

**OPINION 8**  
THE LOST CAUSE OF  
INGENUOUS TRIBALS

**WORLD 11**  
JUNTA TROOPS BURN  
MYANMAR VILLAGE

**SPORT 14**  
FRANCE BEAT GERMANY  
IN EURO 2020 CLASH

LUCKNOW, THURSDAY JUNE 17 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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## Twitter defies IT rules, loses legal protection

Gzb police book Twitter, 7 others over viral video of attack on elderly

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday asserted that microblogging platform Twitter has lost its legal protection in India because it deliberately chose non-compliance despite multiple opportunities to it. Losing legal protection means Twitter's top executives, including the nation's managing director, face police questioning and criminal liability under the Indian Penal Code over "unlawful and inflammatory" content posted by users on Twitter.

Accusing Twitter of deliberately refusing to comply with Indian laws, in identical posts on Twitter as well as its Indian rival Koo, Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said Twitter was given "multiple opportunities to comply" but it deliberately chose non-compliance.

In a related development, the Ghaziabad police have booked Twitter Inc, its India unit and seven others in con-

### CHRONOLOGY OF TWITTER-GOVT TUSSE

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>FEBRUARY 3:</b> The Government issued notice to Twitter on farmers' genocide hashtag   | against the new IT guidelines   |
| <b>FEBRUARY 8:</b> The Government asked to remove 1,178 tweets related to farmers' protests   | <b>JUNE 1:</b> WhatsApp named Pares B Lal as its grievance officer for India  |
| <b>FEBRUARY 24:</b> The Government asked Twitter to take down some tweets critical to its Covid handling                                      | <b>JUNE 2:</b> Twitter subsequently sent an email where a lawyer, Dharmendra Chatur, was appointed an interim Nodal Contact Person and Resident Grievance Officer |
| <b>MAY 22:</b> Twitter flagged Sambit Patra tweet as manipulated media  | <b>JUNE 5:</b> The Government wrote to Twitter, giving last chance to comply the guidelines   |
| <b>MAY 24:</b> The Government asked to remove manipulated media tag from Patra  | <b>JUNE 6:</b> Twitter replied that they had appointed a Nodal Contact Person and Resident Grievance Officer on a contractual basis as an interim measure         |
| <b>MAY 26:</b> The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's deadline of three months given to social media giants and OTT expires | <b>JUNE 13:</b> Twitter said they have posted a job description to hire a CCO, NCP and RGO and that they will venture to fill these roles as quickly as possible  |
| <b>MAY 26:</b> WhatsApp moved Delhi High Court  |   |

nection with a viral video of an attack on an elderly person and issued notices to them. This is the first case that holds the social media giant responsible for third-party content.

Twitter has lost its intermediary immunity (legal protection) in India after it failed to appoint statutory officers on the company's role, in accordance with the new Information Technology (IT) rules.

This means Twitter's top executives, including the nation's managing director, face

police questioning and criminal liability under the Indian Penal Code over "unlawful and inflammatory" content posted by Twitter users on its platform.

In a series of tweets, Prasad said there are numerous queries arising as to whether Twitter is entitled to safe harbour provision. "However, the simple fact of the matter is that Twitter has failed to comply with the Intermediary Guidelines that came into effect from the 26th of May," he said.

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### Compliance Officer retained: Twitter

New Delhi: Amid stand-off with the Government, Twitter shared details of an interim compliance officer with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. Twitter has reiterated that it is making all possible efforts to comply with the new IT rules. A Twitter spokesperson stated on Wednesday that the interim Chief Compliance Officer had been retained by the company.

## Post-job deaths financially worse than that by corona

Victims of virus get compensation, but nothing for death due to shots

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

If a corona warrior passes away due to Covid-19 infection, his relatives might get compensation as high as ₹1 crore, but there is no compensation available to a common man in case of death linked to vaccination.

Clinical trial procedures do have compensation provisions which are paid by the companies, though the process is fraught with difficulties and may stretch years.

A senior Union Health Ministry official said there is no provision of doling out compensation for recipients of Covid-19 vaccine against any kind of adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) or medical complications that may arise due to inoculation. In this connection, he cited children immunisation programme where no compensation has been given so far.

The AEFI is defined as "any untoward medical occurrence which follows immunisation" and which does not necessarily have a causal relationship with the usage of the vaccine. As per the Government



report, since the launch of the nationwide vaccination from January 16 till June 7, one person has died due to severe allergic reaction of vaccination while 488 succumbed post inoculation which the Government said were due to co-incident reasons, including co-morbidities, and cannot be directly attributed to the vaccination. So far, 26 crore people have been vaccinated in the country with Covaxin or Covishield.

In fact, in a written reply in Parliament, Union Health Minister of State Ashwani Kumar Choubey on March 19 said, "There is no provision of compensation for recipients of Covid-19 vaccine against any kind of side effects or medical complications that may arise due to inoculation. The Covid-19 vaccination is entirely voluntary for the beneficiary."

However, measures have been put in place like availability of anaphylaxis kits at each vaccination site, immediate referral to AEFI management centre and observation of vaccine recipients for 30 minutes at session site for any adverse events so as to take timely corrective measure. Also, the AEFI management of such cases are provided free of cost treatment in Public Health Facilities, he had said.

"Though under clinical trials conducted in India, there are specific rules defining compensation for participants, this is not so in case for the vaccination. There is no method under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act to provide any type of compensation against any adverse event after receiving a vaccine approved for restricted emergency use."

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### CAPSULE

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS ON COVAXIN WRONG: CENTRE

New Delhi: Facts have been "twisted and misrepresented" in some social media posts which suggested that indigenously developed Covaxin contains newborn calf serum, the Union Health Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.



#### AIADMK SLAMS SASIKALA FOR 'AUDIO POLITICS'

Chennai: Senior AIADMK leader D Jayakumar on Wednesday slammed VK Sasikala, confidante of late party supremo J Jayalalithaa, for attempting to create confusion in the party using "audio politics" and for trying to "divide and rule."

#### 12-YEAR-OLD LION DIES OF COVID AT TN ZOO

Chennai: An Asiatic male lion being treated for Covid-19 succumbed on Wednesday, becoming the second carnivore to fall victim to the virus at the zoo near here in two weeks, the first being a lioness.

#### TRAI LAUNCHES CHANNEL SELECTOR WEB PORTAL

New Delhi: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Wednesday launched a TV Channel Selector web portal on Wednesday for consumers who could not access its mobile phone app of the same name due to lack of a smartphone.

### Chargesheet against Gitanjali former head in PNB fraud case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has filed a chargesheet against the former international head of the Gitanjali Group of Companies, Sunil Verma, and others in connection with an alleged fraud in the PNB involving an amount of over ₹7,080 crore, in which the promoter of the group, Mehul Choksi, is wanted by the agency, officials said on Wednesday.

Two officials of the Punjab National Bank (PNB) — Sagar Sawant and Sanjay Prasad — and a director of the Gili and the Nakshtra brands under the group, Dhanesh Seth, have also been named as accused in the supplementary chargesheet filed by the CBI, they said.

The supplementary chargesheet, filed more than three years after the first chargesheet, coincides with the legal proceedings against the fugitive diamantaire in a court of Dominica, where he was arrested for on May 24 after his mysterious disappearance from Antigua and Barbuda.

### BJP gains 6 prominent Sikh faces in Punjab

Shah takes up poll command

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

In a run up to the 2022 Assembly polls in Punjab, the BJP has stepped on the accelerator with Union Home Minister Amit Shah placing himself on the driver's seat before the poll process.

Worst-affected by the farmers' ongoing agitation against the Centre's three agrimarketing laws and the resultant political circumstances in the State, the saffron party on Thursday inducted six "promi-

nent Sikh personalities," besides directing its State leadership to put up its act together by taking the workers along.

Those who joined the party in Delhi include former president of All India Sikh Students' Federation (AISSF) Harinder Singh Kahlon, advocate Jagmohan Singh Saini who is also the president of Farmers' Intellectual Front (Patiala), advocate Nirmal Singh from Mohali, Kuldeep Singh Kahlon (former AISSF) from Gurdaspur, former vice-chancellor of Guru Kashi University Jaspinder Singh Dhillon, and Col Jaibans Singh from Patiala.

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BJP leader and Jai Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat greets Punjab intellectuals and other leaders who joined the BJP at party headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday

### Chirag blames JD(U) for LJP split, vows to save party

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Chirag Paswan on Wednesday vowed to fight back to save the party founded by his father late Ram Vilas Paswan, saying he was "sher ka beta" (lion's son).

In his first media interaction after split in the LJP parliamentary party and five of LJP MPs writing to Lok Sabha Speaker to appoint his uncle Pashupati Kumar Paras as the leader of the party, Chirag blamed the Janata Dal (United) for crisis in the party.

While blaming the JD(U) for the split, he steered clear of questions regarding the role of the BJP in the development and added that what has happened is also an internal matter of his party for which he will not target others.

Chirag may have avoided any reference to the role of the BJP behind the split in the LJP, but it is well known that the saffron outfit had lent its weight behind Paras. State BJP chief Sanjay Jaiswal had met Paras just three days before the split in the parliamentary party.



MP Chirag Paswan addresses a Press conference at his residence in New Delhi on Wednesday

When asked if "Hanuman" who is in trouble now will seek help from "Ram", a reference to his projection of his relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the Bihar Assembly polls as that between the two famous characters of epic Ramayan, he said, "If Hanuman has to seek help from Ram, then what good is Hanuman and what good is Ram?"

It is going to be a long battle, Paswan said, as the group

headed by him fights the faction of five other party MPs, led by Paras, to claim ownership of the LJP.

The JD(U), he alleged, had been working to cause a split in the party even when his father was alive. Targeting the party, he said it has always worked to divide Dalits and weaken its leaders.

The LJP draws its support from Paswans, the largest Dalit caste in Bihar.

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### Covid drugs used to treat adults not fit for kids: Govt guidelines

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the third Covid-19 wave is projected to impact children in a bigger way, the Government has issued guidelines for Covid-care management for kids. According to the guidelines, drugs such as ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, favipiravir and antibiotics like doxycycline and azithromycin, which are prescribed for adult patients, should not be recommended for treating the minor.

The Union Health Ministry's recommendations include augmenting existing Covid-care facilities to provide care to children with acute coronavirus infection.

"Similarly, issues of optimal treatment for multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) need to be addressed by clinical trials, such as comparison of low dose with high doses steroids, comparison of steroids with IVIG and others," it added.

Various States like Delhi,

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|--|
| <b>Covid-19 IN INDIA</b>                     |
| <b>TOTAL CASES: 2,96,99,555</b><br>(+67,256) |
| <b>DEATHS: 3,81,931</b> (+2,329)             |
| <b>RECOVERED: 2,84,84,544</b><br>(+1,03,853) |
| <b>ACTIVE: 8,21,392</b>                      |
| <b>MAHA: 58,34,880</b> (+10,107)             |
| <b>K'TAKA: 27,84,355</b> (+7,345)            |
| <b>KERALA: 27,61,475</b> (+13,270)           |
| <b>TN: 23,88,746</b> (+10,448)               |
| <b>DELHI: 14,31,710</b> (+212)               |

UP and Maharashtra on their own have already started taking measures — from ramping up paediatric beds to prioritising vaccination for parents of kids below 12 years.

Continued on Page 11

## Starting from scratch to fulfil dreams

CHANDAN KUSHWAHA ■ NEW DELHI

### Tales of despair

Life was never the same for Abhishek Chaubey, an IAS aspirant after the lockdown imposed in Delhi after Covid-19 pandemic hit him hard.

He had rented a single room at Shakarpur in East Delhi and was dependent on local dhabas for food. After the lockdown was announced, the dhabas shut down and he had a tough time to survive.

"I felt so helpless being new in the city. I spent the first few days with milk and bread but the situation turned grimmer after I tested positive for coronavirus with nobody to look after me. I was without food for days. This was the most traumatic period of life. I don't know how I survived," Chaubey said in a choked voice.

The tragedy did not end

here as his mother also tested positive in Paroraha village in Bihar. "My landlord was kind enough to get me the medicines being circulated on WhatsApp. I did not see him after that despite knowing that he was the only person I was in touch with," he said.

"The condition of my mother was also deteriorating in the absence of proper treatment and lack of awareness. I could not afford to just sit and leave it to destiny. I caught the train and somehow managed to reach my village. Although, I was still struggling to breathe, I got my mother admitted to hospital. Her life was saved with proper medication and

care. I also recovered following doctors' prescription," he said.

There are many like him residing around the north campus of the Delhi University who were forced to leave the city after lockdown was announced.

Similarly, Divya Prakash, who was preparing for civil services and lived at Gandhi Vihar, had to leave the Capital. "I used to teach students here to fund my studies. But after the pandemic returned and lockdown was imposed, everything was destroyed.

Kundan Kumar, a student of the Department of Buddhist Studies, was left with very limited options to survive during the pandemic as all the dhabas were closed. Kumar approached one of his friends and requested him to allow sharing the kitchen.

"Two of my friends also

tested Covid positive and after noticing the situation here, I decided to be back in my town.



I came back recently to Delhi and hope for a new beginning," he said.

### Don't come back, TMC warns Guv as he meets NHRC chief

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In a move unheard of in the contemporary political history of India, Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday called on National Human Rights Commission Chairman Justice Arun Mishra apparently to apprise him of what he called "retributive post poll violence" in the State.

The ruling Trinamool Congress, the prime target of Dhankhar's attack, promptly reacted saying "Governor... don't come back to Bengal."

The Governor is reported to have drawn the attention of the NHRC chief towards the attacks mounted on the Opposition supporters and human rights violation in the State. Dhankhar, who was on a three-day trip to New Delhi, also met Union Ministers



Prahlad Singh Patel and Prahlad Joshi before tweeting, "... Had useful interaction with Union Minister of Coal and Mines and Parliamentary Affairs..."

Earlier dwelling on the post poll violence and the alleged Governmental apathy, Dhankhar said how the State

Government was turning a blind eye to the incidents of "retributive post poll violence" that had rendered thousands of people homeless and properties worth crores looted and destroyed.

"Four Cabinet meetings have taken place in the past six weeks... not a single word has been spent on the post poll violence... no Minister or officer has visited the affected areas and no compensation has been declared," the Governor said, adding, "I told the Chief Minister to update me about the situation but... there was no response on her part... it seems that the police have forgotten their work... the police and the Home Department must rise above partisan politics... (or else) I shall not overlook the matter."

Continued on Page 11

# Parties kick-start battle for assembly polls

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
With the rumblings in the BJP, expulsion of rebel MLAs from BSP and the rebels seeking comfort zone, the political parties have kick-started the battle for the 2022 UP Assembly elections. The political activities are likely to gather pace with a sharp dip in the Covid curve. The Samajwadi Party, facing

existential crisis after three consecutive defeats in UP (2014 Lok Sabha polls, 2017 UP Assembly polls and 2019 Lok Sabha elections) is desperately trying to reinvent itself. The SP, having burnt its fingers after forging alliance with the Congress for the 2017 UP Assembly elections and later with the BSP and Rashtriya Lok Dal for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, seems to have grown wiser. It has ruled out alliances with bigger parties and decided to have a truck only with small parties. The SP has already formed an alliance with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), a predominantly Jat political outfit.

Newly elected RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary has made it clear that his party will contest the assembly elections in alliance with the SP to send a message to its support base, the Jat community in western UP. RLD has also announced its support to SP candidates in the zila panchayat chairpersons' elections.

## Suspended BSP MLAs in dilemma

**Lucknow (PNS):** The rebel BSP MLAs who met Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday are in a dilemma over joining the new party. Right now, the prime objective of the rebel MLAs is to avoid disqualification from the membership of Vidhan Sabha on the grounds of defection. Some of the rebels are trying to form a new party and later merge it with the SP while some are in touch with the BJP and also their parent party.

The sharp attack on the SP by BSP chief Mayawati on Wednesday added to the dis-

comfiture of the rebel MLAs. "The SP is propagating in the media that some BSP MLAs are switching over to the SP, which is a hoax. These MLAs were suspended from the BSP long ago for defeating the son of a Dalit in the Rajya Sabha elections to connive with the SP and an industrialist," Mayawati said on Wednesday.

She also questioned the political integrity of the Samajwadi Party, saying, "Had the SP been even a little honest towards these suspended MLAs, it would not have kept them in limbo till now."

SP sources said Akhilesh Yadav has given a broad hint that his party is willing to accommodate five rebel BSP MLAs and give them party tickets for the 2022 assembly elections, provided they formally join the party. The rebels, despite the assurance, are unwilling to join the Samajwadi Party. While one faction is trying to mobilise the 11 MLAs to form a new party, some are still in touch with BSP for a patch-up, provided they are accommodated in the party with honour and are given tickets for the next assembly elections.

"SP has repeatedly committed the mistake to overwhelmingly rely on the Yadav-Muslim vote bank, leaving the rest of the Hindu votes for the BJP," a senior SP leader said, adding: "To bridge this gap, the SP is

forging alliance with small caste-based political parties to prevent the 'Ati Picchda' votes going to the BJP."

A SP leader said: "With 11 per cent Yadav votes and 19 per cent Muslim votes, we were actually treating the Muslims as a majority community."

Another SP leader said: "The BJP, since 2014, has worked relentlessly to get rid of the 'Brahmin-Bania' party tag and succeeded in forging a rainbow alliance of poor and disadvantaged castes among the OBCs and SCs."

He said that during the 2017 UP Assembly elections, the BJP had given as many as 119 tickets to 'Ati Picchda' castes like Rajbhar, Kushwaha and Maurya and 69 tickets to non-Jatav Dalit communities, and they reaped rich political dividends. "The SP, by forging alliance with small caste-based parties, will prevent the BJP from reaping this dividend in 2022," the SP leader said.

# BJP leaders get plum posts in SC/ST panel

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

With assembly elections just six months away, the Bharatiya Janata Party has started setting the caste equation in its favour. The beginning was made on Wednesday when the Yogi Adityanath government gave plum posts to BJP leaders in the Schedule Caste and Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) Commission.

Governor Anandiben Patel approved the 18-member committee which includes a chairman, two vice-chairmen and 15 members.

Rambabu Harit of Agra has been made chairman of the commission while Mithlesh Kumar of

Shahjahanpur and Ramnaresh Paswan of Sonebhadra have been made vice-chairpersons.

The members of the Commission are Kamlesh Pasi (Varanasi), Tejjaram (Azamgarh), Sheshnath Acharya (Ballia), Anita Siddhartha (Jaunpur), Ram Asare (Farrukhabad), Shyam Sonkar (Mathura), Manoj Sherkar (Varanasi), Shrawan Gond (Sonebhadra), Amresh Chandra (Sonebhadra), Kishanlal (Kanpur), KK Raj (Etawah), Ram Singh Valmiki (Lucknow), Ramesh Toofani (Lucknow), Om Prakash Nayak (Aligarh) and Sadhvi Gita Pradhan (Sambhal). The appointments are for one year or attainment of 65 years, whichever is earlier.



### NOTICE

To be inform in general public. That my KDA H.No. MIG-1, Jarouli Phase-2, Kanpur Nagar, allotment letter have been lost in anywhere. It used will be illegal. Madhu Bhadoria D/o Ashok Singh Bhadoria R/o C-867, World Bank Barra, Kanpur Nagar.

### सूचना

सूचित करते हैं कि पहले मेरा नाम मोहम्मद हमजा कुर्शी था जिसे बदलकर मोहम्मद हमजा रख लिया है। मरिथ में इसी नये नाम से जाना व पहचाना जाय। मोहम्मद हमजा पुत्र मो० शाहाबुद्दीन कुर्शी निवासी-सुरा मंजिल पावर हाउस के पास, काजी गद्दी, काकोरी लखनऊ।

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform all that my original allotment letter & possession letter of residential H/N-B-4/49, Mansarovar yojna, Extension, Kanpur Road, Lucknow, lost anywhere. If any one had found these documents, please contact Mr. Jag Narayan Rawat Mob.-9794830465. Use of afore said documents are illegal.

### NOTICE

In my service records my son Kushagra Patel's D.O.B. written as 01.07.2009. Where as his correct D.O.B. is 05.07.2010. Please correct accordingly. Indra Bhushan Army Service No. 15338135 W, Nayak. S/o Punendrapal, Moh. Ashok Nagar Kursath Town, Par. Mallawan Teh. Bilgram, Distt. Hardoi U.P.

### NOTICE

In my service records my wife's name written as Sandhya Devi & D.O.B. 14.05.1983. Where as her correct name is Sandhya Kanaujia D.O.B. 30.9.1983 Please correct accordingly. Indra Bhushan, Army Service No. 15338135 W, Nayak. S/o Punendrapal, Moh. Ashok Nagar Kursath Town, Par. Mallawan Teh. Bilgram, Distt. Hardoi U.P.

### NOTICE

It is informed to general public that I am ex army soldier no. 14344500m Naik Bharat Singh S/o late sahdev singh my daughter baby singh Date of Birth has been recorded as 10/06/2001 by mistake whereas the correct Date of Birth is 27/02/2001. Bharat Singh S/o late sahdev singh Resident-gam Chak paigambarpur, post sidhaon, Thana Lalauli, tah. Fatehpur Sadar Distt. Fatehpur (UP)

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H.O.D for B.Ed  
Lecturer: B.Ed Science, Art  
Qualification: As per University of Lucknow, NCTE, U.G.C. rules. Complete applications in all respect with Bio-data, attested copies of qualifications, N.E.I/ Phd in concerned Subject. Work experiences, 3 passport size photographs and photocopy of Aadharcard should reach the Manager by registered/ speed-post within 15 days of Advertisement.  
Manager  
Dt: 09.06.2021 M:9415110269

## Three children killed as wall collapses

**Lucknow (PNS):** In a tragic accident, three children lost their lives while others sustained injuries after a wall collapsed in Agra's Kagarol on Tuesday. The deceased included two girls and a boy, aged between 3 and 8 years. After the incident, locals tried to rescue the people trapped under the debris.

On getting information about the incident, police reached the spot and rushed all those trapped under the debris to a hospital where doctors declared three children dead.

"Three children died while others were injured after a wall collapsed in Kagarol. Two girls and a boy were brought dead to the hospital. The injured are under treatment. A total of

nine people were trapped under the debris," Agra District Magistrate Prabhu N Singh said.

In another incident, a groom died a few hours before his marriage. The incident took place in Barabanki on Wednesday morning. Reports said that Tafazul, a resident of Nahama hamlet of Masauli in Barabanki, was to get married on Wednesday afternoon.

Everyone in the family was getting ready for the wedding. The tragedy struck when Tafazul was trying to switch on a water pump. He inadvertently touched a live wire and was electrocuted. He was rushed to hospital where the doctors pronounced him dead upon arrival.

announced its support for the SP in the assembly elections. SP sources said the party leadership is worried by not getting the votes of non-Yadav OBCs and non-Jatav SCs in the last three elections which it lost.

## UP BJP chief slams SP for land scam allegations

**Lucknow (PNS):** Uttar Pradesh BJP president Swatantra Dev Singh slammed the Samajwadi Party saying that those who denied the existence of Lord Rama were now questioning the land purchase for the construction of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya. Singh spoke to media persons after condoling the death of BJP regional chief Manvendra Singh's uncle at Vikrampur village of Etawah on Wednesday.

Attacking the Samajwadi Party further, Singh said that the party which did not have any love for Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, who denied the existence of Ram and Ram Setu and fired bullets at Ram Sevaks were now talking about Ram

Mandir. "Every Ram bhakt knows the truth about the transparent way the lands were purchased in Ayodhya," he said. The BJP leader visited the Etawah village to pay homage to the BJP worker who died from corona on Wednesday and said that he was visiting the houses of all BJP workers and their families who lost their near and dear ones in the state during the corona period. Etawah also witnessed the death of BJP MLA Savitri Katheria's husband and regional vice-president Manvendra Singh's uncle.

Appealing to people, Singh said that more and more people should get themselves vaccinated to prevent corona infection in future.

# CM Yogi revises financial aid for COVID-19 orphans

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

In yet another gesture towards the children who were orphaned due to Covid, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath upwardly revised the aid being given to children whose guardians' income is below Rs 3 lakh per year.

"For the legal or natural guardian, the annual income of Rs 2 lakh limit is very low, hence the monthly assistance will be provided to every orphaned child whose guardian's income is below Rs 3 lakh per year," announced the Chief Minister at a high-level COVID review meeting

in Lucknow on Wednesday. Under the 'Uttar Pradesh Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana', the state government will provide financial assistance to a child's guardian while those who did not have anyone to look after will be sent to children's homes.

Taking care of the upbringing and education of children orphaned by Covid, a monthly financial assistance of Rs 4,000 will be given to a child's guardian or caretaker, till he or she attains adulthood.

Further, the state government will also provide tablets or laptops to all such children studying in schools, colleges,

or pursuing vocational education.

Children below 10 years who did not have any family members alive will be taken care of by the state government Children's Homes, functional in Mathura, Lucknow, Prayagraj, Agra and Rampur. Minor girl children will be housed in Kasturba Gandhi Girls (residential) Schools run by the Government of India or Children's Homes for Girls run by the state government.

In addition, the Yogi Government will also provide financial assistance of Rs 1,01,000 for the marriage of girls under the scheme.

## More stringent laws against gambling in the offing

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

The UP government is expected to make more stringent laws against gambling in public places. The State Law Commission has not only made the Public Gambling Act enacted during the British era stricter but also put online gambling and various forms of betting in the category of non-bailable offences.

After studying the laws of several states, the draft of Uttar Pradesh Public Gambling (Prevention) Bill has been prepared under the chairmanship of a commission led by Justice A N Mittal. A draft scripted by the Commission was submitted to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday. It is believed that the state government would soon implement its own law across the state with regards

to gambling. The State Law Commission in its draft has recommended to increase the amount of fine along with the provision of maximum punishment of three years. The special component is that the draft of this new law has been made keeping in mind the fast growing habit of online gambling in the last decade. Important recommendations have also been made to break the nexus of gambling houses and bookies in the state.

The Central government is also preparing to repeal the Public Gambling Act and the states have been instructed to make their own laws for this. For this Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Goa, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana, Delhi and some other states have already enacted their own laws. The UP Law Commission

has studied many important decisions of the Supreme Court and High Court along with the laws of other states. Along with this, keeping in mind the circumstances of the state, the draft of UP Public Gambling (Prevention) Bill has been drafted.

At present, there is a provision of imprisonment of three months and a fine of Rs 50 for gambling in a public place. The Commission has recommended increasing the punishment to one year and a fine of Rs 5,000. Also, making online gambling, house gambling operation and betting a non-bailable offense, it has recommended punishment of up to three years. The salient feature is that now the police will not have to resort to IPC sections to tighten the legal noose on those betting crores of rupees in cricket matches or other

sports. The commission has also proposed that if betting was being conducted in a gambling house or any premises, then it would be presumed that the amount recovered is related to gambling and all the people present there were gamblers.

Chairman of the commission, Justice AN Mittal said that a distinction has also been made between game of skill and chance. Card games played under a game of skill like rummy, bridge etc will not be punishable. However games like kat patta and teen patti, in which the better is solely dependent on a single chance, would amount to a punishable offence. He said that if a family plays cards in their house for rituals and entertainment and no outsider is present there, it will not be punishable.

## TEMPORARY CANCELLATION & DIVERSION OF TRAINS

In order to upgrade the infrastructure, Lucknow Division of Northern Railway will undertake the Pre-Non-Interlocking and Non-Interlocking work in connection with doubling of track between Jais - Fursatganj - Rupamau Stations on Lucknow - Rae Bareilly Jn - Partapur Jn - Varanasi Jn Section. To execute this work Lucknow Division will take suitable traffic blocks of different durations upto 25.06.2021. During this period following trains will be cancelled/diverted on the dates shown against each:-

| CANCELLATION OF TRAINS |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Train No.              | Train Name                                    | Date of Cancellation (from originating station) |
| 04265                  | Varanasi Jn - Dehradun Special Express Train  | upto 25.06.2021                                 |
| 04266                  | Dehradun - Varanasi Jn Special Express Train  | 17.06.2021 to 26.06.2021                        |
| 03005                  | Howrah Jn - Amritsar Jn Special Express Train | upto 24.06.2021                                 |
| 03006                  | Amritsar Jn - Howrah Jn Special Express Train | 18.06.2021 to 26.06.2021                        |

| DIVERSION OF TRAINS   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Train No. & Train Name  | Diversion Route  | Date of passing (from originating station) |  |
| 03006 Amritsar Jn - Howrah Jn Special Express Train           | Diverted via Lucknow - Sultanpur Jn - Varanasi Jn      | on 17.06.2021                              |  |
| 02875 Puri - Anand Vihar Terminal Neelachal Special Express   | Diverted via Varanasi Jn - Sultanpur Jn - Utraitia Jn  | on 18, 20 & 22.06.2021                     |  |
| 02876 Anand Vihar Terminal - Puri Neelachal Special Express   | Diverted via Utraitia Jn - Sultanpur Jn - Varanasi Jn  | on 18, 20, 22 & 25.06.2021                 |  |
| 02356 Jammu Tawi - Patna Jn Archana Superfast Special Express | Diverted via Lucknow - Faizabad Jn - Varanasi Jn       | on 20 & 23.06.2021                         |  |
| 02355 Patna Jn - Jammu Tawi Archana Superfast Special Express | Diverted via Varanasi Jn - Faizabad Jn - Lucknow       | on 19 & 22.06.2021                         |  |
| 02683 Yasvantpur Jn - Lucknow Festival Special Express Train  | Diverted via Prayag Jn - Unchahar Jn - Rae Bareilly Jn | on 21.06.2021                              |  |

For any other information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTEAS App.

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कार्यालय उपनिदेशक (वि/याँ०)  
**राज्य कृषि उत्पादन मण्डी परिषद, उ०प्र०**  
नवीन गल्ला मण्डी स्थल, महवा चुंगी, गोरखपुर-273016  
ई-मेल:-ddemgrkhpur2016@gmail.com  
पत्रांक : वि/याँ०-(निविदा)/2021-660 दिनांक 16-06-2021  
ई-निविदा शुद्धिपत्र  
कार्यालय पत्रांक-वि/याँ०-(ई-निविदा)/2021-642 दिनांक 25.05.2021 को प्रकाशित ई-निविदा जो दिनांक 18.06.2021 को आमंत्रित है जिसे अपरिहार्य कारणों से बढ़ा कर दिनांक 08.07.2021 तक आमंत्रित किया जाता है। निविदा दिनांक 07.07.2021 को सायं 05 बजे तक अपलौट की जा सकती है। शेष नियम एवं शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।  
उपनिदेशक (वि/याँ०)  
मण्डी परिषद, गोरखपुर

**जवाहर लाल नेहरू पालीटेक्निक, महमूदाबाद (सीतापुर)**  
**2 शैक्षिक सत्रों की संविदा के आधार पर नियुक्ति**  
प्रबंध समिति, जवाहरलाल नेहरू पालीटेक्निक, महमूदाबाद-सीतापुर द्वारा शासनादेश संख्या-270/16-प्रा०शि०-3-2003-12 (बी) 2002 प्राथमिक शिक्षा अनुभाग-3 उत्तर प्रदेश शासन दिनांक 27 मई 2003 में स्वीकृत/प्राप्त/पाठ्यक्रमों हेतु निहित प्रावधानों के तहत दिनांक 05.07.2021 तक आवेदन पत्र आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। आवेदन पत्र प्रधानाचार्य जवाहरलाल नेहरू पालीटेक्निक, महमूदाबाद-सीतापुर के कार्यालय में बायोडाटा एवं सम्बंधित प्रमाण-पत्रों सहित दिनांक 05.07.2021 को सायं 5:00 बजे तक व्यक्तिगत रूप से/पंजीकृत डाक द्वारा प्राप्त हो जाना चाहिए। विलंब से प्राप्त आवेदन पत्रों पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा। विज्ञापित शैक्षणिक पदों का साक्षात्कार दिनांक 17.07.2021 (शनिवार) को प्रातः 10:00 बजे से संस्था में सम्पन्न होगा। साक्षात्कार हेतु अलग से कोई बुलावा पत्र नहीं भेजा जायेगा।

| क्र०सं० | पद नाम                        | पदों की संख्या | नियत वेतन (प्रतिमाह) |
|---------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1       | प्रवक्ता मौखिकी               | 01             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 2       | प्रवक्ता रसायन                | 01             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 3       | प्रवक्ता गणित                 | 02             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 4       | प्रवक्ता अंग्रेजी             | 01             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 5       | प्रवक्ता इलेक्ट्रिकल इंजी०    | 01             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 6       | प्रवक्ता मैकेनिकल इंजी०       | 03             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 7       | प्रवक्ता इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स इंजी० | 02             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 8       | प्रवक्ता कम्प्यूटर साइंस      | 02             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 9       | प्रवक्ता आई० टी०              | 01             | ₹ 21,000/-           |
| 10      | कम्प्यूटर प्रोग्रामर/आपरेटर   | 05             | ₹ 13,500/-           |

पदों की संख्या घट-बढ़ सकती है।  
1. शैक्षणिक पद क्रमांक 1, 2, 3 एवं 4 के लिए अनिवार्य अर्हताएँ:- स्नातक अथवा निष्णात (Master) स्तर पर प्रथम श्रेणी अथवा समकक्ष के साथ उच्चयुक्त विषय में प्रथम श्रेणी निष्णात (Master) डिग्री।  
2. शैक्षणिक पद क्रमांक 5, 6, 7, 8 एवं 9 के लिए अनिवार्य अर्हताएँ:-प्रासंगिक शाखा में इंजीनियरिंग/प्रौद्योगिकी में प्रथम श्रेणी अथवा समकक्ष स्नातक डिग्री। यदि उम्मीदवार के पास इंजीनियरी/प्रौद्योगिकी में निष्णात (Master) डिग्री है, स्नातक अथवा निष्णात (Master) स्तर पर प्रथम श्रेणी अथवा समकक्ष अपेक्षित है।  
3. क्रमांक 10 के लिए अनिवार्य अर्हताएँ:-स्नातक तथा कम से कम एक वर्षीय भारत सरकार/राज्य सरकार से मान्यता प्राप्त डिप्लोमा इन कम्प्यूटर एप्लीकेशन। अथवा इंजीनियरिंग की किसी शाखा में मान्यता प्राप्त डिप्लोमा तथा कम से कम एक वर्षीय भारत सरकार/राज्य सरकार से मान्यता प्राप्त डिप्लोमा इन कम्प्यूटर एप्लीकेशन। अथवा एम०एस०सी० कम्प्यूटर साइंस। उपरोक्त सभी पदों के लिए आयु सीमा न्यूनतम 21 वर्ष एवं अधिकतम 40 वर्ष होगी। साक्षात्कार के समय मूल प्रमाण-पत्र/अंक तालिकाएँ तथा उन सभी की फोटो प्रति लाना आवश्यक है। साक्षात्कार में सम्मिलित होने हेतु कोई यात्रा भत्ता संस्था द्वारा देय नहीं होगा। आवेदन पत्र के साथ सामान्य एवं पिछड़ी जाति के अर्थवर्गीय ₹ 600/-मात्र एवं अनुसूचित जाति/अनुसूचित जनजाति के अर्थवर्गीय ₹ 300/-का बैंक ड्राफ्ट जो प्रधानाचार्य, जवाहरलाल नेहरू पालीटेक्निक, महमूदाबाद-सीतापुर के पक्ष में देय हो तथा यूको बैंक महमूदाबाद (सीतापुर) इलाहाबाद बैंक, महमूदाबाद (सीतापुर) अथवा भारतीय स्टेट बैंक, महमूदाबाद (सीतापुर) पर देय हो संलग्न करना अनिवार्य है। आवेदन पत्र के लिफाफे पर आवेदिता पद का नाम अवश्य अंकित करें।  
(सी०पी०त्रिपाठी) (डॉ० अम्मार रिजवी)  
सचिव/प्रधानाचार्य अध्यक्ष, प्रबंध समिति

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# Special vax booths to come up for students, sportsmen going abroad

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that in view of students and sportsmen from Uttar Pradesh going abroad, special vaccination booths should be set up in all the district hospitals.

"Special booths should be set up in all the district hospitals for the vaccination of people going abroad for studies, jobs or sports competitions from the state," the chief minister said during a Covid review meeting held here on Wednesday.

Yogi said that action should be taken in a planned and effective manner for vaccination of the maximum number of people across the state. Special attention should be given to vaccination in rural areas, he said. "Awareness campaigns should be conducted to motivate rural people for vaccination. Awareness about vaccination should be spread in all gram panchayats through posters and pamphlets. Photos of people who have taken vaccine jabs should also be put in the posters to inspire the villagers," he said.

The chief minister was apprised that a comprehensive action plan has been prepared regarding vaccination in rural areas of the state. A large number of vaccinators have been trained for the inoculation systematically and smoothly.

In a recent achievement, Uttar Pradesh crossed the mile-



A girl takes the Covid vaccine jab at KD Singh Babu Stadium on Wednesday

Pioneer

stone of administering 2.30 crore cumulative COVID-19 vaccine doses. UP has outnumbered many states in terms of vaccination. So far, the state has administered as many as 2,39,49,661 cumulative doses, the CM said.

Meanwhile, the positivity rate came down to 0.1 per cent in Uttar Pradesh as 310 fresh COVID-19 cases came up in the last 24 hours. The active cases also went below the 300-mark in all the districts barring

Lucknow. UP has also been registering a steep decline in the active cases as the figure has dropped from a high of 3,10,783 in April to 6,496 now, which is a remarkable reduction by 98 per cent. In Lucknow, 29 people tested positive for coronavirus infection on Wednesday while 41 patients recovered. There were 10 deaths in the state capital while the active cases came down to 393.

As many as 2,86,396 sam-

ples were tested in the last 24 hours, pushing the total number of tests to 5,41,45,947 so far.

In a significant development, 14 more oxygen producing plants have become functional in the last 24 hours, making the state self-reliant in oxygen generation. "As many as 100 of the 436 sanctioned oxygen plants have already been established and are functional while the work for the rest is going on in the state," a government spokesman said.

# 3rd wave may strike early if Covid protocols not followed

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

The next three months are crucial with respect to coronavirus spread and if people do not follow the Covid-appropriate behaviour, the third wave could be advanced by a month or two, according to nodal Covid officer at KGMU, Dr Surya Kant Tripathi.

The next three months are important also because the vaccination has still not picked up pace. "The pace of the vaccination has not reached the desired levels. We have the capacity of vaccinating one crore people per day but right now due to the scarcity of vaccines, we are not vaccinating more than 30 lakh people per day. We have to increase the pace of inoculation which is likely to happen after June 21," he said.

He said another important thing is the public behaviour as far as following Covid protocols is concerned. "If people behave like they did in January and February earlier this year, we may see a moderate third wave. If the vaccination is expedited and people follow Covid-appropriate Covid behaviour, the third wave would be mild," he said. Dr Tripathi pointed out that Covid-appropriate behaviour is being followed in Lucknow for now as people can be seen wearing masks.

"Reports have come from Haryana and Delhi where people are being careless. In such a scenario, the third wave could



Huge rush at the weekly market in Mahanagar on Wednesday

Pioneer

well be advanced by a few months. In December, people took precautions followed Covid protocols. Even the New Year celebrations were subdued. However, by the end of February earlier this year, people were indiscipline and casual. It was why the virus was rampant in the second wave," he noted.

He said that currently the cases are low, but it is still essential to break the chain of transmission. "As for black fungus cases, it depends on the severity of COVID-19 and the hospital stay apart from co-morbidities. There have been no cases of black fungus in home isolation patients," he added.

About the high number of black fungus cases in KGMU, he said mucormycosis cannot be treated in a short time span. "It is a long process and the

cases are cumulative. There are no or too few new cases coming now," he said. He added that the deaths across the country and in the state have also been low.

The senior doctor said that in the second wave, the black fungus cases came up in large numbers because the virus was more virulent and more prolonged hospitalisation was required. He said they do not expect children to get black fungus in the third wave.

"I am also against the assumption that children will be largely affected by coronavirus in the third wave. Children have emerged as super immune to Covid in the first and second waves. The impact will only be seen in children the age group of 5-12 years because there is no vaccination cover for them.

# Jeweller shot at in shop

Lucknow (PNS): Unidentified miscreants shot at a jeweller when he, his wife and an employee were at the shop in Sarojinagar on Wednesday afternoon. Narendra Kumar Yadav (40) of Bijnaur in Sarojinagar suffered firearm injuries in the head. He was admitted to Medanta Hospital where his condition was said to be critical. As per reports, Narendra, who is also a property dealer, opened the shop eight months ago on the ground floor of his three-storey house.

Around 4:30 pm, he, along with his wife Vinod Kumari, was in the shop while his employee Akash was busy with some work when two miscreants entered the shop. The employee asked them to put off their shoes but they opened fire on Narendra's wife. Luckily, the bullet missed the target and hit a glass case behind her.

Akash was pushed by the miscreants who opened another round of fire and the bullet hit Narendra in the head.

Police said the attackers did not commit loot and it indicated that they attacked the jeweller over some old rivalry or dispute. The police said they were collecting CCTV footages in the area to spot the miscreants. Sources said the police had got some important clues about the attackers based on the information provided by Akash. They said the number of miscreants was four and they had come on two bikes. "The police recovered a CCTV footage from the shop. The attackers are said to be in the age group of 25-30 years. Police have identified some of them and are conducting raids," the sources said.

# Essential commodities burning hole in consumers' pockets

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The increased costs of consumables such as oil, lentils, eggs and vegetables is adding to the woes of consumers in these trying times of pandemic. Traders say that with production being low at the time of lockdown, the costs of these commodities increased, but as the production gathers pace in the coming days, the prices may decrease in a week or so.

President of Akhil Bharatiya Vyapar Mandal Sandeep Bansal said there has been an increase in almost all the commodities because the factories were closed due to lockdown. "Currently, mustard oil is selling at Rs 200 per litre. The cost of oil increased because the processing work was halted. Many local traders

involved in the work of oil extraction say that the raw material was very high, so they stopped the work. Leaving aside arhar daal, all the other lentils are selling at 15-20 per cent of their regular costs. The production of lentils was also low and the sellers sold them at the price which suited them," Bansal explained.

Eggs are costlier because of the large-scale publicity about a high-protein diet for Covid patients, he pointed out.

"The prices of eggs, fruits and vegetables have increased and coming back to previous rates may take more than two weeks. We expect the prices to ease by July. The vegetables are costlier also because of the rains," Bansal said.

He added that the rates of other commodities like flour did not increase because they



were in adequate stock.

"Mustard oil is selling at Rs 160 per litre at wholesale rates by branded companies and Rs 155 by other companies. Two to three months back, mustard oil was selling at Rs 120 per litre but it went up to Rs 170 per litre. Refined oil is selling at Rs 155 per litre at present. Most of the companies say it is because of the low production,

but we believe that the companies are getting high profits and the consumers are forced to buy oil at high rates because they have no option. A rise of Rs 40 per litre is inexplicable," he said.

President of UP Poultry Farmers' Association Nawab Ali Akbar said it was a record high rate of Rs 180-200 per crate of eggs in the retail mar-

ket. "Normally, rates fall down to Rs 125 per crate in summers but this time owing to the pandemic, the prices have soared because of the huge demand and low production. People were having eggs for a high protein diet because they could not procure mutton and chicken because of the lockdown," he said. He added that chicken rates also went high and it was selling at Rs 250 per kg. "Again, the production was low and the demand was high. The poultry farmers were very hesitant in chick production for meat because of the problems which they faced recently, but the demand was high," he added.

Regarding vegetables, the sellers said that in the last one week, the rates of green vegetables which were selling at Rs 30 per kg saw an increase of Rs 10 per kg.

# Mental health a major issue in patients after COVID-19

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the second wave webbing, the patients after recovering from COVID-19 are reaching hospitals with complaints of mental health and respiratory problems.

According to Balrampur Hospital director Dr Santosh Kumar Pandey, they are now getting patients complaining of heart rate being high, respiratory problems and mental health issues. Most of these patients are aged above 50 years. "There are 7-8 patients admitted in the post-Covid ward at the moment and we get 3-4 such patients in the OPD on a daily basis. The patients who are admitted in the hospital because their oxygen saturation level is going down," he pointed out.

Those coming to the OPD are facing mental health problems and they are being counselled. "These are primarily

cases of depression. These patients complain that they have lost interest in their daily activities as basic as eating and reading newspapers. They feel they are a burden on their families. They include both who are working and those who are not, and they have to be counselled as it makes a lot of difference. Depression is also because of the overall illness and listening to the news of deaths all around," he pointed out.

Dr Pandey said that of the total number of patients in the post-Covid category, 60 per cent are suffering from mental health problems. Regarding the post-Covid cases at KGMU, nodal officer Dr Surya Kant Tripathi said they have complaints of fatigue and lack of concentration. "There are also others who complain of brain fogging," he said.

Dr Shriekesh Singh from Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences said they

are getting post-Covid cases with cardiac problems and black fungus. "The patients whose brains have been penetrated by black fungus have a feeling of altered senses," he pointed out.

He said the patients coming to the OPD are suffering from weakness and muscle pain and they are not being able to resume their regular activities like earlier.

"This is leading to some sort of depression and an emotion of not feeling good, not being able to cope with the routine, anxiety and restlessness," he said.

"Since a huge population was affected in the second wave, the post-Covid cases are in all age groups," he said. He said counselling works and complaints are more from people who are working because they feel they are not reaching their optimum level of performance.



Visitors to Bada Imambara had to return disappointed as ASI monuments remained closed on Wednesday

Pioneer

# Chaat vendor forced to compensate for damage to cop's car

Lucknow (PNS): A chaat vendor had to spend around five hours at a police check post in Mohanlalganj on Monday and had to pay the damages after his bike brushed past the car of a sub-inspector. As the news went viral on social media, police officials took note of the incident and set up a probe.

Reports said Govind Jaiswal of Asoha in Unnao puts a stall in Gangaganj in Gosainganj to eke out his livelihood. On Monday morning, he was going to his workplace and his bike kidded on the way at Jail Road tri-section in Mohanlalganj and brushed against the car of Khujauli police outpost incharge.

The incharge blew his top and took out the bike's key so that Govind could not drive away. The incharge allegedly forced Govind to pay the dam-

age and handed him over to cops at a police check post there after he expressed inability to pay.

Govind said he was not allowed to leave the police check post even as he repeatedly requested the cops to let him off. He said he had to borrow Rs 3,000 from his relatives as the policemen were unmoved.

## ROAD MISHAP

A speeding truck knocked down a 27-year-old labourer in Mohanlalganj on Tuesday night. As per reports, Ram Balak of Ayodhya, along with his brother Shiv Balak, was working at a construction site in Jaiti Kheda of Mohanlalganj. Around 10:15 am, he was hit by the speeding truck. Police registered a case in this connection and started further probe.



Officials of a foundation distributing ration to people in need at Mall Avenue in Lucknow

Pioneer

# Forest department to take up massive plantation drive

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Forest department will be carrying out massive plantation on the banks of Ganga river and its tributaries under the directions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

A senior official from the Forest department said it is being done for the conservation of rivers, providing shady trees on the banks of the rivers and for diversification

of the crops. He said that under the 'Vriksharopan Jan Andolan 2021', 57 lakh saplings will be planted on the banks of the Ganga river in Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Bijnore, Kasganj, Farrukhabad, Kannauj, Kanpur, Unnao, Fatehpur, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Ghazipur, Ballia and Sant Ravidas Nagar. As many as 1,70,66,720 saplings will be planted and over 26 other departments

will also support the campaign on the banks of other rivers. The forest official said that on the land adjacent to the rivers, saplings of Arjun, neem, bargad, peepul, pakad, sahan and other fruit trees will be planted. "The farmers will be asked to plant species of their choice in the microplan which was prepared by the Forest department. The farmers will be provided these saplings too," he said.

# Woman delivers stillborn baby while on CRRT at KGMU

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

It was a landmark achievement in the field of obstetric critical care at KGMU. Spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh informed that a patient named Nidhi was admitted to KGMU on March 19 with 34-week pregnancy, respiratory failure, shock and acute kidney injury with severe metabolic acidosis.

"She was immediately put on the ventilator support. She was unfit for routine dialysis due to low blood pressure, so

CRRT (continuous renal replacement therapy) was started. She delivered the dead fetus while still on CRRT. Gradually her condition improved and she was shifted to routine dialysis. Her renal function and respiratory parameters improved, and she was taken off the ventilator as well as dialysis support. She was discharged after one month of ICU stay," he said.

He said that to the best of their knowledge, it was for the first time in UP that any patient

underwent normal delivery while still on dialysis as this facility and expertise are available only in limited hospitals.

"Though she survived despite multiple organ failure, it is advisable for doctors and paramedics working in the periphery to send sick patients to higher centres early during the course of the disease. Once multiple organ failure sets in, the chances of survival are reduced. The team of doctors was headed by Prof Uma Singh," he added.

# PGV corners govt for 'irregularities' in purchase of land in Ayodhya

Lucknow (PNS): Targeting the BJP government over alleged irregularities in purchase of land by Shree Ram Mandir Trust, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said that it had hurt people's faith and demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi to furnish the details of money spent as the Trust was formed by him. She also demanded a Supreme Court monitored probe in the murky land deal.

In a Facebook post in Hindi on Wednesday, Priyanka said, "According to news reports there have been irreg-

ularities in buying land. On March 18, two people bought land in Ayodhya for Rs 2 crore. And within five minutes the land was bought by the Shree Ram Mandir Trust which was formed by the Prime Minister for Rs 18.5 crore."

"Can anyone imagine and believe this? Not to be forgotten, the entire money belongs to the people of the country who donated for the construction of Ram temple. In the sale deed of the land and registry papers, most of the names in the column of witnesses were common," she said.

# 110 COVID-19 orphaned kids identified in Varanasi

PNS ■ VARANASI

As many as 110 children have been identified whose either father or mother or both have died of COVID-19 and out of them three girls have lost their both parents.

The district level task force on Wednesday gave its nod to applications of 61 COVID-19 orphaned children for the benefits under the Uttar Pradesh Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana.

The district level task force held a meeting presided over by District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma to benefit the children who have lost either their father or mother or both parents to COVID-19 under the Uttar Pradesh Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana.

In the meeting, the applications of 61 such children, verified and forwarded with recommendations by the respective sub-district magistrates (SDMs) and block development officers (BDOs), were considered for approval. The meeting gave its nod to all the applications.

As many as 162 applications were received by the administration by June 16, seeking benefits of Uttar Pradesh Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana. District probation officer Praveen Tripathi said 110 children had lost their parents to COVID-19, out of them 97 children had lost their father, 10 children had lost their mother while three girls had lost their both parents.

He said no evidence was found in the case of the remaining 52 children that their par-

## Eight test positive

Varanasi (PNS): With the second wave of novel coronavirus outbreak receding, Varanasi recorded new positive cases in single digit after a long time.

Eight people tested positive for novel coronavirus infection during the past 24 hours, taking the tally of confirmed cases to 82,132, as per the figures released by the Health department on Wednesday evening.

With one COVID-19 patient dying during the last 24 hours, the death toll stood at 771. As many as 37 COVID-19 patients recovered during the past 24 hours -- 34 in home isolation and three in hospitals. With this, 81,145 COVID-19 patients have been cured in the district -- 74,886 in home isolation and 6,259 in Covid hospitals.

The vaccination drive continued on Wednesday at 135 vaccination centres, including 87 for people above 45 years, 48 for people between 18 and 44 years, eight for working employees aged between 18 and 44 years, three for parents having children up to the age of 12 years and two for working women.

Besides, the drivers of commercial vehicles were vaccinated at a booth set up at RTO office in Babatpur and street vendors at the community health centre (CHC) at Chowkaghat. Meanwhile, District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma said a special vaccination booth was being opened at ESIC Hospital in Pandeypur for vaccination of physically challenged people and the vaccination would start there from Thursday from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

ernment will take care of the upbringing and education of these children orphaned in the pandemic. The government will provide Rs 4,000 to a child's guardian or caretaker till he or she attains adulthood and the children below 10 years who do not have any family members will be taken care of by the state government children's homes under the scheme. Child protection officer Nirupama Singh, chairman of child welfare committee Manoj Mishra and centre manager of one stop centre Rashmi Dubey were also present in the meeting.

# Mastermind in bank manager murder case held with 4 aides

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The police claimed to have arrested the mastermind of the murder of branch manager of Punjab National Bank (PNB). The police also claimed to have arrested four others criminals involved in the sensational killing, including the shooters who had shot the branch manager dead at the behest of the mastermind of the crime.

A Scorpio, one country-made pistol of 315 bore and one mobile phone handset used in the crime were also recovered from the possessions of criminals besides two live cartridges and Rs 1,00,250 in cash.

Six criminals involved in the murder have already been arrested by the police.

It may be mentioned here that PNB Karkhiyaon-Pindra branch's manager Phulchand Ram was shot dead by assailants on a Scorpio late on June 9. During investigation, it had come to light that the branch manager was lured by an offer to double the money and thus he had withdrawn Rs 41 lakh from another branch of the bank in Jaunpur and Rs 6



SP (RA) Amit Verma telling about arrest of main accused of PNB branch manager murder case in Varanasi on Wednesday.

lakh from his branch on the fateful day to earn quick money. He had kept the cash in two bags and the criminals had succeeded in taking away a bag containing Rs 20 lakh after killing the manager but they could not take the bag containing Rs 27 lakh in a hurry as he had kept it with him. The branch manager was sitting on the seat beside the driver while the shooter was sitting at the

center of the back seat. It transpired that Alok Rai of Mau had hatched the conspiracy to loot Rs 50 lakh from the branch manager and he took the help of shooters to kill him after looting the cash. As per the conspiracy, when the branch manager had withdrawn the cash, the assailants met him through a criminal, Vikash Gond, and took him to Sandaha crossing. The branch

manager was sitting beside the driver of the Scorpio and shooter Rahul Tiwari, who was in the back seat, shot him from point blank range in the running vehicle. Thereafter, all the criminals fled the scene barring driver Sanjay and Sunil with whom the branch manager had come out from his bank after withdrawing the cash. Crime Branch inspector Ashwani Kumar got a tip off

about the presence of the mastermind and his aides involved in the murder of the branch manager and acting on the information, his team along with cops of Phulpur and Chaubeypur police stations succeeded in arresting Alok Rai and four other criminals, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Amit Verma said while producing the arrested criminals before the media persons on Wednesday.

Besides Alok Rai, the other arrested criminals include Vikash Gond of Ghazipur, Rahul Tiwari of Ghazipur who had opened fire at the branch manager, Nitesh Singh of Ghazipur and Arun Mishra of Mau. The six criminals -- Adesh Srivastava, Mukesh Pal, Atul Kumar Singh, Atul Vishwakarma, Sanjay Kumar Patel (driving the Scorpio of branch manager at the time when the crime took place) and Sunil Kumar Patel -- had already been arrested by the police.

With this, 11 criminals have so far been arrested in connection with the murder of the PNB branch manager while two criminals, Dharendra Singh and Satpal, are still on the lam.

# Complete pending works of dist panchayat by June 19: DM

Varanasi (PNS): Varanasi District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma has directed the district panchayat officers to complete all 55 pending projects by June 19. He was reviewing the progress made in various district panchayat works at a meeting here on Tuesday.

He also directed the officers to ensure payment of all completed works within two days.

In the meeting, the district magistrate was informed that out of 90 works sanctioned during 2016-17, as

many as 28 had been completed. On the status of payment of these works, when the district magistrate was informed that the payments were still pending, he directed the additional chief officer of the district panchayat to release payments of these works by June 17, adding that payment of any completed work should not remain pending.

Giving details of the 203 works of the year 2018-19, when the district panchayat officials informed the district magistrate that the payments of 35

works had already been made while those of 27 works were in progress, he directed them to ensure early completion of all the pending works by visiting the sites in three days.

Warning officials, he said that if the contractors concerned failed to complete the work by Saturday next, the unfinished works done by them be declared as 'shramdan' and the contractors be blacklisted apart from starting procedures for issuing recovery certificates against them from the tehsils concerned.

When he asked how many firms were blacklisted for not completing the work, he was given the details of three firms. In reply the district magistrate sought the character certificates of these firms so that they were not able to work anywhere in the state in future. Apart from this, the district magistrate was also informed that the security deposits of five firms had been forfeited and they were stopped from continuing their works further.

# Police still groping in dark in scribe's death case

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

Police are still groping in the dark in their bid to solve the mystery surrounding the death of journalist Sulabh Srivastava in Pratapgarh. The relatives of the scribe have filed an FIR in which they have alleged that Sulabh was murdered as he had received threats from the liquor mafia.

When the eight-member investigation team constituted led by ASP examined the footage of the CCTV camera, it showed Sulabh coming alone on his bike from Sagra Sunderpur market between Lalganj and the spot. The footage of other places is also being collected to solve the mystery. The police team also closely inspected the spot.

Along with this, the police have questioned other people, including some media persons, about the incident.

Meanwhile, the journalists collectively organised a condolence meeting in the District Panchayat Auditorium.

On Wednesday afternoon, a delegation of Jansatta Dal Loktantrik Party reached Sulabh's residence and provided Rs 51,000 to his wife Renuka Srivastava as financial assistance.

The delegation demanded a high-level inquiry into the incident and financial assistance from the government.

The delegation comprised MLC Akshay Pratap Singh (Gopal) who is state president of the party, and MLA Vinod Saroj, national general secretary Dr. KN Ojha, district president Ram Achal Verma, media incharge Mukku Exorcist etc.

Sulabh Srivastava (45) was district correspondent of the TV news channel. He had gone to the village of Lalganj area late on Sunday evening to cover the news of the illegal arms factory unearthed there by the ATS. Later he was seen lying injured on the road near a brick kiln at around 10:30 pm while returning home to Shohar near the railway station in the city. The family members, who came to know about this over phone from kiln workers, took him to the hospital where he was pronounced dead.

# DRM inspects progress of doubling project

PNS ■ VARANASI

Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Varanasi Division, North-Eastern Railway (NER), Vijay Kumar Panjiar, inspected the progress of various works being done under the doubling project of Aunrihar-Jaunpur (49 km) on Varanasi-Aunrihar-Jaunpur railway section in order to make the train operation ease.

The DRM first reached Aunrihar station after checking rear window trailing through his special vehicle and inspected the parameters of railway track inlays, ballast spreads, line fittings, crossover lines, overhead tractions, colour light signals, information/warning boards, station and block sections.

He also stayed at Dobhi and made a thorough inspection of the station, seeing the yard plan and inspected the map of infrastructure development works for the dou-



NER DRM VK Panjiar inspecting project progress on Varanasi-Aunrihar-Jaunpur section

bling project.

He gave directions to the officers concerned regarding the works to be done under the doubling pro-

ject at Dobhi railway station like signaling, new platform, location box, foot over bridge and station boundary etc.

Earlier, Panjiar inspected the underpass (low height subway) near Dobhi station of Aunrihar-Jaunpur railway section and reviewed the drainage system.

After this, the DRM reached Jaunpur via Kerakat, Gangauli, Muftiganj and Yadendra Nagar, seeing railway tracks, overhead cables, high tension crossing and traction lines on this railway section.

Talking to the officers concerned, he stressed on completing the doubling-cum-electrification works going on from Aunrihar to Jaunpur with full quality within the time limit so that the second line of this section could be started soon.

Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction) Gaurav Gupta, Senior Divisional Engineer (Coordination) Rakesh Ranjan, Senior Divisional Engineer-III Atul Tripathi and senior supervisors of various departments were also present during the inspection.

# Arrest of 6 illegal arms suppliers a shot in the arms of police

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

The arrest of six illegal arms suppliers has come as a shot in the arm of UP Police in exposing the networking of racketeers who used to invite illegal weapon manufacturers from Bihar to expand their illegal trade.

A joint team of UP ATS and Lalganj (Pratapgarh) police had arrested six persons from a house at Asrahi village and seized two country-made pistols of 0.32 bore, two country-made pistols of 0.315 bore, two country-made pistols of 0.12 bore, 23 semi-assembled pistols of 0.32 bore, 46 semi-finished pistol magazines, 300 live cartridges of 0.32 bore, 17 frames of country-made pistols, 30 barrels and other apparatus on the spot.

The police arrested six persons operating an interstate illegal weapon sale and manufacturing racket and identified them as Shyal Alam alias Chhotu, Mohd Sarfaraz Alam, Mohd Azad, all residents of Munger, Tirupati Nath Verma alias Guddu Gandhi of Gorakhpur, Swalheen Ansari alias Babloo of Lalganj (Pratapgarh) and his son Aqleen Ansari of Lalganj.

Police said that arrested Swalheen Ansari alias Babloo was operating the entire racket of sale and manufacturing of illegal weapons from his house for the past four to five years and he had been calling katta manufacturers from Bihar on demand for shaping fine-

shaped kattas and pistols. Police also revealed that Babloo had a vast network of agents working on a commission basis and they supplied the illicit firearms to criminal gangs in districts across UP.

Tirupati Nath Verma disclosed to the police that he had been in the illegal trade of weapons for the past four years and used to come from Gorakhpur to purchase kattas and pistols from Babloo. He also confessed that he had given Rs 75,000 advance to Babloo about three months back and had demanded kattas and 100 live cartridges from him.

Manufacturers from Munger in Bihar, who were arrested by the joint team of ATS and Pratapgarh police, told the police that they were invited by Babloo for shaping kattas and pistols and all expenses of boarding, travelling and other expenses were paid by him.

The agents who purchased illegal weapons from Babloo used to sell them at higher prices in other states and districts. As the Munger-made illegal weapons are high in demand among criminals, Babloo found an easy way to invite katta manufacturers from Bihar by offering them higher prices and selling the country-made pistols to gangs through the agents.

# AMA criticises FIR against doctors

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

The medical fraternity under the banner of Allahabad Medical Association (AMA) has expressed deep concern over the FIR being registered with Kotwali police against four unknown doctors in connection with the death of a 21-year-old Mirzapur woman.

However, all the allegations levelled by the family members against the doctors who operated on the woman were found false in the investigation.

President-elect of Allahabad Medical Association, Dr Sujit Singh, said that following the death of the Mirzapur woman on June 8 and subsequent post-mortem, an FIR was lodged against four unknown doctors due to pressure being mounted by the activists of a political party and family members of the woman even though the investigation by two different panels made it clear that

the allegations do not hold any ground. He added that since the FIR has been lodged against four unknown doctors, it had become quite difficult for doctors to work in such circumstances and under unjustified mental pressure.

The AMA said that the campaign against doctors on social media despite the facts being revealed by the panels, had also miffed them. Resident Doctors' Association of MLN Medical College, Prayagraj had recently handed over a memorandum to senior police authorities, claiming that a group of people, including some leaders of a political party, were making attempt to tarnish the image of doctors and the hospital through social media regarding the charges levelled by family of the woman.

Dr Singh said the patient hailing from Mirzapur was admitted to the emergency ward of the SRN Hospital surgery department on May 29 with acute abdominal pain and septicemia

shock. He said the doctors conducted all necessary tests and found that the patient was suffering from perforation peritonitis and operated upon her in the night on May 31. There were eight members of the staff, including five females and three males, during the entire exercise including the operation.

The doctors, meanwhile, said that the patient was not left alone at any time and this was vouched by the family members of the woman.

Later, on June 2, a close relative of the patient alleged through social media that the patient was sexually harassed during surgery.

Two separate committees were set up by MLN Medical College authorities and the chief medical officer Prayagraj and both committees found the allegations baseless. The committees questioned doctors and medical staff present during operation and found the allegations do not hold any ground.

# Successful use of bioglass in treatment of dog

Varanasi (PNS): Adding yet another feather to its cap, veterinary surgery and radiology department of the faculty of veterinary and animal sciences (Institute of Agricultural Sciences) located at Rajiv Gandhi South Campus (RGSC) of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) at Barkachha (Mirzapur) made a successful use of bioglass as graft material in treatment of cancerous wounds on a Labrador.

Recently, the department had done a caesarian section apart from some rare surgeries on animals. According to head of the department Dr NK Singh, the dog from Varanasi suffered from a large tumor (lump) in the right paw during the first wave of the coronavirus outbreak.

# People want a change in UP, says AICC secy

Varanasi (PNS): All India Congress Committee (AICC) secretary Rajesh Tiwari said that the party would fight in forthcoming assembly elections in UP with its full strength.

Criticising the Yogi Adityanath-led Bharatiya Janata Party government in UP, he said that the people in the state wanted a change and the present political scenario was also showing such signs. According to him, in such a situation only the Congress party could live up to the expectations of the people.

During his visit, Tiwari held a meeting with Congress workers at the party's Maidagin office here on Wednesday. The meeting was also attended by the party's corporators and office-bearers of its various frontal organisations.

According to Tiwari, the

Congress is strengthening its organisation by making committees from booth to city/district levels. During the meeting, he asked the party workers to apprise the people of the policies and ideology of the Congress.

At the start of the meeting, Congress city unit chief Raghavendra Choubey welcomed the AICC secretary. The meeting was attended by Congress state vice-president Vishwajay Singh, general secretary in-charge Varanasi, Devendra Pratap Singh, secretary Imran Khan, state president of Congress Seva Dal Pramod Pandey, general secretary Manindra Mishra, leader of Congress Corporators' Party Sitaram Keshari, Fasaah Hussain Babu, Afroz Ansari and Manish Morolia.

# Medical student commits suicide

Allahabad (PNS): A 21-year-old student preparing for medical examinations in Cantonment area committed suicide. He reached the bushes near Nehru Park by scooter and set himself on fire after spraying petrol. He died shortly after.

Police said that according to family members, he was depressed. The body was sent for post-mortem. Ashutosh Kumar, a resident of Jahnvipuram Sulemasarai, is a veterinary doctor. Presently, he is posted at Manda in Yamunapar. Shashwat was the eldest of their two children who was currently preparing for the medical examination. According to the police, around 5 am on Wednesday, he reached the bushes in an empty ground behind Nehru Park and committed suicide by spraying petrol on himself. He died on the spot due to severe burns.

# NCR GM reviews safety measures

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

General Manager of North Central Railway and North Eastern Railway Vinay Kumar Tripathi reviewed the safety issues of North Central Railway.

Additional General Manager, North Central Railway, Ranjan Yadav, principal head of departments, North Central Railway and divisional railway managers of Prayagraj, Jhansi and Agra divisions along with other officers of headquarters and divisions attended this meeting through video conferencing.

The general manager said that any lapse in respect of safety in operations was not acceptable in any way. He said all established rules should be followed by taking all possible precautions. Referring to the incidents of boom breaking by vehicles at level crossings, the general manager directed officials to ensure availability and proper visibility of indication boards at all crossings. He also directed that the FIR should be lodged in the boom breaking cases and necessary action should be ensured.

Apart from this, he also stressed on

controlling incidents of damage to the signal posts due to the open gates of goods trains. He said that the gates should be secured at the loading or unloading points to avoid such incidents.

The general manager also said that such open gates should be closely monitored whenever trains were passing.

Information regarding patrolling and preparations related to monsoon was also obtained from the divisions.

While talking about the infrastructure development, the general manager asked officials to take necessary steps to complete the work of Bhaupur-Panki fourth line by October-2021 as per the target. Issues like revenue earning, loading, Covid preparedness and human resource management were also discussed in the meeting.

## NCR TO PROVIDE ATP IN IMPORTANT ROUTES

Upgradation and replacement of equipment in use over Indian Railways is a continuous process and is undertaken based on its condition, operational needs and availability of resources and in order to further improve safety in train opera-

tion and generate additional line capacity, modernisation of the signaling system has been taken up.

North Central Railway has been on the forefront of modernisation of railway signaling initiatives. The NCR has already provided modern electronic interlocking (EI) at 180 stations and will soon provide EI at all stations of both Palwal-Bina and GZB-DDU sections and other routes of the zone. The NCR is amongst the three zones in Indian Railways to have automatic train protection (ATP) system (in Agra-Delhi section) and is working on projects to provide ATP in all important routes of NCR by 2024 thus enhancing train safety significantly.

The NCR zone has 847 route kilometre of automatic signaling, highest in all zones in non suburban sections and has projects in pipeline to provide automatic signaling in the balance portion of HDN routes thus enhancing line capacity on busy HDN routes.

Availability of new 5MHz spectrum in 700MHz band will help NCR in fast rollout of around 2700 route km of 4G LTE wireless system for safety of rail operations.

# DM's committee to probe LLRH Remdesivir scam

PNS ■ KANPUR

Following recommendation of a three-member committee of GSVM Medical College to suspend Covid hospital sister-in-charge of Manjulika Mishra and pharmacist Nagendra Bajpai for their involvement in the Remdesivir injections scam at LLRH Hospital, further investigations would now be carried out by a committee set up by the district magistrate.

The probe by the LLRH Hospital committee. Meanwhile, a show-cause notice has been issued to eight other nursing staff members.

GSVM Medical College Principal Dr RB Kamal said the probe report submitted by his three-member committee had been sent to the district authorities for further action.

It may be recalled that a major scam had surfaced wherein Remdesivir injections were allegedly issued in the name of dead COVID-19 patients during the second wave of novel coronavirus pandemic in the GSVM Medical College-run LLRH Hospital. The involvement of the hospital's nursing staff had come to light in removing the Remdesivir vials from the hospital's store. These injections were issued in the name of two dead patients, including a woman who died of COVID-19. As per doctor's report, the

female patient died on May 22 whereas the Remdesivir injections were issued in her name on May 26.

Thereafter, a three-member committee comprising LLRH Hospital Chief Medical Superintendent Dr Jyoti Saxena, professor of pediatric department Dr Arun Kumar Arya and chief pharmacist Rajendra Singh Patel was formed to probe into the scam.

It may be recalled that similar allegations had come to fore on April 30 when the police Crime Branch had busted a racket and nabbed four persons, including two members of LLRH Hospital nursing staff and a private hospital employee in connection with black marketing of Remdesivir.

The arrests were made after a sting operation carried out by a cop of Kakadeo police station. The cop, who approached the accused as a decoy customer, had managed to strike a deal with them for Rs 30,000 to Rs 35,000 per injection.

## DC INSPECTS MAMA TALAB

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar, while inspecting the Mama Talab situated in the Awas Vikas Colony at Machwanpur Chauraha on Wednesday, directed the sub-divisional magistrate of Sadar to verify the land records of the site for the Fasli year of 1359 and check out the ownership and also the nature of land

mentioned in records at that time.

He also directed the SDM to check the subsequent chakbandi and the corrections made in the records, if any, and submit a report. He then directed the superintendent engineer of Awas Vikas to submit a plan proposal for this site by June 22 after a detailed survey of the area and studying the present situation. He said as per the information, the total area of the site was around 2.44 hectares. He said ironically this area was not mentioned as a pond in the revenue records.

The superintendent informed the divisional commissioner that it was a low lying area which had been acquired by Awas Vikas in the year 1991 by paying compensation to the owner of the land and added that at that time also it was in the form of a pond. He also mentioned that as it was also a low lying area the nearby village water and drains of the houses flowed into it. He said Awas Vikas had plans to develop it in the coming days. The divisional commissioner was informed that currently the area was being used as a solid waste dumping ground by Kanpur Nagar Nigam. Dr Shekhar directed the Kanpur municipal commissioner to ensure that the solid waste was not dumped at this site. He directed a proper barricading and tree plantation in the area with joint efforts of Kanpur Nagar Nigam and Awas Vikas.

# Medical college gearing up for third wave

PNS ■ KANPUR

Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial Medical College Vice-Principal Dr Richa Giri on Wednesday said that the UP government had sought a detailed report on the present progress of the setting up of pediatric intensive care units (PICUs) and had directed that each government hospital should have 50 pediatric beds each.

Dr Giri said that orders had been issued to give momentum to setting up of PICUs before the apprehended third wave of COVID-19 outbreak to ensure minimal life loss.

She said the government had also issued a green signal to run the OPDs for non-COVID-19 patients. She said on account of COVID-19, the worst affected were the non-COVID patients. She said in the first phase it had been decided to run medicine, surgery, orthopedic, dermatology, ENT and ophthalmology OPDs and each day these OPDs would attend 100 patients in each of the departments.

Dr Giri said a decision had also been taken to attend to 50 patients each in the remaining departments like pediatrics, neurology, neurosurgery, dentistry, and psychiatry.

She said to prevent the crowd and to strictly maintain Covid protocol, it had been decided that those seeking medical check-up would have to seek prior appointment.

# NCL CMD recommissions dragline

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) CMD Prabhat Kumar Sinha on Tuesday recommissioned the Yamuna dragline of Jayant Project into the mine. In place of replacement of dragline boom by repairing and recommissioning it there has been a monetary saving of more than 80 per cent. On the occasion Sinha said, "due to exceptional skills and tireless efforts of team NCL such huge and seemingly impossible tasks are completed in record time with minimum cost and proper safety". Sinha appreciated the efforts made by the management for the



supply of necessary spares from other coalfields and coordination with various agencies for the execution of this work. Sinha inspected the Jayant mine and reviewed the preparation for monsoon besides the construction work

of important First Mile Connectivity (FMC) projects. Significantly, the dragline is the world's largest machine employed in mining operations. As many as 23 draglines are deployed to remove overburden of six mines of NCL.

# Gkp-ANVT special to run from today

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

For the convenience of passengers the restoration of the following special trains will be done by the railway administration. Besides, the rake composition of some special trains has been changed. All coaches in these trains will be of reserved class and passengers travelling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 prevention guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said.

**CHHAPRA-NAUTANWA SPL:** The 05105 Chhapra-Nautanwa special train will be run from June 21 until further notice. Likewise the 05106 Nautanwa-Chhapra special train will be run from June 21 until further notice.

**CHHAPRA-LUCKNOW JN. SPL:** The 05053 Chhapra-Lucknow Jn special train will be run from July 1 until further notice. The 05054 Lucknow Jn.-Chhapra special train will be run June 28 until further notice.

**CHHAPRA-FARRUKHABAD SPL:** The 05083 Chhapra-Farrukhabad special train will be run from June 29 until further notice. The 05084 Farrukhabad-Chhapra special train will be run from June 30 until further notice.

**CHHAPRA KACHERI-GOMTINAGAR SPL:** The 05114 Chhapra Kacheri-Gomtinagar special train will be run from July 1 until further notice. The 05113 Gomtinagar-Chhapra special train will be run from July 2 until further notice.

**GORAKHPUR-ANVT SPL:** The 02595 Gorakhpur-Anand Vihar Terminus (ANVT) special train will be run from June 17 until further notice. The 02596 Anand Vihar Terminus-Gorakhpur special train will be run from June 18 until further notice.

## CHANGES IN RAKE COMPOSITION

Changes have been made in the rake composition of 05053/05054 Chhapra-Lucknow Jn.-Chhapra and 05083/05084 Chhapra-Farrukhabad-Chhapra special trains. As per the changed rake composition, a total of 21 coaches, including two of SLRD, eight of general second class, eight of sleeper class, two of AC third class and one of AC second class will be attached in these trains. Besides, the rest of the above-mentioned trains will run as per their pre-scheduled route, stoppages and timings.

# Drive launched to end child beggary

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Uttar Pradesh government, in a bid to eliminate child beggary, has launched a special drive to identify such children and send them to shelter homes. The drive will also take action against the gang which forces children to beggary and arrest them as well. On the first day, four children were trapped while the gang behind them fled the scene.

A special team of police has been set up to keep an eye on such people who run a child beggary syndicate in Kanpur.

DPO Abhay Singh said child beggary had taken deep roots in Kanpur but ironically the syndicate never came to fore as they maintained a vigil on these child beggars from a far distance. He said child beggary was not alone because of the syndicate but a big number of parents also forced their children to beg outside Malls, shops and in main markets. He said now because a crackdown had been launched on the child beggars it could bring down the number of child beggars in Kanpur.

Singh said the main causes of child beggary in Kanpur were prevalence of poverty, illiteracy, by inheritance of caste, handicap, diseases and death of parents. He said it had been observed that children from lower socio-economic levels were more likely to be abused due to parental poverty, and hence were forced to beg so that they could supplement the total earning of the family. He said congenital birth deformity in such children or those children who were maimed to gain sympathy were the part of the syndicate which forced them into beggary and with nowhere to go or no one to protect them they were forced to beg for them.

Singh said as per the report of the National Human Rights Commission of India, 40,000 children are abducted every year which roughly means one child went missing every eight minutes in India, over 50 per cent of whom remained untraced.

# Police rescue newborn

PNS ■ KANPUR

A six-day-old child being taken from Delhi to Bihar was rescued by the Harbansh Mohal police from Swatantrata Sangram Senani Express train on Wednesday.

On a tip off from Delhi Police, the Harbansh Mohal police arrested the couple and the man's mother-in-law along with the child. The child was later handed over to the Delhi Police.

According to reports, Govind Kumar, a native of Muzaffarpur (Bihar) had lodged an FIR with the Fatehpur Beri police of South Delhi about the theft of his child. Govind, a daily wage, lived in a rented house in Gurgaon (Haryana). His wife, Puja, had given birth to a child six days back. As Govind was living in a very small room, his friend, Haripal, took them to his friend Raman's house in Fatehpur Beri in Delhi for the proper care of the newborn. On Tuesday morning, when Puja woke up, she found her child



Harbansh Mohal police recovered the stolen six-day old child with the accused.

missing along with Haripal and Raman. On finding the mobile phones of Haripal and Raman switched off, Govind informed the police and the cops immediately traced the location of Haripal and Raman and arrested them with the help of Harbansh Mohal police.

During interrogation, Raman told the cops that the child was given to his brother-in-law Vidyannand Yadav who along with his wife Makhni Devi and mother-in-law Rampari had left for Bihar by

the Swatantrata Sangram Senani Express train.

Then the Delhi police approached the Kanpur police and apprised them about the incident.

Harbansh Mohal Station House Officer Satyadeo Sharma said all the three accused along with the child had been given in custody of Delhi police.

Vidyannand said being issues, he had taken this step with the help of his brother-in-law Raman.

# Altigreen partners with MoEVing

PNS ■ KANPUR

Altigreen, an electric vehicle OEM (original equipment manufacturer), has partnered with electric fleet startup MoEVing to launch its EVs in Delhi-NCR.

Delivery of the state-of-the-art NEEV 3-wheel EVs for MoEVing's portfolio in Delhi-NCR has already commenced. The two partners will work together to augment the adoption of EVs over traditional internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles in a bid to relieve the city's stressed air quality.

Vikash Mishra, founder and CEO of MoEVing said Altigreen NEEV was an L5 Cargo vehicle that had been designed keeping the specific needs of Indian users in mind. He said it was a matter of delight to have Altigreen's 3W as part of the supply portfolio.

He said the high-performance vehicle built customer confidence, eliminated driver range anxiety and the need for day charging. He said Altigreen's NEEV product was the perfect example of it in India.

He said at MoEVing, they had deployed multiple Altigreen NEEVs across Bengaluru and Delhi NCR and look forward to deploying more NEEV EVs across all cities pan India.

Commenting on the partnership, Amitabh Saran, CEO, Altigreen Propulsion Labs, said there was a growing demand for sustainable last-mile services in Delhi-NCR, owing to environmental concerns and increased operational costs of ICE vehicles. He said the organisation believed that Altigreen NEEV provided an ideal, robust, long-term solution that was tailor-made for Indian road conditions.

He said the partnership with MoEVing would help both the companies achieve their vision of deploying environment friendly mobility solutions in the region.

Altigreen's NEEV, with its 11-kWh battery solution, can cover up to 125 km with 550 Kg payload in city traffic conditions.

# CDO reviews development works in Kalyanpur block

**Kanpur (PNS):** Chief Development Officer Dr Mahendra Kumar, while reviewing the development works in Kalyanpur development block on Wednesday, issued warning to the officials concerned for their poor and apathetic performance in Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) and said it had to be set right in 48 hours or strict action would be taken against them.

He said by the end of this month the target was to ensure 60 per cent of the work was completed.

The CDO directed the officials to give further momentum to Operation Kayakalp and to ensure that the construction of the Panchayat Bhawan was completed. He warned the officials against any compromise on time schedule or quality of work.

He said all those found involved in laxity and dereliction

of duties would face severe action.

He also directed the officials to give momentum to the MNREGA projects also.

He said as per the state government orders, all development works need to be completed on time with strict quality control.

He said the focus was on the housing scheme for the poor in the rural areas. He said the work had to be carried out in full transparency and proper feedback of all the schemes and their progress and quality control should be regularly reported to the authorities.

He then asked the reason for the poor performance in the MNREGA work and directed the officials to ensure it was given speed so that it was accomplished at the earliest.

Over two dozen officials of various departments attended the meet.

# IMA-Kanpur to observe June 18 as Protest Day

**Kanpur (PNS):** On the directives of the Indian Medical Association, headquarters, the IMA-Kanpur has decided to observe June 18 as Protest Day to show solidarity and strongly express resentment of the medical fraternity which has recently been the target of mob violence in prominent states of the country. The IMA strongly condemns the statement of Baba Ram Dev who has openly disgraced the medical profession and made a mockery of allopathic mode of treatment. The medical professionals will on June 18 wear black armbands and sport black ribbons to express their concern against the increasing violence against doctors and the "apathy of the government which has kept its eyes closed to all this".

Addressing press persons, president of IMA-Kanpur, Dr Neelam Mishra, said what could be more disgraceful for the medical professionals that allopathy was termed as sham.

# Ansys to fund IIT-K SIIC Mission Bharat O2 project

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur has raised funding from the global leader and innovator of engineering simulation software Ansys, under the Mission Bharat O2, to support manufacturing of oxygen concentrators on a rapid scale.

This association comes at a crucial juncture to promote indigenous manufacturing at par with global standards. Ansys has nurtured a legacy of contributing towards development initiatives across India. Their corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts show a deep commitment towards

nation building. Commenting on SIIC's vocal for local vision, SIIC CEO Dr Nikhil Agarwal says, "The SIIC team at IIT Kanpur aims to turn the country into a manufacturing hub by supporting product innovation that originated from the cutting-edge research and development. Our incubated companies have contributed immensely since COVID-19 struck India. With this experience, we want to go a step further to build a nexus of local manufacturers who will put India on the map of the global manufacturing hubs. The support from Ansys is a much-needed contribution in that direction." Speaking about the initia-

tive, Ansys area vice president (India and South Asia Pacific) Rafiq Somani, said, "Mission Bharat O2 under the aegis of SIIC, IIT Kanpur is a crucial step towards the indigenisation of oxygen concentrators and plants that will go a long way in fighting COVID-19 here. We, at Ansys, are committed to the Make in India initiative and for this to be successful, manufacturing is the key and healthcare is no exception. Simulation driven product development is the edge that will provide that much needed innovation, improved quality and decrease risks. We are happy to partner with the IIT Kanpur team and help the Mission Bharat O2 task force facilitate this decentralised and

rapid-scale production of the oxygen concentrators across the nation."

The Mission Bharat O2 project, led by Prof Amitabha Bandyopadhyay, Professor in-charge, Innovation & Incubation, IIT Kanpur, Srikant Sastri, director, FIRST-IITK and chairman, I3G Advisory Network, and Rahul Patel, head of strategic initiatives, SIIC IIT Kanpur will support local manufacturers to develop oxygen plants and concentrators. The initiative will operate on a decentralised model to generate indigenous manufacturing capabilities and a distribution network of quality health infrastructure.

Through Mission Bharat O2, the SIIC aims to create

decentralised manufacturing pockets where Indian manufacturers will develop oxygen concentrators and plants on a rapid scale.

The SIIC has also selected eight manufacturing partners from 70+ participants who competed to manufacture indigenous oxygen plants and oxygen concentrators under the Mission Bharat O2. With this initiative, SIIC IIT Kanpur has taken a step forward to make the Indian healthcare manufacturing ecosystem self-sustaining by reducing dependence on imports. As a coveted funding partner, Ansys' generous support will pivot SIIC's efforts towards efficient execution of the Mission Bharat O2.

# DM inspects construction works

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

During his hectic tour of Madihan block DM Praveen Kumar Laxkar inspected construction works and warned working agencies to work with quality otherwise remain prepared to face the music. During the inspection of integrated special intermediate college the DM expressed discontent over the quality of works and warned the engineer to improve it otherwise



the action will be taken. He was appraised by the engineer that work was stopped due to the paucity of fund. The DM spoke to MD of the working agency and was informed that the fund was to be released the same day. The DM inspected the under construction work of a mini stadium located at Patehra and was informed that against the allocation of ₹331 lakh, a sum of ₹248 lakh had been released and the work was to be completed within this month. He inspected the strengthening work of DIET building for which ₹115.14 had been sanctioned

and ₹25.74 lakh had been released. The DM took the engineers to task and warned to improve the quality by using material as per the norms. During the inspection of under construction building of fire brigade at Madihan the DM warned the engineer for inferior quality of work and directed to improve it and ensure construction as per the norms. He was appraised by the engineer that against the allocation of ₹828.37 lakh the work had been completed as per the released fund of ₹277 lakh.

**CASH RECOVERED:** Under the joint operation of Katra Kotwali police, SOG and SWAT team police recovered ₹35 lakh out of ₹50 lakh which had been made off by miscreants from a bank premises on June 8. Giving details in this connection, Superintendent of Police (SP) Ajay Singh said on Tuesday the miscreants had been identified in the CCTV footage of the bank and he had formed a team under the supervision of ASP (City) Sanjay Kumar. The SP said the team led by SHO Katra Kotwali Swaminath Prasad raided the hideout of the miscreants in the jungle situated in their village with the help of MP police but somehow they managed to flee from there. After a search the police recovered the cash. He announced a reward of ₹25,000 for the police team. According to the SP, the accused were identified as Kokisasi and Kabirsasi, residents of Kadiyasasi village under Voda police station in Rajgarh district, MP.

# Action taken against illegal mining

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAUJ

Newly-joined ADM Pooja Nigam has taken strict action against illegal mining. A team comprising SDM Satyendra Singh and District Mines Officer RB Singh was formed under the leadership of ADM. She said they had checked two ghats — one at Bandhauli Khand-3 and the other at Bhedhi Khurd village. She further added that

they had checked geotags and instructed the lease owners that mining should be done according to the government guidelines. She checked 11 sand dump licenses and found five sand dumps had dumped sand more than the permission given to them. She said they had been given permission to dump 30,000 cubic metre of sand but as dumping was much more so we fined them a total of around ₹1 crore.

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ASSAM RIFLES, SHILLONG - 793 010**

**ASSAM RIFLES MERITORIOUS SPORTSPERSON RECRUITMENT RALLY 2021**

- Online applications are invited from Indian Nationals Male & Female both as prescribed in detail advertisement to fill up 131 vacancies in Rifleman/Rifewomen General Duty posts in the Assam Rifles against Meritorious Sportspersons Recruitment Scheme.
- Last date of receipt of applications for all candidates is **26 Jul 2021**. Please login to official website of the Assam Rifles [www.assamrifles.gov.in](http://www.assamrifles.gov.in) to access the online Application Form. The online SERVER will start functioning from **26 Jun 2021**.
- Eligibility Criteria.** Age Limit, Education Qualification, Qualitative Requirements, Relaxation in Age, Physical Standards etc. and other instructions are furnished in detailed advertisement available at official website of the Assam Rifles [www.assamrifles.gov.in](http://www.assamrifles.gov.in) and Employment News dated **26 Jun 2021**.
- How to apply.** Applications will be accepted through online mode only. To apply, fill up the online application by clicking on "ONLINE APPLICATION" option and follows the instructions given on the Online Application portal of the website. The online applications portal will remain functional till last date of submission of online Application Form.
- Candidates to undergo Physical Standard Test (PST), Field Trials in respective sports and Medical Examination at own risk and expense. Injuries including fatal due to the test during recruitment rally and transit will not be compensated in any matter by the Govt or Assam Rifles.
- Vacancies are tentative & may increase or decrease. The Assam Rifles has right to make any change in the advertisement or cancel it without assigning any reasons.

## Kerala: Now, SDPI launches agitation for new district

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

As a prelude to its original demand for the creation of a separate Malabar State incorporating the regions of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), the political outfit of the extremist organisation Popular Front of India, launched a month-long agitation on Wednesday in Malappuram asking for the setting up of a new district with Tirur as district headquarters.

According to a release issued by the SDPI, the next 30 days would see party activists staging demonstrations in front of all Taluk offices in the district calling for the immediate creation of the new district. The Muslim Youth League in its annual State conference held last year had declared that the party would launch an agitation for the creation of separate Malabar State bifurcating Kerala and adding some districts of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

It may be remembered that Malappuram district was formed in 1969 by the then United Front Government led by the CPI(M) in which the Muslim League, CPI and some regional outfits were the constituents. The Muslim League had joined the alliance on the condition that a sepa-

rate Muslim district would be formed as a quid pro quo.

The year 2021 being the centenary year of the Moplah Rebellion of 1921, an event dear to the Islamic outfits in the State. Though it was launched as an agitation against Britain demanding the restoration of the Khalifa of Turkey, the struggle turned out to be a pogrom in which thousands of local residents belonging to a particular community were annihilated for their refusal to undergo religious conversion.

"We have been subjected to the worst kind of treatment during the last five decades and we want speedy economic development of this region. The formation of a new district with Tirur as head quarters is the only solution for the same," said the SDPI release.

Tirur is the birth place of Thunchathu Ramanujan Ezhuthachan, the father of Malayalam language who authored Aadyatma Ramayanam. But the local body controlled by conservative Islamists have not allowed to install a statue of the Father of the Malayalam language in his place of birth.

Leaders of the SDPI called on P Ubaidulla, MLA and submitted a memorandum demanding the formation of the new district.

## PM to launch crash course for frontline workers on June 18

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a 'Customized Crash Course programme for Covid-19 Frontline workers' on Friday via video conferencing.

The launch will commence the programme in 111 training centres spread over 26 States.

The launch on June 18 will be followed by the Prime Minister's address. Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Mahendra Nath Pandey will also be present on the occasion. The programme aims to skill



and upskill over one lakh Covid warriors across the country, according to the Prime Minister's Office. The training will be imparted to Covid warriors in six customised job roles namely Home Care

Support, Basic Care Support, Advanced Care Support, Emergency Care Support, Sample Collection Support, and Medical Equipment Support.

The programme has been designed as a special programme under the Central Component of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0, with a total financial outlay of Rs. 276 crore.

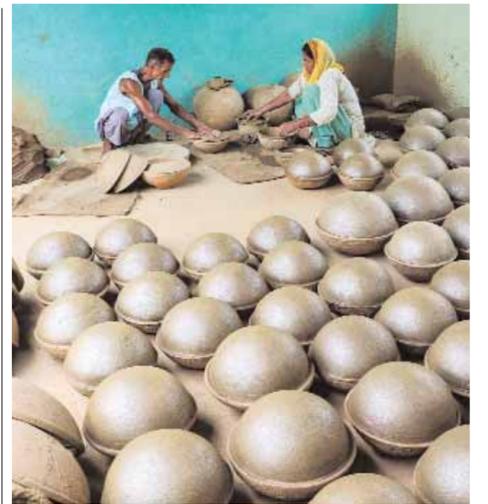
The programme will create skilled non-medical healthcare workers to fill the present and future needs of manpower in the health sector, said the statement from the PMO.

## Police grills actor Mithun for inciting poll-violence

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Amid BJP's continued allegations of State repression of its workers and leaders the Kolkata Police on Wednesday grilled super star Mithun Chakrabarty for allegedly provoking violence during the elections. The actor who was currently in Puri was virtually grilled for about 45 minutes by the additional Officer in-charge of the Manicktalla Police Station and was asked whether he had incited people through his speeches or not.

The Bollywood star had campaigned for the BJP in the State polls and had apparently in a bid to perk up the crowds recited a number of dialogues from Bengali films that he had acted in.



Potters make earthen pots at their house as pots are in much demand during the summer season, at a village about 30 km from Jammu on Wednesday

## TN logs 10,448 new cases, Kerala sees 13,270

KOCHI/CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu has stabilised the transmission of Covid-19 in the State as the data furnished by the Directorate of Health and Preventive Medicine shows that the instances of the pandemic was on a downward journey.

On Wednesday, the State logged 10,448 new cases while 270 succumbed to the pandemic. Coimbatore and Erode, the industrial hub, had 1,420 and 1,123 new cases respectively while Tirupur had 608

new patients. Kerala, which begins the lifting of lock down by phases on Thursday registered 13,270 new cases and 147 deaths. Test Positivity Rate in the State as on Wednesday evening was 11.79. There were 1.09 lakh patients across the State as on Wednesday.

The liquor outlets in the State would start operating from 9 am on Thursday and there is no restriction other than the Covid-related standard protocols.

**कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण मण्डल (द्वितीय), लेसा मर्यादित विद्युत वितरण निगम लि 33/11 केवी उपकेन्द्र, मंत्री आवास, विभूति खण्ड, गोमती नगर लखनऊ। (अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना)** इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमन्त्रित निम्नांकित ई-निविदा दिनांक-01.07.2021 को 16:00 बजे तक ई-पोर्टल पर अपलोड की जा सकेगी एवं दिनांक-02.07.2021 को 12:00 बजे खोली जायेगी। निविदा का पूर्ण विवरण वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड कर देखी जा सकेगी। संशोधन, शुद्धिकरण, विस्तारीकरण, नियम एवं शर्तों ई-टेंडर की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध रहेगी। अशोधनकारी के पास एक या समस्त निविदाओं को किसी भी स्तर पर निरस्त, विभक्त करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित रहेगा। निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अन्तर्गत पड़ जाता है, तो निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस में नियत समय पर खोली जायेगी। निविदा का विवरण निम्नवत् है :- 1. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या-02/विनिवि-दि/0/21-22 :- अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण खण्ड, चिनहट के कार्य क्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत ओ एण्ड एमो के तहत 33/11 केवी विद्युत उपकेन्द्रों पर स्थापित 11 केवी00 पैनल की टेस्टिंग का कार्य। निविदा प्रारंभ रू 1180.00 (जीएसटी सहित), धरोहर राशि रू 3600.00 मात्र। 2. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या-03/विनिवि-दि/0/21-22 :- अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण खण्ड, गोमतीनगर के कार्य क्षेत्र में ओ एण्ड एमो के तहत स्थापित प्रिंटर तथा कम्प्यूटर की मरम्मत एवं अनुक्षण का कार्य। निविदा प्रारंभ रू 1180.00 (जीएसटी सहित), धरोहर राशि रू 2000.00 मात्र। 3. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या-04/विनिवि-दि/0/21-22 :- अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण खण्ड, गोमतीनगर के अन्तर्गत एमो एण्ड आरओ मद के तहत 33/11 केवी00 विद्युत उपकेन्द्र, विश्वासखण्ड, गोमतीनगर उपकेन्द्र पर आइसोलेटर बदलना, ट्रंच का निर्माण, वी0सी0वी0 मरम्मत, आउटगोइंग फीडरो से सम्बन्धित मरम्मत का कार्य। निविदा प्रारंभ रू 1180.00 (जीएसटी सहित), धरोहर राशि रू 2000.00 मात्र। 4. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या-05- विनिवि-दि/0/21-22 :- अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण खण्ड, गोमतीनगर के अन्तर्गत एमो एण्ड आरओ मद के तहत 33/11 केवी00 विद्युत उपकेन्द्र, विश्वासखण्ड, गोमतीनगर उपकेन्द्र पर आइसोलेटर बदलना, ट्रंच का निर्माण, वी0सी0वी0 मरम्मत, आउटगोइंग फीडरो से सम्बन्धित मरम्मत का कार्य। निविदा प्रारंभ रू 1180.00 (जीएसटी सहित), धरोहर राशि रू 2000.00 मात्र। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय वितरण मण्डल (द्वितीय), लेसा लखनऊ पत्रांक - 743 दिनांक : 16.08.2021 "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें एवं एल0ई0डी का प्रयोग करें" टोल फ्री नं0-1800-1800-440"

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ**  
Corrigendum No.: 50195023  
Dated: 16.06.2021  
Third Corrigendum  
On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Material Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj is issued a corrigendum in Tender No. 50195023D against EPS Tender Notice No. 21/32 dated 04.05.2021 or RO No. 520/21 (R).  
Tender No.: 50195023D. From: 30171654D, To: 50195023D. Other Terms & conditions of Tender remain unchanged. 52021(R)  
24 x 7 Passengers Service Helpline No. 138

## Maharashtra deaths drop to 1,236, cases rise to 10,107

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Covid-19 deaths dropped to 1,236 in Maharashtra on Wednesday, even as the State logged 10,107 infections and recorded recoveries by 10,567 patients.

A day after the daily pandemic deaths - inflated by 1,070 "old" and unaccounted

fatalities - jumped to 1,458 in the state, the fatalities went down to 1,236. The daily deaths comprised 237 new deaths and 999 "old" deaths.

The infections went up by 577 - from 9,350 on Tuesday and 10,107 on Wednesday. With 1,458 deaths reported on Wednesday, the Covid-19 toll in the State jumped from

1,14,154 to 1,15,390. With 10,107 fresh infections, the total infections in the State rose from 59,24,773 to 59,34,880.

As 10,567 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the State after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second

week of March last year increased from 56,69,179 to 56,79,746. The recovery rate in the state rose 95.69 per cent to 95.7 per cent.

The total "active cases" in the state dropped from 1,38,361 to 1,36,661. The fatality rate in the state went up from 1.93 per cent to 1.94 per cent.

**कार्यालय उपनिदेशक (वि०/या०) राज्य कृषि उत्पादन मण्डी परिषद, उ० प्र०**  
नवीन गल्ला मण्डी स्थल, महेवा चुंगी, गोरखपुर- 273016  
पत्रांक: वि०/या०-(निविदा)/2021- 657 दिनांक : 16.06.2021

**ई-निविदा सूचना (अल्पकालीन)**  
निम्नलिखित कार्यो की ई-निविदायेँ वित्तीय रूप से सुदृढ एवं मण्डी परिषद में अनुमती फर्मा से दिनांक 08.07.2021 को अपराह्न 01:30 बजे ई-टेंडर के माध्यम से आनलाईन कार्यालय उपनिदेशक (वि०/या०) गोरखपुर में खोली जायेगी। उक्त निविदायेँ दिनांक 07.07.2021 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक वेबसाइट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) पर ऑन लाईन भरकर अपलोड की जा सकती है। निविदाता को दिनांक 08.07.2021 अपराह्न 1:00 बजे तक समस्त बिड डाक्यूमेंट एवं समस्त आवश्यक प्रपत्र सहित कार्यालय उपनिदेशक (वि०/या०) राज्य कृषि उत्पादन मण्डी परिषद, नवीन गल्ला एवं सब्जी मण्डी स्थल महेवा चुंगी गोरखपुर में जमा करना होगा।

| क्र० सं० | कार्य का नाम   | कार्य की लागत (रु० लाख में) | निविदा का मूल्य (रु० लाख में) | धरोहर धनराशि (रु० लाख में) | कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि | पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों की श्रेणी |
|----------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1        | नवीन मण्डी स्थल अयोध्या में एक नग 50 टन क्षमता का कम्प्यूटराइज्ड इलेक्ट्रॉनिक वे-ब्रिजेज के तीन वर्ष तक कम्प्रेहेन्सिव अनुरक्षण एवं संचालन का कार्य 2021_RKUMP_595322  | 17.70                       | 1180.00                       | 1.77                       | 03 वर्ष                  | निर्माता कम्पनी             |
| 2        | नवीन मण्डी स्थल रायबरेली में एक नग 50 टन क्षमता का कम्प्यूटराइज्ड इलेक्ट्रॉनिक वे-ब्रिजेज के तीन वर्ष तक कम्प्रेहेन्सिव अनुरक्षण एवं संचालन का कार्य 2021_RKUMP_595323 | 17.70                       | 1180.00                       | 1.77                       | 03 वर्ष                  | निर्माता कम्पनी             |
| 3        | नवीन मण्डी स्थल आनन्दनगर में एक नग 50 टन क्षमता का कम्प्यूटराइज्ड इलेक्ट्रॉनिक वे-ब्रिजेज के तीन वर्ष तक कम्प्रेहेन्सिव अनुरक्षण एवं संचालन का कार्य 2021_RKUMP_595325 | 17.70                       | 1180.00                       | 1.77                       | 03 वर्ष                  | निर्माता कम्पनी             |
| 4        | नवीन मण्डी स्थल खलीलाबाद में एक नग 50 टन क्षमता का कम्प्यूटराइज्ड इलेक्ट्रॉनिक वे-ब्रिजेज के तीन वर्ष तक कम्प्रेहेन्सिव अनुरक्षण एवं संचालन का कार्य 2021_RKUMP_595327 | 17.70                       | 1180.00                       | 1.77                       | 03 वर्ष                  | निर्माता कम्पनी             |
| 5        | नवीन मण्डी स्थल रूदौली में एक नग 50 टन क्षमता का कम्प्यूटराइज्ड इलेक्ट्रॉनिक वे-ब्रिजेज के तीन वर्ष तक कम्प्रेहेन्सिव अनुरक्षण एवं संचालन का कार्य 2021_RKUMP_595361   | 17.70                       | 1180.00                       | 1.77                       | 03 वर्ष                  | निर्माता कम्पनी             |

नोट- टेंडर डाक्यूमेंट वेबसाइट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) पर दिनांक 07.07.2021 अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक उपलब्ध रहेगा। निविदा शर्त वेब साइट पर देखी जा सकती है।  
उप निदेशक (वि०/या०) मण्डी परिषद गोरखपुर

**OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER GOVT. PRINTING AND STATIONERY, MADHYA PRADESH, BHOPAL-462011**  
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**E-TENDER NOTICE (Printing Articles)**  
Bhopal, dated 14.06.2021  
No.GPR/32/1/0016/2021/PUR/892  
Online Bidding go through IT Department Portal <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> and Sealed Technical & Commercial E-Tenders are invited on or before 2.00 PM on 1-7-2021 as per Key-Dates from the manufacturers or their Agents/Authorized Dealers for the supply of various types of printing materials for the Govt. Printing Press, Bhopal.

- Tender Document and agreement details of tender are also available at website [www.govtprintemp.nic.in](http://www.govtprintemp.nic.in).
- In all respects Hard Copy of the E-Tender document and sample of the items with list (sealed) must be received at the office of the undersigned as per key dates. Envelope 'A' Hard Copy of Technical Tender will be opened ONLINE as per key dates in the Office of the undersigned in the presence of such tenderers or their authorized representatives as may be present.
- All corrigendum/amendments/changes; if any will only be issued and made available only on <https://www.mptenders.gov.in>

Deputy Controller, Govt. Printing and Stationery, M.P., Bhopal.  
G-13387/21

**North Eastern Railway Notification No. 159/2021**  
**IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR RAIL PASSENGERS**  
It is notified for information of general public that following special express trains will be Restored as under-

| S.N. | Train No.  | Restoration Date                 |
|------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1    | 05105 Chhapra-Nautanwa Special Train               | 21.06.2021 to till further order |
| 2    | 05106 Nautanwa-Chhapra Special Train               | 21.06.2021 to till further order |
| 3    | 05053 Chhapra-Lucknow Jn. Special Train            | 01.07.2021 to till further order |
| 4    | 05054 Lucknow Jn.-Chhapra Special Train            | 28.06.2021 to till further order |
| 5    | 05083 Chhapra-Farrukhabad Special Train            | 29.06.2021 to till further order |
| 6    | 05084 Farrukhabad-Chhapra Special Train            | 30.06.2021 to till further order |
| 7    | 05114 Chhapra Kacheri-Gomti Nagar Special Train    | 01.07.2021 to till further order |
| 8    | 05113 Gomti Nagar-Chhapra Kacheri Special Train    | 02.07.2021 to till further order |
| 9    | 02595 Gorakhpur-Anand Vihar Terminal Special Train | 17.06.2021 to till further order |
| 10   | 02596 Anand Vihar Terminal-Gorakhpur Special Train | 18.06.2021 to till further order |

Note - For trains at Sl. No. 1, 2 and 7 to 10, there is No Change in the Days of Run, Stoppages and Rake Composition.  
For trains at Sl. No. 3 to 6, there is No Change in the Days of Run and Stoppages but Rake Composition will be Revised as under-  
SLRD - 02, General Second Class - 08, Sleeper - 08, AC Third Class - 02, AC Second Class - 01 = 21 Coaches  
CPRO-T-71 Chief Pass. Trans. Manager, Gorakhpur  
About any Passenger Amenity complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955  
Never travel on roof and foot boards

## Mumbai cops, BMC launch probe into fraud in pvt HSG society vax camp

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After the residents of a city housing society alleged a fraud in the vaccination camp held by a private agency in their housing society, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Mumbai police on Wednesday launched independent investigations into the alleged fraud.

The HHRWA office bearers told the police that the three alleged fraudsters collected ₹4.92 lakh from 390 residents, housekeeping staff, security guards, drivers or domestic helpers on May 30 for conducting a vaccination camp. The camp was conducted by three facilitators, including Rajesh Pandey and Sanjay Gupta, who claimed to represent leading private hospitals like the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital (KDAH) and the Nanavati Hospital. They agreed to provide 400 vaccine doses for around ₹1,260 each, for which the society paid around ₹4.92 lakh. However the vaccination facilitator did not provide receipts for the

money taken. On their part, the KDAH and the Nanavati Hospital have distanced themselves from the questionable vaccination camp by saying that they had nothing to do with the vaccination camp conducted at Hiranandani Heritage Society. They said that they were not approached by the housing society. The residents got suspicious after as none of the beneficiaries were given the vaccination certificates. They also noticed that the vials used for vaccination camp bore 'Not For Sale' stamp.

The society members approached one of the facilitators Sanjay Gupta for vaccination certificates. However, Gupta said that the certificates would be given after 3-4 days. Later on the residents found out after June 8 that the certificates were being generated from different hospitals in the city, without the date of vaccination i.e., May 30.

## Cabinet clears corporatisation of Ordnance Factory Board

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the corporatisation of Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) by splitting it into seven entities to improve autonomy, accountability and efficiency. There are 42 ordnance factories spread all over the country and its employees had opposed corporatisation when it was mooted more than two years back.

There are more than 82,000 employees in the ordnance factories and many of them had resorted to a strike in 2019 and gave a notice for agitation last year also against the proposal to corporatize these units. Based in Kolkata, the Ordnance factories have a history of more than 200 years old and now manufacture guns, missiles, tanks and other such equipment for the armed forces. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) last year in July had approved to convert the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) "into one or more than one 100

per cent Government-owned corporate entities". The official communique regarding this also said then the corporatisation of OFB will improve its autonomy, accountability and efficiency in Ordnance Supplies.

It said the government has taken note of the strike by workers of the OFB against the proposed corporatisation and their concerns in the notice dated 04.08.2020 from the three recognized Federations of Defence Civilian Employees, proposing to call an indefinite strike from 06.00 am of 12.10.2020 by the Defence Civilian Employees of Ordnance Factories against the government move to corporatize OFB. An Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Minister of Defence to oversee and guide the entire process of corporatisation of the OFB, including transition support and redeployment plan

of employees while safeguarding their wages and retirement benefits.

The EGoM comprised Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister for Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of State for Labour and Employment Santosh Kumar Gangwar and Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievance and Pension Dr Jitendra Singh. PNS

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER ELECTRICAL CIRCLE (R&B) NIRMAL SODHA BHUBANESWAR**  
E-mail: [seebbs2010@gmail.com](mailto:seebbs2010@gmail.com)  
Bid Identification No.S.E.E.C (R&B) 02/2021-22  
No.1228 /Date.11.06.2021/

The Superintending Engineer, Electrical Circle (R&B) Odisha, Bhubaneswar on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids for Construction of Modular OT works which are to be received through online bidding, double cover system as detailed in: <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>. The details of bid documents will be available in the above website from 5.00 P.M. of 21.06.2021 to 5:00 P.M. of 06.07.2021. The bidders must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate of Class II or III. Bids received online shall be opened at 11:30 A.M. of 07.07.2021 in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Electrical Circle (R&B) Odisha, Bhubaneswar. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in).  
Addendum / Corrigendum, if required, will be available only in the Website.  
Superintending Engineer Electrical Circle (R&B) Odisha, BBSR  
OIPR-34008/11/0002/2122

# Covishield doses gap based on scientific data: Min



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Facing criticism for increasing the gap between two Covishield doses without allegedly taking all the experts into confidence and being questioned if the indigenously developed Covaxin contained newborn calf serum, the Government on Wednesday defended itself on both the counts and termed the politicisation of the issue as "unfortunate".

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said the decision to increase the gap between two doses of Covishield has been taken in a transparent manner based on scientific data. "Decision to increase the gap between administering 2 doses of #COVISHIELD has been taken in a transparent manner based on scientific data. India has a robust mechanism to evaluate data. It's unfortunate that such an important issue is being politicised!" he tweeted.

The National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI) chair N K Arora said, "The decision regarding enhancing interval between two doses of Covishield was based on scientific evidence and taken in a transparent manner." "There was no dissenting voice among the NTAGI members," he asserted.

Sharing details of the decision taken in this regard, the Health Ministry in a statement said that on May 13, it had approved extending the gap between the two doses of the Covishield vaccine from six to eight weeks to 12 to 16 weeks

following a recommendation from the NTAGI.

"The 22nd meeting of Covid-19 Working Group of NTAGI was held on May 10. There, a proposal for a change in dose interval for Covishield, used under the National Vaccination Policy, was considered. Based on the real-life evidence, particularly from the United Kingdom, the Covid-19 Working Group agreed to increase the interval between two doses of Covishield Vaccine to 12 to 16 weeks," the statement said.

"This recommendation was taken up for discussion at the meeting of the Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of NTAGI held on May 13 under the joint chairmanship of the secretary of the Department of Biotechnology, the secretary of Health Resources and the DG of the Indian Council of Medical Research," it said.

"The STSC of NTAGI gave the following recommendation: 'as per the Covid-19 Working Group recommendation, a dosing interval of minimum three months between two doses of Covishield vaccine was recommended,'" the statement said.

In both the meetings -- of the Covid-19 Working Group and of the STSC -- no dissent was given by any of the three members who have been quoted in the news report, namely Dr Mathew Varghese, Dr M D Gupte and Dr J P Muliyl, the statement said adding that Dr Varghese has denied talking to the reporter on the issue of his

## Cong: Was double gap in doses prompted by vaccine shortage?

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday questioned the decision of the Modi Government to double the gap between the doses of the Covishield Covid-19 vaccine, asking whether it was prompted by a vaccine shortage.

The party also announced to launch a nationwide outreach programme to collect all the data pertaining to the pandemic, the affected families and losses incurred by the common man among others. Through the outreach programme, Congress aims to directly cover approximately three crore households in 30 days, as per an AICC press statement.

The Congress said India needs quick and complete vaccination and not the BJP's "brand of lies and rhyming slogans" to cover up the vaccine shortage caused by the government's inaction.

Congress leaders, including former party president Rahul Gandhi, said the government was trying to cover up a vaccine shortage. "India needs quick & complete vaccination," Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet.

The Government had said that the gap within two shots of covishield was increased based on scientific evidence and that the issue had been discussed in detail by members of NTAGI as well as its working group on COVID-19.

Rahul alleged that the Government was trying to

alleged dissent. Regarding social media reports on Covaxin containing calf serum, it clarified that the

## Clarification sought over RTI reply that calf serum used in Covaxin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Earlier on Wednesday, the Congress sought a clarification from the Government following the controversy in the wake of an RTI reply that allegedly suggested that newborn calf serum has been used to make the Covaxin Covid-19 vaccine. Congress spokesman Pawan Khera said that the party wants "the Government and Bharat Biotech to respond to the reply that has come in the RTI, then we will give a detailed response on it". Gaurav Pandhi, the national coordinator of Digital Communications and Social Media at AICC, had tweeted the RTI response to applicant Vikas Patni. The "newborn calf serum is used

in the revival process of Vero cells, which is further used for the production of coronavirus during the manufacturing of Covaxin," read the response by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation.

Taking to Twitter, Pandhi cited the RTI response and said that the Modi government admitted that the vaccine manufactured by Bharat Biotech "consists Newborn Calf Serum which is a portion of clotted blood obtained from less than 20 days young cow-calves, after slaughtering them." "This is heinous. This information should have been made public before," added Pandhi. He also attached a screenshot of the response to the RTI application as well.

As for the nationwide outreach campaign, it aimed engaging party cadres from Pradesh. Congress Committee (PCC) of the Panchayat level and establishing contact with target groups in urban, semi-urban and rural areas.

Local leaders will organise visits of senior leaders to the households of the Covid-affected families and help in disseminating information regarding health issues and post-Covid care.

## BJP rejects Cong's Covaxin charge, says party committed 'a big sin'



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing the Congress of "communalising" and spreading disinformation on the indigenous Covaxin Covid-19 vaccine, the BJP on Wednesday demanded to know whether Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her party leaders, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, were vaccinated or not.

Addressing a Press conference here, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra rejected the Congress charge

that Covaxin has calf serum, saying the Opposition party has committed "a big sin" by making such allegations.

He said the scientific community and the Health Ministry has said there is no calf serum in Covaxin and that it is "fully safe".

Patra said Congress has given a "communal angle" to the vaccination process and asked whether "Gandhi family members Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka and Robert Vadra have vaccinated themselves and if so when, where

and which vaccine?" As against Congress "disinformation", the BJP spokesperson said India is the fastest vaccinating country and that the efforts should be applauded.

Patra said the Congress is lowering the name of India and is only known for creating vaccine hesitancy and its wastage. He said Congress-ruled Chhattisgarh said no to Covaxin, Rajasthan threw vaccines into "garbage" and Punjab indulged in "profiteering".

all other impurities," the Ministry said.

These cells are then washed with water, chemicals to make them free of the newborn calf serum. The vero cells are then infected with coronavirus for viral growth and in the process they are completely destroyed.

"In the final vaccine formulation no calf serum is used," the Ministry said.

Bharat Biotech also clarified that the usage of new

born calf serum was 'transparently documented' in several publications in the last nine months. The company had mentioned the same when it published animal trial study documents - which involved trials on hamsters and monkeys; in pre-clinical safety and immunogenicity study reports; in studies on neutralisation of the UK variant, the South Africa variant, the Delta variant among others.

## Use of drone made mandatory for monthly recording of road projects



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Drones will play a major role in India's national highway construction plans. The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) on Wednesday made the use of drones mandatory for a monthly recording of all national highway projects during their different stages of development, construction, operation and maintenance.

The NHAI has mandated

that contractors and concessionaires will carry out the drone video recording in the presence of the Supervision Consultant, and upload comparative project videos of the current and previous month on NHAI's portal 'Data Lake', capturing all project-related developments in a month.

Supervision consultants will analyse these video recordings and provide their inputs/comments in the digital

monthly progress reports covering various aspects of the project development.

"Project Directors of NHAI shall undertake monthly drone survey from the date of signing of contract agreement till the start of construction of the project at site and also on completion of the project. NHAI will also undertake monthly drone survey in all developed projects where NHAI is responsible for operation and maintenance," the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said in a press note.

Further, mandatory deployment of a Network Survey Vehicle (NSV) to carry out a road condition survey on national highways will enhance the overall quality of the highways as NSV uses the latest survey techniques such as a high-resolution digital camera for 360 degree imagery, Laser Road Profiler and other latest technology for the measurement of distress in the road surface.

the final vaccine product. Bharat Biotech, on its part also echoed similar points. The Health ministry said

As for the nationwide outreach campaign, it aimed engaging party cadres from Pradesh. Congress Committee (PCC) of the Panchayat level and establishing contact with target groups in urban, semi-urban and rural areas.

Local leaders will organise visits of senior leaders to the households of the Covid-affected families and help in disseminating information regarding health issues and post-Covid care.

As part of mission PRAGATI, the Centre has been monitoring the progress of several other major infrastructure projects including Bullet Train, Dedicated Freight Corridors and Ports among others.

## Rajnath for respect for sovereignty as China muscles into Indo-Pacific

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As China is muscling into the Indo-Pacific region causing concern, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday called for an open and inclusive order in the region based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations.

He also flagged terrorism and radicalisation as the "gravest threats" to peace and security in the world and said a collective approach is required to combat the challenges. This observation was in apparent reference to Pakistan aiding and abetting terrorism.

Rajnath made these assertions while addressing the 8th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus. The ADMM Plus is an annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries and eight dialogue partner countries - Australia, China,



India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States. Brunei is the Chair of the ADMM Plus forum this year.

Refraining from naming China, Rajnath talked about the Indo-Pacific region stressing the need for rule-based order and stressed on "peaceful resolutions of disputes through dialogue and adherence to international rules and laws."

"India has strengthened its cooperative engagements in the Indo-Pacific based on converging visions and values for promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the region. Premised upon the centrality

of ASEAN, India supports utilisation of ASEAN-led mechanisms as important platforms for implementation of our shared vision for the Indo-Pacific," he added.

Highlighting India's concerns over maritime security challenges, he noted that developments in the South China Sea attracted attention in the region and beyond. It was in obvious reference to China's aggressive behaviour in the critical waterways.

"Maritime security challenges are a concern to India. The Sea lanes of Communication are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region," he stressed.

He hoped that the Code of Conduct negotiations will lead to outcomes keeping with international law and do not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of nations that are not party to these discussions.

## ED arrests one in ₹500-cr bank cheating case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested Vivekanand Shankar Patil, Chairman of Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank, Panvel, Raigad, Maharashtra, in a bank fraud case worth over ₹500 crore.

The fraud came to light after an audit was done at the behest of the Reserve Bank of India in 2019-20.

The audit revealed that Patil was siphoning off funds since 2008 from the bank through 63 fictitious loan accounts of Karnala Charitable Trust and Karnala Sports Academy, which were founded by him, the agency said.

No collateral securities were taken against such loans and no correspondence was made with the revenue authorities regarding payment of stamp duty for the purpose of purchasing immovable properties for which loans were obtained, thereby making the loans unsafe/unsecured, it said.

Further, all the above loan accounts that were used for transferring funds to the said trust, were found to be non-performing asset (NPA).

It was further observed that without following KYC norms and other RBI guidelines, the said loans were sanctioned and disbursed at the instruction and for gains by Patil, the agency alleged.

Patil was produced before the Special Court for PMLA cases in Mumbai on Wednesday. The court granted his custody till June 25.

## CBI case against pvt firm for cheating bank

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against a private company Ruchi Global Limited and its directors for cheating a consortium of banks led by Bank of Baroda to the tune of ₹188.35 crore. The accused firm is registered in Mumbai and has a corporate office in Indore (Madhya Pradesh). The firm and the accused directors cheated the banks between January 1, 2016 and December 2017.

## Maritime museum to come up at Lothal soon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A museum dedicated to the country's 5,000-year maritime history will be set up in Gujarat's Lothal by the Culture Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Shipping, Port and Waterways (MoSPW).

The two Ministries on Wednesday inked a Memorandum of Understanding for 'Cooperation in Development of National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal, Gujarat. According to a statement from the Culture Ministry, the world-class facility will be developed in the vicinity of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) site in Lothal, located about 80 km away from Ahmedabad.

NMHC would be developed as an international tourist destination where the maritime heritage of India -- from ancient to modern times



-- would be showcased and an edutainment approach using the latest technology would be adopted to spread awareness about the country's maritime heritage, it said.

The NMHC project has been taken up under the unique and innovative projects category of the Sagarmala programme under MoSPW. The Government of

Gujarat has transferred 375 acres of land in Saragvada village on lease for 99 years at a token rate to MoSPW. "The complex will be showcasing the thousands of



year old maritime strength of India," said Culture Minister Prahlad Patel.

Renowned architect Hafeez Contractor has been selected as the Principal Project Consultant to prepare a master plan and requisite design and engineering documents for inviting EPC tenders and project management consultancy.

NMHC would be developed in an area of about 400 acres with various unique structures such as the National

Maritime Heritage Museum, lighthouse museum, heritage theme park, museum-themed hotels, maritime-themed eco-resorts and maritime institute among others which would be developed in a phased manner.

The unique feature of NMHC is the recreation of ancient Lothal city, which was one of the prominent cities of the Indus valley civilization.

"NMHC is to be developed as a first of its kind in the

country dedicated to the legacy of the maritime heritage of India, to showcase India's rich and diverse maritime glory," Mansukh Mandaviya, the Minister of MoSPW said during the signing ceremony.

The museum is set to be completed in three years from the date the project commences.

As a part of the museum, 14 galleries have been proposed to exhibit the evolution of India's maritime heritage during various eras.

Key galleries include mythologies and wilderness of Indian Ocean, Harappans: The Pioneer Master Seafarers, Indian Ocean: an Interactive Sphere, India's contact with the Roman World: The Quest for the Spice, Trade, Commerce and Cultural Interaction with China and South-East Asia.

Artefacts from Lothal and Dholavira will also be displayed at the NMHC complex.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Jab gap rethink

As confusion abounds, India still lacks a comprehensive outlook on tackling the virus

The latest UK medical study says the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine against the Delta variant of COVID-19 is 92 per cent effective against hospitalisation after two doses and suggests that it is "vital to get both doses as soon as they are offered to you, to gain maximum protection against all existing and emerging variants". That has made the Indian Government experts rethink on reducing the gap between the doses that now stands at 12-16 weeks. Should the Government be doing a rethink every time a study surfaces? Each has its own definition of the efficacy of the vaccines and doses. Percentages differ. Criteria also vary. Demographic situations in countries are starkly different. Each study has its own, internal purpose. The UK-based studies are analysing symptomatic infections. India is looking for effectiveness against severe disease. That leads to the question: Where is the real-world data in India? Take the



job gap issue, for instance. Independent virologists say there is no real-world data in India to establish the most effective jab gap. The Government on May 13 increased the gap to 12-16 weeks from six-eight weeks, reportedly based on a UK study even though the UK itself reduced the gap from 12 to eight weeks much before data was available on vaccine efficacy. The country merely went by the criterion of greater infectiousness of the variant. Now, there is a rethink in India about the gap. Members of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation say they only recommended a gap of 8-12 weeks because they had no data about efficacy of a gap beyond 12 weeks.

They say the 12-16 weeks idea came from the Government. Dr NK Arora, chairman of the COVID working group on vaccines, has no reply other than that there is no dissent within NTAGI. So, whom to believe? Secondly, Dr Arora quotes two Indian studies from PGI, Chandigarh, and CMC, Vellore, to say that irrespective of dose interval, "both the doses are having similar protection against the Delta variant (B.1.617.2) and Alpha variant (B.1.1.7)". But the Vellore study says: "Our study corroborates these studies that vaccination is protective, although we did not look at the variants responsible for the massive second wave." So, whom to believe? The issue is, India still lacks a comprehensive outlook on tackling the virus. Vaccination, medical care and safety protocols that make up the outlook are seen more in isolation than unison. The basic nature of the vaccine is it will not stop the infection, but only reduce the severity. That means medical facilities for COVID-19 positive patients are as important as vaccination. That also means the Government has to strictly enforce safety protocols. In reality, however, the availability of vaccine is erratic, there is no informed stand on jab gap, new cases continue to be reported and the States are eager to lift the lockdown substantively, if not fully, well aware that people are throwing caution to the wind, prompting fears of a relapse.

### PICTALK



A boatman rows on a relatively clean Khushalsar lake in the middle of the old city in Srinagar

# The lost cause of ingenuous tribals

The poor forest dwellers are at the mercy of no one, despite being the best caretakers of the forested greens and the environment



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

The recent upsurge in Maoist violence puts the focus back on tribal issues, rarely discussed in the mainstream. Even though the tribal population is nine per cent, they live as invisible Indians. Their presence is felt only when they make headlines for the wrong reasons, for obstructing traffic with their protests, for instance, and thereafter again fade into oblivion.

These are the people who have been on the frontline of India's war of independence and the ones to have suffered the most. The British branded 150-odd tribes as "criminal tribes" by imposing the Criminal Tribes Act, starting in 1871. It took the Nehru Government five years to de-notify these tribes and replace the derogatory law on April 31, 1952. Adivasis now celebrate April 31 as the alternative Independence Day.

Even today, tribals live on the sidelines of the Indian political landscape. They are indeed the marginalised entities in India's political life. The adivasis have lived in forests at peace with nature for ages. But they have been castigated, charged, blamed and demonised, often stripped of their basic human rights, their right to life and property included. They are evicted from their dwelling places in the name of conservation and national interest. To use the conservationist lingo, their habitat is shrinking. It is being usurped legally. Despite some sops here and there, the condition of tribals has not improved even after Independence. They remain on the margins, their life and livelihood constantly under the threat. The neo-colonial mindset has replaced the older one. Conservation is one big plank that is a legit and subtle way to evict tribals from their land.

The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, for the first time recognised the rights of tribal communities to forest resources. Hitherto, Government Acts and policies did not recognise the symbiotic relationship of the forest dwellers with the forests. This, ironically, was always present in their dependence on the forest as well as in their traditional wisdom for the



conservation of forests.

The path-breaking law gave three generations of tribals the right to live on their land. But they were asked to prove their ownership, which most of them can't and that is the biggest stick to beat them up with. Though the authorities want them to show papers of the inheritance, they have lived on the land even before paper was invented! Even so, they have been branded a "danger to forest land and wildlife".

The adivasis have managed their environment better than neo-conservationists. People in Gosaba, Sunderbans, are killed by the Bengal Tigers. There is a village in Gosaba named Vidhwapalli, a village of widows whose husbands were killed by tigers. The very same people feed the tigress who takes shelter in the village when she is about to deliver her cubs! Now think about the Delhi ridge or Mumbai's Aarey forest constantly waning each passing year. Nearly 80 per cent of biodiversity in the world is in areas inhabited by tribals. They have conserved the forests pretty well. They take from it what they need, without making permanent damage and giving time and chance to nature to recuperate and grow.



THERE IS A VILLAGE IN GOSABA NAMED VIDHWAPALLI, A VILLAGE OF WIDOWS WHOSE HUSBANDS WERE KILLED BY TIGERS. THE VERY SAME PEOPLE FEED THE TIGRESS WHO TAKES SHELTER IN THE VILLAGE WHEN SHE IS ABOUT TO DELIVER HER CUBS

Their religious practices forbid them to even enter the core areas. The modern conservation programmes would have these forests as open zoos for the inspection of tourists.

While tourists and other outsiders are welcome, the adivasis are not. They are aliens in their own homes. Even if they venture inside, they are beaten up, tortured, even killed by rangers. Their houses are burnt and properties vandalised. Not very long ago, a 13-year-old boy was shot in the Kaziranga for wandering inside the protected area. The park has a shoot-at-sight policy. The Jenu Kuruba, tribals living in the Nilgiri in Karnataka, are frequently shot while collecting mushrooms. Over 50 people have been shot dead by the guards in the last five years. Of course, you haven't heard or read about them. They were seldom reported!

Another aspect of tribal persecution is the Maoist violence in forested areas. It is often reported from Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and others. The security forces are up against the armed resistance in the forests. However, not all tribals are supporters or sympathisers of Maoists. Most of them face

pressure both from Maoists as well as the security forces. They are routinely rounded up and made to suffer.

It is indeed a problem that refuses to go away. The Government, for its part, has never tried to find the root of the problem and solve it politically. The Maoists draw cadres from the wronged people. Since the exploitation doesn't end, they never run out of cadres. The basis of the problem is indeed economic being addressed with force. Since 2010 when it was at its peak, it has come down. It is now confined to around 30 districts, but there is a long way to go. The gains of security forces are no guarantee that the problem is over. Maoism is a problem born out of the social and economic milieu of the region and lack of development. The Government gives them enough fuel and exploitation that oils this war machine.

If the current rate of exploitation of nature continues, we may lose the forests and forest dwellers. And, with them, their wisdom to survive without harming nature.

(The writer is a columnist and documentary film-maker. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### UNSCRUPULOUS ELEMENTS PREY ON MISERY

Sir — As per reports, a housing society in Mumbai's Kandivali area has complained to the police that it was cheated by some persons who organised a COVID-19 vaccination camp by claiming to represent a private hospital, and the vaccine administered could be spurious. The society, Hiranandani Heritage Residents Welfare Association, has now sought investigation into the matter.

A vaccination camp was arranged by the residential complex on May 30. But later it found that the Co-WIN portal did not have any record of the people who participated and they received certificates in the name of different hospitals, it said. "If the vaccine is found to be spurious, the people who got vaccinated will have a medical emergency to deal with. Therefore, there is an urgent need to investigate the whole episode so that such fraudulent activities are not repeated at other places," the complaint stated.

The HHRWA had organised the camp through a person who claimed to be a sales representative of a private hospital in Andheri. As many as 390 members received the jabs at ₹1,260 per person. They were shocked to receive vaccination certificates in the name of Nanavati Hospital, Lifeline Hospital and NESCO COVID Camp, among others. Nanavati Hospital denied any involvement and said they're themselves a victim of the situation.

There are even doubts whether the residents were actually given Covishield or if it were just glucose or expired/waste vaccine. Meanwhile, the BMC, from this week, has made signing of a Memorandum of Understanding mandatory between private vaccination providers and housing societies if such camps are organised.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

### THE REAL FACE OF THE G7 SUMMIT

Sir — The group of seven largest industrial and developed nations was founded in 1970 with a focus on economic issue and to resolve global problems. The 47th G7 Summit was held in the city of Cornwall, the United Kingdom. The western media focused only on the

## Police high-handedness must stop



Within a fortnight of a Supreme Court (SC) Bench of Justices UU Lalit and Vinet Saran quashing a sedition FIR against veteran journalist Vinod Dua in Himachal Pradesh for his criticism of the Narendra Modi Government's handling of COVID-19 and the use of the Pulwama attack and Balakot airstrike to seek votes, the SC Bench upheld citizens' "right to criticise or comment upon the measures undertaken by the Government and its functionaries". Dua's March 30, 2020, statements had neither incited people to violence against the Government nor created disorder, it added.

Or what the Allahabad High Court said when it released Dr Kafeel Khan: "A complete reading of the speech prima facie does not disclose

any effort to promote hatred or violence. It also nowhere threatens peace and tranquillity. The address gives a call for national integrity and unity among the citizens." Now, the three orders by the Delhi High Court were delivered by Justices Siddharth Mridul and Anup Jairam Bhambhani, perhaps the first instance of a court calling out alleged misuse of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) against individuals in cases that do not necessarily fall in the category of "terrorism" cases. The Bench's observation came while granting bail to JNU's Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal, along with JMU student Asif Iqbal Tanha, and gave the Delhi Police a dressing down for "casually" invoking provisions of anti-terror laws.

This is not only a slap to the Delhi Police, which is run by Amit Shah's Home Ministry, but also to the Delhi Government for giving prosecution sanction against the students. Actually, the High Court has rightly reminded us of the basic tenet. The police, who often slap outrageous charges on protestors, should heed it.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

### THE MISSING SPIRIT OF RAJA FESTIVAL

Sir — Raja, the famous festival of Odisha, was badly hit by the COVID-19 second wave. Due to the rising cases, the Government imposed lockdown in most of the state. During this festival in the pre-pandemic times, people used to wear new clothes, moved around having fun, enjoyed savouries and involved themselves in "Raja Mauja" for various games and activities.

But this year, the evergreen and colourful Raja witnessed no colours due to the second wave of the pandemic. People, being in a state of fear and negative mindset, were adverse to letting their hair down. Maybe the State Government should start a show that will add some colour and flavour to the life of the Odia people.

Sarmistha Pradhan | Cuttack

## SOUND BITE

Till the end, I tried my best to keep the family and the party united. I even went to my uncle's house. But all went in vain.



LJP leader — Chirag Paswan

At the moment, it doesn't look like this particular disease of a zoonotic origin came from a lab.

UK Prime Minister — Boris Johnson

Taking Mom home in Shimla after two years. She has stayed indoors all this time. Now vaccinated with both jabs.



Actor — Anupam Kher

I will try to achieve the time of 11.15 seconds in the upcoming Indian Grand Prix IV in Patiala on June 25.

Ace sprinter — Dutee Chand

Congress president Sonia Gandhi and respective PCC presidents will write condolence letters to the next of kin of those who passed away due to the pandemic.



Congress general secretary — KC Venugopal

## Blood money

The closed case of the Italian marines is mired not only in legality but in morality, too

More than nine years after they shot dead two fishermen off the Kerala coast, the Supreme Court has quashed the criminal charges against Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone, the two Italian marines on board the *Enrica Lexie* and accepted the compensation of ₹10 crore deposited by the Government of Italy. The Division Bench directed the Governments of Italy, India and Kerala to coordinate in respect to disbursement of the compensation, which is to be deposited with the Supreme Court Registry. With this, all legal proceedings initiated against the marines stand cancelled. Doramma, the widow of Valentine, and the sisters of younger victim Ajeesh Pink are to



get ₹4 crore each. The owner of the damaged boat, *St Antony*, would get ₹2 crore. This is over and above the *ex gratia* amount of ₹1 crore each paid to the parties. The long-drawn case has already vanished from the public mind, especially after the legal heirs of the deceased fishermen withdrew their affidavits and submissions to the Kerala High Court in April 2012. The fate of the case was sealed then and there, according to a Kochi-based marine law expert.

The incident dates back to 2012 when Kerala was ruled by Oommen Chandy and the Union was headed by Manmohan Singh. However, the Catholic Church's role in the issue hasn't been in the public domain. For one, there has been Cardinal George Alencherry, head of the Catholic sect in Kerala, who was quoted in the immediate aftermath of the mariners' arrest as boastfully saying that he would remain in "close contact with the Catholic ministers of Kerala who would help pacify the situation". Meanwhile, the take of Jayapalayan, president of the South Indian Fishermen's Federation, is that the blood money concept is alien to India. Similarly, VM Shyam Kumar, the counsel for the sisters of Ajeesh Pink, asked: "Italy could afford to pay the compensation. Had the ship belonged to a poor country, what would be the consequences?" Those who question the legality of blood money in the *Enrica Lexie* case should bear in mind that many Indians accused of murder have been saved in West Asia after paying blood money. Last week saw MA Yousuf Ali, a Gulf-based businessman, paying ₹1 crore to save Becks Krishna, a Thrissur youth, from the gallows for killing a Sudanese youth in the UAE. It should be two-way traffic, isn't it?

beaches and the glowing sun.

The G7 grouping took three important decisions to restrict China, which is considered to be moving in an unethical way. The first is the threat to humanity, the sanction of \$40 trillion and re-investigation into the alleged Wuhan lab's virus leak. We have always seen that when a programme is being held in developing nations, the news and articles underlining the headlines of "Hiding the poverty" in the international media pops up. But when the same thing happens in the developed world, it is hushed up. The poorest city of the United Kingdom, Cornwall, where the G7 summit was organised, doesn't get any space in international coverage.

The powerful nations didn't even focus on how to address the issue of the appetite of the poor by providing shelter to their bodies and food to their stomach. It seems that poverty is the selling point only in certain cases.

Aman Jaiswal | New Delhi

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)



## FIRST COLUMN

### ITALY'S EXIT WILL HIT CHINA'S PLANS

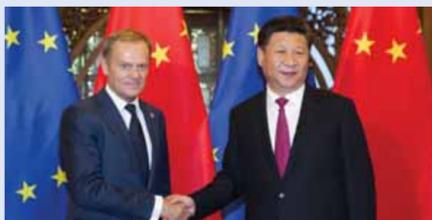
Europe took a long time to see through Chinese strategy of gaining control of strategic assets



GAURIE DWIVEDI

From football teams to strategic infrastructures like ports and airports, China's influence in Europe has grown exponentially in under two decades. Chinese companies own four airports including Frankfurt-Hahn Airport in Germany, six ports and a dozen European soccer clubs. By the time Europe started screening Chinese investments in 2019, Beijing's clout had risen manifold. And Italy's endorsement of Xi Jinping's flagship project Belt and Road Initiative gave it the legitimacy it needed. A G-7 European country endorsing a global program did more damage to European unity than any other recent event. The statement of Mario Draghi, Italy's Prime Minister, indicating the possibility of Rome undoing its biggest geo-political blunder in decades, could derail a lot of China's European plans, which were stitched on the back of its seemingly large wallet.

To deepen its access inside Europe, Beijing had focused on Greece and Italy both of whom were struggling with high debt levels. Heavily-indebted Athens felt it would be better off encashing Chinese cheques than following EU's prescription to cut costs any more. Greece also upgraded its relationship with China a year after the Chinese had gained control of the



Greek port of Piraeus. Under Chinese ownership, Piraeus emerged as the second-biggest container port in the Mediterranean and Europe's biggest passenger port. Piraeus' elevation sparked major fears of loss of trade in Rome, causing it to embrace China and the BRI. China successfully exploited the several fault lines that existed in Europe; the one between industrialised North and relatively weaker South. Add to this, the desperate fund crunch of stagnant Southern economies like Italy and Greece which made large Chinese cheques even more appealing. Europe took a long time to see through the Chinese strategy of gaining control of strategic assets, building inroads into prominent think tanks and exploiting the continent's vulnerabilities to build political leverage.

Beijing engaged with each of countries on the European continent. First, China identified weaker economies like Greece and Hungary to break the EU's solidarity. Beijing engaged with non-EU countries like Serbia that were in dire need of capital. It continued to build trade ties with large economies like Germany and the UK. But China never lost sight of its geo-political ambition. The EU failed to speak in a single voice after Beijing lost the case regarding its acquisition of the Scarborough Shoal in international tribunal UNCLOS in 2016. Greece, Hungary and Croatia had thwarted EU efforts to name China despite Manila's unequivocal win at the tribunal. Recognising the need to act against China's lop-sided economic model, ahead of the EU-China summit in 2018, 27 of the 28 EU country ambassadors to China signed a report charging the BRI with pushing "the balance of power in favour of subsidized Chinese companies". Nine months later, however, Italy formally joined the BRI.

In a post-pandemic world order, an increasingly isolated China is seeing the world coming together against it. With America's renewed push to forge trans-Atlantic cooperation to take on Beijing, Draghi's decision could prove to be the biggest reset on the continent. An EU veto on Chinese investments and a revisit on the EU-China investment deal can put intense pressure on Beijing. BRI holds the key to China's power, in Europe and elsewhere. Italy's decision could begin the unwinding.

(The author is a senior journalist and Visiting Fellow at the United Services Institution of India. The views expressed are personal.)

# Why it is difficult to make things happen



ANIL SWARUP

No matter how good an idea is, it will get converted into a policy only if the ultimate decision-making authority, a politician or a group of politicians, puts its stamp on it

Things don't happen easily in the government. And, if they do happen, it is difficult to sustain them. I had been of the view that for anything to happen and sustain in the government it had to be politically acceptable, socially desirable, technologically feasible, financially viable, administratively doable and judicially tenable. This in itself was quite a handful. However, the unexpected agitation against the Farm Bills has compelled me to add another dimension: "Emotionally relatable".

There is a feeling outside the government that not much happens in the government. Not only that, each one of them will have an idea on how to make-things-happen. However, if the six-fore-mentioned aspects are not taken into consideration, the idea will perhaps not travel much distance on the ground. Let us consider each one of them.

No matter how good an idea is, it will get converted into a policy only if the ultimate decision-making authority, a politician or a group of politicians, puts its stamp on it. For example, many would argue that reservation in government jobs is adversely impacting governance. If there is a referendum, perhaps the majority will vote against it. But can we dispense with it now or at any time in the future? Perhaps not, because it will never be politically acceptable. That is why decision making in democracies takes much longer than in countries like China. A lot of time gets spent in consensus building. This is not to say that democracies are worse than autocracies because political acceptability, as an underlying principle of democracy, has its own merits.

Social desirability of an idea is equally important even if it may not appear to be so. It is important in the context of implementation of an idea that may be politically acceptable. A number of schemes announced by the government, hence politically acceptable, fail on the ground because while formulating the scheme, the social context is not taken into consideration. Thus, the infamous Family Planning effort of the government during the dark days of Emergency not only met with failure but led to the fall of the government. This may be an extreme example but many schemes and ideas face enormous problems if they are not socially desirable. Understanding the needs of the stake holders is critical for the success of any scheme.

Technology is changing by the day. Hence, the feasibility of technology becomes an important determinant in the implementation of an idea and sustaining it. Many of those that have not travelled to various parts of the country advocate the use of internet to reach out to children during COVID-19 times for schooling. They are perhaps unaware of the fact that internet has not reached out as yet to a large part of the country. The situation may change over a period of time but as of now, it may not be possible to reach out to all the children through the net.

The most critical part in implementation of an idea is the availability of funds to back such an idea. Till a couple of years ago, number of railway lines were announced by successive Ministers for Railways in their budget speeches (fortunately this has ceased now) without the funds to back them. These railway lines were socially desirable and technologically feasible.



SOCIAL DESIRABILITY OF AN IDEA IS IMPORTANT EVEN IF IT MAY NOT APPEAR TO BE SO. IT IS IMPORTANT IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF AN IDEA THAT MAY BE POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE. A NUMBER OF SCHEMES ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNMENT, HENCE POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE, FAIL ON THE GROUND BECAUSE WHILE FORMULATING THE SCHEME, THE SOCIAL CONTEXT IS NOT TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION

The author is a former IAS officer. The views expressed are personal.



They were obviously politically acceptable as well. But they never happened on the ground. Similar apprehensions are raised about the recently announced National Education Policy (NEP). The Policy recommends allocation of six per cent of GDP to Education Sector. This is nothing new. It was recommended long ago by Dr Kothari in his Report as well. But the money never came despite a cess levied by the government to raise resources. In fact, during the period from 2014 to 2018 the budgetary allocation to school education actually came down in real terms. Without requisite money to back ideas, such ideas will not travel a long distance.

Even if we have the requisite money, if the desired human resources are not available, the idea will not work on the ground. One of the reasons of failure in delivery of health care in rural areas is the shortage of doctors. Health care is politically acceptable and socially desirable. There is reasonable amount of money available. But shortage of human resource is a major constraint. School education in the country is another example where there is an acute shortage of human resources. There is an additional

problem relating to their management as well. This management of the teachers who are the pivot of school education, has left a lot to be desired. The biggest mafia in school education is the one that provides pre-service training, the B.Ed and D.El.Ed colleges. A large number of them exist only on paper but they can give you a degree. The selection of teachers to government schools is another racket. One former Chief Minister is behind the bars for manipulating selection. What can be expected of teachers who have come through such a process? Human resource management is the key to the success of any programme.

Finally, no matter what the government does, the final arbiter is the judiciary. It can undo all that may have been attempted. The over-indulgent judiciary can make matters worse.

The Farm Bills appear to be fine on all these dimensions mentioned above. Even those who are opposing it on account of political considerations were themselves pushing for such reforms when they were in power. Most of them would privately agree that the Bills would benefit the farmers and will free them from the

clutches of "middle-men". However, opposition to the Bills was still so huge. It reflected the inability of the proponents to make this idea "emotionally relatable" to the farming community. The Bills are indeed socially desirable but the government which has otherwise demonstrated to be so skilful in communicating messages, has apparently been unable to do so in the present instance. Hence, the Bills that are so beneficial to the farmers are not perceived as such. There is, therefore, this problem of perception and a large number of farmers are not able to relate emotionally with the Bills.

The listing of these limitations does not mean that things don't happen in the government. The success of *Ayushman Bharat*, the Coal Block auctions and unprecedented increase in coal production during 2014-16, the successful management of Covid-19 fallout in Mumbai and many districts of the country and the like prove that it can happen. These programmes/schemes/efforts understood these limitations and worked around them. There is indeed a lot to learn from how they made-it-happen for others to make-it-happen.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

YOU NEED TO TRAIN DIFFERENTLY AND ADAPT TO THE CHANGE. IN ENGLAND, THE LENGTH IS FULLER BECAUSE OF THE SWING.

— INDIAN BOWLER ISHANT SHARMA



INDIA ARE A WORLD-CLASS OUTFIT WHO POSSESS MATCH WINNERS ALL THROUGH THEIR LINE-UP. WE ARE UNDER NO ILLUSION.

— NEW ZEALAND HEAD COACH GARY STEAD

# Iran: giving up on Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

An immediate end to US sanctions and a quick rollback of Iran's deviations from strict adherence to the treaty's terms might have done the trick

Lifting Trump's sanctions, @SecBlinken, is a legal & moral obligation, NOT negotiating leverage. Didn't work for Trump - won't work for you," tweeted Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif late last month. But what if US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (and President Joe Biden) have just decided that reviving the 2015 nuclear deal is a lost cause?

There are quite a few people in the Biden administration, and particularly in the State Department, who can count to twenty without even taking their shoes off. So they must have realised that there was going to be an election in Iran next Friday (18 June).

Many of them would even have known that this time the



GWYNNE DYER

The author's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy (and Work)'. The views expressed are personal.

Iranian election has been rigged so that the 'hard-liners' are bound to win it.

Joe Biden therefore only had five months to reverse Donald Trump's deliberate wrecking of the 2015 treaty that prevented Iran from working on nuclear weapons. After the June election, the wreckers would be in power in Tehran, and they would sabotage the talks.

So why didn't Blinken's people move faster?

It was the Trump administration that unilaterally pulled out of the JCPOA treaty (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) and slapped crippling economic sanctions on Iran in 2018. Since then, Iran has repeatedly said that if the US just cancelled Trump's sanctions and rejoined the treaty, all would be well. Now



it's probably too late.

Iran did nothing for more than a year, waiting and hoping that the other signatories (Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China) would find ways to help Iran get around the American sanctions.

The other countries all agreed that Iran was not violating the terms of the treaty in any

way, but none of them wanted to get into a showdown with Trump by breaking the US sanctions. So when Trump tightened the sanctions further in May 2019, crushing Iran's remaining oil exports, Tehran began to go beyond the treaty limits - a little bit.

It didn't leave the treaty, but it began to enrich its uranium a

bit beyond the treaty limit of 3.67% (far below weapons-grade). It allowed inspections to continue, it kept nothing secret, but every three or six months it moved the enrichment up another notch to create some counter-pressure on the other signatories to sort their American problem out.

Finally, Trump lost the 2020 election, Biden replaced him in the White House last January, and it became possible to repair all the damage. However, the new secretary of state, Antony Blinken, then announced that Iran would have to roll back all its post-2019 increments to the enrichment process BEFORE the US lifted its sanctions.

The shoe is clearly on the wrong foot there. It was the United States that showed itself

to be untrustworthy by quitting the treaty. The Iranian economy paid the price, starving in the gutter for three years.

The question of who goes first is fundamentally childish if there is trust, but America has forfeited the right to demand that Iran trust it. Biden and Blinken must know that demanding Iran go first dooms the negotiations, and that a rigged election in Iran will shortly close the door on the deal for good. It would break them off, because Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has arranged for his faithful supporter Ebrahim Raisi to win the election by banning more open-minded candidates from running at all.

Both men are fiercely anti-Western ultra-conservatives, but

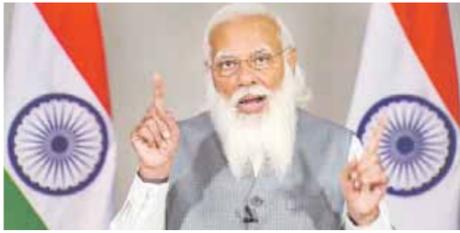
they wouldn't have got away with rigging the election like this four years ago, when the treaty was new and popular hopes were still high in Iran. The despair created by Trump's renewed sanctions killed those hopes. Biden may be wrong to let the JCPOA treaty die. An immediate end to US sanctions and a quick roll-back of Iran's deviations from strict adherence to the treaty's terms might have been done the trick. Even a new hard-line government in Iran would have found it hard to unpick that sort of done deal.

But it would have been a gamble, and Biden seems to have decided that he couldn't afford to risk his political capital that way. It will be years before we know if this was a fatal mistake (and who it was fatal for).

# Repair, prepare eco, health infra: Modi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As India emerges from a devastating second wave of Covid-19 infections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the focus must be on repairing and preparing the health infrastructure as well as the economy for future challenges.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivers keynote address at the 5th edition of VivaTech, in New Delhi Wednesday

To prepare a base for a sustained higher growth rate, the Government continues to unleash reforms and has also extended free food distribution schemes to aid the poor hit hard by the pandemic.

"Over the past year, we have witnessed a lot of disruption in different sectors. Much of it is still there," Modi said at the VivaTech Summit. "Yet, disruption does not have to mean despair. Instead, we must keep the focus on the twin foundation of repair and prepare."

This time last year the world was still seeking a vaccine and today two vaccines are being made in India, and more are in the development or trial stages, he said. "We have to continue repairing health infrastructure and our economies," he said. "And when I say prepare, I mean

insulating our planet against the next pandemic, ensuring we focus on a sustainable lifestyle that stops ecological degradation, strengthening cooperation in furthering research as well as innovation."

Indian economy suffered its worst contraction in four decades as coronavirus-induced lockdowns stalled businesses and economic activity.

While attempts were made to control the spread of infections and healthcare infrastructure built to treat the ill, the government implemented huge reforms across sectors - from mining to space, from banking to atomic energy.

"This goes on to show that India as a nation is adaptable and agile," he said. After the brutal second wave in April and May, the Covid case has fallen more than 80 per cent since its peak 5 weeks ago.

This as well as the pick up in the pace of vaccination had aided state governments to relax restrictions at a relatively faster pace than in 2020.

"I believe where conventional fails, innovation can help. This has been seen during the Covid-19 global pandemic, which is the biggest disruption of our age. All nations have suffered losses and faced anxiety about the future," Modi said.

# Sellers not declaring local content percentage of goods at GeM portal to lose out on biz: Comm min

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sellers who do not declare local content percentage while uploading their products at public procurement portal GeM will lose out on business and will not be able to participate in bids in which buyer has chosen to procure only made-in-India items, the commerce ministry said on Wednesday.

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal was launched in 2016 for online purchase of goods and services by all central and state government ministries and agencies.

The Ministry also said GeM was the first e-commerce portal in the country which had started displaying the 'country of origin' of all products prominently for giving its buyers the right to make informed decisions of procurement.

Now, it is mandatory for all sellers to upfront declare the 'country of origin', without which they cannot upload products on the platform.

"Going a step further, GeM has also started highlighting the local content % (percentage) on the product description page prominently."

"So, even within the products made in India, buyers can identify products that have higher local content and take informed decisions accordingly," it said.



Department of Commerce  
Ministry of Commerce and Industry  
Government of India

Buyers have been provided with a filter in the marketplace to identify and select products from among MII (make in India) compliant sellers/ products only, it said.

"Sellers who do not declare local content % (percentage) while uploading product and creating catalogue on GeM will lose out on business and will not be able to participate in bids in which the buyer has chosen to procure only MII-compliant products," it added.

In the portal, a MII filter has been provided using which a buyer can filter out all non-local suppliers and restrict its procurements under direct purchase and L-1 (lowest bid) purchase from among local suppliers only.

Informing about the portal, Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan said it is providing increasing market access to seller groups like MSEs (micro and small enterprises), women self-help groups (SHGs), and start-ups.

Currently, GeM has over 6,90,000 MSE sellers and service providers and they contribute over 56 per cent of the total order value on the platform.

Speaking with reporters, GeM Chief Executive Officer P K Singh said there are 9,980 start-ups registered on GeM currently. He said that to address the credit access challenges faced by MSMEs, GeMSAHAY app has been rolled out.

# Adani Total up 921%, Adani Enterprises up 890% vs 60% for Nifty in last 1 year

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Total Gas went up by 921 per cent while Adani Enterprises went up by 890 per cent in the last one year compared to 60.7 per cent return for the NSE Nifty index, as per Trendlyne data.

Adani Group stocks have been scorchers in the stock market in the last year before they started unravelling in the last three days and have been going down ever since. Adani Group investors have seen wealth erosion of ₹ 1.10 lakh crore in the last three trading sessions.

Adani Enterprises was down 5.82 per cent at ₹1449.30.

Adani Enterprises Ltd had gained 213.40 per cent in the last six months. It has a market cap of ₹1.59 lakh crore. Adani Total Gas is up 917.9 per cent in the last one year and has a market cap of ₹1.53 lakh crore. It was down on Wednesday by 5.02 per cent at ₹1,394.

Adani Total Gas has gained 86.09 per cent in the last three months, as per Trendlyne data.

While Adani Enterprises and Adani Ports have been the flagship companies, it is Adani Green Energy which



is the star in the portfolio of the group with the highest market capitalisation.

Adani Green's market cap is at ₹1.83 lakh crore, even though it is a relatively new company. Adani Green has given a one year return of 238.4 per cent. Along with other stocks, Adani Green was down by 3.38 per cent at ₹1,171.25 on Wednesday.

Adani Ports has given a one year return of 108 per cent compared to 61.1 per cent for the Nifty. Its market cap is at ₹1.44 lakh crore. It was down 7.22 per cent at ₹706.85 on Wednesday. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd has lost 19.14 per cent in the last one week.

## NIFTY 50

| SCRIP       | OPEN     | High     | LOW      | LTP      | CHANGE   |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| NIFTY 50    | 15847.50 | 15880.85 | 15742.60 | 15767.55 | -101.70  |
| TATASTEEL   | 724.00   | 737.75   | 721.00   | 734.65   | 15.15    |
| NESTLEIND   | 17650.20 | 18068.50 | 17613.05 | 17951.00 | 266.20   |
| ONGC        | 127.00   | 128.25   | 126.10   | 126.70   | 1.35     |
| NTPC        | 117.80   | 120.60   | 116.85   | 119.00   | 1.20     |
| HINDUNILVR  | 2385.00  | 2418.85  | 2383.65  | 2406.50  | 14.55    |
| BAIFINRSV   | 11810.00 | 11895.00 | 11750.00 | 11860.00 | 61.30    |
| YIFCE       | 1472.70  | 1489.45  | 1467.50  | 1479.20  | 5.30     |
| ITC         | 3262.10  | 3294.70  | 3253.00  | 3270.00  | 7.25     |
| IOC         | 207.05   | 209.35   | 207.05   | 207.40   | 0.40     |
| ITEL        | 115.75   | 117.15   | 115.50   | 115.70   | -0.05    |
| BRITANNIA   | 3631.05  | 3644.80  | 3605.05  | 3629.50  | -2.35    |
| HDFCLIFE    | 696.20   | 698.15   | 690.00   | 692.00   | -0.55    |
| TECHM       | 1070.00  | 1077.95  | 1055.00  | 1064.50  | -2.35    |
| HCLTECH     | 984.05   | 986.00   | 974.00   | 983.00   | -2.45    |
| BPCIL       | 483.45   | 484.90   | 479.00   | 480.70   | -1.20    |
| HDFCBANK    | 1488.00  | 1494.00  | 1478.10  | 1485.80  | -4.45    |
| DREDDY      | 541.00   | 548.00   | 533.50   | 539.90   | -16.95   |
| WIPRO       | 559.90   | 562.55   | 553.50   | 555.70   | -2.20    |
| DIVISLAB    | 4319.60  | 4330.25  | 4282.85  | 4293.25  | -19.80   |
| SRLIFE      | 999.95   | 1003.85  | 998.35   | 992.20   | -4.65    |
| M&M         | 808.80   | 821.85   | 801.60   | 804.45   | -4.15    |
| AXISBANK    | 748.80   | 756.85   | 746.25   | 747.50   | -3.90    |
| KOTAKBANK   | 1770.85  | 1780.95  | 1753.00  | 1761.15  | -9.75    |
| UPL         | 843.90   | 854.55   | 836.15   | 837.00   | -4.80    |
| TITAN       | 1712.00  | 1729.00  | 1706.50  | 1712.60  | -10.80   |
| EICHEMOT    | 2751.00  | 2777.65  | 2724.30  | 2743.45  | -20.05   |
| SUNPHARMA   | 675.00   | 680.50   | 666.85   | 667.85   | -5.35    |
| ASIANPAINT  | 3029.00  | 3042.20  | 3005.50  | 3017.95  | -24.25   |
| MARUTI      | 7166.00  | 7193.75  | 7070.00  | 7108.50  | -70.85   |
| BAJAJ-AUTO  | 4138.10  | 4188.05  | 4102.00  | 4104.00  | -34.10   |
| SBIN        | 428.00   | 432.75   | 425.00   | 426.00   | -3.90    |
| HDFC        | 2535.00  | 2545.00  | 2515.70  | 2522.05  | -23.05   |
| ICICIBANK   | 644.90   | 649.20   | 637.60   | 641.15   | -6.15    |
| BAJFINANCE  | 6140.00  | 6160.90  | 6062.80  | 6096.00  | -65.15   |
| SHREEM      | 28323.00 | 28900.00 | 28132.50 | 28165.90 | -3200.10 |
| HEROMOTOCO  | 3008.00  | 3014.85  | 2970.00  | 2971.05  | -36.00   |
| HARTIARTIL  | 543.80   | 543.80   | 534.90   | 536.00   | -6.50    |
| TATAMOTORS  | 350.10   | 356.00   | 348.10   | 348.35   | -4.35    |
| COALINDIA   | 157.30   | 158.80   | 154.85   | 155.20   | -1.95    |
| ULTRACEMCO  | 1605.85  | 1611.00  | 1565.00  | 1579.95  | -88.35   |
| IT          | 1567.85  | 1576.00  | 1548.00  | 1549.90  | -20.90   |
| CIFLA       | 969.00   | 971.15   | 963.90   | 966.10   | -13.90   |
| GRASIM      | 1495.50  | 1501.55  | 1463.90  | 1470.35  | -24.70   |
| RELIANCE    | 2249.00  | 2247.05  | 2205.85  | 2209.55  | -40.45   |
| INDUSINDBK  | 1030.00  | 1038.70  | 1010.35  | 1015.00  | -19.45   |
| POWERGRID   | 246.85   | 247.50   | 240.95   | 242.25   | -5.35    |
| JSWSTEEL    | 720.00   | 728.90   | 703.55   | 706.80   | -18.30   |
| HINDALCO    | 387.30   | 391.35   | 377.00   | 379.80   | -1.10    |
| TATASTEEL   | 1169.00  | 1184.75  | 1131.65  | 1140.00  | -34.30   |
| ADANIAPORTS | 755.00   | 755.00   | 697.80   | 702.00   | -59.85   |

## BSE 500

| Script      | Open    | High    | Low     | LTP     | Wipro      | 626.45  | 626.50  | 553.40  | 555.35  | HATHWAY    | 28.00   | 28.40   | 27.15   | 27.30   | DBL          | 562.30  | 562.30  | 545.00  | 549.60  | SONATSOFTW | 717.00  | 732.70  | 711.95  | 717.00  |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| KOTAKBANK   | 1774.00 | 1781.00 | 1753.00 | 1760.70 | RBLBANK    | 220.00  | 220.00  | 215.20  | 215.90  | INDIANB    | 143.00  | 147.70  | 139.25  | 141.55  | SHK          | 156.20  | 156.20  | 156.20  | 161.35  | ZYDUSWELL  | 2036.00 | 2076.80 | 2031.65 | 2042.00 |
| TATASTEEL   | 1170.00 | 1184.50 | 1131.45 | 1142.15 | L&TFFH     | 98.60   | 99.35   | 95.95   | 96.30   | CENTURYTEX | 582.70  | 589.35  | 563.15  | 576.90  | CALBARAMCHIN | 349.75  | 352.95  | 334.85  | 337.80  | GODREJIND  | 546.20  | 548.70  | 531.15  | 538.55  |
| RELIANCE    | 2248.00 | 2248.00 | 2206.75 | 2211.65 | CESC       | 800.00  | 801.35  | 760.35  | 770.35  | COROMANDEL | 840.15  | 882.25  | 840.15  | 865.60  | IDFC         | 56.00   | 56.75   | 55.10   | 55.55   | KNRCON     | 228.10  | 229.55  | 219.25  | 220.00  |
| ADANIANT    | 1511.90 | 1537.80 | 1409.25 | 1449.30 | WABAG      | 359.80  | 379.25  | 355.95  | 367.60  | TAKE       | 70.20   | 70.65   | 68.20   | 68.65   | ALKEM        | 3187.35 | 3207.05 | 3131.35 | 3183.00 | SUNTECH    | 302.50  | 304.00  | 293.50  | 296.45  |
| ADANIAPORTS | 756.00  | 756.00  | 698.25  | 706.85  | COALINDIA  | 157.50  | 158.80  | 155.00  | 155.45  | COLPAL     | 1720.00 | 1724.00 | 1701.25 | 1710.00 | SIEMENS      | 2060.00 | 2060.00 | 2020.35 | 2039.25 | PANOFI     | 7777.35 | 7815.95 | 7744.00 | 7757.00 |
| HDFCSGFIN   | 312.55  | 313.50  | 292.50  | 298.55  | JSL        | 106.30  | 107.45  | 100.20  | 102.10  | GET&D      | 139.50  | 150.50  | 136.90  | 144.90  | BAYERCROP    | 5722.70 | 5740.70 | 5600.00 | 5639.25 | JAGRAN*    | 62.75   | 64.25   | 60.75   | 62.10   |
| IBULCHSINV  | 1490.45 | 1494.15 | 1478.60 | 1484.15 | CANBK      | 155.00  | 155.90  | 151.85  | 152.10  | TATAMETALI | 1175.30 | 1175.35 | 1134.80 | 1142.00 | ULTRACEMCO   | 319.50  | 320.35  | 319.15  | 319.65  | SWANENERGY | 141.40  | 141.40  | 137.50  | 140.50  |
| HDFC        | 2539.65 | 2545.50 | 2515.90 | 2521.55 | TATECFHEM  | 746.00  | 749.35  | 734.50  | 736.85  | GESHIP     | 421.35  | 477.00  | 408.00  | 410.40  | RELAXO       | 1114.00 | 1114.00 | 1092.80 | 1099.60 | REDINGTON  | 270.15  | 273.45  | 265.00  | 267.85  |
| SAIL        | 136.50  | 138.00  | 130.70  | 131.25  | DEEPAKERT  | 445.05  | 471.25  | 425.00  | 458.25  | CHOLAFIN   | 1114.00 | 1114.00 | 1092.80 | 1099.60 | CHOLAFIN     | 566.00  | 570.90  | 560.15  | 564.55  | VGUARD     | 274.00  | 274.00  | 268.10  | 268.10  |
| TATAPOWER   | 122.15  | 127.90  | 120.20  | 125.95  | MUTHOOTFIN | 1517.00 | 1541.10 | 1497.00 | 1509.40 | CHOLAFIN   | 566.00  | 570.90  | 560.15  | 564.55  | GRSE         | 200.00  | 206.70  | 197.05  | 201.00  | TRENT      | 856.05  | 869.85  | 847.20  | 851.20  |
| INDIAINFRA  | 1305.00 | 1322.70 | 1246.95 | 1264.75 | SCI        | 117.00  | 118.10  | 114.10  | 114.90  | ULTRACEMCO | 6666.05 | 6690.15 | 6570.00 | 6585.70 | ITTI         | 131.90  | 132.00  | 127.65  | 128.35  | ITTI       | 144.00  | 144.05  | 140.60  | 141.25  |
| APOLLOHOSP  | 3319.70 | 3324.30 | 3280.00 | 3294.30 | INTELTEC   | 777.00  | 813.10  | 760.05  | 764.65  | IBDI       | 248.00  | 248.00  | 230.60  | 238.35  | ALLCARGO     | 141.65  | 141.65  | 138.25  | 138.80  | ARVINDFASN | 141.65  | 141.65  | 138.25  | 138.80  |
| HDFCLIFE    | 247.70  | 254.25  | 243.85  | 245.45  | SRTRANSFIN | 1460.00 | 1463.90 | 1426.10 | 1433.60 | SPARC      | 38.85   | 39.30   | 38.60   | 38.75   | IFBIND       | 1123.25 | 1131.45 | 1083.15 | 1091.30 | IFBIND     | 330.10  | 331.65  | 322.50  | 325.65  |
| TECHM       | 1070.00 | 1077.95 | 1055.00 | 1064.50 | THYRCARE   | 1260.00 | 1328.00 | 1231.00 | 1297.15 | FDC        | 382.40  | 382.40  | 354.15  | 359.40  | CSBBANK      | 499.55  | 503.15  | 476.90  | 493.30  | CSBBANK    | 330.10  | 331.65  | 322.50  | 325.65  |
| HCLTECH     | 984.05  | 986.00  | 974.00  | 983.00  | JAICORPLTD | 140.00  | 169.60  | 137.00  | 163.75  | ASIANPAINT | 300.00  | 304.90  | 300.60  | 301.00  | FINCABLES    | 330.10  | 331.65  | 322.50  | 325.65  | FINCABLES  | 499.55  | 503.15  | 476.90  | 493.30  |
| BPCIL       | 483.45  | 484.90  | 479.00  | 480.70  | JUSTDIAL   | 1029.00 | 1083.80 | 1008.90 | 1069.15 | CONCOR     | 685.00  | 694.95  | 680.55  | 681.75  | JYOTHYLAB    | 158.00  | 161.70  | 157.10  | 158.20  | JYOTHYLAB  | 158.00  | 161.70  | 157.10  | 158.20  |
| HDFCBANK    | 1488.00 |         |         |         |            |         |         |         |         |            |         |         |         |         |              |         |         |         |         |            |         |         |         |         |

# BIDEN, PUTIN PLUNGE INTO HOURS OF TALKS

AP ■ GENEVA

## Two great powers

With stern expressions and polite words before the cameras, President Joe Biden and Russia's Vladimir Putin plunged into hours of face-to-face talks on Wednesday at a lush lakeside Swiss mansion, a highly anticipated summit at a time when both leaders say relations between their countries are at an all-time low.

Biden called it a discussion between "two great powers" and said it was "always better to meet face to face." Putin said he hoped the talks would be "productive."

The meeting in a book-lined room had a somewhat awkward beginning — both men appeared to avoid looking directly at each other during a brief and chaotic photo opportunity before a scrum of jostling reporters.

Biden nodded when a reporter asked if Putin could be trusted, but the White House quickly sent out a tweet insisting that the president was "very clearly not responding to any one question, but nodding in acknowledgment to the press generally." Putin ignored shouted questions from reporters, including whether he feared jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

The two leaders did shake hands — Biden extended his hand first and smiled at the



President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin arrive to meet at the Villa la Grange on Wednesday

stoic Russian leader — moments earlier when they posed with Swiss President Guy Parmelin, who welcomed them to Switzerland for the summit.

Biden and Putin first held a relatively intimate meeting joined by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. Each side had a translator for the session, which lasted about an hour and a half. The meeting, after about a 40-minute break, then expanded to include senior aides on each side.

Biden and Putin were expected to meet for a total of four to five hours of wide-ranging talks.

For months, they have traded sharp rhetoric. Biden has repeatedly called out Putin for malicious cyberattacks by Russian-based hackers on US interests, for the jailing of Russia's foremost opposition leader and for interference in American elections.

Putin has reacted with whatabout-isms and denials — pointing to the Jan. 6 insurrection at the US Capitol to argue that the US has no business lecturing on democratic norms and insisting that the Russian government hasn't been involved in any election interference or cyberattacks despite US intelligence showing



US President Joe Biden and Russia's President Vladimir Putin pose for the media at Villa La Grange for the US-Russia summit in Geneva, Switzerland on Wednesday

otherwise. In advance of Wednesday's meeting, both sides set out to lower expectations.

Even so, Biden said it was an important step if the United States and Russia were able to ultimately find "stability and predictability" in their relationship, a seemingly modest goal from the president for dealing with the person he sees as one of America's fiercest

adversaries. "We should decide where it's in our mutual interest, in the interest of the world, to cooperate, and see if we can do that," Biden told reporters earlier this week. "And the areas where we don't agree, make it clear what the red lines are."

Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that no breakthroughs were expected

and that "the situation is too difficult in Russian-American relations." He added that "the fact that the two presidents agreed to meet and finally start to speak openly about the problems is already an achievement."

Arrangements for the meeting were carefully choreographed and vigorously negotiated. Biden first floated the meeting in an April phone call

## Putin: Russia, US to return ambassadors to posts

AP ■ GENEVA

Russian President Vladimir Putin says he and US President Joe Biden have agreed to return their ambassadors to their posts in a bid to lower tensions.

Putin made the announcement at a news conference following a summit on Wednesday with Biden in Geneva.

The return of ambassadors

follows a diplomatic tug-of-war that saw deep cuts in diplomatic personnel.

Russia's ambassador to the US, Anatoly Antonov, was recalled from Washington about three months ago after Biden described Putin as a killer.

US Ambassador to Russia John Sullivan left Moscow almost two months ago after Russia suggested he return to Washington for consultations.

in which he informed Putin that he would be expelling several Russian diplomats and imposing sanctions against dozens of people and companies, part of an effort to hold the Kremlin accountable for interference in last year's presidential election and the hacking of federal agencies.

Putin and his entourage arrived first at the summit site: Villa La Grange, a grand lakeside mansion set in Geneva's biggest park. Next came Biden and his team. Putin flew into Geneva on Wednesday shortly before the scheduled start of the meeting; Biden — who was already in Europe for meetings with allies — arrived the day before. After the meeting concludes, Putin is scheduled to

hold a solo news conference, with Biden following suit. The White House opted against a joint news conference, deciding it did not want to appear to elevate Putin at a moment when the US president is urging European allies to pressure Putin to cut out myriad provocations.

Biden sees himself with few peers on foreign policy. He traveled the globe as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was given difficult foreign policy assignments by President Barack Obama when Biden was vice president. His portfolio included messy spots like Iraq and Ukraine and weighing the mettle of China's Xi Jinping during his rise to power.

## Junta troops burn Myanmar village

AP ■ BANGKOK

Government troops in Myanmar have burned most of a village in the country's central heartland, a resident said Wednesday, confirming reports by independent media and on social networks. The action appeared to be an attempt to suppress resistance against the ruling military junta.

The attack is the latest example of how violence has become endemic in much of Myanmar in recent months as the junta tries to subdue an incipient nationwide insurrection. After the army seized power in February, over-



Smoke rises from smoldering houses in Kinma village, Pauk township, Magwe division, central Myanmar on Wednesday

throwing the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, a nonviolent civil disobedience movement arose to challenge

military rule, but the junta's attempt to repress it with deadly force fuelled rather than quelled resistance.

Photos and videos of devastated Kinma village in Magway region that circulated widely on social media on Wednesday showed much of the village flattened by fire and the charred bodies of farm animals. One report said the village had about 1,000 residents.

A villager contacted by phone said only 10 of 237 houses were left standing. The villager, who asked that his name not be used because of fear of government reprisals, said most residents had already

fled when soldiers firing guns entered the village shortly before noon on Tuesday.

He said he believed the troops were searching for members of a village defense force that had been established to protect against the junta's troops and police. Most such local forces are very lightly armed with homemade hunting rifles.

The village defense force gave residents advance warning of the troops' arrival, so only four or five people were left in the village when they began searching houses in the afternoon. When they found nothing, they began setting the homes on fire, he said.

## UK PM's ex-aid reignites row with release of expletive-laden WhatsApp messages

London: Dominic Cummings, the former top aide of UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, on Wednesday reignited an ongoing row over the government's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic as he shared expletive-laden WhatsApp messages believed to be from his former boss in which the premier brands his health secretary "hopeless."

Johnson's former Chief Strategy Adviser, who left Downing Street unceremoniously last year, has previously made withering attacks on UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock and claimed the minister should have been sacked for 15-20 things, including "for lying" to people.

Following Hancock's own evidence before a parliamentary committee to deny all the allegations, Cummings took to his blogpost to brand the Cabinet minister's parliamentary evidence as an attempt to rewrite history.

"Number10/Hancock have repeatedly lied

about the failures last year," he writes in his blog.

In screenshots of WhatsApp messages he has shared alongside, the Prime Minister appears to call Hancock's efforts "totally f\*\*\*\*\* hopeless" in response to a message from Cummings and in others seems to consider replacing him.

The 7,000-word blogpost dubs Hancock's version of events as "fiction" and criticises "systemic incompetence" surrounding the UK Prime Minister.

Downing Street has refused to be drawn into the latest WhatsApp messages row, with the UK Prime Minister's official spokesperson saying Johnson continued to have "full confidence" in Hancock. "I am not planning to engage with every allegation put forward, the Prime Minister has worked very closely with the Health Secretary throughout and will continue to do so," the spokesperson said. **PTI**

## FROM PAGE 1

### POST-JOB ...

Such people can explore legal options. In such cases, the liability will be of the vaccine-maker," an official said.

The Government on Tuesday said deaths reported post-vaccination standing at 488 were a small percentage of the number of doses given, but this did not mean they were due to vaccination.

"We ascertain if it is a minor adverse event or it is a serious or severe adverse event. Then it is monitored and causes are ascertained. The vaccines approved by us, their safety parameters are very good. When 23.5 crore doses were given, the AEFI deaths were 0.0002 per cent which comes to 488 deaths which does not mean these deaths were because of vaccination," Lav Agarwal, joint secretary in the Health Ministry had said.

### COVID DRUGS USED TO TREAT...

They are formulating children-specific protocol to set up oxygen plants and establishing more testing labs.

According to the Central guidelines, once vaccines are approved for children, those with comorbid conditions having more severe manifestations of Covid-19 and poorer outcomes should be a priority group for immunisation.

About the treatment of children, the guidelines said most drugs used in adults such as ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, favipiravir and antibiotics such as doxycycline or azithromycin have not been tested on children for prevention or treatment of Covid infection among them. "Therefore, these are not recommended in children."

Stating that there may be intermittent surges in the number of coronavirus cases, the guidelines said, "A combined effort from the private and public sector is needed to handle any surge (in cases) in the future after the withdrawal of the lockdown, school reopening or as a third wave over the next three to four months. The basic principles of equity and dignity of care should be followed."

The guidelines said estimates for additional bed capacity for pediatric care may be calculated based on peak daily cases in different districts during the second wave of the Covid-19 infections.

From this, projections for pediatric cases and the number of admissions required can be derived, it said.

"It is desirable to augment the existing Covid-care facilities to provide care to children with acute Covid. This will need additional pediatric-specific equipment, infrastructure and pediatric formulations. "Also, an adequate number of trained

manpower -- both doctors and nurses -- should be provided. The health authorities should initiate capacity building programmes for appropriate pediatric care. In standalone paediatric hospitals, separate arrangements, for example, separate beds for paediatric Covid care need to be set up," the guidelines said. It is desirable to designate specific areas in the Covid facilities for pediatric care and parents should be allowed to accompany the child there.

"For children with Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome who test negative for acute Covid, care has to be provided by the existing pediatric facilities. These facilities also need augmentation, especially HDU and ICU services," it said.

Noting that a majority of children have asymptomatic or mild illness and can be managed at home by parents, it said treatment for symptomatic patients include paracetamol for fever and monitoring conditions such as measuring respiratory rates, difficulty in respiration, oral intake and oxygen saturation.

"In a community setting, ASHA and MPW should be involved for management of children at home and also monitor to assess the need for referral and admission," the guidelines said.

The document stressed on imparting training to community health workers for picking up the red flag signs. Also, all stakeholders, including the community, should be educated by information education communication.

"A few centres may be designated as regional centres of excellence for Covid care and research. These centres can provide leadership in clinical management and training. Telemedicine could be harnessed for reaching out to a large number of facilities," it said.

The guidelines said that based on serosurveillance reports, Covid-19 infection in children above 10 years of age occurs in a similar frequency to that of adults, even though among the confirmed cases less than 12 per cent are individuals less than 20 years of age.

### DON'T COME...

In a sequence of events a delegation of 50 BJP MLAs led by Bengal Opposition leader Suwendu Adhikari on Monday met the Governor asking for his intervention to stop the ongoing attacks on the saffron workers in the State. In private the BJP leadership said their workers were being hounded out of their houses and tortured everywhere.

"What they did to the communists they are doing to the BJP workers... their goons are killing, raping and looting our workers whereas their police force are slapping false cases and putting them to jail ...

the worse part of it is the leaders and MLAs are not being allowed to visit the affected areas ... if this is not fascism and State repression then what is ... but they must understand that we are not CPI(M) ... we will hit back organisationally and politically ... we will not let Mamata sit in peace ... just wait and see," said a BJP MP. Hitting back at Dhankhar for "doing what no Governor has done since Independence", TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Shekhar Roy said "a Governor meeting the NHRC chairman on the issue of his State is unprecedented, crooked and condemnable ... he has denigrated the high post he is holding ... he has set a bad precedence making it the blackest day in Indian federal politics ... As Governor he has crossed the constitutional barriers ... the TMC strongly condemns this act..." Another Trinamool MP Saugato Roy quoted Article 163 of the Constitution saying "there should be a council of ministers to aid and advise the Governor ... he has no power to act outside this advice ... He cannot set central ministers or NHRC on State affairs."

Attacking the Governor for making the contents of his letter --- about post poll violence --- to Chief Minister Mamata public, he said, "A Governor has no business to make public the privileged communication between him and the Chief Minister but he did so breaking the constitutional norms." Calling the Governor a "mental patient" senior Bengal Minister Firhad Hakim said, "This man has become a mental patient ... he is a frustrated person now as he could not take the BJP's defeat in the State ... instead of going to Delhi he should visit a counselor."

BJP GAINS 6 PROMINENT...

The saffron brigade, as of now, is on a sticky wicket with its former alliance partner, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), tying up with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), in an apparent attempt to woo the Dalit voters of the State - which is 32 per cent of the State's total population. What is more, the farmers, which also form a considerable voter base in the State, are also at swords' points against the party for introducing the contentious farm bills.

The development came a day after the party's State leadership held a brainstorming session with BJP national president Jagat Prakash Nadda and Amit Shah to chalk out its strategy for the ensuing Assembly polls in the State, scheduled to be held early next year. The saffron brigade not only discussed the prevailing political scenario in Punjab,

but also deliberated upon the possible alliances, identifying areas to be focused upon, besides holding the ways to respond to the rebellion within the state BJP unit over the farm bills issue.

Sources informed The Pioneer that the BJP high command was unhappy with the party's Punjab leadership, especially for its failure to get in touch with the party workers and the entire cadre at the grassroots causing loss of support for the party.

"Because of this farmers' agitation, it was really hard for the BJP leaders and even workers to move out or hold meetings, even at a small scale. Though several campaigns were started, and programmes were launched to make the farmers, and the people aware of the benefits of the farm bills and other decisions taken by the Central Government, but all that was of no use as these were badly disrupted by the farmers or their supporters," a senior BJP leader told The Pioneer.

It was without any doubt that the farmers' agitation against the agri bills has made a great impact on the politics of the region, especially Punjab, with the saffron party being the biggest loser. Over the past one year, the BJP leaders and workers in Punjab, and also in other states including Haryana, have witnessed social boycotts from the masses, strong protests, unending dharnas outside their residences, and what not.

Perturbed, the party's two senior leaders and former Ministers came out in open to question the party high command regarding its stand on the farm bills, while also openly speaking about their dissatisfaction with the top leadership in handling the farmers' protest.

"We could not step out of our houses. Everywhere our party leaders go, they were hounded, gheraoed. The state leadership was totally detached from the party workers due to COVID and also these agitations. And that's why the central leadership wanted us to launch contact programmes and get in touch with the party cadre," the party leader said.

Party sources indicated that considering the prevailing circumstances in the state, the party stalwart and key strategist Amit Shah has taken upon himself to bring out the state party unit out of the marshy grounds. The BJP has all along been declaring to field its candidates on all 117 seats in the state.

At the same time, the changing political equations in Punjab - SAD and BSP forging an alliance, three AAP MLAs shifting loyalties towards Congress, and prevailing infighting within the Congress party - has forced the party to chalk out its own line of attack and identify the possible alliances and areas to focus upon.



**Bollywood**  
 'Perceptions change with every film and nothing should be taken to heart.'  
 —Zareen Khan



there and then and produced from the rear, or they are delivered directly to your home the following day. While this is a format that has emerged as a result of the short-term restrictions of working in a Covid environment, it is quite likely that customers will come to accept it and then prefer it.

Technology will drive a revolution in the forthcoming months and years and thus, retailers should invest in digitally advanced infrastructure and facilities. Digital transformation will pave the way for touch-free shopping experiences, merchandising, transactions, and eliminate physical interactions, therefore, investment in retail technology will be seen. The use of VR and AR for marketing changed the playing field dramatically. Leading companies are adopting augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) into their digital marketing strategy to attract customers, advertise their goods, improve sales, retain consumers, and give consumers new experiences. Their application is expanding in a variety of fields, including healthcare, medicine, astronomy, education, defence, and consumer products.

AR and VR also allow for in-store experiences to be had from the comfort of one's own home, eliminating the need to travel to the store. AR is rapidly being used by e-commerce platforms to allow buyers to experience the goods as if they were there in a real-life situation. The use of augmented reality and virtual reality in retail establishments, e-commerce, and advertising is the next big thing poised to disrupt marketing paradigms. AR is more successful since it has reduced costs and assists customers in making purchasing decisions while they are engaged with the information.

'Shopping by appointment' is another shopping trend now gaining more popularity. This is already happening with a lot of designer labels and fashion firms, and it's a trend that may continue to spread when Covid fades into obscurity. In a nutshell, 'appointment only' refers to booking an appointment and receiving a time window in the store for yourself only or with a restricted number of other clients. While the short-term goal is to maintain social distance standards and make the client feel safe, the long-term goal is to deliver a variety of substantial benefits leading to a lasting experience. Customers with an appointment are more likely to make purchases, allowing retailers to spend more of their time and effort on other aspects of their business.

With huge retailers suffering and are in the midst of a recession, landlords will need to rethink their options and tactics if they want to keep filling their facilities with brands that attract customers and confirm growth.

(The writer is the Vice Chairman of KGK Group.)

## 'Let my work do the talking'

Actor AYUSHMANN KHURRANA says that whatever his equity is today, it is mainly due to the success of his social entertainers

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana's equity has been soaring since the past few years as he delivered eight back-to-back hits in theatres. His booming credibility with inclusive, conversation-starting social entertainers in India has made him one of the most sought-after brand endorsers in the country.

Now, Ayushmann has been roped in to be the face of a mobile phone brand. As we all know, mobile phones and banking are two sectors that thrive on the credibility of the artist to become the face. Recently, mobile phone brands have signed on the superstars like Robert Downey Jr and Virat Kohli. So, Ayushmann being roped in for a mobile phone brand surely means his credibility with the masses is only on the rise.

When asked if Ayushmann could decode what makes him so brand-friendly, he candidly says, "Whatever my equity is today, is mainly due to the success of my social entertainers which have made me connect to the people of India. These films have told people who I'm, how I think, and what my intent is as an entertainer."

He adds, "I'd like to believe brands have noticed this and connected with the idea that I try to tell real stories of real people. I feel thrilled that I'm part of a brand's vision and journey to reach out to the audience with a narrative that resonates with my journey in cinema. I'm grateful that my films have worked wonderfully at the box office and also got the love and appreciation from people."

Ayushmann says he has been fortunate to get the right films that have become huge hits. Success always translates to equity, he feels.

"I have always believed in letting my work do the talking. I have been fortunate enough to pick projects that have contributed to the new discourse of how cinema in India can be unique, clutter-breaking, conversation-starting entertainers that don't need to follow the same, stereotypical norms of how stories have been told," says Ayushmann.



The COVID-19 outbreak elicited a wide spectrum of merchants' sentiments and behaviours. The retailers are focussing on innovation to operate to the best of their capacities in the new normal. If the modifications, that merchants are compelled to make as a result of the pandemic, are good enough, they will become the new benchmark for customer experience. When you introduce customers to a new level of convenience, reduced pricing, or better fit, their future expectations will be established accordingly. As sad as a pandemic of this magnitude is, merchants simply cannot afford to waste time.

During the first several months, dealing with the new social distance standards was difficult, and only a few shops could open, largely selling food, medical supplies, and necessities. With many establishments closing, the retail sector business faced a very low consumer base and was at times nil. However, as time passed, each sector learned new strategies to deal with the new difficulty.

Consumer behaviour was forced to alter during the lockdown. With physical stores closing, everyone, even sectors and client groups that had previously avoided doing so, had to turn to the digital realm for their retail requirements. Now that this behavioural change has been adopted, it is doubtful that things will revert to their previous state.

## GO TOUCH-FREE

Technology will drive revolution in the forthcoming years, thus, retailers should invest in digitally advanced infrastructure and facilities, says SANJAY KOTHARI

This indicates that the offline-online link is more crucial than ever before. Brands that are unable to balance the two might struggle. Physical retail remains a very powerful tool for customer engagement and the digital environment will never be able to compete with its value and experience, hence, being omnichannel is the way forward to exist in composure.

E-commerce will continue to eat market share because it already has the tools in place to provide what customers want — price, selection, free and rapid delivery, to mention a few. Many brick-and-mortar stores were failing even before the outbreak. The reasons for this are numerous and complicated, but it is reasonable to assume that the rise and popularity of e-commerce are to blame for a large portion of it.

Another trend that will undoubtedly become popular in the future is contactless shopping, which helps avoid



crowded stores while preferring low exposure; a retail experience in which no items are touched, displays are not

restocked, and large crowds are not required. Products are displayed in displays, and purchases are either made

Two years ago in June, Dia Mirza-starrer and Sonal Nair-directorial *Kaafir* made their debut as a web television series and instantly connected with the audience across the world. Written by Bhavani Iyer, the series told the wrenching story of Kainaz Akhtar, a woman who mistakenly crosses the LOC, is presumed to be a militant, and is held, prisoner.

The series was a grim and poignant retelling of a similar incident and reminded the audience of the human cost paid by innocent citizens when nations mistrust each other.

Dia says, "It is difficult to not empathise with a woman who goes through so much suffering for no fault of hers. A woman who is also a mother and no longer knows if she will ever experience a sense of home. It is a human story that will always be relevant for its message of love and peace but is particularly pertinent now because we are being reminded every day by the pandemic of our shared humanity. We are being reminded that hate and violence are ultimately

## 'Hate is a futile emotion'

Actor DIA MIRZA says that *Kaafir* is relevant for its message of love and peace, especially now when we are being reminded of our shared humanity everyday



futile emotions. What remains after we are gone is just this question, 'Did we love this world and those inhabiting it enough?'"

Dia says, the fundamental humanism informing the story instantly drew her to the character of Kainaz and she says, "Deep-rooted prejudices make us forget that we are human

first and *Kaafir* continues to remind us of this fact. Hate is a corrosive emotion and robs us of our ability to empathise with each other and vitiate life so much that we forget to love, to be kind, to build a world where there is more light than darkness. Yes, geopolitical tensions are real but so is the hope that one day we can resolve them."

*Kaafir* was also Dia's digital debut

and she says, "The performance had to be subtle and yet expressive of the turmoil within the character and I felt truly humbled when so many fans and critics sent me appreciative messages after watching the series."

She also won a Critic's Choice nod for Best Actor (OTT) at Gold Awards.

## Yoga for kids

As we approach International Yoga Day, a new series by Shradha Setalvad will centre around '3Fs' — fitness for the body, focus on the mind, and fun for the soul

According to a National Centre for Complementary and Integrative Health survey, one in 12 children practice yoga. Over the years, yoga has become increasingly popular among Indian children. It helps in improving balance, strength, endurance, and aerobic capacity. It can also help to boost memory, self-esteem, academic performance, and classroom behaviour, thereby reducing anxiety and stress in children.

As we approach International Yoga Day, Tata Sky Fitness is introducing *Yoga Ki Paathshala* by Shradha Setalvad. The series will focus on '3Fs' — fitness for the body, focus on the mind, and fun for the soul. Setalvad explains '3Fs' in detail:

### FITNESS FOR BODY

Asanas like Shavasana, Navasana, Tolasana, Suryanamaskar, Chakrasana helps in strengthening the overall well-being of kids. It aims to develop both physical health as well as cognitive skills in children. It opens the energy channels throughout the body, increasing flexibility of the spine, strengthening bones, and stimulating the circulatory and immune systems. Along with proper breathing, these poses or asanas



also calm the mind and reduce stress.

### FOCUS ON MIND

Asanas like Pranayama, Padmasana, Sukhasana, and others, help a child to be aware of themselves and help them control their emotions. These act as a tool for calming and energising the child to develop a state-of-relaxed mind, which is crucial for learning. It also develops social-emotional awareness, body awareness and coordination, and interpersonal skills.

### FUN FOR SOUL

Children can adapt to all kinds of exercise and practicing yoga asana at an early age can lead them to have a healthy head start in life. In this fast-paced world, it helps to rejuvenate kids inside-out. The meditative pose helps to relax both our mind and body. It promotes spiritual awakening and awareness of higher consciousness. It is a perfect choice if you want a holistic approach to mind and body strength.

—IANS

## TRENDBLAZER

### 'CAN'T WAIT TO START FILMING DHAAKAD'

Actor **KANGANA RANAUT** shared a poster of her forthcoming film *Dhaakad*, saying she looks forward to starting work on the film. "Can't wait to start filming *#Dhaakad*," she wrote on the image, which she shared on her Instagram story.

In the picture Kangana is seen in an action-packed avatar. A toppled burning car is visible in the backdrop. She is armed with a machine gun and a pistol.

Apart from *Dhaakad*, Kangana's forthcoming roster includes *Thalaivi* and *Tejas*.

### fairtalk

SHARAD KELKAR



"I don't like to term myself a star because I am not. I am an actor. I would be very happy if even a chunk of people even considered me as a good actor. That's enough for me. My first love has always been acting. So, for me the medium actually doesn't matter. If that (being remembered as an actor) stops, it would be a matter of concern for me."

### dailytalk

JASMIN BHASIN



"If I start worrying about fame and burden myself with responsibilities and expectations, I'll lose myself. I've always been straightforward, I don't have filters. So, I don't think I should change because this is how I'm and that's why I'm loved by my fans. I want to stay this way, real and responsible. I would never want to lose myself."

### OWEN RECALLS REACTION TO MOBIUS IN LOKI

Actor **OWEN WILSON** has opened up on his first reaction to his role of Agent Mobius in the web series *Loki*.

Wilson said Mobius just sounded too complicated and interesting to gloss over.

He described the character and the show as "maybe not something you would expect from a comic book world, while still providing some of the excitement and thrills and sense of adventure that you do expect from these stories."



# Sankalp Se Siddhi — Mission Van Dhan

The Minister for Tribal Affairs, ARJUN MUNDA, virtually launches livelihood initiatives and inaugurates seven new Tribes India outlets along with the new office for TRIFED

**Sankalp Se Siddhi — Mission Van Dhan**, was launched by Arjun Munda, Minister for Tribal Affairs on June 15. The event also witnessed the inauguration and launch of several other programmes, including the new premises of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) headquarters. Keeping in line with the Prime Minister's clarion call 'Vocal for Local' and to build an *Atmanirbhar Bharat*, TRIFED has been coming up with several initiatives, aimed at sustainable livelihoods for our tribal population.

Munda formally inaugurated the new office by cutting the ribbon in the presence of Renuka Singh, Minister of State for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Bhaskar Khulbe, Advisor to the PM, Ramesh Chand Meena, Chairman of TRIFED, and Pravir Krishna, Managing Director of TRIFED.

Speaking on the occasion, Munda remarked, "I am delighted to inaugurate the new premises of

TRIFED and unveil some noteworthy initiatives that TRIFED has been working towards, such as *Sankalp se Siddhi — Mission Van Dhan*. Implementation of this crucial mission will result in the transformation of the tribal ecosystem in our country. Today, is a momentous day for tribal people, as today sees the culmination of the valuable effort put in by the TRIFED team over the past years. It is commendable that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the TRIFED team has achieved this, despite the difficult circumstances of the past two years."

Renuka said, "It is noteworthy that the new initiatives being unveiled today take care of all aspects of tribal empowerment, be it spreading awareness about the richness of tribal lifestyle and natural produce with the immunity boosting product hampers and the attractively designed H&G products which are not only sustainable; or preserving the culture through the vivid colourful Coffee Table

book."

The new TRIFED Office premises at NSIC Complex, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-III, New Delhi is around 30,000 sq ft in area and has state-of-the-art infrastructure and is equipped with two conference rooms for video conferencing and other latest amenities. It houses office space for the Minister for Tribal Affairs, Managing Director, senior officials and all staff.

The most notable initiative unveiled was *Sankalp Se Siddhi — Mission Van Dhan*. TRIFED has been implementing several noteworthy programmes for the empowerment of the tribals. Over the past two years, The Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value Chain for MFP has impacted the tribal ecosystem in a major way. It has injected ₹3,000 crores into the tribal economy, even during such difficult times, aided by government

push. The *Van Dhan* tribal start-ups, a component of the same scheme, have emerged as a source of employment generation for tribal gatherers and forest dwellers and the home-bound tribal artisans. In less than two years, 37,362 *Van Dhan Vikas Kendras* (VDVKs), subsumed into 2240 *Van Dhan Vikas Kendra* Clusters (VDVKCs) of 300 forest dwellers each, have been sanctioned by TRIFED out of which 1200 VDVK Clusters are operational. A total number of 134 Tribes India Outlets have been opened for retail marketing to date, and have made a total sale of ₹53.66 crores. Besides, two TRIFED Projects at Jagdalpur and Raigarh (Maharashtra) are being shortly commissioned for undertaking value-addition of various forest products being procured by beneficiaries of *Van Dhan* Kendras. As a result of the above, an estimated amount of ₹3800 crores has so far been injected in the tribal economy while impacting the lives of 50 lakh members of the tribal popu-

lation. TRIFED now plans to expand its operations through the convergence of various schemes of different ministries and departments to launch various tribal development programmes under the *Sankalp Se Siddhi — Mission Van Dhan* banner for expediting its implementation in a Mission mode. Through this mission, the establishment of 50,000 *Van Dhan Vikas Kendras*, 3000 Haat Bazaars, 600 godowns, 200 Mini TRIFED units, 100 common facility centres, 100 TRIFED parks, 100 SFURTI clusters, 200 Tribes India retail stores, e-commerce platforms for TRIFED and Tribes India brands is being targeted.

Munda also inaugurated seven more Tribes India outlets, two in Jagdalpur, three in Ranchi, one in Jamshepur and another at Sarnath. Showcasing tribal products from all over the country, the outlets will have specific GI and *Van Dhan* corners and will display the large variety of GI tagged and natural products from different parts of the country.

The Sarnath outlet is the first successful collaboration with the Ministry of Culture at an ASI heritage site. With these outlets, the total number of Tribes India outlets have gone up to 141.

A Tribes India Coffee Table Book, which showcases the rich cultural tribal heritage and highlights the journey of various tribal artisans practising different arts and crafts and how TRIFED has impacted their livelihoods, was also unveiled today. With the mission to make Tribes India the ultimate gifting destination, TRIFED has compiled a hamper of unique handicrafts, GI products and immunity boosters from different parts of the country. These hampers, unveiled today, will make for unique gifts both here and abroad. TRIFED has also been providing skill upgradation and design development workshops for the development of tribal artisans through handicraft and income generation training programmes. During the pandemic, efforts were made for the skill development of

tribal artisans and 17 training programmes were approved for benefiting 340 tribal artisans and developing 170 new designed products. Twenty five newly designed products from the recently completed Design workshop training programmes for the Boka tribal artisans at Rishikesh and Meena tribal artisans at Jaipur, were also launched.

Speaking on the occasion, Pravir said, "TRIFED is working consistently on its mission towards making the tribals *atmanirbhar* and self-reliant. These are just a glimpse of the activities it has undertaken in this regard. The team is striving in this direction and will continue to do so."

With the emphasis on being 'Vocal for local' and building a self-reliant India, TRIFED, as the nodal agency working towards tribal empowerment, continues to launch and start new initiatives that helps in improving the income and livelihood of the tribal people, while preserving their way of life and traditions.

## POWERGRID supports Municipal Corporation, Shimla



Jai Ram Thakur, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh (HP), flagged off truck-mounted sewer jetting and litter picking machines, provided to the Municipal Corporation of Shimla by Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.

Suresh Bhardwaj, Urban Development Minister of HP, V K Singh, Director (Personnel) of POWERGRID, Kailash Rathore, Executive Director, Northern Region-II of POWERGRID and other senior officials were also present on this occasion.

POWERGRID had sanctioned funds amounting to ₹1.98 crores for providing four special purpose vehicles (SPVs) to the state of HP. One truck-mounted sweeping machine with vacuum cleaner and one truck-mounted compactor had been handed over to the Municipal Corporation of Shimla in December 2020. The remaining two machines were flagged off on the day before yesterday.

This initiative of POWERGRID shall help the municipal corporation in creating smart city infrastructure. These

machines shall help in maintaining the cleanliness and hygiene of the city. Furthermore, with the introduction of these technologically advanced machines, the process of cleaning, especially in difficult terrains of the hilly region, will be done easily and rapidly.

Earlier, one SPV mounted vacuum-assisted road sweeper, two sewer cleaning jetting vehicle machines costing ₹1.31 crore had been handed over to the Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Manali, district Kullu. Apart from this, 3,250 solar LED street lights and 13,000 twin-bin dustbins having financial implication of ₹11.49 crore, have been supplied and installed in various parts of HP.

Besides, POWERGRID has also undertaken efforts for skill development for local youth in district Lahaul and Spiti, through infrastructure additions & capacity building in the field of mountaineering & allied activities with the financial implication of ₹32 lakhs. As part of CSR efforts in the state, 4 Medical Mobile units costing ₹1.06 crores to Bilaspur District Authorities, two ambulances in IGMC Shimla and District Hospital, Chamba have been provided in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

## NCC as an elective subject

The National Cadet Corps, a premier uniformed youth organisation of our country, has contributed significantly to nation-building since its inception. It has transformed the lives of millions of youth by shaping their character and showing them the path of 'Unity and Discipline, the motto of NCC.

The NCC has made notable and praiseworthy contributions in spreading awareness among the masses on important issues like water conservation, environment protection, *Swachhta Abhiyan* and enforcing COVID-19 protocols. It is time that NCC now be considered as a general elective subject/credit course in all universities and colleges which are affiliated with NCC in an extracurricular capacity.

Secretary of the Department of Higher Education from the Ministry of Education, Amit Khare held a meeting with Lt Gen Tarun Aich, Director-General of NCC and Maj Gen Indrabalan, ADG of NCC, on facilitating the implementation of NCC general elective credit course across universities and technical colleges in India. He welcomed the circulars issued by UGC and AICTE that recognises NCC as a credit course designed by Directorate General National Cadet Corps (DGNCC), which he hailed as a landmark step.



In phase one, adoption of the course in colleges already having NCC units will be made possible. Subsequent expansion to other colleges would depend on the creation of necessary capacity with DGNCC or by the colleges themselves. DGNCC revealed that under Fully Self-Financed Scheme, one lakh vacancies have been released for private colleges over and above the 15 lakh sanctioned strength of NCC.

Interestingly as a JS in 2013, Khare had initiated a similar process. But at that time it was considered as an elective subject since choice based semester system was not in place. He mentioned that the National Education Policy, 2020 has already recognised the importance of holistic education, social service, community development et al as credit courses under the

Choice Based Credit System and NCC training already falls in this ambit.

Out of the 979 universities in India, only 54 are central universities, 425 are state universities and 125 are deemed universities. To achieve implementation of NCC elective in state universities, the DoE would approach the state governments to facilitate the process. The DoE would also consider the suitability of introducing the NCC credit course in IITs and NITs.

Khare also conveyed that the benefits of the NCC credit course to students need to be adequately publicised to generate awareness and interest among universities and students. He appreciated the efforts being made by DG of NCC and the state directorates engaging with universities and colleges in assisting the implementation.



## CISF organises promotion-cum-pipping ceremony

A promotion-cum-pipping ceremony of other ranks was organized at CISF Headquarters, New Delhi and simultaneously at all the zonal headquarters across India.

In a path-breaking initiative for the welfare of the personnel, 2100 constables/GD have been promoted to the rank of Head Constable/GD. Sudhir Kumar Saxena, DG of CISF put ranks to promoted CISF personnel during the promotion-cum-pipping ceremony held at CISF HQ, Arvind Deep, ADG (North), P S Phalnikar, ADG (APS), Prateek Mohanty, IG (Pers) and other senior officers of CISF were present during the ceremony. The ceremony witnessed immense pride and enthusiasm amongst the promoted personnel. To implement this transformational agenda, the officers and staff of CISF HQ pursued hard and maintained liaison & coordination with MHA, for promoting the force personnel.

Because of the COVID menace and guidelines of social distancing, only a

few constables were invited from Delhi-NCR Units and IGI Airport for putting their rank on promotion during the pipping ceremony. Similarly, pipping ceremonies were also organised in all the zonal headquarters of CISF for promoting the CISF personnel to the next higher rank.

Saxena congratulated all the promoted head constables. He said that regular promotions to the personnel go a long way in enhancing our capabilities and also motivates other personnel to improve in their tasks and aspire for a similar promotions. It thus improves the overall employee morale and job satisfaction thereby promoting the development of the organisation as personnel feel connected with their organisation and willingly give their best for its effective functioning and growth. He also added that in the present scenario of negativity, these promotions will not only boost the morale of the personnel but also help to create a positive functional atmosphere at workplaces.

## NAFED launches Fortified Rice Bran Oil

Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary of Food and Public Distribution for the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India launched NAFED Fortified Rice Bran Oil on June 15. This Rice bran oil will be marketed by NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd), India's apex Agri-marketing Organisation which has been serving the country since 1958.

On the occasion, Sudhanshu stated that this initiative by NAFED will reduce the country's consumption dependence on imported edible oil in the future. He also said that this will provide opportunities for Indian edible oil manufacturers while giving an impetus to the *Atmanirbhar Bharat* initiative.

Guest of Honour, Arun Singhal, Chief Executive Officer of Food Safety and Standards Authority of



India (FSSAI) highlighted the benefits of rice bran oil stating it is one of the healthiest cooking oils and has numerous benefits like being rich in antioxidants and having anti-cancerous, anti-ageing properties.

Atish Chandra, Chairman & Managing Director of Food Corporation of India (FCI) also graced the e-launch and outlined the various health and lifestyle benefits of rice bran oil and the importance of standardisation of this product in the industry. Recently an MoU has been signed between NAFED and FCI for the production and marketing of fortified rice kernel.

Regarding this initiative, Sanjeev Kumar Chaddha, Managing Director of NAFED, said, "We aim to support consumers by providing immunity boosting products in the backdrop of the pandemic by introducing products aimed at promoting healthy food habits." He also mentioned that this initiative will provide easy access to NAFED branded high-quality rice bran oil, which will boost the indigenous oil manufacturing industry.

Pankaj Kumar Prasad, NAFED's Additional Managing Director, concluded the event by highlighting that such initiatives will broaden the

organisation's consumer marketing segment by offering daily essential healthy products at affordable price.

Rice bran oil from NAFED will be fortified and will contain additional nutrients and vitamins. According to the FSSAI, fortified oil can help a person fulfil 25-30 per cent of the recommended dietary intake for vitamins A and D. NAFED Fortified Rice Bran Oil will be available at all NAFED Stores and also on various online platforms and is recommended by the American Heart Association and the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of the best substitutes for other edible oils.

## Financial results for RITES Ltd

RITES Ltd (NSE: RITES, BSE: 541556), the leading Transport Infrastructure Consultancy and Engineering firm, announced its standalone and consolidated financial results for the Quarter and Year ended on March 31, 2021.

Commenting on the results, Rajeev Mehrotra, Chairman and Managing Director, RITES Limited, said, "Given the testing scenario, our focus remained on project delivery & execution which helped us to register Quarter to Quarter operational revenue growth in every quarter of FY21. Our Q4FY21 results surpassed the Q4FY20, but were not enough to make up for the shortfalls in first three quarters."

**Revenue and profit growth**  
 Q4FY21 total revenue is up by 6.1 per cent to ₹632 crore as against ₹596 crore in Q4FY20 and has shown a QoQ growth of 36.2 per cent. Revenue improved due to growth in consultancy, exports

and turnkey. Similarly, operating revenue, excluding other income, is up by 12 per cent to ₹619 crore in Q4FY21. EBITDA, excluding other income, and PAT has shown a growth of 17.3 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively and sustained margins at 27.8 per cent and 21.3 per cent respectively. During the quarter, exports started of cape gauge locomotives to Mozambique and coaches to Sri Lanka and as a result, exports have shown a YoY growth of 54.5 per cent. However, revenue from some consignments which were ready for shipment is spilling over to Q1FY22. Consultancy and leasing remained almost flat and seen revenue reaching towards the pre-COVID levels.

**FY21 (consolidated)**  
 FY21 total consolidated revenue stands at ₹2005 crore against ₹2735 crore in FY20. Similarly, the operating revenue, excluding other income, stand at ₹1860 crore against ₹2474 crore in

FY20. The decrease is attributable to a decrease in exports by ₹448 crore, disruptions in the supply chain and restrictions imposed due to pandemic and one-time settlement income of ₹91 crore during FY20. Excluding exports, the fall in operating revenue is 8.7 per cent. EBITDA (excluding other income) and PAT stands at ₹505 crore and ₹444 crore, respectively, against ₹668 crore and ₹633 crore respectively in FY20. EBITDA and PAT margins are sustained at 27.2 per cent and 22.2 per cent respectively due to timely cost reduction measures.

**FY21 (standalone)**  
 Similarly, standalone revenue also got impacted due to disruptions in the supply chain and restrictions imposed due to pandemic and total standalone revenue now stands at ₹1947 crore against ₹2665 crore in FY20. EBITDA (excluding other income) and PAT stands at ₹460 crore and ₹424 crore, against ₹602 crore and

₹596 crore respectively in FY20. In consultancy and turnkey, the margins were maintained at 44.2 per cent and 3.8 per cent however exports and leasing margins moderated to 19 per cent and 35.6 per cent respectively, due to fewer exports and reduced locomotive requirement in H1FY21.

**Dividend**  
 After declaring two interim dividends of ₹120 crore (₹5 per share) and ₹96 crore (₹4 per share) for FY21, the Board of Directors has recommended a final dividend of ₹96 crore (₹4 per share) for FY21 which is 40 per cent of paid-up capital. This dividend will take the dividend payout of the company to 73.6 per cent for FY21 based on the PAT of FY21.

**Performance of our subsidiary and JV**  
 Revenue from our subsidiary REMC Ltd stands at ₹69 crore against ₹81 crore in the previous

financial year. Profit after tax stands at ₹24 crore against ₹35 crore in FY20. Consultancy revenue from this subsidiary got impacted due to less traction power requirement by railways during FY21, however, power generation revenues are up by 46.9 per cent to ₹16 crore in FY21. In FY21, our wagon manufacturing joint venture, SRBWP, revenue and profit stands at ₹161 crore and ₹2.5 crores against ₹265 crore and ₹15.5 crores respectively in FY20. In our joint venture IRSDC, revenue and profit stand at ₹39 crore and ₹5 crores respectively against ₹50 crore and ₹5 crores in FY20.

**Growth outlook for FY21**  
 Commenting on the outlook, Mehrotra said, "We can deliver orders in hand in a timely manner but post-COVID normalcy will set the pace for execution. We are also aligned to seize more opportunities for growth in coming years."

## PFC LOGS HIGHEST EVER NET PROFIT

State-owned non-banking financial firm SPower Finance Corporation (PFC) records highest ever net profit of ₹8,444 crore for FY 21, up 49 per cent on Y-o-Y basis.

**STANDALONE**  
 Highest annual PAT of ₹8,444 crore. Approximately 49 per cent jump in Standalone Profit After Tax from FY 20. Around 28 per cent increase in net interest income from FY 20. Dividend of ₹2 declared per share. Thus, in FY 21, PFC has given a total dividend of ₹10 per share i.e. 100 per cent. Aided by profit growth, company's net worth for FY 21 is up by 16 per cent to ₹52,393 crore and has crossed the fifty thousand mark. Around 25 per cent Stressed Book Resolved in FY 21: Gross NPA ratio saw a sharp reduction of 238 bps from FY 20. The current GNPA ratio is at 5.70 per cent against 8.08 per cent in FY 20. Lowest Net NPA levels in past four years. Net NPA ratio saw a sharp reduc-

tion of 171 bps from FY 20. The current Net NPA ratio is at 2.09 per cent against 3.80 per cent in FY 20.

The Capital Adequacy Ratio of the company has also improved sequentially to 18.83 per cent as on March 31, 2021. The capital adequacy is at a comfortable level with sufficient cushion over and above the prescribed regulatory limits.

**CONSOLIDATED**  
 FY 21 vs FY 20  
 Around 66 per cent increase in consolidated profit after tax from FY 20. PAT at ₹15,716 crore for FY 21 vs ₹9,477 crore for FY 20.  
 Loan Asset book grows at 12 per cent. For FY 21, it was at ₹7,45,189 crore and for FY 20, it was at ₹6,67,330 crore.  
 Reduction in consolidated net NPA ratio to 1.91 per cent in FY 21 from 3.57 per cent in FY 20 due to resolution of stressed assets.  
 Reduction in consolidated gross NPA ratio to 5.29 per cent in FY 21 from 7.36 per cent in FY 20 due to resolution of stressed assets.

Hummels own goal helps Les Blues win opening game against Germany

## FRANCE OFF TO WINNING START

AFP ■ MUNICH

Mats Hummels own goal was enough to hand France a 1-0 victory over Germany on Tuesday as the world champions made a winning start to their Euro 2020 campaign by controlling the game in Munich.

Hummels turned the ball into his own net in the 20th minute, which ultimately decided the contest.

France also saw Kylian Mbappe and Karim Benzema have second-half goals ruled offside, while Adrien Rabiot hit the post for Les Bleus.

"It was a clash that could have been a semi-final or a final, so to take three points was important," said France coach Didier Deschamps.

"We played a big game against a very good German team, but we were up to the level and this victory does us good."

The result leaves France second on goal difference in the early Group F table behind Portugal, after the holders' 3-0 win over Hungary earlier in



French players Lucas Hernandez (21), Adrien Rabiot and Kylian Mbappe (10) celebrate after Germany's Mats Hummels, center, scored an own goal during the Euro 2020 group F match between Germany and France at the Allianz Arena in Munich on Tuesday night

Budapest.

The home defeat piles the pressure on Germany ahead of their next game against Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal on Saturday, also at Allianz Arena.

"It was a brutally intense game," said Germany head coach Joachim Löw. "We fought until the end and I can't blame the team, we gave it everything we had. What was missing was a bit of penetrating power in the final third. We didn't do enough there."

He refused to blame Hummels for the own goal, saying: "There is no need to reproach Mats for the own goal. It was difficult for him to clear."

It was a heartbreaking night for Hummels, back to boost the German defence after a two-year exile from international football.

Seven years ago, it was Hummels' headed goal which knocked France out of the 2014 World Cup in the quarter-finals as Germany went on to win the title in Brazil.

## Miranchuk reignites Russia's campaign

AP ■ ST PETERSBURG

A special goal by Aleksei Miranchuk allowed Russia to kickstart their Euro 2020 campaign with a 1-0 win over Finland in Saint Petersburg on Wednesday, but the game was marred by an injury to Mario Fernandes.

Miranchuk, of Serie A side Atalanta, produced a glorious finish in first-half stoppage time for the only goal of the game between the neighbours in Group B.

It blows open the section after Russia, one of nine participating nations at the Euro playing matches at home, had lost 3-0 to Belgium in their opening game at the weekend.

Finland, making their debut at a major international tournament, had beaten Denmark 1-0 in Copenhagen on Saturday, a game



Russia's Aleksei Miranchuk, front, celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal

completely overshadowed by Christian Eriksen's cardiac arrest.

Here it was Russia's Fernandes, the Brazilian-born CSKA Moscow right-back, who provided an injury scare.

The 30-year-old went up for a high ball in the Finland box in the first half and came down awkwardly, the back of his neck taking the full force of the landing.

He needed to be stabilised and was stretchered off before being taken to hospital.

The Russian team's Twitter feed said he was undergoing tests for a suspected spinal injury.

Russia went on to win the game without Fernandes, as Miranchuk turned on the edge of the box and played a one-two with skipper Artem Dzyuba before sending a glorious left-foot shot into the top corner of the net.

That was enough for the 2018 World Cup quarter-finalists to win the game but it could have been very different.

Finland thought they had gone in front inside three minutes when Joel Pohjanpalo headed in a Jukka Raitala cross.

However Pohjanpalo, who got the winner against Denmark, was this time denied as a VAR check confirmed a marginal offside against the Bayer Leverkusen player.

Russia went on to have the better chances and could have won by a wider margin, with Finland goalkeeper Lukas Hradecky producing a superb fingertip save to deny Daler Kuzyaev in the second half.

Russia's final group game will be in Denmark next Monday, while Finland should again have a sizeable support behind them as they stay in Saint Petersburg to play Belgium.

## Arnautovic banned for goal celebration

AFP ■ LAUSANNE

Austria forward Marko Arnautovic has been given a one-game Euro 2020 ban for insulting a North Macedonia player in his side's opening match at the tournament, UEFA said on Wednesday.

UEFA said Arnautovic had been punished for 'insulting another player' and the 32-year-old will miss his side's match against the Netherlands in Amsterdam on Thursday as a result.

European football's governing body had opened an investigation into Arnautovic following the incident in Sunday's 3-1 win over North Macedonia in Bucharest.

The former West Ham United player, who now plays for Shanghai Port in China, netted Austria's third goal in the game



Marko Arnautovic (7) celebrates after he scores against North Macedonia

and then launched into an ill-tempered celebration until his teammate David Alaba intervened to calm him down.

Media reports claimed he insulted Leeds United's Ezgjan Alioski, referring to the North Macedonia defender's Albanian heritage.

## Coca Cola take \$4 billion hit after Ronaldo's PC

Budapest: Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo removed Coca-Cola bottles placed in front of him at a Euro 2020 press conference here, which reportedly cost the global beverage giant a staggering \$4 billion.

A well-known fitness enthusiast, Ronaldo set aside two Coca-Cola glass bottles which lay in front of him during a press conference ahead of Portugal's opening Euro match against Hungary here on Monday.

According to media reports, the share price of Coca-Cola, one of the official sponsors of Euro 2020, slipped from \$56.10 to \$55.22 almost immediately after Ronaldo's gesture.

The market valuation of Coca-Cola went from \$242 billion to \$238 billion, a fall of \$4 billion.

On Tuesday, France mid-fielder Paul Pogba also removed a bottle of Heineken beer that had been placed in front of him at a Press conference. PTI

## shortpasses

### MURRAY IN TEARS AFTER WIN

LONDON: Former world No 1 Andy Murray defeated Benoit Paire 6-3, 6-2 at The Queen's Club grass-court tournament, dispatching the Frenchman in 65 minutes for his first match victory in more than a year.

### JAPAN WEIGHING 10K FANS CAP

TYOKYO: Japan could allow up to 10,000 fans at sports events ahead of the Olympics, media reported on Wednesday, as organisers weigh how many domestic fans can attend the Games.

### MAN CITY VS SPURS IN PL OPENER

LONDON: Premier League champions Man City will start the defence of their title away to Spurs after the fixtures for the 2021-22 season were unveiled on Wednesday.

### CONCUSSED FAF OUT OF PSL

ABU DHABI: Former Proteas captain Faf du Plessis, who had suffered a concussion during a PSL match, was on Wednesday ruled out of the remaining matches of the T20 tournament.

### WILCARD FOR MURRAY, VENUS

LONDON: Andy Murray and Venus Williams, who have seven Wimbledon singles titles between them, have been given wild card entries to this year's championships.

### CELTIC VS MIDTYLLAND IN CL

LONDON: New Celtic manager Ange Postecoglou's first official game will be against Danish side Midtjylland in the second qualifying round of the Champions League. The Hoops will be at home for the first leg on July 20 or 21 before travelling to the MCH Arena a week later.

### FEDERER SUFFERS SHOCK DEFEAT

HALLE: Roger Federer suffered a setback in his preparations for Wimbledon after crashing out of the second round of the ATP grass court tourney. He suffered a shock 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 defeat to Felix Auger Aliassime.

### ROSE JOINS WATFORD FOR FREE

LONDON: Watford have confirmed the signing of defender Danny Rose on a two-year deal following his departure from Spurs.

### MILKHA OUT OF COVID ICU

CHANDIGARH: Legendary Indian sprinter Milkha Singh is 'stable' and he has been shifted out of COVID ICU to another section of the PGIMER hospital, a statement from his family said on Wednesday.

### BOPANNA-SHARAN IN QUARTERS

HALLE: India's Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan knocked out second seeds Lukasz Kubot and Edouard Roger Vasselin 7-6(11) 6-4 to move to the quarterfinals of the Noventi Open, here on Wednesday.

### DUTTE AIMS TO REACH 100M FINAL

NEW DELHI: An Olympic qualifying spot within her grasp, national record-holding sprinter Dutee Chand said her target in the upcoming Tokyo Games is to reach the 100m final with an improved timing.

## Gavaskar expects both Ashwin, Jadeja to play in WTC final

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Legendary opener Sunil Gavaskar believes that India will go in with both Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin against New Zealand in the World Test Championship final as Southampton's 'boiling hot' weather is going to ensure that the pitch dries up progressively and assists spinners.

Gavaskar is part of the match's commentary panel and is currently in Southampton with first-hand knowledge about the pitch and conditions for the match starting June 18.

"In Southampton, it's been boiling hot over the last few days so the pitch will definitely be dry and help spin as the match progresses, so yes both Ashwin and Jadeja will play," Gavaskar said.

Southampton's maximum temperature has been over 25°C for the past few days but there is a forecast of rain from Thursday.

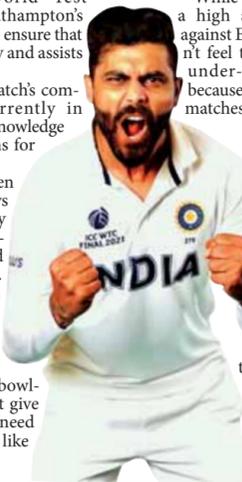
For Gavaskar, it's not just bowling but all-round abilities that give India the kind of balance they need going into a marquee match like this.

"That (Ashwin and Jadeja together) also gives depth to the batting as well as give a fine balance to the bowling attack. For the series later (vs England) much will depend on the weather and pitch conditions."

While New Zealand will be on a high after their series win against England, Gavaskar doesn't feel that the Indian team is under-prepared either just because it didn't get any practice matches.

"(In) today's tours there are barely one or two practice games before the Test series begins and the Indian team has had intra-squad matches so they have had that practice."

"The team is a good blend of youth and experience and most of the players have been to England several times so they know the conditions and what to expect," said the former India captain.



## I've reached here because of criticism: Rahane

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Ajinkya Rahane doesn't mind a bit of 'criticism' but has never been too overtly bothered by what people think about his game as he goes on with his job of winning Test matches for the Indian team.

Despite his blow-hot-blow-cold form over the last few years, India's Test vice-captain with 1095 runs in 17 games is team's top scorer in the two-year World Test Championship cycle leading to the final against New Zealand.

"It feels special," Rahane said about emerging as the top scorer.

But what about the flak that he has faced because of poor run of scores?

"I'm happy to take criticism. I feel it's because of the criticism I'm here. I always want to give my best whether people criticise me or not."

"For me, it's important to give my best for my country and contribute each and every time be it as a batsman or a fielder," Rahane, who played a massive role as skipper during epic series against Australia, said.

Having played Test cricket for more than eight years, Rahane knows that public opinion is fickle and at



Indian Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane trains during team's practice session

best left alone with focus on controllables.

"I don't really think about criticism. If people criticise me, that's

their thing, and that's their job. I cannot control all these things. For me, I always focus on controllables, putting my best foot forward, working hard and following my process and the result follows."

Rahane feels that even if he scores 40 and it proves to be useful for the team's cause, he is more than happy.

"I will be playing my natural game. Winning is really important whether I score hundred or not. I don't want to put too much pressure on myself and even if my 30 or 40 is valuable for the team, I am happy."

The Indian vice-captain in 2019 had played for the Hampshire county and has a better idea about the ground where he has also played two Tests in 2014 and 18, both of which the visitors lost.

"I like to be in the present. I know the conditions. It's about being in the moment, adjusting to the conditions. Also me being the highest scorer doesn't matter now. It's past. I just don't want to put extra pressure and would want to play freely," said Rahane, who has three hundreds and six fifties in this inaugural cycle of WTC.

For Rahane, the WTC final is just another game and his mental make-

## English Women's dominate Day 1

PTI ■ BRISTOL

Indian Women picked up the crucial wicket Tammy Beaumont (66) in the second session but England Women consolidated their position by reaching 162 for two at tea on the opening day of the one-off Test here on Wednesday.

After getting rid of Lauren Winfield-Hill (35) in the first session of the day, India Women toiled hard for most part of the post-lunch period before debutant off-spinner Sneha Rana picked up her maiden Test wicket.

She got rid of in-form of Beaumont, who was brilliantly caught by Shafali Verma at short leg.

Beaumont faced 166 balls and decorated her innings with six fours en route to her second Test fifty.

Skipper Heather Knight (47 not out) batted cautiously and remained unbeaten in the company of Natalie Sciver (11 not out) as England made 76 runs off 28 overs in the second session.



England batter Tammy Beaumont in action against India on Day 1

England vs India  
Live from 3:30 pm IST  
SONY TEN 1 NETWORK

Earlier, the hosts made a solid 86 for one in the opening session.

The Indian pace duo of veteran Jhulan Goswami and Shikha Pandey made a promising start, doing just enough to trouble the English batswoman

between second slip and gully to the boundary.

After a slow and cautious start, England picked up the pace. Winfield was the more positive of the two batters as she lofted Pandey over the mid-wicket to hit the first six of the innings and in the process brought up England's fifty in the 17th over.

An over later, Winfield hit another maximum, this time over backward square leg off Vastrakar.

Vastrakar eventually had the last laugh as she had Winfield caught by wicket-keeper Taniya Bhatia, giving India the breakthrough.

As many as five players made Test debut for India, including Verma, Deepti Sharma, Vastrakar, Rana and Bhatia, while for England Sophia Dunkley was the lone player to earn a Test cap.

Indian women team is playing its first Test match in seven years. It last played the traditional format of the game in November 2014 against South Africa in Mysuru.

## 7 Oz stars skip WI tour

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Seven top Australian cricketers who recently played in the IPL have pulled out of the country's white-ball tour of West Indies and Bangladesh.

The two tours are part of team's preparations for the T20 World Cup later this year.

David Warner, Pat Cummins, Glenn Maxwell, Jhye Richardson, Kane Richardson, Marcus Stoinis and Daniel Sams have requested not to be considered for the tours for various reasons while Steve Smith has been rested to fully recover from an elbow complaint which flared during the IPL. Cricket Australia said in a statement.

Cricket Australia on Wednesday named a 18-man squad for the twin tours. Australia play five T20Is and three ODIs between July 9 and 24. The five-match T20 tour of Bangladesh is yet to be confirmed.

Jason Behrendorff, Moises Henriques and Riley Meredith have all agreed to go for the tour despite also being part of the IPL contingent that recently left



hotel quarantine.

The squad is due to depart for the West Indies on June 28 for five T20Is in St Lucia followed by three ODIs in Barbados. If confirmed, the team will then play five T20Is against Bangladesh.

Squad: Aaron Finch (c), Ashton Agar, Wes Agar, Jason Behrendorff, Alex Carey, Dan Christian, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Mitchell Marsh, Ben McDermott, Riley Meredith, Josh Philippe, Mitchell Starc, Mitchell Swepson, Ashton Turner, Andrew Tye, Matthew Wade, Adam Zampa.

Travelling reserves: Nathan Ellis, Tanveer Sangha.