

**OPINION 8**  
CONSTITUTION, COURTS  
& A PRIME MINISTER

**WORLD 11**  
RUSSIA FIRES WARNING SHOTS TO  
DETER UK WARSHIP IN BLACK SEA

**SPORT 14**  
JADEJA BECOMES NO 1  
TEST ALL-ROUNDER

LUCKNOW, THURSDAY JUNE 24 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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INDIA'S MAGIC:  
BADSHAH  
12 VIVACITY

## CAPSULE

**HARYANA EX-CM OP CHAUTALA TO WALK FREE**  
New Delhi: Former Haryana Chief Minister OP Chautala, who is serving a 10-year prison term in a teacher recruitment scam case and is out on parole, will be freed from Tihar jail as the Delhi Government has granted a six-month remission of sentence, officials said.

**MONSOON LIKELY TO ELUDE DELHI TILL JUNE**  
New Delhi: Delhi is unlikely to receive monsoonal showers till the end of June and the maximum temperature in the city is predicted to hover around 40 degrees Celsius till then, according to the IMD.

**KARNAM MALLESWARI IS SPORTS VARSITY'S 1st VC**  
New Delhi: India's first female Olympic medalist Karnam Malleswari has been appointed the vice-chancellor of Delhi Sports University, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said.

**PRASHANT KISHOR MEETS PAWAR FOR 3RD TIME**  
New Delhi: Political strategist Prashant Kishor met NCP supremo Sharad Pawar on Wednesday, a day after leaders of eight Opposition parties gathered at Pawar's residence and discussed various issues facing the country.

**INDIA PROUD OF ITS OLYMPIANS: PM MODI**  
New Delhi: On the occasion of Olympic Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India is proud of the contributions made to sports by athletes who have represented the country at the Olympics over the years.

## J&K political future hinges on all-party meet outcome

Centre to break ice with J&K leaders today

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The return of political normalcy in Jammu & Kashmir and conduct of elections will largely depend on the outcome of the crucial all-party meet convened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the leaders of the Union Territory in New Delhi on Thursday.

Former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti arrived in Delhi on Tuesday. Though the meeting is taking place in the national Capital, the security has been beefed up all across the Union Territory of J&K. A high alert has also been sounded along the Line of Control and the International border to prevent any misadventure from anti-national elements at this crucial juncture.

After the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, it is for the first time that more than one dozen leaders from the region, including four former Chief Ministers and four Deputy Chief Ministers, would be sitting together under the



A security official stands guard ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with political leaders from Jammu & Kashmir in Srinagar on Wednesday. This will be PM Modi's first interaction with all the mainstream political parties of Jammu & Kashmir since August 5, 2019, when the Centre abrogated the States special status and bifurcated it into two Union Territories: J&K and Ladakh. PTI

same roof with the Prime Minister to share their opinions and give suggestions to kick-start the stalled "internal" dialogue process.

Now the question arises in the absence of any concrete agenda of the meeting, whether the Central Government would be able to break the ice or the mainstream leaders would return home empty handed.

Inside reports suggested the Central Government is keen on pushing the agenda of timely completion of process of delimitation of Assembly constituencies so that Assembly polls can be organised in due course of time. Voices have been raised in support of restoring the statehood of Jammu & Kashmir as part of biggest confidence building

measure. The same demand has been raised by the leaders from both the regions and the Union Government too is committed to grant statehood to J&K at an appropriate time. Sources said that while the Centre may agree to restore statehood to J&K minus Ladakh, it will not bring back Article 370 at any cost. Continued on Page 11

## Delta Plus variant cases double in 24 hrs in India

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Karnataka on Wednesday joined the list of States reporting infectious Delta Plus variant of Covid-19, a mutated version of highly contagious Delta variant, taking the total number of reported cases to 46 across the country, more than doubling a day after the reported 22 cases on Tuesday.

Maharashtra tops the list so far with 21 cases followed by Kerala and Madhya Pradesh which are already on alert. The Centre has issued them advisory amid concerns over likely third wave of the pandemic in the country in the next few months. Presently, the

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL CASES:	3,00,82,030 (+54,147)
DEATHS:	3,92,012 (+1,321)
RECOVERED:	2,90,56,333 (+68,854)
ACTIVE:	6,21,859
MAHA:	58,97,587 (+10,066)
KERALA:	28,42,248 (+12,787)
K'TAKA:	28,19,465 (+4,436)
TN:	24,43,415 (+6,596)
DELHI:	14,33,366 (+588)



A medic collects a swab sample from a man for Covid-19 testing in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

Delta Plus virus is prevalent in nine countries across the world — the US, the UK, Portugal, Switzerland, Japan, Poland, Nepal, China, and Russia. However, the Delta variant has been detected in 80 countries. Detected for the first time in India and now known as "Variant of Concern", experts fear that the virus may be lurking in more parts of India, for which genome sequencing is a key to detect these cases. They said it is just a matter of time when more cases will trickle in from other States.

Karnataka Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar Karnataka on Wednesday confirmed the two cases, one of which is from Bengaluru, while the other is from Mysuru. He said that the information has been shared with the Union Health

Ministry and a further course of action is being planned. The Minister said the State Government is monitoring the emergence of new variants and it has decided to set up six genome labs in the State. "Wherever we have a suspicion, we are doing genomic sequencing. We are doing random checks of five per cent of the total samples checked." The strain has been tagged as a "Variant of Concern" by the Centre. "The new Delta Plus variant of the coronavirus is extremely transmissible, and even walking next to a Covid-19 patient who is a carrier of this variant without a mask may lead to the spread of infection," AIIMS director Randeep Guleria said to a news channel. Continued on Page 11

## Once bitten, twice shy! Akhilesh's no to Cong, BSP ties

### SP keeps door open for small caste-based parties in UP

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW

With the political activities gathering momentum in Uttar Pradesh and main political players scouting for allies, Samajwadi Party national president Akhilesh Yadav ruled out alliance with big players like the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Congress, but kept the door ajar for the small caste-based parties.

Having burnt the fingers in 2017 UP Assembly polls and 2019 Lok Sabha elections by forging alliance with the Congress and the BSP respectively, Akhilesh ruled out any tie-up for the Uttar Pradesh election next year and said his party would join forces with like-minded smaller parties.



"Those who want to defeat the BJP, I appeal to them to help the Samajwadi Party," he added.

"My experience with big parties is not good, I will not get into any alliance with them," Akhilesh said. Ruling out a "Bua-Bhatija" repeat act after his 2019 alliance with BSP flopped, Akhilesh admitted that a few BSP leaders were in touch with him.

On the Congress, he said the party was too weak in UP to beat the BJP. "We did not have a good experience with them in 2017 — we gave them over 100 seats but we could not win. The people of UP have rejected the Congress," said Akhilesh, sidestepping a question on Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's mission to rebuild the Congress in the State. Continued on Page 11

## Captain returns home without audience with party high command

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

A day after Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh was given a deadline to fulfil all pre-poll promises by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) three-member panel, the senior Congress leader returned to Chandigarh without meeting the Gandhis — Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi, party vice-president Rahul Gandhi, and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi — commonly addressed as the party high command.

On the other hand, Rahul continued meeting the party leaders from Punjab for the third consecutive day, including the State Congress president Sunil Kumar Jakhar, Rajya Sabha member Partap Singh Bajwa and Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal. Rahul also met Punjab party affairs in-charge Harish Rawat, who apprised him of panel's meeting with the Chief Minister.

At the same time, taking strong note of the recent statements by the Congress MLA and firebrand leader Navjot



Singh Sidhu, the high command may also summon the former cricketer soon. Notably, the Chief Minister lodged strong objection against Sidhu's "two families taking advantage in the State" remarks, regarding which the high command has also sought details.

Pressure seems to be mounting on Capt Amarinder with the party high command taking a tough stand, and conveying it to the CM that he has to fulfil all the promises made to the people before the State goes to 2022 polls.

Even as Rahul continued to meet the State party leaders, especially those criticising the Chief Minister, a rendezvous with Capt Amarinder was not on his list. Continued on Page 11

## India meets Taliban on and off to secure its interests

Qatar envoy confirms Indian officials' meeting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As part of New Delhi's bid to secure reconstruction investments in Afghanistan amid ongoing US troops' withdrawal and likely formation of a new power structure, Indian officials have been meeting Taliban intermittently, including in Doha, but have kept the talks away from public glare.

Qatar's special envoy for counter-terrorism and conflict resolution Mulla bin Majed al-Qahtani has been on record stating that India was engaging with the Taliban.

According to reports, Indian officials and Taliban have been in intermittent contact at different levels. India is also pushing for a comprehensive ceasefire in Afghanistan amid reports of violent onslaught of Taliban to take over the provinces of that country.

The US has planned a complete withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan by



Afghan militiamen join Afghan defense and security forces during a gathering in Kabul on Wednesday. AP

September 11. This will end nearly two decades of American military presence in the war-torn country.

At a webinar organised by the Arab Center in Washington DC on Monday, the senior Qatari diplomat said that he believed the Indian side was engaging with the Taliban as the group could be a key component in the future of Afghanistan.

The Taliban and the Afghan Government are holding direct talks in the Qatari capital city Doha to end the war

that has taken a toll of tens of thousands of people and ravaged various parts of the country. Qatar is engaged in the Afghan peace process.

"I understand that there has been a quiet visit by Indian officials...to speak with the Taliban. Why? Because not everybody is believing that the Taliban will dominate and take over, because Taliban is a key component of, or should be or is going to be a key component of the future of Afghanistan," Qahtani had said. Continued on Page 11

## Banks recover 40% losses from Choksi, Nirav, Vijay Mallya

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Assets worth ₹9,041.5 crore, representing 40 per cent of the total loss to the banks due to the PNB credit fraud case involving diamondaire Mehul Choksi and his nephew Nirav Modi besides liquor baron Vijay Mallya have been handed over to the public sector banks. These assets were seized by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) as part of the money laundering probe against them.

The alleged siphoning of funds by the trio has led to a combined loss to the public sector banks to the tune of ₹22,585.83 crore.

"Due to the cooperation and help extended by ED, public sector banks have already recovered ₹1,357 crore by selling the shares earlier. Thus, the banks shall be realising total amount of ₹9,041.5 crore through sale of a part of assets attached/seized by ED under the provisions of PMLA," the agency said in a statement.

The ED attached/seized assets worth ₹18,170.02 crore which included assets worth ₹969 crore located in foreign countries. Continued on Page 11

## Dawood's nephew Iqbal Kaskar held by NCB in drugs case

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Mohammed Rizwan Iqbal Hasan Shaikh Ibrahim Kaskar, nephew of Karachi-based underworld don Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar, was on Wednesday arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in connection with a drug-related case. Armed with a production warrant, the NCB picked up Iqbal from Thane prison — where he has been lodged for past five years — and taken to the NCB headquarters for questioning. After several hours of questioning, Kaskar was placed under arrest. Kaskar's name had cropped during the interrogations of several accused arrested in connection with the seizure of drugs made in central Mumbai.

## Guv meddling in House affairs: WB Speaker to Birla

PNS ■ KOLKATA

With the relationship between Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee continuing to deteriorate in the wake of his regular talk about the worsening law and order situation, Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee has reached out to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla accusing Raj Bhavan of regular "interference" in the proceedings of the House.

In a virtual meeting, the Bengal Speaker has accused the

Governor of needlessly withholding the Bills passed in the State Assembly.

"I told the Lok Sabha Speaker about the excessive interference of Governor Dhankhar in parliamentary democracy and the functioning of the Assembly. Despite being passed by the Assembly, several Bills are lying with the Governor as he has not signed them. This is unprecedented in the history of West Bengal's parliamentary democracy. Such a thing has never happened before," he said. Continued on Page 11

## Offers galore to end job hesitancy

Indigo offers 10% discount on airfare, Mcdonald 20% on meal for vaccinated

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

From discounts in flight tickets, waiver on car servicing charges and free mobile charge to heavy rewards are being offered to get people vaccinated. In a move to dispel vaccine hesitancy, rumours and myths surrounding the Covid-19 jobs corporate sectors, business class and elected representatives are throwing in a little something extra to reward those who have gotten their shot or encourage those who are dragging their feet.

IndiGo airline, India's largest domestic budget air carrier, is offering 10 per cent discounts on flight tickets to those who get vaccinated; McDonald's is offering a 20 per cent discount on meals; Mcdonald's is offering a 20 per cent discount on meals; Mcdonald's is offering free mobile recharge while another MLA is offering reward of ₹10 lakh for the village that achieves 100 per cent inoculation; Central Bank of India Ltd is offering higher interest on deposits from recipients of at least one dose; boAt is offering 25 per cent discounts on its product; and Beer Cafe's offer gives its consumers a 10 per cent discount on their first job, and 20 per cent on the second one.

In the nation Capital's Saket, Select CITYWalk is offering various "encouragement packages" for inoculated

consumers. The list is long. To claim the discounts, people must show their vaccination certificates issued by the Government.

IndiGo airline, India's largest domestic budget air carrier, has launched a Vaxi Fare scheme, giving a 10 per cent discount on airfare on single, return and multiple journeys across India for passengers who are vaccinated with either first or both doses of Covid-19 vaccines. IndiGo airline is the first airline to offer such a discount to domestic passengers. The catch is that only limited inventory is available under the offer.

In Gurugram, Hotel Le Meridien is offering a 30 per cent discount on the total bill at their restaurant, latest recipe, while Hyatt Regency in the city



has a "buy one, get one free" offer during their Sunday brunch and on select spirits at their lounge and restaurant, Kitchen District. It is also a discount on spa sessions. In Delhi,

special discount is being offered by Delhi's Zaika's restaurant located in Yamuna Vihar, to those who have taken vaccines against corona. Continued on Page 11

# Loan fairs should be organised in all 75 districts of UP: Yogi



CM Yogi Adityanath giving away a cheque to a woman beneficiary at his official residence in Lucknow on Wednesday

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Hailing the MSME department for organising online loan fairs for Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises units, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that loan fairs should be organised in all 75 districts within a month so that the people could get loans and start their own work. He was expressing his views on the occasion of an online 'Self-employment Sangam' programme organised at his official 5, KD Marg residence in Lucknow on Wednesday.

Yogi said that even in the first wave of corona, the MSME department in coordination with banks had disbursed large amounts of loans to strengthen the MSME units, which created a large number of employment opportunities.

"Despite being the most populous state, the unemployment rate is the lowest in the state. The state government

**"Despite being the most populous state, the unemployment rate is the lowest in the state. The state government has employed more than 4 lakh youths in government services. 1.5 crore jobs were created through MSME. Also, self-employment opportunities were promoted through other measures"**

has employed more than 4 lakh youths in government services. 1.5 crore jobs were created through MSME. Also, self-employment opportunities were promoted through other measures," he said.

The chief minister said that the youth of the state have immense potential and those workers and artisans who returned to the state due to the pandemic were now benefiting through their entrepreneurship. "Uttar Pradesh is successfully carrying forward the campaign of self-reliant India," he said.

"The UP government is committed to saving the lives and livelihoods during the corona pandemic. Vaccination against the viral infection is a protective shield. Vaccination is to save life and self-reliant India is to save livelihood. Also, One District One Product Scheme, Mukhyamantri Yuva Swarozgar Yojana, Prime Minister's employment generation program were being conducted to realize the self-reliant India campaign," he said.

The chief minister also

distributed a loan of Rs 2505.58 crore to 31,542 MSME units in the online loan fair under the online self-employment program and provided free advanced tool kit to five beneficiaries under Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana.

On this occasion, Yogi laid the foundation of Common Facility Centers (CFCs) under ODOP Common Facility Promotion Scheme in nine districts-Bhadohi, Moradabad, Ghaziabad, Mirzapur, Mainpuri, Mau, Agra, Bijnor and Muzaffarnagar at a project cost of Rs 73.54 crore.

Addressing the programme, Minister for Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises and Export Promotion Sidharth Nath Singh said that the MSME department has created a large number of employment opportunities through local skills in the last four years.

# Girl thrown off 2nd floor over objection to eve-teasing

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sensational incident indicating the deteriorating law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh, a 17-year-old girl was seriously injured after three men barged into her home in Chaatha area and flung her off the second floor over her objection to eve-teasing, in Mathura on Monday night.

The girl's elder brother Dinesh Singh alleged that three youths had been harassing his sister for about a year. "Last Monday night, around 8 pm, our father got a call from an unidentified caller who sought to know his location. When my father said that he was in Chaatha, the caller told him that they wanted to speak to my sister. When my father refused, they abused him. Soon, three men arrived on a motorcycle and barged into our house. They assaulted my family, including my mother and sister. Later, two of them dragged my sister to the second floor and threw her off the balcony, breaking her spinal cord," he alleged.

Nearby CCTV footage caught the girl falling flat on the street and people rushing towards her to help her. The video was shared by some journalist on Twitter stating that the girl was in the hospital with a fractured spinal cord. "She is admitted to a private hospital and has got severe injuries in her spinal cord and other parts of the body. She is in a critical condition," the girl's father Prem Pal Singh told reporters. The accused are said to be natives of Bihar.

The family also alleged that when they reached the police station on Monday night to register a complaint they were told to come the next day.

However, SP (Rural) Shrish Chandra said that the victim's family member gave a written complaint at the local police station on Tuesday morning after which an FIR was lodged. "Action was taken immediately and two accused were arrested on Wednesday. The third accused would be arrested soon and further action was underway," he told reporters.

Meanwhile, blaming the BJP government over the crime against women, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday said, "Women's safety is in God's hands in UP. In Mathura, goons who had been harassing a girl for a year entered her house and threw her from the terrace. A girl, troubled over being teased, ended her own life in Hamirpur. Such crimes are being committed against women in the state which would make one's soul tremble, but the government is sleeping."

Meanwhile, in a separate incident, four young men lost their lives and two others were injured after their SUV (Scorpio) hit the divider and overturned on Ring Road in Agra on Tuesday night. The injured were admitted to a local hospital.

The six occupants of the Scorpio had gone to Noida to attend a birthday party. While returning, one of tyres burst, after which the driver lost control of the vehicle, rammed onto a divider and overturned. All the car occupants of the vehicle were under 20 years of age and were residents of Agra. The deceased were identified as Ashish (19), Arshad (19), Krishna (16), and Nikhil (18). The two injured were Kanik and Kabir, both around 17 years of age. All involved in the incident were residents of Agra.

# Etawah deputy CMO kicks up row with social media post

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A religious post created and uploaded on social media platforms by the deputy CMO of Etawah triggered a controversy on Wednesday. Deputy CMO Dr Srinivas Yadav allegedly made derogatory remarks about Hindu deities as well as RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat in a group named Sewa which went viral on social media on Wednesday.

Media incharge of the BJP Etawah unit Rohit Shukla requested Additional DG Kanpur Zone, IG (Kanpur Range) and Etawah SSP to take legal action against the officer over the "derogatory comments" after which the cyber cell of Etawah police started an investigation. Taking cognisance of the episode, Etawah SSP Sirti Prashant Kumar also ordered an inquiry.

As per reports, UP vice-president of Sewa Sansthan and Deputy CMO Dr Srinivas Yadav wrote a post abusing RSS leaders and Hindu deities on WhatsApp. The post said, "RSS and Mohan Bhagwat want to bring Hinduism, on which the whole world laughs when they come to know that in India monkeys fly in the air, bears build bridges, the trunk of an elephant hangs on a man's neck which the prime minister describes as the world's first plastic surgery. Without sexual intercourse, children are born with the blessings of God, 200 million people go to bed hungry at night and tonnes of milk is dumped into the drains in the name of faith. People in temples plead for the safety by paying bribes and the priest of the same temple keeps the temple locked at night if the God of that temple is not stolen. There are 33 crore gods and goddesses, yet they do not win Olympic medals, those who believe in these gods

**MEDIA INCHARGE OF THE BJP ETAWAH UNIT URGED ADG KANPUR ZONE, IG (KANPUR RANGE) AND SSP TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE OFFICER**

and goddesses are getting poorer and those who never went to the temple run away with thousands of crores of rupees. Mankind does not care about worshipping animals. You find out by drinking water from the hands of men and also drinking the urine of animals. They call the cow a mother but never call the bull a father."

The post also made several comments on the caste system, communal feelings and other issues. Rohit Shukla complained to the government and demanded action against the officer. He alleged that the use of such terminology against any religion and sect by the deputy CMO shows a perverted mentality. Bajrang Dal's Rajnish Mishra also tweeted demanding action against the deputy CMO.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given by the undersigned for and on behalf of LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Area Office, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow pursuant to Circular No. 422/Annexure-E of LIC HFL that the Original sale executed 08.07.2009 executed Mohd Zaheer S/O Late Mohd Zaheer in favour of Mushtaq Ahmad Ansari. The said sale deed is registered in the Office of Sub Registrar II Lucknow in Book No. 1, Volume 8732 on pages 75/88 Serial No. 7101 dated 08.07.2009 in respect to Plot No. 34 Kharsa No. 259 area 94.33 sq.mtr. Situated at Lalai, Distt.-Lucknow. Present owner Iqbal Ahmad Khan has been lost Original sale deed dated 08.07.2009. Premita and Sahankant has applied for housing loan for which has proposed the said property to be mortgaged by depositing aforesaid Original sale deed dated 08.07.2009 with LIC HFL and as such any person claiming to be the said property covered by the said document may file claim before me within 15 days from the date of publication of notice failing which it will be presumed that the property in question is free from any encumbrance and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 days of publication of the notice.

Maranendra Mohan Mishra (Advocate)  
Chamber: Shop No. 4 & 5, Ground Floor, Krishna Tower, Near CMO Office, Kasernagar, Lucknow  
Mob: 9415426914, 9539985554

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**NOTICE**

Lost Original Allotment Letter of Property issued by LDA in the name of Sunitha Mishra, D/o, Sri Kashinath Mishra R/o, 4/274, Vibhavkhand, Gominagar, Lucknow. If anyone finds it will be treated as none and void.

**NOTICE**

I Kailashnath Mishra S/O Jagdish Prasad Mishra R/O Vill Narayanpur Barausa Thana Gosaiganj Sultanpur U.P. hereby state that my son's name in army service record 3398552 H is incorrectly mentioned as Aditi Mishra which should be read and written as Aditya Mishra.

**NOTICE**

I, hereby declared that my Statement of marks and Pass Certificate of Class X (ICSE) Index Number T/3288/087 year 2012 & XII (ISC) UID No. 5418251 year 2014 issued from Dr. Virendra Swarup Memorial Public School, 15/60 Civil Lines, Kanpur has been lost somewhere. - HRITIK MISHRA, 105/577, Sri Nagar, Kanpur.

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# Govt decision to allow opening of bars, clubs brings cheers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government's decision to allow opening of bars and clubs has brought cheers to liquor lovers and also made bar/club owners feel elated after a gap of nine months. Nightlife at bars and clubs returned on Wednesday with customers making a beeline for their swigs of choice.

In an order issued on Monday, the excise commissioner said that bars and clubs located outside containment zones will be allowed to open with the condition that Covid protocol under unlock guidelines by central and state government be followed in no uncertain terms.

As per the order, 50 per cent of the total capacity of customers will be permissible at a time while social distancing norms have to be followed strictly. Bar/club owners will

have to ensure cleanliness inside the premises where customers were to be served with beer or liquor and hand sanitizers be placed at the tables. The staff of the clubs/bars will have to wear gloves and face masks all along. The body temperature of entrants will be checked with infra-red thermometers and customers will not be allowed entry.

Media incharge of Liquor Sellers' Welfare Association Devesh Agrawal welcomed the state government's decision and said that the move would end the crisis that the bar/club owners were facing. He said that the customers desirous of taking swigs would also be happy and appealed for following the Covid protocol.

Meanwhile, Bar and Restaurant Association of Uttar Pradesh asked the state government for relaxation in

annual licence fees and taxes to save them from hardships. A delegation of the association had a meeting with the Chief Minister on Tuesday. In a letter, association's general secretary RK Jaiswal said that bar and restaurant business was one of the highest payers of revenue to the state government but they had to be closed for nine months (from March 20 till date). "Most of the restaurant bar owners had shut down their business and they are starving now. The government has asked us to deposit Rs 2.5 lakh which is 25 per cent of annual license fee as security deposit. Since a bar/restaurant is a permanent business, we were never asked to pay a security deposit. The security deposit was being paid by those having temporary licenses. The state government should exempt us from this security deposit," he said.

# 16 new distilleries to be set up in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The capacity for production of ethanol is set to be significantly augmented in Uttar Pradesh as 16 new distilleries are to be set up during the 2021-22 fiscal. The new distilleries will bring fresh investment of Rs 1,250.44 crores.

Besides, 11 sugar mills have also made sizable investments for enhancing the daily cane crushing capacity. Both moves were expected to benefit cane farmers as they would not have to wait longer for payment of their dues from the mills. Uttar Pradesh is the largest producer of sugarcane in the country.

From the year 2017-18 to January 31, 2021, a total of 161.72 crore litres of ethanol has been produced in the state through 54 distilleries, which is a record. One of these distilleries owned by Dalmia Group has also started production while the remaining 15 will start production by the year end.

Cane farmers and the sugar industry have both benefited from the Yogi government and its investor-friendly policies.

According to officials, DCM Shriram Limited has set up a distillery in Hardoi, which has already started production. Besides, Superior Bio fuels Limited is setting up a distillery at Shamli; Karimganj Biofuels Limited at Rampur; Ajudhia Biofuels Limited at Bilari; Mahakaushal Agricoop India Limited at Shankargarh, Prayagraj; Yadu Sugar Mill at Badaun, Aarti Distillery in Kanpur (Rural), Forever International Distillery at Deoria; Malmalbro International at Shahjahanpur; Raj Shree Fine Chemicals at Shahjahanpur; Indian Potas Limited at Muzaffarnagar; Parle Biscuits Private Limited at Bahraich; and Balrampur Sugar Mill at Lakhimpur Kheri.

# Project me as dyCM candidate or lose UP polls: Nishad to BJP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With just seven months to go for UP Assembly elections, president of Nirbal Indian Shoshit Hamara Aam Dal (Nishad) Sanjay Nishad created a political stir when he announced that BJP should project him as deputy chief minister, otherwise it would face a rout like in panchayat elections.

Talking to a select group of journalists here on Wednesday, he said that the BJP had promised cabinet posts and Rajya Sabha seats. "BJP should project me as the deputy chief minister's face for the 2022 Assembly elections. If they hurt us, they will also not stay happy," Nishad said. "The BJP leaders have no choice. They cannot face the ire of the people of eastern UP. The party has appointed Maurya (Keshav Prasad) as one of the deputy CMs. If the BJP can do that, why not project me as

the deputy CM too," he said.

Nishad even threatened the BJP with consequences if it did not meet his party's demands. "Any denial will lead to a similar fate as panchayat elections. The BJP will then be routed in the assembly elections," he said.

"Had the Nishad Party been with the BJP in the Uttar Pradesh panchayat elections, its fate would have been different. By appointing me as the deputy chief minister, the BJP will please a big vote bank in Uttar Pradesh," Nishad said, adding that history has it that the party that he has supported has ruled, and BJP might suffer heavy losses if he is not there. Earlier, Nishad met Keshav Prasad Maurya at his residence and then Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the evening. The meeting continued for almost an hour. In Delhi, he had met Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president JP Nadda.

# Left parties to meet on June 25 to finalise strategy for elections

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Left wing parties will be meeting in Lucknow on June 25 to discuss their strategy for 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

Communist Party of India (CPI) national secretary Atul Kumar Anjaan, said that the Left parties were identifying Assembly seats according to their presence and strength in UP. "Both the CPI and CPI-M leaderships have assessed the ground situation in the state in the wake of utter failure of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in combating the pandemic and dealing with the deteriorating law and order situation," the CPI leader said.

Anjaan said that the unlocking post-pandemic will provide more time to Left parties to interact and make assessments regarding assembly seats. "The party is aware of the significance of this Assembly poll in the context of the present national politics

and accordingly, steps would be taken to ensure maximum mobilisation of secular and pro-people economic policy believing forces against the BJP," he said.

The CPI leader further said that Left parties had presence all over the state and at a time when many political parties would be contesting the elections, the Left parties may influence results at 70 to 100 Assembly seats in UP.

Anjaan said that the forthcoming meet on June 25 would provide an opportunity to Left parties to exchange notes, share views and discuss political scenarios including alliances.

The CPI leader further said that the recent Panchayat polls exposed the poor performance of the BJP and the public disenchantment with the Modi-Yogi governments.

"Panchayat poll results reflected the anger of the farmers against the BJP and major opposition parties had

only symbolic presence and support to the farmers' agitation while Left parties actively participated in the farmers' stir. That is why the Left parties were accused by PM Narendra Modi of instigating farmers and this would work in our favour in the forthcoming UP Assembly polls," he said.

When asked about any possibility of Left parties aligning with Samajwadi Party, Atul Anjaan said that so far there was no discussion in CPI or CPM and there were no feelers from the former CM Akhilesh Yadav or his party.

It is worth mentioning that Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has already entered into alliance with Rashtriya Lok Dal and Mahan Dal and was negotiating with Chandra Shekhar Ravan of Bheem Party and other smaller parties and caste groups to forge a rainbow coalition of various parties representing several backward castes.

# विज्ञापन संख्या-1 दिनांक 04.06.2021 जिला आपदा प्रबन्ध प्राधिकरण जनपद- जौनपुर।

जनपद जौनपुर में जिला आपदा प्रबन्ध प्राधिकरण में आपदा प्रबन्धन कार्य हेतु निम्नलिखित पद पर संविदा के आधार पर रखे जाने हेतु सोय्य, इच्छुक एवं अभ्यर्थियों से आवेदन पत्र आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं।

क्रमांक	पद का नाम	पदों की संख्या	नियत मानदेय प्रतिमाह
1.	आपदा विशेषज्ञ डिजास्टर प्रोफेशनल	01	₹ 50,000/- प्रतिमाह

**अर्हता :-** मान्यता प्राप्त विश्वविद्यालय से किसी विषय में स्नातक उपाधि या आपदा प्रबन्ध क्षेत्र में पोस्ट ग्रेजुएट अथवा डिप्लोमा धारक को वरीयता प्रदान की जायेगी व आपदा प्रबन्धन के क्षेत्र में कार्य का 3 वर्ष का अनुभव एवं आयु 01 जुलाई, 2021 को न्यूनतम 21 वर्ष तथा अधिकतम 45 वर्ष। अभ्यर्थी द्वारा किसी प्रकार का आवेदन शुल्क नहीं दिया जाना है। अभ्यर्थियों द्वारा साक्षात्कार हेतु आने जाने का खर्च स्वयं वहन किया जायेगा। विस्तृत जानकारी, विज्ञापन हेतु वेबसाइट [www.jaunpur.nic.in](http://www.jaunpur.nic.in) एवं नोटिस बोर्ड कलेक्ट्रेट, जौनपुर में चर्या है।

**आवेदन पत्र भेजने का पता :-** देवी आपदा कार्यालय कलेक्ट्रेट जौनपुर

**आवेदन पत्र जमा करने की अन्तिम तिथि :-** 06-07-2021

# NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

**Public Notice**

Level Crossing No. 80-C (Railway Km 1308/6-7), is situated between Nibkarori and Ugarpur Station. It is located near village Pipargaon Tehsil Farukhabad, District Farukhabad Road Under Bridge (RUB) has been constructed parallel to adjacent Level Crossing No. 80-C on the road connecting pipargaon village to the road from Mohammadabad to Farukhabad and the road traffic has been started through this RUB.

On the basis of the District Magistrate, Farukhabad Letter No. 210/A.J.A./20-V (Railway) Dated 06.09.2017, Commissioner of Railway Safety, N.E. Circle-Lucknow has sanctioned for closure of Level Crossing No. 74-C Vide Letter No. 21201415/4/10/24 dated 15.06.2021.

Thus it is informed to all concerned that the Level Crossing 74-C will be permanently closed for Road Traffic from 02.07.2021 onwards.

**Sr. Divisional Engineer/IV**  
N.C. Railway, Prayagraj, Prayagraj Division  
719/2021 V | North Central Railways | @CPRONCR

# Vaccination to gather pace in August with better availability

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has been carrying out vaccination at a consistent pace and it is likely to gain momentum in the month of August when the availability is better. State Immunisation Officer Dr Ajay Ghai said they have already vaccinated a population of 2.32 crore out of the target of 14 crore population.

He said they planned to administer all the first doses and the maximum of second doses by December. "The supply of vaccine is expected to be very good in August and even July would be better than June supply-wise. The pace of the vaccination will definitely increase after that," he said. Dr Ghai said they were aiming to vaccinate up to 3 crore people in July and 5 crore in August.

"We were having 4 lakh to 4.5 lakh vaccinations per day till June 20 and after we scaled it up, it has reached 7.5 lakh to 8 lakh per day. If the vaccine availability becomes better, we have the capacity to do even more," he added.

Meanwhile, a senior official from the National Health Mission said that different states are adopting different strategies for vaccination. "We have been consistent and completed 80 lakh vaccinations in June, which no state has been able to achieve. But if we talk about states doing the maximum in a day, this feat has been achieved more than UP by Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. However, a day before and a day after, the vaccination has been tepid in those states. The day Andhra Pradesh vaccinated 14 lakh

## UP govt achieves 89% of 'Mission June' target

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has achieved 89 per cent of its target to vaccinate one crore people under the 'Mission June' campaign, government officials said in Lucknow on Wednesday. Additional Chief Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal said on Wednesday, "Covid vaccination campaign was underway at a fast pace in UP. For June, the state set a target of 1 crore vaccinations and so far more than 89 lakh doses have been administered. In short, we can say that UP has achieved over 89% of the target."

vaccinations, they had not even completed 50,000 before that and four days after that, they have been doing 40,000 or 50,000. Similar is the case with Madhya Pradesh where 16 lakh people were vaccinated on Monday but on Tuesday, the figure was 40,000," he pointed out.

He said that the other states had mostly tapped the urban population by setting up huge camps in huge cities but Uttar Pradesh is currently tapping the rural population, which is the most difficult.

Besides, the official pointed out that they were getting the same amount of vaccines which the other states are getting, not as per the population

of the state. "Maharashtra got more vaccines in the start because the infection was high there. Maharashtra has 40 districts and UP has 75, but the same number of vaccines have to be distributed in these districts and hence the numbers would be lesser for UP," he said.

He further said that in Andhra Pradesh, they did 14 lakh vaccinations in one day and they had only 2,200 centres. "One can have more people at one point who can be vaccinated or one can go door to door. In the cluster approach, we will have more centres but small ones. We will have 15-20 centres in one block with each doing approx-

imately 100-125 vaccinations. If one big centre can be made in the urban area, it can carry out 400 vaccinations in a day. Therefore, the number of centres does not matter, but the strategy does," he said.

He added that in UP, there are 8,000 to 8,500 vaccination centres with a near-to-home approach. Regarding concerns being raised over the vaccination not being effective against the Delta+ variant, he said that the vaccines have been effective against all the variants and helped in reducing severity as well as deaths. "Delta+ is a recent variant and the vaccinations have been effective against all," he added.

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# Youth killed, uncle injured as dilapidated building collapses

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

An old dilapidated building at River Bank Colony collapsed early Wednesday morning, killing a youth. The victim was identified as Gaurav Trivedi (23) while his uncle Gyani Trivedi (50), a Congress party worker who was in the rear portion of the house, escaped unhurt. It later came to the fore that Gyani's father Ram Pyare Trivedi had served as a personal secretary to former PM Gulzari Lal Nanda.

Two others who were sleeping in the compound received minor injuries. The incident occurred at 6 in the morning.

Soon after a portion of the four-storey structure collapsed, neighbours rushed to the spot. The State Disaster Management team pulled out Gyani from under the debris around 6:45 am when he was still breathing. He, along with his uncle, were rushed to KGMU Trauma Centre where Gyani succumbed to injuries around 10 am.

Locals blamed poor maintenance of the buildings by Nagar Nigam as the reason for the incident. "Also, unauthorised construction is being carried out on the fourth floor of the adjacent building, which should not have been allowed. We have called for the residents' association meeting on Thursday. We will ask Nagar Nigam to ensure proper maintenance of the buildings or give the ownership to us so that we can do that," a local resident said.

District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash and Municipal Commissioner AK Dwivedi reached the spot to assess the situation. Dwivedi



Minister Brajesh Pathak assessing the situation at the mishap site in River Bank Colony

Pioneer

said they were carrying out the assessment of the main building and if it was not found to be safe, the residents would be evacuated. He pointed out that the building was under the jurisdiction of Nagar Nigam for the past 60 years.

"This is a rented property. We are carrying out the assessment of the building on the side of the structure which collapsed. The main building was over 70 years old and the dilapidated building which collapsed was a separate structure," he added.

Dwivedi said they have

already issued notices to all the vulnerable structures across in the city. "The issue is that people do not want to vacate the houses and it has to be done forcefully. Even now when the building has collapsed, people who are living close by are not ready to leave," he pointed out.

He said people ask them where would they go but they do not realise that when they are living on rent, they can live elsewhere too. "This is not LMC's responsibility. Besides, they do not give rent regularly even though it is nominal. In such a scenario, the main-

tenance becomes difficult. However, right now since the matter is sensitive, we are not talking up this issue," he said.

He added that the portion of the house which did not give way would also be demolished since it could collapse any time. The municipal commissioner said there are nearly 200 houses and rented apartments in that building.

Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia also visited the spot and met the bereaved family members. She also asked the municipal commissioner to submit a report in this regard.

# Testing scaled up at bus, railway stations

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Testing in Uttar Pradesh is being maintained at 2-3 lakh per day. While it is being scaled down in rural areas, it is being increased at bus & railway stations — where there has been an influx of people coming from Maharashtra, Delhi and Punjab — to prevent the spread of any mutant strain of coronavirus in the state, Health Minister Jai Pratap Singh said on Wednesday. He admitted that no one knows the implications of the Delta+ variant in India as yet.

"Whatever information we get it is from the ICMR and then only we start working on it. How will the Delta+ variant impact the population is something about which there is no information available and it is only ICMR that can provide the information after consultations with organisations such as WHO and taking into consideration what scientists across the world are talking about it," Singh said. Asked if there is any



Sanitisation drive underway at Charbagh railway station in Lucknow

Pioneer

information on the kind of mutant in Uttar Pradesh considering that it has been some time since the samples for genome sequencing were sent to the IGIB, the minister said he it UP or any other state, the

variant which is prevalent is common.

"UP has been doing genome sequencing since September-October last year and we are doing it at a smaller percentage just to ensure that

no other virus comes in. We did find one mutant which had entered UP and it had affected only one family. After that we did not get any more cases. Since then, it has been going on at a smaller percentage. Now

with the new wave, we are doing the same thing and what we have learnt from the reports is that in Kerala and Maharashtra, the Delta+ variant has been seen but it still not confirmed," he said.

The minister said that learning a lesson from the first and second waves, preparations were being made on a war-footing be it the requirement of oxygen or drugs, everything was being taken care of.

"Whatever information we have got from scientists and doctors about the possible effect of the third wave affecting children, we have made preparations accordingly. Under the chief minister's guidance, we are already setting up paediatric care units. We have a large setup in every medical college, district hospital and certain CHCs," he said.

He added that the sero-surveillance report was still awaited. "We were supposed to collect 62,000 samples from 75 districts. The samples were collected and sent to the lab," he said.

# Varsity to implement 4-year bachelor's degree programme from next session

**Lucknow (PNS):** In the next academic session 2021-22, the University of Lucknow is all set to implement its 4-year bachelor's degree programme, complete with the changes inspired by the New Education Policy.

LU spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava said that for the past one week, under the guidance of Vice-Chancellor Prof Alok Kumar Rai, each and every department of the university has been working towards the finalisation of the new 4-year bachelor's degree syllabus.

"This new syllabus has a uniform 192 credits across subjects insuring one of the most important tenets of the new education policy which is inter departmental and inter-departmental availability of

course choices for students. Students will also be able to take up co-curricular courses and vocational courses during their study. In their four years of study, the students will have a major 1, a major 2, a minor subject and a co-curricular or vocational course to study every semester. The students will study a total of 20 papers in their major 1, 12 papers in major 2, four papers in minor and co-curricular and vocational papers, as well as do internships/term paper, and minor and major projects," he said. He said that each of these will carry 4 credits, and by the end of each semester a student will accumulate 24 credits in all.

"In the first semester, the

students will finish two major 1 papers, two major 2 papers, one minor paper and one co-curricular course. In the second semester, instead of the co-curricular cause, the students shall complete a vocational course. After finishing the first year of this new bachelor's degree program, the students shall be entitled to receive a certificate if they wish to leave their studies at this point. Similarly, in the third and fourth semesters, the student will complete two papers each of major 1 and major 2, one minor paper each and one co-curricular and one vocational course. Finishing the second year study entitles the student to receive a diploma degree," he said.

# 'UP Jodo': AAP to launch membership drive

**Lucknow (PNS):** The Aam Aadmi Party will launch a membership drive under the 'UP Jodo' campaign from July 8. AAP UP incharge Sanjay Singh said the party's aim is to rope in one crore members in a week and the workers and leaders have been asked to start working on this.

Singh told mediapersons on Wednesday that people in UP have shown a strong liking for Kejriwal's model of governance in the past and the membership drive is being launched to add members. "We have set a target of adding 25,000 members from each of the constituencies and this will be nearly 1 crore in UP," he said. He said the workers and leaders will be campaigning door to door and will get the people to join the party without

any membership fee. "The membership for AAP will be free of cost. We will be holding camps in villages in the time to come," he said. He did not spare the chance to hit out at the Yogi Adityanath government saying a woman dancer was forced to perform during a procession of gram pradhan in Charkhari.

Under the membership campaign, there will be different missed call mobile numbers for each of 403 constituencies in UP to join the membership. The party will do wall writing from June 25 to July 28 and the missed call mobile numbers will be displayed on these write-ups. There will be separate incharges for each of the zones and the campaign will be steered by state president Sabhajeet Singh.

# SCHOOLSCAN

100% MARKS

Five meritorious students of City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Campus I, have secured 100 per cent marks in Mathematics competition in the International Benchmark Test (IBT), getting the top rank globally and bringing laurels to the institution. These students are Aditya Verma, Shubranshu Pandey, Praharsh Chaturvedi, Saksham Pandey and Sumi Pandey.

# Minor held for murderous assault on fruit vendor

**Lucknow (PNS):** A minor who stabbed a fruit vendor was arrested by a police team on Wednesday. The victim, identified as Amit Gupta of Sitapur, was attacked during a verbal spat with the minor on Tuesday night. The accused attacked Gupta with a knife, inflicting injuries on the chest and leg. Meanwhile, a fraudster,

who was absconding for the last eight years, was nabbed by a joint team of Manak Nagar police and crime branch on Wednesday. The accused was identified as Prabhat Kumar in a case at Hasanganj eight years ago. He had taken huge loans from banks by submitting fake documents.

# Rare hill turtles born at Kukrail

**Lucknow (PNS):** The Turtle Survival Alliance India (TSA) announced the hatching of 24 tricarinate hill turtles at Kukrail. A senior forest official said that TSA was working closely with the Forest department. Arunima from TSA, who is associated with the project, said that these 24 hatchlings significantly increase the captive population of this critically endangered species at the joint TSA India Programme, Endangered Project, Uttar Pradesh Environment, Forest and Climate Change department's Laboratory for Aquatic Biology at the Kukrail Gharial Rehabilitation Centre (KGRC). "It also continues to validate the captive-breeding potential for imperilled turtles seized from illegal trade," she said. She said that in 2017, the parents of these 24 offspring were among 54 tricarinate hill turtles seized by the UP STF and Environment, Forest and Climate Change department.

# BJP leaders, lawmakers to ensure vax in villages



CM Yogi Adityanath paying floral tributes to Shyama Prasad Mukherjee at Civil Hospital on Wednesday

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Embracing the motto of 'Sewa hi sangathan', the BJP has decided to send party workers, leaders and lawmakers to villages and ensure vaccination of local residents and distribute food grains among the needy. In the two-day meeting of the national BJP leaders with ministers, RSS and party workers, that ended on Tuesday, the BJP decided to contest the election under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Starting on the death anniversary of Jan Sangh founder Shyama Prasad Mukherjee on Wednesday, the fortnight-long programme will continue till his birth anniversary on July 6. As per the party's strategy, workers will reach every vaccination booth and set up a help desk to assist people.

On June 25, they will go for a mega plantation drive to achieve a record breaking target of planting 30 crore saplings. On June 27, BJP leaders will stay at every booth to listen to PM's 'Mann Ki Baat' and connect the public with the Central and state welfare schemes. Earlier, CM Yogi Adityanath asked all his ministers to camp at every block from June 21 and inspect development and welfare works of the government and solve the problems of the people, if any. The ministers have already started camping in the blocks.

BJP in-charge Radha

Mohan Singh held a meeting with booth workers of booth number 292 and exhorted them to work for the welfare of the people and gave the slogan 'booth jeeta to sab jeeta'.

"The booth is the first step towards the victory of the party. If you can win the booth, you can win the election," Singh told workers. He also talked about the UP government's achievements and asked the workers to spread the good work done by the government.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, along with his ministerial colleagues, paid floral tributes to founder of Jana Sangh Shyama Prasad Mukherjee at Civil Hospital on Wednesday.

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**आवश्यकता है**

B.Com (Hons.) पाठ्यक्रम में Asst. Professor, पर हेतु। योग्यता एवं वेतनमान यू.जी.सी. / उ.प्र. शासन / वि.वि. के मानकानुसार। अहं अन्यथा समस्त शैक्षणिक एवं अनुभव प्रमाण पत्रों की छायाप्रति, दो रंगीन फोटो के साथ, आवेदन पत्र 15 दिनों के अन्दर E-mail: banshicollege@rediffmail.com पर या महाविद्यालय के पते पर पंजीकृत डाक से भेजे।  
(सचिव/प्रबन्धक)

**बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा**  
**Bank of Baroda**

Regional Office Kanpur Dehat Region :  
118/330, 2nd Floor, Kaushalpuri  
Gumti No. 5, Kanpur -208012

**Possession Notice** Branch : Station Road, Orai, Distt. Jalaun

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower & guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 & 9 of the said rules.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Bank of Baroda for amount & interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property & O/S Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand Notice Date & Possession Notice Date
<b>Borrower :</b> M/s. R.V. Advisory Solution Pvt. Limited C/o Shri Pankaj Kumar Gupta, S/o Shri Shyam Sunder Gupta, Address : 237/1, Lahariya, Purwa, Orai, Distt. Jalaun. <b>Guarantor :</b> Shri Yogesh Kumar S/o Shri Jagdish Prasad Dwivedi, R/o : 3701, Patel Nagar, Orai, Distt. Jalaun.
<b>Demand Notice Date:</b> 08-04-2021 • <b>Date of Constructive Possession:</b> 19.06.2021
<b>Description of Mortgage Property :</b> Land and Building Builtover Plot No. 480, Situated at Mohalla, Lahariya Purwa/ New Patel Nagar in the name of Shri Pankaj Kumar Gupta, S/o Shri Shyam Sunder Gupta. <b>Area :</b> 60x28.6 = 1710 Sq. Ft. in 1/2 = 855 Sq. Ft. = 79.42 Sq. Mtr. (427.50 Sq. Ft. = 39.71 Sq. Mtr.). <b>Bounded- North :</b> Plot Mahipal Singh, <b>South :</b> Plot Kazi Wasim Ulla etc., <b>East :</b> Plot Dinesh Kumar West : Rasta Kachcha 22
<b>O/S Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 27,56,634.30 + Intt. + Others Charges</b>
<b>Date : 24-06-2021</b> <b>Place : Orai, Distt. Jalaun</b> <b>Authorised Officer</b>

# CM distributes to city MSME units

PNS ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath disbursed loans worth Rs 2,505.58 crore for setting up 31,542 MSME units in the state, including Varanasi, under Swarozgar Sangam programme through video conferencing on Wednesday. He also distributed free toolkits under Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana.

In Varanasi, the CM gave Rs 12 lakh to Sudha Devi for saree manufacturing unit and Rs 8 lakh to Ashok Kumar Pal for setting up a flour mill under the Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Srijan Programme from Khadi and Village Industries department.

Besides, Industries Department gave loan of Rs 20 lakh to Anand Kumar Maurya for setting up a power loom, Rs 10 lakh to Mandakini Prakash for detergent powder unit, Rs 5 lakh to Mantasha for saree manufacturing unit under the ODOP (One district, One Product), Mukhya Mantri Yuva Rozgar and Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Srijan programmes respectively. Sewing machines were provided free of cost to Soni Pal and Gunja Singh under Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana.

In the online talks with Mandakini Prakash, the CM asked the former about her training, markets of products and how many people would get employment in the unit. In reply, Mandakini told the CM that she had taken train-



MSME and other scheme beneficiaries listening to CM online in Varanasi on Wednesday

ing, contacted the local shopkeepers and dealers and at present, five-six people were associated with her. She also informed Yogi that the number of employees would increase with the growth of her unit.

Congratulating her, the CM described her work as a source of inspiration for others towards self-reliance. He said that the government is helping the women in their education and making them self-reliant and secure under

the Mission Shakti scheme as the women are now moving fast as entrepreneurs, realizing the vision of Atma Nirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India). Yogi also launched the online portal of ODOP Common Facility Centre Scheme. He said that there was a lot of potential for youth self-employment under MSMEs in the state. He instructed the officers that by conducting loan fairs at district level, the benefits should be made available under

various schemes at a fast pace. He said the most populous UP had the lowest unemployment rate. The government gave jobs to four lakh youths and connected 1.5 crore people with employment in MSMEs. DM Kaushal Raj Sharma, GM DIC, district village industries officer and beneficiaries were present in this programme organised online at NIC. The DM handed over cheques, acceptance letters and sewing machines to the beneficiaries.

AYUSHMAN BHARAT YOJANA

# DM directive to make all golden cards by June-end

Varanasi (PNS): Annoyed at the slow progress in making the remaining golden cards under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana within the stipulated time, District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma directed the block development officers and the medical officers in-charge to make the cards of all the beneficiaries by June 30 otherwise their salary of the month of June would not be released.

Reviewing the progress of making golden cards under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana in a meeting of the district task force held at the auditorium in the commissionerate on Tuesday evening, the DM found the progress in this direction much slow and asked all the BDOs and medical officers in-charge (MOICs) of the district to make the remaining cards of the scheme by June 30.

He said the golden cards should be made within stipulated time by setting targets for all the employees at the grass-

roots level and warned that if laxity was shown further and the card of the remaining beneficiaries were not made by the end of this month, the salary of the officers responsible for the month of June would be withheld. Reviewing the preparations for the drive to be launched from July to check the communicable diseases, the DM directed the officials concerned to hold meetings with the officers and employees of block level by Thursday and also ensure the presence of all ANMs, secretaries, lekhpal and other block level employees in the meetings.

The DM expressed annoyance over the tardy progress of the pilot project to administer Covid vaccines in three blocks under the cluster strategy, he directed all the SDMs, BDOs, and MOICs to start the work in clusters to mobilise villagers for the vaccination to that the hundred percent beneficiaries could be saturated under the vaccination programme to start

from July. The district administration has divided blocks into clusters to administer the Covid vaccines to the maximum people under the mega vaccination programme of the government to begin from the next month. Under the cluster strategy, as many as 143 vaccination centres were made in the Sevapuri, Harahua and Badgaon blocks as a pilot project.

The work of mobilising people for vaccination should also be started in the urban areas and corporators, teachers, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers and monitoring committees should also be involved in it to ensure the hundred percent vaccination in the district, the DM said, adding that the programme should be implemented by chalking out a plan.

Chief Medical Officer Dr VB Singh, SDMs, BDOs, MOICs and representatives of partner agency UNICEF and WHO were present in the meeting.

# OPD re-opens in SSH BHU

Varanasi (PNS): After several months of suspension due to surge in the novel coronavirus positive cases during the second wave, the patients were seen once again at Sir Sunderlal Hospital (SSH) in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) as the OPDs reopened on Wednesday, along with the OPDs at the Trauma Centre and Faculty of Dental Sciences.

Though still several restrictions are imposed as the number of registration for general specialty as well as super specialty has been fixed at 50 patients per day and for Specialty Clinic of general specialty departments at 25 patients, there was not much rush as is seen generally in this biggest hospital of the region where a large number of

patients not only from different districts of Purvanchal (eastern UP) but also from adjoining states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh come for treatment. During the suspension of OPD, the consultants of various departments of SSH, on the instructions of the director of Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS), BHU, continued their telemedicine facilities and in case of serious diseases, the patients were also allowed to visit the Emergency Ward of the hospital. The telemedicine OPD would continue as per existing practice.

Apart from restrictions on the number of patients, the outdoor patients and their attendants were also instructed to follow Covid appropriate

behaviour while the indoor patients were admitted only after furnishing RT-PCR negative report of sample collected within 72 hours prior to admission. The elective operation theatres also became functional with only 50 per cent capacity but the Emergency OT continued functioning as usual.

## 4 TEST POSITIVE

Four more people tested positive for novel coronavirus infection in Varanasi during the past 24 hours taking the tally of confirmed cases to 82,203, as per the figures released by the health department on Wednesday evening.

With no COVID-19 deaths during the last 24 hours, the death toll remained at 773.

# Main shooter in PNB branch manager murder case held

PNS ■ VARANASI

The main shooter in the Punjab National Bank branch manager murder case, who was carrying a cash reward of Rs 50,000 on his arrest, and another criminal carrying a cash reward of Rs 25,000 and involved in the sensational killing have been arrested by the police.

The police recovered Rs 12.5 lakh looted from the branch manager, a pistol of 32 bore used in the crime, four live cartridges, a motorcycle, and PAN and identity cards of the branch manager from the possession of the shooter.

The police have so far arrested 13 persons in connection with the bank branch manager's murder, including

the mastermind, but one more criminal involved in the case, who is carrying a cash reward of Rs 50,000, is still absconding.

It may be recalled that Phulchand Ram, manager of PNB branch in Karkhiyaon village under Phulpur police station, was shot dead by Scorpio-borne assailants on June 9 last. The criminals had also looted a bag containing Rs 20 lakh. It was said that the branch manager had withdrawn Rs 41 from a branch of the PNB at Maniyahu in Jaunpur and Rs 6 lakh from his branch on the fateful day.

He along with Dharendra, on whom the police have announced a cash reward of Rs 50,000, and Mukesh Pal boarded the Scorpio on which the branch manager was sitting on

the front seat beside the driver, the main shooter of the murder case, Aryan Pandey aka Raju Pandit of Babhnauli village under Shadiabad police station in Ghazipur district, had revealed to the police during interrogation after being arrested.

He disclosed that the branch manager suspected that they had boarded the Scorpio to loot the bags containing the cash he had withdrawn from two branches of the bank.

Aryan Pandey also disclosed that when the branch manager asked the driver to turn the vehicle towards Jaunpur, he shot him dead from point blank range on the instruction of Dharendra. He also said that Dharendra took away the bag containing Rs 20

lakh in a hurry, leaving behind the other bag containing the cash that was recovered by the police.

Rs 1.25 lakh was recovered from the criminals earlier and Rs 12.5 lakh was recovered from the possession of shooter Raju Pandit, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Amit Verma told newsmen, adding, a pistol of 32 bore, a motorcycle and four live cartridges were also recovered from his possession besides the PAN and identity cards of the branch manager.

Along with Raju Pandit, the joint teams of crime branch of rural police also arrested another criminal, identified as Satpal Paswan, who was carrying a cash reward of Rs 25,000, the SP (Rural) said.

With both these criminals,

the police have so far arrested 13 criminals, including the mastermind of the murder, Alok Rai. The other criminals arrested are Adesh Srivastava, Mukesh Pal, Atul Kumar Singh, Atul Vishwakarma, Sanjay Kumar Patel (driver), Sunil Kumar Patel, Vikas Gond, Rahul Tiwari, Nitesh Singh and Arun Mishra.

The SP (Rural) said one more criminal involved in the murder was on the lam and he would be arrested soon.

The police teams of Varanasi and Ghazipur led by Ashwani Chaturvedi and Bipin Rai respectively and the cops of Phulpur police station led by Durgesh Kumar Mishra played an important role in the arrest of the shooter and the other criminal.

## VARANASI BRIEFS

### PNB'S MAU DIV CELEBRATES 1ST ANNIV



To mark the first anniversary of the opening of the divisional office of Punjab National Bank in Mau, a programme was organised at its premise in Bhujauti locality of the district.

Speaking on the occasion, PNB divisional head RP Sankhwar outlined the significance of the best customer service and inspired the bank staff, saying, "We all progress when the organisation makes progress and so we should discharge our duty with the honesty and sincerity." The staff lauded the leadership of the divisional head, saying that the bank had made remarkable achievements in NPA, business, etc under his able leadership despite the short period of time and adverse situation. Chief Manager Sanjay Singh proposed the vote of thanks.

### SP DELEGATION MEET DCP

In connection with pushing the vehicle and threat on life given to the Samajwadi Party city women's wing chief Pooja Yadav, a delegation of the party led by city president Vishnu Sharma met Deputy Commissioner of Police (Kashi Zone) Amit Kumar on Wednesday. Apprising the DCP of the incident, the SP leaders said that when Pooja Yadav was going to Godowlia from her house in Mahmoorganj around 4:30 pm on Tuesday, some unknown persons on a four-wheeler stopped her in Kamachha area after overtaking her vehicle. They alleged that these persons not only abused Pooja Yadav but also issued life threats. According to them, though the SP woman office-bearer could not note down the vehicle number, she recalled that it was carrying the name-plate of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). They also alleged that the attackers were in an inebriated state and they also misbehaved with Pooja's driver. According to them, the DCP has instructed the Luxa police station to go through the CCTV footage of the time and take action against the guilty persons. SP leaders present in the delegation included state secretary Raju Yadav, city general secretary Jitendra Yadav, spokesperson Sandeep Sharma, Vikas Yadav Bachha, Shamim Ansari, Dilip Kashyap, Jitendra Yadav, Kanchan Chaudhary, Saman Yadav and Ishu Gautam.

### BJP LEADERS GREET DARSHANA

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party leaders of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's parliamentary constituency Varanasi greeted Mahila Morcha state chief Darshana Singh for becoming national vice president of the frontal unit of BJP. Belonging to Trans-Ganga Chandauli district, she lives in Ashok Puram Colony near Daffi here. Getting a new responsibility prior to forthcoming assembly election in the state, she was greeted by several local party leaders, including Union minister Mahendra Nath Pandey, state vice president Laxman Acharya, regional president Mahesh Chand Srivastava, UP ministers Anil Rajbhar, Neelkanth Tiwari and Ravindra Jaiswal, and MLA Saurabh Srivastava. Expressing gratitude to the BJP leaders and well-wishers who reached her residence here on Wednesday, Darshana Singh said that empowerment of the women would be her top priority apart from strengthening the party and apprising the people of the schemes and achievements of the government. Regional spokesman Navratan Rathi said that two women workers from UP had been given places in the national team. Apart from Darshana Singh, Chauri Chaura (Gorakhpur) MLA Sangeta Yadav has been made the national secretary.



# Ganga Parikrama Yatra arrives in Prayagraj

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

The Mundmal Ganga Parikrama Yatra from Gomukh to Ganga Sagar reached Prayagraj on Wednesday. During this, samples were taken every 10-15 km to check pollution. The drains falling into the Ganga were marked along the way.

However, this yatra, which arrived in the afternoon, has taken a halt at Phaphamau at night. A total of 5900 km of foot journey (padyatra) of Ganga has been completed during this campaign. It is being said that this is the biggest padyatra of Ganga till date. On Thursday, the yatra will reach Samudra Coupe. There will be a ritualistic worship of Ma Ganga. Deepdan will also be performed along with maha aarti for the well-being of people and society. It has been resolved to run this yatra campaign continuously for 11 years for the cleanliness and purity of Ganga.

The yatra was started six months ago on December 15,



Hindu devotees cross the Ganga river in Prayagraj. Ganga river and Yamuna river raising due to heavy rain

2020 from the Sangam on behalf of the founder of Atulya Ganga, ex-army officer Gopal Sharma, Lt Col Hem Lohmi, Col Manoj Keshwar to make Ganga aviral and serene. During this yatra, samples were taken by the Atulya Ganga team under 12 parameters to check pollution of Ganga water every 10.15 km. Along with this, the drains falling into the Ganga were also marked.

Along with this yatra, Vrikshamaal campaign was also launched for the development of green belt on the

banks of the Ganga. Under this campaign, saplings were planted on the banks of the Ganga.

Vrikshamaal Abhiyan was led by Vijay Shukla and Kaleshwar Mishra of Green India Foundation. Abhay Mishra, associated with the Yatra, said that the responsibility of the people of the respective villages and settlements had also been fixed for the protection of the plants planted on the banks of the Ganga, so that they survived.

Around 35,000 saplings have been planted during this

campaign and 47,000 saplings have been distributed to tree lovers. During this campaign, the Green India Foundation team also gave a message to 76,000 students and the people of Ganga banks to plant saplings.

Ganga Yatris will be felicitated at Samudra Koop on Thursday. Dozens of Ganga lovers including Yogesh Shukla, Prayagraj Foundation president Shashank Shekhar Pandey, who are contributing to the success of this campaign, will greet the Ganga Yatris on the

occasion.

Prominent among those present included Dattatreya Pandey, Jitendra Sharma, Pramod Sharma, Pratima Mishra, Jayvrat Singh, Manoj Tripathi, Krishna Kumar Pandey, Neeraj Tripathi, Renu Singh, P Tripathi, BN Dixit, Manoj Kumar Tripathi, Shivdas Dwivedi, Harikant, Hari Mohan Pandey. Many people including Rakesh Shukla, Rajesh Sharma, Rakesh Sharma, Anuj Mishra will be involved.

A cinematographer associated with the Mundmal Ganga Parikrama Yatra raised suspicion over this parikrama. Rohit Umraon rubbished the claim of the Atulya Bharat team having completed the journey to both the ends of the Ganga. He said that this yatra had returned from Gangotri, 22 km before Gomukh. Rohit said that he could not go further due to ill health and being infected with coronavirus in Kasganj, but he regretted leaving the journey incomplete on behalf of the Mundmal passengers.

# Jamtara gang had database of 1 lakh! bank customers

Allahabad (PNS): Jamtara's gang had bought the database of one lakh bank customers for cyber crime. This database was provided by one Narayan Singh of Varanasi. Dheeraj Pandey, who was arrested and sent to jail, disclosed this fact during interrogation.

Interestingly most of the data was of senior citizens. For forgery, the criminals sitting in Jamtara used to make people their victims by taking personal information from this database. After arresting Dheeraj, the police interrogated him and he made many shocking revelations. He told the cops that cyber criminals sitting in Jamtara had personal data of lakhs of bank customers like name, address, account number, passbook number, debit/credit card number, internet banking user ID etc.

In the beginning he kept saying that the people of Jamtara gang managed the database through their contacts but when the police started searching his laptop, they found a database of one lakh bank customers.

During interrogation, he informed the cops that this database had been provided to him by Narayan Singh of Varanasi. He further said that he was provided Narayan's number by the gang members sitting in Jamtara after which he used to talk to him on the phone but did not meet him.

Police officers said that the youth who provided the database may not have even given his true name. However, he is being traced. Only after he is caught, it will be possible to get information about who provided him the database of bank customers. Police officers said that copies of PAN, Aadhaar card and photos of hundreds of people had also been found in Dheeraj's laptop and mobile phone. Dheeraj has told the police during interrogation that he knows only Dharmendra alias Babu among the members of the Jamtara gang. According to Dheeraj, Dharmendra made him contact Narayan through phone. Dharmendra used to inform him and Rahul about the money being siphoned off from people's accounts, after which he used to transfer the money to the bank accounts mentioned by online mode itself to which the gang members sitting in Jamtara.

# Vaccination: Cluster approach to cover all eligible persons

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

In order to attempt to cover a maximum number of people in rural and slum areas, the officials of the health department have chalked out a cluster plan to reach out to each and every person in villages, blocks and slums of Prayagraj district for Covid vaccination.

The plan will be implemented from July 1 in all 23 blocks of the district. Interestingly, the health department is also mooted a proposal to send 'bulawa parchi' (invitation slip) to every person eligible for vaccination in villages and blocks, appealing them to reach a particular vaccination centre at timing of their convenience.

These measures are being initiated to increase vaccination in rural areas after witnessing low turnout at rural vaccination centres set up in community and primary health centres (CHCs/PHCs) in the ongoing Covid vaccination drive.

Additional Chief Medical Officer and District

Immunisation Officer Dr Teerath Lal said, "The cluster plan would be implemented from July 1 in all 23 blocks of the district. Under the plan, at least 10 to 12 medical teams would be covering a cluster of villages in rural areas and slums in urban areas and administering vaccines to the eligible persons."

He, however, said that the department was also mulling to send 'bulawa parchi' to the eligible recipients in which details like vaccination centre and timing would be mentioned. The health department has also planned to rope in mobilisation teams comprising ANM/ASHA workers, gram pradhans, Anganwadi workers and teachers who would be promoting vaccination in villages concerned.

The ACMO said, "The 23 blocks and slums would be divided into clusters and cluster vaccination groups would be asked to cover the assigned cluster within stipulated time. The department aims to cover all clusters within July."

Under the cluster plan, the date of immunisation and vaccination venue will be announced in advance and there will be an on spot registration facility. Places like panchayat bhawans, primary schools and gram sabha would be selected after calculating the number of eligible vaccine recipients. Moreover, quick response teams and cluster response teams will also be deployed to deal with any untoward incident.

As many as 7,04,747 vaccine shots were administered to recipients of all age groups, including those above 45 years and in the age group of 18-44 in the district till June 16. While 5,78,588 people were administered the first dose of the vaccine, 1,26,159 took the second dose.

Figures of the health department reveal that on an average, over 9,000 to 10,000 vaccine doses were administered daily in all age groups, including 45 plus and those in the age group of 18-44 years, in the district.

# ACU students demand 60% marks to all

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

The demand for giving 60 per cent marks to all the students promoted in the Allahabad Central University (ACU) and its affiliated colleges has intensified again.

On Wednesday, a large number of students reached the vice-chancellor's office and stood firm on the demand. During this, slogans were raised regarding the demand. A police force has been deployed there to avert any untoward incident on the university premises.

Controller of examinations Prof Ramendra Kumar Singh, proctorial board member Prof KN Uttam and security officer Ajay Singh reached the spot with security personnel on getting information about the gherao of the vice-chancellor's office by the students. The controller of examination tried to pacify the students for hours but they refused to budge. As a precaution, a police force has been deployed there.

Even before this, there was a demand to promote students studying in the affiliated colleges including Allahabad

Central University with 60 per cent marks. The National Students Union of India (NSUI) organised the agitation. The students staged an indefinite dharna in front of the examination controller office.

The students said that some students were given very low marks whereas the majority of the students were given very high marks. The university administration was also accused by the students of releasing the results bypassing the standards. The students demanded an amendment in the results and said that the university administration should promote all the students with a minimum of 60 per cent marks. Apart from this, the demand was also raised to promote the students of first year undergraduate and first and final semesters of post-graduate courses.

NSUI unit president Satyam Kushwaha, state secretary Ajay Pandey, Abhishek Dwivedi, Amit, Kamlesh Sonkar, Arun, Vinay, Akash, Ilyas, Satyam and Sawant Siddhant were present on the occasion.

## Private hospitals to get Covid vaccines as per requirement

PNS ■ KANPUR

In a bid to boost the vaccination drive, the government has decided to set up a special CoWIN Portal through which private hospitals can obtain the vaccines as per their requirements.

Under this the private hospital can raise a demand directly on the portal. This facility will come into force from July 1, 2021. Under this the private hospitals can purchase the vaccines, Covishield, Covaxine and Sputnik V, whichever they need through the portal.

Managing Director of Regency Healthcare, Dr Atul Kapoor, said that in a special meeting held with the Union Health Secretary and Member of NITI Aayog it had been decided that from vaccine order indent to payment would be now done through the portal. He said very soon there shall be changes on the portal and CoWIN App and it would become effective from July 1, 2021. It may be mentioned that thousands of people are running from pillar to post to get themselves vaccinated but they are not able to get a slot and these are kept waiting for the past over one month. Besides, at some vaccination centres, unless there are 10 people for the vaccine it is not given and the people have to return without the job. This is a major cause of concern as people travel to the centres but are not administered the vaccine if

## 10 hospitals found wasting or using more oxygen in May

Kanpur (PNS): Out of the 52 hospitals surveyed in different parts of the state, 10 were found to be wasting oxygen or using more than the required amount per patient.

This was revealed in a study report of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur submitted to the state government last week on oxygen wastage in hospitals across UP during May.

The list of hospitals was provided by the government, most of them being state-run.

The team collected information about different kinds of instruments used by the hospitals for supply of oxygen, amount of oxygen used and the number of patients using oxygen. This was compared with the standard usage to find where the consumption was excessive.

"There are different kinds of equipment for oxygen supply -- various kinds of masks and ventilators. All of these have standard consumption rates. We compared these standards with the average daily consumption in these hospitals and found that 10

hospitals had been using excessive amounts of oxygen. We have submitted the findings to the state to take further corrective steps" said the leader of the study team, Prof Manindra Agarwal, who is deputy director of IIT Kanpur.

He said that maximum wastage was found while using the high flow nasal cannula (HFNC). "The study did not mention reasons for the wastage and it needs to be investigated further. However, the wastage could be because of leakage if the mask was not adjusted properly and had been left unmonitored," Dr Agarwal said.

Hospitals included in the study from national capital region (NCR) districts were Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS) in Greater Noida, NCR Institute of Medical Sciences and LLRM Medical College in Meerut, Santosh Medical College in Ghaziabad and Rama Medical College in Hapur. None of these were found to be using excessive oxygen, Prof Agarwal said.

there are less than 10 people. Similarly when one tries to search for a slot for a vaccine it is not available. This is defeat-

ing the very purpose of the vaccination and preparation of the expected third wave of COVID-19.

## Elaborate security arrangements made for Prez visit

PNS ■ KANPUR

The district administration has made elaborate security arrangements for the visit of President Ram Nath Kovind, who will be arriving in Kanpur via his native village in his presidential saloon on Friday.

The entire 161 km route has been fortified with a special police force to be deployed at all the railway crossings. He will also visit Kanpur Dehat by helicopter.

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar said as per the schedule, prior to the arrival of President Ram Nath Kovind, the entire Kanpur Central station would be vacated. He said special CCTV cameras had been installed at all the vulnerable points so that it was fully monitored from various sides. He said the Railway authorities had decided that in the two-hour time slot no train would arrive at Kanpur station. He said two command centres had been set up, one at the Kanpur Central station and the second at the Circuit House.

The district administration has also stepped up special security at the village Paraunka, the native place of President Ram Nath Kovind, and a special documentary was being prepared to go down memory lane which



**The district administration has also stepped up special security at the village Paraunka, the native place of President Ram Nath Kovind**

the president would view. Special security arrangements have been made in the village where the president will be meeting selected people of his native village. Two of his nephews will be handing over a memorandum related to the development of the village, and a special demand to make Jhijhak a model railway station and to be christened as Ram Nath Terminal.

A huge waterproof pandal has been erected at Paraunkh for the president to interact with the gathering from his village, surrounding villages and Kanpur Nagar as well.

## 2 pairs of weekly spl trains to run between Guwahati-Jammu Tawi

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration will run two pairs of weekly special trains between Guwahati-Jammu Tawi. All coaches in them will be of reserved class and passengers will have to follow the COVID-19 norms, CPRO PK Singh said.

**GHY-JAT SPL:** The 05653 Guwahati (GHY)-Jammu Tawi (JAT) weekly special will from June 30 till further notice on every Wednesday leave Guwahati at 13.10 hrs, Kamakhya at 13.30 hrs, Rangiya at 14.16 hrs, New Bongaigaon at 16.45 hrs, New Alipurduar at 18.10 hrs, New Cooch Behar at 18.40 hrs, Dhuburi at 20.05 hrs, New Jalpaiguri at 21.35 hrs, Kishanganj at 22.45 hrs, Bagaha at 10.18 hrs, Srisa Bazar at 12.10 hrs, Kaptanganj at 12.40 hrs, Gorakhpur at 14.00 hrs, Basti at 15.02 hrs, Gonda at 16.55 hrs, Lucknow at 19.50 hrs, Shahjahanpur at 22.22 hrs, Bareilly at 23.23 hrs, from Moradabad on the third day at 01.05 hrs, Laksar at 03.00 hrs, Roorkee at 03.21 hrs, Saharanpur at 04.25 hrs, Yamunanagar Jagadhri at 04.55 hrs, Ambala Cantt at 05.49 hrs, Ludhiana at 07.40 hrs, Jalandhar Cantt at 08.40 hrs, Pathankot Cantt at 10.35 hrs, Kathua at 11.06 hrs and reach Jammu Tawi at 13.00 hrs.

**JAT-GHY SPL:** In the return journey 05654 Jammu Tawi - Guwahati weekly special will from July 2 until further advice on every Friday leave Jammu Tawi at 22.45 hrs and after stopping at Kathua, the second day at Pathankot Cantt, Jalandhar Cantt, Ludhiana, Ambala Cantt, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur, Roorkee and Laksar leave Moradabad at 10.13 hrs, Bareilly at 11.40 hrs, Shahjahanpur at 12.47 hrs, Lucknow at 15.30 hrs, Gonda at 17.35 hrs, Basti at 18.48 hrs, Gorakhpur at 20.55 hrs, Kaptanganj at 21.46 hrs, Srisa Bazar at 22.15 hrs, Bagaha at 23.18 hrs, the third day Narkatiaganj at 00.07 hrs, Bettiah at 00.39 hrs, Sagauli at 01.00 hrs, Bapudham Motihari at 01.18 hrs, Chakia at 01.45 hrs, Motipur at 02.05 hrs, Muzaffarpur at 03.40 hrs, Samastipur at 04.30 hrs, Barauni at 05.50 hrs, Begusarai at 06.08 hrs, Khagaria at 06.50 hrs, Naugachia at 07.50 hrs, Katihar at 10.30 hrs, Kishanganj at 12.25 hrs, New Jalpaiguri at 14.20 hrs, Dhuburi at 15.25 hrs, New Cooch Behar at 16.35 hrs, New Alipurduar at 17.22 hrs, New Bongaigaon at 19.25 hrs, Rangiya at 21.35 hrs, Kamakhya at 23.08 hrs and reach Guwahati at 23.45 hrs. A total of 24 coaches, including two of GSLR/D, one of AC second, five of AC third, 13 of sleeper class, two of general second class and one of pantry car will be attached in it.

**05651 GHY - JAT SPL:** The 05651 Guwahati - Jammu Weekly will from July 12 till further advice on every Monday leave Guwahati at 13.10 hrs, Kamakhya at 13.30 hrs, Rangiya at 14.16 hrs, New Bongaigaon at 16.45 hrs, New

## Gkp-LTT AC special to run on July 1, 8 & 15

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration will for the convenience of passengers extend the running period of 01355/01356 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT)-Gorakhpur-LTT AC special train for three trips. All coaches in them will be of reserved class and passengers will have to follow the COVID-19 norms, CPRO PK Singh said. As a result, 01355 LTT-Gorakhpur AC special will be run on June 29 and July 6 and 13 and 01356 Gorakhpur-LTT AC special will be run on July 1, 8 and 15 for three trips.

Alipurduar at 18.10 hrs, New Cooch Behar at 18.40 hrs, Dhuburi at 20.05 hrs, New Jalpaiguri at 21.35 hrs, Kishanganj at 22.45 hrs, on second day from Katihar at 01.35 hrs, Naugachia at 02.30 hrs, Mansi at 03.20 hrs, Khagaria at 03.32 hrs, Begusarai at 04.00 hrs, Barauni at 04.45 hrs, Mohiuddinnagar at 05.20 hrs, Shahpur Patoree at 05.55 hrs, Mehnar Road at 06.05 hrs, Desari at 06.16 hrs, Hajipur at 07.15 hrs, Sonpur at 07.27 hrs, Chhapra at 09.50 hrs, Siwan at 10.45 hrs, Bhatni at 11.30 hrs, Deoria Sadar 11.53 hrs, Gorakhpur at 14.00 hrs, Basti at 15.02 hrs, Gonda at 16.55 hrs, Lucknow at 19.50 hrs, Hardoi at 21.22 hrs, Bareilly at 23.23 hrs, Moradabad at 01.05 hrs, Laksar at 03.00 hrs, Roorkee at 03.21 hrs, Saharanpur at 04.25 hrs, Yamunanagar Jagadhri at 04.53 hrs, Ambala Cantt at 05.49 hrs, Ludhiana at 07.40 hrs, Jalandhar at 08.40 hrs, Pathankot Cantt at 10.35 hrs, Kathua at 11.06 hrs and reach Jammu Tawi at 13.00 hrs.

**05652 JAT-GHY WEEKLY:** In the return journey 05652 Jammu Tawi-Guwahati weekly special will from July 14 till further advice on every Wednesday leave Jammu Tawi at 22.45 hrs, Kathua at 23.47 hrs, Pathankot Cantt at 00.30 hrs, Jalandhar Cantt at 02.25 hrs, Ludhiana at 03.30 hrs, Ambala Cantt at 05.25 hrs, Yamunanagar Jagadhri at 06.09 hrs, Saharanpur at 07.00 hrs, Roorkee at 07.38 hrs, Laksar at 08.00 hrs, Moradabad at 10.13 hrs, Bareilly at 11.40 hrs, Hardoi at 13.36 hrs, Lucknow at 15.30 hrs, Gonda at 17.35 hrs, Basti at 18.48 hrs, Gorakhpur at 20.59 hrs, Deoria Sadar at 22.01 hrs, Bhatni at 22.23 hrs, Siwan at 23.10 hrs, third day from Chhapra at 00.50 hrs, Sonpur at 01.55 hrs, Hajipur at 02.10 hrs, Desari at 02.43 hrs, Mehnar Road at 03.08 hrs, Shahpur Patoree at 03.28 hrs, Mohiuddinnagar at 03.43 hrs, Barauni at 05.50 hrs, Begusarai at 06.08 hrs, Khagaria at 06.50 hrs, Mansi at 07.03 hrs, Naugachia at 07.50 hrs, Katihar at 10.30 hrs, Kishanganj at 12.25 hrs, New Jalpaiguri at 14.20 hrs, Dhuburi at 15.25 hrs, New Cooch Behar at 16.35 hrs, New Alipurduar at 17.22 hrs, New Bongaigaon at 19.25 hrs, Rangiya at 21.35 hrs, Kamakhya at 23.08 hrs and reach Guwahati at 23.45 hrs. A total of 24 coaches, including two of GSLR/D, one of AC second, five of AC third, 13 of sleeper. two of general second and one pantry car will be attached in the train.

## Threatened by goons some families decide to migrate

PNS ■ KANPUR

Fed up with frequent eve-teasing by local goons who resort to vandalism on protest, some families in Colonelganj police station area have decided to migrate from the locality by selling out their houses.

Seeing the message about migration by selling out their houses on Wednesday, the local police were alerted and the issue was brought to the notice of senior officials who ordered the local cops to immediately lodge FIRs against the alleged goons and slap National Security Act and Gangster Act on them.

On learning about the issue, Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) Anoop Kumar reached the spot and quizzed the residents. The victims informed him about the threats on their life. Later Commissioner of Police Asim Arun issued directions to immediately lodge FIR against the guilty goons and initiate action against them under the Gangster Act and NSA. It may be recalled that fed up with frequent incidents of eve-teasing, some families decided to leave their place. Apart from affixing posters, they displayed the message 'Ghar Bikau Hai, Parivar Palayan Kar Raha Hai' (house for sale, family is migrating) at the doors of their houses.



Message about migration and sale of house displayed on the walls of houses in Colonelganj. Pioneer

According to reports, 10 families of a community live at railway track lane opposite Colonelganj church where a large number of people of another community also reside. On Saturday night, a girl returning from a beauty parlor was teased by the youths of another community. When they protested, they brutally beat up her brother. Later, they broke into her house and brutally beat up other family members and damaged the household goods.

The victim had lodged an FIR against nine named and three unidentified youths, and four of them were later arrested by the police. The accused later started regularly threatening the victim's family with dire consequences, insisting on either conversion of their religion or leaving the locality. This prompted the victims to migrate from the locality by selling out their houses. They put up posters to this effect on the outside walls of their houses.

## IIT-K SIIC training ITI principals

PNS ■ KANPUR

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and the Department of Training and Employment, Uttar Pradesh, to train principals of industrial training institutes (ITIs) across the state on new-age innovation technologies.

For this, a week-long virtual workshop programme was launched by Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Vocational Education, Kapil Dev Agarwal, on Tuesday.

Others who graced the event Secretary to Chief Minister Alok Kumar, IIT Kanpur Director Prof Abhay Karandikar, IIT Kanpur SIIC professor in-charge Prof Amitabha Bandyopadhyay and IIT-K SIIC CEO Dr Nikhil Agarwal.

The workshop will provide pragmatic inputs on addressing global challenges through new-age technology-led innovations.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said, "The initiative comes at an opportune moment when the education systems are transforming rapidly. We believe that this interdisciplinary programme would lead to confidence-building of ITI staff which will further strengthen the educational outcomes of students in these institutions."

Alok Kumar congratulated the team for the initiative and envisioned a stronger association with IIT-Kanpur for similar future endeavours.

He added, "We aim to bring novel opportunities to the principals of ITIs that can bring value-addition to their efforts."

IIT-K Director Prof Abhay Karandikar said, "Education and training are strengths of educational institutes like IIT and we would feel honoured to assist in capability building of ITIs and envision to scale the process in the future."

The week-long workshop will target principals from ITIs and other senior officials of the Department of Training and Employment, Uttar Pradesh. The participants will be exposed to the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world which now experiences amplified dynamism in the post-COVID-19 era.

The workshop sessions will be conducted by subject experts, including IIT professors who would directly train the ITI principals.

The workshop also aims at delivering better exam results of ITI students and providing them the job.

## Mohini Chai adopts Lalimli crossing

Kanpur (PNS): As part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR), one of the leading brands of tea from the city, Mohini Chai, has adopted Lalimli crossing and has taken up the entire responsibility of its beautification and upkeep.

Speaking at a function presided over by him, UP Industrial Development Satish Mahana said it was a wonderful step to beautify the city with the help of industrialists. He appealed to others also to do the same.

Kanpur Municipal Commissioner Akshay Tripathi and Mayor Pramila Pandey were present along with other dignitaries like directors of the company Dinesh Agarwal, Suresh Agarwal, Manoj Agarwal and several others.

## UPSIDA plans industrial development in a big way

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A high-level meeting of Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority held at Lakhanpur, headquarters late Tuesday evening gave its approval for industrial development in a big way.

This budgetary allocation of Rs 1,100 crore that was ratified is for all-round development of the basic infrastructure. Under the budgetary allocation, development of Trans-Ganga City, Kanpur, Saraswati Hi-Tech City, Prayagraj and Theme Park at Agra and all other land acquired for the industrial development will be covered.

This was stated by Additional Chief Secretary (Industrial Development) and UPSIDA Board Chairman Arvind Kumar on Tuesday. He said development of Kannaui as Itra Park would also be taken up. He directed that land plots for petrol pumps and hospitals be allotted in Trans-Ganga City and momentum be given to the development works being carried out

there. He also gave the nod for setting up an integrated manufacturing cluster at the land allotted for the project.

Kumar said once the Dedicated Freight Corridor became functional and the goods trains started running on the route, it would greatly benefit the entrepreneurs.

He said the term of the present consultant company, Ernest and Young, was over and there was an imperative need for another consultant which would be engaged soon.

He said due to the merger of Lucknow Industrial Development Authority, the new areas had been assigned to UPSIDA and added that a decision had been taken to set up warehouses, logistic units and parks on the wider land area under its control.

UPSIDA CEO Mayur Maheshwari said that 441 lakh plots had been allotted in a year over 299 acre area and the tentative investment required was around Rs 2,694 crore.

## NSI director for smart packaging of sugar

PNS ■ KANPUR

National Sugar Institute Director Prof Narendra Mohan, while chairing a virtual session on 'Sugar Quality, Consumption and Supply Chain Management' on Wednesday said the Indian sugar industry had to explore for better quality, safe procession and packaging. He said it should also work out better supply chain management and diversification into production of different types of sugars as per the market requirement.

Addressing the virtual lecture organised by Shrijee

Process Engineering Works Ltd, Mumbai, Prof Mohan said during the pandemic and otherwise also sugar was consumed directly, unlike various other food items which were cleaned first and then consumed and this engendered the need for safe processing from farm to consumer.

He said the sugar industry was required to adopt food quality management systems and quality management systems to ensure consumer protection and to build up and maintain consumer trust.

Prof Mohan said the sugar industry in the country was



required to produce keeping in view quality requirements of common consumers, bulk consumers and exports. He said as about 60 per cent of the sugar produced was consumed by bulk consumers like pharmaceutical, beverage, confectionery and sweets industries,

the sugar industry must produce quality sugar like refined sugar, icing sugar, liquid sugar and brown sugar etc.

Discussing packaging, he said today the time had changed and thus there was a need for smart packaging, adding that it was shifting from bulk packaging. He said this would ensure proper weight, hygiene and proper distribution. He said in the sugar market there were many ways in which each type of sugar may be packed, ranging from a simple paperboard box to more convenient options such as re-sealable bags.

Discussing the sugar demand-supply scenario, Prof Mohan said it was still surplus and keenly looking forward for export. He added that although during the current year the country was all set to achieve all time export of 6.5 million tons, yet the Indian sugar industry may consider production and export of value-added specialty sugars like flavoured sugars, low GI sugar, muscovado sugar and fortified sugars. He cited the example of Mauritius which had only a few factories but exported specialty sugars to over 50 countries and was the market leader.

## IICT staff perform yoga

PNS ■ VARANASI

On the occasion of seventh International Yoga Day under the guidance of yoga guru Sandesh Yogi, yoga and 'pranayama' practice was done at Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), Bhadohi. Keeping the Covid-19 protocol in mind including its Director, Dr Alok Kumar, about 25 officers and employees participated in this programme. According to the



guidelines of the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, on the occasion of Yoga Day various 'asanas' such as Tadasana, Vrikshasana, Padahasthasana, Braj Asana etc. were discussed and practised and thereafter detailed information was given about Anulom Vilom, Bhramari, Sheetal etc. Director Dr Alok Kumar while expressing his gratitude to yogacharya Sandesh Yogi, stressed on making yoga an integral part of lifestyle. On the occasion Dr Ratikant Malik, Dr Himanshu Mahapatra, Dr Atanu Manna, Viman Rai, Dr Shrawan Gupta, Umakant Srivastava, Jaihind Chauhan, Dr Jayant Deshpande etc were present.

## Yoga Day observed

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

In Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) all employees, including the top management, observed International Yoga Day with their families. On the occasion its Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD), Prabhat Kumar Sinha, Director (Personnel) Bimlendu Kumar, Director (Technical/Operations) Dr Anindya Sinha, Director (Finance), RN Dubey, Director (Technical/Project & Planning) SS Sinha, representatives of labour and officers' associations, including NCL personnel along with their families, performed yoga. On Yoga Day a large number of NCL personnel shared photos of them doing yoga with their families on social media in which a large number of children and elders also participated. Competitions were also organised in the projects and units of NCL on the day in which children gave the message of leading a healthy life through yoga. Significantly, due to the Covid protocol, NCL did not organise a big programme on Yoga Day.



**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ**  
**First Corrigendum**  
 Corrigendum No. : 80201071A  
 Dated: 22.06.2021  
 On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Material Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj is issued a corrigendum for extension of Tender Opening date in Tender No. 80201071A published against EPS Tender Notice No. 21/38 Dated 28.05.2021 or RO No. 606/21 (P).

Tender No.	Sr. No.	Particulars	From	To
80201071-A	01	Extension of Tender Opening Date	21.06.21	06.07.21

Other Terms & Conditions of Tender remain unchanged. **606/21(P)**  
 North central railway @CPRONCR

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY**  
**Invitation for Tender through E-Procurement System**  
 Sr. Divisional Material Manager, North Eastern Railway, Lucknow and on behalf of The President of India, invites tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following item. Complete description of the item and other conditions are available on website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) in S.N.-1, Tender No.: 60215567 (Item No. 56XXN001), Description of Material: PVC insulated armoured underground unshielded RLY Signalling cable with conductivity annealed copper conductor conforming to RDSO Specification No. IRS-S 63/2014 (Rev 4.0) with latest amendment if any size 6 C x 1.5 Sq mm Identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification, Qty.: 4 KM, (Item No. 56XXN002), Description of Material: Supply of PVC insulated armoured underground unshielded RLY Signalling cable with conductivity annealed copper conductor conforming to RDSO Specification No. IRS-S 63/2014 (Rev 4.0) with latest amendment if any size 6 C x 1.5 Sq mm Identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification, Qty.: 15 KM, (Item No. 56XXN003), Description of Material: PVC insulated armoured underground unshielded RLY Signalling cable with conductivity annealed copper conductor conforming to RDSO Specification No. IRS-S 63/2014 (Rev 4.0) with latest amendment if any size 6 C x 1.5 Sq mm Identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification, Qty.: 2 KM, (Item No. 56XXN004), Description of Material: Supply of PVC insulated armoured underground unshielded RLY Signalling cable with conductivity annealed copper conductor conforming to RDSO Specification No. IRS-S 63/2014 (Rev 4.0) with latest amendment if any size 6 C x 1.5 Sq mm Identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification, Qty.: 2 KM, (Item No. 56XXN005), Description of Material: Supply of PVC insulated armoured underground unshielded RLY Signalling cable with conductivity annealed copper conductor conforming to RDSO Specification No. IRS-S 63/2014 (Rev 4.0) with latest amendment if any size 6 C x 1.5 Sq mm Identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification, Qty.: 9 KM, Due Date: 12.07.2021, Earnest Money: ₹ 78,400/-. Note:- Above Tender has been uploaded on the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). The firms, who desire to participate in e-tender are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class III Digital Signature Certificate Authority licensed by CCA India Manual offers against e-tenders will not be considered. For details, please visit the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).  
 Sr.Div. Materials Manager Lucknow  
 CPRO/S-13  
 About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955  
 DO NOT TRAVEL WITH INFLAMMABLE ARTICLE IN TRAIN

## Hardcore woman Maoist surrenders before police in Maha

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A hardcore woman Maoist with a bounty on her head, who was wanted for involvement in 15 encounters, an incident of arson and four major offences, surrendered before the Gadchiroli police in eastern Maharashtra. Identifying the surrendered Maoist as Anju Asaram Achala, a resident of Motha Zalia in Dhanora tehsil of Gadchiroli district with various aliases like Shashikala, Guni and Zuri (30), the police said that she had joined Tipagad Naxal Dhalam in 2006 as member and gone on to become the Tipagad Area Committee Member. According to Gadchiroli police, she was personally

involved in 20 crimes including 15 encounters. The Maharashtra Government had announced ₹6 lakh as bounty against her arrest.

With her surrender, the total number of Maoists who have surrendered before the Gadchiroli police between 2019 and 2021 has gone up to 39. Those surrendered four Divisional Committee Members (DVCM), two Dalam Commanders, three Dept. Commanders, 29 Dalam Members and one Jan Militia Member.

A senior Gadchiroli police official said that "frustrated and fed up with life besieged with violence, Maoists were getting 'attracted' to the surrender policy announced by the Maharashtra Government.



Anju Asaram Achala, a hardcore woman Maoist with a bounty on her head, surrendering before the police at a function held in Gadchiroli district in eastern Maharashtra

The policy involves a rehabilitation programme.

Apart from intensified anti-Naxal operations, the Gadchiroli police undertake various kinds of civic action programmes like Janjagran

melawas, Rozgar melawas, Women Melawas and Village Visitations (Grambhet), "which deeply impact the minds of common people". Under the Grambhet programme, senior police officers

visit the homes of relatives of Maoists who can be persuaded to abdicate violence.

"These activities contributed to the surrender of Anju Achala," the police official said.

"Simultaneously, we build a constant pressure upon the Naxalites to surrender before the police," the official said.

At a rehabilitation programme organised for the surrendered Maoists at "Navjeevan Vasahat" (colony), Gadchiroli's Superintendent of Police Ankit Goyal, said that facilities like, electrification, water, gotul, sanitization, etc. Would be made available with the above "Navjeevan Vasahat". The employment would be provided to the surrendered naxalites.

## Maha logs 10,066 new cases, 508 deaths



TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

With not much of a change in the Covid-19 situation, Maharashtra logged 10,066 fresh infections and 508 deaths, even as 11,032 patients were discharged after full recovery from various hospitals in the State.

In a significant development, Maharashtra achieved a milestone as it crossed four crore Covid-19 tests. Of the 4,01,28,355 samples sent to various laboratories across the State so far, 59,97,587 have tested positive (15.01 per cent) for Covid-19 until Wednesday.

A day after the State recorded 9,043 infections and 482 deaths, the daily infections rose by 1043, while the deaths increased marginally by 26.

Of the total 508 deaths reported on Wednesday, 163 were new fatalities, while the remaining 345 were "old and unaccounted deaths" which have been added to the State's Covid-19 tally as part of the ongoing reconciliation process.

With 508 deaths, the Covid-19 toll in the state jumped from 1,18,785 to 1,19,303.

With 10,066 fresh infections, the total infections in the state rose from 59,87,521 to 59,97,587.

As 11,032 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 57,42,258 to 57,53,290. The recovery rate in the state rose from 95.90 per cent to 95.93 per cent.

The total "active cases" in the state dropped from 1,23,340 to 1,21,859. The fatality rate in the state rose from 1.98 per cent to 1.99 per cent.

Mumbai recorded 23 deaths and 863 infections. As a result, the Covid-19 toll in

the metropolis increased from 15,315 to 15,338, while the infected cases in Mumbai went up from 7,21,099 to 7,21,963.

Mumbai with 18,711 cases emerged as the first in the State in terms of maximum number of "active cases" in the state, while Pune with 17,378 stood second, followed by Thane (13,059), Sangli (9543), Kolhapur (9142), Satara (7061), Ratnagiri (5615), Sindhudurg (5504) and Raigad (4571).

Currently, 6,58,863 people are in home quarantine while 4,196 people are in institutional quarantine.

## 6,02,163 people vaccinated in a day in State

PNS ■ MUMBAI

As many as 6,02,163 people were administered Covid-19 doses across Maharashtra on Wednesday, in what was described as the highest-ever number of vaccinations performed in the State.

Announcing this, State Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Dr. Pradip Vyas said: "Today we have bettered the performance of yesterday and have administered the highest ever number of Covid-19 vaccination doses in a single day in the State. As many as 6,02,163 doses were administered till 7 PM and the figure is likely to increase further". Vyas went on to congratulate the district health authorities across the State. "Great work done by the district teams. Congratulations to all District teams," he said.

## After MPs, BJP MLAs too seek separate State in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

After BJP MPs Soumitra Khan and John Barla it is now the turn of the saffron party MLAs to make demands for a separate State.

BJP MLAs from Dabgram-Fulbari and Naxalbari-Matigara Sikha Chatterjee and Ananda Roy Burman have raised their voices for a separate State comprising the North Bengal districts.

Both Dabgram-Gulbari and Naxalbari-Matigara are the satellite townships of Siliguri — the largest city in North Bengal which is also called the gateway to the North East.

Backing Barla the BJP's Alipurduar MP, Chatterjee on Wednesday said that "neither the Left nor the Trinamool

Congress Government have taken any measure to develop the backward regions of North Bengal and its people... so the only way development can be achieved in North Bengal is by making a separate State here.... If anyone raises a voice for a separate State it is well within one's rights to do so because everyone has a right to develop in a democracy and our constitution declares that India is a democratic country of which we are the free citizens."

Roy Burman too backed Barla saying "the Alipurduar MP has done the right thing by demanding a separate State because from our long experience we have seen that the Government from Kolkata only takes care of the southern part of the State and leaves the northern part to starving State

... this cannot go on for long and the local people are gradually awakening to their cause of a separate State which is the only way through which their all-round development can be achieved"

Curiously Barla continued to raise his demands for a separate State the way he did before the BJP State president Dilip Ghosh rejected views that the saffron party had anything to do with such demands. "It is his private statement and the BJP has got nothing to do with it... maybe such leaders are making such statements out of frustration after seeing their workers being battered and their properties looted every day."

Refusing to withdraw his demand for separate State despite his party's "declared

stance" against it and partly buttressing the argument of Ghosh the Alipurduar MP on Wednesday said "what else can I do as a BJP MP... I am seeing the people of my party being hounded out by the Bangladeshi supporters of the Trinamool Congress... here are several families who have come from Assam border in Cooch Behar district... they have fled for their lives... their properties have been looted by the Bangladeshi Trinamool men... these are the sons and daughters of the soil and are being attacked by the foreign intruders backed by the ruling party... this cannot be tolerated and so I have no other way but to raise my voice for a separate State... I will take it to the Governor of Bengal and even New Delhi."

## 6,596 new cases in TN



People wait to receive the token for the Covid-19 vaccine at the Ramanathapuram healthcare centre in Coimbatore on Wednesday

Wednesday evening, The State logged 6,596 new cases on Wednesday while the death toll of the last 24 hours showed 166 casualties. Both the new cases and fatalities were lesser than that of Tuesday which showed 6,895 and 194 respectively. There were 52,884 patients undergoing treatment for the pandemic across the State as on Wednesday evening. The State has not lowered its guard in testing people for the disease. More than 1.66 lakh persons were tested across the State while 10,432 persons came out of hospitals fully cured and rejuvenated, said the release. The death toll till date reached 31,746 while the number of laboratories with Covid-19 testing facilities shot up to 273.

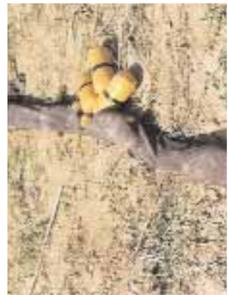
## Pakistani smuggler killed as BSF foils narcotics smuggling bid in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

A narcotics smuggler was unearthened immediately after one of the alert jawans of the Border Security Force (BSF) unearthed a sinister plot to smuggle narcotics worth ₹135 crore from the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district early on Wednesday morning.

The smugglers were apparently provided logistics support by the Pakistani rangers to smuggle the huge consignment weighing 27 kgs inside the Indian territory.

According to a BSF spokesman, "During the wee hours, a vigilant BSF troop thwarted a drug smuggling attempt by Pakistani smugglers along the Kathua border and seized about 27 kgs of heroin." IG BSF Jammu Frontier NS Jamwal, who visited the location along the International Border (IB) told reporters that border troopers deployed near one of the border outpost in Hira Nagar sector noticed some



suspicious movement on IB from the Pakistan side and alerted its men. When the Pakistani smugglers came closer to the IB, they were challenged and fired upon.

"During a search of the area, the body of a Pakistani smuggler and 27 packets of heroin were found near the fence," said IG BSF. "We have gathered all the material evidence and soon we will lodge a strong protest with our Pakistani counterparts," he added.

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ**  
**E-Procurement Tender Notice No.21/45** Date: 22.06.2021  
**E-Procurement Tender Notice**  
 On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

SN.	Tender No.	Short Description	Qty.	Tender Opening Date
1	20213619	Contractor for discharge resistor & converter precharging.	05 Nos	13.07.2021
2	30212048	Secondary Vertical Damper	305 Nos	19.07.2021
3	90211032	MS FLAT 50x12 MM	65000 KGS	14.07.2021
4	40211578	PORCELAIN BRACKET INSULATOR	1216Nos	14.07.2021

Note: The complete information of above tenders are available can be seen and downloaded from IREPS website i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) 718/21(D)  
 North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

**DELHI JAL BOARD: DELHI SARKAR**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH)-II**  
**JAL SADAN : LAJPAT NAGAR: NEW DELHI-110024**  
**STOP CORONA-Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene**  
**NIT NO.04/S/2021-22**  
**Press Tender**

S.No.	Name of work	Reserve price	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date and time for download & RTGS through e-procurement solution
1	Augmentation of water supply in B-Block,NDSE -II by P/L 150mm dia Loop line across Ring Road by trenchless technology upto B-Block,NDSE-II under EE(S/II) (AC-42 Kasturba Nagar)	3303712/-	2021_DJB_204757_1 23.6.2021	13.7.2021 upto 2.00 PM

It is for publishing in the leading newspaper please. Further details in this regard can be seen at [govtprocurementdelhi.gov.in](http://govtprocurementdelhi.gov.in)  
 ISSUED BY P.R.O.(WATER) (S.Ghulam Sajjad) Advt.No.J.S.V.135(2021-22) EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH)II

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ**  
**Tender Notice No. 1920212022** E-Tendering Tender Notice Dated: 17.06.2021  
 Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders on prescribed form for the following works up to 13:30 hrs. on 22.07.2021. The details of the tender are as under:-

SN	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost of work ₹	Earnest Money ₹	Completion Period	Date of Opening of tender
1	64	Mobile Flash Butt Welding of Rails on Loop Line in Tunda-Ghaziabad section under Sr. DEN/5/PRYJ.	1,63,03,832.00	NIL	12 Month	22.07.2021

Eligibility criteria for "Similar work": Flash Butt Welding through Mobile flash butt welding plant. "Note: Railway Board vide letter No. 2020/CE-ICT/3E/GCC/Policy dt. 30.12.2020 has advised that Ministry of Finance vide OM No. F/94/2020-PPD, dated 12.11.2020 titled "Bid Security/Earnest Money Deposit" has advised to take from bidders Bid Security Declaration in lieu of Bid security/Earnest Money Deposit. The above instructions shall be followed for all works & services tender on Indian Railways published on or after 18.00 hrs. of 16.01.2021 and shall be valid for all the tenders issued till 31.12.2021 (including 31.12.2021). 1. E-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. 2. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tender is available on Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) up to 13:30 hrs on the due date of tender opening i.e. 22.07.2021. 3. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000.4. The tenderers shall submit a copy of certificate as given in tender document in standard format without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. 5. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 6. The tenderer has to submit necessary documents in compliance of clause 10 to 18 (Part-I) of GCC July 2020 mandatorily, otherwise offer will be considered as incomplete offer and accordingly shall not be considered. 710/21(D)  
 North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

## Opening of tender for Central Secretariat buildings postponed again

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Public Works Department (CPWD) has extended the last date of submission of bids and opening of technical bids for the construction of the first three buildings of the proposed new Common Central Secretariat from Wednesday to July 14. This is the second time the deadlines have been pushed in a week, with the earlier extension being from June 16 to Wednesday.

According to CPWD officials, the last date of submission

of bids and opening of technical bids for the construction of the first three buildings of the proposed new Common Central Secretariat from Wednesday to July 14. The CPWD had invited bids for three new office buildings under the Common Central Secretariat along Rajpath at a cost of ₹3,269 crore and ₹139 crore was set aside for five year's maintenance in April this year.

These new buildings will come on the plot where the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts is currently located. The Modi Government's mega

project to redevelopment of central vista and construction of a new parliament building has become a bone of contention as the opposition parties are demanding to scrap the project in view of the Covid pandemic. The redevelopment of the Central Vista -- the nation's power corridor -- envisages a new parliament building, a common central secretariat, revamping of the 3 km Rajpath from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate, new prime minister's residence and prime minister's office, and a new vice president enclave.

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, NORTHERN (R&B) CIRCLE: SAMBALPUR**  
**Mail ID: - sepwdsbp@rediffmail.com**  
**e - Procurement**  
**BID IDENTIFICATION NO SENC (RAND B) /04/ 2021-22**  
**No. 1506 Dtd.11.06.2021**

- The Superintending Engineer, Northern (R&B) Circle, Sambalpur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate bids in double cover system in ONLINE MODE for the construction of Building works as detailed in the DTCN from the eligible class of contractors.
- No of works : 02 (Two) (Road Works).
- Tender Cost : Rs. 10,000/-
- Class of contractor : "A" Class and "Special" Class
- Date & Time of available in web site & receipt of Bids From 25.06.2021 to 17.00 Hours of 09.07.2021.
- Date of opening of Technical Bid 13.07.2021 at 11.00 Hours.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in).
- Any corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in).

**Sd/-Superintending Engineer Northern (R&B) Circle, Sambalpur**  
 OIPR : 34035/11/0004/2122

## NCB arrests Dawood's brother Kaskar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Incarcerated Mohammed Rizwan Iqbal Hasan Shaikh Ibrahim Kaskar, younger brother of Karachi-based underworld don Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar, was on Wednesday arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in connection with a drug-related case.

Armed with a production warrant, the NCB picked up Iqbal Kaskar from the Thane prison — where he has been lodged for the past five years and taken to the NCB headquarters here for questioning.

After several hours of questioning, Kaskar was placed under arrest by the NCB.

Kaskar's name had cropped during the interrogations of the several accused arrested in connection with the seizure of drugs made in central Mumbai.

Among other cases, the name of Kaskar, who is suspected of running his brother Dawood's realty empire and other businesses in Mumbai for the past couple of decades or so, figured in connection with the recent seizure of 15 kgs of Cannabis which was sent from Kashmir to Mumbai.

It may be recalled that on July 17, 2019, then 30-year-old Iqbal Kakar and two of his aides were arrested by the Mumbai police in connection with extortion-cum-organised crime.

Kaskar was arrested at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport here on Wednesday night, while his wife was trying to flee to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The passport authorities had initiated a verification procedure suspecting that he had acquired a forged passport. Danish, son of late Haseena Parker, elder sister of Dawood Ibrahim, had been detained by Nagpada police under provisions of the Bombay Police Act, as a passport verification process was initiated in connection with the passport acquired by him. The detention was ensured against Danish creating any problem during the passport verification process.

the three gangsters had handed extortion threats to several businessmen in the city.

Rizwan Kaskar's arrest was a fallout of the arrest and interrogation of Dawood's gang member Fahim Machmach, in an extortion case.

Machmach was arrested at the city international airport when he returned from Dubai on July 15, 2019. During the interrogation, Machmach told the police that it was he who introduced Ahmedraja Wadharia to Rizwan Kaskar and also to the members of the Chhota Shakeel gang.

Machmach's arrest came in connection with a dispute between traders dealing with imported goods. In one of the taped telephonic conversations, Machmach handed out a threat to the complainant in June 2019 in an earlier case and told the latter not to seek money from Ashfaq Towelwala.

The police went to search Rizwan Kaskar's residence on the afternoon of July 17, 2019. In an effort to avoid his arrest, Rizwan Kaskar and his wife attempted to fly to Dubai, only to be arrested at the airport.

Iqbal Kaskar is Dawood's second relative to have been arrested in recent years. It may be recalled that Danish Parker, nephew of the fugitive don Dawood, was Nagpada police in March 2006 to ensure that he did not create any trouble.

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# Follow Covid norms to blunt 3rd wave: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday strongly felt that the number of cases in the third wave will not be to the extent that the health system comes under strain if people religiously follow Covid appropriate behaviour (CAB) and States wisely implemented containment strategies.

"At least 2.2 per cent of India's population has been affected by the disease so far. This should also make us wary of protecting the still vulnerable or susceptible 97 per cent population. We cannot let our guards down, hence, continued focus on containment is critical," Union Health Ministry Joint Secretary Lav Agarwal said at a media workshop organised by UNICEF in partnership with the Ministry on the need to bust myths about vaccines and vaccination and reinforce the importance of CAB.

"If we keep following containment and Covid appropriate behavior, then the third wave, even if it comes, will not have the number of cases that

## 'If vaccinated, you are protected for next 6/9 months from virus'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

If you have been vaccinated then likely chances are that you are protected from the coronavirus for the next six-nine months. This was stated

by senior Union Health Ministry official Veena Dhawan at an event here.

She also said there was no evidence that supports interchangeability of vaccines' brands.

Responding to a question on the effectiveness of cocktail vaccines or mixing different vaccine doses, senior ministry official Veena Dhawan said as per the evidence available, the vaccines are not "interchangeable".

"A full analysis is yet to be made on the subject. Cocktail vaccination is not to be followed and we should take the same doses of the vaccine," she stressed.

On Adverse Event Following Immunisation (AEFI), Dhawan said the first 30 minutes post vaccination are crucial.

"That is why people are

kept under observation. Serious or severe side effects

are mostly seen in the first 30 minutes," she added.

least, 41,23,073 vaccine doses were administered as first dose and 68,903 vaccine doses given as second dose in the age group 18-44 years on Wednesday.

"Cumulatively, 7,02,11,075 persons across 37 States/UTs have received their first dose and a total 14,98,113 have received their second dose since the start of Phase-3 of the vaccination drive."

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have administered more than 10 lakh beneficiaries of the age group 18-44 years for the first dose of Covid vaccine, so far, said the statement.

Talking about the infection rate, the statement said that India has reported 50,84,88 new cases in the last 24 hours.

# On day 3, Covid jab numbers remain less than day one figures

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Countrywide Covid-19 vaccination numbers continued to remain less than the day one figures. On Wednesday, the tally stood at 58.34 lakh vaccine doses till 7 pm in the evening as per the Union Health Ministry statement.

This is much less when compared to the first day of the revised phase of vaccination drive launched from June 21 when the country reported a record number of over 84 lakh shots administered to the citizens. On Tuesday also, the vaccination process covered only around 51 lakh people in the country.

"More than seven crore vaccine doses have been registered so far for those in the age group 18-44 so far," said the statement.

Overall the cumulative Covid vaccination coverage of the country crossed 30 crore (30,09,69,538), as per the 7 pm provisional report. At

least, 41,23,073 vaccine doses were administered as first dose and 68,903 vaccine doses given as second dose in the age group 18-44 years on Wednesday.

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# ED seizes Unitech's land parcels, ₹81.10 cr helicopter in money laundering case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached 101 land parcels and one helicopter worth ₹81.10 crore in a money laundering probe against the Unitech Group.

The attached land parcels are situated in Santacruz, Mumbai and are owned by the Shivalik Group. The helicopter is owned by King Rotors Air Charters Pvt Ltd., an associate company of Shivalik Group.

The ED probe revealed that Unitech Group had diverted 'Proceeds of Crime' to the tune of ₹574 crore to the Shivalik Group and in turn, the entities of Shivalik Group had purchased the land parcels and helicopter from this.

On March 4, the ED had conducted searches at 35 locations in NCR and Mumbai on the premises of Shivalik Group, Trikar Group, Unitech Group and Carnoustie Group.

"After analysis of seized records followed by the disclosures of various persons, the above diversion of Proceeds of Crime has been unearthed," the agency said.



# 3 fashion designers summoned to explain cash payments by leader

New Delhi: Famous fashion designers Manish Malhotra, Sabyasachi Mukherjee and Ritu Kumar have been asked by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to appear before it to record their statements in connection with some cash payments made to them a few years ago by a politician in Punjab.

An ED source related to the probe told IANS, "A notice has been sent to the three fashion designers to appear before the ED."

The source said that the three designers were paid in

cash by the politician for designing the dresses for a wedding ceremony a few years back. "And there was no record of the cash transaction in their IT returns."

"So they have been called to present their side," the source said. However, the source did not name the politician.

Malhotra, Mukherjee and Kumar are known for their designer collection in India as well as in other countries. Many corporates and Bollywood personalities wear dresses designed by them. IANS

# 'NEP 2020 committed to equitable education to all'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday at the G20 Education Ministers' meeting said that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, envisages equitable and inclusive education for all, with special focus on children and youth, especially girls, from socially and economically disadvantaged groups who are more at risk of being left behind.

"NEP 2020 provides for early vocational exposure in middle and secondary school along with smooth integration into mainstream education. It aims that by 2025, at least 50 per cent of learners in the school and higher education system would have expo-

sure to vocational education. It also provides for vocational education to be aligned to skill gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities," said Minister of State for Education Sanjay Dhotre at the virtual conference of G20.

India attaches great importance to the collaboration between G20 countries in the field of vocational education and training.

Dhotre reaffirmed the support of the Government of India to the collective efforts of the G-20 countries to develop strategies to ensure smooth transition from education to work.

A joint Meeting of Ministers of Education and Ministers of Labour and

Employment was also held virtually. G20 Ministers exchanged views on transitions from school to work. Sanjay Dhotre represented Ministry of Education in the meeting. Ministry of Labour and Employment was represented by MoS (Independent Charge) Santosh Gangwar.

"The member countries of G20, recognise the need to equip our youth well for a smooth transition into the workspace after completing their education.

This is especially important for learners from socially and economically disadvantaged population groups, who are more at risk of being left behind," said Dhotre.

# Ramdev moves SC, seeks stay on cases on allopathy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Yoga guru Baba Ramdev on Wednesday approached the Supreme Court seeking a stay on the proceedings in multiple cases lodged against him in various States over his remarks on allopathy and its treatment protocol for Covid-19.

In his petition, Ramdev sought the quashing of many FIRs lodged by Indian Medical Association (IMA) in Patna and Raipur branches and asked for a transfer of the FIRs to a Delhi court.

Ramdev has been booked under Sections 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life), 504 (intentional insult



with intent to provoke breach of the peace) and other provisions of Disaster Management Act, 2005 in many States based on the complaints by IMA chapters.

As per the IMA complaint, since over the last one year, Ramdev has allegedly been propagating false information on social media against medicines being used by the medical fraternity, Government of India, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and other frontline organisations in treatment of Coronavirus infection.

# Nadda hails Modi for fulfilling Mookerjee's goal of 'national integration'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing the Nehru-led Congress Government of "ignoring" the demand for a probe into the death of Bharatiya Jan Sangh (BJS) founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee in Kashmir while demanding the removal of Article 370, BJP president J P Nadda on Wednesday complimented Prime Minister Narendra Modi for fulfilling Mookerjee's goal of 'national integration' by abrogating the special status to Jammu & Kashmir.

A day before the all party meet on J & K called by the Prime Minister, the BJP president said Mookerjee agitated against 'ek desh main do vidhan, do Pradhan and do nishan' system and removal of Articles 370 and 35 A. These aims of Mookerjee, he said, have been achieved by the Modi-government.

Mookerjee died in police custody in Kashmir on June 23, 1953 while protesting against the requirement of a permit for entry to the Kashmir valley.

Nadda said Mookerjee's mother had written to Nehru seeking a probe into the death of the BJS founder but the Congress government "ignored and pushed it under the carpet". However, successive BJP governments at the Centre



have themselves not setup a probe leading to his death in Kashmir valley.

The BJP president said Mookerjee had died in "doubtful circumstances".

While paying tributes to the late leader who, he said, sacrificed his entire life for the nation, the BJP President said national integration as sought by Mookerjee was realised by Modi's "strong willpower" and Union Home Minister Amit Shah's "skilled strategy".

Modi led BJP leaders' tributes to the BJS ideologue on his 68th death anniversary.

"Remembering Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee on his Punya Tithi. His noble ideals, rich thoughts and commitment to serve people will continue to inspire us. His efforts towards national integration will never be forgotten," Modi tweeted.

Home Minister Amit Shah said Mookerjee sacrificed himself to safeguard India's identity and integrity, and saved the country from another division.

# LPG can now be booked through CSC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To make it more accessible to every rural household, a new LPG connection can now be booked through the Common Service Centre (CSC). The CSC has taken the lead in helping Centre's Ujjwala beneficiaries in bookings for the refills.

Ujjwala scheme is one of the flagship programmes of the Modi Government to provide LPG gas connection to women of rural areas and especially to those from the weaker section of the society.

Linking the Ujjwala beneficiaries and also new connections through CSC digital kiosk can serve consumers close to their place of residence. CSC has so far done online booking for one crore Ujjwala beneficiaries.

"We have requested Oil companies to enable other support services through CSC as change in name, address, request for additional cylinder etc. Booking for new connection through CSC is still to be allowed by the oil companies through CSC and once these services are extended, CSC can provide all services to Ujjwala beneficiaries in villages," said CSC MD Dr Dinesh Kumar Tyagi.

Though the connection was provided by the government to women, however, refilling due to logistics still remained a concern. Many factors constrained the increase in delivery centers close to the place of residence.

# 204 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to be distributed among poor amid looming third wave

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In view of the anticipated third wave of Covid-19 that is expected in 6 to 8 weeks, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved allocation of 204 lakh tonnes of foodgrains at an estimated cost of ₹67,266 crore for extending the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) to provide free ration to over 80 crore people, mostly poor, by five more months till November-end.

The free supply of grains will ameliorate the hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruption caused by the coronavirus, an official statement said.

Health experts have alerted state governments about the third wave of pandemic and have advised ramping up of the health facilities.

The approved monthly allocation of five kg foodgrains per

person to 81.5 crore beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act is for five more months between July and November this year. The second phase of PMGKAY was launched for May and June as the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic hit the country.

The sanction of around 204 lakh tonnes of additional foodgrains free of cost would entail an estimated food subsidy of ₹64,031 crore. As the Centre would bear the entire expenditure towards this scheme without involving States and UTs, an additional expenditure of about Rs 3,234.85 crore would be required for meeting the transportation and handling charges, as well as FPS dealers' margins, taking the total cost to ₹67,266.44 crore, an official statement said.

Early this month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi while

addressing the nation had announced that the Centre's free food programme PMGKAY will be extended for five months till Diwali.

Five-kilo foodgrains per person per month is provided free of cost under the PMGKAY to 81.35 crore beneficiaries covered under National Food Security Act (NFSA), it noted. This is over and above distribution of highly monthly subsidised foodgrain of 5 kg per person given at Rs 1-3 per kg via ration shops to poor beneficiaries covered under the NFSA.

The Food Ministry will decide on the allocation of wheat and rice.

It may also decide on the extension of the lifting/distribution period under Phase III and Phase IV of the PMGKAY as per operational requirements, arising out of adverse weather conditions like monsoon, snowfall, etc..

# Adani group to operate Navi Mumbai Int'l airport

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Government on Wednesday approved a change in ownership of the company from M/s GVK Airport Developers Limited to M/s Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) to develop and operate the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) in the adjoining Thane-Raigad region.

At its weekly meeting, the State Cabinet - presided over by chief minister Uddhav Thackeray - gave a go ahead to AAHL to be the new concessionaire for the prestigious greenfield airport being developed as a public-private partnership (PPP) project.

Earlier, the airport was to be developed by GVK which was running the Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL). However, the MIAL was taken over last year by AAHL and the same was

approved by the Directorate of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India, SEBI, CCI and finally the CIDCO, which is overseeing the mega-project.

With the state government's approval, the Gautam Adani-headed AAHL becomes the biggest private airport operator running several major airports like Mumbai, Navi Mumbai (proposed), Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Lucknow, besides three more likely in the near future. A wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Ltd. (AEHL), the AAHL now has a majority stake in the new airport, with 26 per cent belonging to the AAL.

Being developed on 1,160 hectares of land, Mumbai International Airport is expected to become operational in 2023-2024. When opened, it will become the country's leading airport over the next decade for both domestic and international flights.

# K'taka launches 2,500 smart classrooms, distributes Tablet PCs to 1.55 lakh students

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Wednesday rolled out initiatives to promote digital learning and bridge the digital divide in higher education at a cost of about Rs 195 crore.

The initiatives include distributing Tablet PCs to 1.55 lakh students amounting to Rs 163 crore; creation of 2,500 smart classrooms at Rs 27.77 crore; and development of a learning management system (LMS) at ₹4.04 crore, an official release said.

"The programme is beneficial in moulding the future of the students. Smart classes will include projectors, white board, Android box, UPS and internet facility which will facilitate both teaching and learning," the Chief Minister was quoted as saying by his office in a release.

Despite the impediment caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, he said the govern-

ment has made efforts to scientifically implement the digital learning programme in government higher education institutions thereby bring about a complete change in the higher education sector in the State.

The release quoted Deputy Chief Minister C N Ashwath Narayan, who holds Higher Education portfolio, as saying that the Tablet PCs would be given to first-year students of 430 government first grade colleges, 1st and 2nd year students of 87 government polytechnic colleges, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students of 14 engineering colleges. Classrooms in government higher education institutions are being upgraded to ICT smart classrooms, the release said. The learning management system is for providing a platform to a unique and modern teaching and learning process which is ideal to conduct both online and offline classes, said Narayan. PTI

# Mask compliance still low in country despite being one of worst hit: Survey



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mask wearing compliance still remains low in India despite it being one of the worst hit by the second wave of Covid-19, according to findings of a survey.

The mask compliance at vaccination centres also remains low, as per the survey conducted by online social media platform LocalCircles.

"Despite the most lethal Covid-19 wave that any country in the world has experienced so far, India's mask compliance is still low as indicated by the survey finding where 67 per cent of citizens say there is limited or no mask compliance in their area, district, or city," it said. The survey received over 33,000 responses from citizens located in 312 districts of the country.

According to the survey findings, only 32 per cent of citizens in the survey note that there was limited mask compliance at the vaccination centre they recently visited.

Many respondents noted that their family members have gotten Covid-19 a few days after receiving vaccination at centres, citing the high possibility of some vaccination centres being superspreaders as some people were not even following masking protocols.

It is a major concern that requires an immediate action to make sure that such centres do not become superspreaders, as per the findings of the survey.

The survey tried to find out how people in cities and districts, including at the vaccination centres, are complying with wearing a face mask. It also sought to find out if

people are wearing the right masks that give them protection, or are they wearing any mask just for the sake of it. Lastly, the survey sought to gather citizens' pulse if the state governments should make the wearing of masks outside home mandatory in districts with active Covid-19 cases.

It found that only 44 per cent of the Indians were wearing cloth masks which may not provide them with the needed protection against the highly transmissible variants like Delta.

The findings of the survey indicate that one in two Indians were wearing cloth masks that provide limited protection from Covid, it added.

Many Indians since 2020 have been using cloth masks, some even using ones made at home, assuming that they will provide the necessary protection from Covid-19 while that may not be the case with the new Delta variant, it said.

On the question whether the state governments should make wearing of masks outside home mandatory if a district has any covered cases, 91 per cent of the respondents okayed the proposal while 8 per cent decided against it.



Local villagers board a boat to cross Mundeswari river to reach North Batora Island, after a bamboo bridge collapsed due to flood, in Howrah on Wednesday



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## The plus?

The Government seems to be at a crossroads in its tackling of Delta+ variant despite best intentions

Three steps the Union Government has taken in the last couple of days attest to a change for the better in its COVID-19 management policy. The first is the accelerated pace of vaccinations in the country. Over 8.3 million doses were given on a single day on Monday, the highest so far, beating the April 1 record of 4.8 million. In the first week of May, when the second wave of the pandemic was at its peak, single-day vaccinations hovered around 1.6 million. On Tuesday, however, the pace slowed down with some States experiencing a massive fall in the numbers. While the intention of the Government is honourable, to set a scorching pace to reach herd immunity at the earliest, it needs to ensure that the exercise does not become an event but is part of an organised, consistent process. Two, the Government has declared the Delta+ mutation as a Variant of Concern (VoC). The announcement came within hours of the Union Health Secretary saying the variant is only a Variant of Interest (VoI). Such an open contradiction of its Ministry may be unique for this Government, but it shows the latter is proactive and moving ahead with caution, having drawn flak for failing to recognise the Delta variant earlier.



Three, the Government has cautioned the States against unchecked opening up of the lockdown, recommending a close watch on adherence to safety protocols. In perhaps its first, comprehensive advisory to the States concerning Delta+, the Government has asked them to step up monitoring in the six districts

in three States where cases of the new variant have been detected, increase testing, contact tracing, and vaccination. However, this is only a bit of the task done. Vaccinations continue to be problematic. The Government does give daily data about the number of doses at hand, but transparency is needed about the doses expected from the Indian and foreign manufacturers and the numbers apportioned to the states. This will enable to streamline the vaccination process. There is now an obvious rush to get free vaccinations leading to a fear of a reduced rush for paid vaccinations in private hospitals. Is it the right time for the Government to take over the procurement and supply of 100 per cent of the vaccinations to rationalise the process? India is yet to nail the vaccine efficacy issue. If it is a case of the more mutations the lesser the efficacy, then the Government has to come clear on a big-picture approach than reactive ones. There are reports of Bharat Biotech releasing data of its third phase trial to the Government regulator, but somehow the company shuns transparency. Also, the campaign to remove vaccine hesitancy is still to go national, presently restricted to the imagination of village-level teams. The unlock remains an issue of grave concern, with neither the States nor the Centre coming with tangible mechanisms to prevent safety violations without affecting economic activity.

### PICTALK



People with motorcycles travel by boats to cross the flooded Ganga river, at Kachchi Dargah in Patna

# Constitution, courts & a Prime Minister



RISHI GUPTA

Among a host of obstacles in the path, even with the President on his side, Nepal's Supreme Court has given Prime Minister Oli a rap on the knuckles

The ongoing political instability in Nepal has deteriorated with the Supreme Court's verdict on June 22. In a big blow to Prime Minister KP Oli, the apex court quashed the appointment of 20 new Ministers in the Oli Cabinet. These Ministers were appointed after Oli managed to crack a deal with a faction of the Janata Samajbadi Party led by Mahanta Thakur and Rajendra Mahto to support his minority Government. The acting Prime Minister, Oli, had appointed these Ministers, including two deputy Prime Ministers, on June 4 and 10. Meanwhile, these Ministers were appointed when the House of Representative stood dissolved, and the Supreme Court was examining a pile of petitions against the House dissolution on May 21. The Supreme Court has stoked the fanfare and enthusiasm among Oli's supporters for the second time in a row. On February 23, the court had quashed the unilateral move by President Bidya Bhandari to dissolve a functional Parliament and declaration of new elections in March and April. The first House was dissolved in December 2020 after Oli feared that his tussle with Maoist Party chief Prachanda would fall, which eventually happened in May.

However, Oli has been trying to play out the Constitution for months, using the President's Office. As a result, of this nexus between Oli and Bhandari, Nepal again stands at a crossroads similar to the days of the political transition from monarchy to democracy in 2006. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear hundreds of petitions filed against President Bhandari's decision to dissolve the House for a second time. While the hopes are high that the court may restore the House, it brings severe administrative challenges to the Government. At present, Oli is left with only five Ministers in his cabinet, including himself in charge of several portfolios. As per the Constitution, Oli should have continued with his previous Cabinet as no new appointment can be made under a dissolved House, or the Government in question has not faced the vote of confidence. However, the power-sharing between Janata Samajbadi



Party itself was based on new portfolios and one deputy premier-ship.

As a result, Oli had asked his Ministers and loyalists in the Cabinet to resign *en masse*. However, amidst two back-to-back defeats in the apex court, the moral question for Oli has to be his resignation as for the last one year, he has merely been interested in the PMO for his political survival rather than focusing on COVID-19 and acting upon corruption charges levied on his fellow Ministers.

**Unreliable Oli:** Many in India believe that New Delhi facilitated the Janata Samajbadi Party's decision to support Oli. As a result, a long-term critic to India, Oli went on to record to say "differences with India have been resolved". If this is the case, India has taken the biggest strategic risk by trusting an untrustworthy Oli. For the last five years, Oli has been spitting venom against India's goodwill in Nepal. From raising the border issue to manipulating cultural and religious facts to suit his ultra-nationalistic outlook, he unilaterally included India's sovereign territory in a new political map of the country. However, even after everything seemed to be favouring



**KP SHARMA OLI IS A PRODUCT OF POLITICAL EQUATIONS AND CALCULATIONS, AND HIS CORD FUNCTIONS AS PER THE POLITICAL SUITABILITY. THEREFORE, HOPING A FRIENDLY OLI WILL BE NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE TASK FOR INDIA**

India in Nepal, Oli once again alleged his claim on yoga as a Nepali practice and "not Indian". While Oli may still hold the powerful office in Nepal, India needs to think beyond him to keep open borders safe and prevent cross-border activities from affecting India's national security.

Oli is a product of political equations and calculations, and his cord functions as per the political suitability. Therefore, hoping a friendly Oli will be next to impossible task for India. On the other hand, China continues to benefit from political instability in the Himalayan country.

Before the second wave of COVID-19 had hit, India had supplied more than two million doses to Nepal. On the other hand, China promised to supply the second consignment of vaccines with four million doses. Meanwhile, the dragon has shown its unhappiness over media reports on the procurement. It exposes China's commercial intent in supplying the vaccines at about \$10 per dose (₹1186 Nepal) than its desired humanitarian intent. Meanwhile, Oli does not seem bothered with Chinese micro-management of Nepalese political affairs, its territorial expansion on the

Nepalese soil, brutal policies on Tibetan refugees living in Nepal and artificial humanitarian acts. The two large photographs of Chinese President Xi Jinping continue to grace the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website in Nepal at the cost of deteriorating relations with India.

**Conclusion:** The political instability in Nepal is the least desired by the people of Nepal under the current circumstances. Before Nepal, there are immediate challenges in terms of medical infrastructure, employment, economic development, infrastructure and leadership, which are clearly not on Oli's agenda. Therefore, while the people of Nepal await the court's verdict on the fate of Oli as Prime Minister, the latter himself should pave the way for a stable Nepal by resigning on moral grounds. Also, Nepal needs to understand that China may be a "big brother", but it is ill prepared to deal with dragon's ill-intended expansionist outlook where India is an "elder brother" it always needs.

(The author is an ICSSR Doctoral Fellow at the JNU and Visiting Fellow at the Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs, Kathmandu. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THEY'RE OUR KIDS, GO TO THEM!

Sir — With regard to 'Corona's orphans: Kids of a lesser god', June 23, it is extremely pitiful that thousands of children in India have lost one or both parents in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. And the prospect of a surge of abandoned minors worries many. Heart-rending stories in the media and desperate calls for help on social channels reveal a devastating truth of our times.

The intention is good, the schemes are fine but how will orphaned children avail of these benefits? Can we expect small or adolescent orphaned children going to the Government departments, filling up forms, submitting certificates and availing of this scheme? The direction has to be in reverse.

Instead of orphans seeking help from the Government, it is the State machinery which should send its officials to meet these orphaned children, prepare details and arrange a smooth transfer of stipends and educational loans. The entire task devolves upon the State Governments, who will have to provide data to the Centre.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

### CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD

Sir — According to UNICEF, India has over 30 million orphan and abandoned children. Unfortunately, the existing Corona crisis is adding unknown numbers of orphans to the list. In times of crisis of this magnitude, some miscreants try to derive undue benefit by resorting to human trafficking, which surely is a blot on society. These unscrupulous people tend to hoodwink gullible persons, who are easy targets. Their sentiments are exploited for exorbitant sums of money. The business of child trafficking and criminal trading is rampant and must be dealt with an iron hand.

The National and State Commissions for Protection of Child are empowered by law to take legal action against such criminal activities. Social activists, NGOs, newspapers and the aware citizens must report and publicise such incidents so that timely action can be taken against those engaged in illegal activities.

### Caution ahead



Delta Plus variant, a mutated version of the more aggressive B.1.617.2 strain that drove the second wave of infections in India, is undergoing additional mutation called K417N which could become a "variant of concern" if unchecked as the variant is causing a surge in cases. India would see a faster surge if aggressive COVID-appropriate behaviour is not followed and insisted upon. The Delta plus is a variant which is of same lineage as the Delta variant, with a slight change as there is one more mutation found, which could be a cause of concern because this mutation, the K417N, is something which may change the virus to some extent

as far as its infectivity is concerned.

The B.1.617.2 variant is characterised as being highly infectious. The spike protein is what helps the virus enter and infect human cells, and the K417N mutation has been associated with immune escape, or evasion, that leaves it less susceptible, or more immune, to the vaccine or any form of drug therapy. India should not take this virus casually as this virus is changing and changing to survive and infect more people, therefore we have to be ahead of the virus.

The UK did a very good job by having an aggressive lockdown for many months and when they started opening up, the new variant caused the surge in number of cases. What it means is we are also in a vulnerable situation and if we are not careful right now then three or four months from now, we will have a similar situation and that is why we need to be very aggressive; it is mutating, changing, new variants are coming up. With this danger of Delta Plus variant looming heavily, we have to tackle it on war footing.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

People must be made aware about the due process of adoption by the Government. The Central Adoption Resource Authority regulates the adoption of the orphaned, abandoned children. In fact, the whole process must be streamlined to avoid delays.

Recently, the SC also came to the rescue of those orphaned by the crisis and gave instructions to the Government about their protection. This critical issue must be addressed and heeded so that they can get their rightful due a dignified life.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

### A DAMP SQUIB

Sir — Despite much political excitement around an Opposition party, the Rashtra Manch meeting hosted by Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar in the Capital turned out to be a damp squib with a majority of the Opposition parties giving it a miss and many of them sending in sec-

ond-line leaders.

The NCP was subsequently at pains to explain that Pawar was only playing the host and did not organise the meeting. It also explained that there was no deliberate exclusion of the Congress. Other than the Congress, the DMK, the RJD and the BSP too did not send any representatives to the meeting.

It has been reported in the media that this meeting of Rashtra Manch was held by Sharad Pawar to unite anti-BJP parties is totally a showpiece rather than serving a desired purpose. Moreover, the meeting should not be misconstrued as a big political step taken by Pawar to exclude the Congress from any potential opposition grouping, pointing out that several Congress leaders were invited but they did not attend.

Chitra Krishnan | Vashi

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

Chiranjeevi garu, on behalf of the State Government, I thank you for your kind words of appreciation. The credit goes to team effort.



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister — YS Jagan Mohan Reddy

We will not raise interest rates preemptively because we think employment is too high, because we fear the possible onset of inflation.

US Federal Reserve Chair — Jerome Powell

It is totally in the hands of makers as to what role they offer. I am known as a comedian and people have enjoyed my comic avatar for the longest.



Actor — Sunil Grover

Read reports that England cricketers may not be able to have family members with them Down Under this winter.

Former England skipper — Michael Vaughan

The scheme shall come into force with the effect from the date of its publication in the Delhi gazette.



Delhi Lieutenant Governor — Anil Bajaj

## Red ball

The new, World Test Championship, format has accorded competitiveness to all cricket games, even against lesser names

The World Test Championship was launched to bring excitement back into the longest format of the game, *vis-à-vis* the faster T20 matches, across the globe. The inaugural season, which started immediately after the end of ICC Cricket World Cup 2019 and concluded with the first ever WTC Final in Southampton between India and New Zealand on Wednesday, was the first ever multination ICC event which was played with the red ball. The idea to start the championship in the ultimate format was to give relevance to every bilateral series that is played as the points were awarded to each team after the end of every series and the top two teams with the maximum number of points by the end of a two-year cycle make it to the final and fight for the silverware. Ever since the WTC format came into act, the Test matches saw the rise in level of competitiveness. The teams now go for the kill in every game because a win would get them extra points as against a draw. Earlier, teams used to rest all format players for the red ball matches against the not-



so-fancy opponents but now, under the new format, even after winning the series before all the matches are played, team's don't rest their main players and would rather start with the strongest possible eleven in all the matches.

The competitiveness that was missing from the Test matches was installed back into the game by this WTC championship and it has certainly added an extra flair in the bilateral matches. Now the matches against teams like Bangladesh and Windies also have the same relevance as that of the matches against Australia or England. However, there are still a few things that needed to be sorted out to make it even more interesting and worthy, like the number of points awarded after every Test match win should be the same, irrespective of the number of matches in the series. Every game should be offering equal points and not like a five-match Test series will offer 24 points per Test win as compared to 60 per win in case of two match series. That is quite unfair. There were discussions about if one game is enough to determine the winner, like in case of this year's championship, or the ICC should consider having a proper Best of Three final to get the winner.



## FIRST COLUMN

### BACKWARDS AS 'FORWARD' IN UP

Rajbhar or otherwise, the names don't matter, but the point is to let the 'backwards' take the lead



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

Is it a coincidence that the state presidents of all the major parties in Uttar Pradesh namely, Bharatiya Janata Party, Samajwadi Party, and Congress belong to the backward castes, or is it a compulsion that has pushed all the major players in UP to woo the backwards by projecting them as state presidents? It is a political reality that the party which will be able to garner the maximum support from the backwards will win Uttar Pradesh. The BJP state president, Swatantra Dev Singh, and the Samajwadi Party state president, Naresh Uttam, are Kurmi, an influential backward caste after Yadavs. The Congress state president, Ajay Kumar Lallu, is a Senthwar, another backward caste.

The results of the 2017 assembly elections and the 2019 general elections show the importance of the votes of the backwards in UP politics. "The BJP was able to win these elections only because it was able to stitch a social alliance between its core, upper caste, and middle-class base and the intermediary castes, constituting more than 50 per cent of the state's electorate," Nomita P Kumar of Giri Institute of Development Studies in Lucknow said. The forthcoming electoral battle in Uttar Pradesh represents a matter of survival for the four major players. After the BJP fared poorly in the West



Bengal assembly elections and got a drubbing in the state Panchayat polls, a message went down the political corridors that it is losing its sheen. A loss in UP would intensify the pressure on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and that could prove detrimental to the party in the 2024 elections.

Senior BJP leaders confirm that the RSS and the BJP leadership have asked senior leaders to contest the elections. The Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath, and Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Dinesh Sharma, who are members of the Upper House, will contest from Gorakhpur and Lucknow, respectively. For the Samajwadi Party it is a fight for its relevance. It secured only five seats in the 2014 general elections. It lost the 2017 assembly elections despite an alliance with Congress. In 2019, it lost again when it had an alliance with BSP. The party lost these elections under Akhilesh Yadav's leadership. There are reports that Akhilesh Yadav is not willing to forge an alliance with big parties but is ready to share seats with smaller caste-based parties. Samajwadi Party has almost finalized an alliance with the Mahan Dal, a small caste-based party that is popular among the backward Maurya, Kushwaha, and Saini castes. On the other hand, BJP too has started putting its house in order. Sanjay Nishad of Nishad Party and Anupriya Patel of Apna Dal (S) recently met Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The meeting is considered crucial in the backdrop of backward politics and BJP losing the Rajbhar support after Om Prakash Rajbhar of Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party walked out of the National Democratic Alliance.

Rajbhar has formed 'Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha' - a conglomeration of small parties and the front will field candidates in the 2022 assembly elections. The Morcha includes Babu Singh Kushwaha's Jan Adhikar Party, Krishna Patel's Apna Dal, Prem Chandra Prajapati's Bhagidari Andolan Manch, Baburam Pal's National Uday Party, Ram Sagar Bind's Bharat Mata Party, Ram Karan Kashyap's Bharatiya Vanchit Samaj Party, Anil Chauhan's Janata Kranti Party and All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen of Asaduddin Owaisi. Arun Rajbhar, son of Om Prakash Rajbhar, said that the Morcha will emerge as the king-maker. "We have the support of Backwards, MBCs, and Muslims. This is a very potent force which has the potential to topple the apple cart of big parties," he said.

(The writer is Executive Director (News), The Pioneer, Lucknow. The views expressed are personal.)

# Fuel, healthcare, online businesses spur prices



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The recovery process, the SBI says, needs a cut in fuel prices by tax rationalisation as otherwise non-discretionary spends will continue to get distorted and cause inflation

The Indian economy may have started recovering with the pandemic unlock but galloping inflation, increasing healthcare expenses, and rising unemployment are major banes.

The global economy is to rise by four per cent and India would marginally benefit from it with some rise in exports. A World Bank report wants India to create 90 million jobs in non-agricultural organized sector - a Herculean task as most private sector offices are either closing down or slashing operations. Humanitarian crises, hunger deaths, and societal conflicts are growing.

Latest figures indicate 12.69 per cent inflation primarily on account of F2 - food and fuel. The fuel price rise is hitting every sector of the economy with nobody to correct it. The basic price of petrol remains still around ₹35.99 and over ₹65 are the central and state tax components. The edible oil prices have reached crisis points with a 62 per cent spike, Food Secretary Sudhansu Pande says. This follows withdrawal of edible oil from essential commodities list in September 2020

A State Bank of India report says that massive increase in healthcare, especially in the hinterland, steadily rising fuel prices, and online delivery of articles will increase inflationary pressure much higher on the one hand, while crowding out other consumer spending on the other, putting a big question mark on overall growth that is still being driven by consumption demand. Month-on-month increase in inflation on non-institutional medicines, x-ray, ECG, pathological and other clinical tests is taking a heavy toll not only in urban areas but even on the rural populace.

The SBI report has questioned the headline inflation figures announced by the ministry. It says that price movements convey important information about the scarcity of particular goods and services like health and medical care as of now. Health expenditure, which currently constitutes five per cent of overall inflation basket, may jump to at least 11 per cent. (It may be noted that health expenditure is around ₹6 lakh crore or five per cent of the private final consumption expenditure). This is likely to also result in a squeeze in expenditure on other items of discretionary consumption.

The daily increase of fuel prices is another bane. "And if we look at credit card spends since December, CPI computed inflation for the five-month ending April is higher than the CSO estimate on an average by 60 basis points and the higher oil prices had forced consumers to ration out discretionary spends in December," says SBI chief economist Soumya Kanti Ghosh. It means the actual inflation is 60 per cent more than the CSO figures.

The RBI has virtually given credence to the SBI finding as it estimates ₹2 lakh crore losses on economic output. It says that it may not reflect on GDP but there would be a considerable value loss across the economy. The SBI report clarifies it as the share of non-discretionary spend which has jumped to 59 per cent in April and 52 per cent in March and "this does not augur well".

The inflation is to further rise as the US has matched its interest rate rise. It would



THE RBI HAS ALREADY LOWERED ITS GDP PROJECTION TO 9.5 PER CENT FROM 10.5 PER CENT. IT HAD HOPED 18.5 PER CENT RECOVERY IN THE FIRST QUARTER, CONSIDERED LOW BASE GIVEN THE CONTRACTION LAST YEAR. IT IS NOW SCEPTICAL DUE TO THE SECOND WAVE OF LOCKDOWN THAT SEES DECLINE IN DEPOSITS, INDICATING HIGHER HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES, AND LOWER SAVINGS

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)



impact India as well as there would be commodity price-rise globally. The RBI upon the government's suggestion has suppressed interest rates but it will not help keep prices low. It will make it difficult for the RBI to manage the conflicting targets of inflation, exchange rate, and adequate liquidity amidst weak growth.

The RBI has already lowered its GDP projection to 9.5 per cent from 10.5 per cent. It had hoped 18.5 per cent recovery in the first quarter, considered low base given the contraction last year. It is now sceptical due to the second wave of lockdown that sees decline in deposits, indicating higher household expenses, and lower savings. Additionally, currency holding - cash - with the people decelerated to 1.7 per cent during April against a growth of 3.5 per cent last year.

It substantiates what the SBI says that extra expenses on households have increased manifold. Also, there has been an increase in use of online delivery platforms which is not considered by the NSO and if the NSO considers online prices, there will be 10-15 basic points (bps) impact on CPI inflation. The SBI says

that the online delivery adds to inflation. The RBI says that the increased healthcare and other expenses have impacted domestic demand. That is the reason of delayed recovery of manufacturing, core sector and other activities.

The recovery process, the SBI says, needs a cut in fuel prices by tax rationalisation as otherwise non-discretionary spends will continue to get distorted and cause inflation.

The RBI has given another formula. It has gone a bit beyond and wants to partner with the private sector - in short a prescription for further denuding the PSUs. The recommendation should make the authorities rethink on privatisation.

Over the last few years, major PSUs have consistently increased payouts to the government despite a dip in their profitability. Since 2016, as per an official diktat they are paying a minimum 30 per cent of their profit after tax or five per cent of their net worth, whichever is higher, as dividend.

The 100 government companies declared a dividend of ₹71,857 crore during 2018-19, according to the CAG. In 2021,

the PSUs paid a dividend of ₹39,022 crore (against an estimated ₹34,717 crore), the RBI paid ₹99,000 crore dividend, and other banks paid ₹1,619 crore in 2020-21. In short, a major part of the government expenses are being funded by the PSUs. The government's efforts to sell PSUs are being stonewalled by a poor economy. It should rather change its policies to strengthen the PSUs.

Despite this the India remains an investment destination. A healthy flow of FDI into the country corroborates India's strength and attracts attention of global investors, the Confederation of Indian Industry says. Total equity, re-invested earnings, and capital rose 10 per cent to the highest ever \$81.72 billion during 2020-21.

The RBI expects recent government boost in capital expenditure to spur activity and investment. For all this, however, there has to be a major shift in policy thrust. While private investments must rise, the government must relook at strengthening PSUs to tide over the crisis that is beyond the capacity of the private sector. This would alone cut prices and boost demand.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

ON A DAY INDIA VACCINATED MORE THAN 84 LAKH PEOPLE, DELHI ADMINISTERED ONLY 76,259 OUT OF MORE THAN 11 LAKH DOSES AVAILABLE. WHY? — UNION URBAN DEVELOPMENT MINISTER HARDEEP SINGH PURI



HARDEEP JI: PLS FOCUS ON PROVIDING ENOUGH VACCINES FOR THE YOUTH, RATHER THAN JUST ABUSING ARVIND KEJRIWAL ALL THE TIME. — DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER MANISH SISODIA

# Aviation industry: Pandemic-hit Phoenix waiting to rise

Indian aviation is expected to incur \$4 billion worth of losses in 2021 and it is not easy to even out the operational costs before 2023

The COVID-19 pandemic has clipped the wings of the aviation industry the world over. In India, the lockdown banning air travel has hit this industry the worst. As a ripple effect, the tour and travel and the hospitality industry have also been hit.



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

Downsizing has led to people in these industries losing their jobs and a lucky few are working on half, reduced or meagre salaries. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) pegs the losses of the aviation industry at \$370 billion. Air travel is down 60 per cent. This has led to airlines shutting most of their operations. They continue to incur fixed costs without the grounded fleets not earning a dime. According to the Indian rating

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

agency ICRA, domestic passenger traffic between May and September 2020 was only 11 million in comparison to 70 million in 2019.

An aviation expert, PS Nair, says Indian aviation is expected to incur \$4 billion worth of losses in 2021. Nair says: "These losses are not easy to even out. A very careful and integrated approach is required to rejuvenate the aviation industry. Everything would depend upon the economic recovery of the country. But aviation stands a good chance, as it has no alternative. If you have to travel, you have to take a flight; virtual flight is not an option."

India is the seventh-largest civil aviation market in the world. It is the third-largest aviation market in terms of



domestic operations. The country has the potential to overtake the United Kingdom and become the world's third-largest aviation market in terms of handling air passengers within the next five years.

The best minds in the aviation industry recently had a brainstorming session under the aegis of the Air Travellers Association (ATA). GS Bawa, General Secretary, ATA, feels

that the recovery will take years, if not decades. The recovery is linked to Covid-19 vaccination programs and testing procedures worldwide. He feels operational costs would not be broken before 2023.

PS Nair, the former CEO, Delhi Airport and founder-CEO of HIAL says that the industry has a good chance to bounce back as fundamentals of the country's economy are still favourable. For a few years before the pandemic, the aviation sector of India had registered a steady growth and India had overtaken Japan to become the third-biggest domestic market. Private investors were showing interest in developing the country's airports but Covid-19 struck and stalled everything.

Efforts are already on in the industry as well as in the government to make the turnaround possible. To encourage the development of the aviation industry, the government plans to invest up to \$1.83 billion and develop airport infrastructure and aviation navigation services by 2026. The Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Patel is hopeful of early revival, saying the tourism and aviation industries will be back with a bang because the government is linking its vaccination program with the drive to revive the tourism sector. The government is also working on a uniform policy for travel and protocols for vaccinated travellers. The Minister recently launched the Confederation of Hospitality, Technology and

Tourism Industry, an industry body of travel and hospitality tech players like Airbnb, EaseMyTrip, OYO, and Yatra. The idea is to help small operators in the tourism sector.

Nair, however, feels optimistic because the country aims to open 100 new airports by 2024 of which 30 projects are already in progress. Plans are on to have 200 more airports by 2040. The infrastructure boost coupled with a rise in demand should see the Indian aviation industry flying high. "The Government must support the industry. If you increase the airfares, the demand may further come down, if you don't losses would mount," says Bawa.

On its part, ATA has a few recommendations for helping out the aviation industry. It has

asked the government to compensate airlines and airports to the extent of their operating losses and give them some tax relief. It wants a government package for maintaining operations in tier-2 and tier-3 cities. This will improve passenger confidence. The traffic will improve bringing sustainability to the sector.

Bawa has also asked the government to relax the travel restrictions for those who have been vaccinated. "Restrictions like the RT-PCR tests and quarantines should not be mandatory for the travellers with both jabs," he says. The ATA has suggested that for inland travel, a pass with a fitness certificate can also be issued. 'Yatra Setu' on the lines of 'Arogya Setu' can be a good step in this direction.

# Moody's cuts 2021 India's growth forecast to 9.6 pc

FLAGS LOW VACCINATION RATE AS RISK

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Moody's Investors Service on Wednesday slashed India's growth projection to 9.6 per cent for 2021 calendar year from its earlier estimate of 13.9 per cent, and said faster Covid vaccination will be paramount in restricting economic losses to June quarter.

The US-based rating agency said high-frequency economic indicators show that the second wave of Covid-19 infections hit India's economy in April and May. With states now easing restrictions, economic activity in May is likely to signify the trough, it said in a report on India.

"The virus resurgence adds uncertainty to India's growth forecast for 2021; however, it is likely that the economic damage will remain restricted to the April-June

# Govt liberalises guidelines for voice BPO industry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday announced liberalisation of guidelines for other service providers (OSPs) and said that the move would position India as a strong global destination for voice BPOs.

The distinction between domestic and international OSPs has been removed.

A BPO centre with common telecom resources will now be able to serve customers located worldwide including in India. The easing of guidelines would lead to cost-saving and better utilisation for BPO companies. With removal of the distinction between domestic and international OSP centres, the interconnectivity between all types of OSP centres, is now permitted. "We have today extensively liberalised OSP guidelines... This revolutionary step will make India a global destination for BPOs," Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters.

# Sensex breaks 3-day winning streak

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex nursed losses on Wednesday after three days of gains, weighed by selling in Reliance Industries, finance and metal stocks despite firm Asian cues.

Persistent foreign fund outflows added to the selling momentum, though a recovery in the rupee capped the losses, traders said.

The 30-share BSE benchmark ended 282.63 points or 0.54 per cent lower at 52,306.08 in choppy trade. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty declined 85.80 points or 0.54 per cent to 15,686.95.

Kotak Bank was the top loser among the Sensex constituents, shedding 1.32 per cent, followed by L&T, Tata Steel, TCS, Axis bank, ICICI Bank, HDFC and Reliance Industries.

On the other hand, Maruti, Titan, Bajaj Finserv, M&M, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank and SBI finished with gains of up to 2.33 per cent.

# UK HC rejects Nirav Modi's extradition plea

HAS 5 DAYS TO APPEAL FOR ORAL HEARING

PTI ■ LONDON

Nirav Modi has lost the first stage of his extradition plea in the High Court here, just over two months after the wanted diamond merchant's extradition to India was ordered by UK Home Secretary Priti Patel in the estimated USD 2-billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) scam case.

The case was before a High Court judge for a decision "on the papers" submitted for the appeal to determine if there are any grounds for an appeal against the Home Secretary's decision on April 16 or the Westminster Magistrates Court February ruling in favour of Modi's extradition to India to face charges of fraud and money laundering.

A High Court official confirmed that the permission to appeal was "rejected on paper" on Tuesday, which leaves the

# DoT allocates 5G trial spectrum to MTNL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Department of Telecom on Wednesday allocated the spectrum for 5G field trials to the state-owned telecom firm MTNL with C-DoT as its technology partner, according to an official source.

Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea were given the spectrum in May to conduct 5G trials across select cities in India.

"(The) DoT has allocated spectrum to MTNL for 5G trials in Delhi. It will conduct trials in partnership with C-DoT," the official source told PTI. The state-owned telecom firm will conduct trials in the Najafgarh area of Delhi.

According to the DoT, 5G technology is expected to deliver 10 times better download speed than that of 4G and up to three times greater spectrum efficiency. The duration of the trials at present is six months. This includes a time period of two months for procurement and the setting up of the equipment.

# FDI in April up 60 pc to USD 4.44 bn:

Govt data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign direct investment into India increased by 60 per cent to USD 4.44 billion in April as against USD 2.77 billion in the same month last year, government data showed on Wednesday. Total FDI, including equity, re-invested earnings and capital, rose 38 per cent to USD 6.24 billion in April this year, as against USD 4.53 billion in April 2020, as per the data. "During April, 2021 FDI equity inflows amounting to USD 4.44 billion were reported in the country which is an increase of 60 per cent over the FDI equity inflow of April, 2020 (USD 2.77 billion)," the commerce and industry ministry said in a statement. Measures taken by the government on the fronts of foreign direct investment (FDI) policy reforms, investment facilitation and ease of doing business have resulted in increased FDI inflows into the country, it added.

# Mask compliance still remains low in India despite most lethal Covid-19 wave: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mask wearing compliance still remains low in India despite it being one of the worst hit by the second wave of Covid-19, according to findings of a survey.

The mask compliance at vaccination centres also remains low, as per the survey conducted by online social media platform LocalCircles.

"Despite the most lethal Covid-19 wave that any country in the world has experienced so

far, India's mask compliance is still low as indicated by the survey finding where 67 per cent of citizens say there is limited or no mask compliance in their area, district, or city," it said.

The survey received over 33,000 responses from citizens

located in 312 districts of the country.

According to the survey findings, only 32 per cent of citizens in the survey note that there was limited mask compliance at the vaccination centre they recently visited.

# NMDC another impressive performance in FY21

India's largest iron ore producer, NMDC has produced 34.15 million tonnes and sold 33.25 million tonnes of iron ore during the financial year 2020-21. This is an 8% growth in production and 6% in sales from the 31.49 million tonnes produced and 31.51 million tonnes sold during FY 2019-20, achieved in an undoubtedly challenging year. NMDC's turnover for FY 2020-21 is ₹15,370 crore against ₹11,699 crore during FY 2019-20.

## NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	15862.80	15862.95	15673.95	15686.95	-185.70
MARUTI	7266.10	7479.00	7240.05	7432.10	+66.80
TITAN	17255.00	17866.00	17505.05	17830.00	+26.00
BAJAJFINSV	12200.00	12400.00	12080.00	12287.85	+156.20
M&M	781.90	786.00	775.00	783.00	+7.80
ONGC	123.50	124.40	121.75	123.25	+1.20
HEROMOTOCO	2958.95	2995.00	2921.00	2930.05	+23.00
HINDALCO	368.05	370.00	367.35	369.00	+1.45
EICHEMOT	2721.00	2763.00	2708.60	2728.00	+9.80
CIPLA	956.00	966.00	952.00	959.00	+3.15
BRITANNIA	3652.00	3684.30	3631.00	3661.95	+11.05
TATACONSUM	760.00	765.00	751.85	759.00	+2.30
ULTRACEM	6874.70	6953.70	6782.00	6878.10	+19.15
HDFCBANK	1490.00	1497.80	1478.60	1487.00	+3.20
UPL	809.00	810.95	793.10	804.00	+1.50
HDFCLIFE	721.00	723.65	716.35	718.00	+1.25
SBN	421.10	424.75	415.00	418.00	+0.15
INDUSINDBK	1009.00	1017.80	996.50	999.70	-0.40
BAFINVEST	6051.00	6130.00	6001.00	6014.35	-2.45
NESTLEIND	17099.95	17560.00	17370.00	17420.00	-16.55
TECHM	1060.00	1062.30	1038.45	1056.00	-1.20
SUNPHARMA	666.00	672.35	664.25	666.00	-0.80
GRASIM	150.00	151.25	1484.00	1494.50	-1.80
COALINDIA	148.95	150.00	148.15	148.20	-0.30
HINDUNILVR	2495.00	2514.00	2458.20	2481.25	-9.00
DRREDDY	532.00	539.95	528.20	528.00	-20.35
BAJAJALTO	4230.00	4259.65	4191.25	4204.00	-17.60
BHARTIARTL	538.00	539.20	532.75	533.90	-2.50
ITC	205.65	205.85	203.60	204.05	-1.05
ANSAPNT	3030.00	3030.00	2983.50	2995.00	-15.80
POWERGRID	235.75	236.00	232.00	232.80	-1.25
INFY	1525.00	1525.00	1498.65	1503.00	-8.85
HCLTECH	985.00	985.00	971.00	974.25	-5.85
TATAMOTORS	341.00	343.25	334.30	335.20	-2.40
SAIL	1010.50	1015.05	999.00	999.20	-7.80
RELIANCE	2250.00	2250.00	2201.70	2208.15	-17.60
BPCL	474.00	475.00	469.15	469.90	-3.75
IOC	114.50	114.50	112.70	112.80	-1.05
ICICIBANK	633.75	635.00	623.45	625.80	-5.80
NTPC	118.85	118.85	116.95	117.20	-1.10
AXISBANK	743.20	743.75	730.80	732.40	-6.95
TATASTEEL	1120.50	1127.55	1097.85	1107.10	-10.60
HDFC	235.00	237.00	233.00	248.80	-24.10
TCS	3329.00	3329.00	3296.40	3267.30	-33.90
KOTAKBANK	1746.00	1764.00	1727.25	1738.00	-19.10
IT	156.00	157.00	147.10	148.20	-17.20
JSWSTEEL	679.00	685.00	664.15	665.70	-9.55
SHREEM	29256.00	29314.00	28749.00	28825.15	-413.90
DIVISLAB	4300.00	4310.20	4221.25	4225.00	-63.75
WIPRO	560.00	560.85	538.40	540.45	-16.10
ADANIPORTS	749.00	757.00	715.50	718.55	-24.35

## BSE 500

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
Urbal	1495.15	1497.65	1395.00	1403.40	+45.80
INFY	1523.00	1524.95	1498.60	1502.85	+63.95
TCS	3325.00	3325.00	3256.60	3262.10	+58.70
WIPRO	560.00	560.75	538.70	540.30	+43.60
RELIANCE	2249.00	2250.00	2201.45	2205.10	+11.65
TCS	3471.00	3950.00	3369.25	3668.65	+134.85
HCLTECH	984.80	984.80	971.10	972.70	+6.60
ASIANPAINT	3037.40	3037.40	2984.05	2988.50	+4.45
HINDUNILVR	2498.90	2513.00	2458.50	2479.50	+21.00
ADANIPOWER	750.00	760.00	715.30	718.70	+3.00
ADANI	1562.80	1569.40	1481.30	1504.40	+23.10
MARUTI	7282.00	7478.00	7241.35	7432.95	+191.60
HFCL	65.20	72.65	64.55	66.75	+2.25
GOPI	2156.00	2156.00	2127.00	2133.75	+16.75
BEL	155.00	169.95	152.50	168.35	+13.35
TECHM	1059.80	1061.75	1039.00	1056.25	+2.25
DRREDDY	5334.00	5349.50	5289.95	5299.75	+19.80
SBIN	420.90	424.75	415.00	418.90	+3.90
DABUR	565.95	569.95	560.25	566.35	+5.40
MARICO	517.00	519.30	513.90	515.80	+2.90
WOCKPHARMA	605.00	608.00	588.75	561.50	-26.50
BRITANNIA	3641.00	3682.00	3630.00	3658.45	+18.45
TATASTEEL	1120.00	1127.75	1095.35	1099.80	-10.20
EICHEMOT	2732.00	2762.00	2708.95	2727.45	+18.50
CIPLA	955.65	965.80	954.50	957.80	+3.30
TATAMOTORS	341.45	343.25	334.40	335.25	-1.20
TITAN	1760.00	1785.90	1756.00	1782.75	+22.75
IDEA	10.07	10.13	9.88	9.93	+0.05
PNB	41.60	42.95	41.30	42.25	+0.65
PAEIND	2950.00	2987.30	2937.40	2941.25	+4.85
MRF	8250.00	8245.00	8102.65	8197.95	+95.30
SUNPHARMA	670.00	672.30	664.20	665.15	+0.95

## RUPEE vs Dollar



## NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	39048.75	39075.25	38482.35	38525.00	-314.05
PNB	41.50	42.95	41.30	42.20	+0.90
PGHIL	13240.00	13675.00	13240.00	13619.95	+223.40
SIEMENS	2005.20	2048.00	1992.25	2030.00	+32.65
BAJAJHLLI	3546.75	3694.95	3546.75	3600.30	+55.25
ICICIPRULI	606.55	613.50	599.30	606.00	+3.55
PETRONET	231.00	232.35	230.30	230.75	+0.60
GOPI	881.00	886.70	873.70	879.00	+1.85
MOTHERSUNI	238.90	243.70	237.10	238.20	+0.45
MRF	81750.00	82499.95	81750.00	81865.00	+117.75
ADANI GREEN	1178.00	1196.20	1115.00	1169.00	+1.60
LT	4112.40	4170.00	4110.00	4115.40	+4.20
COLPAL	1699.35	1700.40	1682.90	1690.00	+0.65
ICICI	1531.00	1550.00	1518.00	1524.60	+0.40
HAVELLS	1007.60	1007.60	993.30	999.20	-0.50
BERGPAINT	814.00	817.85	803.75	807.95	-0.45
DABUR	567.20	570.00	560.25	565.90	-0.70
JUBLFOOD	3248.00	3251.15	3181.30	3214.00	+6.15
MARICO	516.00	519.50	513.65	514.30	+1.35
HDFCAMC	2981.00	2986.90	2936.20	2953.00	+8.15
INDIGO	1723.00	1743.60	1702.10	1712.00	+5.45
BOSCHLTD	15220.00	15267.40	15011.40	15076.00	+52.60
YSBANK	13.85	13.95	13.60	13.75	+0.05
VEDL	254.80	256.85	249.90	251.40	+1.00
AMBUJACEM	346.90	348.50	343.50	344.75	+1.50
LUPIN	1161.00	1173.80	1151.50	1152.60	+6.35
PIDILITIND	2153.85	2156.00	2138.25	2135.80	-12.05
APOLLOHOSP	3274.95	3274.95	3212.00	3235.25	+19.95
TORNTPHARM	2930.00	2940.70	2899.95	2900.50	+24.45
PEL	2445.15	2505.75	2421.25	2425.40	+20.90
BIOCON	402.90	404.95	396.60	397.00	+4.35
ALKEM	3143.15	3154.80	3093.10	3115.05	+34.80
CADILAC	632.70	633.20	621.00	623.00	+7.05
MCDOWELL-N	683.80	684.00	660.40	666.15	+7.70
ARROPHARMA	953.20	957.00	942.55	941.55	-11.05
ABBOTINDIA	16669.00	16744.00	16400.00	16475.00	+195.85
ACC	2049.70	2059.90	2025.00	2025.10	-24.25
DLF	298.50	300.60	292.00	293.20	+3.80
GAIL	157.00	157.00	152.70	153.05	+2.25
HINDPETRO	304.80	305.15	298.85	300.00	+4.55
DMART	3400.00	3400.00	3300.95	3320.00	+53.80
IGL	531.60	533.35	517.60	518.75	+9.55
NAUKRI	4880.00	4922.90	4760.00	4778.90	+94.00
MUTHOOTFIN	1510.00	1514.00	1470.00	1474.40	+32.30
ADANITRANS	1403.00	1409.00	1398.90	1332.00	+35.25
BANDHANBNK	342.65	344.55	331.85	333.80	+9.15
ADANIEN	1560.10	1569.95</			

# Myanmar's junta leader attends military conference in Moscow

AP ■ MOSCOW

The leader of Myanmar's military junta on Wednesday attended an international conference in Moscow, an appearance that reflected Russia's eagerness to develop ties with it despite international opprobrium.

The military in Myanmar ousted the democratically elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb. 1, saying her party's landslide victory in elections last November resulted from massive voter fraud. It has not produced credible evidence to back its claim.

Security forces have brutally suppressed widespread popular protests against the military takeover, killing hundreds of protesters and carrying out waves of arrests.

The junta's leader, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, claimed in Wednesday's speech at the conference organised by Russia's Defence Ministry that it was trying to consolidate a democratic system in the country that has "degraded."

On Tuesday, Min Aung Hlaing met with Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, who hailed strong military cooperation between the countries.

"We pay special attention to this meeting as we see Myanmar as a time-tested strategic partner and a reliable ally in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region," Shoigu said at the start of the meeting.

He added that "cooperation in the military and military-technical field is an important part of relations between Russia and



Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, left, and Commander-in-Chief of Myanmar's armed forces Senior General Min Aung Hlaing walk past the honour guard prior to their talks in Moscow, Russia on Tuesday

Myanmar" and praised Min Aung Hlaing for strengthening the country's military. Shoigu said that

Russia would work to expand ties with Myanmar based on "mutual understanding, respect and trust."

## Warren Buffett resigns from Gates Foundation

New York: Warren Buffett is resigning as a trustee from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The announcement comes weeks after Bill and Melinda Gates announced that they were divorcing after 27 years of marriage but would continue to jointly run the foundation, one of the largest charitable foundations in the world.

Gates was formerly the world's richest person and his fortune is estimated at well over \$100 billion.

"For years I have been a trustee - an inactive trustee at that - of only one recipient of my funds, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). I am now resigning from that post, just as I have done at all corporate boards other than Berkshire's," Buffett said in a prepared statement Wednesday.

## Blast outside JuD chief Hafiz Saeed's house kills 3 in Lahore

PTI ■ LAHORE

A powerful car bomb exploded outside the house of the 2008 Mumbai terror attack mastermind and banned Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed here on Wednesday, killing at least three people and injuring 21 others.

The blast took place at a police picket outside Saeed's residence at the BOR Society in Jauhar Town, resulting in serious injuries to some police officers guarding his house. The windows and walls of Saeed's house were damaged from the impact of the blast, Pakistani media reported.

Inspector General of Police (Punjab) Inam Ghani said there could have been a "major loss" had there been no police picket outside the house of the high-profile personality, referring to Saeed.

The 71-year-old radical cleric has been serving a jail sen-

tence at the high-security Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore for his conviction in terror financing cases.

The blast sparked rumours that Saeed was present in the house. Ghani said at least three people were killed in the car bomb blast while 21 others were injured.

No group has claimed responsibility for the blast. "Explosive material was installed in the car. There was a police picket outside the high-value target's house. The car could not cross the police picket," Ghani said, describing it as "a terror" act.

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) has taken over the blast site and investigating from all aspects, he said. Ghani also claimed that "hostile" intelligence agencies could be involved in the blast.

According to an initial report prepared by investigative agencies,

## ISRAELI OK'S DEMOLITION OF PALESTINIAN HOME

Jerusalem: Israel's Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the decision to destroy the family home of a detained Palestinian accused of a deadly shooting.

## BRUTAL MEXICO PRISON RIOT LEAVES 6 DEAD

Mexico City: A brutal fight between two rival groups of inmates at a prison on Mexico's Gulf coast Tuesday left six prisoners dead and nine wounded.

## JAPANESE NUCLEAR REACTOR RESTARTED

Tokyo: A more than 40-year-old nuclear reactor in central Japan which suffered a deadly accident has resumed operation after being taken offline for a decade after the March 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster.

## Russia fires warning shots to deter UK warship in Black Sea

AP ■ MOSCOW

A Russian warship fired warning shots and a warplane dropped bombs Wednesday to force a British destroyer from an area in the Black Sea near Crimea that Russia claims as its territorial waters.

The incident marked the first time since the Cold War that Moscow has used live ammunition to deter a NATO warship, reflecting growing risks of military incidents amid soaring Russia-West tensions.

The Russian Defence Ministry said the Russian warship fired warning shots after the British missile destroyer Defender had ignored a notice against intrusion in Russia's territorial waters. It said that a Russian Su-24 bomber also dropped four bombs ahead of

the British ship to persuade it to change course. Minutes later, the British warship left the Russian waters, the ministry said. The Russian Defence Ministry said it has summoned the UK military attaché in Moscow to protest the British destroyer's maneuver.

The UK Ministry of Defence did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014, a move that was not recognised by most countries in the world. Russia has frequently

chafed at NATO warships visits near Crimea, casting them as destabilising. NATO members Turkey, Greece, Romania and Bulgaria are on the Black Sea, but warships from the US, UK and other NATO allies also have made increasingly frequent visits in a show of support to Ukraine.

## Iran likely had failed rocket launch, preparing for another

Dubai: Iran likely conducted a failed launch of a satellite-carrying rocket in recent days and now appears to be preparing to try again, the country's latest effort to advance its space programme.

Satellite images, a US official and a rocket expert all confirmed the failed launch, earlier this month, at the Imam Khomeini Spaceport in Iran's Semnan province. The attempt comes as Iran's space programme has suffered a series of high-profile losses, while its paramilitary Revolutionary Guard runs its own parallel program that launched a satellite into orbit last year.

Iran's Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi later Wednesday denied Tehran had a failed satellite launch, but offered no explanation for the activity at the spaceport. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not respond to a request for comment.

## Oli: Yoga originated in Nepal, not in India

Kathmandu: Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has stoked yet another controversy by claiming that Yoga originated in his country, not in India, a view not shared by a leading expert here.

Speaking at a function organised to observe the International Yoga Day on June 21 at the Prime Minister's residence in Baluwatar, Oli said that India was not even born as a separate country when Yoga originated in "this part of the world".

"Yoga originated from this part of the globe. It originated from Uttarakhand, in particular, Nepal was the place of origin of Yoga," he said. Some 15,000 years ago, Shambhunath or Shiva propounded the practices of Yoga. Later on, Maharshi Patanjali developed the philosophy of Yoga in a more refined and systematic manner, he said.

"Yoga doesn't belong to any particular religion or religious sect," Oli said.

"Shiva started the practice of Yoga on the longest day on the Earth, which lies on June 21 as per the Gregorian calendar. Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi proposed to observe International Yoga Day on the same day, for which we all should be pleased," Oli said.

"In fact, Yoga originated from Uttarakhand and at that time Uttarakhand was not in present-day India," he claimed.

"India was not even born as an independent country at that time," he added. "Not only Yoga but also Samkhya philosophy propounded by Kapil Muni originated from our land," he added. Samkhya is one of the six astika schools of the Indian philosophy. It forms the theoretical foundation of Yoga.

"Charak Rishi, who developed Ayurveda, was also born in this land," pointed out Oli. A leading Yoga expert of Nepal, Yogacharya G N Saraswati, however, PTI

## Delta variant 'greatest threat' to US' Covid-19 efforts: Dr Fauci

Washington: The highly contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus is the "greatest threat" to America's attempt to eradicate the pandemic, the country's leading infectious disease expert and White House Chief Medical Advisor Dr Anthony Fauci has warned.

The variant, which was first detected in India, is more contagious and causes more severe disease than other circulating variants, he said on Tuesday during a White House Covid-19 response team briefing.

Fauci said the Delta variant now makes up more than 20 per cent of all new cases in the US, nearly doubling from nearly 10 per cent two weeks ago.

"Similar to the situation in the UK, the Delta variant is currently the greatest threat in the US to our attempt to eliminate COVID-19," PTI

## Iran: 'Sabotage attack' on civilian nuclear center thwarted

Tehran: Iranian authorities have thwarted what they called a "sabotage attack" targeting a civilian nuclear facility near the country's capital, state TV reported on Wednesday, as details about the incident remained scarce.

The attempted attack against a building belonging to Iran's Atomic Energy Organization "left no casualties or damages and was unable to disrupt the Iranian nuclear program," Iranian state television reported, adding that authorities were working to identify the perpetrators. Iranian media offered no details on the kind of attack, saying only that the move targeted a sprawling nuclear center located in Karaj city, just some 40 kilometers northwest of Tehran.

When asked for comment, an Iranian official referred to the initial report by Nournews,

believed to be close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council. The official spoke on condition of anonymity as they did not have authorisation to discuss the matter with media.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' body that monitors Tehran's atomic program, did not immediately respond to request for comment.

Iranian authorities did not specify which facility in Karaj had been targeted. There are two sites associated with Iran's nuclear program known to be in the area, including the Karaj Agricultural and Medical Research Center. Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation describes the Karaj Agricultural and Medical Research Center as a facility founded in 1974 that uses nuclear technology to improve "quality of soil, water, agricultural and livestock production." AP

### FROM PAGE 1

#### J&K POLITICAL...

Commenting on the possible outcome of the meeting, political analyst Prof Hari Om observed, "The constituents of the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration have raised the bar too high for the Prime Minister to concede anything under the prevailing circumstances".

Prof Hari Om said those who are battling in support of restoration of Article 370, which granted special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, will come out of the meeting empty handed.

Prof Hari Om said, "The mood of the nation is against any concession as any U-turn on the part of New Delhi would be construed as a major concession to Pakistan. The demands put forth by the Gupkar Alliance - Article 35A, Article 370, full State status, reunion of Ladakh with J&K and special status - are extraordinary demands. Pakistan is also parroting the same agenda to pin down India. "None of the five demands could be conceded by the PM without the approval of the Parliament or without amending the Indian Constitution. Besides, his Government has to render the J&K Reorganization Act, 2019 (Act No. 34 of 2019) unreal and ineffective and only the Parliament could do it", commented Prof Hari Om.

#### DELTA PLUS VARIANT CASES DOUBLE...

However, Guleria said that right now, the spread of Delta Plus variant is limited in India and we need to continue to be cautious. On Tuesday, the Union Health Ministry had announced that 22 cases of Delta Plus variant have been detected in India. The cases of Delta Plus have been found in genome sequenced samples from Ratnagiri and Jalgaon Districts of Maharashtra; Palakkad and Pathanamthitta Districts of Kerala; and Bhopal and Shivpuri Districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Recently, World Health Organisation (WHO) Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan had warned that the Delta variant is "well on its way" to becoming the dominant variant globally. However, Dr Rahul Bhargava, Director-Bone Marrow Transplant Program, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurgaon, stressed "on knowing the infectivity rate of Delta plus variant and chances it can evade the fully-immunised person." Mask, vaccination and genomic surveillance are the cornerstone for prevention, he tweeted.

Flagging the concern, Dr Arvind Singh Soin, chairman, Medanta Transplant Institute said that the Delta Plus - a variant of concern, is more transmissible and could even escape vaccines. "We will continue to learn more about it. For now, remember that new variant or old, Covid-appropriate behaviour stays the same," Soin said in his tweet.

#### ONCE BITTEN, TWICE SHY! AKHILESH'S NO ...

He said the SP was targeting 350 of UP's 403 seats in the crucial election that is widely seen as a test of voters' pulse ahead of the 2024 national election, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP will seek re-election and a third straight term in power.

"The BJP is going to lose the upcoming UP elections... they failed the people of UP in the biggest test of their leadership. People were abandoned by the Government. The so-called double-engine government - at the Centre and in UP - is going in different directions," he said.

The former Chief Minister downplayed the "Modi factor" and its potential impact on the UP campaign, flagging the infighting and dissidence against Yogi Adityanath over the past few months. Referring to Modi's close aide AK Sharma settling for a party post after much hype about his UP assignment, Akhilesh remarked, "Dilli wale log usko mantra nahin bana paye, unki uttar Pradesh mein vote kaun dega" (Delhi couldn't even make him Minister, who will vote for them)". The BJP would defeat the BJP in UP, he quipped.

Targeting the Yogi Government's handling of the Covid crisis in the State, especially in the second surge, Akhilesh accused the Government of hiding the true figures of deaths. The SP chief also sought to explain a controversial remark that he made on "not taking the BJP vaccine", a reference to Bharat Biotech's Covaxin that was cleared for use while still in clinical trials.

"I had only refused to take the vaccine initially because it had not completed all the trials," Akhilesh said to allegations that his comments added to vaccine hesitancy in UP. On when he planned to take the shot, he kept it open-ended and said: "I have told the UP government that if it is able to vaccinate all the poor free of cost by Diwali, I will take the vaccine." He dismissed the risks involved in delaying vaccination.

"I had Covid in April and scientifically, am safe for three months at least," he said, asserting that his father and former Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav had been vaccinated.

#### CAPTAIN RETURNS HOME WITHOUT AUDIENCE WITH...

Meanwhile, Rahul continued his one on one meetings and met Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar, Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal and Rajya Sabha MP Pratap Singh Bajwa mainly to take a first-hand feedback of the prevailing situation and ground realities in the state after the infighting escalated.

Downplaying the ongoing crisis in the State party unit after meeting Rahul,

Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC) president Jakhar said the main issue under consideration is how to make the party come together for the next Assembly elections and emerge victorious.

#### INDIA MEETS...

His remarks came while replying to a question during a discussion on the theme "Looking towards peace in Afghanistan after the US-NATO withdrawal".

"I see the reason behind having a dialogue or talks or reaching out to all parties in Afghanistan but it is important to keep in mind that we are in a critical stage at this time, and I think if any meeting is going to take place, it should be for a major or main reason, which is to encourage the parties to solve their differences by peaceful means," al-Qahtani said.

Recently, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar made two stop-overs in Doha during his visits to Kuwait and Kenya.

In his talks with senior Qatari leaders in Doha, the issue of Afghanistan was discussed. Jaishankar also held talks on the issue with US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad who was also there in the Qatari capital. The Government is yet to react to the Qatari diplomat's comments. Earlier this month, MEA Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said that India is in touch with various stakeholders in Afghanistan in pursuance of its long-term commitment towards peace, development and reconstruction of that country.

In what could be a summing up of the Indian concerns on the Afghan issue, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla had last week said that the Taliban's relentless pursuit of power through violence has created an uncertain environment in Afghanistan and the situation in the country is "fluid" at this point in time.

With an investment of close to USD three billion in aid and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan, India is a major stakeholder in the peace process of that country,

#### BANKS RECOVER 40% LOSSES...

"As on date, out of total attached/seized assets of ₹18,170.02 crore under provisions of PMLA, assets worth of ₹329.67 crore has been confiscated and assets worth ₹9,041.5 crore, representing 40 per cent of total loss to the bank have been handed over to the public sector banks," it said.

The quantum of the attached and seized assets represents 80.45 per cent of the total bank loss pegged at Rs 22,585.83 crore.

The investigation by the ED has proved that substantial part of these assets were held in the names of dummy entities/trusts/ third persons/ relatives of these accused and these entities were proxy of these accused to hold these assets, it said.

Extradition requests have been sent against these persons to the UK and Antigua and Barbuda. The extradition of Vijay Mallya has been ordered by the Westminster Magistrates Court and confirmed by the UK High Court. Since Vijay Mallya has been denied permission to file appeal in the UK Supreme Court, his extradition to India has become final.

The Westminster Magistrates Court has also ordered the extradition of Nirav Modi to India. Nirav Modi has been in London jail for the last two years and three months on the basis of an extradition request by India. On Wednesday, the UK High Court rejected Modi's appeal against his extradition approved by the UK Home Secretary Priti Patel. However, he will get an opportunity to appeal for an oral hearing within five days.

Nirav Modi and Vijay Mallya have also been declared Fugitive Economic Offenders by the PMLA Court in Mumbai.

The Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) on Wednesday sold shares of United Breweries Ltd. worth Rs 5,824.50 crore that were earlier attached by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under money laundering charges against fugitive liquor baron Vijay Mallya's alleged involvement in bank fraud, it said.

Further realisation of Rs 800 crore by sale of shares is expected by June 25. Recently, it said, the agency had transferred shares attached by it (worth about Rs 6,600 crore) to the SBI-led consortium following an order from the PMLA Special Court, Mumbai. "Today, DRT on behalf of SBI-led consortium, has sold shares of United Breweries Limited for Rs 5824.50 crore," it said.

#### GUV MEDDLING IN HOUSE AFFAIRS: WB SPEAKER TO BIRLA

Supporting the Speaker's contention, senior TMC MLA Tapas Roy said, "Biman has done the right thing by bringing it to the notice of the Lok Sabha Speaker so that even he can see how democratically our Governor has been working".

Reacting to the issue CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakrabarty, however, held both the sides guilty of failing to accommodate each other. "During our times also we had a Governor like Gopal Krishna Gandhi who was known for his partisan ways... still Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee accommodated with him and such peculiar situations were avoided," he said.

However Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said the Governor was stopping only those Bills which are not worthy to be passed. "The TMC is trying to bulldoze its way with certain Bills... the Governor is only exposing the party's lawlessness."

#### OFFERS GALORE...

Under the scheme, a discount of 20 per cent will be given on food items. After the

unlock, the restaurant is again started offering the discount.

DTH service provider Dish TV is offering free "one day worth of entertainment" to its customers after they upload the details of their vaccination on the company website.

A BJP MLA Vishnu Khatri in Madhya Pradesh has announced that free mobile recharge will be done for all the people in his constituency who get vaccinated by June 30. Before Khatri, Sitasaran Sharma, MLA of Hoshangabad Assembly, had announced a reward of Rs 10 lakh for the village that achieves 100 per cent inoculation. In Sitasaran Sharma's assembly constituency, there are 40 villages under a total of 23 gram panchayats.

The fast food giant McDonald's is offering a 20 per cent discount on meals. McDonald's India - North and East has launched the "We Care" initiative. It is aimed at encouraging McDonald's customers to join the fight against Covid and get themselves vaccinated. The initiative, launched through McDonald's mobile app, will offer special deals, like discounts on burgers, to the customers post their vaccination. McDonald's customers can avail the limited time offer by uploading their vaccination certificate on McDonald's mobile app under the "Got Vaccinated" tab, along with basic details. Restaurants and hotels brands have also recently come up with a special offer to provide vaccinations to customers with lucrative offers.

BharatPe is running an instant cash-back offer for its six million merchant part-

ners, if they upload their vaccination certificates on the app.

The Beer Cafe's offer gives its customers a 10 per cent discount on their first jab, and 20 per cent on the second one.

The Chaayons tea chain is offering tea on the house for those who have taken their first jab. boAt has an attractive offer for those who have received the Covid vaccine. They can take advantage of a 25 per cent discount offer on boAt products. People who avail this offer will also receive a free mask from the brand.

Colorbar, a beauty brand has come up with the #CBCares initiative to spread awareness about the Covid vaccination drive. One can become a part of this initiative by sharing a picture of themselves getting vaccinated, for which they will be get Colorbar vouchers worth Rs 500.

Jaan Vision, an organisation in Rajkot district of Gujarat, is providing free food to those who get vaccinated. A car workshop in Mehsana, Gujarat is forgoing labour charges on car servicing and offering a 10 per cent discount on car accessories to vaccinated individuals.

SoftBank-backed grocer Grofers a month's subscription to its loyalty program, and home appliances maker Godrej extended product warranties. State-run Central Bank of India Ltd is offering higher interest on deposits from recipients of at least one dose.

Recently, Soni community in Gujarat offered gold nose pins for women and hand blenders to men after vaccination.

## Myanmar trial of Australian adviser to Suu Kyi still not set

Bangkok: The case of an Australian economist and adviser to Myanmar's ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi who like her was arrested when the military seized over in February remained in legal limbo Wednesday as a court considered where he should be tried. Su Kyi, her advisor Sean Turnell and three former Cabinet ministers were charged in March under Myanmar's official secrets law, which is punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

Turnell has not appeared in public since he was detained on February 6 and did not attend Wednesday's court hearing. The exact details of Turnell's alleged offence and those of the others charged have not been made public, though Myanmar state television,

citing government statements, has said the Australian academic had access to "secret state financial information" and had tried to flee the country.

Turnell, the author of "Fiery Dragons: Banks, Moneylenders and Microfinance in Burma," was an advisor to Suu Kyi after her government came to power following an election in 2015 that followed years of mil-

itary rule. The February coup toppled Suu Kyi's government just as it was to begin a second term following a landslide election victory in November. Suu Kyi is currently being tried in the capital, Naypyitaw, on five more minor charges, but the charge of breaching the secrets law was made in Yangon, the country's biggest city.

Prosecutors several weeks ago initiated the process of getting court approval to have the secrets trial be held in Naypyitaw, where Suu Kyi is being kept at a secret location. One of Suu Kyi's lawyers, Kyi Win, said that at Wednesday's procedural hearing before the Supreme Court in Naypyitaw, prosecution and defence lawyers both presented arguments favouring the move. It is not clear when there might be a ruling on the motion. Australia's Foreign Minister Marise Payne on Sunday called for an "fair and open" trial. "We do believe Professor Turnell is arbitrarily detained and we have been consistently seeking his release since he was detained some months ago now," she said. AP



# MELTING BOUNDARIES

Actors are no longer defined by the medium they most often dabble in. By TEAM VIVA

So many performers are today flexing their acting prowess with equal ease on, both, streaming platforms and films. Here is our pick of five of such versatile talents:

### Mukul Chadda

Mukul left New York and a thriving career as a banker because his heart craved for a life in the arts. He arrived in Mumbai without a blueprint for his future but memories of doing theatre in college and attending classes at the Lee



Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute began to guide his choices. He soon found himself working in films like *Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu*, *Island City*, *I, Me Aur Main* et al along with shows like *Bichoo Ka Khel* and *Gurgaon*. He also played a jovial and rather clueless boss in the Indian adaptation of the popular American sitcom, *The Office*. This month, he is celebrating the release of an OTT series, *Sunflower* and the much-awaited film *Sherni*. In the former, which is a dark crime comedy, he plays a rather mercurial, short-tempered character and in *Sherni*, he portrays a rather unimaginative spouse who believes his wife's government job is a 'recession-proof' meal ticket for life. Chadda is



### Sayani Gupta

This graduate from the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), is truly a new-age star whose unconventional choices have resulted in a very interesting creative journey. Sayani made her debut in 2012 in *Second Marriage Dot Com* but her breakout role was as the visually-challenged love interest of Kalki Koechlin in Shonali Bose's



emerging as an actor who can effortlessly adapt to cinematic and OTT narratives without missing a beat.

### Radhika Apte

From someone who made her debut in 2005 with a fleeting appearance in a now-forgotten film, *Vaah! Life Ho Toh Aisi!*, Radhika has grown enormously to become the unofficial queen of OTT productions and an acclaimed film actor, be it in commercial hits like *Badlapur* and *Andhadhun* or an independent film like *Raat Akeli Hai*. Many credit her with changing the scope and span of female performances in OTT shows. Her ability to exude both charisma and earthy simplicity has seen her churn out flawless performances in titles as diverse as *Manjhi - The Mountain Man*, *Parched*, *Phobia*, *Pad Man*, *Lust Stories*, *Bazaar*, *A Call To Spy*, *Stories by Rabindranath Tagore*, *Ghoul*, and *Sacred Games*. Along the way, she has scooped up various awards and also garnered critical and popular appreciation.

in a specific genre or format.

### Vikrant Massey

Vikrant's journey has been chequered and spans diverse platforms. Starting with the 2004 television series, *Kahaan Hoon Main*, he tried his best to adapt to the entertainment trends of the day by working in shows like *Dharam Veer*, *Balika Vadhu*, *Baba Aiso Varr Dhoondo*, and *Qubool Hai*. His debut film appearance in *Lootera* (2014), and then a role in *Dil Dhadakne Do* (2015) showed us a glimpse of the actor who has more potential than he has been given credit for. With 2017's critically acclaimed film *A Death In The Gunj*, he showed what an accomplished actor he really is and even won a Filmfare Award



nomination in the category of Best Actor - Critics. In the OTT space, he has carved a niche for himself with success stories like *Mirzapur*, *Criminal Justice* and in the second seasons of *Broken But Beautiful*. And bigger film roles are also coming his way, including the lead role opposite Deepika Padukone in *Chhapaak* (2020) and a starring role in the recent *Ginni Weds Sunny*, opposite Yami Gautam.

### Jaideep Ahlawat

For this FTII graduate, the success of his idol, Irrfan Khan, was a beacon in the dark years he spent struggling for meaty roles. In 2008, Jaideep made his debut in a short film *Narmeen* and went on to play many small parts till his role as Shahid Khan in *Gangs of Wasseypur* (2012) and as Khalid Mir in *Raazi* (2017) got him some much-deserved attention. But stardom and a Filmfare award came with the Anushka Sharma-produced web series *Paatal Lok*. This performance truly heralded his arrival as a



star who could lead a show as its protagonist. Even in an anthology like *Ajeeb Daastaans*, he stood out for his portrayal of a gay man who is unable to embrace his sexuality openly. Today he is being offered diverse roles in OTT productions as well as films. Even as Jaideep carved a path that was painstakingly tread by predecessors like Irrfan and Manoj Bajpayee, there is no doubt that he has already created a success story that is uniquely his own.



## Regional rules digital waves

ANANT ROONGTA says that localised content has been taking centre stage on OTT platforms

As the diversity in content takes centre stage, OTT as an industry has reached new heights. For the global entertainment scene, the past year has been a mixed bag. After rigorous turmoil, the industry partially got back on its feet because of the rise of OTT consumption. With the advent of work from home culture, coupled with outdoor restriction, streaming platforms witnessed a jump in subscription revenue. Interestingly, after a few years of launch, OTT platforms reached a new level of subscription revenue when compared to the broadcast industry which took years to gain the current levels. This, in turn, has provided an opportunity to not only experiment with content but also create something that resonates with the audience.

### Wider growth

With hyperactive internet users and increased internet penetration in the country, studios and platforms are creating storylines inspired by people's behaviour in the region. The notable thing here is that the content is either dubbed in multiple languages with the scripts and references that make people connect with a show across the country or it is created for a specific region. A good example of that would be MX Player's *Samantar* that has a suspenseful storyline that any Maharashtrian could relate to. Such regional content is especially consumed in the native areas of the country amidst the digital progression and easy availability of smartphones at an affordable price.

Regional content creation has its advantages, an immersive storyline could potentially be created at 30-40 per cent lower cost with larger viewership. Consumption of regional content is expected to double, with over a billion of the population having a smartphone by the next decade. Currently, streaming services have more subscribers than people with a cable connection. As per a report by FICCI, regional languages will make up 60 per cent of television consumption by 2025 from around 55 per cent in 2020 and around 50 per cent of streaming video consumption from 30 per cent in 2019. Keeping the demand for regional content in mind, big media platforms like Amazon Prime Video, Zee5, Hotstar and Voot are keen on producing regional content for the masses.

### Scope

Regional markets have a lot of potential and scope in the future because many of them are underserved, which means there's room for growth. Due to the increase in demand, marketers have realised that simply dubbing Hindi or English advertising into local languages will no longer suffice, therefore they have started including modest local language additions to their ads or are attempting to compose local language scripts in English. With digital platforms making significant progress in terms of content creation — as they seek new methods to thrill their audiences — local material will receive a significant boost, which will benefit regional cinema greatly.

### Future of the digital era

The consumption of digital content has unquestionably expanded dramatically over time. People have been riveted to the screen for Marathi comedy, south-Indian action, Bengali crime thrillers, and romantic narratives in all languages, and OTT platforms have recently discovered that regional shows are attracting the most viewers. The consumption of regional material is expected to increase in the next few years, particularly on streaming platforms, as non-metro audiences continue to lead internet user growth.

(The author is managing director of a film studio which was set up in 1946.)

Since the pandemic has taken over, most of our lives have been consumed by the digital world. Be it work, entertainment or socialising, digital screens have become an indispensable part of everyday life.

Excessive screen time is putting an enormous strain on your eyes, which can be really harmful in the long run.

Want to combat increased screen time in easy and effective ways? Read on for five ways to give your eyes a protective detox from digital screens.

### Use eyeglasses with BLU-cut lenses

This one is a must-have if you are part of the WFH team. If excessive screen time is absolutely unavoidable for you because of work, this is the solution for you. Eyeglasses with BLU-cut or computer lenses are an easy and effective way to protect your eyes. These lenses keep at bay the harmful effects of blue rays emanating from digital screens. These not only add protection and functionality to your work life but also undeniable style for the virtual meetings you attend throughout the day. Check out John Jacobs' high-quality yet affordable BLU eyeglasses range to balance out excessive screen time. Give your eyes the digital detox they deserve.

### Reduce screen brightness on all devices

Adjusting screen brightness to suit the time of the day and your lifestyle is an easy way to reduce eye strain. Almost every digital device available today has settings for night mode and yellow light. These can be automated to custom timings and aligned with your schedule seamlessly. Lux is an interesting app available for android devices that allows you to customise and adjust your screen brightness. It has features like renowned blue light filtering with easy navigation guides and a smooth, simple interface.

### Take frequent breaks from the screen

Sometimes, there is nothing more effective and relaxing for



## Visual relief

Ever get a nasty headache in the middle of a workday? Do your eyes start watering while binge-watching your favourite series? TEAM VIVA is here with some helpful suggestions to help your sore eyeballs

your eyes than a good ol' fashioned coffee break! Give your eyes rest in between work meetings and assignments and chill with a cuppa. Listen to calming music or simply meditate on your day — but keep the phone down and let your laptop go to sleep for a 15-minute periodic break every now and then. This will not only boost your productivity but also combat watering or burning eyes that occur due to continuous and uninterrupted screen exposure. We love Country Bean's aromatic and innovative flavours for our much needed coffee breaks!

### Increase the font size on your devices

A lot of what we do on our screens involves reading. Almost every digital device today has settings that allow you to adjust font size. Larger font size is essential to ensure that all the other measures you take for protecting your eyes work together in harmony. This helps you relax your eyesight and reduce the strain.

Techlicious' guide on how to increase text size on phones, tablets and computers is a handy read for this purpose.

### Use The 20-20-20 rule



Here's a recommendation straight from the ophthalmologist's office! You must be wondering, what is the 20-20-20 rule? It recommends that digital screen users divert their attention from screens every 20 minutes and look at objects 20 feet away for 20 seconds. This one really works and is

advised as an add-on even when you wear computer eyeglasses and switch the night mode on in your devices. Download the Eye Care 20 20 20 app, it automates the process for you when you are working or watching something and makes it super easy to follow this useful tip.

Balancing work, entertainment and social life are essential. However, it's equally important, if not more, to take care of our health. Luckily, these simple hacks can help us all effectively combat the negative effects of increased screen exposure. Go on, give your eyes a better chance to last in the long run.

## TRENDBLAZER



### JOINING A SELECT LIST: VIDYUT

Actor VIDYUT JAMMAL has signed with the reputed Hollywood talent management agency Wonder Street, known to represent international action heroes such as Tony Jaa, Michael Jaa White and Dolph Lundgren.

"I'm excited to be associated with some of the hardest working people of Hollywood," Vidyut said, of his new association.

### fairtalk



"Yes. I truly believe in the power and magic of India, its culture, especially its music and instruments that so frequently end up being lost in this new digital age. It is our responsibility as representatives to keep this magic alive and represent this richness to the world and bring India on the world map."

### dailytalk



"*Sherni* was a difficult film to score because of the complex inter-sections in the story. I felt safe with Naren Chandavarkar and Benedict Taylor because I knew they would put the story and the theme first. They have the sensitivity and depth to understand a layered narrative."

### JUST SOME TOUGH LOVE: DIESEL

Actor VIN DIESEL has spoken out about the reported feud between him and Dwayne Johnson.

The subject came to light in the July/August 2021 issue of *Men's Health* magazine, where Diesel opened up about Dwayne's involvement in the *Fast & Furious* franchise.

He said, "The role played by Johnson was a tough one to embody. I had a lot of tough love for him to get the perfect performance."



# THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Union Cabinet Minister for Education, Government of India, Dr RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK says that *YUVA* will encourage a stream of authors who can write on a spectrum of subjects to promote Indian heritage, culture and knowledge

## What is the genesis of the YUVA: Prime Minister's Scheme For Mentoring Young Authors?

The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, in his *Mann Ki Baat*, on January 31, called upon 'youngsters to write about our freedom fighters, events associated with them and tales of valour during freedom struggle from their areas'. That provided us with the vision to launch the first-ever multi-lingual authors' mentorship scheme at the national level to provide a platform to the young writers to pen their thoughts on various known and unknown facets of the National Movement as part of the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* programmes.

## What are the main salient features of the scheme?

Any young and budding writer below the age of 30 years (as of June 1, 2021) is eligible to participate in the ongoing 'all India contest'. It will end on July 31. The contestants can send their entry in any of the 22 languages listed in the 8th schedule of the Constitution and English, provided their entry in any way relates to the National Movement. They need to send their entry in a maximum of 5,000 words, and if selected, through a well-structured Mentorship programme, the scripts will be developed by the authors into a full-fledged book. A total of 75 authors will be selected under the scheme, and on selection, they will be offered a scholarship of ₹50,000 per month for six months. Moreover, the National Book Trust, India, which is the Implementing Agency for the Scheme, will be publishing the books, and would also offer royalties to the authors, in original language as well as possible translated editions, as per its norms. So, the scheme is structured to provide a 360-degree exposure to the young authors to



the exciting world of writing, creating, ideating, editing, publishing, interaction with the national and internationally acclaimed authors, and seeks to open a door to a world of creative opportunities.

## This type of scheme has not been attempted on a national scale before. How does it aim to encourage authorship and the writing aspirations of the Indian youth?

A nation's literature is an important way to chronicle a nation's journey through time. This scheme, in under-

standing the power of words, aims to encourage young writers to hone their craft so that they can optimise their potential and become thought leaders of the future. It aims to encourage authorship and the writing aspirations of the Indian youth by providing them an opportunity to present their work before the reading masses.

## Since you are also an acclaimed author, how do you see the scheme?

As an author myself, I can attest to the fact that becoming a writer is a tough

process as it demands a lot of time and effort. This is even more so when there is a dearth of available opportunities that can acknowledge and hone raw talent. At the time when I started writing, there was no easy way to publish written work. It is with the knowledge that young writers across India face similar challenges, that we have introduced this scheme — to make authorship more accessible and to create a platform that many writers like myself did not get in the past.

## How do you think this scheme will help young authors in the future?

I believe that this scheme will allow many young writers to publish their work and that I, in turn, will inspire them to work further on their writing skills. I think a majority of the young authors selected through this scheme will go on to inculcate a great literary acumen and will become prolific writers of the future. They will definitely put India on the literary map of the world and one or more of them might even win international awards like the Nobel Prize in Literature. I say so because I believe that the young writers of India are capable of both writings about history and creating history.

## The core of the YUVA theme is India@75. What is the vision behind it?

The scheme is an opportunity for the youth to display their work on a prestigious platform, but it is simultaneously a chance for them to delve into the defining period of India's history. Since proficient writing requires voracious reading, this theme of the National Movement will encourage the young authors to learn about the freedom struggle, its celebrated heroes and their sacrifices for the nation. In the process, they might encounter unsung heroes, whose stories are yet to be written and they might write

these stories themselves. So the idea is to gift the youth the knowledge of their country's past in a way that also allows them to effectively contribute to it — by documenting history through their writing.

## A crucial facet of the PM's YUVA scheme is its multilingual submissions. Can you highlight this aspect?

India's societal landscape is recognised the world over for its opulent diversity with regard to culture, traditions and value systems. But our country is especially well-known for its multi-linguistic character because many languages harmoniously coexist to create a varied linguistic panorama. And as each language is unique in its mode of description and vocabulary, we want to ensure that the perspectives and stories from across the country's multi-lingual fabric are portrayed in this scheme to create a rich narrative of India, its glorious past and its illustrious future. This will promote a much better understanding among various linguistic factions in contemporary times.

## The scheme also includes NRI(s)/PIO(s). What is the idea behind this?

The scheme wants to give all people, who are rooted in India's culture and ethnic background, a chance to write about the country's national movement, its heroes and its history in general. And to ensure that Indians from across the world can participate and express their view about the country, this scheme has allowed submissions from PIO(s)/NRI(s). We should also never forget the crucial role played by the Indian diaspora community in furthering the cause and ideals of the national movement and identity.



## DISABLED RECEIVE AID

**A** *Samajik Adhikarita Shivir* for distribution of aids and assistive devices to divyangjan under the ADIP Scheme of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, was organised by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) in association with ALIMCO and District Administration Jamnagar at Dhanwantari Auditorium, near DKV Circle, Jamnagar, Gujarat.

A total of 6,225 aids and assistive devices valued at ₹3.57 crore were distributed free of cost to 3,805 divyangjan at Block/Panchayat levels by following the SOP prepared by the department because of the pandemic.

Speaking on the occasion, Vijay Rupani, Chief Minister, Gujarat, said, "The society which does not care about divyangjan is itself a disabled society. Under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the central government has implemented various welfare schemes in the interest of the country. In 2016, the 'Right To Person With Disability Act' was brought under the leadership of the PM, which not only provides more security but also ensures and protects the fundamental rights of the person with disabilities across the nation."

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot, said, "The Central government has released around 8.06 crore funds in Gujarat under scholarship program benefiting 2,808 beneficiaries. Around 709 railway stations, 10,175 bus stops and 683 websites have been covered under Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan. Looking at the interest in sports among the divyangjan of the country and their good performance in Paralympics, the Ministry has decided to establish five Divyangta Khel Kendra in different parts of the country."

Addressing the occasion, Anjali Bhawra, Secretary, DEPwD, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, elaborated on the details of the schemes. She said that the government has taken several steps for employing divyangjan and skill training programmes are being conducted to empower them.

The high-end products which are to be distributed in the camp include 220 battery-operated motorised tricycles, 665 tricycles, 385 wheelchairs, 998 crutches, 621 walking sticks, 60 rollers, 185 smartphones, 437 smart cane, 40 daisy player, 24 braille kit, six braille cane, 856 MSIED kit, 165 ADL kit (for leprosy), 606 hearing aids, 765 artificial limbs.

Anjali Bhawra, Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Person with Disability (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, Dr Prabodh Seth, Joint Secretary, DEPwD, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, D R Sarin, CMD ALIMCO were present virtually and Ravi Shankar, Collector, Jamnagar, also attended the function 'in person'.

## Best Indian companies to work

### SYNCHRONY BAGS 5TH PLACE

Synchrony, a consumer financial services company, has been ranked 5th among India's Best Companies to Work for in 2021 by the Great Place to Work Institute (GPTW). This recognition highlights Synchrony's efforts to create an environment that is caring, inclusive, collaborative, and innovative despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. Synchrony has earned the coveted recognition for four consecutive years and the rank has gone up to 5th this year from 27th last year.

The company has more than 120 people with disabilities and more than 42 per cent women employees. In the face of the unprecedented pandemic, the company prioritised the health, safety, and wellness of employees, and quickly moved its workforce home. The company provided employees with assistance for the set-up of ergonomic office

space at home along with a comprehensive benefits programme. It also helped employees balance the new demands of work and life and stay motivated and focused through virtual engagement activities.

Speaking on the occasion, Andy Ponneri, Senior Vice President and Business Leader, Synchrony India, said, "Being recognised as a Great Place to Work, especially in this challenging year, further demonstrates our commitment to being a company that puts people first and maintains a high-trust culture with a positive and empowering working environment. At Synchrony, our employees are our greatest asset and we are committed to supporting their wellbeing and success."

Recognising employees' continued desire to help others, Synchrony also launched its 'Gear Up Campaign', which leveraged employee, partner, and cardholder networks to make and distribute protective gear such as masks and face shields. Synchrony's Diversity Networks further promote an inclusive culture that celebrates individuality and fosters collaboration.

### POWERGRID MAKES IT

The Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, has again been recognised as a 'Great Place to Work

by the Great Place to Work Institute (GPTW), which is a gold standard for workplace culture assessment. It has been ranked 68 in the largest workplace culture study in the country through an objective and rigorous workplace culture assessment process.

POWERGRID has also won the recognition of being India's Best Employers in the Nation-Builders 2021 category. Figuring consistently in GPTW's Best Workplaces List is a testimony of its sound human resource management policies and employee-friendly approach.

Earlier, POWERGRID has also been recognised in the coveted Forbes Global Best Employers List.

## India organises summit on green hydrogen initiatives

India hosted a two-day summit on Green Hydrogen initiatives involving the BRICS nations. The event was anchored by NTPC Ltd. The virtual summit brought the best brains, policymakers and major stakeholders from the BRICS nations deliberating and discussing at length the future of hydrogen

in the energy mix. As the world rapidly moves to decarbonise the entire energy system, hydrogen is poised to play a vital role and build on the rapid scale-up of renewable resources across the world. Hydrogen, when produced by electrolysis, using renewable energy, is known as 'green

hydrogen'. It has no carbon footprint. This gives hydrogen the edge over other fuels to unlock various avenues of green usage. The summit aimed to address the challenges in terms of technology, efficiency, financial viability and scaling up. Green hydrogen blending up to 10 per cent may be adopted in CGD net-

works to gain widespread acceptance. Further scaling up with greening of hard to abate sectors (like steel and cement) through hydrogen is to be explored. Many countries have brought out their strategies and defined targets and roadmaps based on their resources and strengths.

## International Yoga Day celebration



### VIT-AP UNIVERSITY

International Yoga Day celebrations were held virtually on June 21 at VIT-AP University. Durga Shaktamma and Dandu Srinivasa Raju (Senior Faculties, Art of Living), Dr Uma Valli (Ayurvedic Physicians), Dr Agam Das Goswami (Faculty, VIT-AP University) attended as Resource Person for this celebration.

Dr Uma explained the importance of Ayurvedic treatments. The Vice Chancellor of VIT-AP University, Dr S V Kota Reddy, Registrar Dr CLV Sivakumar, Live Club Coordinator, Dr CH Deepak, students, teachers and staff participated in the celebrations. SPMCIL

Tripti Patra Ghosh, chairman and MD, SPMCIL, highlighted the impor-

**'The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually on 21 June since 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014'**

tant developments of modern yoga in her inaugural address during the online camp organised at the corporate office of SPMCIL. She urged to adopt yoga regularly in daily life.

Sunil Kumar Sinha, Director (HR) and Ajay Agarwal, Director (Finance) were also present online. Yoga sessions and various programmes were also organised in all the units of the SPM-CIL.

### SRM INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Over 100 students and staff of SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) participated in the virtual lecture-demonstration, on yoga for immunity and wellness, held on the occasion

of International Yoga Day. A live demonstration was conducted by a yoga scholar from S-VYASA, Dr Rakshita Nayak.

SRM MCH & RC's Pro Vice Chancellor (Medical and Health Sciences) Lt Col Dr A Ravikumar said, "Self-discipline can help master the world, not in terms of being a ruler but understanding the meaning of life and knowing how to lead a healthy life. Good health should consist of being mentally, physically, and spiritually well. If one has a calm mind, the body will also be calm. This is what yoga teaches us — to control our body, mind and spirit."

The vote of thanks was presented by SRM MCH & RC's Dean (School of Public Health), Dr Padma Venkat



Dr Vinay Sahasrabudhe, President, ICCR, Ministry of External Affairs and Member of Parliament, releases a new edition of Gagananchal in New Delhi. Chief Editor of Laghu Udyog Samachar, GOI, Harendra Pratap and Editor of Gagananchal, GOI, Dr Ashish Kandhway and professor of Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Dr Umapati Dikshit were also present.

## LIC crosses milestone

LIC of India crossed another milestone by embarking upon a new centralised web-based workflow-based IT platform for its Group Business operations. The Chairman of LIC of India, M R Kumar, inaugurated the 'Go Live' project, 'e-PGS', in a formal ceremony in the presence of Managing Directors Vipin Anand, Mukesh Gupta, Raj Kumar and S Mohanty. The inaugural ceremony was joined online from 204 locations across the entire country by all the zonal managers, executive directors in charge of central office departments, regional managers, unit heads and all employees of the Group Business Vertical of LIC of India.

The new technology platform is designed to provide centralised collection and payment accounting with a high level of bank integration through the host to host connectivity and provide very innovative features of seamless and integrated banking with automatic reconciliations. The new system, e-PGS, is capable of providing comprehensive self-servicing capabilities through a customer portal where corporate customers will be able to view their data, initiate actionable processes, lodge and track claims.

Some of the services will be launched on the green channel with end-to-end processing at the customer level itself without manual intervention

from the Insurer's Office. All the features and services will be launched in a phased manner spread over the next three months.

Vipin Anand, MD of LIC, informed that the new technology platform is designed to cater to the expectations of technology-intensive corporate customers and will change the face of customer service on a group business platform. The new system is capable of high-level integration with customers' technology systems for seamless transfer of data and services. LIC will soon launch a customer awareness campaign for new IT system capabilities so that the benefits can be reaped by all customers to save time and energy.

K S Nagnyal, Executive Director for Group Business informed that the Group Business Vertical of the corporation, which accounts for 77.69 per cent share of group business of the Life Insurance industry, will leverage the new IT platform for enhancing the customer experience at a world-class level and the same will support in marketing and servicing of group business operations. The Group Business vertical of LIC specially caters to various term insurance needs and retirement solutions for employers on the group platform. It is felt that the launch of a new IT platform marks the beginning of a new era in customer servicing for group business.



# STAR WARS



With just two goals scored, England are the lowest-scoring side to ever top a group at a Euros but their defence is yet to be breached

## JOB DONE FOR ENGLAND

AFP ■ LONDON

Raheem Sterling scored the only goal as England found an attacking spark to beat the Czech Republic 1-0 at Wembley on Tuesday and clinch top spot in Group D at Euro 2020.

The Manchester City forward, who kept his place alongside Harry Kane in a rejigged attack also featuring Jack Grealish and Bukayo Saka, settled fans' nerves with an early headed goal, which ultimately proved decisive.

The result means Gareth Southgate's side finish top of their group with seven points while Croatia are second with



Raheem Sterling (10) scores England's opening goal against Czech Republic on Tuesday

@England

four points. The Czech Republic will join them in the last 16 as one of the best third-placed teams.

With just two goals scored, England are the lowest-scoring side to ever finish top of a group at a European Championship but their defence is yet to be breached.

England now have the dubious privilege of a potential match-up against world champions France, holders Portugal or Germany but will have home advantage on June 29.

"We are not fluent but we have moments where we look a good side," Southgate told ITV.

"Different sorts of tests. All of our next opponents will be different games. There is a lot of good things we are doing. We are getting minutes for a lot of the players. Ninety minutes for Harry Maguire was important tonight, Jordan Henderson getting 45 minutes is a step forward. A lot of positives."

### GREALISH STARTS

There was clamour before the match for Aston Villa captain Grealish to start to shake up a blunt attack that produced an insipid display in the 0-0 draw against Scotland.

Southgate obliged, also

bringing in Saka among four changes to his side.

Chelsea midfielder Mason Mount was unavailable as he was isolating due to coronavirus protocols while Southgate opted to leave Phil Foden out to prevent the risk of a suspension.

Manchester United defender Eric Semaia made his first appearance of Euro 2020 alongside John Stones in central defence.

England started brightly in the evening sunshine and Sterling went agonisingly close in just the second minute but could only watch as his deft chip over the goalkeeper come back

off the post after he collected a raking pass from Luke Shaw.

As chants of "Football's Coming Home" rang around the stadium, captain Kane — heavily criticised for his toothless performances in the tournament so far — shot from distance and Grealish let fly.

England broke the deadlock in the 12th minute, when Grealish, on the left side of the penalty area, lifted the ball to the back post, where Sterling headed in for his second goal of Euro 2020.

Grealish and Man-Of-The-Match Saka were inventive and direct on either side of Kane, showing a willingness to run at their opponents.

Kane went close midway through the first half, forcing a fine left-handed save from Tomas Vaclik and thumping the ground in frustration.

But the Czechs carried a threat of their own on their forays forward, growing in menace as the half wore on.

Tomas Holes forced a flying save from England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford just before the half-hour and Tomas Soucek fired wide of the left post.

Liverpool midfielder Henderson replaced Declan Rice at half-time and the Czechs made their own change, bringing on Petr Sevcik for Jakub Jankto.

The sides were evenly matched in the second half, with the reduced crowd making an impressive noise in the cavernous stadium.

Both sides made further changes as the match wore on and the intensity dipped, with fans having to wait until the 83rd minute for the first attempt at goal in the second half.

Henderson briefly thought he had scored his first England goal late on but it was ruled out for offside.



Croatia captain Luka Modric, center, celebrates after scoring his side's second goal against Scotland

AP

## Modric breaks Scotland hearts

AFP ■ GLASGOW

Scotland's shot at reaching the knockout stage of a major tournament for the first time were ended in a 3-1 defeat to a Luka Modric-inspired Croatia at Hampden Park on Tuesday that took the World Cup runners-up into the last 16 of Euro 2020.

After ending a 23-year wait just to qualify for a major tournament, another historic feat was beyond Steve Clarke's men who were undone by a moment of magic from Modric.

Callum McGregor cancelled out Nikola Vlasic's early opener to give the hosts hope heading into half-time.

But Modric showed the class that made him the man to break Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo's grip on the Ballon d'Or in 2018, a stunning strike with the outside of his foot just after the hour mark restoring Croatia's lead.

"No one is sure how Luka manages that," Croatia boss

Zlatko Dalic said of the 35-year-old.

"We expect that Luka will go down, lose his strength, but he is the force that pulls the whole team. Anything I would say about Luka would not be sufficient. I'm very proud to have such a player as part of our team."

Ivan Perisic's header rubbed salt into Scottish wounds 13 minutes from time as Croatia pipped the Czech Republic to second place in Group D behind England.

Zlatko Dalic's side will face the runner-up from Group E, featuring Spain, Sweden, Slovakia and Poland, in Copenhagen next Monday.

Scotland's preparation had been blighted by the loss of Billy Gilmour to a positive test for coronavirus after the 20-year-old midfielder had shone on his first international start in 0-0 draw against England on Friday.

But Clarke's squad escaped without any other players being

forced to isolate as close contacts and, roared on by 12,000 fans inside Hampden, started on the front foot.

Che Adams was inches away from connecting with John McGinn's dangerous cross that Dominik Livakovic did well to turn behind for a corner.

Croatia had barely threatened before they went in front on 17 minutes.

Perisic headed down a lofted ball into the box and Vlasic found space between three Scotland defenders to fire low into the corner.

Croatia then had the hosts chasing shadows for 10 minutes as the midfield maestros of Modric, Marcelo Brozovic and Mateo Kovacic took control of the game.

"Modric was incredible," said Arsenal defender Kieran Tierney. "I think tonight was a big learning curve for us all. They've been there before, the quality they showed it was hard for us to get going."



## Lahiri wasn't expecting to qualify for Olympics

**Cromwell:** Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri says he wasn't expecting to qualify for the Olympics given his below par performance this year but now wants to make it count by returning with a medal from the Tokyo Games.

Lahiri on Tuesday made the cut for the Olympics at the 60th spot, the last quota available as per the International Golf Federation rankings.

"It was a big surprise, I wasn't expecting it," said Lahiri, who is preparing for this week's PGA TOUR stop at the Travelers Championship at TPC River Highlands, Connecticut.

"Even though I've earned it, I don't feel like I've really earned it as I know how far below my potential I've played this year. It's a gift and an opportunity, so why would I throw it away?"

India was eligible for one spot and Lahiri qualified being the highest-placed golfer from

the country at the 340th position.

"I know what it is to be an Olympian as I've done it before (in Rio) and I don't want to be just an Olympian. I want to win a medal, I want to do something that makes a difference," said the 33-year-old.

"I know winning a PGA TOUR event will do that but winning a medal would even do more. I do have a certain responsibility towards the game and my country."

The former Asian No 1 finished a lowly 57th in Rio while playing with an injury. But recently, there have been signs of some good form returning following a recent T-25 finish at the Palmetto Championship at Congaree.

That has made him optimistic of his chances at the Olympics to be held at the Kasumigasaki Country Club from July 29 to August 1. **PTI**

## Jadeja becomes No.1 Test all-rounder



**New Delhi:** India's Ravindra Jadeja on Wednesday dislodged West Indian Jason Holder as the world's top all-rounder in the latest ICC Test rankings.

Jadeja is two points ahead of Holder (384) while England all-rounder Ben Stokes is third on 377 points. Another Indian, Ravichandran Ashwin is at fourth with 353 points, followed by Shakib Al Hasan of Bangladesh (338).

Ashwin remained at second spot in the bowlers' rankings on 850 points, below Pat Cummins (908) of Australia. Tim Southee (830) of New Zealand is third.

Among the batsmen, there was no change in top-five with Indian captain Virat Kohli static at fourth on 814. Steve Smith of Australia continued to be the top batsman on 891 points, followed by Kane Williamson (886) of New Zealand and Marnus Labuschagne (878) of Australia.

England captain Joe Root (797) is at number five, followed by the Indian pair of Rishabh Pant and Rohit Sharma at joint at sixth on 747 points. **PTI**

# Kiwis win World Test Championship

AGENCIES ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Ross Taylor and Kane Williamson chased down the total of 139 set up by India on the Reserve Day as New Zealand lifted the inaugural World Test Championship trophy.

Two years on from their agonising Super Over loss to England in the 50-over World Cup final at Lord's, New Zealand's men claimed their first major global title.

Set a victory target of just 139 in 53 overs, New Zealand finished on 140-2 with more than seven overs left after the match was extended into the reserve sixth day after two days' play were completely washed out.

Earlier, India had another batting disaster with only 170 runs in their second innings leaving New Zealand with a target that they are expected to chase. Rishabh Pant lived by the sword and died by it while his India seniors found it difficult to survive against a probing New Zealand attack, which left its batsmen with a gettable 139-run target to win.

At tea, New Zealand were 19 for no loss with 120 runs to get in 45 overs in the final session.

If New Zealand manage to win it with a session left, they would certainly be considered deserving winners, being able to



force a result despite two full days being lost due to rain.

It was one of the worst batting performances on a good track with sun beating down and the Indian batsmen never found the going get easier.

Kane Williamson is probably one of the few captains who have now got Indian team out for less than 250 in six consecutive innings, a testimony to his brilliant cricketing acumen and near perfect execution by his bowlers.

Tim Southee (4/48) did the

early damage with his swing bowling, Neil Wagner (1/44) bowled those hard 'rib cage' overs coming round the stumps and Trent Boult (3/44) with his ability to bring it back into the left-hander made it for a brilliant few hours of Test cricket.

And then, India's nemesis Kyle Jamieson (2/30), who again got his 'bunny' Virat Kohli, third time in three Tests and twice in one to make it an icing on the cake.

Rishabh Pant fought for two and half hours for his 41 but

it was more intent and less content as a cavalier devil may care approach didn't get him too many runs. The catch that Henry Nicholls took while running backwards was as good as one would witness at this level.

Pant's dismissal did hamper India's chances but before that an inspirational piece of captaincy from Williamson left an indelible mark.

He got Wagner to come round that wicket to Jadeja and the left-arm 'pounder' went wide enough to nearly cut the

side crease and angled one for Jadeja to nick it behind the stumps. Before that delivery, he had bowled short balls pegging the batsmen on backfoot and then ensured that his feet doesn't move to the pitch of the ball.

However Pant's approach of dealing with the New Zealand attack was better than being in the shell, something that did more harm than good for Cheteshwar Pujara (15 off 80 balls).

Before Pujara, the extra bounce outside the off-stump had the Indian skipper feeling for it and BJ Watling got the easiest of catches in his final game for Black Caps.

Pujara, whose abilities of grinding out bowlers has reached mythical proportions and once again he was never looking to score. The pressure was always there and Jamieson fired one in with the angle. Pujara wanted to remove his bat but it seemed the ball tailed him and Taylor got a easy catch.

Ajinkya Rahane (15 off 40 balls) also didn't last long and as it has happened with India often, their tail didn't wag save Mohammed Shami (13), who sacked three fours before Williamson cleverly deployed a 'fly third-man' (neither short third-man nor traditional third man) for a slash over slips which promptly landed in the fielder's palms.

## Haryana to give ₹6 cr to Tokyo Gold winner

**Chandigarh:** Haryana government on Wednesday announced that sportspersons from the state who win Gold medal in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics would be given a cash amount of ₹6 crore.

The state Government will give the Silver winners ₹4 crore while the Bronze medalists will get ₹2.50 crore.

The state sports minister Sandeep Singh announced this while interacting with Olympic medallists on the occasion of International Olympic Day here, along with Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar.

Sandeep also said that 30 players taking part in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics have been provided ₹5 lakh each as preparation amount.

The Chief Minister said medal winners at the International events will be given Government jobs to encourage youngsters to take up to sports, a state Government statement said. **PTI**

## Call off Ashes if families can't accompany players: Vaughan

PTI ■ LONDON

Former England skipper Michael Vaughan believes the iconic Ashes series should be cancelled if families are not allowed to travel with the players for the four-month long tour of Australia due to strict Covid-19 protocols.

According to a report in the UK media, there is still uncertainty whether families of the visiting England players will be permitted to stay with them during the Ashes, beginning on December 8.

"Read reports today that England cricketers may not be able to have family members with them down under this winter. Quite simply if they can't they should call the Ashes off. 4 months away from your family is totally unacceptable. #Ashes," Vaughan wrote on his Twitter handle.

The report also drew a sharp response from former England captain Kevin Pietersen, who feels players



shouldn't be criticised if they decide to pull out of the series due to such restrictions.

"Any ENG player that pulls out of this Ashes, if they seriously can't see their families for FOUR MONTHS, has my full backing. Families are the most important part of a players make up. And even more so in the current climate! FOUR MONTHS with no family on Ashes Tour?," he tweeted.

Cricket Australia, however, on Wednesday said that a solution can be worked out and the tournament is still many months away.

"It's only June and England are not due to arrive until November," a CA spokeswoman told the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

"We'll be going through the same process we did with India last summer."

England cricketers will not have their families with them for the upcoming tours of Bangladesh and Pakistan starting in September, before they participate in the T20 World Cup campaign from October.

## Morgan insists historic tweets 'taken out of context'

**London:** Dismissing accusations of racism against him, England's World Cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan said the historical tweets, allegedly mocking Indians, were "taken out of context."

The English cricket system was shaken earlier this month after pacer Ollie Robinson was waled by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) for his racist and sexist tweets dating back to 2012-13.

Soon after, posts, in which Morgan and wicketkeeper batsman Jos Buttler used the word

'sir' to mock the Indians, started doing the rounds on social media.

"I don't really reflect on it a lot," Morgan told reporters ahead of England's white-ball series against Sri Lanka in Cardiff on Wednesday.

"If I call somebody 'sir' on social media, or anywhere around the world, it's a sign of admiration and respect."

"If that's taken out of context there's nothing I can control or do about it. So I haven't actually looked into it," he added. **PTI**

## Pandemic Games will show 'true Olympic values': Tokyo 2020 chief

AFP ■ TOKYO

The stripped-back Tokyo Games, held despite the ongoing pandemic, will highlight the Olympics' true values, Tokyo 2020 chief Seiko Hashimoto said as organisers mark a month to go.

The Games will be unlike any other, with overseas fans banned and athletes kept away from the public. Competitors have had to leave their families behind and spectators will be capped at 10,000 people.

But former Olympian Hashimoto said the restrictions were a chance to look beyond the usual pomp and celebration that accompany the Games, and to focus on the sport.

"In recent years when I was participating as an athlete, there were concerns that this (event) has become so huge," she told reporters. "The Games tended to end with extreme excitement,



IOC Vice President John Coates, second right, and Tokyo 2020 Olympics Organizing Committee President Seiko Hashimoto, right, listen to a brief as they inspect one of the Olympics venues in Tokyo

AP

but because of that the original meaning and values... were not fully communicated," she added.

"This time, I feel that the true values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games are finally being discussed."

Hashimoto is a seven-time Olympian who competed at

both summer and winter Games, in speed skating and as a sprint cyclist.

She came to office after her predecessor, former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, resigned over a sexism row after he said women speak too much in meetings.