. Apart from paddy, farmers will also be motivated to grow other profitable crops.



that for the state government, the interest of farmers is paramount. The final decision regarding paddy milling rates will be taken by the Cabinet.

Minister of Finance and Commerce Tax Jagdish Deora, Minister of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Bisahu Lal Singh, Minister of Farmers Welfare and

Agriculture Development Kamal Patel, Minister of State for AYUSH Shri Ram Kishore Kanvre were present in the meeting held in Mantralaya. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains and Principal Secretary Food, Civil Supplies Faiz Ahmed Kidwai also took part in the meeting.

It was informed in the

meeting that the production of paddy is increasing every year in the state. A total of 37.26 lakh metric tonnes of paddy was procured in the year 2020-21 whereas in the year 2017-18 this quantity was only 16.60 MT. Out of a total of 804 millers in the state, 396 mills have a milling capacity of 4 metric tonnes per hour and 392 millers have a milling capacity of 4 to 8 metric tons per hour. Only 16 units have a milling capacity of more than 8 MT per hour.

The present milling capacity of the state is 35,000 metric tonnes per day. Chouhan

directed that necessary action should be taken to set up rice mills with more capacity in the state.

Various alternatives were presented by the Cabinet Committee for milling of paddy. Discussions were also held on the proposals for rice delivery submitted by the miller unions, the policy and procedure for milling of other paddy producing states. Options were presented by the Cabinet sub-committee regarding the proposed ratio of rice delivery, incentive amount for milling and amount of upgradation.



Shopkeepers clean their shops a day before the unlocking process of Covid-19 lockdown at Sarafa Chowk in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo



A child rides a bicycle through a waterlogged street after heavy pre-monsoon rain last night, in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

Bajaj Allianz announces bonus to policy holders

PNS ■ INDORE

Bajaj Allianz Life, one of India's leading private life insurer has declared bonuses amounting to ₹1,156 crore to its policyholders. This includes a special one-time bonus of ₹315 crore, which is over and above the regular bonus. The Company aims to ensure there is adequate support, in these unprecedented times, to its customers in achieving their Life Goals.

These bonuses are funded from the profits generated by the Company's participating policyholders for the year FY 2020-21. This move is expected to benefit nearly 12 lakh (11,99,612) policyholders, who have stayed invested and entrusted their faith in the Company.

This is the 20th consecutive year the Company has declared a bonus and delivered long

term value to policyholders. The Bonus declared by the Company is for the policies of all par products, which are in-force for full sum assured as on March 31, 2021, and for which customers are paying premiums regularly. The one-off special bonus and the regular reversionary bonus are payable at the time of maturity or death of the policyholder.

Commenting on the announcement, Tarun Chugh, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance said, "Our employees and our customers' Life Goals continue to be our key priorities as we collectively move ahead in these tough times. We want to assure each of them, especially our customers that we will stay by their side, and assure the best of our services and unwavering support towards keeping their Life Goals on track."

Classical singing, Kathak dance performed at MPSTM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Bhopalites enjoyed the tunes of classical singing under the Gamak series here on Wednesday. The classical singing and kathak dance performance was held at Madhya Pradesh State Tribal Museum Youtube channel.

Here on Wednesday, Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Akademi's 'Classical Singing' by Nikhil Ramesh Walker and companion, Bhopal and 'Kathak Dance' by Mudra Bandre and team, Indore was broadcast on the YouTube channel of the department.

Nikhil Ramesh Walker and team began the classical performance with Chhota Khayal Madhyalay in Raag Puriya Dhanashree was composed in three talas - Pavalya Jhankaye Mori, Shri Krishna Rasleela song based on Mishra Pahari-

Kanhaiya Mohe Rang Na, based on Raga Mishra Megh. It was followed with the hymn Nisidin Barsaat Nain Hamare by Sant Surdas.

He was accompanied on Tabla by Ashesh Upadhyay, on Harmonium by Aman Malak.

Nikhil Ramesh Walkre has been doing classical singing for the last twelve years, he received his initial education in singing from his father Shri Ramesh Walkre (Gwalior Gharana) and then from Jayshree Sawgunji (Kirana Gharana), Bhopal.

He has completed his B.A from Gandharva Mandal, Mumbai, Sangeet Visharad, Raja Man Singh Tomar University, Gwalior. Received the degree of Muse and M. Muse.

He has received the Best Musician Award from All India Radio, Bhopal.

Fraudsters booked in duping held

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Habibganj police have arrested booked fraudsters involved in duping several victims through Real Vision Infratech in the name of doubling money; over 65 people were duped to the tune of Rs 22 lakh, on Tuesday police have registered case against accused.

Police said that the accused Pradeep Singh and Pradeep Verma of Lucknow UP were booked who duped several victims in the name of doubling money by investment in Real Vision Infratech.

In the year 2019 company's office was shut and accused escaped. The company appointed Kamala Rajput in Bhopal at their agent and who invested around 65-70 people in the name of doubling money.

The scheme was started in the year 2013 and by 2018 when the maturity period of investment was completed investors started to enquire regarding the return but the agent escaped with excuses and in the year 2019 office was closed and accused went absconding.

The company used to operate at 11 no. stop and during the period Rs 22 lakh were deposited by the investors and maturity amount Rs 36 lakh.

At present two accused were booked and possibly more aides involved in the nexus of fraud would be revealed and action would be taken. The accused were directly involved in the fraud in which the victims were offered to double their investment in five years time luring them and trapping them.

The action was taken after Kamla Rajput lodged complaint against two accused of company.

Heavy rainfall lashes Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Spells of heavy rainfall was witnessed across state and would continue to be witnessed, heavy rainfall lashed the state capital on Tuesday.

In the state capital uneasiness in the weather conditions with extreme hot and humid conditions were witnessed on Wednesday throughout the day and pattern of rainfall in the evening faded away.

Day temperature in the state capital was recorded at 36.3 degree Celsius and night temperature was recorded 21.7 degree Celsius. The day temperature would be recorded at 36 degree Celsius and night temperature was recorded would be recorded at 23 degree Celsius.

Met has issued warning of very heavy rainfall, thundery activities and lightning and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph Hoshangabad divisions and Chhindwara, Seoni and Balaghat.

The warning of thundery activities and thundery lightning and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph Bhopal, Shahdol, Sagar, Rewa, Indore and Ujjain divisions and Katni, Jabalpur, Narsinghpur, Mandla, Guna, Ashoka Nagar and Shivpuri districts.

Rainfall recorded in cm at Gyaraspur, Tamia, Kesli 9, Kannada, Multai, Sehore 8, Bhainsdehi, Khategaon 7, Rehli, G Jjbasoda, Ghodadongri, Bhopal 6, Raisen, Ganj Basoda, Chhindwara, Umarreth, Goteagaon, Mohkheda 5, Deori, Pandhurna, Pushparragarh, Jaisinagar, Tedh UKheda, Panagar, Shahpur, Vidisha, and Udaipur 4.

Despite of heavy rainfall day temperatures soared on Wednesday Gwalior recorded day temperature at 43 degree Celsius, Sheopur recorded day temperature at 42.4 degree Celsius, Sidhi recorded day temperature at 41.4 degree Celsius.

Woman aided by ambulance staff, local women delivers baby midway to hosp

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The distance of JP hospital from the woman's house was about 25 kms but after walking 20 kms the labor pain increased more

Prompt and prudent action by ambulance assistants with the help of local women helped to deliver a healthy baby at Dushhera Maidan (Anna Nagar) while taking woman to JP hospital in the afternoon on Wednesday.

With the help of emergency service 108 ambulance in Bhopal, a pregnant woman of village Sukhi Sewania (Rajiv Nagar) of Tehsil Huzur managed to deliver a healthy baby by the ambulance assistants with the help of local women, Sukhi Sewania Ambulance location on Wednesday afternoon at around 4 in Sukhi Sewania village.

On which the 108 ambulance immediately left for the village and when the ambulance was coming towards JP hospital with the woman, the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) of the ambulance on the way near Dusshera Maidan (Anna Nagar) due to the woman suffering more. Dharmendra Dhakad managed helped in safe delivery. The woman who is 25-years-old.

The distance of JP hospital from the woman's house was about 25 kms but after walking 20 kms the labor pain increased more. After the delivery of the same woman, the woman and the child were safely released to JP (1250) Hospital. The baby's weight is about 2.5 kg.

EMT of 108 Dharmendra Dhakad and pilot Devendra Chadar were praised by their families and service district officer Shubham Chaurasia Bhopal 108.

He said our free 108 ambulance service and staff are capable and safe to handle any type of emergency. Therefore, use the free and safe 108 ambulance service for transportation as compared to other vehicles.

60-yr-old man hangs self over harassment by sons, daughter-in-laws at Shivaji ward

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Harassed by atrocities of sons and daughter-in-laws a 60-year-old man committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at Shivaji Ward on Tuesday; man mentioned harassment by family members in suicide note recovered, Gandhi Nagar police have started investigation.

Gyanchand Gangwani was spotted hanging by the family members on Tuesday and took him to the nearby hospital where he was declared dead.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem. A case under section 174 of the CrPC

was registered by the police. Police recovered a suicide note which claimed that deceased was harassed by two sons and their families who live in the same house at upper floors while deceased was left alone on ground floor. Family members used to harass him, abuse him and not provide him food.

Deceased claimed that he spent all his money on sons and their families which live with him while he bought a house for his third son. The post mortem report is awaited and other reasons behind the death would be investigated.

It was found that daughter-in-law had lodged a case of harassment after deceased

opposed their atrocities. After the case was lodged by daughter-in-law the atrocities reached extreme.

Meanwhile, a 26-year-old youth was found dead under suspicious circumstances at Arjun Nagar on Tuesday, TT Nagar police have started investigation.

Salman Khan was found lying unconscious near residence and was rushed to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead. Police were informed and after preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem. The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investigation.

RTU organises national webinar on NCC as school curriculum

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

An online national webinar on NCC as General Elective Credit Course was organized by Rabindranath Tagore University.

In this webinar, the Vice Chancellor of the University Brahm Prakash and Registrar Vijay Singh were present. In order to discuss the subject, Brigadier Sanjoy Ghosh, Group Commander, NCC Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, as a subject expert, discussed in detail how NCC will be included as an optional subject in the overall curriculum of universities and colleges. Commander Om Prakash Sharma elaborated on the syllabus of NCC in which like other optional subjects (such as Science, Commerce, Arts, Law, Music, etc.) in the syllabus of undergraduate examinations, now NCC is also an optional subject. But, it will be available, he added.

The total number of credits in the NCC course will be twenty four divided into 6 semesters. Earlier, the Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr. Brahmprakash, while sharing his experiences, described NCC as an important tool for the holistic development of the students. The same Registrar, Dr.

Vijay Singh while welcoming everyone said that our NCC cadets brought laurels to the university in the country and abroad. The webinar was successfully conducted by Sub Lieutenant Manoj Manral and NCC Care Taker Durga Verma played an important role. NCC officers, cadets and a large number of students from different states of the country participated in it.

CRISP to introduce module classes of interior designers

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Looking at the current situation of Covid-19, CRISP has taken a lead to make a difference for students who are willing to learn Interior Designing.

CRISP is introducing its online Module classes of interior designers. CRISP is going to be starting this in three module duration courses for enthusiasts in online form. The Courses are CAD based and online instructor LED pro-

gram- Module 1 is 100 hrs duration course, Module 2 (CAD BASED) 30 hrs duration course and Module 3 which is 70 hrs duration course

This course will help students to learn interior design fundamentals and techniques in a few months. Students will get an effective hold on all levels of design, from basics to advanced.

The details structure of the course will develop creativity and the art of detailing in the students.

Indore Crime Branch arrests man involved in fake currency business

PNS ■ INDORE

Indore range I G Harinarayan Chari Mishra and DIG Indore Manish Kapuria instructed the Indore police to trace the people who were involved in circulating fake currency in different markets of Indore city.

Under the guidance of SP headquarter Indore Arvind Tiwari, ASP Crime Branch Indore Guruprasad Parashar and his team arrested Raj Ratan Tayde, who was involved in

printing duplicate currency and confiscated ₹2.5 lakh from his possession.

476 units of ₹100, 159 currency of ₹500 and 63 currency of ₹2000 was recovered from the accused Raj Ratan, son of Anil Tayde, residing for 25 years as tenant of Liyakat Ali, opposite to Akhil Raj hospital, Haq masjid lane, police station Azad Nagar district Indore.

All the currency was of the same number. Police registered the case against accused

rajratan tayde under IPC section 489 a 489 b 489 c. The accused was printing the fake currency since one month.

The accused is high school graduate and was working as a trainer in the fight club located at kesar baag road Indore.

The accused lost his job in the lockdown hence he learnt printing the fake currency watching the you tube and hence purchased a printer. the accused is a habitual offender.

Movie screened to observe Balidan Divas of Birsa Munda

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

To observe the Balidan Divas of Birsa Munda on Wednesday, a biographical film 'A Song for Birsa' was screened online.

Birsa Munda was a folk hero and a tribal freedom fighter hailing from the Munda tribe. He was a spearhead behind the Millenarian movement that arose in the Bihar and Jharkhand belt in the early 19th century under the British colonisation.

Munda rallied the tribals to fight against the forceful land grabbing carried out by the British government which would turn the tribals into bonded labourers and force upon them abject poverty. Known as 'Dharti Abba' or the Earth

Father, Birsa Munda stressed the need of the tribals to study their own religion and not forget their cultural roots. He influenced his people to realise the importance of owning their land and asserting their right upon them.

Birsa wanted to reform the tribal society and so, he urged them to let go of beliefs in witchcraft and instead, stressed on the importance of prayer, staying away from alcohol, having faith in God and observing a code of conduct.

Based on these, he started the faith of 'Birsait'. This was a threat to Christian missionaries who were converting the tribals left and right. Soon, the Mundas and Oraons became devoted Birsaities.

Dance performed in another episode of Hunarstaan Season-3

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

It is to be noted that Junior Hunarstaan is organised with a purpose to provide an online platform for talented children

The splendid dance performance marked another energetic episode of Junior Hunarstaan. The episode of season 3 was held on Wednesday.

It was organised by a group called Kala, Kebab aur Kisse. The event was hosted by Sanya Acharya, founder of First Instagram Radio Sanya ka Radio. There were solo dance performances. The performers not only presented the new

filmy tracks but also sang some of the musical tracks from old movies.

The dance performance by young artists added much zest to the event. The audiences were totally engrossed in the melodious music performed by the youngsters of the city.

The immense talent of young girls and boys of the city was a must-watch for the live audience. The little children beautifully presented dance performances, few Bollywood tracks adding charisma in the event.

The children of 12 to 15 years gave spellbinding performances. It is to be noted that Junior Hunarstaan is organised with a purpose to provide an online platform for talented children to showcase their talent before the art lovers.

CM thanks PM for increasing MSP of Kharif crops

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi while welcoming the decision of the Central Government to increase the Minimum Support Price for Kharif crops. Chouhan said that Prime Minister Shri Modi is farmer friendly and is taking decisions one after the other in the interest of farmers. Chouhan said that the central government's decision to increase the support price of crops will benefit farmers and they will get the right price for their crops. This will encourage diversification of crops and increase the production of pulses and oilseeds. At present we have to import pulses. Chouhan

said that the increase in support price of Kharif crops up to 62 percent by the center is commendable. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved the Government procurement of agricultural produce and the hike in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of all Kharif crops for the season 2021-22. Compared to last year, the highest recommendation was made to increase the MSP of sesame (Rs 452 per quintal) and Tuar and Urad (Rs 300 per quintal). In case of groundnut and nigerseed, Rs.275 and Rs.235 per quintal, was hiked respectively, compared to previous year.

Chouhan pays floral tribute to Lord Birsa Munda on his martyrdom day

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid floral tributes at the portrait of Lord Birsa Munda on his martyrdom day on June 9. Chouhan garlanded the portrait of Birsa Munda at the Chief Minister's residence. He said that the sacrifice of Lok Nayak Birsa Munda, who gave the slogan of 'Abua Dishum Abua Raj' i.e. 'Our Country, Our Raj', to save the rights, self-respect, freedom, culture of the tribes would never be forgotten. He was the leader of the Ulgulan movement.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan pays tributes to Birsa Munda on his martyrdom day in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

Jan-Nayak Birsa Munda was born on November 15, 1875 in Ulihatu village of Khunti district of Jharkhand. He was always worried about the maltreatment of his community by the British rulers. Birsa Munda would teach them how to fight diseases. Due to this service, Birsa Munda had become "Dharti Aba" i.e. "Earth Father" in his area. "Dharti Aba"

Birsa Munda, who instilled the spirit of patriotism by playing a leading role in the national movement, came to be considered as God.

In October 1894, Birsa Munda agitated against the British for waiver of agricultural taxes. Between 1897 and 1900, there were battles between the

Mundas and the English soldiers, and under the leadership of Birsa Munda, the Mundas made things difficult for the British. In March 1900, Birsa Munda was addressing a public meeting in Chakradharpur, when he was arrested. Birsa Munda took his last breath on June 9, 1900 in Ranchi Jail.

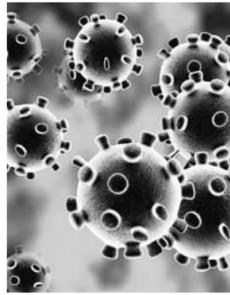
Punjab reports 1407 cases, 66 deaths due to Covid-19

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab on Wednesday reported 1,407 fresh cases of the novel coronavirus on Wednesday at the positivity rate of 2.29 percent, besides 66 deaths — pushing the state's COVID-19 tally to 5,83,474 and death toll to 15,293.

With this, the state's active cases have come down to 17,344 — accounting for 2.97 percent of the state's total positive cases; while the recovery rate has gone up to 94.41 percent as total number of recoveries has reached 5,50,837. The state's case fatality rate (CFR) continues to hover around 2.62 percent.

Currently, the state has 3024 patients on oxygen support, while 619 patients are at critical care Level-III facilities, and 240 critical patients are on ventilator support.



Highest nine of the Wednesday's total deaths were reported from Amritsar; followed by eight from Ludhiana; six each from Jalandhar and Patiala; five each from Sangrur and Gurdaspur; four each from Bathinda and Ferozepur; two each from Kapurthala, Mansa, Moga, Pathankot, Ropar, and Tarn Taran; and one each from Fatehgarh Sahib, Fazilka,

Hoshiarpur, Mohali, Muktsar, SBS Nagar (Nawanshahr), and Barnala.

Among districts, Jalandhar reported the highest 142 fresh infections at the positivity rate of 2.20 percent; while Ferozepur registered highest positivity rate of 5.39 percent reporting 93 fresh cases. Total 10 districts reported a higher positivity rate than that of the state.

Meanwhile, the state on Wednesday reported eight new cases of the Mucormycosis, popularly known as black fungus, taking the total number of cases to 399, of which 353 cases belonged to Punjab while remaining 46 belonged to other States.

As per data available, 282 cases are under treatment in the state, while 39 patients of black fungus have been cured and a total 49 have died.

Project launched for children orphaned by Covid in Haryana

Chandigarh: Haryana State Legal Services Authority Executive Chairman, Justice Rajan Gupta, on Wednesday launched projects to create awareness about rights and benefits of the children who were orphaned amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

Justice Gupta emphasized the need of awareness as it is the only effective tool that can bring changes in the mindset towards social responsibilities and to fight the pandemic.

"Awareness has a great impact on our society in making it more sensible, responsible and reliable. With this view, the legal services authority has

launched projects aiming maximum mass awareness and strengthening the legal services," he said.

The projects included a short-animated clip on Covid mask etiquettes, "Corona Home Warriors", an awareness drive about children who lost their parents.

Justice Gupta focused on the difficulties and challenges being faced by the legal services authorities in achieving the motto of "Access to justice for all".

He asked authorities to ensure quality legal services through panel advocates by improving their selection

process and identifying those advocates who are competent and have sense of commitment towards the legal aid work.

Advocate General Baldev Raj Mahajan said all efforts would be made to reach each and every child who has lost his/her parents during the pandemic.

Earlier, the legal services authority had carried out a project in which 24,911 people were vaccinated in association with the Health Department. Also in association with NGOs and jail authorities, 46,096 masks were prepared and 64,426 masks were distributed among the needy. IANS

Rapper who went missing after leaving suicide note on social media held from Jabalpur

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police traced a 23-year-old Delhi-based rapper on Wednesday, a week after he posted a suicide note on social media in the National Capital and went missing.

The rapper has been identified as MC Kode aka Aditya Tiwari. According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, they received information that Aditya Tiwari was present at his friend's house in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.

"A police team was sent to Jabalpur from where Tiwari was traced on Wednesday. He is being brought back to the national capital where he will



be questioned for his step," said the DCP.

"His mother Deepa Dhingra had filed a kidnapping case after her son went missing days after posting a suicide note on social media," police had said here.

"The woman, a Vasant Kunj resident, lodged a report,

saying her son, Aditya Tiwari, was missing since Wednesday," said police.

She also mentioned in the report filed on Friday that he had posted a suicide note on Instagram and later, his phone was got switched off, a senior police officer said.

Man held for killing his pregnant wife

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police have arrested a man for strangling his 20-year-old pregnant wife in outer Delhi's Narela area as he suspected her of having an illicit relationship.

The accused has been identified as Dilshad. Police said that the accused was working at a gas stove manufacturing factory in Narela. According to a senior police official, the incident took place on early Tuesday morning.

"The couple engaged in a fight during which he allegedly strangled her to death. After killing her, he later lied next to her body. One of the relatives who visited them on Tuesday morning got to know about the

murder and soon informed police about the incident," said the senior police official.

"A case was registered and the accused husband was taken into police custody after he confessed to killing his wife over suspicion of her having an affair with someone else," he said.

Police said the couple were married for around nine months and lived at a rented house in Narela here. The woman was apparently two-months pregnant as alleged by locals and family members but police are verifying claims and awaiting post-mortem report to ascertain the facts. They often fought as Dilshad suspected her of having an illicit relationship with someone else, police said.

11 including 2 CAs held for online fraud 349 children in Haryana lose one or both parents to Covid

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police's Cyber Cell unit has arrested 11 men, including two chartered accountants, for allegedly cheating more than five lakh people of over Rs 150 crore in two months on the pretext of lucrative returns on Power Bank App. The app projected itself as a Bengaluru-based start-up, but its server was found based in China.

Police said that a total of Rs 11 crore of cheated money has been blocked in various bank accounts and payment gateways.

According to Anyesh Roy, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Cyber Cell unit (CyPAD), police took notice of various posts being made on social media by people from across the country about two

mobile applications Power Bank and EZPlan.

"Police invested a token amount in the app and the money trail was followed. It was found that the accused persons had created a web of around 25 shell companies for routing the fraud money. These companies were located in different parts of the country and money was being moved from one account to another to hide the trail," said the DCP.

"Police analysed the mobile numbers connected with the bank accounts and found that one of the accused, Sheikh Robin, was in Uluberia, West Bengal. On June 2, raids were conducted at multiple locations. Robin was arrested. At the same time, nine others were arrested from the Delhi-NCR, including two Chartered Accountants (CAs) -- Avik

Kedia, a resident of Gurugram, and Ronak Bansal, a resident of Katwaria Sarai," the DCP said.

"The CAs created over 110 shell companies and sold these companies to Chinese nationals for Rs two to three lakh each. Robin, who was contacted by the Chinese national through Telegram, initially opened a bank account for these fraudsters, but later started acting as an operative whose primary task was to manage the large number of fund transfers," said the DCP adding that at the time of the arrest, he was operating around 29 bank accounts.

"The main Chinese handlers behind this massive scam, used to randomly contact people over various apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram and hired the interested persons as partners for procuring bogus

bank accounts, creating shell companies, circulating and promoting the apps, transferring money, etc," said the DCP.

"These apps offered lucrative returns on investment. The apps, in order to entice large numbers of people to invest more and more money, initially gave a small payout amounting to 5 to 10 per cent of the invested money," said the DCP.

"People, believing the scheme to be genuine, started investing more money as well as circulating and sharing the app with their friends and relatives," said the DCP.

Names of several Chinese nationals have been revealed so far. Investigation in respect of their whereabouts, specific roles and their large fraud network is underway, police added.

NISHU MAHAJAN ■ CHANDIGARH

At least 349 children have either lost one or both their parents in Haryana due to the deadly COVID-19 virus.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began last year has claimed over 8800 lives in Haryana rendering 91 children orphaned while 258 are left with a single parent. Many of these hapless children are now either living with their grandparents, extended family or shifted to a child care institution in the state, as per the government's record.

For instance, a three-month old baby girl and her seven-year old brother in Rohtak lost their parents to COVID-19 in May and are now living with their grandmother. In Rewari district also,

two teenage siblings lost both their parents to the fatal virus in May and are living with their maternal grandmother.

Similarly in Hajar district, a grandmother is raising her teenage grandson and granddaughter, who lost their mother to COVID in May and their father in February last year. Two sisters including a 9-year-old and a 13-year old in Sirsa are under the care of their extended family after losing their parents to COVID in April this year.

A 17-year-old boy in Faridabad had to be sent to a child care institution as he lost both his parents in May and there was no guardian to look after him.

There are numerous such heart-breaking stories of loss and grief as the deadly second wave of COVID-19 ravaged the

state and caused great emotional, psychological, financial and social distress to children.

"According to the data uploaded on 'Bal Swaraj' portal till now, 91 children including several siblings were orphaned and 258 children were left with a single parent due to COVID-19 in Haryana," said Jyoti Baidna, chairperson, Haryana State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (HSCPCR) while talking to The Pioneer.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) had devised the online tracking portal 'Bal Swaraj' (COVID-care link) to track children who have lost both their parents or abandoned during COVID-19 pandemic.

Jyoti said that in many cases, orphaned children are

either living with their grandparents or with extended family (uncle and aunt).

The verification of the cases of orphaned children is currently being done by the HSCPCR. We are verifying all the cases to ensure that children who have either lost both parents or the earning parent due to Covid-19 are being taken care of, she said.

The HSCPCR chairperson further said that COVID-19 has left a large number of children orphaned and vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Hence, the concerned district child welfare committees have been given directions to track the children in need of care and report such cases where children have lost both parents, a single parent or are needed to be shifted to a child care institution, she added.

Punjab's most-wanted gangster, aide gunned down

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab's most-wanted and dreaded gangster Jaipal Bhullar, and his aide Jassi Kharar, was gunned down in Kolkata's New Town area in a fierce encounter. The joint operation to flush out the two dreaded criminals was carried out by the Punjab Police and West Bengal Police's STF (Special Task Force) on Wednesday morning.

Jaipal Bhullar is on the Punjab Police's list of most wanted criminals, with more than 50 criminal cases registered against him in police stations across Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Delhi. he was also carrying a bounty of Rs 10 lakh issued by the Punjab Police, while Jaspreet had a bounty of Rs five lakh on his head.

The encounter on Wednesday took place at the Sapoorji Palanji complex in Kolkata's New Town area. Increased police deployment was seen in the area, including Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel.

Bidhanagar Commissioner of Police, Additional Director General (STF), and other senior officials were also spotted at the encounter site.

and Punjab Police. Both Gangster Jaipal Bhullar and his aide Jassi Kharar were killed in retaliatory firing. One police officer is also said to have suffered injuries in the encounter.

Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Dinkar Gupta, sharing the details of the joint operation — named Op Jack — during a press conference, said that both the gangsters-turned-drug smugglers were wanted in the killing of two ASIs — Bhagwan Singh and Dalwinderjit Singh — of Jagraon Police at grain market, Jagraon, on May 15, 2021 evening.

Notably, Jaipal had earlier snatched a 9 mm Pistol from an ASI Sukhdev Singh of Khanna Police on the evening of May 10, 2021, when he was deployed at a naka on GT road near Doraha. In this connection, Punjab Police had earlier arrested Darshan Singh and Baljinder Singh alias Babbi from Gwalior on May 28, 2021.

The DGP said that Punjab Police launched a massive operation code named OP-Jack manhunt and for nabbing the absconding drug smugglers, Jaipal Bhullar and Jaspreet Singh and many police teams were dispatched to various states to nab these gangsters with the help of other state police forces.

"Punjab Police today (Wednesday) arrested Bharat Kumar — a resident of Sahnewal, Ludhiana, from near Shambhu Border in Rajpura

area and recovered one .30 bore Pistol, along with a Honda Accord vehicle, bearing registration number WB02R4500 by the team. Bharat is a close accomplice of Jaipal Bhullar, and was providing him logistic support in Gwalior area of MP after he and Jassi had fled from Punjab," said the DGP.

DGP said that Bharat revealed that both Jaipal and Jassi were holed up in a rented apartment in Kolkata. "Punjab Police immediately dispatched a special team for Kolkata by flight. In the meanwhile, we also coordinated with Kolkata Police to share pinpointed inputs regarding their current hideout for the arrest of these two most wanted drug smugglers," he said.

"A senior police officer from Kolkata police informed later in the afternoon that both the criminals had been killed in retaliatory firing by STF Kolkata in which one of their Police inspectors had also sustained bullet injuries," added the DGP.

"I am grateful to West Bengal Police, especially the ADGP and STF chief of West Bengal Vineet Goyal, IPS, who acted immediately on inputs provided by the Punjab Police and organized a raid at the Kolkata apartment where Jaipal was holed up along with his associate, Jassi," he said.

The DGP said that the neutralization of Bhullar and his close associate in Kolkata on

Wednesday, and the arrest of two of his associates from Gwalior on May 28, 2021, is a big blow to the heroin drug smuggling network, which is operating from across the border.

JAIPAL BHULLAR'S RAP SHEET

Punjab's one of the most wanted gangster Jaipal Bhullar is the son of a retired police officer. Carrying a bounty of Rs 10 lakh and with 50 criminal cases registered against him, Bhullar has emerged as the state's most dreaded gangster, especially after his close aides — gangsters Vicky Gounder and Prema Lahoria — were killed in encounters with the Punjab Police.

Bhullar was also accused in the murder of two policemen in Ludhiana. He, along with three of his accomplices, opened fire at the police on May 15, 2021, after one of the cops identified him as a wanted criminal. Two ASIs were killed during the incident.

DGP Gupta said that Bhullar was absconding since 2014 and during all these years, he had committed many heinous crimes and was wanted in more than 25 sensational criminal cases. He was presently involved in smuggling of drugs from across the border in close collaboration with major drug smugglers based in Pakistan.

When Shera Khuban was

shot dead in a police encounter in 2012, Jaipal suspected that Rocky had leaked information about Shera Khuban to the police. Therefore, in 2016, Jaipal murdered Jaswinder Singh alias Rocky near Solan. Jaipal took the responsibility of Rocky murder on Facebook and declared it as the revenge of Shera Khuban encounter.

In 2017, Bhullar and his accomplices made away with Rs 1.33 crore after robbing a cash van of Axis Bank in Banur on Chandigarh-Patiala Highway near Chitkara University and Rs 35 lakhs from an ATM loading van in Ropar.

In 2020, Bhullar, along with his brother Amritpal Singh Bhullar, also allegedly fled with 30 kg of gold in a daylight robbery at the IIFL branch on Ludhiana's Gill road.

Bhullar's brother Amritpal, along with gangster Gagandeep alias Gagan Judge, was later arrested by Punjab Police's Organized Crime Control Unit (OCCU). However, Jaipal Bhullar managed to evade the police dragnet until Wednesday.

JASSI'S CRIME SHEET

Japreet Singh alias Jassi, a resident of Kharar, was involved in at least four criminal cases, including the killing of two ASIs at Jagraon. He was a close accomplice of Jaipal Bhullar, along with Darshan Singh and Baljinder Singh alias Babbi, who were arrested from Gwalior on May 28, 2021.

Daily Covid..

From Page 1

Now more than 10 new cases of corona have come in only 6 districts of the state. 144 new cases have come in Indore, 104 in Bhopal, 39 in Jabalpur, 13 in Ujjain, 12 in Betul and 11 in Ratlam.

No new case in 10 districts. No new cases of corona have been reported in 10 dis-

40 fatalities, 528 fresh Covid cases reported in Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana on Wednesday reported 40 deaths as 528 fresh COVID-19 were detected in the last 24 hours. According to the health bulletin, the death toll reached 8829 while the total case tally was 764094 in the state.

940 people recovered from the virus in the last 24 hours and the total recoveries now stands at 748186. In the last 24 hours, a maximum of five deaths were reported in Hissar district while a highest of 69 cases were reported in Sirsa district. No fresh COVID case was reported in Nuh district, as per the health bulletin.

districts of Alirajpur, Bhind, Datia, Dindori, Guna, Harda, Mandla, Sheopur, Singrauli and Tikamgarh. Alirajpur district is completely corona infection free. Active cases of corona are in single digit in Burhanpur and Chhatrapur districts.

In only two districts of the state, Indore and Bhopal, the weekly positivity rate is more

than 2%. The weekly positivity rate is 2.1% in Indore and 2.2% in Bhopal.

In the state, 3135 patients of Corona are being treated in hospitals. Out of these, 1315 patients are in ICU, 1227 patients are on oxygen beds and 593 patients are on normal beds. There are 3936 patients in home isolation.

PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

B-14/A, Chhatrapati Shivaji Bhawan, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi-110016

1st June 2021

Public Notice

Caution against fraudulent offers in the name of PFRDA/NPS

It has come to notice that some unscrupulous elements are making phone calls in the name of PFRDA promising to release large sum of money lying with NPS/PFRDA and these unidentifiable callers also provide deceitful explanations to extort money for release of payments.

This is to inform that PFRDA is a statutory body which regulates National Pension System (NPS) and the general public is hereby cautioned not to fall prey to the designs of such unscrupulous elements who are trying to dupe the unsuspecting citizens in the name of NPS/PFRDA

PFRDA NEVER MAKES CALLS TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING THEM TO DEPOSIT MONEY FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS FROM NPS/PFRDA. ANY SUCH COMMUNICATION RECEIVED TO DEFRAUD MAY BE INFORMED TO POLICE IMMEDIATELY.

Davp 15102/11/0001/2122

BJP got ₹785.77 cr in donations



RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Corporate entities, builders, jewelers, and IT companies among other contributed generously to the BJP, which yet again cornered the lion's share of donations in 2019-20. As per the report filed by the BJP to the Election Commission of India, the party received ₹785.77 crore in donations/contributions above ₹20,000. At an individual level, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu was the politician with the highest contribution to the BJP's kitty with ₹1.11 crore.

As for BJP's one-time NDA ally Shiv Sena, it received only ₹18.61 crore while the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) got just ₹8.08 crore

during the period. Political parties are required to declare donations above ₹20,000 every financial year received by them from any source under the provisions of The Representation of the People Act. The treasurer of every party has to present a report on political donations exceeding Rs 20,000. Political parties are required to furnish the name, address and PAN of the donor along with information about mode of payment and amount contributed by each donor to the Election Commission.

As per the report, the highest donation to the BJP came from Prudent Electoral Trusts which donated ₹208.25 crore. The other donors were

ITC Limited ₹55 crore; New Democratic Electoral Trust ₹30 crore; Oasis Realty ₹20 crore; Lodha Developers ₹14.55 crore; ITC Infotech India ₹12.80 crore; Triumph Electoral Trust Rs 10 crore; AB General Electoral Trust ₹9 crore; BG Shirke Construction Technology ₹5.15 crore; Jankalyan Electoral Trust ₹6.15 crore; Harmony Electoral Trusts ₹5.50 crore; ILABS Hyderabad ₹5 crore; Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited Rs 5 crore Muthoot Finance Limited Rs 4 crore; Paradeep Phosphates Ltd Rs 3.5 crore; Kalyan Jewellers India Ltd Rs 3 crore; Hero Cycle Limited Rs 2.5 crore; Motilal Oswal Financial Service Ltd Rs 2.5 crore; Mewar University Rs 2 crore;

Janhit Electoral Trust Rs 2 crore; Samaj Electoral Trust Rs one crore; Janam Multimedia Ltd Rs one crore and Haldiram Snacks Rs 30 lakh.

Former union minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore donated Rs 3 lakh while former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Dr Raman Singh contributed Rs 1.20 lakh to the BJP. Besides, Kirori Mal Meena, Bhupendra Yadav, Vijay Goel, Arjun Ram Meghwal and Smriti Z Irani have donated Rs one lakh each to the party fund.

Shiv Sena's donors included Lodha Developers and Bhairavnath Sugar Works with Rs five crore each; BG Shirke Construction Rs 4 crore; ITC Limited Rs 2.62 crore; Harmony Electoral Trust Rs two crore; Modern Road Makers Rs two crore; New Democratic Electoral Trusts Rs one crore; Prudent Electoral Trust Rs 1.85 crore; Derive Trading and Resorts Limited Rs one crore and Hotel Grand Hyat Rs 4.12 lakh.

In the case of AITC, major contributors were New Democratic Electoral Trust which donated Rs two crore; Texmaco Infrastructure Rs 50 lakh; Century Plywood India Limited Rs 50 lakh; Texmaco Rail Engineering Rs 50 lakh and Star Cement Rs 50 lakh.

Security forces hunt for 100 foreign terrorists in Valley

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 750-km-long Line of Control (LOC) in Jammu and Kashmir may be silent for the last more than three months due to the ongoing ceasefire between India and Pakistan but the security forces are hunting for nearly 100 foreign militants who are lying low to avoid the dragnet and planning to launch major attacks in the Union Territory.

Coupled with this, militants have started moving from one terrorist camp to another across the LOC indicating the Pakistan Army and the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) are getting active again. There are more than 40 terror camps located close to the border in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK).

Flagging these two developments, sources in the security establishment said here on Wednesday that the recent activities in the terrorist camps indicate that despite the ceasefire, the terrorist infrastructure is intact.

India and Pakistan mutually agreed to observe ceasefire on the LOC on February 25 and both sides have not fired a single shot since then. Moreover,



no infiltration bids from across the LOC were detected so far, they said.

Earlier, the summer months used to be the busiest for security forces as militants lodged in the launch pads tried to sneak into Kashmir after the mountain passes opened up due to the melting of snow. The Pakistan Army provided covering fire to the militants to enable them to infiltrate.

Sources said the highly-trained and battle-hardened foreign militants are now hiding in North Kashmir. Intelligence about them has dried up as they are refraining from moving about to avoid any leak or detection.

In all, there are more than 230 militants including foreigners now present in Kashmir. The anti-insurgency grid

including the army, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the local police is spreading its net to neutralize the foreign ultras.

The focus of the drive is in South and North Kashmir. As regards activities in terrorist camps in POK, officials said reports from across the LOC in Poonch sector indicate the ultras have resumed weapons and basic infantry field craft training. It had stopped for some weeks after the ceasefire and its resumption is a matter of concern, they said.

Besides these developments, the law and order machinery is also keeping a close watch on the trend of locals joining the terrorist 'tanzems (organisations)'. So far, 50 to 55 youth have jumped

The highest figure of 214 was noticed in 2018 while 140 local youth joined militant ranks in 2019

the fence this year, sources said.

Though this figure is the lowest as compared to last two to three years, officials said more efforts are required to wean away the young men from the path of violence. The highest figure of 214 was noticed in 2018 while 140 local youth joined militant ranks in 2019 and more than 130 last year.

Agreeing to adhere to the ceasefire announced by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2003, a joint statement issued by both the countries on February 25 said the two armies will observe all agreements on ceasefire along the 750-km long LOC and other sectors, according to a joint statement issued on Thursday.

There were 5,133 ceasefire violations last year in which 22 civilians were killed and 71 injured on the Indian side. Moreover, 24 security personnel were also killed in the firing while 126 were wounded. Moreover, nearly 300 incidents of ceasefire violation were recorded till January end this year.

Don't share jab stocks at public forum, States told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has written to the States and Union Territories, advising them not to share the data of the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) system on vaccine stocks and the temperature of vaccine storage at public forums, and stating that it is a "sensitive information and to be used only for programme improvement".

In a recent letter to the states, the Union Health Ministry said the Centre, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has rolled out the eVIN system under UIP, which is used to track the vaccine stock status and the temperature at all levels of vaccine storage, from national to the sub-district level.

In the letter, the Ministry said it was overwhelming to see that all the states are using the system to update the stock



and transactions of Covid vaccines on a daily basis.

"In this regard, please be advised that data and analytics generated by eVIN for inventory and temperature is owned by the Ministry of Health and not to be shared with any other organisation, partner agency, media agency, online and offline public forums without the consent of

the ministry.

"This is very sensitive information and to be used only for programme improvement," said the letter written by Pradeep Halder, Advisor, Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) to all mission directors of the National Health Mission in all the states and Union territories.

Desi 2-DG priced ₹990 per sachet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Just like Covaxin and Jcovishield, the indigenously-developed drug, 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG), for management of coronavirus would not come cheap either. The 2-DG has been priced at a steep ₹990 per sachet.

The drug has been developed by scientists at the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), a DRDO lab, and is being commercialised by pharma major Dr Reddy's Laboratories. It was considered to be homemade and hence, was anticipated to be affordable.

Dr Reddy's had last month issued a statement saying that the pricing of the drug was "being determined with a view to making it accessible and affordable to as many patients as possible".

The price was announced by Deepak Sapra, CEO, API & Services, Dr Reddy's Laboratories who said: "The goal at Dr Reddy's is to max-

imise production and make it accessible as much as possible to patients all over the country in as short a time frame as possible."

The Government on Tuesday capped the price per dose to be charged by private hospitals for Covid-19 vaccines. Covishield will be available at ₹780 while Covaxin at ₹1,410 and one will have to shell out ₹1,145 for the Sputnik jabs.

This includes the vax price, service charge of ₹150 and GST of 5 per cent.

For its part, the DRDO has now invited the Indian pharmaceutical industry to produce it after the technology is transferred to the selected companies.

Giving details, officials said the government has called for Expression of Interest from the industry to manufacture 2-DG.

Clinical trial results have shown that this molecule helps in faster recovery of hospitalised patients.



Former Uttar Pradesh chief secretary Anup Chandra Pandey takes charge as the new Election Commissioner of India on Wednesday. The post fell vacant in April following the retirement of former Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora. CEC Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar are the other two members of the poll panel. Agency

Tomar: Govt ready to talk with protesting kisan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Wednesday reiterated that the Government is ready to talk with the protesting farmers but yet again asked their unions to come up with logical objections to the provisions of the three farm laws.

"All political parties of the country wanted to bring the farm laws, but they could not gather courage to bring them. The Modi government took this big step in the interest of farmers and brought reforms. Farmers got the benefit of that in several parts of the country. But in the meantime farmers' agitation started," Tomar said at the Cabinet briefing.

He said the Government held 11 rounds of talks with farmers and Unions were asked about their objections in the laws and which provisions they think were against farmers. "But neither the leader of any political party gave its answer in the House (Parliament) nor any farmers' leader, and the talks did not move forward". The minister said that the government is committed towards farmers and it also respects farmers.

"So, whenever farmers want discussions, Government of India will be ready for discussion. But we have repeatedly asked them to tell the objections in the provisions with logic. We will listen and find a solution," Tomar said. The government and unions have held 11 rounds of talks, the last being on January 26, to break the deadlock and end the farmers' protest. Talks have not resumed following widespread violence during a tractor rally by protesting farmers on January 26.

Reacting on Tomar's statement, the farmers' leaders said that the government's attitude is unjustifiable and unreasonable, and is resting on ego and optics-games. Condemning the government's approach, the farmers leaders said that the farmer agitation is going to completely nearly 200 days of protests at Delhi's Borders and 502 farmers have sacrificed their lives in the movement.

CBI books G'gram-Delhi-based firm for cheating Yes Bank

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked Delhi and Gurugram-based Avantha Group and Oyster Buildwell promoted by Gautam Thapar and conducted searches on Wednesday at the premises of the directors and promoters of these firms in a case of defrauding the Yes Bank to the tune of ₹466.51 crore.

The firms allegedly availed a term loan facility of Rs 515 crore from Yes Bank Limited in December, 2017. The loan amount was declared as NPA on October 30, 2019.

"Further, the borrower was allegedly declared 'Red Flagged Account' on March 6, 2020 on the basis of Early Warning Signals (EWS). It was also alleged that the accused including the said private company and its holding company, its directors/promoters and others committed breach of trust, cheating, criminal conspiracy, forgery for diversion/misap-

propriation of the public money during the period from 2017 to 2019, thereby causing loss to the tune of Rs 466.51 crore to Yes Bank," the CBI said in a statement.

Searches were conducted at 14 locations including at Delhi/NCR, Lucknow, Secunderabad and Kolkata which led to recovery of incriminating documents/digital evidence, it said adding investigation is continuing.

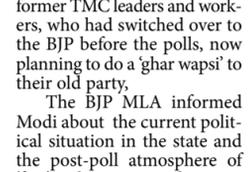
Besides Oyster Buildwell Pvt. Ltd. and its holding company Avantha Realty Ltd., its directors/promoters like Raghuraj Kumar Sharma, Rajendra Kumar Mangal, Tapsi Mahajan, Gautam Thapar and unknown officials of private companies/bank have been named as accused in the case. Unknown officials of Jhabua Power Investment Ltd., Jhabua Power Ltd., Avantha Ltd. and Avantha Power and Infrastructure Ltd. have been listed as accused in the FIR.

Suvendu meets PM, apprises him of post-poll violence in Bengal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly and BJP MLA from Nandigram Suvendu Adhikari on Wednesday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his official residence here and apprised him of the alleged post-Assembly-election violence against BJP workers in the State.

His meeting also comes against the backdrop of many former TMC leaders and workers, who had switched over to the BJP before the polls, now planning to do a 'ghar wapsi' to their old party.



The BJP MLA informed Modi about the current political situation in the state and the post-poll atmosphere of 'fear' in the state, apprehensions of the BJP workers and their 'migration' to Assam. "I met PM Modi, JP Nadra and briefed them on the current situation in West Bengal.

More than 40 BJP workers were murdered in the state. This violence in the State should end," he said.

Adhikari, who defeated State Chief Minister Mamata



Banerjee from the prestigious Nandigram constituency, had a day before also met union home minister Amit Shah and BJP president J P Nadra and several other Union Ministers and BJP leaders from Bengal.

He has been visiting the Capital for the first time after the West Bengal assembly

elections and subsequent violence allegedly against the BJP supporters.

The West Bengal government on May 25 informed the Supreme Court about the arrest of three people in connection with the alleged killing of two BJP workers on May 2 in the state.

IISc now world's top research varsity



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has been ranked the "world's top research university" as per the prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World Rankings 2022. It has also been judged the third best institution in India with IIT Bombay and Delhi occupying the first and second positions, respectively. The three Indian institutions

have made it among the top 200 in the world.

"According to the Citations Per Faculty (CPF) indicator, when universities are adjusted for faculty size (the size of the institution is taken into account for calculating the CPF), IISc Bangalore is the world's top research university, achieving a perfect score of 100/100 for this metric," a press statement issued by QS stated.

Though IIT Bombay has

maintained its position as the top Indian institution in the QS ranking for the fourth consecutive year now, at the global level it ranks a joint-177, having fallen five places over the past year. IIT Delhi has become India's second-best university, having risen from 193rd rank in last year's ranking to 185 in the latest ranking. "It has overtaken IISc Bangalore, which ranks joint-186 in the world," the press statement mentioned.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated those figuring in the top-200 positions and said efforts are underway to ensure more universities and institutions of India scale global excellence and support intellectual prowess among the youth.

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' congratulated IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi and IISc Bengaluru for securing the positions in universities rankings. Pokhriyal said that India is taking a leap in the field of Education and Research and is emerging as a Vishwaguru. "We are equally proud to have a Guru like Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has constantly been thinking about the welfare of students, faculty staff and all other stakeholders associated with the Indian Education sector," Nishank said in a statement.

The other Indian institutes that have made it to the top 500 in the ranking are IIT Madras,

which has improved 20 places from its last year rank and now ranks in the 255 bracket. IIT Kanpur, Kharagpur, Guwahati and Roorkee are the other institutes in the 500 bracket, in that order.

Delhi University is in the 501-510 bracket, while Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has for the first time been ranked in the top 600 bracket in QS World Rankings. Thirty-five Indian institutions have found a place in the QS rank this year.

The top three institutions globally are Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of Oxford and Stanford University respectively.

Ashwin Fernandes, Regional Director for QS Intelligence Unit in Middle East, North Africa & South Asia, said that this is the first time that any Indian institute has scored a 100 in research or any other parameter.

Making every effort to abide by new IT rules, says Twitter

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Having been served a final warning, Twitter on Wednesday said it is making every effort to comply with the new IT rules which came into force last month and has shared a progress report with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), wherein it is said to have cited the pandemic-induced constraints for the delay on its part.

According to sources, in its progress report to the MeitY, Twitter has stated that it is in advanced stages of finalising a chief compliance officer as per the new IT

rules and additional details will be submitted to the government within a week. Twitter in its reply to the final notice of the government dated June 5, said that it is making all efforts to comply with the new guidelines but has been unable to do so because of the global impact of COVID-19 pandemic.

"...We are in advanced stages of finalising the appointment of the role of chief compliance officer and we plan to provide additional details to you in the next several days, and at the latest within a week," Twitter said. Source said, the letter was sent on June 7 to the Ministry.

Mamata wants a 'union of States' against Centre

Didi meets Tikait, backs farm laws repeal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday called upon all the States to form a "union of states" to counter central harassment and linked it to a credible unity of opposition parties in order to get rid of the Narendra Modi Government. The Chief Minister who met Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait at State secretariat Nabanna in Kolkata said a time had come when "there should be a union of the States in order to save the federal structure of the country ... so that whenever a state gov-

ernment is harassed by the Centre all the states can stand behind that state and take on the central government." This was "necessary to save the federal structure of the country which is threatened by the incidents that are taking place for the past several years," Banerjee said, throwing her weight behind the BKU which has been fighting against the Centre for the repealing of new farm laws that would in the final run "lead to complete corporatization of agriculture and impoverishment of peasants." Apart from Banerjee her senior party colleague and former Union Minister Yashwant Sinha --- as former BJP leader --- too met the delegation led by Tikait. "The farmers, youth and workers of the country are under threat ... their future is

in danger ... it is an urgent need to throw out the Black (farm) laws along with its creator the BJP Government," Banerjee said. On whether she would like to lead the larger unity of opposition parties or for that matter the UPA against the BJP, Banerjee skirted the issue saying "I only want to remove the Government this ... I only want to remove Narendra Modi ... they are torturing the entire country for the past several years... my full support is for Tikait ji and the farm leaders and I will call upon him to unite all the farmers of UP, Punjab, Haryana and the country against Modi Government ... my support is fully with him." There has been a buzz in the social media circles and also in the Trinamool Congress



BKU spokesperson Rakesh Singh Tikait meets West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee at State Secretariat, Nabanna, in Kolkata on Wednesday

about Banerjee's prime ministerial plans. In fact the elevation of her nephew Abhishek Banerjee as the national party general secretary is considered a step towards taking TMC to other States and preparing the junior Banerjee for the Bengal masnad. Attacking New Delhi for its insensitive approach towards the farmers' cause she said, "For the last 7 months, they (Centre) didn't bother to speak to farmers. I demand that all three farm laws are withdrawn," reminding how her Government had earlier "passed the resolution against the farm laws. We are with farmers, with their movement until their demands are met." Alleging that the GST was being levied though the industries were suffering, Banerjee said "even medicines and vac-

cines are not being spared from GST." In return Tikait lauded Banerjee for standing firmly behind the farmers. "The Chief Minister assured us that she will continue to support the farmers' movement. We thank her for this assurance. West Bengal should work as a model state and farmers should be given more benefits," he said. On whether he had faith in Banerjee's ability to lead the country the farm leader said "she has saved Bengal from BJP now I will request her to take a lead in saving India from this party as they are against the interests of the farmer, poor and workers," adding his party would make a coordination team to fight off the black laws. "Mamata didi has supported our idea of a joint fight," he maintained.

Kerala to see re-energised Cong under Sudhakaran

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala will soon see a rebooted and re-energised Congress party striving hard to regain its lost vitality and strength. The target set for the newly appointed Pradesh Congress Committee president K Sudhakaran is the 2024 Lok Sabha and 2026 legislative Assembly elections. A day after the appointment of Sudhakaran as the State Chief of the Congress, the party high command decided to disband the entire organizational set up from the State to the block level in Kerala. Three working presidents have been appointed to help Sudhakaran in his mission to revive the

party. Former Union Minister of State Suresh Kodikkunnil, P T Thomas MLA and T Siddique (who was kind enough to hand over the Wynadu Lok Sabha seat to former AICC chief Rahul Gandhi during the 2019 Lok Sabha election) are the new working presidents of the KPCC. Sources close to Sudhakaran said that he has been given a blank cheque for rebuilding the party. The sources said that the days of Oommen Chandi and Ramesh Chennithala are over as far as the KPCC is concerned. Chandi (78) is not in the best of health and it is doubtful whether he would be actively campaign during the 2024 Lok Sabha elec-

tion when he would be on the wrong side of 80. The new look organizational team would be selected from the youth and those who are below the age of 50, if the indications from Tariq Anwar, the representative of the Congress High Command is any indication. Anwar who interacted with all party MLAs, MPs and office bearers of the party is believed to have told the High Command that groupism and quota system had damaged the good will enjoyed by the party in the State. "There are many elements occurring in party posts only because of the family lineage and this would soon be a thing of the past," said an aide to Sudhakaran.

Ladakh L-G reserves Subordinate Services for residents of UT

PNS ■ JAMMU

Fulfilling the long pending demand of the people of Ladakh region, Lt Governor Ladakh RK Mathur has reserved all types of Subordinate Services for the "Residents of UT". Significantly, rules to define the criteria of such locals are yet to be framed. According to the Union Territory of Ladakh Employment (Subordinate) Service Recruitment Rules, 2021, notified by the UT Administration, "No person shall be qualified for appointment to the Service unless the person is a Resident of Union Territory of Ladakh". Welcoming the announcement Chief Executive Councilor, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council-Kargil, Feroz Ahmed Khan said, It has been our demand since the bifurcation of J&K almost two years ago. It's a welcome move. He, however, added the order has come very late as many

unemployed youths have crossed the upper age limit in the past two years. "We will also demand relaxation in the age bar for fresh recruitments. According to the notification this rule shall not apply to persons allotted service in UT of Ladakh under the provisions of section 89(2) of Jammu and Kashmir Re-organization Act 2019, or such Rules as may be prescribed by the Administration. These Rules shall come into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette and from the date of commencement of these Rules, Union Territory of Ladakh Employment (Subordinate) Service shall be constituted. As per the Rules, appointment to the Service shall be made by direct recruitment or by promotion, failing which by absorption. The competent authority to appoint a person to the Service by absorption shall be the Administration.

2 dreaded Punjab gangsters killed in Kolkata shootout

Kolkata: Two dreaded gangsters from Punjab Jaipal Bhullar and Jaspreet Kharar were on Wednesday killed in an encounter at the plush residential complex of New Town, north-east of Kolkata. A team of Special Task Force raided the up market premises where the duo were hiding for the past more than three weeks, sources said adding "as soon as the police entered the area they were received with gunshots in which an inspector KM Ghosh was injured... the STF commandos retaliated in which they were killed." Son of a police officer Bhullar had 40 cases --- including murder,

extortion, robbery, kidnapping, drug-racketing, arms-smuggling etc --- registered against his name. He had fled Punjab after shooting dead two assistant sub-inspectors and Jagraon. He was wanted in Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, police said adding they carried a bounty of Rs 10 lakh on them announced by Punjab Police. The police got information of their presence in the area following seizures of truck loads of explosives and sophisticated weapons from Siuri in Birbhum district and another arms haul at Baidyabati in Hooghly district, sources said. PNS

Kerala logs 16,204 new cases, 156 fatalities

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

There is no respite for Kerala from the Covid-19 as the State logged 16,204 new cases and 156 deaths on Wednesday, according to the Department of Health, Government of Kerala. Health officials tested 1.15 lakh samples on Wednesday. The end of the day saw 1.39 lakh patients undergoing treatment in various hospitals across the State. A senior Government physician told The Pioneer that most district general hospitals and taluk head quarters hospitals reported full capacity by Wednesday. "Situation is grave in Kerala because the figures thrown out daily after the RT-PCR tests are inconsistent. There is no uniformity in the number of persons testing positive or in the fluctuation in TPR, a measure than indicates the real status," he said. The doctor also added that the situation is unlikely to see any change before July 31. "All we can hope is that the number of daily positive cases remain static or stable if not lessening," he said. Ernakulam with 1972 new cases topped the table of districts with highest number of new cases. Malappuram with 1685 cases continued to be a problematic district despite the efforts of the administration to bring down the number of cases.

Karnataka may opt to unlock in 4 to 5 phases: Minister

Bengaluru: Karnataka Revenue Minister R Ashoka on Wednesday indicated that the state may go for unlocking in four to five phases after June 14, as the Covid-19 induced lockdown comes to an end. "Keeping the number of deaths and new cases in mind and aimed at bringing down the Covid infections further, lockdown will not be relaxed at one go. Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai, Health Minister K Sudhakar and I have held detailed discussions with the Chief Minister in this regard," Ashoka said. Speaking to reporters here, he said lockdown will be relaxed in phases, most probably it may be done in four to five phases.



A woman leaves after receiving a Covid-19 shot at a vaccination centre, in Bengaluru on Wednesday

"First will be timings, now the relaxation (for shopping) that is there between 6 to 10 am, it may get extended further. Also those who go for a walk at parks may get some relief. All this is subjected to a final decision by the Chief Minister. Lockdown will not be relaxed at one go," he added. Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa is likely to call a meeting of Ministers, officials and experts on June 11 or 12, to discuss and take a decision on the unlocking process. The State Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprising experts, is also said to have recommended a gradual unlocking of activities in the state. PTI

Bharat Biotech expects peer review of Covaxin's Phase 3 trial data in Q4 2021

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Biotech, which is yet to publish the data of its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin phase-3, expects a peer review of the job in two to four months after it was given to scientific journals, Raches Ella Project Lead Covid-19 Vaccines at Bharat Biotech said on Wednesday. In a series of tweets, Ella said there were nine publications on Covaxin so far and the efficacy paper of phase-3 trials would be the tenth one. To remain unbiased, Bharat/ICMR cannot access any data. Our service provider IQVIA has started the final statistical analysis. After submitting efficacy and 2 months of safety to CDSCO (July), it is expected to instantly reach a pre-print server. Peer review takes 2-4 months, he tweeted. According to his tweet, as many as 25,800 participants took part in phase-3 trials and there were 30 separate forms pertaining to each volunteer amounting to individual data points of 70.4 lakh. "The last participant (participant #25,800) received the second dose in mid-March, add two months (based on CDSCO/FDA requirements for 2-months post-dose-2 safety follow-up), and we are in mid-May with sufficient data for quality checks and analysis, he said in another tweet.

Showers cripple normal life in Mumbai Metro gets entire June's quota of rain in a single day

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The south-west monsoon arrived in the country's commercial capital and the neighbouring satellite townships in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) with a bang on Wednesday, inundating the low-lying areas, paralysing the road and train traffic and crippling normal life in the metropol- is. Mumbaikars woke up to the incessant lash of heavy rains which began late on Tuesday night and continued all through Wednesday --- a feature that they have been used to witnessing for years on end on the day of the arrival of the monsoon. The high intensity and quantum of downpour could be gauged by the fact that the city registered a record rainfall for a day in June --- 280.2 mm rain in the city suburbs and 123 mm in the Island city, during the past 24 hour. Between 8.30 am and 8.30 pm on Wednesday, the Island city received 102.29 mm, while the eastern and western suburbs recorded 169.17 mm and 137.33 mm respectively. While most low-lying areas of Mumbai lay under thick sheets of water, the neighbouring satellite townships of Thane, Palghar, Navi Mumbai and Kalyan-Dombivli --- all of which fall under separate municipal corporations --- bore the brunt of the first the first bout of rain during the



Two men try to push a vehicle that stalled in the middle of a waterlogged road during heavy rain, at Kings Circle, in Mumbai on Wednesday

current monsoon. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast "heavy to very heavy rains" accompanied by thunderstorms till June 13 in Mumbai, Thane and other districts of Palghar, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg in the coastal Konkan region. It has also forecast heavy rain in other parts of Maharashtra. Like it happens during the monsoon months, several roads in Mumbai and suburbs were flooded. Similarly, suburban trains on the Western Railway, the main and harbour lines of the Central Railway --- considered the lifelines of Mumbai and its suburbs --- were badly affected. However, in what came as a blessing in disguise was that the trains were not operating to their full capacity, as a majority of Mumbaikars are confined to their homes owing

excess water from the railway tracks. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray --- who has been warning the people for the past three days about the impending heavy rains in Mumbai and neighbouring areas --- visited the Disaster Management Centre of the Birhanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) along with Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and took stock of the rain situation in the metropolis with Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar and Municipal Commissioner I S Chahal, and other senior officials. Meanwhile, the flight operations at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) remained normal during the day, but the inclement weather conditions resulted in "go-around" for at least four flight. As it normally happens during the heavy rains, heavy inundation was witnessed at Sion, Kings Circle, Wadala, Dadar, Matunga, Kalachowky, Kurla, Mankhurd, while the subways at Andheri, Khar, Malad and Santacruz were flooded and remained out of bounds for traffic all through the day. Traffic snarls were witnessed on the stretches of the Eastern Express Highway, Western Express Highway, major roads like S. V. Road in the west suburbs and LBS Marg in the east suburbs remained flooded.

5 MHz spectrum in 700 MHz to be allocated to Indian Railways: Centre

New Delhi: In a major technical advancement towards improving safety of passengers on trains, the Centre on Wednesday approved the allocation of 5 MHz spectrum in the 700 MHz band to Indian Railways for a greater precision in the national transporter's communication and signalling systems entailing an investment of ₹25,000 crore. With this spectrum, Indian Railways has envisaged providing LTE-based mobile train radio communication on its route and the project will be completed in the next five years. The decision was taken in the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Briefing about the Cabinet decisions, Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said

railways currently relies on optical fibre for its communication network but with the allocation of fresh spectrum, it will be able to use high-speed radio on a real-time basis. It will help in augmenting both communication and signalling networks of the railways, Javadekar outlined. In its statement, the Indian Railways said, "It brings a strategic shift in Railways' operations and maintenance regime. It will help in improving the safety and increasing the line capacity to accommodate more trains using the existing infrastructure. The modern rail network will result in reduced transportation cost and higher efficiency. Also, it will attract multinational industries to set up manufacturing units to fulfil the 'Make in India' mission and gener-

ate employment." In addition, Indian Railways has approved an indigenously developed automatic Train Collision Avoidance System. The purpose of LTE (Long Term Evolution) for Indian Railways is to provide secure and reliable voice, video and data communication services for operational, safety and security applications. It will be used for modern signalling and train protection systems and ensure seamless communication between loco pilots and guards. It will also enable Internet of Things (IoT) based remote asset monitoring especially of coaches, wagons & locos, and live video feed of CCTV cameras in the train coaches to ensure efficient, safer and faster train operations, the Railways said. PNS

Centre resumes action in gold smuggling case

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The gold smuggling through diplomatic baggage case which has been in the cold storage for the last six months returned to hog national limelight on Wednesday morning as a team of officials from the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) Kochi office took into custody 36-year-old Mohammed Manzoor from Kochi International Airport on early Wednesday morning. Manzoor, hailing from Kozhikode district had returned to Kerala early Wednesday morning by a scheduled flight from West Asia and he was whisked away by the waiting NIA team to the latter's office in Kochi. He is the 35th accused to be arrested in connection with the case.

The NIA officials said that Manzoor was the source in West Asia who procured and sent the gold consignments to Kerala through diplomatic channels in the international airports in Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi. The scam has seen the arrest and incarceration of M Sivsankar, the then principal secretary of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan for his alleged dealings with Swapna Suresh, the kingpin behind the operation that saw the smuggling of 167 kg gold in 2019 qne 2020. Though agencies like Enforcement Directorate and Customs too had joined the probe, the investigation has been in limbo and did not make any progress for the last six months. All accused who were arrested except Swapna Suresh, her henchmen P S Sarit and

Sandeep Nair, charged with COFE-POSA have been granted bail. Though the NIA and the Customs had claimed that they would nab Faizal, the main brain behind the planning and execution of the smuggling operations, he remains elusive in the safe havens of West Asia even after one year. The arrest of Manzoor comes at a time when the BJP leadership in Kerala have come under police investigation for heist of ₹3.5 crore, malpractices during assembly election and swindling of ₹240 crore meant for election funding. The BJP's State chief K Surendran is likely to be questioned in connection with a complaint filed by the CPI(M) that the former threatened Sundara, the BSP candidate from Manjeswaram in the assembly election held on April 6.

The police recorded the statement from Sundara who alleged that the State BJP president threatened him and made him withdraw from the race. A delegation of leaders led by former Muzoram Governor K Rajasekharan called on Kerala Governor Mohammed Arif Khan and complained to him that the CPI(M) and Chief Minister were misusing police and other official machinery to destroy the BJP in the State. "The ₹3.5 crore hawala case and all such cases have been foisted on the BJP leaders with the motive to tarnish the image of the party. The Special Investigation Team probing the case has been packed with police officials with tainted background and owing allegiance to the CPI(M)," the BJP leaders charged in the representation.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Good intent

The Election Commission of India is pushing the Government over the next batch of electoral reforms

The Election Commission, trolled by the non-BJP parties during the last round of Assembly elections for reasons ranging from impartiality towards the Opposition and alleged kowtowing before the BJP Government, took the lead this time in inquiring with the Government about the next tranche of electoral reforms. The Commission wrote to the Union Law Ministry to get back on the nearly 40 reform proposals pending with it. The Commission identified five main reforms it urgently wants implemented: Allowing voters turning 18 to register themselves with the Commission; punishment for candidates furnishing false information in their affidavits; paid news to be made an electoral offence; ban on advertising in print media during the silence period; linking Aadhaar number to electoral rolls to avoid duplication of voter ID cards. Reforms are currently of three levels in terms of ease of implementation. The Commission is already implementing the elementary level, comprising digitising the election process and enabling remote voting for NRIs and migrant workers. The five reforms listed above come in the intermediate level because they first need amendments to laws and they are not really politically controversial. Some reforms implemented over a decade ago made the electoral process a bit more credible, including candidates' affidavits on criminal antecedents and assets, criminalisation of politics, limitations on exit and opinion polls, prohibition on surrogate advertisements, compulsory maintenance of poll accounts by parties. However, feet are being dragged on a crucial reform: Restricting the number of seats a candidate can contest from.

It is the final level of reforms that are contentious and which form the real core of electoral reforms India urgently needs. One is overall transparency of the Commission's actions. The run-up to every Assembly election sees various interpretations of Commission's actions, particularly the Opposition's charge of alleged leniency shown to ruling party bigwigs. The second issue is electoral bonds. At present any Indian citizen can buy electoral bonds and donate it to a political party of choice, but anonymously. While anonymity is intended to prevent political victimisation of the donor, the Commission in 2017 did not favour the donor's identity being kept secret as that may allow shell companies and foreign entities to fund and influence Indian elections. Hate speech and communal polarisation have of late become the biggest negative factors in Indian elections, their impact worse than caste considerations. The Commission has been found wanting in issuing exemplary punishment to the wrongdoers. Another issue is the demand for taking the collegium route, like the judiciary, for appointment of commissioners and elevating the senior-most as the chief. Last but not the least is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "one nation one election" proposal as well as a single voters' list for the Lok Sabha, Assembly and panchayat elections to cut down costs. Clearly, the latter reforms will hold a candle to the Commission's sincerity of purpose subject, of course, to the Union Government being eager to clear the proposals.

PICTALK



Commuters make their way during heavy rain, near Oberoi Mall at Goregaon, in Mumbai

PTI

Better tomorrow?

Crushed, the tourism industry is hoping that the run of bad luck would soon be over

The travel and tourism industry, along with associated arms like the hospitality and aviation sectors, has been in the doldrums for at least two seasons in a row. Depression has set in, hope has touched nadir, jobs have been lost and revenue — both for individual players and the Governments, alike — is shying away from the invested entrepreneurs like Vijay Mallya from the Indian law-enforcement agencies. But the Centre and State Governments' ongoing inoculation drive, as it gathers momentum, has injected a sense of optimism and enthusiasm among the stakeholders. From Kashmir to Uttarakhand to Himachal Pradesh to Goa and Kerala, basically almost all the States where the economy thrives on travel, tourism and hospitality, it's the same story of despair. But Wednesday brought with it a sliver of hope and positivity when Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Patel fanned the embers of their dying hope. He said in unequivocal terms that the ongoing vaccination drive is going to drive the revival of the tourism sector. Giving the entrepreneurs in the above-mentioned sectors another reason to smile, he added that the Government is working on a uniform policy and setting up protocols for travellers getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

Speaking to a conglomerate of well-known companies operating in the related fields, he lauded their efforts in coming together to "promote the interests of the smallest and often under-represented operators". Meanwhile, in Goa, the tourism stakeholders were trying to decipher Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's statement that re-opening of tourism would be considered after its entire population is vaccinated with at least one dose. Similarly, in Kerala, the tourism sector is in peril as the State has lost three consecutive seasons for the first time. The two consecutive floods in 2018 and 2019, and now the COVID-19 pandemic have flattened the tourism sector. The tour operators are clueless as to when they will see a return to the good old days. In Kashmir, too, the sector has been hit two successive years. In March this year, tourist arrivals had picked up to 1,25,000 from about 19,000 in January before the second wave of COVID-19 hit home. Here's hoping that the lives and livelihood of all of them, as well as of their families, get back on track as early as possible.

Likud oxygen for Israel's polity

Irrespective of whether Netanyahu stays or goes, it can't be denied that his Likud party has changed the contours of Israeli politics forever



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

With four inconclusive elections to the Knesset in the last two years, Israel's politics is badly fragmented. While Likud is still the leading party in the 24th Knesset, its 30-seat performance is the poorest in recent times. Many attribute it to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's brashness, arrogance and corrupt policies. He might have to stand trial for four distinct charges of corruption and sleaze against him. Politics in Israel has always been fissiparous. Parliamentary groupings (alliances) are common for cobbling up a majority in the 120-member legislature. On most occasions, the Knesset failed to complete its four-year term and a new Government was sworn in sooner than the Knesset dissolved. Israel witnessed 34 Governments during the previous 23 Knessets.

Whether Israelis have practised democracy to the hilt, or to a fault, is a matter of opinion. They organised the first general elections to the Knesset on January 25, 1949 — less than a year after declaring independence on May 14, 1948. Israel's declaration of independence was accompanied by its battle for survival against the Arab Army's attack aimed at annihilating the new State. Despite many Arabs of Palestine fleeing, a portion stayed back. Almost 30,000 Arabs voted in the first general elections (1949) and nearly 70,000 in the second (1951). Israel, based on universal adult suffrage, was the first country in the world to enfranchise Arab women.

Democracy in Israel might be seen as an American influence, its stalwart ally. However, it is largely forgotten that a Communist USSR was the first country to recognise an independent Israel *de jure* and supply it with arms and ammunition (through Czechoslovakia), which helped Israel survive the Arab attack. Previously, on May 14, 1947, (exactly a year before Israel's declaration of independence) it was the USSR's permanent representative at the UN Andrei Gromyko who had proposed in the UN the plan to partition the mandated territory of Palestine between the



Arabs and Jews; thus leading to creation of sovereign Israel. It is another thing that the USSR, which turned anti-Israel and pro-Arab by 1950, tried to erase these aspects from the public discourse.

The birth and survival of Israel is popularly presented through the prism of Jewish-Arab discord. It is generally overlooked that pro-Zionist Jews were themselves affected by tumultuous ideological disputes. One of the best-kept secrets is how this dispute led an independent Israel to practise apartheid against a section of its own Jewish citizens for the first 30 years. The struggle has its origins in the ideological conflict between David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973), a committed Socialist, and Zeev Jabotinsky (1860-1940), who espoused Revisionist Zionism and created Jewish self-defence units for the first time in two millennia. Both were from the former Russian Empire. This split the Jewish underground active defence into mainstream Haganah and fringe Irgun and Lehi. The more militant Irgun and Lehi, following Jabotinsky's footsteps, believed in fighting the British as well as Arabs, while fighting the former was not on the agenda of Haganah.

BEN-GURION ACTED VINDICTIVELY AGAINST THE JEWISH FAMILIES WHICH HAD SERVED IN IRGUN AND LEHI. THOUGH THEIR CITIZENSHIP COULD NOT BE CANCELLED AS PER ISRAEL'S LAW OF RETURN (1950), THEY WERE PRACTICALLY OSTRACISED

In this power struggle, Ben-Gurion apparently emerged victorious. Not only he became the first Prime Minister of Israel, but his Mapai (Labour) Party ruled Israel for a quarter century, ending with his protégé Golda Meir's exit in June 1974. Despite its splintered politics, the Social-Democratic nature of Israel made Mapai an extremely powerful agency to control the economy, education, labour market, media and Army.

Ben-Gurion acted vindictively against the Jewish families which had served in Irgun and Lehi. Though their citizenship could not be cancelled as per Israel's Law of Return (1950), they were practically ostracised. While Irgun and Lehi were demonised as terrorist organisations in history books, their former fighters like Yitzhak Shamir (who later became the PM) could not get even a simple clerk's job and Israel Eldad was removed from professorship after Ben-Gurion's personal intervention. The graves of former fighters were not marked with Israel Defence Force symbols.

These families, restricted to a few colonies in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, stayed close to each other sharing pride and pain. Their only notable representa-

tive in Knesset was Menachem Begin, a disciple of Jabotinsky. They named their children, born mostly in 1940s, after fallen fighters and heroes and brought them in the family tradition of pride, pathos and patriotism. It was from these families that emerged a whole generation of politicians including Ehud Olmert, Yair Shamir, Uzi Landau, Ruby Rivlin and, later, Tzipi Livni and Benjamin Netanyahu who would transform the scenario in Israel.

Shortly after Israel's pyrrhic victory in Yom Kippur War, 1973, an 87-year old David Ben-Gurion died. Golda Meir resigned and Menachem Begin, along with Major General Ariel Sharon (Retd), formed the Likud (Consolidation) party, with Revisionist Zionism as its creed. This party has produced, apart from Begin, other Prime Ministers like Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert and Benjamin Netanyahu. In one generation, led by Menachem Begin, children (often called Princes) from ostracised fighters' families had turned the politics of Israel around.

(The writer is an author and independent researcher based in New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REGIONAL PARTIES IN VIRTUAL SPACE

Sir — Apropos of the exclusive report 'Regional parties gain Twitter ground' (June 9, 2021), it needs no clairvoyance to say that this doesn't bode well for the ruling party. Social media, including Twitter, can be said to have influenced a large section of the middle class in general and the youth in particular at the hustings during the past two general elections. If the ruling party is losing its foothold on Twitter, it certainly has reasons to worry.

Gradually, this may lead to an erosion of the party's support base and the core constituency of voters. Surprisingly, COVID-19 has served on a platter an unanticipated opportunity to politically challenge the ruling party using all the political weapons. The ruling party will have to do some serious homework to get out of this conundrum.

Bichu Muttathara | Pune

TESTING TIMES OF DEMONETISATION

Sir — It was indeed a trying time for various banks in India, including the currency chests, during the demonetisation period and the bank staff struggled just like in the recent COVID-19 times. There were serpentine queues and the staff worked late hours to cater to the needs of their clients during the tough time.

The period from November 8 to December 31, 2016, was a crucial period for unearthing black money and even housewives were found having bundles of ₹500 and ₹1000 in their kitty unaccounted for. The clever people got it exchanged right during the intervening period and some of them cleared their loan dues with these demonetised notes. As part of the exercise, the Government gave the people an opportunity to exchange junked currency notes or deposit these in their bank accounts.

Now, the RBI has asked the banks to preserve the CCTV recordings of their branches and currency chests in an effort to assist the enforcement agencies to take action against people involved in illegal activities during the demonetisation peri-

Keep staying in battle mode



There is a slight sense of relief that the ferocious second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has proved costly in terms of the lives lost, is receding. There are no words to describe what the pandemic has done to us. Our lives are being shaped by the effects, losses and the memories it has engendered. Despite the decline in the number of daily new cases and casualties, there is no room for complacency. It is crucial that we don't let the pandemic catch us off guard one more time. It is of utmost importance for us to understand that the virus is still very much in circulation with its tendency to gain

entry into human hosts. It is a fine detail of the pandemic that the virus (SARS-CoV-2) is mutating and it is in its nature to do so to increase its chances of survival. When the causative agent of a pandemic disease mutates into new forms, we find ourselves in a race against them. The level of protection provided by vaccines to various new variants varies.

It is true we are creatures of habit. But we cannot carry on merrily without realising the danger of not changing the usual behaviour. COVID-19 leaves us with no option but to adopt pandemic-appropriate behaviour. The war against COVID-19 needs to be fought on multiple fronts. Ramping up testing, carrying out more genome sequencing and quickening the pace of vaccination, besides improving healthcare facilities, are of critical importance. We must be conscious that the pandemic is not going away anytime soon and it could erupt in more waves, and act accordingly. It is usual to have peaks and troughs in the course of a pandemic, so we cannot avoid fighting a long battle against it.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

od. On the basis of various inputs, the investigative agencies also started probing matters relating to illegal accumulation of new currency notes. This is another step in the right direction.

Jayanthi Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

NOT EASY FOR THE TMC OUTSIDE BENGAL

Sir — This has reference to your editorial 'Wide angle' (June 9). The young nephew of Didi, who recently took over as the TMC's general secretary, is reported to have said that if they decide to go to other States, they will do so not to win a few seats or increase their vote share but to win power in that State by taking the BJP head on. It is the best joke of the year. Politicians tend to speak tall but when it comes to execution, they just fall short.

Will the TMC spread its wings to Uttar Pradesh or Punjab, which go to polls in 2022, participate and win these elections?

The TMC has a considerable Muslim vote bank in West Bengal. Bangladeshi infiltrators and other minorities who have settled in the State for decades together have been given ration cards and voter IDs. But that may not work in other States.

The TMC cannot dream of winning a few seats in other States, leave alone clinching power there. It is a daydream. Similar was the AAP's thought after it won the Delhi elections the first time. Eyeing an all-India canvas, it failed to get more than a few seats in Punjab. Didi is not a figure to fit into the shoes of a national leader.

On the other hand, the BJP has made inroads in West Bengal in the recently held elections. Whether the TMC provides good governance in the coming days to retain power in 2026 remains to be seen.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

SOUNDBITE

Will the UP Government bring out the reality of Agra medical mock drill and punish the guilty?



Congress general secretary — Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

The #BitcoinLaw has been approved by a supermajority in the Salvadoran Congress. 62 out of 84 votes!

History!

El Salvador President — Nayib Bukele

Nothing's more romantic than Mumbai rains, but single people can just daydream. Who is meant for me please show up na!



Actor — Kangana Ranaut

I do not count the number of goals. All of this is past. Ten years later, we will sit together, have a chat and then count.

Indian footballer — Sunil Chhetri

We are thinking of starting Tika Utsav 3.0 for the 18-44 age group at the gram panchayat level.



Goa Chief Minister — Pramod Sawant

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

WHEN DOCTORS BECOME PATIENTS

It's an Indian medical conundrum: How long will the doctors tolerate violence against themselves?



N SOUMIK

Seneca, the great Roman philosopher and statesman once said on the importance of doctors: "People pay the doctor for their troubles, but for his kindness, they still remain in his debt." We are fighting against an invisible and an infinitesimal enemy in size, the coronavirus, which brought mankind to its knees, and it is our bounden duty to give every possible aid to the phalanx of our front warriors - the doctors and healthcare workers. Doctors have been revered in India as the proxies of god since ancient times. But attitudes have changed with time and doctors are subjected to hardships by the very people they strive to save.

Of late heinous instances of doctors and healthcare workers being assaulted and mistreated are being reported across the nation. It is a shame that during such a critical phase of pandemic, when the whole medical system is on trial, people are not recognizing these gods in white coats.

In the last fortnight, there have been at least four to five cases reported of violence against healthcare workers, including vandalism in hospitals. A video infamously went viral on social media platforms in which a junior doctor at a Covid-19 care centre in Assam, Dr Seuj Kumar Senapati, was mer-



cilessly beaten with utensils and crockery items by a mob which was the outraged over the death of a Covid-19 patient.

The mob, not only assaulted the doctor, but also rendered heavy damage to the care centre. There have been 28 arrests made by the police so far, including the main accused. The National Human Rights Commission has been strictly scrutinizing the case and has demanded an action taken report from the Director-General of Police within four weeks. Assam, having the fifth highest literacy rate in our country, simply cannot live down this shame.

A similar case is from Karnataka where a senior pediatrician, Dr Deepak was seriously assaulted following the death of a six-year-old boy due to complexities after a dengue attack. A relative of his and three others attacked the doctor while he was returning home riding on his bicycle after finishing his duty.

The doctors do have every right to protest such violence. In the Assam incident, the doctors even boycotted OPD services and the IMA, Assam chapter threatened to boycott Covid-19 services if doctors' safety is not ensured. In several towns and cities, doctors and healthcare workers are wearing black badges to express solidarity with the victims.

Its psychology that when in pain anger is a bosom friend. How long will the doctors tolerate violence against them? As it is they are under tremendous pressure, working long, stressed hours. The safety equipment they wear is anyway cumbersome - they have to wear two masks, PPE kits, double gloves and a face shield for stretches of up to 12 hours. There is no guarantee of timely, hot meals or the much-needed rest. And the unrelenting queues of patients.

The IMA has released this data: Last year, 748 doctors across India succumbed to Covid-19 in the first wave and 642 in the second wave. They must receive praise We for facing the virus storm to keep people safe. In the very least they should not be de-motivated by bouts of violence that helps no one and only hampers medical care to other patients

(The author is a student of BA (Economics) in BJB College, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The views expressed are personal.)

G7 plans end of tax paradise for MNCs

It will end a lucrative business model of the MNCs that park most of their profits in tax havens, bringing curtains down on the golden era of the havens themselves



GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE

The June 4-5 agreement between the G7 Finance Ministers (FMs) from the USA, Britain, Germany, Canada, France, Italy and Japan to plug the cross-border tax loopholes used by the giant multinational companies (MNCs) to evade taxes has immense potential to reform and revolutionise the global tax system. The reform blueprint is based on two pillars: first, to distribute the profits equitably among countries where these are generated, enabling them to tax such profits, and second, adoption of a minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 percent globally.

By forcing the MNCs irrespective of their nature of business to pay taxes where they operate, it can bring to an end the decades-long "race to the bottom" in which some countries compete with each to attract corporate giants with ultra-low tax rates and exemptions, depriving the governments of other countries where the MNCs reap most of their profits of billions of dollars in taxes - money badly needed by them now to prop up their pandemic-ravaged economies. It will also bring to an end a very lucrative business model of these MNCs that park most of their profits in tax havens, bring to an end the golden era of the havens themselves. The tech giants which operate remotely through digital medium like Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple etc. would also start feeling the pinch.

Rich nations like G7 as well as emerging economies have equally struggled in vain for decades to make the MNCs operating within their jurisdictions to pay taxes to them. But using a tax avoidance strategy called Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS), MNCs have been artificially shifting their profits year after year from higher-tax jurisdictions to tax-havens where they pay little or no tax, thus 'eroding' the 'tax-bases' of the former. Countries like Ireland, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Caribbean countries like British Virgin Islands, Bahamas or Cayman Islands, and Central American countries like Panama have used their tax rate arbitrage to attract the MNCs - about 40 percent of MNCs' overseas profits are estimated to be shifted to low-tax countries in this way.

The tax losses are stupendous - estimated to be \$50 billion for the USA and over \$10 billion for India. A global minimum tax rate of 15 per cent would preclude countries from undercutting each other, yielding an estimated \$50 billion-\$80 billion in extra tax annually from the MNCs. Governments would still have the sovereign power to set their own corporate tax rates but not below the floor rate and if the MNCs still continue to shift their profits to a country with a lower tax rate, their home governments can 'top-up' their taxes to the minimum rate to eliminate the benefits from shifting of profits.

The US tax rate was cut down to 21 per cent from 35 per cent by then President Donald Trump in 2017, which his successor Joe Biden now proposes to increase to 28 per cent. The average OECD corporate tax rate in 2020 was 21.5 per cent, with 18 out of 37 members charging higher rates. Only three countries charge rates lower than 15 per cent: Ireland (12.5 per cent), Hungary (eight per cent) and Switzerland (8.5 per cent).

The average tax rate for Asian countries is around 23 per cent; while China and South Korea charge 25 per cent, Singapore charges only 17 per cent rate. In 2019, India also sharply reduced its corporate tax rates to 22 per cent for domestic



THERE ARE SEVERAL ZERO-TAX TERRITORIES, MOSTLY SMALL ECONOMIES LIKE BERMUDA, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS OR CAYMAN ISLANDS, IN WHICH EVEN THE CRUMBS THROWN BY THE MNCs BY WAY OF INVESTMENT ON SUBSIDIARIES AND OPPORTUNITY FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT THEY CREATE, HOWSOEVER LIMITED, COULD BE A BÓNANZA. CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 50 PER CENT OF GOVERNMENT REVENUE IN MANY OF THESE SMALL ECONOMIES

The author is a former Director General, Comptroller & Auditor General of India. The views expressed are personal.



companies (15 per cent for new manufacturing companies) without any deductions, aligning its corporate tax rate to global standards.

However, there are several zero-tax territories, mostly small economies like Bermuda, British Virgin Islands or Cayman Islands, in which even the crumbs thrown by the MNCs by way of investment on subsidiaries and opportunity for employment that they create howsoever limited could be a bonanza. Corporate and financial services account for more than 50 per cent of government revenue in many of these small economies. Over many past decades, the low-tax or tax-less countries have thus enticed investments with lax rules that favour the MNCs and serve as conduits for them to avoid tax in other countries.

The Economist reported an IMF study in 2019 which found that such "phantom" investments by MNCs had pushed Luxembourg's stock of foreign-direct investment to \$4 trillion, "an improbable one-tenth of the global total". Many small countries like Ireland, Cyprus, Hong Kong and Singapore have also benefited in this manner.

To book profits in low tax regimes, MNCs have all the leverage and wherewithal to relocate their subsidiaries and headquarters in any country across the globe - they can relocate their production units anywhere by arm-twisting the smaller countries to agree to their terms. By choosing a suitable trans-

fer pricing mechanism, they can always transfer profits to their subsidiaries located within such jurisdictions to avoid paying taxes in the tax havens. It would be in the interest of these countries to have their taxing rights over these companies in their own jurisdictions.

As the communique from the G7 had stated, "We commit to reaching an equitable solution on the allocation of taxing rights, with market countries awarded taxing rights on at least 20 per cent of profit exceeding a 10 per cent margin for the largest and most profitable multinational enterprises." The principle is that MNCs must pay taxes equitably in every market where they generate their profits, thereby apportioning their global profits to countries where their customers and users are located.

The business model of MNCs that rely on the tax havens would collapse like a pack of cards, as would the economy of tax havens themselves - especially of those that lack other significant sources of revenue - once the G7 proposals are translated into an international treaty, contours of which may be finalised in the broader G-20 meeting at Venice in July, which, in addition to the G-7 countries includes emerging economies like China, India, Brazil, Russia, South Africa, Indonesia and others. An agreement

would usher in nothing short of a tax-revolution that would nudge the other countries also to fall in line. MNCs and tax havens would be the losers - indeed it might signal the ultimate end of the tax havens' business model, while large economies that give the MNCs most of their profits which are now being siphoned off to the tax havens would stand to gain the most. Countries like Ireland whose economy has boomed with the influx of billions of dollars in investment from the MNCs would be deeply unhappy and unlikely to give in, as would be the tax havens themselves.

To tax the digital transactions of global digital giants like Apple, Google etc. that carry out their activities remotely from another country, India had imposed a six per cent Equalisation Levy in 2016 on incomes accruing to foreign e-commerce companies from India in certain business to business transactions above a threshold. Several other countries had followed suit. This, however, hardly compensated for the revenue loss. Once the new tax regime comes into force, it will bring to an end such digital taxes as they will become redundant. India which is one of the largest and fastest expanding global internet markets has much to gain from the new tax regime, but must follow up with further reforms of its tax system and reduction of factor costs to attract international investment and industries.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

WE WELCOME FORMER UNION MINISTER JITIN PRASADA INTO THE BJP. HIS JOINING WOULD FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE PARTY. — UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER YOGI ADITYANATH



IN THE CONGRESS, HE BECAME AN MP AND A MINISTER. THE CONGRESS HAS GIVEN HIM SO MUCH BUT WHAT HAS HE DONE IN RETURN? — UPCC PRESIDENT AJAY KUMAR LALLU

Environment is forever, not diamonds

The permission to mine for diamonds in a 364-hectare area in MP will lead to felling of 225,000 trees, besides adversely impacting the groundwater table

Even as India celebrated the World Environment Day recently, the environment itself had little to cheer for. The fact that the ambitious pledges taken to protect the environment are only a symbolic exercise has been made evident by the ongoing controversy involving the Madhya Pradesh government granting diamond mining rights to Aditya Birla Group (ESSEL Mining) to mine for diamonds in the Buxwaha forest area of Chatarpur.



KOTA SRIRAJ

The grant of permission for mining a 364-hectare area will lead to felling of approximately 225,000 trees besides clearing the forest area which comprises rare plant species and also adversely impact groundwater table. In addition to this the indigenous communities also

The author is an environmental journalist. The views expressed are personal.

stand to be adversely impacted as about 8,000 local forest dwellers will get displaced.

The rights to mine the Bunder diamond block estimated to contain 34 million carats of rough diamonds was won by Essel Mining in 2019. The project with an outlay of Rs. 2500 crore investment is supposed to eventually become the largest diamond mine project in Asia. However, so far, the project could not make much headway due to ecological concerns pertaining to air and water pollution. These concerns combined with stiff resistance from the local population has kept the project in a suspended state. There is a need for urgent measures to ensure that the work does not begin in the area unless a renewed environmen-

tal impact assessment report is commissioned that has the inputs of local environmental experts and the opinion of the local communities as well.

Even as opinion builds up against the diamond mining project, an environment activist from Jabalpur Dr.P.J. Najpande has moved the National Green Tribunal against the project. Conservation committees too have been formed for the districts of Sagar, Damoh and Chatarpur as these districts stand to be the most affected by the diamond mining projects. The committees are preparing the grounds for registering demand for a proper tree audit and a public hearing on the matter with the presence of all affected stake holders. These efforts however are from either



the local communities or environmental conservationists, but sincere and impactful interventions form the government are yet to be seen.

In India, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are the three states that produce the most diamonds in the country with Madhya Pradesh accounting for over 90

per cent of the produce which is an average 39,000 carats per year. Given these figures it is easy to understand why there is so much pressure on Madhya Pradesh as far as diamond mining goes.

The Bunder mining block falls in the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh, which is a traditionally water-stressed region. The project pre-feasibility report clearly states the project is water-intensive as it requires an estimated 5.9 million cubic meters per day which is a tall order for a water-challenged region. Unfortunately, this is yet to ring alarm bells for the government even though the Central Ground Water Authority has declared the region to be in a semi critical area water resources wise.

The ecological biodiversity of Madhya Pradesh has already borne the brunt of projects such as the river interlinking project linking the Ken and Betwa rivers which is threatening 2.3 million trees. On the other hand, the Bundelkhand Expressway project has resulted in the felling of over 1,90,000 trees. The diamond mining project promises to deliver yet another blow to the environment from which the state may not really recover this time.

In this mad drive for development and prosperity the environment is not the only collateral damage; the people especially at the grass root level who labour at these diamond mines in Madhya Pradesh are the worst affected. The labourers at the mines, especially in the

Panna district, already suffer from malnutrition, chronic poverty and migration related problems such as housing and unemployment.

The exploitation of earth's natural resources is not only causing the abuse of the environment but is also resulting in immeasurable suffering to the people who are directly impacted by these activities. The government cannot be a mute spectator to this devastation and take ages to respond even as natural resources, environment get exploited while the social fabric is tattered. The alacrity in government actions alone will establish genuineness of its concern and commitment for the environment and Buxwaha forests in Madhya Pradesh are earnestly waiting for the same.

China has ability to try to 'disturb' rules-based order: Blinken

China is both most consequential and most complicated relationship US has, says US Secretary of State

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China is the single nation that militarily, economically, diplomatically and politically has the ability to try to "disturb" the rules-based order that America, its friends and allies strongly defend, US Secretary of State Tony Blinken has said.

Blinken also told lawmakers during a Congressional hearing on Tuesday that China is both the most consequential and most complicated relationship the US has.

"It (China) is the single nation state that militarily, economically, diplomatically, and politically has the ability to try to disturb the rules-based order that we strongly defend because it's advanced our own security

and prosperity for so many years," he said.

Testifying before the Senate Appropriations Committee during the hearing on the 2022 Budget Request for the State Department, Blinken said the US-China relationship has increasing adversarial aspects to it.

"It certainly has competitive ones. And it still has some cooperative ones as well. But the common denominator is to approach each of those aspects of the relationship from a position of strength. I think that strength starts with a few things," he said.

Blinken said that it starts with alliances and partnerships.

"This is a unique strategic asset for us, something that



Secretary of State Antony Blinken testifies during a Senate Foreign Relations budget hearing on Capitol Hill on Tuesday

China does not enjoy. That's why we're working to revitalise those alliances and partnerships. It includes our engagement in international organisations and international life because when we pull back, China fills in and starts to shape the rules and set the norms.

"It absolutely includes our military and our deterrent capability... Some years ago we started to shift resources to the Asia Pacific, including about 60 per cent of our Navy. Continue to take the steps necessary to make sure we have a strong deterrent," Blinken said.

China claims almost all of the 1.3 million square mile South China Sea as its sovereign territory. It has been building military bases on artificial islands in the region also claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Blinken said: "Investments in our technology, our workers, innovation and research and development, all of those elements together or how we approach China from a posi-

tion of strength."

Responding to a question, the secretary of state said that China is making more investments in its nuclear programme and seeks to build its arsenal.

"This is something that I think we need to engage in because it presents a growing challenge. So, this is something that we're focused on. We're working on it," he said.

Blinken said that the foundational piece of ties with China has to be approaching it from a position of strength. The elements of that strength are strong alliances and partnerships.

"That is a strategic asset for us that China doesn't have. When we are working and speaking collectively with oth-

ers who are aggrieved by China's practices in one area or another, we are much stronger. We're much more effective just in the economic realm, to cite one example.

"Alone, we're about 20 per cent, 25 per cent of the world GDP. When we're working in concert with other democracies, we are 50 per cent or 60 per cent of the world GDP. It's a lot harder for China to ignore. So, alliances and partnerships, that's a critical piece," Blinken said.

Second is actually leaning in and engaging in these very imperfect international institutions, he said.

"The challenge there is that these institutions tend to set the rules, the standards, the norms. When we pull back,

China fills in, and it has a stronger hand in setting the rules on new technologies, for example leaning. We are leaning in, making sure with our allies and partners that we're present.

"Third, what you've just done or are on the verge of doing, I think this afternoon, with this very important legislation that is making the right investments in ourselves, and our technology, in research and development, in our workers, that is fundamentally our greatest source of strength when it comes to competing and dealing effectively with China," Blinken said.

He said of course, "our military, our deterrent capacity, all of those things have to be married together."

Senate passes Bill to boost US tech industry, counter rivals

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Senate overwhelmingly approved a bill on Tuesday that aims to boost US semiconductor production and the development of artificial intelligence and other technology in the face of growing international competition, most notably from China.

The 68-32 vote for the bill demonstrates how confronting China economically is an issue that unites both parties in Congress. That's a rarity in an era of division as pressure grows on Democrats to change Senate rules to push past Republican opposition and gridlock.

The centerpiece of the bill is a USD 50 billion emergency allotment to the Commerce Department to stand up semiconductor development and manufacturing through

research and incentive programs previously authorized by Congress. The bill's overall cost would increase spending by about USD 250 billion with most of the spending occurring in the first five years.

Supporters described it as the biggest investment in scientific research that the country has seen in decades. It comes as the nation's share of semiconductor manufacturing globally has steadily eroded from 37 per cent in 1990 to about 12 per cent now, and as a chip shortage has exposed vulnerabilities in the US supply chain.

"The premise is simple, if we want American workers and American companies to keep leading the world, the federal government must invest in science, basic research and innovation, just as we did decades after the Second World War," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

Russian court mulls motion to outlaw Navalny's organisations

Moscow: A Moscow court on Wednesday is considering a request by prosecutors to outlaw the organisations founded by Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny — part of authorities' efforts to muzzle critics ahead of a crucial parliamentary election in September.

The Moscow City Court is expected to grant the request to designate Navalny's Foundation for Fighting Corruption and his sprawling network of regional offices across Russia as extremist organizations.

In conjunction with a new law, the ruling would bar people associated with the groups from running for public office, derailing hopes by Navalny's allies to seek parliament seats.

The extremism label also could potentially carry prison terms for activists who have worked with the organisations, anyone who donated to them, and even those who simply shared the groups' materials.

The court is expected to issue its verdict later in the day, according to the lawyers in the case.

Nepal's SC issues show cause notice to Prez, PM in House dissolution case

Kathmandu: Nepal's Supreme Court on Wednesday issued a show cause notice to the Office of the President, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers on the dissolution of the House of Representatives and sought a reply within 15 days. President Bidya Devi Bhandari, at the recommendation of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, had dissolved the House for the second time in five months on May 22 and announced snap elections on November 12 and November 19.

Prime Minister Oli is heading a minority government after losing a trust vote in the House. The five member constitutional bench, headed by Chief Justice Chandra Shumsher Rana, has sought clarification from the defendants, according to sources in the Supreme Court.

The proceedings of the politically significant case, which had been disrupted since Sunday, finally resumed on Wednesday. It has been learnt that regular hearings on the case will resume from June 23 after the completion of 15-day

Japan, Australia share China concerns, augment defense ties



Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, right, and Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi, left, attend a video conference with Australian Foreign Minister and Minister for Women Marise Payne and Australian Defense Minister Peter Dutton at Foreign Ministry in Tokyo during their two-plus-two ministerial meeting on Wednesday

AP ■ TOKYO

East and South China Seas as a challenge to the international community. Motegi was joined by Japanese Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi and their Australian counterparts, Marise Payne and Peter Dutton.

Japan regularly protests to China over its coast guard presence near the Japanese-controlled Senkaku islands, which China also claims and calls Diaoyu. Chinese vessels routinely violate Japanese territorial waters around the islands, sometimes threatening fishing boats, Japanese officials say.

Japan and China are also in dispute over the development of undersea resources in the area.

Japan and Australia on Wednesday shared concern about China's increasingly assertive actions in regional seas and expressed strong objections to "coercive or destabilising" behaviour.

Foreign and defence ministers from the two countries agreed in the online talks to strengthen their security ties as China presses its claims to contested areas in the Asia-Pacific region.

Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi told reporters after the talks that the officials shared their concerns about China's activity in the

10 HALO TRUST STAFF KILLED NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN

Kabul: Gunmen killed 10 people and wounded 14 others in an attack on the HALO Trust de-mining organisation in Afghanistan, an Afghan interior ministry official said Wednesday. Spokesman Tariq Ariyan blames the Taliban for the Tuesday night attack on the group's camp in the Baghlan Markazi district of northern Baghlan province.

BUILDING COLLAPSE IN SOUTH KOREA KILLS 9

Seoul: A five-story building being demolished in southern South Korea collapsed on Wednesday, sending debris falling on a bus and killing nine people on board, officials said.

SOVIET-MADE JET CRASHES, PILOT MISSING

Sofia: A Soviet-built MiG-29 fighter jet from Bulgaria's air force crashed into the Black Sea during a military exercise and the pilot is missing, the Bulgarian Defence Ministry said.

ROW OVER NAMING DAUGHTER LILIBET

London: Prince Harry was on Wednesday forced to issue a statement in reference to naming his new-born daughter Lilibet, a nickname of his grandmother Queen Elizabeth II, after a Buckingham Palace source claimed that the 95-year-old monarch was not consulted about the decision.

WESTERN RAILWAY
CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL
Executive: Sr.DEN(North)BCT. Tender Notice No. BCT/21-22/112 dtd. 08.06.2021. Work and location: Mumbai Division : Virar-Surat section:- Construction of Boundary wall with Precast PSC Panel & Precast Column and RCC footing & Column cap in connection with increase of speed to 160Kmph on Western Railway (Total length 157.42Kms) (Two Packet system). Approx. Cost of work : ₹120,16,48,752.73. EMD (₹): 0. Date & Time of submission: On 13.07.2021 till 15.00 hrs. Date & Time of opening: On 13.07.2021 at 15.30 hrs. Regarding detailed nature of work, containing cost of tender document (Non-refundable), EMD eligibility criteria, similar nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit www.ireps.gov.in. Manual offers will not be considered. 0170
Follow us on [Twitter.com/WesternRly](https://twitter.com/WesternRly)

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the share certificates Nos. 65333 to 65341 for 625 shares bearing distinctive No (s) 10322821 to 10323445 (Folio No. 037002) standing in the name of Joginder Singh in the books of M/s Aarti Drugs Limited, having regd. office at plot no. N-198, MIDC, Tarapur Village, Pambhli Taluka and District Palghar, Maharashtra 401506, have been lost and the advertiser has applied to the company for issue of duplicate share certificate (s) in lieu thereof. Any person (s) who has/have claim (s) on the said shares should lodge such claim (s) with the company's Registrar and Transfer Agents X viz Link Intime India Pvt Ltd, C-101, 247 Park, LBS, Marg, Vikhroli (west) Mumbai -400083 within 15 days from the date of this notice failing which the company will proceed to issue duplicate share certificate (s) in respect of the said shares.
Date: 5.12.2020 Name of the share holder: Joginder Singh
Place: J-3/85 Rajouri Garden, New Delhi
New Delhi 110027

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
The Dy. Chief Engineer/Const., Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India invites open e-tender under Single Packet System for the under noted work:-

1	Name of work and location	Balrao work of Additional holding line between Anand Vihar & Chandernagar station in c/w Development of new coaching terminal at Anand Vihar Railway Station (Phase-II) (Seventh call)
2	Completion period of the work	06 (Six) months from the date of issue of acceptance letter
3	Approx. Cost of Work:	Rs. 58.25 Lakh (Rupees Fifty Eight Lakh & Twenty Five Thousand only)
4	Earnest money amount (to be deposited online)	Nil
5	Date, Time for submission of e-tender and opening of tender	Tender may be uploaded upto 11.30 hrs. on 02.07.2021 on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in . The bidders can only participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 11.30 hrs. on 02.07.2021
6	Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document :	Above tenders document will be available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 11.06.2021 to 02.07.2021. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender No.220-ACS/1/1176/Holding Line Dt. 09.06.2021 1259/2021
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Former Prez Trump returns as a diminished TV draw

New York: Former President Donald Trump reached less than a million measurable television viewers over the weekend in his return to the public stage at a North Carolina political event.

Newsmax averaged just under 7,00,000 viewers between 8 pm and 9:30 pm Saturday when Trump spoke, the Nielsen company said. His speech was also carried live on One America News Network and C-SPAN, but their audience is not measured by Nielsen.

Fox News Channel did not carry the speech by the former president beloved by many of its viewers. The network averaged more than 1.5 million viewers for its typical Saturday night fare of Jesse Waters and Jeanine Pirro. AP

On 1st overseas trip, Biden to assure allies and meet Putin

Washington: Set to embark on the first overseas trip of his term, President Joe Biden is eager to reassure the United States on the world stage, steadying European allies deeply shaken by his predecessor and pushing democracy as the only bulwark to rising forces of authoritarianism.

Biden has set the stakes for his eight-day trip in sweeping terms, believing that the West must publicly demonstrate it can compete economically with China as the world emerges from the coronavirus pandemic.

Building toward his tripartite summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin, Biden will aim to reassure European capitals that the United States can once again be counted on as a dependable partner to thwart Moscow's aggression both on their eastern front and their internet battlefields.

The trip will be far more about messaging than specific actions or deals. And the paramount priority for Biden, who leaves Wednesday for his first stop in the United Kingdom, is to convince the world that his administration is not just a fleeting deviation in the trajectory of an American foreign policy that many allies fear irrevocably drifted toward a more transactional outlook under former President Donald Trump. AP

Albanian Parl impeaches Prez for vote comments

Tirana (Albania): The Albanian Parliament on Wednesday impeached President Ilir Meta for violating the constitution and discharged him from the post.

In an extraordinary session, the parliament voted 104-7 to discharge the president. Three abstained. The final approval comes from Albania's Constitutional Court within three months. A report of a parliamentary investigation concluded that Meta had violated the constitution with his biased approach against the ruling Socialists during the April 25 parliamentary electoral campaign. The report said Meta violated 16 articles and also incited violence.

"Ilir Meta has betrayed the mission of the president of ... Albania," Prime Minister Edi Rama said in his speech before the vote. "Ilir Meta has humiliated the constitution."

Meta has denounced the investigation and impeachment attempt, arguing they are illegal. There was no reaction from Meta during the debate or after the vote. During the parliamentary debate Meta continued his daily agenda, awarding a medal to a folk music ensemble. AP

Ghaziabad Development Authority
Vikas Path, Ghaziabad
(I.S.O. 9001:2015 and I.S.O. 14001:2015 certified)
Letter No. 194/4/EE-6/2021 Dated:- 08.06.2021

E-Expression of Interest

Expression of Interest is hereby invited from reputed and experienced agencies in Two Bid system on behalf of V.C. G.D.A. Ghaziabad, for implementation of environmental management plan with respect to general and specific conditions of environment clearance for elevated road Ghaziabad. Terms/ references/ general and specific conditions of environment clearance are available on E-Tender link of website of Ghaziabad Development Authority www.gdghaziabad.com and UP Electronics Corporation website <https://etender.up.nic.in> from dated 11.06.2021 to dated 21.06.2021. The date of opening prequalification part through E-Tender procurement solution is dated 24.06.2021. Interested bidder are requested to visit the site regularly and update themselves with regard to any change or additional information related to the tender. The cost of bid document is Rs.1770/- E-Tender processing fees and earnest money of Rs.10,000/- is required in the shape of RTGS in favour of V.C. G.D.A. e-tendering. The price bid of eligible bidders shall be downloaded through e-tender procurement system after filling their details on the e-tender portal. The price bid opening date/time shall be displayed on above websites. In case of holiday/holidays the e-tender will be opened on next working day. Vice chairman G.D.A. reserves the right to reject any or all the offers without assigning any reason. Any other enquiry can be made from Executive Engineer on Mobile No. 8191002904 during office hours.

Chief Engineer
E-mail : helplinegda@gmail.com : @gdagzb : @gdagzb
Helpline : 0120-3342433, Whatsapp: 9818988807, Website : www.gdghaziabad.com
एक सुंदर शहर — हमारा संकल्प

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
General public is hereby informed that this person Named: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 30 Years, Sex: Male, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Shallow, Built: Strong, Face: Round, Wearing: Black Check Shirt and Khaki Lower, was found dead on 05.06.2021 Behind Red Fort Monkey Bridge, Delhi.
In this regard a DD No. 50A,U/s 174 Cr. PC dated 05.06.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.
Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform the following. SHO P.S. Kotwali, Delhi
DP/1257/N/2021(UIDB) Ph.: 011-23977100, 8750870121

DELHI JAL BOARD
GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW) VIII
SEC. 16-D, PAPPANKALAN, N. DELHI. 110075
"STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"
PRESS N.I.T. No. 02/ EE(SDW)/VIII/ (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of work	Estimate cost in Rs.	E/Money in Rs.	Tender fee in Rs.	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1.	Deployment of operation & maintenance staff for 91 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant at Pappankalan Ph-I	3845379/-	77000/-	500/-	Tender ID:- 2021_DJB_204084_1 Date: 08.06.2021	23.06.2021 at 11.45 A.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at (<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>)
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) (T.P. Singh)
Adv. No. J.S.V. 100(2021-22) EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW) VIII

PARADIP PORT TRUST
CORRIGENDUM-V
Name of the work : "Supply, installation, commissioning of navigational / range lights & five years maintenance". Estimated cost : Rs.2,10,73,613/-. Last date & time of submission of bid : Dt.28/06/2021 up to 17:15 Hrs. Refer our website for details: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>
Executive Engineer (PED-III)
PPT/PR/40/21-22-Dt-09.06.2021

Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd
HO: SCO 78-80, Bank Square, Sector-17B, Chandigarh 160017 India

The e-tenders are hereby invited on behalf of Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd (HARCO Bank) under Two Bid System (Technical Bid and Financial Bid) for the following works to be carried out from the eligible parties as per details given below:-

EOI Ref. No.	EDP/IT-Consultant/2021-22
Description of item	Appointment of Technical Consultant (1 only) for automation of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies in the State of Haryana including: - Hardware/Software/Network - Infrastructure/IT/entail/theretic, including cloud technology - Core banking technology deployment and management - Application development/deployment and maintenance - Operations management
Earnest Money	Rs. 50,000/-
Tender Fee (Non-refundable)	Rs. 1000/- + GST
e-service Fees (Non-refundable)	Rs. 1000/- + GST
Start date and time of Bid preparation & submission on e-procurement portal	08.06.2021 (10:00 Hrs)
Last date and time for Bid preparation & submission by bidders	22.06.2021 (17:00 Hrs)
Date and time of Tender Opening (Technical Bid Part - I)	23.06.2021 (14:00 Hrs)
Date and time of Tender Opening (Financial Bid Part - II)	To be decided later on
Last date and time for Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) or Bid submission	22.06.2021 (17:00 Hrs)
Pre-bid Meeting	14.06.2021 (11:30 Hrs)

The complete bidding documents, fee details, technical specifications and key dates can be viewed/downloaded from the web sites <https://tenders.hrync.in/> and www.harco.bank.org.in. Bid through any other mode shall not be entertained. Please note that Managing Director, HARCO Bank reserves the right to accept or reject the tendering process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever.
Managing Director, Haryana State Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd.

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY
General Public is hereby informed that an one male person was found dead by train accident at K.M. Pole No. 6/22, Railway Track Main Line, near Shahdara Railway Station, Delhi dated 05.06.2021 at 5:44 pm. In this regard a DD No. 28A, dated 05.06.2021 has been registered at P.S. Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi. The description of the person is given as under Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 60-65 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Medium, Face: Long, Injury Mark: Head Separated from body, Wearing : White & Black Linedar Shirt, Blue Colour Lower and brown colour Chappal in his feet.
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.
SHO P.S. Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi
DP/157/RLY/2021 Ph.: 011-23961522, 8750871302

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
General public is hereby informed that this person Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 55 Years, Sex: Male, Height: 5'6", Built: Thin, Hair & Beard: White, Wearing: Blue Colour Pant and White T-shirt with Black Stripes, was found Dead near Delite Cinema, Asaf Ali Road, Daryaganj, Delhi on 07.06.2021.
In this regard a DD No. 46-A, dated 07.06.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Daryaganj, Delhi.
The Dead Body has been preserved in the Mortuary of Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi, for 72 hours for identification.
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.
Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following. SHO P.S. Daryaganj, Delhi
DP/823/CD/2021 Ph.: 011-23274683, 23279331

Finance Min releases third instalment of revenue deficit

GRANT OF ₹9,871 CR TO 17 STATES

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Wednesday said it has released third monthly instalment of revenue deficit grant of ₹9,871 crore to 17 States.

With the release of this instalment, total ₹29,613 crore has been released in the first three months of the current financial year as Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant to States.

"The Department of Expenditure on Tuesday released the 3rd monthly instalment of Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD) Grant of ₹9,871 crore for the year 2021-22 to 17 States," the ministry said in a statement.

The Centre provides PDRD grant to states under Article 275 of the Constitution. The grants are released as per



the recommendations of the Finance Commission in the monthly instalments to meet the gap in Revenue Accounts of states post devolution.

The 15th Finance Commission has recommended PDRD grants to 17 states — Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

The eligibility of states to receive this grant and the quantum of grant was decided by the Commission based on the gap between assessment of revenue and expenditure of the state. Assessed devolution for financial year 2021-22 was also taken into account by the Commission.

The 15th Finance Commission has recommended total PDRD grant of ₹1,18,452 crore to 17 States in 2021-22. The grant is released to States in 12 monthly instalments.

The department also will make recommendations on how to further protect Americans' genetic and personal health information, and

White House drops Trump orders trying to ban TikTok, WeChat

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The White House has dropped Trump-era executive orders that attempted to ban the popular apps TikTok and WeChat and will conduct its own review aimed at identifying national security risks with software applications tied to China, officials said Wednesday.

A new executive order directs the Commerce Department to undertake what officials describe as an "evidence-based" analysis of transactions involving apps that are manufactured or supplied or controlled by China. Officials are particularly concerned about apps that collect users' persona data or have connections to Chinese military or intelligence activities.

The department also will make recommendations on how to further protect Americans' genetic and personal health information, and



will address the risks of certain software apps connected to China or other adversaries, according to senior administration officials.

The Biden administration's move reflects the ongoing concern that Americans' personal data could be exposed by popular apps tied to China, a chief US economic and political rival. The White House and Congress have both taken action to address Beijing's technological advancement. On Tuesday, the Senate passed a bill that aims to boost US semiconductor production and the development of artificial intelligence and other technology in the face of growing international competition.

Sensex slumps 334 pts as bears return; RIL, banks top laggards

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic markets surrendered early gains to finish deep in the red on Wednesday as profit-booking emerged in Reliance Industries, banking and infra stocks amid a weak trend in global equities.

Concerns over frothy valuations and a depreciating rupee also sapped investor confidence, traders said.

After a firm opening, the 30-share BSE Sensex suddenly succumbed to selling pressure in mid-afternoon trade. It finally closed 333.93 points or 0.64 per cent lower at 51,941.64, extending its losing streak to the second session.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty slumped 104.75 points or 0.67 per cent to end at 15,635.35.

L&T was the top loser among the Sensex companies, shedding 1.80 per cent, followed by Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, SBI, Maruti, Axis Bank and Bajaj

Auto.

On the other hand, PowerGrid, NTPC, Titan, HCL Tech and Asian Paints were among the gainers, spurring up to 3.42 per cent.

"Domestic equities fell sharply as selling pressure in financials, auto and RIL dragged indices down," said Binod Modi, Head - Strategy at Reliance Securities.

Further, Asian markets traded weak, reacting on higher-than-expected jump in China's producer price index at 9 per cent for May, he added.

"Global investors remained cautious ahead of European Central Bank (ECB) policy decision and US inflation data to be released on Thursday. ECB is expected to continue its bond-buying policy to support a recovering economy." And US inflation is forecasted to be high but transitory. Both these factors, if inline, will provide comfort to the market," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Rupee slides by 8 paise to 72.97 against dollar

Mumbai: Falling for the second day in a row, the rupee closed lower by 8 paise at 72.97 against the US currency on Wednesday amid a lacklustre trend in domestic equities.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened on a negative note at 72.90 per dollar as against its previous close of 72.89. It hovered in the range of 72.88 to 73.02 per dollar during the day before ending at 72.97. The domestic currency has lost 17 paise in the two trading sessions to Wednesday.

The local unit traded in a narrow range amid lack of any major data on Wednesday in the domestic and the international markets, traders said. PTI

WTO to intensify talks over protections of Covid-19 vaccines

AP ■ GENEVA

World Trade Organisation member states agreed on Wednesday to intensify talks toward improving access to Covid-19 products, as developing nations push for a proposal to ease patent and other legal protections on coronavirus vaccines - and some wealthier countries remain stiffly opposed.

A WTO panel focusing on intellectual property, which includes patents on technological know-how like vaccines and the processes to manufacture them, wrapped up a two-day meeting on Wednesday with an agreement to start a "text-based process" to pull together proposals about improving the fight against Covid-19 through the Geneva-based trade body's intricate system of rules.

The goal is to help jumpstart lagging efforts to get vaccines to developing-world countries that badly need them, according to a Geneva-based trade official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak publicly on the matter. New, informal talks will

start next week among members of the panel, with an eye toward pulling together a report for a meeting of WTO ambassadors on July 21-22.

South Africa and India floated the proposal for a temporary easing of patent protections for Covid-19 vaccines, therapies and tests - known as an "IP waiver" -- last fall. While many developed countries with strong pharmaceutical industries hesitated about or were outright opposed that idea, the debate received a jolt last month when the Biden administration announced support for an IP waiver for vaccines alone.

In the two days of talks, South Africa and India laid out a revision of their proposal - now backed by over 60 countries - that insisted on the three-year temporary nature of the waiver for COVID-19 products, the trade official said.

But some countries - notably the European Union's 27 member states, as well as Britain, Switzerland and Korea - continue to oppose a waiver, the official said, relaying deliberations in the closed-door talks Tuesday and Wednesday.

Govt buys record 418.47 lakh tn wheat at MSP

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday said it has procured a record 418.47 lakh tonnes of wheat so far in the current marketing year that started in April, costing exchequer ₹82,648 crore.

The record procurement of wheat has been achieved amid farmers' protests at Delhi borders since late November 2020. Farmer unions are demanding a repeal of three new farm laws and a legal guarantee of the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The Rabi marketing season (RMS) 2021-22 runs from April to March but the bulk of the procurement gets completed by June.

"Procurement of Wheat in ongoing RMS 2021-22 is continuing smoothly in the procuring states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir at MSP, as was done in previous seasons," an official statement said.

Till June 8, the Government has purchased 418.47 lakh tonnes of wheat as against 373.22 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Inflow in equity MFs at 14-month high in May amid stock mkt rally

New Delhi: Equity mutual funds witnessed a net inflow of over ₹10,000 crore in May, making it the highest infusion in 14 months, due to rally in stock markets on the back of declining Covid-19 cases and robust quarterly earnings.

This is also marks the third consecutive monthly inflow after ₹3,437 crore net inflow seen in April and ₹9,115 crore in March, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed on Wednesday. Prior to this, equity schemes had consistently witnessed outflow for eight straight months from July 2020 to February 2021. "With stock markets moving to all time highs, investors continued their preference towards mutual funds and this trend could continue in the coming months," Gopal Kavalireddi, Head of research, FYERS, said.

Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar India, said that significant improvement on the coronavirus situation with daily Covid-19 cases falling consistently, along with improving recovery rate, over the last few weeks, would have provided comfort to investors. PTI

Quickening vaccination coverage critical for regaining growth momentum: FinMin report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Quickening the pace of people against Covid is critical for regaining growth momentum as economic activities are inextricably linked to the path of the pandemic, the finance ministry said in its monthly economic report on Wednesday.

"As we cautiously recuperate from the second wave, rapidly improving vaccination delivery and frontloading the fiscal measures planned in the Union Budget hold key to invigorating the investment cycle in the coming quarters," it said.

Regarding the impact of the second Covid wave, the report said that with state-level lockdown restrictions being more adaptive to learnings from the first wave, manufacturing and construction are expected to experience a softer economic shock in the current quarter.

The report emphasised that quickening the pace and coverage of vaccination is critical to help India heal and regain

the momentum of economic recovery.

Continued vigilance in terms of pandemic preparedness, upscaling health spending and health infrastructure, faster rollout of vaccines and vaccination, investing in research and development to guard against possible mutants of the virus, prudent and pre-emptive restrictions, and strict observance of Covid-appropriate behaviour are essential to maintain the delicate balance of lives and livelihoods, it said.

India's second Covid wave situation has been improving lately with a continuous decline in 7-day average of active cases since May 13, 2021. Data showed that the second wave reached its peak of 7-day average of daily new cases around May 8, with the pace of decline being as fast as the rise.

The daily case positivity rate has plummeted sharply from 24.9 per cent in early May to reach 3.6 per cent as on June 2. Concomitantly, the report said that high frequency indicators in real and financial sectors like power consumption.

Cabinet approves extension of New Investment Policy benefits to RFCL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday extended the subsidy benefits under the amended New Investment Policy 2012 to Ramagundam Fertilisers and Chemicals Ltd (RFCL), located in Telangana.

A decision in this regard was taken in the Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Briefing media after the Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, "The subsidy benefit under the (amended) New Investment Policy 2012, which was brought in 2014, was applicable to those factories set up till 2019. But, RFCL has been set up in 2021, and this policy has now been extended to this also."

As per norms, the urea factories set up till 2019 were eligible for subsidies under the amended New Investment Policy 2012. Still, the benefits are extended to RFCL that was set up in 2021 because farmers will benefit at the end of the day, he said.

RFCL will manufacture 12.70 lakh tonnes of urea annually. This would help reduce the country's dependence on imports and move towards the direction of self-reliance, he added. The New Investment Policy 2012 was amended on October 7, 2014.

RFCL is a joint venture company of National Fertilizers Ltd (NFL), Engineers India Ltd (EIL) and Fertilizers Corporation of India Limited (FCIL).

Clean mode of goods transportation can save logistics fuel worth ₹311 lakh cr: Report

New Delhi: India can save logistics fuel worth ₹311 lakh crore from 2020 to 2050 by deploying clean and cost-effective mode of goods transportation, a Niti Aayog report said on Wednesday, and added that the country can also save 10 gigatonnes of cumulative carbon dioxide emissions over the next three decades.

The Aayog and Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) in a report titled 'Fast Tracking Freight in India: A Roadmap for Clean and Cost-Effective Goods Transport' said due to the rising demand for

goods and services, freight transport demand is expected to grow rapidly in the future.

"India can save logistics fuel worth ₹311 lakh crore between 2020 and 2050. Can save 10 gigatonnes of cumulative CO2 emissions between 2020 and 2050," the report said. According to the report, India has the potential to reduce its logistics cost by 4 per cent of GDP and also reduce nitrogen oxide (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) emissions by 35% and 28 per cent, respectively, until 2050. PTI

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Gayatri Sharma is the absolute owner of Property Bearing No. B-124, measuring 70 Sq. Yds. out of Khasra No. 534/2, situated in the Area of Village Newada, colony known as Rama Park, Block B, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-59 by virtue of Gift Deed duly registered in the office of SR Delhi, as Doc No. 5196, book no. I, Vol no. 6094, Pages 183-192, dated 04.03.2021.

All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan against the said Property and subsequent creation of mortgage in respect thereof.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Mayur Vihar-II, Delhi-91, Mob. 981006351

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male, Age: 35-40 years, Complexion: Black, Height: 5'2", ID Mark: Malaa Singh tattoo on right hand, was wearing Black colour Nikkar & White T-Shirt, was found dead between KM Pole No.

1524/25 to 1524/28 near Hazrat Nizamuddin Railways Station. In this regard a DD No. 15A, dated 05.06.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, 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. Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, Delhi
DP/159/Rly/2021 Ph.: 011-24358593, 24356743

Govt. of Bihar

Bihar State Electronics Development Corporation Ltd.
(A Government of Bihar Undertaking)
Beltron Bhawan, Shastrri Nagar, Patna-800023
Telephone No. 0612-2281242, Tele Fax No. 0612-2281857
CIN No - U31900BR19785GCO01317

आइंटीओ क्षेत्र में कार्य करने एवं राज्य के विकास में भागीदारी सुनिश्चित करने का सुवर्ण अवसर

राज्य में आइंटीओ प्रक्षेत्र के आधारभूत संरचना को विकसित एवं आइंटीओ आधारित उद्योगों में निवेश तथा प्रोत्साहन प्रदान किये जाने हेतु राज्य सरकार द्वारा आइंटीओ प्रक्षेत्र में कार्यरत Startups के लिए Rent free space आवंटन के संबंध में online आवेदन आमंत्रित किया जा रहा है।

https://dit.bihar.gov.in पर online आवेदन किया जा सकता है।
इसकी अंतिम तिथि 21/06/21 तक विस्तारित की जाती है।

Notice No.: -2768/21
Date:- 08/06/2021

Incubation Centre for Start Ups

- 9th & 13th Floor, Bismacon Tower, Patna-800 001
- युवा उद्यमी, Start Ups, IT Entrepreneurs के लिए Rent free Workstation Space एवं Cubical आवंटन किये जाएंगे
- सामान्य सुविधाएँ : 24 x 7 Electricity, High Speed Wi-Fi, Conference Room, Reception cum Business Centre etc.

Managing Director

PR. No. 002087 (Ni.Ni) 2021-22

नोवल कोरेना के संघर्ष में विस्तृत जानकारी एवं सहाय्य हेतु Toll Free No. 104 पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

Delton Cables Limited

Regd. Office: Delton House 4801 Bharat Ram Road 24 Durgajugari New Delhi -110002
Website: www.deltoncables.com, E-mail: cs@deltoncables.com, CIN: L31300DL1964PLC004255

EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2021 Rs. in lakh

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended		Year Ended	
		31.03.2021	31.12.2020	31.03.2020	31.03.2021
1	Total income from operations (net)	4,213.32	2,653.44	3,137.02	12,470.41
2	Net Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and / or Extraordinary Items)	79.37	(85.55)	214.62	122.92
3	Net Profit for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary Items)	86.46	(85.55)	215.78	130.01
4	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary Items)	7.76	(81.97)	166.52	62.32
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	9.45	(74.43)	135.98	53.00
6	Equity share capital (Face Value of Rs.10/- each)	864.00	864.00	864.00	864.00
7	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) (Face Value of ₹ 10/- each)				
	(a) Basic (Rs.)	0.09	(0.95)	1.93	0.72
	(b) Diluted (Rs.)	0.09	(0.95)	1.93	0.72

Notes:
1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchanges website (www.bseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.deltoncables.com).
2) The above result have been prepared in accordance with principle and procedure of Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) as notified under the companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 as specified under section 133 of Companies Act, 2013.
3) The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on June 09, 2021. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have carried out audit for the year ended March 31, 2021 and have expressed an unmodified audit opinion on these results.

for and on behalf of the Board
Vivek Gupta
(Managing Director)
DIN 0003916

Place : Delhi
Date : 09-June-21

BRIEFS



GAIL's press conference on annual financial results held today

PNB FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER & FY ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021

Net Profit stood at ₹2022 Crore during FY21. Operating Profit increased Y-o-Y by 28.4 per cent to ₹22980 crore during FY21. Gross Global Business reached ₹1845739 Crore & Global NIM improved to 2.88 % in FY21. Global Business of the Bank stood at ₹1845739 Crore as on March'21 as against ₹1834290 Crore in March'20. Global Deposit of the Bank increased to ₹1106332 Crore as on March'21 from ₹1071569 Crore in March'20 with a Y-o-Y growth of 3.24 %. Global Credit stood at ₹739407 Crore as on March'21 against ₹762721 Crore in March'20.

GOVT GIVES NINE-MONTH EXTENSION TO LIC CHAIRMAN

New Delhi: The Government has given a nine-month extension to LIC Chairman MR Kumar till March next year in view of the insurer's proposed initial public offer towards the end of the current fiscal. In her Budget Speech 2021, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the Initial Public Offer (IPO) of LIC would be floated in 2021-22 as part of the ambitious ₹1.75 lakh crore disinvestment target. The Govt has approved the proposal of the Department of Financial Services for extending the term of Kumar from June 30, 2021 till March 13, 2022, the date when he completes three years, sources said. The sources said the rules under the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, have been amended to provide extension beyond 60 years in view of the ongoing preparation for the IPO, they added.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority

Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E - TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & https://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to use these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

S. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Amount (₹)
1	08/SPE/PE (PH-01)/2021-22	Supply of Labour and Machinery for Cleaning & Desilting of drain of Various Location in PH-1 Area, Zone-V, Noida.	9819675.32

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 15.06.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 16.06.2021 at 11.00 AM.

(S.C. Mishra)
Sr. Project Engineer
(Public Health)
Noida.

Office: Sector-39, Noida
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

B-14/A, Chhatrapati Shivaji Bhawan, Outab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi-110016

1st June 2021

Public Notice

Caution against fraudulent offers in the name of PFRDA/NPS

It has come to notice that some unscrupulous elements are making phone calls in the name of PFRDA promising to release large sum of money lying with NPS/PFRDA and these unidentifiable callers also provide deceitful explanations to extort money for release of payments.

This is to inform that PFRDA is a statutory body which regulates National Pension System (NPS) and the general public is hereby cautioned not to fall prey to the designs of such unscrupulous elements who are trying to dupe the unsuspecting citizens in the name of NPS/PFRDA

PFRDA NEVER MAKES CALLS TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING THEM TO DEPOSIT MONEY FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS FROM NPS/PFRDA. ANY SUCH COMMUNICATION RECEIVED TO DEFRAUD MAY BE INFORMED TO POLICE IMMEDIATELY.

prda
Davp 15102/11/0001/2122



Working towards an ideal rainbow workplace

The reading down of section 377, the decision legalising consensual adult same-sex relationships in 2018, creation of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019 and the inclusion of transgender persons in paramilitary forces in 2020 have been some monumental milestones in building an equal and inclusive ecosystem for the LGBTQIA community. These laws and initiatives have set the premise in place, but a large part of the onus lies with organisations in the corporate sector to create adequate avenues to implement these changes. Today, we see a genuine interest among corporations to be inclusive when it comes to individuals from the LGBTQIA. It has become a priority for many organisations. They have started with multiple initiatives to back individuals from the LGBTQIA community but many organisations are still at a nascent stage in their journeys.

What is it that organisations need to do to help their workplaces in becoming inclusive in the truest possible sense?

Ensuring inclusion that goes beyond cultural symbols

Creating a sustainable and inclusive environment for LGBTQIA individuals has to go beyond tokenism, mere symbolic actions, checking boxes for diversity goals. With the pride month here we see rainbow colours streaked everywhere, organisations signalling their support to the LGBTQIA community in their marketing and on social media platforms. Social media and advertising have the potential to impact attitudes and opinions in society. Symbols do play an important role as they show visible commitment to the inclusion journey creating awareness around the topic, but what is important to note is whether such branding and advertising initiatives align with some real actions.

Create awareness

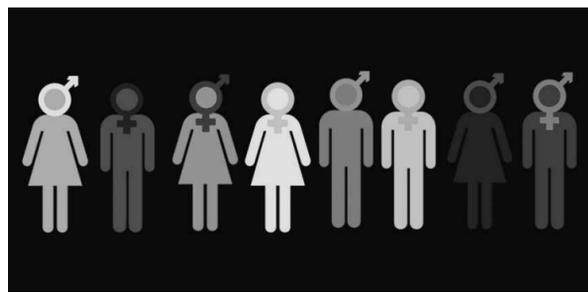
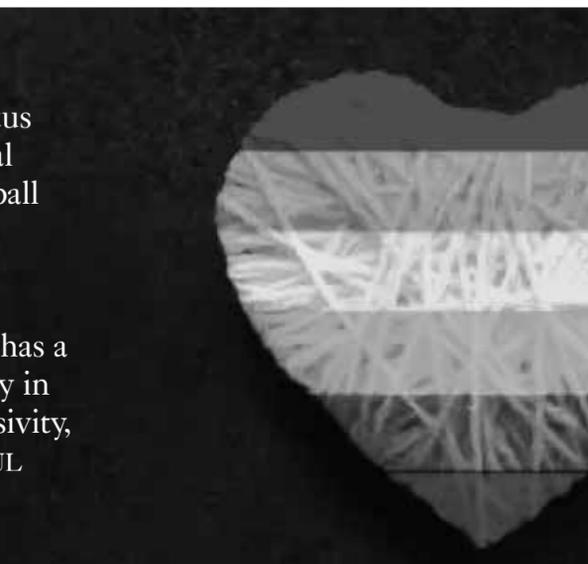
The first step towards building the right culture is creating awareness in the workforce by educating them. Most initiatives to enhance inclusiveness fail not because of malintent but a lack of awareness. The employees need to know about the ground realities of the LGBTQIA community, who they are, their chal-

While the impetus provided by legal reforms set the ball rolling for the LGBTQIA+ community, the corporate sector has a major role to play in promoting inclusivity, says RUPALI KAUL

lenges and their aspirations. It will help filter unconscious bias and demystify myths around their LGBTQIA colleagues to aid the organisation's commitment to be inclusive. Apart from this, being trained on using inclusive language and calling out inappropriate behaviour will not only improve their knowledge but also encourage employees to engage in candid conversations with colleagues from the LGBTQIA community, making them feel more included in the organisation.

Revisit your policies and processes

Having created awareness on the topic, it is the key to strengthen your policies by reviewing them with an inclusive lens. Policies impacting the touchpoints in LGBTQIA employees' professional and personal life cycle need to be reconsidered. Policies should not only provide equal benefits but at the same time empower them with equal opportunities to learn and grow. Some changes we see today in many organisations are— an inclusive hiring policy, extending health insurance benefits to domestic partners, gender-neutral sex-



ual harassment policy, health insurance benefits covering hormone therapy and gender confirmation surgery for employees seeking to transition, parental policies, HR systems and documents that are inclusive of genders and personal pronouns, having gender-neutral washrooms and revising the dress code so that it is gender-inclusive et al.

Engagement programmes

Understanding that the inclusion of the LGBTQIA community in the corporate sector is still at an early stage, individuals from this community still look for acceptance in the organisation. Hence, it becomes essential to keep employees from the community engaged by connecting them with like-minded people by initiating pride programmes, creating ERGs (Employee Resource Groups), having inclusive work-family initiatives to explicitly include non-traditional families, amongst other such activities. These initiatives will help enhance employee experience and

create allies within the organisation.

Challenges

When addressing concerns revolving around LGBTQIA inclusion, anti-discrimination policies and employee resource groups (ERGs) are mostly seen as the first steps to establish a more inclusive environment. As important as these are, at times, they may not have the intended impact. One reason here is the challenge around 'coming out with their identity' in the workplace. It could be the first step for them to create a connection with colleagues in the workplace, giving them the freedom and ease to work productively. However, employees from the LGBTQIA community may feel uncomfortable revealing their identity through day-to-day casual conversations with their colleagues. There is continuous social pressure that keeps them from opening up. Removing the various pressures LGBTQIA employees feel to hide their identities may appear intimidating but encouraging everyday conversations, casual interactions, continuous listening and learning from their experiences may become more important than just policies and processes. It is such small gestures, daily conversations that can really make a difference.

Another challenge is their under-representation in the corporate world. Being the only one, or one of the few causes a lot of anxiety and isolation. The solution to this is only through hiring more from the community and giving them the environment to grow and open up. This will set the right example and provide role models for future employees to look up to within the organisation.

Overcoming these challenges and social barriers is not going to be easy. But with the growing awareness across organisations and the impetus given by legal reforms in this direction will go a long way in creating the ideal rainbow workspace which embraces the LGBTQIA community with respect and love.

(The author is the Operations Head of Marching Sheep, an HR advisory firm.)

'Overwhelmed with gratitude'

After the critical success of *Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar*, ARJUN KAPOOR feels that this is the start of a brand new phase in his acting career. By TEAM VIVA

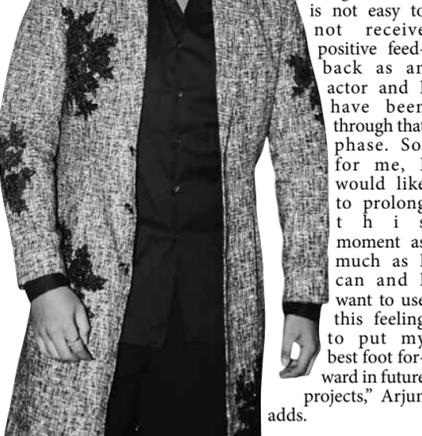
Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor feels his well-reviewed acting in *Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar* (SAPF) has generated the same amount of love and appreciation that he received for his debut in *Ishaqzaade*. In SAPF, Arjun plays the role of a brooding, corrupt police inspector Pinky Dahiya and he has charmed one and all with his portrayal.

"I haven't got this amount of love and recognition since my debut *Ishaqzaade*. We actors are hungry for love and attention and we lay bare every single time we come on screen. It is the appreciation from audiences and critics that keeps us going. I feel rejuvenated with the success of SAPF and how people have reacted to my acting. This is a rare feeling and I will cherish this for a long time," he says

Arjun further expresses that this appreciation will propel him to provide better performances on screen, "It will motivate me and push me to do better as a performer. I'm not a critic-

friendly actor because of the films that I generally do. So, it feels amazing that they have appreciated my performance and I can't thank them enough."

He shares that he wants to take the success of SAPF as the start of a new phase in his acting career. "It is not easy to not receive positive feedback as an actor and I have been through that phase. So, for me, I would like to prolong this moment as much as I can and I want to use this feeling to put my best foot forward in future projects," Arjun adds.



TRYING TO WRITE A SCRIPT: AMOL

With shoots mostly on hold amid the ongoing second wave of Covid, actor Amol Parashar is currently utilising his time trying to work on a script.

"I was supposed to be shooting for a film in April that has been postponed because of the current scenario. I guess that will happen when it is safe to shoot again. Since there are no shoots, I am concentrating on finishing a script that I have been wanting to write. There are a couple of interesting conversations but timelines are uncertain given the fact that nobody's sure when it will be completely safe to shoot again," says Amol.

The actor got his first dose of the Covid vaccine last month. Sharing the experience, he says, "There was a sense of relief after managing to get a slot and a jab, but I am also aware this is only the first dose for now. I am hoping to get the second dose on time, so I can feel more assured. It is advised to still wear a mask and take precautions post vaccination, so I will continue to do that."

A lot of people have complained of post-vaccine side effects. Did he experience anything?

"There was some zoning out for two to three days and an overall feeling of laziness. Some of my friends who got a jab reported body ache, nausea and fever. I got away with some mild fever on day two and three, but it took seven to 10 days to feel the normal level of energy and strength," the actor informs.

On the work front, Amol was recently seen in the web series



Aapkey Kamrey Mein Koi Rehta Hai, where he features alongside Swara Bhasker, Sumeet Vyas, Naveen Kasturia and Ashish Verma.

He is all set to essay the role of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh in Shoojit Sircar's forthcoming period drama *Sardar Udham Singh* starring Vicky Kaushal in the lead.

—IANS

TREND TOOL

Herbal oils for your mane

While chemicals are a preferred choice in treating other ailments, everyone detests using them for skin and hair care. SARADA ANASTASIA VON SONN suggests some natural remedies to preserve your beautiful tresses



are power-packed with essential nutrients that can enrich our hair and treat our scalp.

Amla: The wonder fruit amla is a depository of essential nutrients like vitamin C, vitamin A, polyphenols, amino acids, proteins, carbohydrate, magnesium, iron, potassium and calcium and more. Modern medical research has proved that amla has the potential to inhibit the 5-alpha reductase associated with male baldness. Amla can be used to strengthen the scalp and hair, stimulate hair growth, reduce hair loss, curtail premature pig-

ment loss from hair (greying), prevent and treat dry scalp, dandruff, fungal or bacterial hair and scalp infection and improve the overall appearance of your hair.

Bhringraj: Coming from the sunflower family, these flowers are often referred to as the king of herbs. Bhringraj oil is rich in vitamin D, vitamin E, iron, magnesium and calcium. It prevents hair fall, increases the volume of hair, treats dry scalp, premature greying of hair and reduces dandruff while improving blood circulation that nourishes the hair and assists its growth.



Jojoba: Often confused with jujube, these shrubs come from the southwestern part of North America. They are native to Arizona, Mexico and Southern California. The oil-like wax extracts from the jojoba fruits are used in making hair and beauty products. The fruit is rich in vitamin B, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, zinc and copper. Jojoba oil strengthens hair, and thus, it can prevent hair loss; it also moisturises the scalp and hair follicles to reduce dryness. These inherent qualities have made it a popular ingredient of hair oils and conditioners.

Coconut oil: Coconut oil is a rich source of fatty acids like lauric acid, myristic acid, capric acid, caprylic acid and stearic acid. The oil is rich in antioxidants and has anti-fungal, anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties. It has a lipid structure similar to the hair, and thus, it can penetrate the hair. It is one of the best natural conditioners available and is among the most

primary hair care resources in every household. Coconut oil can moisturise the hair, prevent dryness and dandruff, repair and prevent split ends to stall hair breakage.

Sesame oil: Sesame is rich in protein, antioxidants and is a source of vitamin B, Vitamin E, calcium and some other minerals. The moisturising properties of sesame oil make it a deep conditioner that prevents dryness and strengthens hair from the roots.

Lemon oil: Lemon oil is a powerhouse of antimicrobial ingredients. It helps in clearing flaky skin, restores and maintains pH balance that can reduce oil build-up which is essential for a healthy scalp.

Lemongrass oil: Lemongrass oil has anti-bacterial and antifungal properties. It removes dandruff, provides a flake-free scalp while nourishing the scalp. It can provide relief from scalp irritation by eliminating itchy-ness.

Lavender oil: Lavender oil is a natural antiseptic that can help in improving blood circulation while lubricating your scalp and nourishing hair.

While many of these can be directly applied to the scalp and hair, some of these ingredients require carrier oils like coconut oil, sunflower oil and jojoba oil for application. Along with the carrier oils, they can be considered as the primary or essential oils for hair care, and they should be increasingly used to maintain healthy and shiny hair. Bad hair days would become a thing of the past with regular application of these essential oils.

(The writer is an Ayurveda expert at Organic India.)

TRENDBLAZER



'ALL WE ARE ASKING FOR IS CLARITY ON 5G'

JUHI CHAWLA took to social media to claim that she is not against 5G technology but just wants to learn whether it is safe for all.

Juhi shared a video where she said, "There has been so much noise in the past few days that I almost could not hear myself too! And I feel that a very important message probably got lost in the middle of all this noise, which is that we are not against 5G. In fact, we are welcoming of it. Please bring it. All we are asking is that the authorities certify that 5G is safe."

fairtalk

SAYANI GUPTA



"There is so much that remains undiscovered about Northeast. Slowly we are emerging from a haze of ignorance to learn more about a region that is a beautiful part of our country. *Axone* is path breaking because it has actors from the Northeast who portray experiences that are uniquely theirs. The film has initiated a conversation about inclusion."

dailytalk

AVIKA GOR



"The positioning that beauty creams have created over a period of time is that fairness is equivalent to beauty and success and that it gives us confidence. However, that is not true at all. Our confidence has to come from our work ethic and knowledge. We as a society cannot idolize one colour and make all the others feel lesser than. There has to be some change in this trend."

'ALWAYS FELT AN AFFECTION FOR LOKI'

Actor TOM HIDDLESTON has opened up about what makes his character, Loki, the God of Mischief, the most fun one to portray.

"Having played Loki for such a long time and having had the privilege of inhabiting him at the outset, I've always felt an affection for him and for his vulnerability. But I've been aware through the course of my experience that Loki has a role to play and that as Loki I had to play the villain. Then I had to play the antihero," he said.



DDA meeting to discuss MPD-2041

The Master Plan for Delhi prepared by Delhi Development Authority is a statutory document that facilitates the capital's development by assessing the city's present condition and guiding to achieve the desired development. The implementation of the Master Plan is the collective responsibility of all the agencies involved in the development of Delhi, including the Central Government, concerned departments of the Government of the NCT of Delhi, service providers, landowning agencies, regulators, and local bodies among others. The first Master Plan for Delhi was promulgated in 1962 under the Delhi Development Act 1957, followed by the Master Plans of 2001 and 2021, each of which was an extensive modification of the respective previous plan document. These plans were prepared with a 20 years' perspective and provided a holistic framework for the planned development of Delhi. The Draft MPD-2041 is a 'strategic' and 'enabling' framework to guide the future growth of the city. The Draft Master Plan for Delhi-2041 (MPD-2041) has been divided into two volumes, nine sections, which contain 22 chapters.

The DDA held its meeting, the day before yesterday, through video conferencing under the chairmanship of Anil Bajjal, Lt Governor, Delhi/Chairman, DDA. It was attended by Anurag Jain, IAS, Vice Chairman, DDA and other members of the authority including Vijender Gupta MLA, Somnath Bharti MLA, Dilip Kumar Pandey MLA, OP Sharma MLA and Adesh Kumar Gupta Municipal Corporation, North Delhi Municipal Corporation. The following major decisions were taken:

The modification in MPD 2021 with respect to development control norms for unauthorised colonies: Unauthorised colonies (UCs) are unplanned settlements built in contravention of the 'Master Plan' and zoning regulations char-



acterised by poor infrastructure and amenities, leading to poor quality of living standards. Understanding the importance of the same, the above requirement was also stressed upon in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Recognition of Property Rights of Residents in Unauthorised Colonies) Regulations, 2019.

The Government of India launched the PM-UDAY scheme (*Pradhan Mantri Unauthorised Colony in Delhi Awas Yojana*) for recognising ownership rights to the residents of 1,731 UCs in the city. The DDA has been made a nodal agency of the scheme, which delineates the boundaries of these UCs with the help of a survey of India and Revenue Department, GNCTD using satellite imageries of 2015. Under the scheme, DDA will scrutinise documents and will issue a Conveyance Deed for Government Lands and Authorisation Slip for private lands, only for residential purposes. The beneficiaries can get these documents registered with the sub-registrar's office.

The development control norms for unauthorised colonies in Delhi are formulated to pave the way for the planned development

of the existing colonies. A two-pronged approach with differentiated norms has been formulated to improve the quality of the built environment, to provide continued affordable rental housing and to improve the existing physical and socio-economic conditions of the area.

Facilitating medical oxygen infrastructure: To ensure that medical oxygen infrastructure is facilitated in the hospitals in Delhi, the authority has approved the amendment to the Unified Building Bye-Laws 2016. This amendment will allow oxygen-related infrastructures such as PSA plants, Liquid Medical Oxygen to be set up in the open area of the existing hospital premises. Further, no notice and building permit will be required from the sanctioning authority for installation of the PSA plant/Liquid Medical Oxygen Plant and similar related infrastructure in hospitals if it is on the ground and in open/secure areas. However, fire safety clearance, PESO and other mandatory clearances, wherever applicable, will be required.

Further, as per information received from Delhi Fire Services,

the oxygen plants having an area less than 250 square meters are not covered under Rule 27(9) of Delhi Fire Service Rules 2010 and therefore, the issue of Fire Safety Certificate is not required. However, the following shall be maintained:

- The plant shall be approachable to fire engines through a six metres wide motorable road.
- Fire safety arrangements that have already been provided in the hospital building shall not be altered.
- Fire safety arrangements as per National Building Code 2016, Part 4 shall be provided in the interest of the public.

The proposed amendment will now be sent to MoHUA for final approval. On receipt of the approval, the same shall be notified by DDA.

Opportunity for small format houses: The authority has approved disposal of some Group Housing Plots for construction of small houses up to 60 square metres through freehold basis through e-auction. This will cater to the demand of 40-60 sqm affordable housing due to the

growing trend of reduction of family member sizes, single-parent families, only elderly couples dwellings. The small format houses are in line with National Housing Policy. It was felt that there should be another category for smaller houses which are cheaper to the standard two/three bedroom houses/flats and can be purchased by lower middle class or low salaried and small family persons.

Boost to commercial built-up shops: The authority has reviewed the method of pricing of built-up units/shops and approved significant changes in the pricing policy which aim to keep the prices fair and competitive. As per the existing policy, the cost of construction was enhanced every year by 10 per cent with respect to the year of construction while fixing the reserve price, whereas generally, structures are depreciated as they age. Accordingly, the new policy accounts for depreciation. Considering the general economic scenario, the multiplication factor for the land has also been reduced. Under the new policy, the reserve price of these built-up units is reduced by about 30 per cent to 55 per cent. This presents an excellent opportunity to the interested buyers as the shops are going to be offered at reduced rates.

Change of land use for multilevel car parking at Idgah Road, Zone-A: To cater to the acute demand for parking in the area, the authority has approved change of land use of land measuring 2.6 Ha. from 'Residential (Redevelopment)' to 'Transportation (MLCP)' for multilevel car parking at Idgah Road, Zone-A, other than the walled city. The proposed modification would help North MCD and DMRC with the construction of car parking and the Nabi Karim Metro Station. A public notice will now be issued for inviting objections/suggestions from the general public.

Relief for families of Covid-affected

Union Minister Dr JITENDRA SINGH says that instructions have been issued for the immediate release of pension to the household of government servants who lose their life due to COVID-19

The Central Government has issued instructions for the immediate release of pension to the family of a government employee who loses his/her life due to COVID -19 infection. In a landmark order, the Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) -- under the Union Ministry of Personnel -- has instructed all ministries, departments, Controller General of Accounts as well as CMDs of Pension Disbursing Banks to ensure that the family pension is started within one month of the receipt of the claim from the eligible family member of a Government servant who has lost his or her life due to COVID. The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh informed that as per the new O.M., all secretaries have been asked to personally monitor the in-service death cases and ensure the start of family pension within a month of the receipt of claim and death certificate, periodically. The secretaries shall also nominate for this purpose, an officer of the respective ministry/department, whose name and contact details shall be reflected on the website for any family member to contact in case of delay. At the same time, every ministry/department shall send a monthly position of such cases to the DoPPW, he added.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, "The O.M. has been issued in the spirit of the sensitivity and concern with which Prime Minister Narendra Modi is personally monitoring every aspect of the COVID pandemic on a day-to-day basis. The government is committed to assist and help every section of cit-



izens and families affected by the pandemic. The notification issued by the Department of Pension states that the COVID-19 pandemic has claimed the lives of several Government employees during the recent surge. In many cases, the deceased employees were the sole breadwinners of their family and the casualties have left the families in urgent need of funds for livelihood. It is, therefore, incumbent to ensure that the family pension and other entitlements are released to their families expeditiously. "The new O.M. also implies that action may be taken on a priority basis for disbursement of regular family pension to the bank and for payment of other entitlements of the family on the death of the government servant. It may be ensured that the Pension Payment Order (PPO) for family pension is issued and disbursement of regular family pension is commenced by the bank not later than one month after the receipt of the claim for the family pension. Dr Jitendra Singh hoped that all the departments of the government will follow these instructions in letter and spirit, and the respective Heads of Departments will monitor the same regularly.



Next stop, Paris

In the hunt for a ticket to Tokyo Olympics, Indian archers set off for France for the last qualifying tournament before the Olympics. Following the tournament, they will be competing in the third stage of the Archery World Cup

A nine-member women's recurve team comprising Indian archers Deepika Kumari, Komalika Bari, Ankita Bhakat and Madhu Wedwan along with Dronacharya Awardee Purnima Mahato have set off for Paris to participate in the final qualification tournament for the Tokyo Olympics Games, from June 17 to 19 followed by the third stage of the 2021 Archery World Cup from June 20 to 28.

NTPC Ltd has partnered with the Archery Association of India (AAI) for the holistic development of archery across India and to further promote Indian archery on the global platform. Through this partnership, NTPC aims to provide a platform for Indian youth to showcase their talent and elevate India's reputation in archery.

Dillip Kumar Patel, Director (HR) NTPC, extended warm wishes to the Indian Archery team. The men's recurve team, com-

prising ace archers Atanu Das, Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Ramesh Jadhav, which brought home the team silver medal after an excellent performance in the World Championship held in the Netherlands, is also set to depart for Paris to take part in the third stage of the World Cup.

Recently, Deepika, Atanu, Ankita and Komalika had put up a stellar performance during the first stage of the Archery World Cup in Guatemala. In the women's and men's individual recurve events, Deepika and Atanu won the gold medal in their respective categories.

Apart from lending support to India's growth, NTPC has also been a pillar of support for holistic development for its communities and society at large. NTPC has supported the development of sports in India and sponsoring the Archery Association of India is one of the milestones in its long history.

Towards clean and green India

In accordance with *Bharat Ka Amrut Mahotsav*, ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (ICAR-CRIJAF), Barrackpore, organised lectures during the week coinciding with World Environment Day

To commemorate the completion of 75 years of India's independence, our nation will celebrate a year-long mega event, Bharat Ka Amrut Mahotsav, which will conclude on August 15, 2022. The Central Government ministries have scheduled programmes to focus on the high points of social, cultural, scientific and technological aspects in the country's post-independence journey. Along these lines, ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (ICAR-CRIJAF), Barrackpore organised three virtual lectures during the week coinciding with World Environment Day, on the theme Making of Clean and Green India.

Dr Gouranga Kar, Director of ICAR-CRIJAF in his introductory remarks of the programme said that jute will see its golden days again as the most ideal fibre to replace plastics and save the environment.

Dr S. K. Jha, Principal Scientist for ICAR-CRIJAF, in the first lecture, explained the different kinds of pollution caused by plastic waste, its negative impact on agriculture, wildlife, aquatic life, marine ecosystem and human health. The reasons for seeking

alternatives to plastic and why natural fibres, especially jute fibre, can be a good alternative was explained.

In his special remarks, Dr Kar expressed concern over plastic pollution and emphasised that the technologies and road map have been framed to achieve the future demand of jute fibres in case of phasing out of single use plastics. There will be an additional requirement of more than eight lakh bales per year due to the renewed demand for jute shopping bags created in the country and overseas.

In the Chairman's remarks, Dr D B Shakyawar, Director, ICAR-NINFET, Kolkata advocated strong linkage and coordination between the various stakeholders to make the jute sector more vibrant.

Dr A K Singh, Principal Scientist for ICAR-CRIJAF, delivered a virtual lecture on *Wealth from waste and Eco farming*. Improper management of agricultural waste has been contributing towards increasing air, soil and water pollution. The huge quantity of agricultural and municipal waste generated in the country can very well be converted to generate electricity and green fertiliser for

use in agriculture. There are numerous technologies available for wealth creation utilising various waste materials generated during agricultural activities for sustainable eco-farming and to create employment opportunities in the rural areas.

Dr B K Das, Director-CIFRI, Barrackpore, said that it's high time to act proactively to translate the technologies to create wealth from agricultural waste for the benefit of the farmers and the environment.

Dr S Datta, Principal Scientist for ICAR-CRIJAF, delivered a lecture on 'genome editing in jute' in which he talked about genome editing technology, its scope in development of jute with better quality, higher productivity in a shorter duration of the crop.

Dr Kar emphasised on the need to prepare a roadmap to use genome-editing technology in a systematic manner to develop improved jute and allied fibre varieties that will sustain and perform well in the climatic condition of the coming decades.

The staff of the institute participated in the virtual drawing and poetry competition organised on the occasion.



Muthoot Finance initiates vax drive

Muthoot Finance and Alexander George Muthoot, Deputy Managing Director, The Muthoot Group, emphasises, "In line with the vision of our beloved Group Chairman, Late MG George Muthoot, we are committed towards the upliftment of our society. Through this initiative, we are providing free transport service to the elderly and the less-privileged sections of our society in order to help them get vaccinated easily and facilitate the ongoing vaccination drive."

"Third Planet Foundation is dedicated to supporting under-privileged communities across India. We are closely working towards the socio-economic development of the communities during the pandemic and at the same time, preparing for post-Covid rehabilitation, which we believe is critical for sustainability and growth," says Jatinder Dhall, Executive Director at Third Planet Foundation.

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Oxygen plant inaugurated at Northern Railway Central Hospital



In order to augment oxygen-related infrastructure in railway hospitals, a plant having 500 litres per minute (LPM) oxygen generation capacity was inaugurated at the Northern Railway Central Hospital, New Delhi, under the CSR initiative. It was commissioned in the presence of Ashutosh Gangal, General Manager Northern Railway and Ravindra Kumar Jain MD/DFC and officials of Northern Railway Central Hospital.

Providing a 500 litres per minute (LPM) oxygen generation plant at the Northern Railway Central Hospital, New Delhi under the CSR initiative was assigned to DFCCIL. It was pro-

vided in a record time of less than a month from the time DFC committed to set it up and to its actual installation.

This plant works on the pressure swing absorption (PSA) technology in which a special absorbent material is used to separate gases based on their molecular characteristics and absorb the target gas at high pressure and ambient temperature. The gas is then absorbed at lower pressure. The total requirement of oxygen of the hospital in normal times is about 1,500 LPM and this plant will help fulfil 30 per cent of the baseload and about 10 per cent in peak Covid times.

Powergrid commissions VSC based HVDC System

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (Powergrid), a Maharatna CPSU under Ministry of Power, Government of India, has commissioned Monopole-I of the ± 320 kV, 2000 Mega-Watt (MW), Pugalur (Tamil Nadu) - Thrissur (Kerala) Voltage Source Converter (VSC) based High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) System on June 8, 2021. This project strengthens the power system of the southern region of the country. It may be recalled that Monopole-II of the project was inaugurated by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, on February 19 and with the commissioning of Monopole-I, the project has attained its full capacity.

The Pugalur-Thrissur HVDC system, costing ₹5,070 crore, is a part of the Raigarh-Pugalur-Thrissur 6,000 MW HVDC system and enables the transfer of 2,000 MW to Kerala through the VSC HVDC station at Thrissur.

The state-of-the-art VSC Technology has been brought to India for the first time by POWERGRID through this project.

The VSC technology significantly reduces the land requirement compared to the conventional HVDC systems and is particularly suitable for areas, where land is scarce. It also facilitates the development of a smart grid and improves system resilience under various operating conditions. A unique feature of this project is the combination of overhead lines and underground cables to address the restricted availability of the transmission corridor in Kerala.

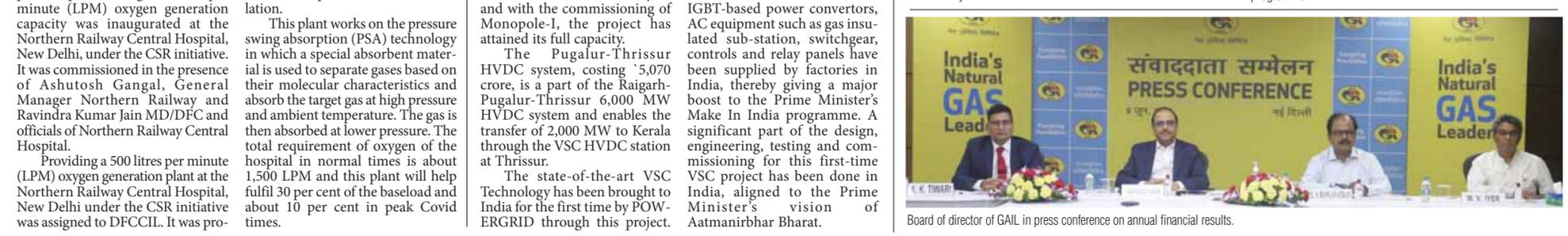
Major HVDC equipment like interface transformers and IGBT-based power converters, AC equipment such as gas insulated sub-station, switchgear, controls and relay panels have been supplied by factories in India, thereby giving a major boost to the Prime Minister's Make In India programme. A significant part of the design, engineering, testing and commissioning for this first-time VSC project has been done in India, aligned to the Prime Minister's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.



Northern Railway Women Welfare Organisation (NRWVO) is constantly endeavouring to help the railway employees by running schools, providing scholarships as well as organising different activities. The sahayaks (coolies) had been facing hardship during this COVID-19 pandemic. As a part of their Social Responsibility, Shikha Gangal, President NRWVO along with Anjali Gulati, Vice President, NRWVO, Rakhi Jain, President, Delhi Division wing of NRWVO and members of the organisation distributed dry ration to about 250 sahayaks at New Delhi railway station.



For the convenience of employees, BSES is organising special vaccination camps for its eligible employees and their family members. Over 4,000 employees have been vaccinated. While BSES Rajdhani Power Limited partnered with Apollo Hospital and Fortis Escorts hospital, BSES Yamuna Power Limited partnered with BLK Max. Apart from these drives, being front-line workers, thousands of BSES employees have already been vaccinated through a government facilitated programme.



Board of director of GAIL in press conference on annual financial results.

shortpasses

WOLVES APPOINT LAGE AS BOSS
WOLVERHAMPTON: Wolves on Wednesday announced the appointment of former Benfica boss Bruno Lage as the new manager of the club. Lage replaces Nuno Espirito Santo, who left Molineux at the end of the season.

VENUTO JOINS OZ COACHING STAFF
SYDNEY: Former Australia batsman Michael Di Venuto has returned to Australian team as assistant coach for the limited-overs tours of the Windies & Bangladesh in July and August.

GIDEY BREAKS 10,000 METERS WR
HENGELLO: Letesenbet Gidey clocked 29 minutes 01.3 seconds to break the women's 10,000 m world record by five seconds during the Ethiopian athletics trials on Tuesday night.

SPAIN SETS UP 'PARALLEL' TEAM
MADRID: Spain have set up a 'parallel' squad of 17 reserves for Euro 2020 who may have to play if the Covid-19 infections among its players spread, team management said.

TOP OZ PLAYERS MAY WITHDRAW
SYDNEY: Seven top Australian players could pull out of the national team's white-ball series in the West Indies next month after having spent considerable periods in various cricketing bubbles over the past few months.

DONG WILL COMPETE AT TOKYO
SHANGHAI: Legendary trampolinist Dong Dong will compete at the Tokyo Olympics, Chinese media said on Wednesday, making a record fourth appearance at the Games.

ARLOTT RECEIVES MAIDEN CALL-UP
BRISTOL: Pacer Emily Arlott on Wednesday earned a maiden call-up to the England women's squad for the one-off Test against India starting here on June 16.

AFI ANNOUNCES IGP 4 ON JUNE 21
NEW DELHI: Athletics Federation of India on Wednesday announced that it will host the Indian Grand Prix 4 on June 21 in Patiala which will give Himma Das one more domestic event in their bid to qualify for Tokyo Olympics.

ESL 6 REBELS ACCEPT \$31M FINE
LONDON: The six Premier League clubs that tried to join a European Super League have accepted a collective fine of 22 million pounds (\$31 million).

Sakkari ends Swiatek win streak

World No 18 will face unseeded Krejcikova for a place in Saturday's final

AP ■ PARIS
Maria Sakkari ended defending champion Iga Swiatek's 11-match and 22-set winning streaks at the French Open on Wednesday and reached the semi-finals of a major tournament for the first time.

The 17th-seeded Sakkari used strong and steady baseline play to eliminate Swiatek 6-4, 6-4 at Court Philippe Chatrier in the quarterfinals and ensure that the clay-court tournament will end with a new Grand Slam champion.

"I couldn't have done it without my team and their support and I just want to thank them and we still have a long way to go, of course," Sakkari said, "but we made a huge step today."

All four women remaining in the field are making their Slam semifinal debuts. This is only the second time in the professional era that's been the case at any major tournament, according to the WTA; there also was a quartet of first-time semifinalists at the 1978 Australian Open.

On Thursday, Sakkari plays unseeded Barbora Krejcikova, and No 31 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova faces unseeded Tamara Zidansek.

Krejcikova advanced earlier on Wednesday by beating 17-year-old Coco Gauff 7-6 (6), 6-3.

Sakkari, who is from Greece, and Krejcikova, who is from the Czech Republic, are both 25. Each has won only one tour-level title. Neither had been past the fourth round at a major until now.

And both dealt with early deficits on Wednesday.

Swiatek, a 20-year-old from Poland who has looked untouchable



Women's semifinals
 Live from 6:30pm IST
 STAR SPORTS NETWORK

on clay, jumped out to a 2-0 lead, but then Sakkari took over, collecting eight of 10 games. When Sakkari smacked a backhand winner down the line to close a 15-stroke point that claimed the first set, she leaned over and punched the air with her right fist.

That ended Swiatek's set streak at Roland Garros, which dated to the beginning of last year's tournament, when she dropped only 28 games in all. She'd only lost 20 games this year through four matches.

But Sakkari, who beat 2020 French Open runner-up Sofia Kenin

in straight sets in her previous match, used clean strokes — accumulating 26 winners, nine more than her opponent — and a strategy of serving to Swiatek's forehand to gain control.

Down 2-0 in the second set, Swiatek took a medical timeout and left the court with a trainer, returning with her upper right leg taped. During the break, Sakkari tried to stay warm by hopping and skipping side-to-side behind the baseline and did not lose a beat when play resumed.

In the day's first quarterfinal, Gauff led 3-0 at the outset, then 5-3, and held a total of five set points in the opener, but failed to convert any. Krejcikova grabbed that set by taking the last four points of the tiebreaker and reeled off 15 consecutive points during one stretch en route to a 5-0 edge in the second set.

Closing out the most important victory of her singles career was not easy, though: Krejcikova needed six match points to do it, raising her arms overhead when she finally won when Gauff sent a forehand wide.

Krejcikova has won two Grand Slam doubles titles with Katerina Siniakova — and they're into the semifinals in Paris — but is playing in only her fifth major tournament in singles.

"Everybody, they just put a label on me like, 'Yeah, you play doubles. You are a doubles specialist.' But I never thought I just want to be a doubles specialist," Krejcikova said.

"So I was just working hard all the time. I just wanted to play singles. It was really, like, frustrating that I just wasn't able to get there," she said. "But I always felt ... sooner or later, I'm just going to get there."

Tsitsipas, Nadal in semis



Rafael Nadal consoles Diego Schwartzman after their quarterfinal match
 AFP ■ PARIS

Rafael Nadal dropped a set for the first time at this year's French Open but ultimately advanced to the semifinals for a record-extending 14th time.

The 13-time Roland Garros champion faced a stiff challenge from gritty 10th-seeded Diego Schwartzman and prevailed 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 on Court Philippe Chatrier on Wednesday.

Nadal was down 4-3 in the third set but won nine games in a

row to seal the match.

Nadal will be up against either top-ranked Novak Djokovic or Matteo Berrettini in the semifinals.

On Tuesday night, Stefanos Tsitsipas defeated Daniil Medvedev in straight sets to stay on track for a first Grand Slam final at the French Open.

Greek fifth seed Tsitsipas qualified for his third successive major semi-final, winning 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 7-5 to avenge his defeat by second-ranked Medvedev at the Australian Open and set up a showdown with Alexander Zverev.

"I was playing against one of the best guys on the tour and I had to keep up with the intensity and elevate my game," said Tsitsipas.

"I thought I was playing good and not giving him space to do things and I think my performance was close to one of my best this week. I love being in Paris, it brings back good memories and I'm happy to keep going."

Tsitsipas had won just one of seven previous matches with Medvedev, but the former arrived at Roland Garros favoured to reach the final after titles in Monte Carlo and Lyon, with Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal in the opposite half of the draw.

Look at her now. She's ranked a career-high 33rd and on a 10-match winning streak in singles.

Krejcikova ended the nine-match run of the 24th-seeded Gauff, who is based in Florida and was the

youngest French Open quarterfinalist since 2006. Gauff's 41 unforced errors included seven double-faults — and after one, she mangled her racket frame by whacking it three times against the ground.

Dahiya to fight for Gold at Poland Open

PTI ■ WARSAW

Olympic-bound Indian wrestler Ravi Dahiya put himself in line for his second title of 2021 season on Wednesday by reaching the 61kg final of Poland Open, the last Ranking Series event before the Tokyo Games.

All his opponents targeted Ravi's left leg again and again but the reigning Asian champion and 2019 World Championship Bronze medalist grappler's superior stamina pulled him through in his bouts.

Competing in only his second competition of the season, Ravi began with an easy 10-1 win against Uzbekistan's Gulomjon Abdullaev but struggled against Kazakhstan's Adlan Askarov before prevailing 13-8.

He sealed his spot in the semifinals with a 9-5 win over American Nathan Khalid Tomasello, who like Ravi, usually, competes in 57kg.

Ravi then reached the final with a 7-4 win over Iran's Reza Ahmadali Atrinagharchi.

He will now fight for Gold against Abdullaev, whom he trounced easily in his opening bout.

The most challenging bout for Ravi turned out to be his sec-



ond round duel against Askarov. It was all about stamina and power as the Indian effected a dramatic turnaround after trailing 0-8 to win against the Kazakh.

Askarov, the Asian Championship Silver medalist, stunned Ravi with a flurry of double-leg attacks as the Indian was struggling to negotiate with the Kazakh wrestler's fast moves. Even as Ravi got himself positioned for counter attacks, he could not execute them.

It was a strange sight to see Ravi struggling and his defence falling apart. He was just one move and two points away from an embarrassing defeat by technical superiority.

However, his rival lost steam in the second period and Ravi took advantage of that to pull off take-down moves one after another to log 13 straight points.

Buttler, Morgan under investigation for alleged racist remarks against Indians

London: England's white-ball skipper Eoin Morgan and wicketkeeper batsman Jos Buttler are under investigation by the country's cricket board after their alleged racist tweets, mocking Indians, surfaced on the social media.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has promised "relevant and appropriate action", saying each case will be considered on an individual basis.

The posts, in which Buttler and Morgan used the word 'sir' to mock the Indians, started doing the rounds on social media after the ECB suspended pacer Ollie Robinson for some of his offensive tweets dating back to 2012-13.

"Screenshots have also been shared of a message by Buttler in which he says 'I always reply

sir no1 else like me like you like me' and, separately, Morgan includes Buttler in a message which says, 'Sir you're my favourite batsman', according to a report in the telegraph.co.uk.

"Although there are questions over the precise context of the tweets, they were written at a time when Buttler and Morgan were established England players and have caused offence on social media," the report added. The ECB said the matter will be dealt in an appropriate manner.

A homophobic tweet dating back to 2010 from veteran pacer James Anderson has also emerged. "For me it's 10-11 years ago, I've certainly changed as a person. And I think that's the difficulty, things do change, you do make mistakes," Anderson told the British media.

I see myself on Olympic podium: Pooja

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A second successive Asian Championship Gold adding to her confidence, Olympic-bound Indian boxer Pooja Rani (75kg) on Wednesday said she can visualise herself winning a medal at the Tokyo Games next month.

Pooja defended her Gold in the Asian Championships in Dubai a few days ago by beating Mavluda Movlonova in the final. That was her lone bout of the event as she got a bye and a walkover earlier.

"I will give my best in the Olympics and the rest is up to



God. Of course, I see myself on the Olympic podium," Pooja said during a virtual interaction from Pune where she is currently training.

"I am happy with my preparations for the Olympics and this Gold (in Asian Championships) has given me more hope and confidence."

Williamson out of 2nd Eng Test but 'will be back' for WTC final

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson was on Wednesday ruled out of the second Test against England to give much-needed rest to his 'irritated' left elbow ahead of the World Test Championship final against India.

Left-handed batsman Tom Latham will don the captaincy hat in Williamson's absence in the second Test beginning here on June 10.

While Latham will lead the Kiwis only for the third time, Will Young will replace Williamson in the playing eleven.

According to a statement issued by New Zealand Cricket, Williamson has been managing the elbow injury "since first missing matches in March".

New Zealand coach Gary Stead said that the injury has been troubling the 30-year-old batsman for quite some time.

"It's not an easy decision for Kane to have to miss a Test, but we think it's the right one," he said.

"He's had an injection in his elbow to relieve the irritation he's been experiencing when he bats and a period of



rest and rehabilitation will help maximise his recovery.

"The decision has been made very much with the ICC World Test Championship Final at Southampton in mind and we are confident he will be ready for that match starting on June 18," he added.

Latham assured Williamson will be back for the WTC final.

"I am sure he will be back. From our point of view, it is a precautionary thing. We would love for him to be available for this game but we have also got

the eye on the (WTC) final in a week's time.

"So it is about Kane giving himself the best opportunity to be fully fit and available for that game. The decision was made for him to rest this one and get that right for the final," said Latham in the pre-match interaction ahead of the second Test against England.

Latham also said that New Zealand will be resting their pacers on a case-by-case basis rather than resting all of them. Senior pacer Trent Boult is set to play the game after missing the first one, considering the WTC final in the following week.

"His coming back into the side is a massive boost for us. The way he can swing the ball, his leadership as well. He has been in this part of the world and knows how to perform," said Latham.

On resting the likes of Neil Wagner, Tim Southee and Kyle Jamieson, Latham added: "While we have an eye on that final, this is such an important game for us to put a performance that we can be proud of. We will take a call on the 11 or 12 after training but it (resting pacers) is more of a case by case situation."

IOA in search of new kit sponsor

New Delhi: After dropping Chinese sportswear company Li Ning as India's Olympic kit sponsor, Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday said the country's athletes will not wear branded apparel in the upcoming Tokyo Games even as the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) claimed that the search is on for a new partner.

Rijiju's statement came hours after IOA president Narinder Batra told PTI that the National Olympic Committee (NOC) was hoping to find a new kit sponsor for the contingent by the end of this month after cutting ties with Li Ning on Tuesday.

"Indian athletes, coaches and support staff, won't be wearing any branded apparel at Tokyo Olympics. Only 'INDIA' will be written in the kits of our athletes," Rijiju tweeted.

However, Batra said search is on for a new sponsor within the limited available time.

Benzema injured in France's win

AFP ■ PARIS

Karim Benzema was forced to leave the pitch with a dead leg on Tuesday as world champions France beat Bulgaria 3-0 in their final friendly one week before beginning their Euro 2020 campaign.

Benzema was taken off in the 39th minute at the Stade De France in what is France's last match before they take on Germany in their opening Group F match of the European Championship against Germany on June 15.

France also face reigning European champions Portugal and Hungary, who will play two of their group matches in front of big crowds at the Puskas Arena in Budapest.

The 33-year-old Benzema had been recalled with great fanfare to the national team following a near six-year exile, but his replacement Olivier Giroud showed why Les Bleus are considered among the favourites for



trophy with a late brace which took his France total to 46.

Giroud, 34, is now just five goals behind France's all-time top scorer Thierry Henry but will likely be sidelined when Benzema returns.

"When people call on me, the most important thing is to do the job," Giroud told broadcaster M6. "I had good service from my teammates. They know where I'm going to be in the box so I just tried to finish well."

Neymar helps Brazil maintain perfect record

AFP ■ ASUNCION

Neymar scored one goal and created the other as Brazil maintained their perfect start to World Cup qualifying with a 2-0 win over Paraguay on Tuesday.

Substitute Lucas Paqueta sealed the win deep into injury time as Brazil opened up a six point lead at the top of South America's single qualifying group after a sixth win out of six.

Paraguay's first defeat saw them drop out of the automatic qualification places.

Brazil got off to a quick start with less than four minutes on the clock.

Gabriel Jesus, recalled to the starting line-up, crossed from the right and although Richarlison missed his attempted volley, Neymar was unmarked at the back post to bobble the ball past goalkeeper Antony Silva.

Paraguay did not crumble, though, and center-back Omar Alderete forced an incredible save out of goalkeeper Ederson with a blockbuster drive from 30



yards. Brazil had chances to kill the game off on the counter but Neymar screwed an effort wide and Gomez did brilliantly to block Richarlison's shot.

But in injury time, Neymar played in Paqueta on the right to send a precise left-foot finish just inside the far post.

ARGENTINA BLOW LEAD

Miguel Borja scored four minutes into stoppage time to

rescue a 2-2 draw for Colombia in a World Cup qualifier against Argentina in Barranquilla.

Argentina were off to a flying start, helped by woeful home defending, to move 2-0 up inside eight minutes through goals by Cristian Romero and Leandro Paredes.

But Colombia's substitutes turned the game around in the second half as Luis Nuriel netted from the spot and then Borja snatched a point at the death.

Selecao players won't boycott Copa America

Sao Paulo: Brazil's national footballers on Tuesday said they are against hosting the troubled Copa America, but will not boycott the tourney.

The championship is being organized on Brazilian soil in a last-minute, pandemic-defying rush after organizers withdrew it from Argentina over a Covid-19 surge.

"We are against organizing the Copa America, but we will never say no to the Brazilian

national team," the players said in a joint statement.

"We have a mission to accomplish in the historic green and yellow jersey of the five-time world champions," they said, five days from the opening match of the South American football championships.

Brazil's players were reportedly unhappy over their country's late decision to host the tournament.

PERU CLAIM FIRST WIN

Peru earned their first win of the qualification campaign but remained bottom of the group despite a surprise 2-1 success at Ecuador.

In Caracas, Venezuela held Uruguay to a 0-0 draw to remain above Peru on goal difference, while the visitors clung on to a top four automatic qualification spot. Marcelo Moreno's penalty eight minutes from time earned Bolivia a 1-1 draw in Santiago with dominant Chile, who took the lead through Erick Pulgar on 69 minutes.