

**OPINION 8**  
LIKUD OXYGEN  
FOR ISRAEL'S POLITY

**WORLD 11**  
CHINA HAS ABILITY TO TRY TO 'DISTURB'  
RULES-BASED ORDER: BLINKEN

**SPORT 14**  
KANE OUT OF  
2ND TEST

LUCKNOW, THURSDAY JUNE 10, 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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AXONE IS PATH  
BREAKING:  
SAYANI GUPTA  
12 VIVACITY

## Brahmins back in focus as UP readies for polls

Jitin Prasad's entry into BJP, another Brahmin as EC to soothe community's feelings in UP

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 Prasad 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.

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Congress leader Jitin Prasad 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 Prasad, 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.

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## 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 sever-

ity 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.

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## 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: 2,91,82,070 (+93,826)

DEATHS: 3,59,695 (+6,138)

RECOVERED: 2,76,45,183 (+1,48,909)

ACTIVE: 11,65,527

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.

## ICMR loses 31 staff, scientists to Covid

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, has lost at least 31 of its staff, including a few senior scientists and retired personnel to Covid-19.

A senior official from the ICMR said some of the employees who died during the coronavirus pandemic were associated with the research body for the past 30 years. He said these scientists and staff were posted in various posts at the ICMR's regional offices across the country.

However, it was the ICMR-NIV at Pune which was worst hit, probably because the institute was engaged in the testing of corona samples. At least seven employees from the ICMR-NIV lab succumbed to the virus.

"These colleagues had served in various capacities across ICMR and its institutes, and breathed their last during these pandemic times. They will serve as a reminder for the



remainder of us to strive forward and work towards a better world," said the official.

Former director of National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, Dr Kalyan Banerjee, passed away at a private hospital from heart-related problems and was infected with Covid-19 later. He was a fellow of the National Academy of Medical Science, Indian National Science Academy, Indian Academy of Science and National Academy of Science.

Similarly, Dr Namita Mahapatra of Scientist G grade, who was at ICMR-RMRC, Bhubaneswar, succumbed to the virus in September last year.

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## Know mystery woman linked with fugitive Choksi's kidnapping

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diamond was a common link between Mehul Choksi and the mystery woman Barbara Jarabik, 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.

Cullinan Designs have an office in Dubai in partnership with Elysian Design Furniture Trading LLC. Barbara's Dubai partner is Anita Keskeny.

The Dubai office is situated at M-03, Golden Building 10 24 Deira Street, according to the website of Cullinan Designs.

According to sources, Jarabik was known to Nirav Modi, Priti Choksi, Dilip Choksi and Chetan Choksi. She was engaged in their UK-based business promotions in

their heydays. Incidentally, on Tuesday Jarabik gave interviews to a TV channel accusing Mehul of fooling her by giving fake diamonds and denied any role in kidnapping him. But according to the complaint filed to the UK authorities, she was engaged by Gurdip Bath.

Choksi family's lawyers approached the UK authorities on Tuesday to complain that Jarabik, along with three UK settled Indian origin bouncers Gurdip Bath, Gurjit Singh Bhandal and Gurmit Singh, were behind trapping Choksi and taking him out of Antigua to Dominica. The complaint distributed to media by lawyers of attaching the passport and flight ticket and travel details shows that "on May 28 Barbara Jarabik, Gurjit Singh Bhandal and Gurmit Singh left Dominica at 8.30 am on Inter-Caribbean JY0705 to St Lucia.

As per the UK company registry, Jarabik lives at Flat 2, 5 Princess Road, London NW6 5 AL and runs a company called Cullinan Property.

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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.

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

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW



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, who ghar hi khatam ho gaya. We are alone... all alone," said Ruby.

Her father was deputised 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.

When he was brought home their struggle started. That was time when the scarcity of beds and oxygen was at its peak. Himanshu's younger brother Aman pulled all strings to get oxygen as he was showing signs of breathlessness.

"My younger brother Aman managed to get an oxygen cylinder at ₹20,000 plus ₹8000 as installation charge and we paid that money," Himanshu said.

As Himanshu struggled to explain Ruby took over. "In the meantime my mother showed symptoms of cough and fever. Our full attention was on our father so we did not realise that she was also facing problems. But soon our focus turned to our mother as her SPO2 level dropped to 50."

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Himanshu Srivastava

## Doors still open for parleys with Centre, says Gupkar alliance

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Lying dormant for over six months now, constituents of the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) on Wednesday woke up to assemble at the residence of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti where they "unanimously" announced that doors have not been closed for holding parleys with the Central Government.

"Remember this, we have not closed any doors. If they will invite us for talks we will take a call at that point of time. We are not closing our doors.

What we want is betterment of our people," said Chairman of the alliance Farooq Abdullah.

The Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration was floated by the Kashmir based mainstream political parties. The PAGD had contested the DDC polls last year on the slogan of restoring the special status of the erstwhile state of J&K and revoking Abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A.

Addressing media persons Abdullah also claimed, "PAGD is unanimously committed to the Gupkar Declaration of August 4, 2019."

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# CM transfers ₹1,000 each to bank accounts of 23L daily wage earners

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to provide relief to the poor suffering due to the economic slowdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday transferred a total of Rs 23 lakh crore to the bank accounts of 23 lakh daily wage earners at the rate of Rs 1,000 per beneficiary.

"Be it the dream of building a house, proper treatment of illness, cost of education or the need of financial help in any mishap, the state government is there with you at every step," the chief minister said, adding that the labourer brothers had made a significant contribution with their complete dedication and hard work in realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of a Self-reliant India.

Ensuring the lives and livelihood of these daily wage earners as well as their social security, Yogi Adityanath said, his government had ensured that the district magistrates and district police chiefs distributed the wedding invitations of the workers' daughters who did not have the support from their close relatives.

He said that in the last one

and-half years, when the entire world was grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, Uttar Pradesh had managed to bring the situation under control through collective efforts of the government and its people.

"UP has a total population of about 25 crore, and today, states with half of UP's population are recording as many new COVID-19 cases on a daily basis as we have in total. The state has the best recovery rate in the entire country while the positivity rate is the lowest," he said.

Yogi also appealed to the people of the state to get vaccinated and follow the Covid protocols set by the government, as these were the only steps to keep the spread of the deadly coronavirus under control. To make sure more and more workers get the benefit of efforts being made for the safety of workers, Yogi has launched a web portal, www.upssb.in. He said that the beneficiaries, including small shopkeepers, daily wage labourers, rickshaw/e-rickshaw pullers, porters, barbers, washer men, cobblers, confectioners must get themselves registered on the website.

This registration will help

## Yogi meets Swatantra, Bansal

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met Bharatiya Janata Party state president Swatantra Dev Singh and state general secretary (organisation) Sunil Bansal in a hurriedly called meeting at his official residence here on Wednesday evening.

Highly placed sources in the party said that the meeting was called to smoothen out the ties between the party and the government.

"There were grievances among party leaders that officials did not listen to them. An attempt was made to find a middle path in this impasse," the source said.

The meeting was called the day former Congress leader and Union Minister Jitin Prasada joined the BJP in New Delhi. This was an unscheduled meeting as Singh



was touring western UP while Bansal was in eastern UP. Both of them were asked to reach Lucknow by evening. "There are other issues like expansion of cabinet and selection of candidates for the forthcoming Vidhan Parishad election and they were also discussed. Party's UP in-charge Radha Mohan Singh had already hinted that expansion of the cabinet was the prerogative of the chief minister and in this meeting Yogi might have discussed the nitty-gritty of cabinet expansion," the source said.

the state government to make arrangements for their safety. Every labourer, whether in the organised or unorganised sector, general worker or expressway worker, would be given

annual insurance of Rs 5,00,000 by the state government with just a registration. The work of providing insurance cover is being done with full commitment.

Referring to the COVID-19 first wave, the chief minister said that UP's efforts to secure the lives and livelihoods of 40 lakh migrant workers was today the subject of study in all institutions around the world. During the first wave of COVID-19 outbreak, the Yogi government had made all arrangements, whether it was for providing ration cards and monthly allowance, or making arrangements of food and basic necessities.

At an event held at his official residence, the chief minister provided symbolic cheques to five workers and interacted with workers from different districts virtually. He interacted with Atul from Hamirpur, Mithilesh from Varanasi, Praveen Mishra from Kanpur, Kuldeep from Meerut and Rashid Ali from Jhansi, and inquired about their work, home and family before taking feedback on the government schemes. He also appealed to them to get all their colleagues registered on the portal. They thanked the chief minister for all the support they got in their basic needs like marriage of their daughters, education of their children and free ration for their families.

# Special vax booths for auto drivers, street vendors from June 14

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to extend vaccination facilities to all sections of the society, the Uttar Pradesh government has decided to set up special vaccination booths to inoculate street vendors, auto-rickshaw drivers, bus drivers, e-rickshaw and rickshaw drivers from June 14.

"The chief minister has decided to prioritise vaccination of street vendors and those who run high risk of exposure to the coronavirus. With the inclusion of new categories in the vaccination drive, the exercise will pick up pace, covering all sections of the society. The state government has decided to make special arrangements for the socially and economically weaker section in its aggressive campaign against COVID-19," a senior official said.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health, Amit Mohan Prasad said that special camps will be organised in all 75 districts from June 14 as 'Workplace Covid Vaccination Centres'. In this regard, directions have been issued to the district magistrate to appoint a nodal officer

and beneficiaries will include drivers and street vendors. Separate booths will be set up for them in Nagar Nigams, Nagar Palikas and Transport department offices.

"In case of drivers, two special vaccination booths will be set up at the Regional Transport Offices in all districts where at least 100 drivers (bus, taxi, auto-rickshaw and e-rick-



shaw drivers) will be inoculated daily. Of these, at least 50 beneficiaries will be from the 45+ category, while the remaining will belong to the 18-44 category. Similarly, special vaccination booths will be set up for street vendors, including vegetable-fruit sellers, rickshaw pullers and handcart pullers, at Nagar Nigam and Nagar Palika offices.

At least 100 such people will be getting their dose of vaccine in these booths. 50 people of the 18+ category and 50 of the 45+ category will be inoculated everyday. After completing the targets at Nagar Nigam and Nagar Palika, these booths will be shifted to Gram Panchayats," Prasad said.

In a bid to provide a shield against corona infection to maximum people of the state, the chief minister has already directed the department of Health to set up special centres in every districts like Guardian Special Booths, Special 'Pink Booths' for women, Workplace CVCS for in districts courts, government offices and for and media persons along with the employees of Information department.

Around 150 'special pink booths' or women in total were being set up in all districts, one for the 18+ category and the second for the 45+ women. The government has given instructions to set up these camps in District Women Hospitals or District Joint Hospitals. Similarly, as per need, such camps will be set up in Tehsils as well.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### NOTICE

I Indira Devi daughter of Late Sankatha Prasad Shukla resident of 124/24 E Block Govind Nagar Kanpur Nagar have changed my name from Indira Devi to Indira Awasthi for future reference

### NOTICE

Service No. Jc 285689y - sub (GNR) UPENDRA KUMAR SINGH village-post. BEOHARA Dist. Azamgarh my son's name and DATE of birth Navneet Vikram DATE of birth 14/02/1998 is wrongly mentioned in my service record, his correct name and DATE of birth is SHIVAM SINGH Date of birth 23/02/2001 for all future purpose vide affidavit no. FH 752539 Date 8/06/2021 before Tahsheel Laliganj Dist. Azamgarh utter parades.

### NOTICE

I, Army No-2892104 M Nayak Ajay Kumar Singh Vill-Bakarabad, Post-Mauima, Tehsil-Phulpur, Prayagraj, Pin Code-212507. The name of my son SATENDER SINGH is registered wrongly in my service record. His correct name is SATENDRA SINGH. He should be known as SATENDRA SINGH in future for all work.

### NOTICE

I Subedar Shivkesh Singh 89, UP Battalion BHU Varanasi, Village Jampur, Post Jampur, District Behm (MP). Verified that the date of Birth of my son (20-12-2001). But by mistake date of Birth has changed as 20/12/2001 in my service record, correct date of Birth is 20/12/2002

### NOTICE

I UGAM KANWAR, W/o Army No-6801830P Rank late -Ex. Havaldar/DVR Kishan Singh R/o Vill and Post-tena, Tehsil-Shergarh District-jodhpur Rajasthan in service record my name UGAM and DOB-09/12/1949 is incorrect while my correct name is UGAM KANWAR D.O.B.-01/01/1949, in all futures purpose.

### आवश्यकता है

**आवश्यकता है**  
एस.जे. महाविद्यालय, रसपुर, कानपुर नगर। आवश्यकता है- प्राचार्य, बी.एससी.- पाठ्यक्रम में भौतिक विज्ञान, रसायन विज्ञान, गणित, जून विज्ञान, वनस्पति विज्ञान, सैन्य विज्ञान, सांख्यिकी तथा बी.ए. पाठ्यक्रम में हिंदी साहित्य, अंग्रेजी साहित्य, अर्थशास्त्र, इतिहास, शिक्षा शास्त्र, समाजशास्त्र, राजनीति शास्त्र, गृह विज्ञान, कृषि एवं सैनिकी, मनोविज्ञान, धर्मशास्त्र, अंग्रेजी भाषा, हिंदी भाषा, दर्शन शास्त्र तथा सैन्य विज्ञान विषयों, एम.ए.- हिंदी, समाजशास्त्र तथा शिक्षा शास्त्र, एम.एससी.- जून विज्ञान, रसायन विज्ञान, भौतिक विज्ञान, गणित तथा वनस्पति विज्ञान, बी.बी.ए., बी.सी.ए., बी.एड. हेतु सहा.आचार्य को। माक एवं सेवा शर्तें यू.जी.सी./उत्पत्ति शास्त्री महाराज विश्वविद्यालय/उ.प्र. शासन के अनुसार। अपने शैक्षणिक अभिलेख व्यक्तित्व रूप से कार्यालय में अतिरिक्त जमा करें।

# Recovery rate climbs to 98 per cent in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Continuing its northward recovery trend, Uttar Pradesh reported 709 fresh corona cases against 1,706 recoveries as the recovery rate climbed to 98 per cent on Wednesday.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health, Amit Mohan Prasad said that in the last 24 hours, 1,706 Covid patients recovered as against fresh cases dropping to merely 709, making it the lowest daily infection count for the state since mid-March.

"The state recorded a decline by more than 95 per cent in the number of active corona cases since its peak on April 30, with active cases dropping from 3.10 lakh to nearly 12,000 now. The Covid condition in the state has been improving day by day. The recovery rate has climbed up to 98 per cent. Consequently, the daily case positivity rate also dipped to 0.24 percent from a high of over 16.84 percent in April," he said.

Prasad said that UP successfully curbed the transmission level by breaking the Covid chain as Test positivity rate was much lower in comparison to several other states with lesser population such as Tamil Nadu (11 per cent), Maharashtra

(over 10 per cent), Kerala (14.15 per cent) and West Bengal (12-15 per cent).

Emerging as a leader in terms of testing maximum samples for the novel coronavirus infection, the Yogi-led state has so far tested as many as 5,21,98,161 samples. Nearly 2.90 lakh Covid tests were carried out in the last 24 hours alone.

With the Covid condition in the state showing remarkable improvement, the UP government also lifting the corona curfew in all the districts. The active corona cases in all 75 districts are now much below the 600-mark. So far, more than 16.66 lakh patients have recovered from the deadly infection across the state.

To limit any further spread of the virus across the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath issued strict directives to firm up the containment zone strategy in the state.

"Containment zones must be fixed and the strategy must be fixed up after the assessment of local conditions by the district magistrates to avoid any inconvenience to the citizens. A policy should be framed in a manner to avoid any further spread of the virus," directed the CM at a high-level Covid review meeting in Lucknow on Wednesday.

# BJP Lucknow unit sets up helpline for treatment of post-Covid symptoms

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In an endorsement of the party's commitment to help COVID-19 affected people, the city unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party has started a helpline for the treatment of people having post-COVID-19 symptoms. BJP city president Mukesh Sharma said that a team of six doctors had been constituted to provide free medical consultation to the post-COVID-19 patients. Three panels of two doctors each would be available daily from 11:00 am to 7:00 pm and the post-COVID-19 patients can contact them for treatment.

Giving details of the doctors, party media in-charge Praveen Garg said Dr Vaibhav Khanna (Mobile phone number 9415109683) would be available from 10 am to 1 pm and Dr Sujit Pandey (9335206787) from 1 pm to 4 pm. Dr Yaduvendra Choubey (9621897374) and Dr Rajeev Rathore (9453377190) followed by Dr. Anoop Agarwal (9415018365) and Dr Digvijay Singh (9455274113) would be available for teleconsultation from 4 pm to 7 pm.

BJP city vice-president Vivek Singh Tomar has been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating with the doctor helpline team.

In a meeting held on Wednesday, work was also allotted to leaders. Trilok Singh Adhikari will work to make community health centres (CHCs) and primary health centres (PHCs) ideal health facilities by coordinating with public representatives. Ram Avatar Kanojia will ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach the people while Tinku Sonkar will help in vaccination of people.

"Members of the party's IT team will ensure that artisans, labourers and people of uneducated class are given vaccines on priority basis," Garg said.

# Mukhtar Ansari's property worth ₹24 crore attached

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In another major action against ganglord-turned-politico Mukhtar Ansari after being brought from Roar Jail of Punjab, the administration attached his property worth Rs 24 crore in Mau on charges of it being illegally possessed by the jailed gangster-MLA. The Mau district administration has also attached several acres of land in the presence of several police officers and personnel on the spot.

As per reports, the property was registered under the name of Mukhtar Ansari's mother who had made a will in the name of her two sons - Mukhtar and Afzal Ansari.

Mukhtar Ansari was brought back from Roopnagar Jail in Punjab to Banda jail in UP in April, after he spent over two years in the Punjab jail in connection with a case of extortion.

The action was initiated and the UP police took Ansari's custody after a Supreme Court order.

On March 26, the Supreme Court had ordered Ansari's transfer to a UP jail for his involvement in cases of murder, attempt to murder, cheating and conspiracy, apart from offences under the Gangsters Act.

The SC said that a convict or undertrial, who disobeyed the law could not oppose his

transfer from one prison to another and the courts could not be helpless bystanders when the rule of law was being challenged with impunity.

Subsequently, political tussle ensued after the UP government accused the Congress government in Punjab of 'shielding' Ansari for several months by not letting the state take custody of the gangster.

The Yogi government alleged that the custody was denied to UP Police 'under the guise of medical issues' to the inmate by the Punjab government.

Just before Ansari was to be transported to UP, his wife Afshan Ansari moved the Supreme Court seeking directions to the UP government to ensure his personal safety, casting aspersions on a probable move to eliminate him in an encounter during his transport.

On April 8, a convoy of six police vans, a Vajra vehicle accompanied Ansari in an ambulance covering a distance of 882 km spanning three states for over a 16-hour journey.

A five-term MLA from Mau (east UP), Mukhtar Ansari represents the Bahujan Samaj Party. He faces 52 cases in the state and elsewhere. Among these, 15 cases are in the trial stage.

## LUCKNOW CANTONMENT BOARD

31, Nehru Road, Lucknow Cantt. Phone No. - 0522-2480037 | Fax - 0522-2480610 | E-mail: cblucknow@dgst.org

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

- (1). CONSTRUCTION OF HALL/ROOMS & SHED ON THE LAND ON SY NO. 97/3 ON ATAL ROAD.
- (2). CONSTRUCTION OF HALL/ROOMS & SHED AT DILKHUSHA LAWN.
- (3). REPAIR/MAINTENANCE OF CANTT FUND BUILDING.
- (4). CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL CLASS ROOM IN RAINBOW SCHOOL.

Online Tender are invited from the reputed firms/agencies/contractors having work experience in the relevant field in MES/Cantonment Board/Central of State Govt. Department, through the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/cpppl> by Cantonment Board Lucknow. The bid document can be downloaded from the <http://eprocure.gov.in/cpppl> PPP portal.

The other terms and conditions can be seen from the Office of the Cantonment Board Lucknow, 31 Nehru Road, Lucknow Cantt-226002 during working hours on before 30.06.2021.

No. LCB/4/Works/2020-21 (Vikash Kumar, IDES) Chief Executive Officer Lucknow Cantt.

### SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

Online Tender are invited from the reputed firms/agencies through the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in> for the work of "Provision of House Sewer Connections from newly laid sewer line in Cantonment area Lucknow"

The other relevant information/terms & conditions can be seen from the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in>. No. LCBS/E/M/Tender Notice/2021 (Vikash Kumar, IDES) Chief Executive Officer Lucknow Cantt.

### VERY SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

Online Tender are invited from the contractors having work experience in the relevant field in MES/ Cantt. Board/Central or State government departments through the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/cpppl> by the Cantonment Board, Lucknow for "Data Entry of Birth and Death Legacy Records. The detailed requirement is given in Annexure 'B' which may be increased or decreased as per actual requirement."

The other relevant information/terms & conditions can be seen from the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/cpppl>. No. LCB/1/IT/eChhawani/Birth/Death (Vikash Kumar, IDES) Chief Executive Officer Lucknow Cantt.

**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)  
Advt. No. J.S.V. 100(2021-22) EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW) VIII

**UCO BANK** ZONAL OFFICE, Finance Department, Dhansree Complex  
1st Floor, D-63/8-1M, Mahmoorganj, Varanasi-221010

### LOCKER BREAK OPEN NOTIFICATION

The following locker holders are informed that the locker rent due by you has not been paid on time, while the concerned branches requested you to deposit the outstanding locker rent through telephone, mobile and correspondence from time to time in this regard. But still bank due did not yet paid, but we have to write with great regret that all our efforts were made and the outstanding rent was not deposited by the defaulters. Therefore, it has been ensured by the bank that the outstanding rent is recovered by auctioning the goods kept in the locker by breaking the locker according to the system prescribed by the bank. Branch wise locker holder information is as follows:

S. No.	Branch Name & Sole ID	Locker No.	Name of Locker Holder	Due Amount	Since when Due	1st Notice Date	2nd Notice Date	3rd Notice Date	Last Notice Date
1.	Varanasi Main (0034)	C/A 205	Ashutosh Khatri CK 8/155 Garhwasi Tola Varanasi	Rs. 19293/-	30.07.2005	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
2.	Varanasi Main (0034)	BA 146	Sandeep Kr. Agrawal CK Soot Tola Varanasi	Rs. 14883/-	10.01.2010	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
3.	Varanasi Main (0034)	AA 036	Vandana Agrawal & Alok Kumar Agrawal CK 54/27 Raja Darwaja Varanasi	Rs. 9057/-	30.12.2016	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
4.	Varanasi Main (0034)	CA 181	Kamal Kant Dawe & Mamta Nagar CK 3/1 Bhikhari Das Lane Chowk Varanasi	Rs. 6035/-	13.02.2018	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
5.	Varanasi Main (0034)	EA 305	Ram Kishore Pathak CK 30/12 Muri Tola Varanasi	Rs. 4075/-	09.08.2019	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
6.	Varanasi Main (0034)	EA 315	Sheela Shukla CK 8/142 Garhwasi Tola Varanasi	Rs. 5035/-	22.02.2019	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
7.	Varanasi Main (0034)	EA 343	Ashok Kumar Arhithya S-10/6 A-2 Maqbool Alam Road Varanasi	Rs. 3964/-	04.09.2019	31.12.2020	18.01.2021	05.02.2021	09.03.2021
8.	Ballia (1816)	AA 41	Salish Kumar Jalalipatti (D.L.W.) Post Bhehpura, Varanasi	Rs. 34465/-	08.05.2003	16.09.2020	20.10.2020	23.03.2021	05.05.2021
9.	Ballia (1816)	BA 24	Durga Trivedi 24/181 Baleshwar Mandir Road Jaipiganj Ballia	Rs. 16710/-	04.09.2013	16.09.2020	20.10.2020	23.03.2021	05.05.2021
10.	Urwa Bazar Gorakhpur (0550)	AA 020	Rameshwar Pathak & Kalawati Devi, Vill. Kanhal Post Siswan urf Siuwa Bansgaon Gorakhpur	Rs. 14934/-	28.08.2009	02.08.2018	10.01.2021	22.02.2021	03.03.2021
11.	Mumford-ganj Allahabad (1611)	BA 095	Rajnath Singh & Sanjay Kumar Singh 7 T Shivpuri Govindpur Allahabad	Rs. 11583/-	22.10.2014	04.06.2018	14.08.2020	03.09.2020	28.09.2020 and 19.03.2021

**Note:** The above locker holders are again informed that they should immediately deposit the rent of their locker and get the No Dues certificate, otherwise the bank will have to break the locker and fix the auction date for its further action. Please note that the cost of breaking the locker, press release and other expenses will be recovered from the locker holder and his entire responsibility will be with the locker holder.  
(Ghanshyam Parmar) Dy. General Manager and Zonal Head

# 127 kids orphaned by Covid identified in Lucknow so far

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

There are 127 children orphaned due to COVID-19 in Lucknow district from March 1, 2020 till now even as the counting and identification process is still going on. Giving this information, the District Probationary Officer Sudhakar Sharan Pandey said that this was just the initial stage and searches and identification was still being carried out. He said that these orphans included both those who lost a single parent or those who lost both the parents. "The counting process is still on and these include orphans of people who died either after contracting coronavirus infection or after recovery from COVID 19. The annual income of the family has to be less than Rs 2 lakh for these children to be the beneficiaries of the government scheme," he said. He said that once the list

was completed and their documents were checked, these children would be given Rs 4,000 per month each. He said that as per the government order, several benefits would be given to these children, including funding of their education and marriage. "These children must be up to 18 years of age," he said. He said that these children were with their guardians at present and home visits were being carried out by the department. Pandey said that they were taking the list of COVID-19 deaths from the Covid Control Room and the office of the chief medical officer to determine and identify these orphans. "We want to ensure that no Covid orphan is missed and all the eligible orphans get the benefit," he said. Child Welfare Committee member Sangeeta Sharma said that they were working in tandem with the government to ensure that the benefits reach the target group.

Sharma said that when the kin of the orphans who lost one or both parents to COVID-19 contact them, they try to make sure whether they would be able to keep the child's property. "We take into consideration whether a person trying to get the custody of Covid orphan is doing so for financial reasons. The issues of property are also looked into. We talk to the family and all the persons involved and as far as the property issue is concerned we will inform the district magistrate." She said that they would be carrying out quick follow-ups along with Childline and other organisations. "The Bal Aayog is also active in this and is looking into the issues along with the counselors," she said. Sharma said that the challenge was that sometimes things do not come out in the open. "The rural areas are difficult to face because the rural people sometimes do not share the details and it is difficult to reach these areas. Some of the

counselling is done on the spot and in some cases tele-counselling is done," she said. She said that in some of the families the issues were so complicated that it would take days to sort them out. Talking about the psychological impact on the children, she said that some of the relatives were very selfish and were not looking after the child which was affecting them. Besides, she said, problems were also being faced by the single parent orphans. "There are mothers who are illiterate and have more than one child which is a challenging situation because anybody can manipulate them. Then there is a case of a 17-year-old girl in whom a person is taking undue interest. We have to keep a tab on the man and counsel the girl that she should not accompany anyone in case of fake promises of government jobs because this is the time when child trafficking is actively taking place," she added.

# Son of murder convict shot by cop

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A constable deployed in the security of a murder convict shot latter's son at the gate of the residential premises of Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences on Wednesday evening. The deceased was identified as Praveen Singh of Sitapur. His father Dhruv Singh was accused in a murder case and he is presently admitted in the hospital for treatment of a renal disease. Constable Ashish of Badaun was in police uniform when he shot Praveen in the head with a country-made pistol. Sources said the accused constable changed his uniform on being advised by some policemen and later surrendered at the Vibhuti Khand police station. Commissioner of Police DK Thakur, who reached the scene instantly after the news reached the police, said the constable appeared to be mentally unwell. "The constable, who was recruited in the year 2016, was posted at Sitapur police lines since 2017," Thakur said. The constable told the police during interrogation that Praveen used to harass him

and intended to murder him, so he killed Praveen to save himself. However, Thakur said the claims made by the constable were unconvincing. "We have sought his report from the police lines in Sitapur as also details about his father from the Sitapur police," he said. He added that Ashish was deployed in the security of the murder convict since May 25. A spokesman said the constable did not use the service pistol but a country-made pistol. He said the constable appeared to have been under depression for the last few days. Inspector, Vibhuti Khand, Chandra Shekhar said the constable snatched the country-made pistol from Praveen and shot the latter. "Both had a scuffle when they reached the gate of the residential premises for doctors and later, Ashish shot Praveen," he said, adding further investigations were underway. **FARMER HACKED TO DEATH BY TWO** A farmer was hacked to death in Madiyaon on Wednesday. The victim was identified as Ram Gulab Yadav

(45) of Umarbhari village in the area. The family of the deceased named Surendra Yadav and his aide Banke (both of Mubarakpur village) in the FIR. They alleged that both the attackers trained rifles on the villagers who rushed to the rescue of Ram Gulab and fled the scene. As per reports, Ram Gulab was with his cattle when the accused reached the scene. Surendra had a rifle and a sharp-edged weapon in his hand while Banke was also wielding a sharp-edged weapon. The accused pinned down the victim and later attacked him with the sharp-edged weapons. Ram Gulab was rushed to a hospital where doctors pronounced him dead. An old enmity was said to be the murder motive. The bereaved family also named Surendra's kin Virendra, Rajendra and Babuwa.

**King George's Medical University, U.P., Lucknow Ph. 0522258428**  
**Ref.No. E/242 Dated: 08-06-2021**  
**E-Tender/Short-term Tender Notice**  
 Second Time E-Tenders under two bid systems are hereby invited from the original manufacturer, authorized dealer/distributor of air conditioning in Lucknow for the execution of work. **SITC of Cold room for proposed HRF at Atal Bihari Vajpai scientific convention center, KGMU, Lucknow. And Second Time Sealed tenders under two bid system are hereby invited from the registered electrical contractors of Electric deptt./OEM of their authorized dealer and service provider, for the execution of (A.) Repairing & rewinding of 1000 KVA capacity C.G. make Transformer including transportation installed at Hospital substation KGMU Lucknow. (B) Repair & Rewinding of 750 KVA Transformer AREVA make installed at shatabdi phase-1 KGMU Lucknow. (C.) SITC of Separate Air Conditioning is Isolation Room Nos. 249 & 250 at Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Department, 2nd Floor, Shatabdi Hospital Phase-2, KGMU, Lucknow.** The tender shall be opened on 23-06-2021 timing 3.00 PM at Electric Department KGMU. The details of the tender document can be viewed at university website [www.kgmucindia.edu](http://www.kgmucindia.edu) & [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) & www.KGMU.org. Other terms and condition regarding the tender and work can be seen in the office of electric department during any working days.  
**Executive Engineer (Electrical)**

# As curbs ease, DM, CP discuss ways to check spread of virus

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash and Police Commissioner DK Thakur on Wednesday discussed measures to be taken to check spread of novel coronavirus as daytime curfew was lifted in Lucknow. The district magistrate said all precautions had to be taken to ensure that the coronavirus infection was not imported from outside because at present it was at its minimum level in Lucknow district. "For this there should be strict monitoring at places like the airport, railway and bus stations and special Covid management should be carried out in these areas. Hundred per cent screening should be carried out of passengers arriving at these points. If any passenger has COVID-19 symptoms then an antigen or RT-PCR test should be conducted immediately and details should be taken from the person on a daily basis," he said. He said that passengers coming from the high risk zones which had more than 600 cases had to be tested and the responsibility for this would be on the chief medical officer. The district magistrate stressed on testing and vacci-



Huge rush in Aminabad after markets reopened in Lucknow on Wednesday

nation of staff of banks, police training institute, airport, railway and bus stations. He said that work site vaccinations should be ensured at the Police Lines. He said that the post-Covid hospitals and Integrated Covid Control and Command Centre would remain operational. Prakash said to ensure that Covid protocols were followed, the district administration

along with Lucknow Development Authority, nagar nigam and police would carry out a large-scale exercise to see that wearing of masks and social distancing was followed and those not wearing masks would be fined. The DM said that the public address systems should inform people about Covid appropriate behaviour and asked the nagar nigam teams

collecting garbage from door to door to distribute pamphlets highlighting Covid appropriate behaviour. He said hotspot areas would be monitored through CCTV cameras. He asked the nagar nigam to sanitise all markets at night besides the airport, and railway and bus stations. He said that 24 sector magistrates would remain active in their areas.

# Doctor, hosp staffers arrested for selling life-saving injections

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A doctor from the Emergency Medicine department of Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences, three staffers of King George's Medical University (KGMU), a pharmaceutical company's franchise owner and another person were arrested from Wazirganj on Wednesday on the charges of selling Amphotericin B and Remdesivir injections. Those arrested were identified as Dr Wamiq Husain from RMLIMS, Mohammed Imran (contractual technician at KGMU's Emergency Medicine department), Mohammed Arif (contractual ward boy at KGMU's Emergency Medicine department), Balbir Singh (pharmacist at KGMU Trauma Centre), Mohammed Raquib (owner of pharmaceutical company's franchise) and their aide Rajesh Kumar Singh, who is a salesman in a surgical company. ADCP Rajesh Srivastava said the police were tipped off

that some people were selling Amphotericin B vials/injections used for treatment of black fungus. "We developed the information and nabbed one of the accused. During interrogation, he disclosed the names of those involved in the racket. In police presence, he called Dr Wamiq Husain and the latter reached the scene while carrying the injections," the ADCP said. He said the police recovered 28 injections used in treatment of black fungus, 18 Remdesivir injections, eight mobile phones, Rs 16,000 in cash, two motorcycles and a car from the possession of the accused. The ADCP said some patients' kin had complained about the unavailability of injections and the police team was alerted. "The injections used in treatment of black Fungus are not available in private and there is a shortage of the same. It is available only at government hospitals or Red Cross Society in Lucknow. Sale of these injections is impossible without the involvement of the staff of government hospitals," he said.

**PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
 B-14/A, Chhatrapati Shivaji Bhawan, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi-110016  
 1<sup>st</sup> 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

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Notification No. 152/2021**  
**Important Notice for the Rail Passengers**  
 It is notified for information of General Public that following Special Trains will run as under:-

Restoration of special trains			
S. No.	Train No.	From - To	Date of Running from Originating Station
1	02091	Dehradun - Kathgodam	11.06.2021 To till further advice
2	02092	Kathgodam - Dehradun	11.06.2021 To till further advice
3	05070	Aishbagh - Gorakhpur	13.06.2021 To till further advice
4	05069	Gorakhpur - Aishbagh	14.06.2021 To till further advice
5	05104	Manduadih - Gorakhpur	15.06.2021 To till further advice
6	05103	Gorakhpur - Manduadih	15.06.2021 To till further advice
7	05111	Chhapra - Varanasi City	10.06.2021 To till further advice
8	05112	Varanasi City - Chhapra	10.06.2021 To till further advice
9	02531	Gorakhpur - Lucknow Jn.	11.06.2021 To till further advice
10	02532	Lucknow Jn. - Gorakhpur	11.06.2021 To till further advice
11	05009	Gorakhpur - Mailani Jn.	10.06.2021 To till further advice
12	05010	Mailani Jn. - Gorakhpur	11.06.2021 To till further advice
13	05040	Kasganj - Kanpur Anwarganj	16.06.2021 To till further advice
14	05039	Kanpur Anwarganj- Kasganj	16.06.2021 To till further advice
15	05038	Kasganj - Kanpur Anwarganj	16.06.2021 To till further advice
16	05037	Kanpur Anwarganj- Kasganj	17.06.2021 To till further advice
17	05044	Kathgodam - Lucknow Jn.	15.06.2021 To till further advice
18	05043	Lucknow Jn. - Kathgodam	14.06.2021 To till further advice
19	05036	Kathgodam - Delhi	11.06.2021 To till further advice
20	05035	Delhi - Kathgodam	11.06.2021 To till further advice
21	05356	Ramnagar - Moradabad Jn.	11.06.2021 To till further advice
22	05355	Moradabad Jn. - Ramnagar	11.06.2021 To till further advice
23	05325	Tanakpur - Delhi	12.06.2021 To till further advice
24	05326	Delhi - Tanakpur	13.06.2021 To till further advice

Please Note: 1. These train will run with full reserved accommodation. 2. It is mandatory for the passengers to follow the guidelines issued for prevention and safety from Covid-19. CP/RO-T/66 Chief Pass. Traffic Manager, Gorakhpur  
 About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955  
**"DO NOT TRAVEL WITH INFLAMMABLE ARTICLE IN TRAIN"**

# Youth sexually exploits friend's wife, forces her to undergo abortion; held

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth befriended the wife of his friend with bigshots, allegedly sexually exploited her and forced her to go for abortion when she got pregnant. The accused also thrashed her for not bowing down to his diktats and extorted money by blackmailing her into silence on the issue. However, as the woman could not take it any further, she lodged a case after which the accused was rounded up. He was identified as Sharad Kumar Tiwari of Beverly Apartment in Mahanagar. He works as a DJ. Inspector KK Tiwari said the police team arrested the accused within five hours after the case was lodged on Tuesday. He said the accused happened to be a good friend of the victim's husband and he

befriended the girl while staying in the same locality and promised to marry her. He later took her to a house where he raped her. After a case was lodged, the police started searching for the girl and recovered her on June 6. A team arrested the accused following a tip-off. **SUICIDE** A 21-year-old woman, who had an interfaith love marriage, ended her life at her house in Naka on Wednesday morning. She was identified as Ishpreet Kaur aka Tanu of Pandariba in Naka. She married Mohammed Afzal Shah, who works as a painter, on May 14, 2018. Police said the woman was found hanging from the roof with a dupatta tied around her neck. The police sent the body for autopsy while further investigations were underway.

# Monsoon likely to arrive in UP early

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The south-west monsoon is all set to arrive before time in Uttar Pradesh in the next 2-3 days, according to Director of Meteorological department JP Gupta. There were very little possibilities of it getting delayed, he said. "The monsoon has reached Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and some parts of West Bengal. It will reach Lucknow a day after it hits Uttar Pradesh. The chances of early monsoon arrival are there because of the development of a low pressure area over the North Bay of Bengal because of high heat conditions. Normal rainfall, an average of 800 mm, is expected," Gupta said. Gupta said that the state would witness rains in some areas in a day or two, and light rains were also expected in the state capital. "Humidity levels are high due to the moisture in the air because of the approaching monsoon," he added. The south-west monsoon has advanced into the entire central and some parts of North Arabian Sea, entire Konkan, including Mumbai and most parts of interior Maharashtra, some more parts of Telangana, some more parts of Andhra Pradesh, most parts of central

Bay of Bengal and some more parts of North Bay of Bengal, officials said. They said a low pressure area is likely to form over North Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood around June 11. South-westerly winds over the Arabian Sea are also likely to strengthen from June 10. Under its influence, the south-west monsoon is likely to advance into the remaining parts of Maharashtra, including Mumbai, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, by June 11; Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, east UP; and some parts of Madhya Pradesh & Gujarat during June 11-13.

**Bank of Baroda**  
**Public Notice**  
 Here by this is to inform that under named borrower has not repaid principal and interest thereon of the loan. Therefore the loan become NPA on below Dated . A notice under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 was issued at last known address, which was returned undelivered. Therefore we again inform to under named borrower/ Guarantor by this public notice to repay the loan amount due including interest and other expenses as mentioned in this notice within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice otherwise bank will take action u/section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets, that after publication of public auction/inviting quotation/tender/ private treaty your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available.

Sl No.	Name and Address of Borrower / Guarantor and Security agreement with brief description of securities/N.P.A. Date & Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice
1.	<b>Borrower : Smt. Sarvesh Kumari</b> W/o Shri Brajesh Kumar, Regd Office : Devvarampur, Inside Teshil- Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj & Also at Village Bhajpur Nigah, Post-Mighauli, Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj. <b>Guarantor :</b> Smt. Seema Arya W/o Shri Avneesh Chandra Arya, R/o : Nai Basti Bhainpura, Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj. <b>Property :</b> Land & Building built over Devvarampur, Inside Teshil- Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj in the name of Smt. Sarvesh Kumari W/o Shri Brajesh Kumar, Area : 116.17 Sq. Mtr., <b>Bounded-North :</b> Plot of Smt. Moolkanti, <b>South :</b> House of Amar Singh, <b>East :</b> Road, <b>West :</b> Plot of Virendra O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : <b>Rs. 14,03,799.12</b> + Intt. +Others Charges N.P.A. Date : 31-03-2021 • Demand Notice Date : 27-05-2021 Branch : Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj
2.	<b>Borrower : M/s R.D. Enterprises,</b> Regd Office : Kamalpur, Kalyanpur, Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj. <b>Proprietor :</b> Smt. Rajshree W/o Shri Dinesh Chandra, R/o : Sarai Dayamganj, Post : Khubariapur, Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj. <b>Property :</b> Land & Building built over Mauza Kamalpur, Kalyanpur Road, Pargana & Tehsil Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj in the name of Smt. Rajshree W/o Shri Dinesh Chandra, Area : 770 Sq. Mtr., <b>Bounded-North :</b> Land of Mukhtyar Khan, <b>South :</b> Land of Seller Shri Jagdish Chandra, <b>East :</b> Land of Lalte & Shri Nattu Khan, <b>West :</b> Chak Road O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : <b>Rs. 27,62,420.07</b> + Intt. +Others Charges N.P.A. Date : 31-03-2021 • Demand Notice Date : 27-05-2021 Branch : Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj
3.	<b>Borrower : M/s Sai Traders,</b> Address : 6/416 A, Nehru Nagar, Shuklaganj, Unnao, Distt. Unnao. <b>Proprietor :</b> Shri Deepak Tiwari S/o Shri Janki Shanker Tiwari, R/o : 1/310, Rajhani Marg, C/o Shah Big Bazar, Shuklaganj, Distt.-Unnao. <b>Guarantor :</b> Smt. Mamta Tiwari W/o Shri Janki Shanker Tiwari, R/o : 6/416 A, Nehru Nagar, Shuklaganj, Unnao, Distt. Unnao. <b>Property :</b> Arazi Bhumidhari No. 220, 221, 222, 223 & 224 Mi, Present House No. 6/416 A, situated at Netuva, Mohalla Nehru Nagar, Shuklaganj, Pargana Sikanderpur, Tehsil & Distt. Unnao in the name of Smt. Mamta Tiwari W/o Shri Janki Shanker Tiwari, Area : 112.50 Sq. Mtr., <b>Bounded-North :</b> Road 25 ft. Wide, <b>South :</b> Remaining Part of Arazi Seller, <b>East :</b> Arazi Others, <b>West :</b> Arazi Others. O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : <b>Rs. 4,78,604.16</b> + Intt. +Others Charges N.P.A. Date : 31-03-2021 • Demand Notice Date : 05-05-2021 Branch : Shuklaganj, Distt. Unnao
4.	<b>Borrower : Smt. Jhumur Banerjee</b> W/o Late Shomnath Banerjee & Miss. Shivanshi Banerjee (Minor) Through Mother & Natural Guardian, Smt. Jhumur Banerjee W/o Late Shomnath Banerjee, R/o : House No. 1332, Civil Lines, Jhansi and also at House Situated at part of Arazi No. 923 & 924, Mauza Lahar Gird, Abadi Saiyad Nagar Colony, Tehsil & Distt. Jhansi. <b>Property :</b> Land & Building of Free Hold House Situated at Arazi No. 923 & 924, Mauza Lahar Gird, Abadi Saiyad Nagar Colony, Tehsil & Distt. Jhansi in the name of Smt. Jhumur Banerjee W/o Late Shomnath Banerjee, Area : 795 Sq. Ft., <b>Bounded-North :</b> House of Mr. Afsar Ali, <b>South :</b> House of Mr. Akhtar, <b>East :</b> Way 6.10 Mtr., <b>West :</b> Plot of Mr. Sadik Khan. O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : <b>Rs. 31,36,464.60</b> + Intt. +Others Charges N.P.A. Date : 31-03-2021 • Demand Notice Date : 24-05-2021 Branch : Bara Bazar, Distt. Jhansi

**Date : 10-06-2021 Place : Kannauj / Unnao / Jhansi Authorised Officer**



# CM transfers money to bank accounts of 67,759 workers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath transferred Rs 1,000 online under the Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme to the bank accounts of 67,759 workers of the district through video conferencing on Wednesday. Under the scheme, 23 lakh workers of the state were benefitted with ₹ 230 crore. The CM also launched the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Portal for the unorganised workers and on this portal, workers of 45 different sectors such as washermen, tailors, gardeners, cobblers, barbers, weavers, rickshaw pullers, vendors, retail vegetable sellers, tea-chat sellers, retail traders, boatmen,

auto drivers etc will be able to register. These registered workers have been covered with cashless medical facility up to ₹2 lakh under Chief Minister Accident Insurance Scheme and ₹5 lakh under Chief Minister Jan Arogya Yojana. In the divisional auditorium, Yogi held talks with Mithilesh, a mason from the Sindhra area through a virtual platform. During the interaction, Mithilesh told the CM that he had received a total of ₹48,000 under the Shishu Matriva Yojana, Balika Madad Yojana, medical facility and Disaster Relief Scheme during the corona pandemic period last year. He also informed that he has a ration card and on which he

was getting ration every month apart from receiving ₹ 1,000 during the day. During his address, Yogi stressed on getting the workers of all organised and unorganised sectors registered so that they can get the benefit of the government schemes. He said that the corona control work has gone well in the state as the UP model to fight pandemic has been appreciated throughout the country last year as well as this year and during the second wave, activities like farming, work in industries etc were conducted in the state by adopting the Covid guidelines. As many as 119 sugar mills continued their production, said the CM, adding that the corona infec-

tion has weakened, but is not over yet. He also appealed to all to take precautions, follow the Covid protocol including wearing of masks, maintaining two yards distance and sanitisation. On the occasion, MLAs Dr Awadhesh Singh, Surendra Narayan Singh and Sushil Singh, Divisional Commissioner (DC) Deepak Agrawal, District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma along with officials of Labour department and laborers including Nagendra Kumar, Santosh, Hirendra Yadav and Subedar were present. Later, the DM handed over the acceptance letters of the Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme to the five workers present.

# Gadkari lays virtual foundation-stone of oxygen plant at Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday laid the virtual foundation-stone of an oxygen plant in Prayagraj. He laid the foundation-stone of a private oxygen plant under construction at Saraswati Hi-tech City in Naini. He said that people should come forward to fight the pandemic spreading in the country, so that this pandemic can be easily defeated. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said that many facilities and conveniences have been provided by the government for setting up oxygen plants. Taking advantage of which people should play their part in fighting this pandemic. He congratulated the chairman of the company for this. Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, who was present at the function, said that our government had defeated Corona-



Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, speaking at the function

Pioneer

One in a systematic manner. Corona-Two has been controlled to a great extent. Complete preparations have been made to fight the possible Corona-third wave. This plant will be of great convenience. This plant will start its work after 90 days. Everyone is working unitedly for this. When private organisations come forward to serve the country, the fight becomes

even easier. From this private oxygen plant, 1100 to 15,000 cylinders will be refilled daily which will go a long way in saving lives. UP's Union Minister Siddharth Nath Singh said that before Corona, 356 oxygen was needed daily which had increased during the peak hour of the pandemic. To deal with this crisis, 416 new oxygen

plants have been set up in the state. Due to this, he requested Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to get orders from the Central Government to start production again for three to four months for BPCL to meet the shortage of about 2000 metric tonnes per day of oxygen cylinders. Oxygen manufactured by Prabhaya Industries will be

given free of cost to three government hospitals TB Sapru (Beli), Dufferin and Colvin Hospitals. The Deputy CM later held a meeting with the party functionaries at the Circuit House. After this, he also held a meeting with the departmental officers there. After a night's rest at Circuit House, he will leave for Lucknow at 10:30 am on

# Congmen blame state govt for patronising liquor mafia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Annoyed with the deaths in dozens due to consuming spurious liquor in Aligarh few days back, the Congressmen on Wednesday staged a sit-in at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Town Hall, here and blamed the government for patronising the liquor mafia. They demanded the compensation to the next of kin of those who lost their life after consuming spurious liquor.



Congress workers staging dharna at Townhall in Varanasi on Wednesday

spurious liquor during the rule of present government. The government has failed on all fronts, he added. The district president of the party Rajeshwar Patel and city chief Raghendra Chaubey jointly demanded the government to give compensation to the next of kin of those who lost their life after consuming spurious liquor. Instead of taking stern action against the liquor mafias, the government is happy with the revenue earned from the Excise department; they said and demanded, the government should take stern action against liquor mafias. The government should take a concrete initiative to check the manufacturing and selling of illegal liquor effectively, they added. The state secretary of the party Imran Khan, Sitaram Keshari, Durga Prasad Gupta, Fasahat Hussain Babu and Shailendra Singh were among those present on the occasion.

ment and liquor mafias. There is a syndicate of manufacturing and selling the spurious liquor illegally and it has patronage of the government, he blamed adding, the government has otherwise taken a stern action against liquor mafias. The government is only showing the action against

those behind the deaths in Aligarh and if the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is serious about the deaths, he should have summoned the Excise Minister and sought reply from him in this direction, Rai said and blamed, the people in large numbers have lost their life by consuming

# STF arrests trader for supplying chemicals that adulterate petrol

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Trader Rajkumar Jaiswal who was earlier rumoured to have been kidnapped from Naini's PAC Colony on Tuesday night was actually arrested by the STF in the wee hours on Wednesday. The STF revealed that Rajkumar is the kingpin of a gang supplying chemicals that adulterate petrol and diesel. A tanker filled with chemicals has been recovered from a petrol pump located in Fatanpur, Pratapgarh. Four people, including the petrol pump owner, have been arrested along with Rajkumar. The District Supply Department has sealed the petrol pump. It may be pointed out here that when businessman Rajkumar Jaiswal went missing near Naini KPSC Colony, a rumour of his kidnapping was spread. Later it was revealed that Rajkumar has been arrested by the STF. According to Deputy SP STF Navendu Singh,

Rajkumar used to supply hydrocarbon mixer chemical from Rae Bareilly to petrol pumps. This chemical was mixed with petrol and diesel and sold from petrol pumps. On Tuesday night, a tanker of chemical was recovered after raiding the Vinayavasi Automobile Petrol Pump in Fatanpur. Police claimed that Rajkumar Jaiswal of COD Road Sanjay Nagar, Petrol Pump owner Vipin Mishra, Manager Ankit Sharma and Barmdeen Kushwaha of Mungeri Industrial Area were arrested from the spot. There was also a team of District Supply Department with STF. The team has seized the petrol pump. 16 STUDENTS FROM UGI GET JOB OFFERS: Sixteen students from United Group of Institutions (UGI) received job offers at lucrative package from Irish multinational firm Accenture.

At the time of COVID-19 pandemic when millions have lost their jobs, students of UGI, Prayagraj are finding their ways. They are not only bagging good job offers from reputed IT companies including IBM, Infosys, and TCL besides others but also setting an example for others too. In an off campus placement drive underway at UGI, as many as 16 students of the institution have been selected by Irish-domiciled multinational company Accenture at a package of ₹ 4.5 to 6.5 lakh per annum. Expressing happiness over the selection of students, Head, Corporate Relation, UGI, Prayagraj Dr Divya Bartaria said that this was really a matter of pride as well as satisfaction that the UGI students were bagging good job offers and that too on lucrative packages by the international firms at a time when millions have lost their jobs due COVID-19 pandemic.

This has become possible only by the quality of education which the institution was providing to its students according to the need and requirements of firms of national and international repute, she added. Of the total 16 students, 10 students were selected from United College of Engineering and Research (UCER), four from United Institute of Technology (UIT) and two from United College of Engineering and Management (UCEM). All the 10 students of UGER were selected on the post of Associate Software Engineer. These 16 students include Risha Mishra, Pragya Singh, Shivani Singh, Vaishnavi Srivastava, Yamini Krishna, Priya Kesarwani, Naureen Haider Jafri, Sriyanka Singh, Shivank Gupta, Shambhavi Rai all from UCER, Ekta, Muskan Singh, Shalini Srivastava and Saurabh Tiwari from UIT, while Suryakant and Neha Somani from UCEM.

# BLW exports third loco to Mozambique

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Despite effectively dealing with the second wave of COVID-19, Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) exported the third 3000 HP (horsepower) Cape Gauge locomotive to Mozambique here on Wednesday. Under the leadership of General Manager (GM) Anjali Goyal, the BLW employees have shown a great team spirit registering exemplary success in production despite dealing with the high rate of Covid positive cases detected in its premises as more than 20 per cent of the officers and employees being affected by corona during the second wave. The affected employees were looked after properly by the dedicated medical team helping the BLW to continue the production work ensuring strict adherence to the Covid protocol. The employees, who had



A loco being sent to Mozambique from BLW in Varanasi on Wednesday

been sent there soon. BLW is determined to fulfill its target in these adverse circumstances as well as to fulfill the export orders on time. This will not only increase the prestige of BLW but also of the entire nation by giving a boost to 'Make in India' campaign. The BLW had received an export order of six state-of-the-art locomotives of 3000 HP Cape Gauge from the Government of Mozambique and on March 10 last, Union Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal and Minister of Transport and Communications, Mozambique, Janfar Abdulai had flagged off two locomotives for export to Mozambique through video conferencing. The remaining two (fifth and sixth) locos will also be made soon and the export order will be completed in time, claimed the BLW officials.

taken both the doses of vaccine and after the recovery of corona, have resumed work again with determination so that the BLW can be able to fulfill its export orders on time. During the most affected pandemic period of April-May last, as many as 34 electric locomotives were produced in the BLW as com-

pared to last year's production of eight apart from making the third diesel locomotive for Mozambique which was sent from this leading production unit of the Indian Railways during the day. The fourth locomotive for Mozambique export is also almost completely ready as its testing procedures are going on and it will

# NCR GM reviews safety related issues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

NCR GM VK Tripathi convened a review meeting through videoconferencing to discuss safety issues and progress of planning works related to upcoming projects. At the outset, GM congratulated the officers for attaining 100 per cent punctuality of mail express trains in NCR on June 7, 2021. While reviewing safety related issues, GM said that staff should regularly be counselled and updated to ensure safety in train operations. He said that it is the duty of the officers to ensure that instructions received from Railway Board and Headquarters should reach and get understood by the field staff properly. Among other issues discussed were timely submission of inquiry reports in RCT, providing prompt replies to references received from MPs and MLAs, strengthening of infrastructure of Railway Hospitals and vaccination. G A N G A - G O M T I EXPRESS TO RUN FROM JUNE 15: There is good news for those traveling from Prayagraj to Lucknow. The popular train Ganga-Gomti Express running to Lucknow, the capital of the state, will leave from Prayagraj Sangam from June 15. Prior to this, this train will depart from Lucknow on June 14 and reach Prayagraj Sangam. The train will operate as before. During the Corona period, trains were run by the railway administration for a fixed time. After this, it is being restored when the need is felt. When the second wave of Corona came, many trains were suspended. Now those

gets should be adhered to. Tripathi also insisted that alteration work at BPCL siding Kanpur to facilitate loading facility of POL needs to be closely monitored and completed as soon as possible. GM congratulated Prayagraj Division upon completion of electrification work of Unchdih to Meja thermal plant. He, however, asked that Prayagraj Division should now focus on the work of connectivity of power plant with Meja station also. Among other issues discussed were timely submission of inquiry reports in RCT, providing prompt replies to references received from MPs and MLAs, strengthening of infrastructure of Railway Hospitals and vaccination. G A N G A - G O M T I EXPRESS TO RUN FROM JUNE 15: There is good news for those traveling from Prayagraj to Lucknow. The popular train Ganga-Gomti Express running to Lucknow, the capital of the state, will leave from Prayagraj Sangam from June 15. Prior to this, this train will depart from Lucknow on June 14 and reach Prayagraj Sangam. The train will operate as before. During the Corona period, trains were run by the railway administration for a fixed time. After this, it is being restored when the need is felt. When the second wave of Corona came, many trains were suspended. Now those

going to Lucknow and Bareilly will get convenience. 04216 Lucknow-Prayagraj Sangam Ganga-Gomti Express will start operating from Lucknow from June 14 and 04215 Prayagraj Sangam-Lucknow from June 15. 04307 Prayagraj Sangam-Bareilly Special will be operated from June 15 and 04308 Bareilly-Prayagraj Sangam Special will operate from June 14. However, the date of operation of 04209/04210 Prayagraj Sangam-Lucknow Intercity Express, 04231 Manwar Sangam Express running between Prayagraj Sangam-Basti, Saryu Express going to Ayodhya has not yet been announced by the Railways. FILM 'FIZA MAIN TAPISH' TO BE RELEASED SOON: The first poster of Hindi feature film 'Fiza main Tapish', which is a vital illustration of the battles between religious fundamentalists and liberal society, is released. Movie is also ready to release and soon will be available on the digital platform. Rahat Khan, Director of film has briefed us about the story which is based on the contemporary issues which are prevalent in society these days. The story is about the honey trap created by terrorists to influence the youth of the society and encash their anger against the system. Interesting fact of this film is that 90% of the filming was completed in the Sangam city

Prayagraj. The leading cast of film includes new talent Salman Sheikh who is recently working in famous family sope 'Sasural Simar Ka' fame airing on Colour TV which has paired with a budding talent Richa Karla along with them the caste also includes senior and well known artist who has established himself by playing many dynamic roles in famous Bollywood movies Mithilesh Chaturvedi, his well known work includes Scam1992: The Harshad Mehta story web series fame in which he played the role of Ram Jethmalani. He also worked in famous Hindi movies Satya, Taal, Gadar: Ek p katha, Koi — mil Gaya, Bunty aur Babli etc. Another star who had been part of many famous Bollywood films Seema Azmi, she worked in many Hindi movies like Chak de! India, Mohala Assi, Water and TV serials like Yeh Jadu Hai Jinn Ka. Other budding artists who joined the fantastic cast includes Atul Bhardwaj, Alok Nair etc who had worked and acted in the- atres. Music was composed by Raja Ali and melodious songs of the film were sung by famous singers like Javed Ali, Aman Trikha, Altamas Faridi and Munawwar Ali. The screenplay of this movie has been taken care of by Ashar Nazmi and heartwarming lyrics written by Aslam Sani. Film is Co-directed by Ram Tripathi.

# 13 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Varanasi district continued recording decline in the positive cases of COVID-19 and a total of 13 people tested positive for novel coronavirus infection during the past 24 hours taking the tally of confirmed cases to 82,034, as per the figures released by the Health department on Wednesday evening. With one more COVID-19 death during the last 24 hours, the death toll stood at 763. As many as 56 COVID-19 patients recovered during the past 24 hours, 50 in home isolation and 6 in hospitals. With this, 80,868 COVID-19 patients have been cured in the district- 74,644 in home isolation and 6,224 in Covid hospitals. In the first report of the day, 5 positive cases were found out of 2,260 test reports received and this figure increased to 13 out of 4,999 as per report provided by the Health department this evening. The total active cases

decreased to 403 from 447 which was a day ago. On Tuesday evening, as many as 24 positive cases were recorded and the total number of cases was 82,021 and with two more deaths, the death toll increased to 762. Earlier, there was no new hotspot and the active hotspots were 331, while 1 green zone has been converted into red zone by a day ago. Out of a total 3,334 hotspots, 3,003 are green zones and 331 are red zones. On Tuesday, a total of 12,446 beneficiaries were vaccinated at 141 vaccination centres including 5,992 beneficiaries of above 45 age and 6,469 beneficiaries aged between 18 and 44 years. Meanwhile, a delegation of the Samajwadi Party (SP) met the ADM, City Gulab Chand and demanded the permission by the district administration to the boatmen to run their boats during the relaxation period from the COVID-19 restriction between 7 am and 7 pm. The boatmen are facing a starvation-like situa-

tion because of corona curfew and thus they should be given permission to run their boats in the river during the relaxation period from corona curfew, the delegation said adding, the boating is only source of their livelihood. The delegation mainly comprised with ex-MLA Abdul Samad Ansari, Vishnu Sharma and Sandeep Sharma. INAUGURATED: Apprising about the benefits from vaccines of COVID-19, the state general secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Sunil Bansal on Wednesday made an appeal to the people not to pay attention to those who are creating confusion on it and take its requisite doses. He was speaking while inaugurating a special vaccination booth made at the primary health centre in Manduadhih for the vaccination of street vendors, rickshaw pullers, etc under the BJP's Seva Hi Sangthan Abhiyan. It may be mentioned that the state unit of the BJP has

adopted 1000 CHCs and PHCs of state under Seva Hi Sangthan Abhiyan to equip them with latest medical facilities. VIDHI GETS INDIA'S FIRST D LITT (KATHAK): Dr Vidhi Nagar, associate professor (Kathak) and former head, Department of Dance, Faculty of Performing Arts, Banaras Hindu University has received first D Litt (Kathak) in India from Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh, (Chhattisgarh). Dr Nagar is an internationally acclaimed artist, teacher, academician and choreographer. Her students are spreading the heritage of Indian classical dance Kathak worldwide. She has also received an award in 2013 from Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Academy along with many other accolades. Dr Nagar's innovative production 'Kathakpatali' is a very famous dance drama in the field of art and culture.



# Shekhar inspects progress of Dedicated Freight Corridor

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar, while inspecting the progress of the Dedicated Freight Corridor on Wednesday expressed satisfaction over the progress and the quality of work being carried out.

He said once this freight corridor was ready, over 70 per cent of goods trains would be shifted to this track. He said this would facilitate movement of passenger trains and lead to improved speed as well. He said the corridor was being constructed on a stretch of 236 km.

The divisional commissioner said the track laying work between Sujatpur and Rooma was completed in this 45 km stretch of the corridor. He said to carry out the work qualitatively and speedily the government had imported machines costing Rs 150 crore to lay the tracks. He said the machine would lay 1.5 km of track per day.

Dr Shekhar said the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor would cover Ludhiana, Punjab and Dankuni (West Bengal). He said it would cross states like Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

RK Jain, Rajesh Agarwal, Amit Kanaujia, Mahinder Gera and several others accompanied the divisional commissioner.

Later, the divisional commissioner while interacting with village heads at Kailash Bhawan, CSA University of Agriculture and Technology, said in view of the apprehended third wave of COVID-19, the focus was on rural areas and thus every person had to



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Dr Raj Shekhar, inspecting the progress of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor on Wednesday.

Pioneer

be vaccinated on priority. He said for this the gram pradhans would have to get themselves vaccinated first and then motivate the villagers to get themselves vaccinated.

He said every effort would be made for the cleanliness of the villages and the 'Mera Gaon Swachh Gaon' campaign would be launched and it would continue till June 19. He said under this campaign, plastic waste would be collected and pits would be dug up to make fertilisers from garbage.

He said the village vigilante committee (gram nigrahi samiti) would visit all the houses to prepare a list of sick people with symptoms like cough,

cold and sore throat. He said once this was done they would be provided medical kits.

He said a massive campaign had to be carried out to vaccinate all people above 18 years of age and the village heads would have to make major efforts in this direction. He said it was the duty of the gram pradhans and nigrahi samiti members to allay all apprehensions of the villagers regarding Covid vaccine and explain to them its benefits.

He said cleanliness drastically reduced the chances of spread of diseases and this had to be informed to the villagers so that they kept their

villages clean to reduce chances of spread of any disease. He said the nigrahi samiti members would also have to explain to the villagers that Covid protocol needed to be followed in the right earnest. He said the onus rested on the shoulders of the gram pradhan to motivate people and take them to the vaccination centres.

He said the time was less and the UP government was focusing especially on rural areas and was making every effort to remain prepared for the third wave with special care for children.

Others present included Kamal Kishore, KK Pandey and several others.

# 17 killed, 18 injured in road accident

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

As many as 17 persons were killed and 18 seriously injured when a private bus overturned into a pit after colliding head-on with a tempo near Gadankhedha village on Kanpur-Etawah highway under Sachendi police station on Tuesday night.

The condition of four of the injured was stated to be critical. The deceased were reported to be residents of Lalhepur and Ishwariganj. After the mishap, the driver and conductor of the bus escaped.

As per reports, after collecting 120 passengers from Fazalganj, the 42-seater bus of Kalpana Travels headed for Ahmedabad at 7:28 pm. At the Vijay Nagar petrol pump, the bus driver allegedly consumed liquor despite protests by the passengers. Most of the passengers travelling in the tempo were going to a biscuit factory at Kisan Nagar in Sachendi for the night shift.

The local police with the help of villagers rescued the passengers trapped in the bus and tempo and sent them to Lala Lajpat Rai Hospital where doctors pronounced 17 of them dead. The deceased included tempo driver Golu Parihar (22), Gyanendra Singh Parihar (50), Dharmraj Singh (22), Gaurav (18), Ram Milan (22), Rajneesh (20), Shiv Bhajan (19), Karan Singh (35), Ankush Paswan (19), Lavlesh (20), Shiv Charan (20), Udai Narain (55), Subhash (20), Dhani Ram (55), Balvir Yadav (50), Surendra Yadav (45) and Annu Singh (18).

# 16-bed Covid paediatric ward being set up

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

As per the instructions of General Manager, Vinay Kumar Tripathi, the Lalit Narayan Mishra (LNM) Railway Hospital located at North Eastern Railway (NER) headquarters here is continuously providing better medical facilities to railway personnel and their families by specialist doctors. On GM's instructions for the preparation of paediatric Covid ward in Railway Hospital a joint inspection was conducted by Medical Director Dr Kumar Umesh and Principal Chief Engineer Satish Kumar Pandey. The work of paediatric Covid ward is being executed under the supervision of Nodal Officer Dr M Nath Kovid and Covid Paediatric Officer Dr Umesh Maurya. In the Covid ward of LNM Railway Hospital in the second wave of coronavirus till date 288 patients have been treated.

Keeping the possibility of third wave of Coronavirus in mind, a 16-bed Covid paediatric ward is being set up which will have five ICU wards and arrangement for air conditioning is being to protect the children from heat, CPRO PK Singh said. Along with it training is being given to doctors and paramedical staff for treatment and care of children. Special attention is being paid to cleanliness in Covid ward and cleaning of wards and toilets is being done in every shift. Pure and clean breakfast and food is being given from the hospital to the patients admitted in the Covid ward and a provision of pure drinking water through the RO has been made. A help desk has been set up in the Railway Hospital for the convenience of relatives of Covid patients. Nursing staff posted in the ward assist in the food and daily activities of elderly and weak patients. Patients who

have symptoms of Covid and low oxygen, but their RTPCR test is negative, are being admitted in a separate Covid suspected ward. The patients are discharged from the Covid ward on becoming negative are kept in the post-Covid ward till they recover completely and for them consultancy is also being given in the OPD. Senior Nursing Superintendent Surendra and his team after coordinating with the Chief Medical Officer's office is doing the vaccination work in a better way. Dr Ayyaz, Dr Aakriti, Nursing Sister, Manoj and Shweta, Nursing staff Santosh, Alisha and health workers Sunita, Mohammed Shami, Madhuri and Udal are making a significant contribution in the proper treatment of Covid-19 infected patients. Besides, a video showing the real picture of 'Service to humanity is true service' has been made so that people are able to learn a lesson from it.

# Gkp-Lko Jn special from June 11

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

For the convenience of passengers the restoration of the following special trains will be done by the railway administration. All coaches in them will be of reserved class and passengers travelling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 prevention guidelines. Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said.

**BARAUNI-LKO JN SPL:** The 05203 Barauni-Lucknow Jn special train will be restored from June 10 till further notice.

**LKO JN-JABALPUR SPL:** The 05205 Lucknow Jn-Jabalpur special train will be restored from June 11 till further notice.

**JABALPUR-LKO JN SPL:** The 05206 Jabalpur-Lucknow Jn special train will be restored from June 12 till further notice.

**LKO JN-BARAUNI SPL:** The 05204 Lucknow Jn-Barauni special train will be restored from June 13 till further notice.

**MUZAFFARPUR-AHMEDABAD WEEKLY:** The restoration of 05269 Muzaffarpur-Ahmedabad weekly special train will be done every Thursday from June 10 to 24. Likewise, the restoration of 05270 Ahmedabad-Muzaffarpur weekly special train will be done every Saturday from June 12 to 26.

**DEHRADUN-KATHGODAM SPL:** The 02091 Dehradun-Kathgodam special train will be restored

from June 11 till further notice.

**KATHGODAM-DEHRADUN SPL:** The 02092 Kathgodam-Dehradun special train will be restored from June 11 till further notice.

**AISHBAGH-GORAKHPUR SPL:** The 05070 Aishbagh-Gorakhpur special train will be restored from June 13 till further notice. Likewise, the 05069 Gorakhpur-Aishbagh special train will be restored from June 14 till further notice.

**MANDUAADIH-GORAKHPUR SPECIAL:** 05104 Manduadih-Gorakhpur special train will be restored from June 15 till further notice. Likewise, the 05103 Gorakhpur-Manduadih special train will be restored from June 15 till further notice.

**CHHAPRA-VARANASI CITY SPL:** The 05111 Chhapra-Varanasi City special train will be restored from June 10 till further notice. The 05112 Varanasi City-Chhapra special train will be restored from June 10 till further notice.

**GORAKHPUR-LKO JN SPL:** The 02531 Gorakhpur-Lucknow Jn special train will be restored from June 11 till further notice. The 02532 Lucknow Jn-Gorakhpur special train will be restored from June 11 till further notice.

**GORAKHPUR-MAILANI SPL:** The 05009 Gorakhpur-Mailani special train will be restored from June 10 till further notice. Likewise, the 05010 Mailani-Gorakhpur special train will be

restored from June 11 till further notice.

**KASGANJ-KANPUR ANWARGANJ SPL:** The 05040 Kasganj-Kanpur Anwarganj special train will be restored from June 16 till further notice. The 05039 Kanpur Anwarganj-Kasganj special train will be restored from June 16 till further notice. Besides, 05038 Kasganj-Kanpur Anwarganj special train will be restored from June 16 till further notice. The 05037 Kanpur Anwarganj-Kasganj special train will be restored from June 17 till further notice.

**KATHGODAM-LKO JN SPL:** The 05044 Kathgodam-Lucknow Jn special will be restored from June 15 till further notice. Besides, the 05043 Lucknow Jn-Kathgodam special will be restored from June 14 till further notice.

**DELHI-KATHGODAM SPL:** The 05035 Delhi-Kathgodam special will be restored from June 11 till further notice.

**RAMNAGAR-MORADABAD SPL:** The 05356 Ramnagar-Moradabad special will be restored from June 11 till further notice. The 05355 Moradabad-Ramnagar special will be restored from June 11 till further notice.

**TANAKPUR-DELHI SPECIAL:** The 05325 Tanakpur-Delhi special train will be restored from June 12, till further notice. The 05326 Delhi-Tanakpur special train will be restored from June 13 till further notice.

# Lalimli workers' protest against non-payment of salary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Dozens of Lalimli workers staged a demonstration at the residence of Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Surendra Maithani in Pandu Nagar on Wednesday in protest against the non-payment of their salary for the past 36 months.

Speaking on the occasion, senior office-bearer of Lalimli Mill Employees Union, Ajay Singh, said around 400 workers of the mill had not been paid their salary for the last three years while over 40 mill workers had died in the last couple of years.

It may be recalled that the Lalimli unit in Kanpur is owned by the British India Corporation Limited (BIC), a public sector undertaking of the Union Textiles Ministry.

Singh said due to non-payment of their salary, the mill workers were facing great financial hardship particularly



Lalimli workers staged a protest at the residence of BJP MLA Surendra Maithani on Wednesday.

Pioneer

during the ongoing pandemic time. He said no budget allocation had been made for the salary of the Lalimli mill workers by the Centre.

He said they had been

approaching the local people's representatives but none had paid them to their woes.

Singh handed over a memorandum to Maithani and threatened to intensify the stir if the salary of mill work-

ers was not paid soon.

The demonstration was called off after Maithani assured to forward the demand of mill workers to the authorities concerned.

# Lawyers boycott work

KANPUR (PNS): Lawyers abstained from judicial work on Wednesday in protest against the alleged anti-lawyers proceedings initiated by the judiciary. The decision to boycott work on Wednesday and Thursday was taken in a meeting of Kanpur Bar Association and Lawyers Association held on Tuesday.

The lawyers said the judiciary appeared to have initiated proceedings against them with biased intention which was apparent from the recent issues of their colleagues Narain Singh Bhadauria and Gopal Sharan Singh Chauhan. Both the accused were produced in a court on Monday and after hearing, they were denied bail.

They were bailed out only on Tuesday and that too after vigorous efforts and pressure from the lawyers fraternity. This made the lawyers fraternity feel ignored by the judiciary and they decided to abstain from judicial work on Wednesday and Thursday.

It may be recalled that advocates Gopal Sharan Singh Chauhan and Narain Singh Bhadauria were arrested for forcibly rescuing a history-sheeter, Manoj, from police custody and for manhandling the cops on June 2 afternoon when Manoj had gone to attend the birthday party of a BJP leader in a guest house in Naubasta. When the cops in plain clothes took Manoj in their custody and huddled him in the jeep, some people, including the accused advocates, allegedly manhandled the policemen and helped Manoj escape from police custody. The accused lawyers were arrested on the basis of videos that had gone viral on social media and sent to jail on June 7. During hearing of the case on Tuesday, District Judge RP Singh, in his order, stated that without making any comment on merits of the case, conditional bail was being granted to Gopal Sharan Singh Chauhan and Narain Singh Bhadauria after they furnished two bail bonds of Rs 25,000 each and a personal bond of the same amount. The additional district government counsel had urged the court to reject their bail applications as the case was still in the investigation stage and the accused had helped the history-sheeter to escape from the police custody. Earlier, the lower court of ACMM-III had already rejected the bail application of both the accused lawyers.

# Rihand ED inaugurates oxygen supply system

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

In view of Covid-19 pandemic, the installation of Medical Oxygen Supply System (MOSS) with a capacity of 45 litres per minute was done by NTPC Rihand at Rihand Nagar-situated Dhanwantri Hospital. The oxygen supply system was inaugurated by Executive Director (Rihand) Balaji Iyengar. He said the NTPC Rihand management decided to

# DM reviews works

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

District Magistrate PK Laxkar has directed the officials concerned to carry out works with quality as per the deadline or else remain prepared to face the music. Such warning was given by him to the working agencies during review of works of above ₹50 lakh as well as schemes of the government under priority points at Collectorate on Tuesday. He asked working agencies to demand fund from the headquarters concerned through him for works which had stopped due to paucity of fund. He was apprised by working agencies that out of 97 works more than 50 were on the verge of completion and for the rest progress was on. He reviewed the ongoing work at Police Lines. Reviewing the schemes, including PM Crop Insurance Scheme, PM Jan Arogya Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana etc the DM said that it should run with transparency. He told the officials concerned that target of plantation for district had been fixed as 68,12,260 which was to be done with the participation of the different departments in coordination with Forest department. The meeting was attended by CDO Srilaxmi VS, PD DRDA Rishi Muni Upadhyay and others.

**CASH MISSING:** One person made away with ₹50 lakh from a bank premises under Katra Kotwali on Tuesday. On getting information about the matter police reached the spot and in the CCTV camera footage a person was spotted making away with the bag. Besides, the ASP Sanjay Kumar Verma visited the spot and teams had been formed to work out the case after registration of an FIR at Katra Kotwali.

# Three girders launched successfully

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

During the Coronavirus period in North Eastern Railway (NER) works related to passenger facility and development works are being completed on a priority basis following the Covid protocol. The top priority of Varanasi Division is safe, secure and uninterrupted movement of trains. Owing to rapid doubling-cum-electrification over the past years in the division by constructing foot over bridges even at small stations so that passengers can change platform safely the plan to make movement of trains fast and accident-free is being implemented expeditiously. In Manduadih-Prayagraj Rambagh railway section of Varanasi Division between Rajatalab and Nigatpur railway stations at Baherwan Halt falling on km No. 228/0-228/500 under the foot over bridge construction by Rail

Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) the work of successful launching of three girders of 27.445x 0.450 x 0.80 metres was completed recently, PRO Ashok Kumar said. By taking only two hours of traffic and traction block this challenging task of launching of three girders was successfully done within the limited period of time by following Corona protocol. High-capacity road crane was used for girder launching and a crane was kept as a standby during the work. Out of the three girders launched, two girders have a length of 27.44 metre and a weight of 25 tonnes. Under the supervision of RVNL's Chief Project Manager, Vikas Chandra, Project Director (Joint General Manager)

Satyam Kumar Singh and Additional General Manager (Civil Expert) Safety and Planning SN Sahu the work of girder launching was completed by taking electric traction and traffic block from 12.45 hrs to 14.45 hrs within the limited period of time.

# IMA-K doctors mourns COVID-19 deaths

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The doctors of Indian Medical Association's Kanpur Chapter observed a two-minute silence to mourn the deaths of doctors and a large number of people during the COVID-19 pandemic not only in Kanpur but across the country. The IMA-K also appealed to the government to ensure proper care and upbringing of the orphaned children so that they did not feel isolated and sidelined from the mainstream of society.

Addressing the gathering, Dr VC Rastogi said the endeavour of the government should be to ensure these children were not left as dropouts from school and they pursued their education and completed it and became independent.

He said the IMA-K was proud that doctors had remained frontline warriors and despite knowing the impact of the pandemic they continued to serve people selflessly, risking their lives and this was certainly a great example in the present times.

Prominent doctors who took part in the condolence meeting Dr Neelam Mishra, Dr Dinesh Sachan, Dr Alka



The members of IMA-K condole the death of doctors who died during pandemic by observing two minute silence on Wednesday.

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Sharma, Dr AC Agarwal, Dr AS Prasad, Dr Gaurav Dubey, Dr Savita Rastogi, Dr AK Singh and Dr Poornima Dixit.

**56.39 LAKH SAPLINGS TO BE PLANTED IN MONSOON:** Divisional director and member-secretary of District Tree Plantation Committee, AK Yadav, while addressing a meeting at the collectorate on Wednesday, directed the officials concerned to prepare plans as per their targets for massive tree plantation. He said this year the target

was to plant 56.39 lakh saplings. He said it had been decided that the Forest department would plant 18.66 lakh saplings, Gram Vikas would plant 12.33 lakh saplings, Panchayat Raj would plant 1.40 lakh and Revenue department would plant 1.40 lakh saplings and other departments would plant 24 lakh saplings.

He said the Forest department had 27 nurseries which would provide the saplings and each department had to appoint a nodal officer and his

or her name and mobile phone number should be provided at the earliest. He said land where the plantation drives had to be carried out in monsoon had to be identified and a list of it should be forwarded to the Forest department. He said the department would plant 10 saplings each through farmers. He said people need to be roped in for this campaign and preparations should be carried out fast. He said the ID and Geo Tag should also be planned accordingly.

# 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 ₹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 Haldar, 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 Covishield, 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 22, 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 complete 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-

ropriation 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 Raghubir 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 Nadda 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 Nadda 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

# 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.



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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 at 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.

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

### 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 Malviya 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 toehold 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

## SOUND BITE

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 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. 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 BONANZA. 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 countries where they generate most of their revenues by selling their products while booking profits 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.

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 ground water table. In addition to this the indigenous communities also



KOTA SRIRAJ

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 Chatterpur 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 from 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.

"Whoever wins the race to the technologies of the future is going to be the global economic leader with profound consequences for foreign policy and national security as well."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said the bill was incomplete because it did not incorporate more Republican-sponsored amendments. He nonetheless supported it.

"Needless to say, final passage of this legislation cannot be the Senate's final word on our competition with China," he said.

## 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 organisations.

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. AP

## 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 Cholendra 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

deadline provided by the court to the defendants to submit their clarification. A report in myRepublica.Com said that the apex court has decided to seek the help of two senior advocates each from Nepal Bar Association and Supreme Court Bar Association as amicus curiae to decide the case related to the dissolution of the 275-member House of Representatives.

The chief justice formed a five-member Constitutional Bench on Sunday on the basis of seniority to conduct a hearing on dissolution of the House.

As many as 30 writ petitions, including by the Opposition alliance, have been filed in the Supreme Court against the dissolution of the House, which they said was "unconstitutional".

The hearing on the writs related to House dissolution has been obstructed multiple times following the petitioners' and government lawyers' cycle of objections over the composition of justices in the Constitutional Bench claiming conflict of interest. PTI

## 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

AP ■ TOKYO

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

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.

## GLOBE TROTTER

**10 HALO TRUST STAFF KILLED NORTHERN AF**  
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 Defense 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.

## FROM PAGE 1

## BRAHMINS BACK IN FOCUS AS UP READIES FOR POLLS

Appointment of Sanjay Srinet, another Thakur, as Chairman of Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission, intensified the "save Brahmin" campaign in the political sphere.

The centre of this Brahmin politics is Bikuru village, the infamous village of gangster Vikas Dubey, who killed eight police men and later died in a mysterious encounter when he was being brought from Ujjain to Kanpur. Leaders from different political hues are now demanding release of women from Dubey's family who are in police custody.

"Police should release four innocent women and a two- and- a -half year old child who are perishing in the jail in the Bikuru incident," senior AAP leader Sanjay Singh said. He alleged slain gangster Amar Dubey's wife, Khushi Dubey, her mother Kshama Dubey, Heeru Dubey's mother Shanti Dubey and maid Rekha Agnihothri and her toddler son were in jail in Bikuru incident.

"It is a politics of vengeance and it should be stopped. The Yogi Adityanath Government is at the peak of its highhandedness. The Government is working on three agendas --- hatred, ill feeling and vengeance," he said.

The words he used were precise. The words like ill-feeling and vengeance is what Brahmins are talking about. A section of Brahmin leaders, even in the BJP, say that Vikas Dubey was a criminal and was killed but what is the crime of these women. "One of the women Khushi Dubey was married to Amar just three days before Amar was gunned down," Umesh Dwivedi, a BJP MLC said.

## DELTA CAN REINFECTION EVEN AFTER FULL VACCINE DOSES

The doctors have stressed on boosting the vaccination rate which, they said, would help guard against the Delta variant gaining a greater hold. The Delta variant is already doing rounds in various parts of the country as well as the world.

The AIIMS-IGIB (Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, a lab of the CSIR) study was based on an analysis of 63 symptomatic patients who reported to the hospital's emergency ward complaining of high fever persisting for five to seven days.

Of these 63 people, 53 had been given at least one dose of Covaxin and the rest at least one dose of Covishield. Thirty-six had received both doses of one of these vaccines.

At least, 76.9 per cent of infections by the

Delta variant were recorded in people who had received a single dose, and 60 per cent in people who had received both doses.

Similarly, data from the NCDC-IGIB study indicated that breakthrough infections due to the Delta variant seemed to affect people who took Covishield while Delta breakthrough infections was reported in 27 patients who had taken that vaccine, with the infection rate at 70.3 per cent.

Both studies also indicated that while the vaccine's protection against the 'Delta', and even 'alpha', variants may be reduced, severity of infection in each case appeared to be unaffected as a result.

The patients had reported symptoms of high-grade fever, shortness of breath and headache. "The viral load at the time of diagnosis was high in all the patients irrespective of vaccination status or type of vaccine received," said the study but pointed out that no death was reported.

Senior co-author Anurag Agrawal from IGBI told a news channel that "it was the first study in India to link a variant to a major outbreak.

If there was no Delta [variant] and only the Alpha variant came into India (from the UK), would we have had an outbreak like this? I don't think so," Dr Agrawal had said.

The report noted infections among those who had been fully vaccinated were "usually mild", and the variant itself did not lead to a higher rate of death.

Dr Rahul Bhargava, Principal Director, Hemato Oncology and BMT division at Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurgaon, and a leading cell transplant expert said more data is needed before we can reach this conclusion. "But still, if one goes by this small sample size study, it seems the Delta variant is evading all the possible vaccines at present. Only light in the gloomy report is that no death has been reported. Thus the mask still has its relevance in the era of vaccination. Another important aspect is that we need to ramp up the vaccination as one dose is not going to be sufficient."

## CONG REFUSES TO LEARN LESSON

Amid continued infighting in its Punjab, Rajasthan, Kerala, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh units, the grand old party received Prasad's jolt after facing the drubbing in the Assembly elections in April-May. Some of the other leaders said to be frustrated in the Congress are former party MP and Mumbai unit congress chief Milind Deora among others. Deora, Prasad, Scindia and Pilot were once considered as the young brigade of the Congress, led by Rahul Gandhi

Jitin had frequently indicated his unhappi-

ness to the party leadership. There were also "rumours" before the 2019 general elections of him joining the BJP. He was unhappy over the appointment of Ajay Singh Lallu as UP Congress chief. He then joined the ranks of Congress leaders who wrote to Sonia Gandhi last year demanding immediate changes in the party's functioning.

## ICMR LOSES 31 STAFF, SCIENTISTS TO COVID

Another scientist Dr Kiran Shrivastava, at ICMR-NJIL and OMD, Agra, in April this year lost the battle to the deadly virus.

At least seven personnel, including AR Mendes (Sr TO), VV Pethe (senior store officer), AS Lot (MTS) SN Singh (Sr LIO), Richard Disa (Sr Tech Assistant) and SS Shelke (Laboratory Assistant), all from ICMR-NIV, Pune, died due to Covid-19.

Among others who could not overcome the infection caused by the Covid were Raja Ram Pinjan (Technical Assistant) and F Rajoriyo (Office assistant) both at ICMR-NJIL and OMD, Agra while J Phani Kumar (Senior Technician-2) and K Raja Narsing Rao (Laboratory Assistant).

Similarly, Kuldip Kumar (Animal Attendant) Arati Sharma (Lower Division Clerk) from ICMR-NIMR, New Delhi, J D Kushwah (Personal Secretary) and Sant Ram (Office Assistant) both from ICMR-RMRC, Gorakhpur and Sunil Kumar (Sr Technician (2)) and Dr Vijay Kumar (consultant) both posted at ICMR Hq, in Delhi lost the life to the virus. ICMR is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world.

## 50-62% RISE IN MSP OK'D TO INCREASE FARMERS' INCOME

Addressing a Press briefing on Cabinet decisions, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said, "None should have any misconception about MSP. It's continuing and increasing and it will continue. The Cabinet has approved the MSP of 14 kharif crops for the 2021-22 crop year (July-June) and farmers would get 50-85 per cent returns over their cost of production."

Dispelling apprehensions about the MSP, the Minister said there were doubts about the MSP a few months back when the new farm laws were passed in Parliament. At that time, both the Prime Minister and myself had assured that the MSP policy is there and will continue in future as well.

According to the Agriculture Ministry, over 816.65 lakh metric ton of paddy procured on MSP for ongoing kharif marketing season 2020-21 and rabi marketing season and 120.89 lakh farmers benefitted from the

Government procurement.

Among kharif-grown oilseeds, the Government increased the support price maximum in the case of sesamum by ₹452 to ₹7,307 per quintal for the 2021-22 crop year, against ₹6,855 per quintal last year. The support price of groundnut also increased by ₹275 to ₹5,550 per quintal for the 2021-22 crop year, compared to ₹5,275 per quintal last year, while sunflower seed MSP has been increased by ₹130 to ₹6,015 per quintal from ₹5,885 per quintal.

Among the commercial crops, the MSP of cotton was increased by ₹211 per quintal to ₹5,726 for medium staple variety, and by Rs 200 per quintal to ₹6,025 for long-staple variety of cotton for the 2021-22 crop year (July-June).

## DOORS STILL OPEN FOR PARLEYS WITH CENTRE, SAYS GUPKAR ALLIANCE

"There's no change in our stand. Our challenge to changes of Aug 5, 2019, is in the Supreme Court. We are watching the delimitation process," he added.

Referring to the recent arrest of the youth, Dr Abdullah said police are committing excesses on the people. "We will not tolerate this. This must be stopped. Otherwise it would be difficult to control the people". When reporters confronted Dr Abdullah over his party's stance on the ongoing Delimitation exercise and why JKNC parliamentarians have not resigned he reacted angrily, "Why should I quit. I will never resign from Parliament. I will double the flames in the fire. I will fight for my people in Parliament". Standing next to him, former MLA and CPI(M) leader Mohd Yusuf Tarigami, who was appointed spokesman of the alliance, told reporters, "we will use every opportunity to fight for the rights of people". He also made a desperate attempt to send positive vibes to the common people by claiming, "Never ever misunderstand us. We must convey to the people of all three regions including people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh that we shall be on the side of our people who are suffering".

After the declaration of the District Development council polls it is for the first time leaders belonging to Jammu & Kashmir National Conference, PDP, Awami National Conference, CPI(M) and Jammu & Kashmir Peoples' Movement met each other to take stock of the political scenario in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

## ...NOW WE DON'T WANT HELP: ORPHANED SIBLINGS

The oxygen cylinder we had brought for

father was given to mother, who was in the ground floor while father was in first floor of our house," she said.

The condition of her mother deteriorated very fast and on April 22 she died. "We did not tell our father about mother's death but the next day — on April 23 — my father died too" Ruby said.

The family cremated mother and father together.

"The next day on April 24 my brother Aman went to immerse ashes of my parents in Ganga in Kanpur and on his way he met with an accident and died," she said. "On three days from April 22 to April 23 we lost family members one by one. Failing to bear this shock my grandmother died on April 28 of heart attack," she said.

Ironically, Ruby and Himanshu have relatives in Lucknow. "No one came to help us when we needed them the most. Now, we do not need them," she said.

Survival is a challenge for them. They are surviving on savings of her father. "We are not entitled for Government's covid relief because the first test of my father was negative," she said and added now they will have to pay monthly installment of ₹15,000 to repay a bank loan which her father had taken to construct the house.

"I have hopes that my brother will get government job on a compassionate grounds because my father was in a government service," Ruby said.

## KNOW THE MYSTERY GIRL LINKED WITH FUGITIVE CHOKSI'S KIDNAPPING

Limited (later changed name to Cullinan Designs Limited) and has an office at 4 Old Park Lane Mayfair London W1K 1QW. Her business partner Tojo Francisco Da-Silva is also a Director in Cullinan Designs. She had deleted her Twitter (@barbarajarabik) and Facebook accounts recently.

In the complaint Choksi's lawyers alleged that Jalandhar-born Bath is a former director of London-based CS Global Partners, who define themselves as "legal experts in residency and citizenship by investment solutions". The Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne follows him on Twitter. "Along with Jarabik, there is evidence that the following individuals were involved in Choksi's torture and kidnap: Gurdip Bath (St Kitts and Nevis national and United Kingdom resident); Gurjit Singh Bhandal (British national and United Kingdom resident); and Gurmit Singh (Indian national and United Kingdom resident)," said the complaint filed by Choksi's lawyers producing passport and travel details of the four.

## 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.

In late April, 49 governing Socialist lawmakers asked for the investigative committee. They accuse Meta, a former Socialist prime minister who left the party many years ago, of inciting instability and violence in the Balkan nation and siding with the political opposition ahead of the election. They say Meta should be impeached for failing in his constitutional duty to guarantee national unity.

The governing Socialist Party ended up winning a landslide of 74 of parliament's 140 seats in the April 25 election, winning their third four-year term. AP



# 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.

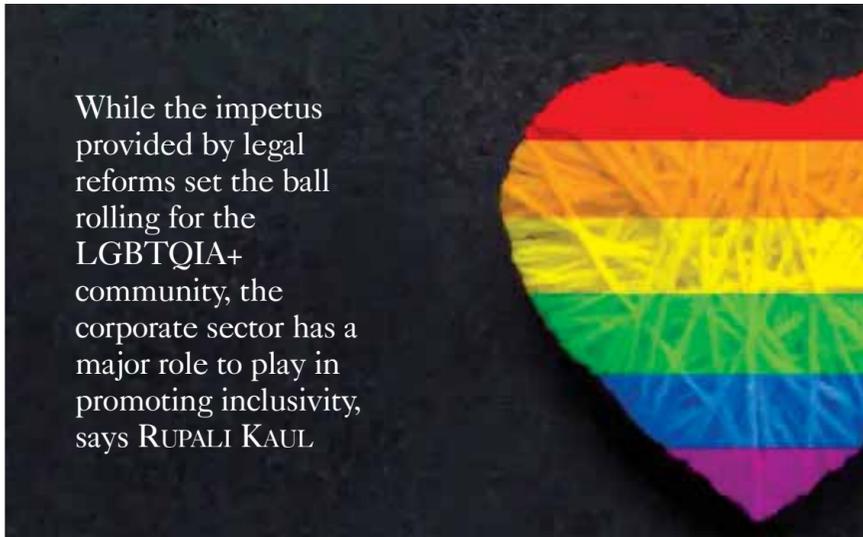
What is it that organisations need to do to help their workplaces in becoming inclusive in the truest possible sense?

## 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-

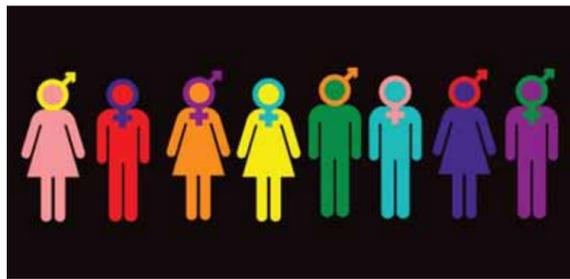


While the impetus provided by legal reforms set the ball rolling for the LGBTQIA+ community, the corporate sector has a major role to play in promoting inclusivity, says RUPALI KAUL

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 cor-

porate 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 workplace 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.

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 anti-fungal properties. It removes dandruff, provides a flake-free scalp while nourishing the scalp. It can provide relief from scalp irritation by eliminating itchiness.

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.)

## TREND BLAZER

### '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 Councillor, 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/setback 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 multi-level 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 multi-level 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, Anika Bhakhat 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.

Dilip 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, Anika 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



# Muthoot Finance initiates vax drive

Muthoot Finance and MNBFC, in association with Third Planet Foundation, has initiated a special programme to support the world's largest vaccination drive as a part of its Corporate Social Responsibility Programme.

This CSR initiative will be providing free pick-up and drop services to the nearest vaccination centre for the impoverished, vulnerable, underprivileged and differently-abled individuals across Delhi, Gurugram and Faridabad. Four vehicles, dedicated helpline numbers to schedule free pick-up and drop service along with an experienced field team have been deployed as part of this programme. The service is being specially focussed towards those sections of our society which have limited means and almost no access to smartphones, the internet et al.

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 underprivileged 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.

# 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**  
**HENGELÖ:** 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 Hima 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 Krejckikova 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 semifinals 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 Babora Krejckikova, and No 31 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova faces unseeded Tamara Zidansek.

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

Sakkari, who is from Greece, and Krejckikova, 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. Krejckikova 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: Krejckikova needed six match points to do it, raising her arms overhead when she finally won when Gauff sent a forehand wide.

Krejckikova 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," Krejckikova 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.

Krejckikova 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.

## 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

## 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.

Argentina remain unbeaten in second place while Colombia are just outside the automatic qualification spots in fifth.

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.