

OPINION 8
WHEN A PM'S CONCEIT
DRAGGED DOWN INDIA

WORLD 11
DELTA VARIANT NOW REPORTED
IN 85 COUNTRIES GLOBALLY: WHO

SPORT 14
RONALDO EQUALS ALI DAEI'S
INTERNATIONAL GOAL RECORD

LUCKNOW, FRIDAY JUNE 25 2021; PAGES 14 33



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Govt ready for statehood, but faces heat on Art 370

Polls soon after delimitation, assures PM at all-party meet

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday assured the key political voices from Jammu & Kashmir that the Centre was committed to holding elections "soon after the completion of the ongoing delimitation process" even as most of the leaders demanded restoration of the statehood and slammed scrapping of Article 370.

Talking after the meeting, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the Centre was committed to granting statehood to the J&K.

"We are committed to ensure all round development of J&K. The future of J&K was discussed and the delimitation exercise and peaceful elections are important milestones in restoring statehood as promised in Parliament," Shah tweeted soon after the meeting.

Modi stressed in the meet-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an all-party meeting with various political leaders from Jammu & Kashmir, in Delhi PTI

ing that holding Assembly elections, just like the "successful conduct" of the District Development Council polls, is a "priority" and that the polls can happen soon after the delimitation exercise.

According to sources, Modi assured statehood but sought cooperation from parties in the delimitation exercise. People Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti had reservations towards the delimitation process.

The demand for the

restoration of Article 370 was raised by the main leaders of Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), but it was rejected by Modi saying the step has brought forth peace and reduced corruption in the erstwhile State.

The PM stressed that an atmosphere of safety and security needs to be ensured for all sections of society in J&K.

Modi said he wanted to remove "Dilli ki Duri" as well as "Dil Ki Duri" (distance from Delhi as well as distance of

heart) and that wanted to call this meet last year itself but the Covid-19 pandemic did not allow it.

National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah said "it was a good beginning" though he said it was "pointless to expect the Modi Government to restore Article 370."

Abdullah said it took the BJP 70 years to take away Article 370 but "we will take it back in time. We are for a long haul."

Continued on Page 11

House panel summons FB over citizens' rights

Google also asked to appear on June 29 to answer on misuse of social media platform

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After summoning a microblogging platform Twitter, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information and Technology led by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has asked Facebook and Google to appear before them on June 29 on the subject of "safeguarding citizen rights" and misuse of social media/news platforms.

These developments come against the backdrop of a long standoff between the Indian Government and social media platforms like Facebook's WhatsApp regarding the implementation of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021.

Officials said that the agenda of the meeting is to hear the views of representatives of Facebook India and Google India on the subject "safeguarding citizen rights and prevention of misuse of social/online news media platforms, including special emphasis on women security in the digital space." The meeting



will be held in the Main Committee Room of the Parliament House Annexe at 4 pm. Further, representatives of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology will present evidence on the same subject on July 6.

WhatsApp has challenged in the Delhi High Court the new IT rules for social media intermediaries requiring the messaging app to trace chats and make provisions to identify the first originator of information, saying they violate the right to privacy and are unconstitutional. The Facebook owned company further said the requirement of intermedi-

aries enabling the identification of the first originator of information in India upon Government or court order puts end-to-end encryption and its benefits "at risk".

The committee had previously summoned Twitter to appear before them on the subject of "safeguarding citizen rights" on June 18. Twitter was at the receiving end of prolonged questioning by members of the Standing Committee on Information and Technology on non-compliance of new IT rules, usage of manipulated media tag and fact checking.

Continued on Page 11

Twitter India MD gets K'taka HC breather against Gzb cops

PTI ■ BENGALURU/GHAZIABAD

Twitter India's Head Manish Maheshwari, who was summoned by the Ghaziabad police in connection with a probe related to the assault of an elderly Muslim man there recently, did not appear before them as the Karnataka High Court restrained police from initiating coercive action against him.

In his interim order, the single bench of Justice G Narendar said, "If police desire to examine the petitioner (Manish Maheshwari), they may do so by virtual mode."

"If the matter requires consideration, we list it on June 29. In the meanwhile restraining the respondents from initiating any coercive action against the petitioner," the court maintained.

"It is case of petitioner that he has replied to notice under Section 160 of CrPC to join through virtual mode. The respondent (Ghaziabad police) taking objection to the request has turned around and issued notice under Section 41(A) virtually putting him in shoes of accused," the high court observed.

Continued on Page 11

Felt like Maharaja, says lone flyer on AI flight to Dubai

New Delhi: A UAE-based Indian businessman who travelled from Amritsar to Dubai as the sole passenger on the Air India international flight said he felt like a "Maharaja".

The businessman and philanthropist SP Singh Oberoi who took the three-hour flight on Wednesday found that he was the only passenger in the aircraft.

"I took my flight from Amritsar to Dubai by Air India (AI-929) on June 23 around 4 am. I was very lucky to be the only passenger on the entire flight. I feel like a Maharaja during my travel," he told ANI.

Oberoi who holds a ten-year golden visa and operates a business in Dubai said that when he bought the ticket for the Air India flight dirham 750, he never thought that he will have experience of flying in a chartered plane.

"I was treated very well by the entire crew and was pho-



tographed in an empty plane, I took pictures with the crew and pilots of the aircraft," Oberoi said, recounting his memories from around a three-hour flight to Dubai.

Without any co-passengers, Oberoi said he found the journey extremely boring and he even resorted to counting the number of seats and windows of the Airbus 320 aircraft to pass time.

Continued on Page 11

Ex-DGP, former IB Dy Director booked for fake ISRO spy case

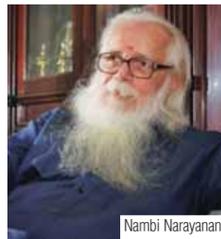
Scientist who had an unceremonious exit was absolved of charges later

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The infamous ISRO spy case that created a sensation way back in 1994 is back in the limelight as the CBI filed an FIR in a Thiruvananthapuram court on Thursday about the conspiracy angle behind the episode.

Kerala's former director general of police Siby Mathews, then Deputy Director of Intelligence Bureau RB Sreekumar and a host of junior level police officers figure as accused in the FIR, according to sources in the CBI.

The ISRO spy case centred round allegations made by a section of the media in Kerala that sensitive documents pertaining to the development of cryogenic engine used to power



Nambi Narayanan

space launch vehicles meant for deploying heavy communication and earth observation satellites were handed over to two Maldivian women, Mariam Rasheeda and Fauzia Hassan, by space scientists Nambi Narayanan and D Sasikumaran.

Narayanan, Sasikumaran and the two Maldivian women (one of whom was employed in the Maldives Army) were arrested along with some persons in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh with whom the women had some kind of liaisons.

Though the local police probed the case initially, they could not make any breakthrough and hence the enquiry was handed over to the CBI. Nambi Narayanan and Sasikumaran were interrogated and tortured by the Kerala Police and the IB. The CBI found that there was no spying and directed a thorough probe into the conspiracy behind the case which saw both Narayanan and Sasikumaran, two engineers who pioneered the cryogenic technology, making an unceremonious exit from the ISRO.

The case also saw then Chief Minister K Karunanakaran losing his job following allegations that an IPS officer Raman Srivastava, a close associate of the former, was also involved in the case.

After the conclusion of the CBI probe, Cheria Philip, considered as an acolyte of then Chief Minister AK Antony, wrote articles that the spy case was a cock and bull story.

Continued on Page 11

4 students from Kargil held for Israel embassy blast conspiracy

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested four students from Ladakh's Kargil area in connection with the Israel Embassy blast case in the national Capital.

The accused persons have been identified as Nazir Hussain (26), Zulfikar Ali Wazir (25), Aiaz Hussain (28) and Muzammil Hussain (25), all residents of village Thang in district Kargil.

"In a joint operation with a Central intelligence agency and Kargil Police, the Special Cell of Delhi Police has detained four persons from Kargil in connection with conspiracy to plan and execute terror activities in the national Capital," said Chinmoy Biswal, the spokesperson of Delhi Police.

Continued on Page 11

Eateries bear brunt of students' exodus

CHANDAN PRAKASH ■ NEW DELHI

Even after the lifting of the Covid lockdown in Delhi, dhaba owners in areas around the north campus of the Delhi University are experiencing around 70 per cent less business due to the mass exodus of students from the areas.

Areas such as Mukherjee Nagar, Vijay Nagar, Nehru Vihar, Gandhi Vihar, Indra Vihar, Outram Lane, etc, are home to thousands of students preparing for civil services and other competitive exams but their mass exodus ahead of Covid-19 related lockdown has had debilitating economic impact on eateries business, including home delivery.

Kuldeep Bhatiya, who runs Aapki Apni Rasoi at Nehru Vihar for over 20 years, said he had never experienced such a low footfall. "When we reopened dhabas after lockdown relaxation was announced, only a few customers visited and ordered food for the week. It gathered

pace with time but still only 30 per cent of students are coming to have food here compared to the time before lockdown," he said.

Many dhabas owners have reduced the number of staff and some are planning to close the business. Ajay Kumar, a resident of Indra Vihar, who has

been running a dhabas at Nirankari colony for years, said 60 per cent of flats got vacant in the area after Covid-19 hit Delhi.

"The situation is still flustered as even after cases of coronavirus came down, the students are not returning at that pace. We have reduced

staff strength to four compared to nine earlier. But, still paying the remaining staff is becoming difficult as I have lost 90 per cent of the revenue. I do not know if the situation is going to be restored soon. We are frustrated and economically shattered," he said.

Similarly, the life of Binod

Gupta, who used to deliver tiffin to more than 700 flats in these areas, has come to halt as his customer base has reduced to just 80 to 90.

"The loss of customers due to the pandemic has not destroyed my income but my dream and family too. The long disturbance followed by lockdown has driven me to despair," he said.

Anahul Hasan, who started Mother's Rasoi at Wazirabad after borrowing money from friends and relatives three years back after students started shifting in the areas due to cheap rent, said he has no courage to start it afresh.

"I have shut it down days after the lockdown was imposed. We had also started a tiffin service for students but that too failed completely during the period as many students vacated their flats without paying the due. I cannot explain the suffering my family has gone through. I am selling eggs and vegetables now to feed my family," he said.



Andhra cancels Class X exams after SC sets no death condition

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hours after Supreme Court's tongue-lashing, the Andhra Pradesh Government on Saturday cancelled the AP SSC (Class X) public examinations and promoted the students in view of the Covid-19 situation. State Education Minister A Suresh said the Government took the decision to safeguard the students' health in view of the rapid spread of coronavirus.

The July 10 examinations were scheduled to be held in March but were first put off due to the impending elections to local bodies and subsequently due to the Covid-19 lockdown. As restrictions were relaxed, the Government announced the exams will be conducted from July 10, by curtailing the number of papers from 11 to six.

Continued on Page 11

Hong Kong's last pro-democracy paper sells out final edition

Hong Kong: The final edition of Hong Kong's last remaining pro-democracy paper sold out in hours on Thursday, as readers scooped up all 1 million copies of the Apple Daily, whose closure was yet another sign of China's tightening grip on the semi-autonomous city.

Across the densely populated metropolis, people lined up early in the morning to buy the paper, which in recent years has become an increasingly outspoken critic of Chinese and Hong Kong authorities' efforts to limit the freedoms found here but not in mainland China. The paper was gone from newsstands by 8:30 am.

The newspaper said it was forced to cease operations after police froze \$2.3 million of its assets, searched its office and arrested five top editors. AP Detailed report on P9

Yogi asks gram pradhans to take preventive measures

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Establishing direct communication to ensure local participation, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has written to all newly-elected gram pradhans (village heads) urging them to initiate preventive measures in view of a probable third Covid wave in the coming months. Yogi made a four-point appeal to the new rural officials, saying: "We have to save people's lives as well as their livelihood." The let-

ters were hand-delivered to the pradhans through respective district authorities.

Stating that Uttar Pradesh has been able to control the second corona wave, the chief minister asked gram pradhans to ensure proper surveillance through 'surveillance committees' that played a pivotal role in timely identification and isolation of COVID-19 patients, thwarting further spread in rural areas. He also advised the pradhans to engage in mass planta-

tion drives in respective villages.

Concerned about further corona spread in rural areas, Yogi in his letter appealed to the

Covid appropriate behaviour to prevent transmission of the virus. Written in Hindi, the chief minister said in his letter, "Dear pradhanji, I would like to

Corona Mukht Gaon."

Yogi also requested the pradhans to implement a four-pronged strategy beginning with, prevention of illness and promotion of wellness through 'sanitation' and mass-scale cleanliness campaigns, curb the spread of corona and other communicable diseases through regular sanitisation, encourage vaccination by spreading awareness and ensure timely distribution of 'special medicine kits' for children with influenza-like symp-

oms like cold and cough by members of surveillance committees set by the state government, specially for rural areas. He also urged the pradhans to ensure supply of clean potable water, use of masks and frequent washing of hands.

"Make people aware so that they get tested and vaccinated and get them registered for vaccinations in order to provide every citizen a safety shield against the virus," the CM concluded.

THIRD COVID WAVE SCARE

newly elected pradhans to generate awareness about the viral infection, prepare to save villagers from communicable diseases during the monsoons and ensure that everyone adopted

extend my greetings on your victory. I urge you to help prevent a third Covid wave in your respective village with an aim to realise the Honourable Prime Minister's dream of 'Mera Gaon

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Dilshad Ahmad to Dilshad Ahmad Ansari, in all future purpose, Dilshad Ahmad Ansari s/o Abdul Haque R/O 105/696 Plot No.3, Chamanganj, Kanpur

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Rajiv Arora to Rajeev Arora Rajeev Arora S/o Puran Chand R/O Plot No.-43, Gadaria Purwa, Guru Nanak Market, Kanpur

NOTICE

I, Akriti Singh wife of No 15416072N Hav/aa Jitesh Singh. I have changed my name from Akriti Singh to Akriti Chawla. No : 15416072N Rank :Hav (Amb Asst) Name : Jitesh Singh Unit : AMC Records.

NOTICE

In School Records of my son Jain Singh Mother's name wrongly written as Vijay Nandini Singh whereas her correct name is Vijay Nandani Singh. Pl. correct accordingly. Rakesh Bahadur Singh, Vill. Datli, Post. Dhedhemau, Tehsil Malihabad, Lucknow.

NOTICE

I Service No. JC-705471K NB Sub S.Venkatesan hereby declare that my Father Mother name has been changed from Father - Saminathan. J to Saminathan Jadhav Agounder Mother - Thangamai to Thangamai Saminathan as per aadhar card & affidavit

NOTICE

I Manoj Upadhyay s/o UdayRaj Upadhyay R/o 1/761, Sector 1, Vardaan Khand Gominagar Extension, Lucknow UP have changed my minor daughter's name from Aradhya Upadhyay to Advika Upadhyay for all future purpose.

NOTICE

I, Nurjahan Begam Mother of JC- 669693L Subedar/ Clerk (SD) Muhammad Kasim, R/O Village & post Amehta, Tehsil Saidpur, District Ghazipur (UP) have changed my name from Nurjahan Begam to Noorjahan Begam vide affidavit dated 23 June 2021 before Notary District Court Lucknow.

NOTICE

I, Suhail Uddin Kidwai S/o Mr. Musheer Uddin Kidwai R/o-House No. 293/187, Old Haiderganj, Police Station-Bazar Khala, Lucknow U.P. hereby declared that I have changed my name from Suhail Kidwai to Suhail Uddin Kidwai for all future purposes.

NOTICE

Late Shri Ashwani Kumar S/o Late Shri Krishan Lal Sharma resident of A-5/350, Kothi, Paschim Vihar, West Delhi, Delhi-110063 is the main applicant in the Studio No. B1/0218, in DLF Phase 2, Viharvi Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow. On 26/02/2019 Shri Ashwani Kumar passed away at New Delhi and after his death the said studio is being transferred to his wife Mrs. Jayashree. If Someone has any objection, please contact on the below address within 21 days from today. A-5/350, Kothi, Paschim Vihar, West Delhi, Delhi - 110063

NOTICE

I Mohammad Javed resident of 106/13 Nazabagh, Choti Park Lucknow. Declare that in 10th and 12th Marksheet of my son my name is wrongly written as Mohd. Javed whereas my correct name is Mohammad Javed, my wife's name is wrongly written as Firoz Jahjan whereas. Her correct name is Fauziya Khatoon and my son's name is wrongly written as Mohd Asheer whereas his correct name Mohammad Asheer for all purposes.

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

HAVILDAR PRABAKARAN R
13 JUL 1986 - 14 JUN 2021
ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF HAVILDAR PRABAKARAN R WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH BASE HOSPITAL DELHI CANTT.
FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

NAIB SUBEDAR DHIRENDRA KUMAR
02 JUN 1977 - 24 MAY 2021
ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF NAIB SUBEDAR DHIRENDRA KUMAR WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH 318 FD HOSP.
FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

HAVILDAR RAJ NATH RAM
06 JUL 1983 - 08 JUN 2021
ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF HAVILDAR RAJ NATH RAM WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH AFMSD MUMBAI.
FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

NAIK PAWAR BHAGAWAN BHAGAWAT
24 SEP 1988 - 22 MAY 2021
ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF NAIK PAWAR BHAGAWAN BHAGAWAT WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH MH AHMEDNAGAR.
FROM: LT GEN SANDIP MUKHERJI AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

Race for UP DGP post hot up

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The race for the UP DGP post is on at full steam with the incumbent Hitesh Chandra Awasthi is set to retire by June-end and has also refused any extension of service.

The state government has already sent a panel of senior officers from 1986 to 1988 batch DG rank officers from Uttar Pradesh and a new DGP was likely to be announced by next week after consultations with the Central government in Delhi. The meeting in Delhi will also be attended by state chief secretary RK Tiwari and present DGP HC Awasthi.

The Central government will

clear three names and forward it to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who will subsequently make a final call. The new DGP will be the fourth UP Police chief to be posted in the Yogi government which came to power in March, 2017. Hitesh Chandra Awasthi became the third DGP after Sulkhan Singh and OP Singh during the present tenure.

Well placed sources said in Lucknow on Thursday that the names of nine candidates were sent to the Union Home Ministry. There has been a lot of speculation about the name of the new DGP in view of the 2022 Assembly elections in UP. The Yogi government has so far given preference to seniority in postings

of DGP. DGP Hitesh Chandra Awasthi will be completing his term on June 30 and put an end to speculations of his extension. As per the seniority list, 1986 batch IPS officer posted on Central deputation, Nasir Kamal was at the forefront and his service tenure was till July, 2022 but he might not get the nod due to political reasons.

Among officers with sufficient tenure to stake a claim, the names of 1987 batch IPS officer Mukul Goel posted on Central deputation and Dr RP Singh of the same batch posted as DG of EOW crop up. Both were being seen as strong contenders although Goel's earlier posting as

ADG (Law and order) during the SP regime might serve as a spoiler.

Besides, the names of IPS officers of 1987 batch Vishwajit Mohapatra and GL Meena are also doing the rounds. A 1988 batch IPS officer and DG of Police Recruitment and Promotion Board Dr RK Vishwakarma along with batch mates, DS Chauhan and Anand Kumar were also being seen as contenders in the race.

Chauhan is currently posted as DG Intelligence and Anand Kumar is posted as DG Jail. The name of the 1988 batch officer posted on Central deputation, Anil Kumar Agarwal was also included in the seniority list.

Transport officer suspended in Mukhtar ambulance case

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Facilitating the registration of an ambulance used by don-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari and his henchmen during his transit from Ropar jail to a Mohali Court House in Punjab in March this year, finally took its toll when then assistant regional transport officer (ARTO) of Barabanki was suspended by the state government on Thursday. A departmental probe has also been ordered against the official. The government action came after it surfaced that the

vehicle registration was done on the basis of fake documents of the ambulance. Additional District Magistrate (ADM) of Barabanki, Ram Asrey confirmed the development.

Former ARTO, Rajeshwar Yadav was suspended in connection with the fake ambulance papers case. Yadav is currently posted at Regional Transport Office (RTO), in Ballia. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) was set up by the UP Police to probe the case. On April 2, a case was registered in Barabanki after the documents of the ambulance bearing UP registra-

tion number were found to be fake. On March 31, BSP MLA from Mau, Mukhtar Ansari was taken from Ropar jail and produced before a Mohali court in connection with an alleged extortion case in Punjab of 2019. After an initial probe, the name and address given for the registration of the ambulance were found to be false. The Barabanki police so far arrested half a dozen persons including Dr Alka Rai, whose nursing home's papers were used to get the vehicle registered as an ambulance in the RTO office at Barabanki.



CM Yogi Adityanath called on Governor Anandiben Patel in Lucknow on Thursday and presented her a book on Hatha Yoga

Loans to tune of ₹2,27,326 cr disbursed during Yogi regime

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In order to make the youth of Uttar Pradesh self-reliant, loans to the tune of Rs 2,27,326 crore have been disbursed to 70,69,447 micro and small units in the last four and a quarter years. Self-employment rose significantly even during the Covid period due to the financing of small and micro units. In the last 15 months, as many as 35,12,000 units have got a loan of Rs 65,538 crore.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has played an important role in making the youth of the state self-reliant. It resulted into a situation that on

an average, two crore people have got employment from these units. The state government has given loans to these units manifold as compared to the previous governments. In the financial year 2017-18, Rs 41,193 crore of loans were given to 7,87,572 entrepreneurs, Rs 47,764 crore loans to 10,24,265 entrepreneurs in the financial year 2018-19 and Rs 62,831 crore to 17,45,472 entrepreneurs in 2019-20. In the financial year 2020-21 from April 1, 2020 to March 2021, Rs 63,038 crore of loans have so far been disbursed to over 34.80 lakh entrepreneurs.

In comparison, during the

SP regime in the financial year 2016, only 6,35,583 micro and small entrepreneurs were given loans to the tune of Rs 27,202 crore. In a latest development, Yogi made available a loan of Rs 2505.58 crore to 31,542 MSME units in a loan fair through online self-employment Sangam programme on Wednesday. About 20 lakh people will get employment from these units even as nine months are still left in the current financial year.

According to official sources, the state government will take more measures to encourage the private sector in the next nine months.

Cop killed after truck hits vehicle of Commercial Taxes department

Lucknow (PNS): In a daring incident, a truck hit a vehicle belonging to the UP Commercial Taxes department in a bid to speed off during a checking drive on Yamuna Expressway on Wednesday night. In the incident, a policeman was killed and six others were injured.

Police said that the incident happened near Milestone 60 of Yamuna Expressway in Mathura when Joint Commissioner of Commercial Tax Manoj Tripathi was checking the vehicles with others.

During the checking, a truck driver hit the Commercial Taxes department vehicle in which constable Kishore Kumar Shukla (33), a native of Kanpur, died on the spot.

Joint Commissioner, Commercial Taxes, Vinay Gupta, Assistant Commissioner Virender, driver Vijay Kumar Yadav, peon Vinod Kumar and Anil Rawat were injured along with another person.

Naujheel police rushed the injured to Kailash Hospital in Noida even as the errant driver fled the scene abandoning the vehicle. The police impounded the truck.

SP (Rural) Sreeschand said one constable died in the incident while six people were injured. A case was registered in this regard.

In a separate incident in Sonbhadra, three minor boys died after a mound of coal mine waste in Shaktinagar area started flowing following incessant rains, police said on Thursday. Shaktinagar police station incharge Mithilesh Mishra said the incident occurred on Wednesday morning when four boys — Radheyshyam, Dinanath, along with Abhishek and Vikki (both aged 12) — went to answer nature's call from Hardahva locality.

It seems the coal mine waste gathered on the upper part of a drain suddenly started flowing due to the rains, the SHO said. Later, the bodies of Radheyshyam, Vikki and Dinanath were recovered from the drain while Abhishek was injured. He was admitted to a hospital.

In a separate incident in Badaun, two motorcycle-borne youths were killed after a tractor-trolley hit their vehicle, police said on Thursday. The incident occurred on Ataina Ghat bridge in Ushait police station area on Wednesday night, they said. While Aslim (35) died on the spot, Manoj (22) lost his life on the way to Usawan CHC, SHO Chetram Verma said, adding the bodies were sent for autopsy. Tractor driver Rajveer was detained, the police said.

CITYBRIEFS



FOUNDATION DAY

The 114th Foundation Day of Punjab and Sind Bank was celebrated at the zonal office of Lucknow. Celebrations were also held in the bank branches in different districts of Uttar Pradesh under Lucknow zone. All the employees together sang the anthem of the bank

while circle head Gajraj Singh Thakur cut a cake and greeted the employees. Addressing all the branches through video-conferencing, he said the golden history of the bank and the focus of its ideology (Sarvajan Hitay, Sarvajan Sukhay) inspires all to keep moving forward.

SCHOLARSHIP

Priyanshi Kishore, a meritorious student of City Montessori School, Aliganj Campus I, has been offered admission with a scholarship of US\$ 81,700 by the prestigious Simmons University of USA for pursuing higher education there. The scholarship has been offered to her for the entire study period of four years. Apart from this, University of Dayton, University of Utah and University of Arizona have also offered her admission with scholarships.

बैंक ऑफ बरौदा
Bank of Baroda

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

CORRIGENDUM

This is with reference to our Possession Notice dated 24.06.2021 published in this Newspaper, wherein at Station Road, Orai, Distt. Jalaun Branch, Borrower : M/s. R.V. Advisory Solution Pvt. Limited Mortgage Property Detail : Land and Building Builtover Plot No. 480, Situated at Mohalla, Lahariya Purwa/ New Patel Nagar as should be read Land and Building Builtover Plot No. 480, Situated at Mohalla, Lahariya Purwa/ New Patel Nagar, Orai, Distt. Jalaun. Rest contents remains unchanged.
Date : 25.06.2021 • Place : Orai, Distt. Jalaun • Authorised Officer

PUBLIC NOTICE
(REGARDING PROPERTY KNOWN AS "KAILASH" 4/276, NAWABGANJ, KANPUR)

My client Smt Hemlata Srivastava w/o Late Shri H K Srivastava is the owner in possession of 1/2 undivided share in the property known as "KAILASH" 4/276, Nawabganj Kanpur. The property has vested in the name of Shri H.K. Srivastava in terms of a registered and probated Will of Late Lady Kailash Srivastava vide letter of assent dated 11-01-1985 executed by the sole Executor of the Will of Late Lady Kailash Srivastava. With the letter of assent and subsequent letter dated 13.02.1999 issued by the Executor, the transfer of title and possession of half share of the property in the name of Shri H K Srivastava has attained finality.

The said property in terms of a registered and probated Will of the Late Lady Kailash Srivastava was vested jointly on Shri H K Srivastava and Shri J. K. Srivastava, her two sons. The Hon'ble Divisional Bench of Allahabad High Court vide its judgement dated 23rd March 1997 has finally conferred the title of Mr H K Srivastava to his half share of the property after death of Shri H K Srivastava it has now devolved upon his wife Smt Hemlata Srivastava.

We have been informed through reliable sources, that the legal heirs of Shri J.K. Srivastava namely, Smt Raj Mohini Srivastava and sons of the deceased Shri Vijay K. Srivastava namely Shri Kunal K. Srivastava and Mr Yatin K. Srivastava are trying to sell the property 'Kailash' by falsely claiming to be the owners of the entire property, whereas they hold only 1/2 undivided Share in the property.

Besides this a status quo order dated 10.11.2004 has been passed by Kanpur District Court in **Civil Suit No. 450 of 2001**, not to alienate the property. Execution of any Agreement to Sell, Sale deed, Rent Deed, Gift Deed etc. in respect to this property shall not be illegal, null and void but also in contempt of the order passed by the Hon'ble Court.

The Public in general are hereby notified and warned not to deal with Smt Raj Mohini Srivastava, Mr Kunal K. Srivastava, Mr Yatin K. Srivastava or their nominees in relation to the aforesaid property known as "KAILASH", as they would do so at their own risk and cost and wholly responsible for any consequences thereof.

Rajeev Jain (Advocate)
Chamber No.32, Collectorate Compound, Kanpur
Mobile -9415161486

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Notification No. 172/2021				
Important Notice for the Rail Passengers				
It is notified for information of General Public that following Unreserved Special Trains will be restored as under:-				
Restoration of trains with existing days, Stoppages, Maintenance Pattern & Composition				
S. No.	Train No.	From - To	Date of Run from Originating Station (JCO)	
1	05375	Gorakhpur-Gonda	02.07.2021 To till further advice	
2	05371	Gonda-Bahraich	03.07.2021 To till further advice	
3	05372	Bahraich-Gonda	03.07.2021 To till further advice	
4	05373	Gonda-Bahraich	03.07.2021 To till further advice	
5	05374	Bahraich-Gonda	03.07.2021 To till further advice	
6	05376	Gonda-Gorakhpur	04.07.2021 To till further advice	
7	05377	Gorakhpur-Nautanwa	04.07.2021 To till further advice	
8	05378	Nautanwa-Gorakhpur	05.07.2021 To till further advice	
9	05033	Gorakhpur-Barhni	05.07.2021 To till further advice	
10	05034	Barhni-Gorakhpur	05.07.2021 To till further advice	

Please Note: 1. These train will run with full Unreserved accommodation. 2. It is mandatory for the passengers to follow the guidelines issued for prevention and safety from Covid-19. CPRO/T-82 Chief Pass. Traffic Manager, Gorakhpur

About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955
"DO NOT TRAVEL WITH INFLAMMABLE ARTICLE IN TRAIN"

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Notification No. 175/2021					
IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR RAIL PASSENGERS					
It is notified for information of general public that following Special train will be running as under -					
02099/02100 Pune - Lucknow - Pune Super Fast Special Train					
Train No. 02099 - Ex. Pune on Tuesday from 06.07.2021 to 26.10.2021 = 17 Trips, Train No. 02100 - Ex. Lucknow on Wednesday from 07.07.2021 to 27.10.2021 = 17 Trips					
02099 - Pune - Lucknow Super Fast Special		02100 - Lucknow - Pune Super Fast Special			
Arr.	Dep.	STATION	Arr.	Dep.	
---	11.30	Pune	18.45	---	
12.23	12.25	Daund Chord Line	16.58	17.00	
16.13	16.15	Kopergaon	12.53	12.55	
17.20	17.25	Manmad	11.55	12.00	
19.45	19.50	Bhusaval	09.05	09.10	
23.08	23.10	Khandwa	07.18	07.20	
01.50	02.00	Etarsi	04.35	04.40	
03.40	03.45	Bhopal	02.55	03.05	
05.30	05.35	Bina	01.00	01.05	
07.45	07.55	Jhansi	21.30	21.40	
09.08	09.10	Orai	19.33	19.35	
11.30	11.35	Kanpur Central	17.50	17.55	
13.15	---	Lucknow	---	16.20	

Rake Composition:- SLRD - 02, General 2nd Class - 04, Sleeper - 11, AC 3 Tier - 04, AC 2 Tier - 01

Please Note: (1) These trains will run with full reserved accommodation. (2) It is mandatory for the passengers to follow the guidelines issued for prevention and safety from Covid-19.

CPRO/T - 85 B Chief Passenger Transportation Manager
About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955
"Never travel on roof and foot boards"

Yogi for genome sequencing in view of Delta-plus threat

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Striking a warning note, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that in view of recovery of a new Covid variant (Delta-plus), genome sequencing should start in those districts which share borders with states where the variant was found.

ICMR has claimed recovery of the Delta-plus variant Covid cases in Bhopal and Shivpuri in Madhya Pradesh.

At a review meeting in Lucknow on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said, "Delta-plus variant has appeared in many states. We have to be very careful and a necessary strategy should be chalked out in consultation with the state-level Health Expert Advisory Committee."

"In view of the confirmation of the Delta-plus variant in the states bordering Uttar Pradesh, genome sequencing should be done by taking samples from adjacent districts," Yogi said and directed officials to provide necessary facilities at KGMU in Lucknow for genome sequencing at the earliest to identify the presence of new variant of coronavirus.

The Health department was also asked to expedite the process of setting up



Sanitisation work underway at Charbagh railway station

Pioneer

PICU/NICU across the state. "Availability of all necessary equipment including BiPAP machines, pediatric ICU, mobile X-ray machines should be ensured at the hospitals. There should be direct communication with their manufacturing companies to ensure prompt supply," the chief minister said.

Yogi was apprised that the first phase training of doctors and nursing staff had been completed and the requirement of other health workers, pediatrician, nursing staff and technicians was being assessed at the district-level to arrange for adequate human resources

in view of the third corona wave.

It was also decided that all necessary useful medicines should be procured on the advice of health experts and officials were asked to complete the process within the next fortnight.

Meanwhile, a total of 229 new corona cases in Uttar Pradesh during the past 24 hours while 308 people recovered in the same period. At present, the number of active corona cases in the state has come down to 3,552. In Lucknow, 24 people tested positive, 12 patients recovered and three succumbed.

In the last 24 hours, 2.71 lakh Covid tests were done and till date a total of 5.62 crore Covid tests have been done in the state so far. The recovery rate of corona infection in the state was 98.5 per cent.

In the meeting it was apprised that a target of 1 crore vaccines has been set in the current month of June. So far this month, 97 lakh vaccine doses have been administered. The target of administering a minimum of 6 lakh vaccines every day from June 21 to 30 is in progress. So far, more than 2.80 crore vaccine doses have been administered in the state.

The chief minister directed that work should be done with a target of administering a minimum of 10 lakh Covid vaccines every day from July 1.

Yogi said that the process of recruitment on the vacant posts of 69,000 assistant teachers in the Basic Education department should be completed smoothly. "The schedule for the entire process has been set. Keeping in view the convenience of the candidates along with following the Covid protocol, recruitment on vacant posts should be done in a time bound manner," he said.

Lucknow leads the way in vax

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow is on top in terms of vaccination in the state with a total of 13,22,454 lakh jabs having been administered so far. The state capital is followed by Gautam Buddha Nagar (10,85,136 doses) and Ghaziabad (9,37,587 doses), according to District Immunisation Officer Dr MK Singh. The mega vaccination camps organised at Chhota Imbarra, Ekana & KD Singh stadiums and increase in the pace of vaccinations in rural parts of the district have made Lucknow the leading district in terms of the number of jabs given so far.

Incidentally initially when the vaccination had started, the figures of Lucknow were not high and smaller districts in the state were ahead. Dr Singh said that workplace vaccinations also helped increase the figures which went up to 25,000 per day on June 23.

"If we go at this rate, we will cover the population soon. This is a result of the continuous efforts made in this direction and people who were not coming out earlier seem to have shed the inhibitions in the pilot project under which jabs are being given in Gosainganj, Mohanlalganj and on NK



Road," he said.

State Immunisation Officer Dr Ajay Ghai said that the pilot project of the cluster approach which was carried out in 250 blocks across the state has doubled the figures of total vaccinations in the state to 8 lakh to 8.5 lakh per day.

"This is primarily because of the extensive mobilisation carried out in rural areas to do away with the vaccine hesitancy amongst the locals. Extensive mobilisation worked effectively in the polio vaccination too," he added.

Meanwhile, a senior official from the National Health Mission said they have adopted a multipronged strategy wherein mobilisation was car-

ried out by lekhpal, gram pradhans, district panchayat members along with ASHA & Anganwadi and ANMs apart from teachers.

"We took the help of everyone for the mobilisation which was carried out for three days and was followed by vaccinations on two days. We took the support of all those who could influence, be it religious leaders or others," he said.

The official said they are currently carrying out vaccinations in three to four blocks in rural parts of the district and entire district will be covered later. "We were not mobilising so aggressively earlier. We were waiting for people to come and get vaccinated, and only the

ASHA workers were roped in for mobilisation. Now for the first three days, we reach out to the public and tell them why vaccination is necessary, what they have to do and where they have to go to get the jabs, and then they are followed up by ANMs," he said.

He added that they are carrying out the pilot project because bringing the machinery on one page was difficult as it would have created problems in 820 blocks of the 75 districts.

"We can handle any problem if it happens at this stage through comparisons between different blocks so that vaccinations can be escalated later on," he said.

He said that since the start from June 21, they have covered a total population of 25 lakh in the state. He said the strategy applied to urban areas was the same as rural areas and that they are involving public representatives for mobilisation of the people.

"In rural areas, it is easy to get the influencers as compared to urban areas. Interpersonal communication is the key word in rural areas where other modes are not as popular as in urban areas. People who are involved in the IEC are going door to door, sticking posters and organising chaupals," he added.

New variant a cause of concern

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Delta-plus, which is one of the mutants of coronavirus, is a cause of concern currently in the country with experts, including doctors and microbiologists, attributing several reasons such as its high transmission rate and vaccines being less effective against it. They are of the view that people must follow Covid-appropriate behaviour for prevention.

Dr SP Ambesh from Anaesthesiology department of SGPGI said the Delta-plus variant is a concern because of several reasons. "The Delta variant underwent two mutations, which gave rise to the Delta-plus variant. The spike protein of the Delta variant (K417N) has undergone two

mutations, Kappa and Eta variant. The first case of Delta-plus was detected in the country on June 11 and since then 40-45 cases have been found so far," he pointed out. He added that there are some reasons why everyone is worried about its presence.

"First, the population below 18 years is vulnerable as it has not been vaccinated. Second, the 'R' number which is the reproductive number of the Delta variant increases its transmissibility and infectivity. It's more than double. Third, those who have been infected with the Delta-plus variant have the chances of getting secondary infections more with more susceptibility of fungal and bacterial infection. It has infected people who have

already been inoculated which shows that this strain is not following immunisation and can infect even those who have been jabbed. The vaccines which are currently available are not so effective against this mutant, which can cause the spread of infection faster. The monoclonal antibodies, one of the treatment therapies used, has been found to be totally ineffective against this mutant," he explained.

Dr Ambesh said that because the virus is mutating, it may not follow the ace receptor protocol and can find windows to enter the cell of a person. "Earlier the virus was entering the human cells only through the ace receptors," he said. However, he pointed out that if people fol-

low Covid-appropriate behaviour, the chances of infection are less. He added that vaccination is a must because it could reduce the severity of the disease.

Head of the Microbiology department, SGPGI, Dr Ujjawal Ghoshal said that few cases of Delta-plus have been reported in the country recently. "The main cause of concern is that the monoclonal antibodies therapy is not working against this variant. This is worrisome because there is no treatment for the virus and whatever treatment is being thought of will not work against this variant. Another problem is the increased transmissibility of this variant which can cause rapid spread," she added.

'Mission June' accomplished by govt with six days to go

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh achieved a major milestone in the COVID-19 vaccination by completing one crore doses in just 24 days under the ambitious 'Mission June'. The state government vaccinated more than 8 lakh people on Thursday, taking the cumulative doses to over 2.88 crore. From July 1 onwards, the UP government aims to achieve the next big target of administering around 10 lakh doses a day and getting to the landmark of 10 crore doses by the end of August.

Expressing happiness over achieving the feat, Additional Chief Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal said here on Thursday that the drive was organised on the directions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to cover the maximum number

of people. UP has set a new record by administering one crore doses a week before the set time period."

Sehgal added that there has been no wastage of Covid vaccine doses during the mega drive. The pace of vaccination in UP is currently high as the daily doses are around 8 lakh per day. The change in the Centre's policy, announcing free vaccines for all, is the factor which contributed to the spike in vaccinations in the state. In the last four days, more than 30 lakh doses have been administered in UP.

Under the world's largest free vaccination drive, the pace of vaccination in UP is the highest in the country, leaving behind Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Kerala amongst other states.

RLD demands rollback of new farm laws

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) National president Jayant Chaudhary asked the Central government to roll back the new farm laws terming them black laws and anti-farmer in nature. Speaking on the issue, RLD national spokesman Anupam Mishra said that Jayant Chaudhary has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking to withdraw the three controversial farm laws after the completion of six months of farmers' agitation so that farmers could return to their villages.

In the letter, Chaudhary maintained that the farmers' agitation was negatively impacting the economy. "The Central government was adamant and was not solving the issue and this was an insult to the farmers who are the backbone and pride of the country. It is strange that farmers, who fed the people of the country during the Corona crisis and also bore the burden of the economy, are fighting for their existence," he said.

The RLD leader reminded the Prime Minister of his

famous slogan 'Ek call door' (only a phone call away) and said that the farmers were very much disappointed with the Central government.

Meanwhile, RLD spokesman Anupam Mishra blamed the UP government for the pitiable condition of the tannery industry of Kanpur and said that it has reached the brink of destruction since the BJP came to power. Mishra said that Kanpur's leather products were not only the city's identity, but were so popular across the globe.

"Today the leather industry and tanneries of Kanpur were fighting for existence. Due to Kanpur, India ranks first among the countries producing leather products in the world but the industry collapsed due to the indifferent attitude of the BJP government. Out of about 402 units of leather industry in Kanpur, at present only 140 are functional with half the capacity and this business is nearing closure because many leather-related units of Kanpur are trying to set up shop in Bangladesh, West Bengal and Bihar," he said.

Applications for UPCET-2021 from today

Lucknow (PNS): The first meeting of the Central Admission Committee of Uttar Pradesh Combined Entrance Test (UPCET-2021) was held under the chairmanship of AKTU Vice-Chancellor Prof VK Pathak on Thursday.

UPCET coordinator Dr Arun Tiwari said online applications were invited for admission to MTech, MPharm, MURP, MArch and MDes from June 25 evening.

"Candidates can fill the application form available on the website (www.aktu.ac.in). The last date to apply online has been fixed as July 15. The date of online entrance examination of MTech, MPharm, MURP, MArch and MDes is August 8," he said. The admissions to BTEch and BArch will be through JEE (Mains) while those to BPharm, BHMCT, BFA, BFD, BDes, BiVac, MCA etc through UPCET-2021 conducted by NTA.

Gang using fake letter heads for confirmed train berths busted

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the arrest of two accused on Thursday, a joint team of the commercial staff of Northern Railways and RPF claimed to have busted a gang using fake recommendation letters for getting berths confirmed in different trains.

Those arrested were identified as Syed Salim Husain of Thakurganj and his aide Pankaj Singh Kushwaha of Newazganj. Salim is an IRCTC agent.

The team worked under the supervision of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Ajeet Kumar Sinha and Senior Divisional Security Commissioner Abhishek Kumar. A spokesman said the department was tipped off about a gang using fake letter heads of former and sitting MPs in getting train berths confirmed.

The team worked on the lead and tracked the applications received by the commercial wing for confirmation berths. It later came to the fore that a person applied for the confirmation of a berth in Pushpak Express (sleeper class) on the fake letter head of Rajya Sabha MP Devi Prasad Tripathi (NCP, Maharashtra) on June 17.

The team contacted the mobile number mentioned in the application but it went unanswered. Later, the team reached the railway station and tracked the passengers travelling on the PNR numbers.

The team quizzed the passengers and the name of Salim surfaced. Later, a team of RPF nabbed Salim and recovered details of 51 railway tickets worth Rs 32,600.

Salim owned up his crime and disclosed that he used to

get the tickets confirmed with the help of his aide Pankaj. The team then raided Pankaj's house. Pankaj also owned up his crime and disclosed that he used to put the applications in the drop box at the DRM office. He further said that he would ask his minor daughter to fill the application forms and to write for quota on fake letter heads. The team recovered 13 letter heads in the name of five MPs from Pankaj's house.

Pankaj said he used to take Rs 500 each for each confirmed ticket.

Sources said it was easy to penetrate the tenuous system of quota allotment. "The quota is meant for needy passengers or VVIPs who travel in urgent situations. Most of the time, the quota is allotted to those who use fake documents. The staff handling the quota allotment has little exposure to these tricky things," they said.

Four in police net for looting job-seekers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Four accused were arrested on Thursday in connection with the loot from job-seekers at a hotel in Naka on Wednesday. The accused would trap innocents by promising them jobs in foreign countries and then deprive them of their money. They used to focus more on foreign currency. The accused would impersonate sleuths of the Intelligence Bureau while looting the job aspirants.

Those arrested were identified as Ashish Sindhia of Chandigarh, Shakil Ahmad & Lalit Kumar of New Delhi, and Balram Sain of Rajasthan. The police recovered 7,650 dollars and 3150 euros (valued at Rs 10 lakh), over Rs 5,000 in cash, four purses, PAN & ATM cards, passports, visas, Aadhaar cards, a country-made pistol, a knife and an SUV in which they reached the hotel.

On Wednesday, Kerala resident Sunil Kumar Tachapulli Unichakan, along with his colleagues Nived VV, Amal Antu and Manoj MM, checked in hotel Shanta on Latouche road in Naka as they had to fly to the Republic of Malta near Mediterranean Sea for jobs. Their facilitator was Hakim of New Delhi, who is said to have absconded and is on police radar. ADCP (East) Rajesh Srivastava said Hakim had promised jobs to these people and brought them to New Delhi from Kerala. They were then sent to Lucknow to catch a flight to Mumbai from where they were scheduled to fly to their destination.

In the meantime, Hakim sent four of his men (the accused who were arrested in Naka) to Lucknow. As per plan, Hakim sent two of the victims to the airport to get the tickets while two others stayed at the hotel. The robbers pretended to be IB sleuths and held the two victims in the hotel at the gunpoint. They locked the duo

inside the bathroom and collected all the money and documents from the victims before fleeing the scene.

The ADCP said that the incident was reported at 10 am on Wednesday after the victims contacted the police. "We checked the CCTV footage and one of the accused was nabbed after he was identified on the basis of his shirt. It led to the arrest of other accused. However, one of the accused, identified as Kulwant Singh, managed to escape," the ADCP said. He further said that Hakim was the mastermind while Kulwant would look into the affairs in Lucknow. Rohit is another mastermind who is in the US.



The state capital received light rains on Thursday, leading to increased humidity levels. The city received 3.4 mm rainfall. Lucknow recorded the maximum temperature at 33.2 degree Celsius, which was 4.3 degrees below normal. The forecast for Friday is partly cloudy skies

Pioneer

3 members of gang of thieves arrested

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A joint team of Indiranagar police and crime branch on Thursday nabbed three members of a gang which had struck at several houses in the city in the past. Those arrested were identified as Ajeet Chaudhary of Kushinagar and Shadab Siddiqui & Rakesh Yadav of Indiranagar. Their aide, identified as Rohit Gautam, managed to evade arrest.

The team recovered huge quantity of ornaments, a car and a motorcycle from the accused. Inspector Ajay Prakash Tripathi said a team was conducting checking at the Picnic Spot trisection when a car and motorcycle were spotted. "The bike riders and occupants of the car were asked to stop but they tried to speed off. On being chased by the police, the one riding pillion fled the scene while the other car occupants were caught. The police recovered ornaments and stolen electronic goods from the car," he said.

LUCKNOW DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(An ISO 9001:2008, ISO 14001:2004 CERTIFIED COMPANY)
VIPIN KHAND, GOMTI NAGAR, LUCKNOW (U.P.) Phone : 0522-2307868
E-mail : vicechairmanlda@gmail.com, Website : www.ldaonline.in

Expression of Interest

Lucknow Development Authority invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from qualified, reputed and experienced Agencies/Institution in single Bid System for conduct (operation) of Entry fee system in Janeshwar Mishra Park Gomi Nagar, Lucknow. The Tender documents can be downloaded from the E-Tendering Website : - <http://etender.up.nic.in> From 23.06.2021 to 01.07.2021 by 3 PM. The uploaded bid will next day at 12 AM.

Chief Engineer
Lucknow Development Authority

BUREAU OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY
(A Statutory body under Ministry of Power, Government of India)
4th Floor, Sewa Bhawan, R. K. Puram, New Delhi - 110066
Website : www.beeindia.gov.in, Ph: 011-26766700

EMPANELMENT/RE-EMPANELMENT OF ESCO

Applications are invited from eligible organizations for empanelment/re-empanelment as Energy Service Company (ESCO) with Bureau of Energy Efficiency with effect from the date of publication of this advertisement.

Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has been promoting energy efficiency initiatives in the country under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, including promotion of energy conservation measures in existing facilities through ESCO model. ESCO is an organization engaged in a performance-based contract with a client firm to implement measures which reduce energy consumption and costs in a technically viable manner. BEE intends to prepare and maintain a list of empaneled Energy Service Companies with validity of two years.

In order to get empaneled/re-empaneled as ESCO with BEE, all ESCOs have to submit complete application forms to the grading agencies CRISIL Ltd/CARE Advisory Research & Training Ltd /ICRA Analytics Ltd/IRR Advisory Services Pvt. Ltd. /SMERA Grading & Ratings Private Limited.

The advertisement, application format indicating criteria, contact details of grading agencies and process for empanelment can be downloaded from www.beeindia.gov.in. The last date for receipt of complete application forms to the above-mentioned grading agencies is within 30 days from the date of publication of this advertisement. Incomplete applications and those received after due date would be rejected.

DAVP 34106/11/0003/2122 **Secretary**

People asked to follow Covid guidelines

PNS ■ VARANASI

An awareness campaign was launched under the auspices of Namami Gange at Assi ghat and its adjoining areas here on Thursday, appealing to the people to follow the Covid guidelines. The campaigners said as the number of coronavirus positive cases had started declining and the administration was extending relaxations, many people had started showing laxity by avoiding face masks and physical distance.

The members of the Namami Gange visited Assi Ghat and nearby Sabzi Mandi (vegetable market) and made the boatmen, priests, vendors selling worship materials, passersby and other shopkeepers aware of the pandemic and also distributed masks to those who were not wearing it. They also warned the people about the danger of the third wave of COVID-19. Namami Gange convener Rajesh Shukla appealed to everyone to wear masks and maintain physical distance.

Earlier, at Assi Ghat, president of Rashtriya Roti Bank, Poonam Singh, and Mohd Mustafa felicitated the Namami Gange team for its service to the Ganga. Shivam Agrahari, Ram Prakash Jaiswal, Satyam Jaiswal, Rashmi Saha, Sarika Gupta, Pushpalata Verma, Preeti Jaiswal and many others were present.

85 pc railway staff vaccinated in BLW

PNS ■ VARANASI

Taking forward the goal of vaccination as a mission, the medical team has now fully utilised the doses of Covid vaccine supplied by the state government to Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW), one of the leading production units of the Indian Railways, as about 85 per cent of the personnel have been vaccinated so far. Right from the start, the vaccination process picked up in the BLW on the instructions of the general manager. Under the supervision of the principal chief medical officer, more than 35,000 persons have been vaccinated in BLW so far.

Out of them, about 85 per cent are railway personnel while most of the remaining employees could not be vaccinated as they were infected with novel coronavirus. Among the people vaccinated there are a large number of non-railway persons.

A total of 35,204 people, including railway employees, their families and non-railway persons, have been vaccinated so far with the first dose being administered to 10,943 people, including 6,100 railway personnel and 4,843 non-railway beneficiaries. The second dose of the vaccine was given to 24,261 people including 9,465 railway personnel and 14,796 non-railway beneficiaries.

Keeping in mind the problems of divyangians (physically challenged per-



A beneficiary getting a vaccine at BLW in Varanasi on Thursday

sons) and elderly people, the vaccination workers reached them to give them the

The second dose of the vaccine was given to 24,261 people including 9,465 railway personnel and 14,796 non-railway beneficiaries

vaccine jab.

Apart from this, deep cleaning, sanitisation and sanitation is being done daily in various workshop premises, administration buildings, offices, colony premises etc following the Covid protocols besides creating awareness about preventive measures.

Vaccination related messages have been displayed through banners and posters.

Active cases below 150 in Varanasi

PNS ■ VARANASI

Active cases of COVID-19 have dropped to the 150-mark in Varanasi which reported six positive cases and no death on Thursday.

The active cases came down to 141 from 144 a day ago.

Six people tested positive for novel coronavirus infection during the past 24 hours taking the tally of confirmed cases in the district to 82,209, as per the figures released by the health department on Thursday evening.

As many as nine COVID-19 patients recovered during the past 24 hours – seven in home isolation and two in hospitals. With this, 81,295 COVID-19 patients have been cured in the district – 75,016 in home isolation and 6,279 in Covid hospitals.

The district has reported no COVID-19 death for the last many days and the death toll stands at 373.

Deceased journalist's wife gets a job in nagar panchayat

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

Deceased journalist Sulabh Srivastava's wife Renuka has been given a job as office assistant in the Kohandor Nagar Panchayat in Pratappgarh.

Sushil Raghuvanshi, executive officer of the nagar panchayat confirmed this news.

Sulabh Srivastava died under mysterious circumstances on June 13 and his family has accused a liquor mafia of killing him.

On the instructions of Additional Director General of Police of Prayagraj Zone, a team has been constituted to investigate the journalist's death. It is led by ASP (East). The family members had demanded Rs 1 crore as compensation, a job for the deceased journalist's wife Renuka and arrangement for education of his children.

People's anger had erupted on the road following the death of Sulabh Srivastava under mysterious circumstances. An agitated mob had created a ruckus, alleging that the journalist was murdered. Not only this, journalists and politicians had also staged a sit-in in front of offices of the ADG, the district magistrate and the district police chief.

A number of politicians besides the ADG, the DM and the SP had visited Sulabh's house to express condolences.

MP Sangamali Gupta, MLC Akshay Pratap Singh Gopalji, MLA Vinod Saroj, BJP district president Hari Om Mishra, former MLA Brijesh Mishra Saurabh, Shiv Prakash Mishra Senani, Abhay Singh Pappan, Ashwani Soni, Raghavendra Shukla, BJYM president Ravi Gupta, BJYM leader Varun Singh, Congress district president Brijendra Mishra, Neeraj Tripathi, district panchayat member Poonam among others were among those who visited Sulabh Srivastava's residence and expressed condolences to his wife and assured to provide all possible help.

Sulabh was facing a threat to his life for a long time. He suspected that someone was always following him and had told his wife about this. He had informed the ADG Prayagraj about the possibility of his murder on his WhatsApp number.

In the letter, Sulabh had stated that on June 9 he had run a report against a liquor mafia on the internet media and he could harm him and his family.

Constable crushed to death

PNS ■ VARANASI

A police constable was reportedly crushed to death by a commercial vehicle in the early hours of Thursday when he along with other cops was checking vehicles on a flyover in Kachawan under Mirzamurad police station.

Two other police personnel were said to be injured in the incident.

The police sent the body of the constable for autopsy. The driver managed to escape with the vehicle.

According to reports, the deceased constable, identified as Radheshyam Yadav (44) of Motipur village under Maharajganj police station of Azamgarh, was posted at Mirzamurad police station. In the wake of rising incidents of chain-snatching in the area, the Mirzamurad cops were checking vehicles on the

Mirzamurad-Kachawan flyover in the wee hours on Thursday after night patrolling in the area.

It is reported that there was a traffic jam on the flyover and seeing the cops, the driver of a pick-up without registration number accelerated and hit constable Radheshyam. In a bid to escape, the driver also hit two other police personnel when they tried to stop the pick-up. Radheshyam sustained serious injuries while other police personnel sustained minor injuries.

Radheshyam was rushed to a nearby private hospital but the doctors referred him to the trauma center in Sir Sunderlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment.

The police informed his family members in Azamgarh and sent the body for autopsy.

It is reported that Radheshyam was posted at Mirzamurad police station about fortnight ago.

In a separate incident, a youth committed suicide at Bhikharipur under Manduadih police station late in the night on Wednesday. The police sent the body for post-mortem. The cause behind the suicide was said to be financial crunch.

According to information, the deceased, identified as Manoj Patel of Patel locality in Bhikharipur, was a painter. On Wednesday night, he had dinner with family members and went to his room to sleep. In the morning, the family members saw him hanging from the ceiling. On being informed, the local police reached the house for investigation and the forensic team collected samples.

It is said that the youth was in depression because of the financial crisis.

BHU VC releases book on COVID-19 period

PNS ■ VARANASI

Banaras Hindu University Vice Chancellor Prof VK Shukla released a book titled 'Corona Kaal - Chikitsak ki Kalam Se' at the central office of the university on Thursday.

The author of the book, Prof Sridhar Dwivedi, is a senior cardiologist of international repute and an alumnus of the Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS), BHU. He has been the former principal of Hamdard Institute of Medical Sciences and is presently senior cardiologist at National Heart Institute, New Delhi.

In his address, the vice chancellor said that at present the country was passing through a very sensitive situation when almost the whole world was in the grip of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We are almost out of the first and second waves of COVID-19 but there is still a possibility of a third wave. In such a situation, we need to be constantly vigilant. The infection can be avoided by maintaining social distance, wearing masks and using sanitisers," he said, adding that in the time of such deadly pandemic, Prof



BHU VC Prof VK Shukla releasing a book online in Varanasi on Thursday

Dwivedi had written a book on a relevant subject.

Talking about the book, Prof Dwivedi said that in view of the problems faced by the people during the coronavirus pandemic period, he started writing the book.

"The period from March 11 last year

has been the most exciting, sensitive and stirring time of my entire academic, medical and personal life of 50 years. COVID-19 has given rise to many questions about the parameters of medical practice, methods of proper prevention, care of patients, medicinal systems, ethical questions related to it and above all, a touching explanation of various dimensions of human sensibility," he said, adding that during this period, whatever problems, hopes and doubts arose in the public mind, an attempt was made to write them down in this book.

A total of 32 articles and 44 poems are published in this 100-page book. The foreword to the book has been written by Dr Vishwamohan Katoch, former Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi.

In the online programme organised on this occasion, Prof VM Katoch, Prof Saroj Chooramani, Prof Ramesh K Goyal, Prof Arun Agarwal, Prof Ankur Kalra, Dr S Rajpal, Prof Girish Dwivedi, Prof Anupam Prakash and Dr Daya Shankar Tripathi participated from various parts of the world.

Lewis: 'Yoga a symbol of peace'

PNS ■ VARANASI

Director of Maharishi Vedic University (Netherlands) Dr Raja Lewis said that yoga was a symbol of peace in society.

Describing Yoga through Patanjali's sutras, he said that mantra 'sarve bhavantu sukhin' was mentioned in the Vedas as the original source of Vedic yoga science.

He was addressing as the chief guest on the concluding day of the five-day international webinar on 'Vedic Yoga Science' organised by the Vaidic Vignyan Kendra, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Thursday.

Dr Lewis also outlined the health-related effects of yoga on people, saying "those who accept yoga in their life, they fall less sick."

Special guest and member secretary of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR, New Delhi) Prof Sachchidananda Mishra, said that in the ancient Vedic tradition, the sages had described ways of being healthy through yoga.

"Control over dharma, artha and kama should be the main aim of man," he said, adding that yoga was described in all the chapters of the Gita.

Acharya Krishnakant Atri, secretary of the National Council of Hindu Priests (UK), quoting the Gita, said that Lord Krishna had given uniqueness to 'nishkam karma' yoga. "If we have character, determination then we will be able to achieve success," he said, giving the message of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam to all the people to live life with the spirit of universal brotherhood.

Earlier, the programme began with Vedic Manglacharan by Vipin Chandra Jha followed by kull-geet by Dr Gyanesh Chandra Pandey.

Introducing the subject, coordinator of Vaidic Vignyan Kendra, Prof Upendra Kumar Tripathi, described the Vedas as a knowledge-oriented scripture. "Yoga philosophy has been invented from the Vedas, in which Hiranyagarbha is its originator and Maharishi Patanjali has given it a systematic form. One can attain supreme happiness by controlling dharma, artha, kama and moksha," he said.

Addressing the programme, dean of the Faculty of Sanskrit Vidya Dharma Vignyan (SVDV), BHU, Prof Kamlesh Jha, said that the practice and rituals of yoga as described in the Vedas were the main medium to reach the complete omniscience of Shiva. Former dean of SVDV faculty, Prof Krishnakant Sharma, said that the originator of yoga was Acharya Hiranyagarbha, whose description was found in Shruiti and Smriti.

The programme was conducted by Dr Mamta Mehra while the vote of thanks was proposed by Vijaya Mishra. Around 3,000 participants from India and abroad participated in the programme.

Murder victim's son writes to CM for protection

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

The police and Special Operation Group (SOG) have failed to work out the murder of a couple and their daughter with sharp-edged weapon in Manda of Yamunapar area of the district last year. The murder remains a mystery. The members of the family, who were in shock after the murder, are now terrified by the threats of the miscreants. The son has sent a letter to the chief minister requesting for protection.

Nandlal Yadav, his wife Chhabila Devi and daughter Rajdulari, residents of Aandhi village in Manda, were strangled to death by unidentified miscreants on the night of May 6 last year. After this sensational murder, the police officials along with the crime branch went to the spot for investigation but failed to get any clue to the killers.

Police teams took all the people around and questioned them in custody. Mobile call details were also checked but it yielded no result. Six police teams, including SOG, were pressed into service in the investigation but they could not get success in solving the triple murder case till date.

The names of some people were reported to the police as suspects but their role in the murder could not be established.

About 13 months after the incident, the criminals have again acted in such a way that the family is terror-struck. On Tuesday night, the miscreants knocked the door till for a long time and pushed it with the hands as well as feet. They then went away threatening the family with dire consequences.

Ram Bahadur Yadav, son of deceased Nandlal Yadav, has sent letters to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, SSP of Prayagraj, circle officers of Meja and Manda, informing them about the threats and requesting for security.

Lord Jagannath 'falls sick' after jalabhishek

PNS ■ VARANASI

For the second consecutive year, no major programmes are being organised this year also in Lord Jagannath temple at Assi due to the prevailing novel coronavirus pandemic. Only traditional formalities were performed by the members of the priest family by offering jalabhishek of Lord Jagannath with Gangajal on Thursday.

In the morning, after the mangala aarti and offering of sweets, fruits and flowers to the deity, the priest worshiped as per tradition. As Lord Jagannath has symbolically fallen ill due to excessive bathing, he will not give darshan to the devotees for a fortnight. The door of the temple is already closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As per the traditional beliefs, due to excess love shown by the devotees and offering of jalabhishek, Lord Jagannath falls sick ahead of the

annual rath yatra and is isolated for 14 days during which he takes rest in closed temple premises. When he recovers, he is offered 'parval ka kada' and then his 'doli yatra' (procession) is carried out, along with his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra to his in-laws place at Beniram ke Bagicha near Rathayatra where from the next day, a three-day grand Rathayatra Mela is organised. It is also known as one of the lakha melas (in which lakhs of people turn out) of this holy city.

This year also the temple management has decided to postpone the Rathayatra Mela, scheduled to begin from July 10. Besides, no prasad will be distributed among the devotees. All the rituals will only be performed within the temple premises and no devotees would be allowed to enter.

The decision has disappointed scores of traders and others who have waited for the

fair for several months. During the festival, a large number of shops selling 'nankatai', traditional hand-made cookies, earn good money. Besides, the traders who hope to earn good money by installing swings etc during the festival have also been saddened.

In 1780, Pandit Nityanand, the chief priest and manager of Jagannath temple in Puri, visited this holy city and then set up a temple of Lord Jagannath near Assi. The Rath Yatra Mela was started in 1802 and since then it has continued without any break except last year and this year.

During the festival the idols are kept on a chariot. After the mela, the traditional rath is being kept in a room at Shaheed Udyan for the last few years. Earlier, it was kept near Rathayatra crossing but due to traffic jams, its site has been changed. The chariot is made of wood and kept on 14 wheels near Rathayatra crossing during the festival.

Security drill organised for President's train

Allahabad (PNS): A security drill was organised at the railway station here as President Ram Nath Kovind is scheduled to visit his native village Paraunkh in Kanpur Dehat in a special train on June 25.

The President of India, will embark on a journey to Kanpur on this special presidential train on Friday from Safdarjung railway station in Delhi. The train will make two stopovers, at Jhijnjhak and Rura in Kanpur Dehat, where President Ram Nath Kovind will interact with his old acquaintances from his school days and from early days of his social service. The two stopovers are close to the President's birthplace, village Paraunkh in Kanpur Dehat, where two functions to felicitate him are scheduled on June 27. As he boards the train, the President will be travelling down the memory lane that will cover a span of seven decades of his life right from his childhood to holding the top constitutional position in the country.

Unorganised workers extended cashless treatment facility

Varanasi (PNS): The state government has decided to extend to the unorganised workers and their families cashless facility for treatment up to Rs 5 lakh. The unorganised workers will also be provided financial assistance of maximum Rs 2 lakh in case of death or physical disability in an accident.

The Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008 and Unorganised Workers Social Security Rules and Regulations, 2016, covers a total of 45 categories of unorganised including cobblers, tailors, washer men, hair-dressers, street vendors, cooks, rickshaw-pullers, fruit-vegetable sellers, hawkers, etc, according to Assistant Labour Commissioner Devbrat Yadav and the beneficiaries can avail of the facility of these schemes by getting their names registered online on the website/portal of UP State Social Security Board (UPSSB) directly or through common service centre.

The beneficiaries are required to furnish a photo-

graph and details documents such as Aadhaar card, ration card, bank pass-book and phone number at the time of registration while keeping the mobile phone with them for the OTP. They are also required to mention the name and Aadhaar number of the nominee while getting registered. They will have to pay Rs 60 at the time of registration, including Rs 10 as registration fee and Rs 50 as the contribution for five years at the rate of Rs 10 per year.

The UPSSB is currently running two schemes, Mukhyamantri Jan Arogya Yojana and Mukhyamantri Accident Insurance Scheme, the DLC said, adding that the beneficiaries and their families could avail the facility of treatment up to Rs 5 lakh and avail the facility of maximum Rs 2 lakh in case the death or physical disability of the insured worker in accident. They can contact the office of the additional labour commissioner in case they face any problem in getting registered.

Ganga, Yamuna rising

Allahabad (PNS): The water level of Ganga and Yamuna increased further on Thursday. The highest rise in water level was in Phaphamau while there was a slight increase in the water level of Yamuna in Naini.

With the rising water, the scope of erosion of ghats is increasing. The makeshift platforms have been removed from the ghats from Phaphamau to Sangam.

According to the flood control office of the Irrigation department, the water released from Haridwar, Narora and Kanpur is coming to Prayagraj hence the rivers have swelled. About 3.50 lakh cusecs of water has been released from Haridwar, Narora and Kanpur.

On Thursday, the water level in Phaphamau increased by 37 cm in 24 hours.

UPPSC guidelines for interviews

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

Keeping in view the COVID-19 pandemic, the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission (UPPSC) has issued a guideline for candidates appearing in interviews.

As per a statement released by Satya Prakash, Deputy Secretary and interview in-charge of the UPPSC, candidates should bring a RT-PCR negative report to appear in the interview. The report should not be more than four days old.

Candidates should come for the interview wearing face masks and face cover. They will not be allowed to bring any other item.

Candidates having symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath will not be admitted. The rule of maintaining a six-foot distance will have to be followed during the interview. Hands will be washed or sanitised at the designated place. While coughing or sneezing, the person concerned would cover the mouth

Villagers response to vaccination lukewarm

Allahabad (PNS): The government's emphasis is on administering Covid vaccine to everyone above the age of 18 years. The focus is more on rural areas as there are not many health facilities there. But the rural people are still not willing to take the jab even when vaccination camps are organised near their homes.

The special camps organised at the development block level are disappointing the health department in the trial phase itself. Vaccination camps have been set up in villages so that people do not have to travel far to get vaccinated. Publicity is also done but the villagers are refraining from taking advantage

of it. In three days, the total vaccination in special camps and community health centres was around 18,000. Chief Medical Officer Dr Prabhakar Rai said that the response of the villagers to the Covid vaccine was disappointing. He said this was the situation when the camps were being set up in the village itself and registration was also being done on the spot.

He said the village heads and the youth should take the responsibility of motivating villagers to go for vaccination. He hoped the number of people reaching the camp for the vaccine would increase soon.

the dustbin. Spitting around the premises is prohibited.

32-month old girl gets jab during vaccine trial

PNS ■ KANPUR

Amid the trials of the domestically developed paediatric Covaxin being conducted in Kanpur, the youngest girl aged 2 years and 8 months, received the jab on Wednesday. She is the daughter of a private doctor of Kanpur Dehat.

Five kids, aged between 2 and 6 (three girls and two boys) were administered the vaccine doses as a part of the trials going on at Prakhar Hospital in Arya Nagar.

The three age groups selected for the vaccine are 12-18 years, 6-12 years and 2-6 years. During the screening for the 2-6 years age group, only six kids were selected but later one child was dropped from the list. Chief investigator of the trials and former Director-General (Medical Education) Dr VN Tripathi said that 15 more kids in the 2-6 age group would be inoculated in the coming days. The next screening would include a child aged two years. After immunisation, the safety

Covid third wave to be a big challenge: Kala

PNS ■ KANPUR

The new Principal of GSVM Medical College, Prof Sanjay Kala, arrived in Kanpur to take over charge from the outgoing principal Dr RB Kamal. He will be holding the charge of SN Medical College Agra simultaneously.

He was head of the general surgery department in GSVM Medical College earlier and is familiar with the hospital and its working on account of his rich experience.

It may be mentioned here that Dr Kamal has been shifted to Motilal Nehru Medical College in Prayagraj. He had

profile of all these children will be checked and analysed, Dr

taken over the charge from GSVM Medical College principal, Dr Arati Lalchandani, was removed for issuing a statement to media persons which became viral and cost her the seat.

Dr Kamal was sent in her place and had been continuing for quite some time when several complaints were made against not only patients and their relatives but a few prominent political leaders who had strongly demanded his removal. It was alleged that he had refused to be influenced by local leaders who were demanding out of turn treatment, admission and oxygen.

Tripathi added. As of now, 15 volunteers

The new principal said it was certainly a big challenge to take up this post as with the expected third wave of COVID-19, massive efforts and planning had to be made to counter the virus and reduce loss of life.

He said the staff of the medical college was very familiar to him and he hoped that they would work as a team to ensure they were prepared for the third wave.

He took a formal round of the medical college on his arrival. He was welcomed by Chief Medical Superintendent and Vice-Principal Dr Richa Giri and several other doctors.

from the 6-12 and 12-18 age groups have been given the

first dose of the vaccine. According to reports, all these children were administered a 0.5 ml dosage of the vaccine. Amongst the recipients of the vaccine in the current trial was the girl aged 2 years and 8 months. The group of volunteers has kids of bank officials and businessmen too.

This schedule would be continued with the inoculation of more young kids, Dr Tripathi said. Ensuring the safety of the children, the trials are being conducted in accordance with the rules framed by the Drug Controller of India and international clinical trial guidelines.

First, RT-PCR tests are conducted on all the kids and the process moves ahead only after they test negative. Prior to vaccination, blood samples are collected and sent to ICMR Delhi for testing. Once the vaccine doses are given, the safety profile of the kids is prepared. Depending on this, the efficacy of the vaccine for developing immunity amongst kids will be inferred.

District jail inspected

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A joint inspection of district jail was conducted by DJ Lal Chand Gupta, DM Praveen Kumar Laxkar, SP Ajay Kumar Singh and CMO Dr PD Gupta on Wednesday. During the inspection the barracks, toilets, urinals, bath-



rooms, hospital, store etc. In barrack No 1 the officers interacted with prisoners and became aware with the arrangements. In kitchen they tested the meal and expressed satisfaction with food material. During the inspection of jail

hospital the officers found 24 patients admitted there. The jail superintendent was directed to make facilities available to prisoners as per jail manual and follow Covid-19 prevention norms. CO (City), SHO Katra Kotwali and SHO City Kotwali were also present during the inspection.

via a congenial atmosphere to their children for their overall development. ALC RK Pathak apprised that 1,398 children of labourers aged between nine and 14 years had been identified who had dropped out of the school and proposal had been sent for 48 special training centres to teach them. He said in year 2020-21, ₹33,05,01,054 had been distributed among 38,139 labourers. The ALC said that 11 bonded labourers had been freed under Chunar tehsil and five under Sadar tehsil. Throwing light over different welfare schemes for labourers he said the department was providing ₹1,000 to boys and ₹1,200 to girl students aged between 8 and 18 years per month and ₹6,000 per annum as additional help to the students of classes VIII, IX and X. The meeting was attended by the CMO, all SDMs and other officials concerned.

NABBED: Katra Kotwali police arrested a chain snatcher and recovered a golden chain along with intoxicating powder on Wednesday. Interacting with media at Katra Kotwali ASP (City) Sanjay Kumar said chain of Radha Devi Modanwal had been snatched on June 17. He said the police took the incident as a challenge and formed a team for working out the case. He patrolled the back of SHO Swaminath Prasad and Laldiggi outpost incharge Sanjeev Singh as that the team became successful not only in nabbing the criminal but in recovering the snatched chain too which was identified by the victim.

Schools to reopen with parents' consent

PNS ■ KANPUR

President of the Pradhanacharya Parishad, Dr Girish Mishra, said as per the Uttar Pradesh government decision, schools will be reopened for classes 9 to 12 from July 1, but only with the parents' consent. He said all those children who were being sent to school should put up their parent's consent letters and must wear masks, hand sanitisers and maintain physical distance when in school.

It may be mentioned that schools were opened earlier this year at the end of the first phase of COVID-19 and only classes 9 to 12 were run strictly as per the Covid protocol.

Similarly, keeping in view the sharp decline of the active cases in the past 10 days, it has been decided that schools should be reopened mainly to facilitate admissions. The admission process has totally derailed this session.

However, in view of the Central Board of Secondary Education decision to tabulate Class XII marks sheet as per its directive, teachers have been asked to come to schools for the tabulation of marks which is quite a complicated work and takes time. The board has directed that all the results of Class XII should be ready latest by July 8 so that by the end of the month the CBSE can declare results.

UP Merchants Chamber urges govt to develop industrial plots in time

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Merchants Chamber of Uttar Pradesh has made an appeal to the UP government to ensure that the development of the industrial land plots should be within a stipulated time frame. It strongly favoured a single window service so that work could be done systematically and at the earliest for which the entrepreneur need not run around. It also demanded that till the development process was not carried out by the government the interest on loans should be waived.

The members were of the view that the Trans-Ganga City land plot rate fixed by the government at Rs 10,850 per square metre was too much and thus demanded that the price be fixed at Rs 8,000 per square metre.

They strongly favoured an increase in the number of installments which was

presently decided by the government at 12 six-monthly installments and appealed that it should be made at least 20 installments.

They said the development work was being carried out at a snail's pace and this was a major hindrance for the entrepreneurs to invest in such land plots and thus appealed to the government that a date be fixed for total completion of the basic development works. They also sought a moratorium period as well. They said there should be no two per cent penalty in the delay and the rate of interest should be 12 per cent. The members also demanded that Trans-Ganga City should have hotels, clubs and other modern centres which were essential for the present lifestyle.

Prominent among those who took part in the meeting were Mukul Tandon, Atul Kanodia, Sushil Sharma, RK Jalan and PM Gupta.

SAJ Group to plant 1.5 lakh saplings

Kanpur (PNS): In a notable initiative aimed at preserving the environment, Seth Anandram Jaipuria Group of Educational Institutions plans to plant 1.5 lakh saplings across its network in the summer of 2021.

The drive in fact is an annual event at Seth Anandram Jaipuria Group, which is a conglomerate of schools, pre-schools, business institutes, and teacher's training academies spread over North India. Vinod Malhotra, senior advisor of Seth Anandram Jaipuria Group of Educational Institutions said that each year the students, teachers and staff of the group planted thousands of saplings especially during monsoon season when the country observed Van Mahotsav. He said this year they were taking the target up by several notches.

The group presently has 20,000 students and 805 teachers and each one of them will plant 7 to 10 saplings this monsoon to reach the whopping target of 1.50 lakh saplings. Malhotra claimed that this would be one of the biggest tree plantation drives carried out by a chain of schools in North India.

Malhotra said it was extremely important for all to understand that everything one needed for survival and sustenance was provided by Mother Nature -- air, food and water. He said over a period of time, a huge amount of debt got accumulated and one never thought seriously in terms of paying it back. He said one of the methods of paying back the debt was to start planting trees, especially in the plantation season.

Organic farming to get momentum

Kanpur (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to take the help of NGOs and other organisations for the promotion of organic farming. In the first phase all the NGOs working in this direction will be brought on a common platform and linked to Rashtriya Aajivika Mission (RAM). A pilot project has already been launched in a village in Kanpur Dehat.

The RAM mantra will be spread in the villages with the support of agricultural scientists and experts so that organic farming can take off in a big way. Assistant DPO Sudhir Divedi said it had also been decided to set up an agriculture and processed food export development authority which would ensure that the products were not only grown with use of organic farming but kept away from pesticides and insecticides

so that they could be acceptable for exports.

He said this would not only open the doors for exports of food grains, fruits and vegetables but also provide immense opportunities for employment. He said one NGO had made forays in this direction and with the help of this and other groups the government would focus on improving food grain yield and also ensure that it was purely grown by organic methods. He said once the trend picked up other villages would be soon taken up and given all technical help as well. He said the basic difference between organic and non-organic (conventional) farming was how food was produced. He said organic food like vegetables, fruits, eggs, milk and meat was produced without man-made pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers.

Mask made of gold to 'protect' Golden Baba from coronavirus!

PNS ■ KANPUR

Manoj Sengar, also known as Manojanand Maharaj alias Golden Baba, of Kakadeo has spent Rs 5 lakh to get a mask made of gold that will protect him from the novel coronavirus. Weighing 101 grams and 5 ratti, the mask has been made by special artisans of Mumbai.

Golden Baba put on the mask in a religious ceremony held amid chanting of Vedic mantras. On the upper side of the mask, a picture of Lord Shiva is engraved.

Golden Baba's huge collection of gold items is common knowledge. He has two armed bodyguards by his side for protection at all times. His love for gold is the reason why he is known as 'Golden Baba of Kanpur' and his latest extrav-

agance has earned him yet another title -- 'Bappi Lahiri of UP'.

According to Manoj Sengar, this mask made of gold has a sanitiser solution inside it, which will work for two years. Adding to the act that qualifies the benchmark of eccentricity, Sengar has named his Covid armour as 'Shiv Sharan Mask'.

On the occasion of Janmashtami, he has been distributing the idols of Laddoo Gopal among hundreds of devotees free of cost for the past several years by asking them to swear for the Lord's 'vidhivat puja'.

His passion for gold is believed to parallel that of Bappi Lahiri, as he wears jewellery weighing nearly two kilograms on a daily basis.

The collection of gold items owned by Golden Baba includes four chains which altogether weigh around 250 grams, a conch shell, a fish, a locket of Lord Hanuman, a pair of earrings, a revolver handle, spectacles and three belts. Apart from these, he also owns a pair of shoes made of silver. It is believed that he ardently watched Mahabharat in the 1990s and his taste for expensive metals is said to have got inspiration from there.

Sengar has often received threats from anti-social elements owing to his bountiful collection which he thwarts by staying under guard all the time.

Meanwhile, former principal of GSVM Medical College Dr Arti Lalchandani said nobody should wear a mask made of metal.

LIC launches IT platform for group business operations

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Life Insurance Corporation of India crossed another milestone by embarking upon a new centralised web-based, work-flow-based IT platform for its group business operations.

It was inaugurated by LIC Chairman MR Kumar who launched the go live of the project e-PGS in a formal ceremony.

The first receipt was handed over to IDBI Managing Director and CEO Rakesh Sharma which was generated on the new IT platform to the bank as master policy holder in one of its group policies.

The inaugural ceremony was joined online from 204 locations across the country by all the zonal managers, executive directors in-charge of central office departments, regional managers, unit heads and all employees of Group Business Vertical of LIC.

The new technology platform was designed to provide for centralised collection and



The Chairman of the Life Insurance Corporation of India, MR Kumar handing over the first receipt generated under ePGS to Rakesh Sharma, MD and CEO, IDBI Bank

payment accounting with high level of bank integration through 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 the 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 green channel

with end-to-end processing at customer level itself without manual intervention from the insurer's office. Individual members of various group funded schemes and annuities under group annuity schemes will also be able to view, on a real time basis, their accounts, fund position, annuity position etc through the customer portal. All the features and services will be launched in a phased manner spread over the next three months.

Managing Director Vipin Anand said the new technolo-

gy platform was designed to cater to the expectations of technology intensive corporate customers and would change the face of customer servicing on the group business platform. He said the new system was 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. KS Nagnyal, Executive Director (group business) said that group business vertical of the LIC, which accounted for 77.69 per cent share of group business of the life insurance industry, would leverage the new IT platform for enhancing the customer experience at a world class level and the same would support in marketing and servicing of group business operations.

The group business vertical of the LIC specially caters to various term insurance needs and retirement solutions for employers on group platforms. It is felt that the launch of the new IT platform marks the beginning of a new era in customer servicing for group business. Prominent among those present included Vipin Anand, Mukesh Gupta, Raj Kumar and S Mohanty. The function was attended by Sujit Bakshi, country head of Tech Mahindra along with their team, Vishakha Limaye, executive director of ICICI Bank and the bank team.

Online quiz held

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

International Yoga Day was celebrated enthusiastically by the residents of NTPC Rihand. Keeping Covid-19 pandemic in mind, residents of Rihand Nagar celebrated it by doing yoga in their respective homes. The Rihand management gave a message to the people of Rihand that all aspects of life are controlled by yoga. Besides, yoga is important in building a healthy body and mind. Senior officers, NTPC personnel and their family members, union and association actively participated in yoga. The children also showed great enthusiasm for yoga asanas. Online quiz was also organised by NTPC Rihand in which people participated. The president and members of Vartika Mahila Mandal also showed their enthusiasm by doing yoga on Yoga Day.



Yoga programme organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

On the occasion of seventh International Yoga Day the Suhasini Sangh of NTPC Vinhyachal organised a yoga programme under the chairmanship of its president Mridula Johri. During it as per the guidelines of the Government of India all precautions in view of Covid-19 were taken and social distancing was maintained. All women enthusiastically participated in this programme. Mridula Johri said yoga has a very important impact on our lifestyle. It helps in controlling our body, mind and spirit and keeps the body flexible. All members practised various 'asanas' of yoga such as Pranayama, Surya Namaskar, Tadasana, Trikonasana, Pawanmuktasana etc. On the occasion vice-president Suhasini Sangh Dolo Chapa Bandhopadhyaya, adviser Tiny Tons Suman Bhatia, adviser, Welfare, Vinita Subedar, Anju Mishra, all committee members and senior members were also present. Treasurer Shilpa Kohli and joint secretary Kusum expressed their gratitude to all senior members.



Dirty politics: Over 30 pigeons owned by boy killed in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

In a gruesome incident, activists belonging to the ruling CPI(M) in Kerala slaughtered more than 30 ornamental pigeons which were being reared by 11-year-old Christi Devassia of Kanjikkuzhi village in Alappuzha district.

"Neighbours came to know about the incident only on Tuesday as the family members were under quarantine. Covid-19 had claimed the life of Joseph, father of Devassia," said Asha Mukesh, ward member of the Panchayat, the first person to reach out to the family. She said the incident happened during the intervening night of June 2 and 3 right under the nose of V S Achuthanandan, former Chief Minister, whose ancestral home is in the vicinity.

The slaughtered pigeons consisted of rare varieties like Boccario, American Fantail, Indian Fantail, Hungarian Mix and Modena which were painstakingly collected by the sixth standard student from friends and well-wishers.

"All the pigeons were my pets and used to play with me as if they were my own brethren," a weeping Christie told *The Pioneer*. His sister Sanjana said the birds never left Christie alone and were with him throughout the day. "It was on the morning of June 3 we saw the carcasses of the birds when our mother went to feed them," said Sanjana. Since the entire family was under quarantine and isolation, they could not communicate to the outside world anything about the incident, she said. The six-member family was under isolation following the death of Christie's grandfather Joseph and there was no one to help them to get food and essen-

tial materials. The needs of the family were taken care of by Seva Bharathi, a Sangh Parivar outfit. Seva Bharathi volunteers are the frontline warriors against the pandemic in Kerala and ensure that help reaches those in distress.

Devassia's family members are fellow travellers of the CPI(M). But during the Covid-19 pandemic, the party activists kept off the house which put the former in crisis. "We attended to their call for help and offered them all assistance despite the fact that all family members were in quarantine," said Jayakrishnan, Seva Bharathi, district secretary, Alappuzha.

The slaughtering of the birds is seen as a stern warning issued by party leadership to its cadres and fellow travellers not to have anything to do with Sangh Parivar as part of its efforts to eradicate Hindu communalism, said Mukesh. They had ordered Devassia and family not to have any kind of association with them. Since Devassia did not pay any attention to the party diktat, the CPI(M) commissars struck back by slaughtering the ornamental doves being reared by Christie. "My son is in a state of shock because of the demise of my father with whom he had close relations. The two were attached to each other and it was the grandfather who initiated Christie to the world of birds," said Devassia.

Downgrading J&K to UT brought bad name: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

On a day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was meeting the Kashmir leaders Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday questioned the BJP Government's decision to downgrade Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory saying the act had brought bad name for India worldwide.

Banerjee said, "What was the need to strip Jammu and Kashmir of statehood? People need freedom. If freedom is taken away, then everything is lost. It is not beneficial for the country," adding how the situation that followed after it lost its statehood hit its tourism industry. She said (as a result of the situation) "no tourist was able to visit Kashmir for the last two years" and attacked the BJP for running an "autocratic" regime. "Just like the vaccine crisis, this autocracy has also defamed the country," she said. Curiously Banerjee would not raise the question of Article 370 or 35A, which ensured special status for the Himalayan region.

In a separate development the Chief Minister also announced the

launching of ₹10 lakh credit card for the students of the State that would enable them to pursue their higher studies.

"The students are our pride... in order to help them in their higher studies and researches the Government has decided to afford them a credit card facility of ₹10 lakh... the Government will stand a guarantor for them and the scheme will start from June 30 onwards," the Chief Minister said on Thursday adding the scheme would continue for the students till the age of 40 where after they would be required to return the loan after getting jobs."

Meanwhile the Chief Minister has also written to the Prime Minister seeking urgent steps to ensure that Covaxin got the approval of the World Health Organisation. Covaxin is still not accepted in several countries.

"I have written to the Hon'ble PM today seeking his intervention for an early approval for COVAXIN from WHO," the Chief Minister tweeted adding how "A large number of students travel abroad for pursuing higher studies and amid an already critical situation, we must take every possible

step to ease their lives." In her letter to the Prime Minister written on Thursday the Chief Minister wrote, "I request for your kind intervention so that an early approval is

received for Covaxin from WHO and students do not face any problem. This will also benefit people travelling abroad for job, business, education and any other purpose."

Heated arguments in HC in Nandi election case

Kolkata: With Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee virtually appearing in the proceedings — as directed earlier by the Bench of Justice Kaushik Chanda—Nandigram elections case, hearing for which, began in Calcutta High Court on Thursday. This, even as the contention of the petitioner's lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi that the case be transferred to a different court on the grounds of Judge's saffron antecedents was strongly refuted by Justice Chanda who asked as to why the issue was not raised on the very first day of hearing.

The Judge also wondered whether a Judges' past political con-

nections should be a valid ground to question one's judicial integrity. "I am asking Abhishek Manu Singhvi that if you felt that the Judge cannot deliver you justice, then why didn't you raise it on the first day," the Judge who had been a former Additional Solicitor General of India said.

He also asked whether Singhvi's connection with a particular political party (Congress) could impact his professional approach. Banerjee and the Trinamool Congress have challenged the results of Nandigram elections and demanded its recounting which was however refused by the Election Commission. PNS

PARADIP PORT TRUST
e-TENDERING NOTICE
Online tenders in three bid system i.e. (1) EMD Bid (2) Technical Bid (3) Price Bid are invited from manufacturers for supply of different types of rollers and rollers stand. The last date and time of submission of the tender is 17.15 Hours on Dt. 09.07.2021. For details, log on to website: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
Sr. Dy. Materials Manager
PPT/PR/48/21-22 Dt. 24.06.2021

U.P. POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
e-TENDERING NOTICE
Following E-Tenders are invited from the experienced/reputed contractors for the execution of following works:- For more details login on website www.tender.up.nic.in. 1. Very short term E-Tender No. 12/AETC/2021-22:- Plantation of various 220/132 kV sub-stations under ETD, Jaunpur. Earnest Money: Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty six) only. 2. Very short term E-Tender No. 13/AETC/2021-22:- Plantation of various 132 kV sub-stations under ETD-II, Jaunpur. Earnest Money: Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty six) only. Earnest money will be in the shape of RTGS/NEFT duly pledged in favour of Superintending Engineer, Etecy, Transmission Circle, UPPTCL, Azamgarh. Tenderers can upload their tender bids against very short term E-Tender No. 12 & 13 upto 17.00 hrs. of 30.06.2021 and same will be opened on dated 01.07.2021 at 13.00 Hrs. & 14.00 Hrs. Information regarding opening of Tender Bid Part-II i.e. Price Bid will be given on above e-website in due course of time. Please visit website www.tender.up.nic.in for details/download and for any other corrections/amendments/modification/time extension till the date of submission of tender. In case the tender opening date is holiday or the undersigned remain out of headquarters, the date of opening of the tender will stand extended to next working day. Undersigned has the right to reject/divide any tender without assigning any reason therefor. Conditional tenders shall not be accepted. SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (TRANS), AZAMGARH No. 794 Dt. 24.6.2021 SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF NATION.

Municipal Council Dholpur
No. 1726-28 Notice Inviting Tender (E-18-24) Date: 17.06.21
M.I.T. is invited on behalf of Government of Rajasthan by Municipal Council Dholpur for Manpower supply in Municipal Council Dholpur from Registered Contractor the amount of work is between 5 lakh to 130 lakh and UBN No. are under UBN No. DLB2122SLRC07125, DLB2122SLRC07164, DLB2122SLRC07166, DLB2122SLRC07170, DLB2122SLRC07172, DLB2122SLRC07175, DLB2122SLRC07178. For detail visit www.sppr.rajasthan.gov.in & www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.
R.O.No.Samwad/C/2581/2021-2022 Date: 23/06/2021
Commissioner Municipal Council Dholpur

बिहार स्टेट मिल्क को-ऑपरेटिव फेडरेशन लि०
अधो-डिप्लोमेट कॉम्प्लेक्स,
पोस्ट-बी० भी० कोलज, पटना-800 014,
दूरभाष- (0812) 2228953, 2224083, 2228347, 2223087
फैक्स-2224017, email:marketingcomfed@gmail.com
निविदा सूचना
पशु आहार कारखाना, रॉची एवं विहिया के लिए कच्चे सामग्रियों की आपूर्ति हेतु निविदा सूचना जारी की जा रही है। नये आपूर्तिकर्ता जो इस संस्था को कच्चे सामग्रियों की आपूर्ति करना चाहते हैं अपना आवेदन, पैन नम्बर एवं जी.एस.टी. नं. की छाया प्रति एक रु. 5500/- का ड्राफ्ट (जिसमें रु. 5000/-—सिक्युरिटी मनी एवं रु. 500/-—रजिस्ट्रेशन हेतु है) उपरोक्त पते पर भेजकर निबन्धन भी करा सकते हैं। सामग्रियों का विवरण एवं शर्तों की जानकारी के लिये निविदा प्रश्न हमारे वेबसाइट www.sudha.coop से डाउनलोड (download) किया जा सकता है। निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 15.07.2021 के संस्था 5.00 बजे तक है। प्राप्त निविदायें दिनांक 16.07.2021 को 11.00 बजे प्रातः काल उपस्थित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष इस कार्यालय में खोली जायेगी।
प्रबन्ध निदेशक

मधुबनी विद्युत वितरण निगम लि०, हरदोई ई निविदा सूचना
अधोहस्तक्षरी द्वारा अनुमदी एवं कार्य में दक्ष ठेकेदारों से ई-निविदायें दो भागों में उपरो सरकार की पोर्टल etender.up.nic.in पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा सूचना www.mvvnli.in पर भी अवलोकित की जा सकती है। सभी निविदाओं को अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि 05.07.2021 समय 17:00 बजे तक तथा प्रथम भाग खुलने की तिथि 06.07.2021 समय 14:00 बजे नियत है। निविदा में संशोधन, तिथि विस्तारण, पुनःप्रकाशन आदि की सूचना भी उक्त पोर्टल पर एवं वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध करायी जायेगी।
1. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या 43/विमिहं/2021-22 :- अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण खण्ड-प्रथम, हरदोई के कार्यालय उपयोगार्थ एक नग डीजल चलित चार पहिया वाहन मय ड्राइवर सहित 12 माह के लिये किराये पर आपूर्ति। निविदा मूल्य रु० 1180.00 जीएसटी सहित एवं धरोहर धनराशि रु० 2640.00।
2. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या 44/विमिहं/2021-22 :- उपखण्ड अधिकारी, विद्युत वितरण उपखण्ड-बिलग्राम, हरदोई के कार्यालय उपयोगार्थ एक नग डीजल चलित चार पहिया वाहन मय ड्राइवर सहित 12 माह के लिये किराये पर आपूर्ति। निविदा मूल्य रु० 1180.00 जीएसटी सहित एवं धरोहर धनराशि रु० 2640.00।
3. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या 45/विमिहं/2024-22 :- उपखण्ड अधिकारी, विद्युत वितरण उपखण्ड-मल्लावां, हरदोई के कार्यालय उपयोगार्थ एक नग डीजल चलित चार पहिया वाहन मय ड्राइवर सहित 12 माह के लिये किराये पर आपूर्ति। निविदा मूल्य रु० 1180.00 जीएसटी सहित एवं धरोहर धनराशि रु० 2640.00।
4. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या 46/विमिहं/2021-22 :- विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, हरदोई के कार्यालय में स्थापित कम्प्यूटर, लैपटॉप एवं प्रिन्टर्स के अनुसंधान, प्रिन्टर्स की इक कार्टेज की आपूर्ति एवं रिफिलिंग का कार्य। निविदा मूल्य रु० 1180.00 जीएसटी सहित एवं धरोहर धनराशि रु० 2000.00।
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, हरदोई पत्रांक - 1316 दिनांक - 23.6.2021 राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Auction Notice No. 05/2021-22
E-Auction Program for the Month of July -2021
All prospective bidders are invited to participate in the on-line public auctions being conducted for sale of scrap material.
E-Auction Dates Jurisdiction of lots Contact No.
14 & 29 July 2021 Dy. CMM/GSD/Gorakhpur 0551-2283558
8 & 24 July 2021 Dy. CMM/GSD/Izzatnagar 0581-2518138
6, 15 & 28 July 2021 Sr. DMM/Lucknow 0522-2233113
13 & 23 July 2021 Sr. DMM/Varanasi 0542-2224819
14 & 29 July 2021 Sr. DMM/Izzatnagar 0581-2518104
Type of material: Scrap Rail, Cast Iron, Melting, MS, condemned Rolling Stock (Coaches, Wagons and Locomotives), Turning & Boring, Non-Ferrous such as copper, Aluminium, Batteries etc. In the event of Auction not being completed on the same day, Auction July be continued on the subsequent days also. Details of Auction catalogue, Procedure and Conditions of Sale are available at www.ireps.gov.in. This auction program is also available on North Eastern Railway website www.ner.indianrailways.gov.in.
CPRO/S-16 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Gorakhpur
About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955
"Never travel on roof and foot boards"

Delhi Jal Board : Govt. of NCT of Delhi
Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil)-SDW-NW
Opp RBI Colony Shalimar Bagh, New Delhi-110088
Ph No. 011-27491437, e-mail: eeecsdsnw@gmail.com
"STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing and Maintain Hand Hygiene"
PRESS NO.08 (21-22)
EE(C)SDW-NW
Item No. Name of work Amount put to Tender (in Rs.) Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1. Removal of sludge and repair and maintenance of damaged brick work and plaster of drying beds at Phase-I at Coranation Pillar NSTP Tender ID 2021-DJB 204858.1 32,53,450/- 24-06-2021 15-07-2021 Up to 03:00 PM
Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) (Anil Kumar Sharma) Executive Engineer (Civil) SDW-NW
Advt. No. J.S.V. 136(2021-22)

कार्यालय नगर निगम देहरादून
पत्रांक:146/भूमि-2021 24.06.2021
सार्वजनिक निविदा सूचना
नगर निगम क्षेत्रान्तर्गत विभिन्न स्थलों पर सूनियोल / होर्डिंग के माध्यम से विज्ञापन प्रदर्शित करने हेतु दिनांक 01.08.2021 से दिनांक 31.07.2023 तक कुल 02 वर्ष हेतु निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि से दिनांक 16.07.2021 की अपरान्त 2.00 बजे तक ई० निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।
क्रम सं० मार्ग का नाम सूनियोल / होर्डिंग हेतु कुल साईट निगम द्वारा विज्ञापन हेतु आरंभित निविदा धनराशि
1 राजपुर रोड-70 साईट, मसूरी डाईवर्जन से मेन राजपुर तक-08 साईट, चकराता रोड-47, साईट, जी०एम०एस०रोड-10, गीधी रोड-10, साईट, सारानपुर रोड-16, साईट हरिद्वार बाईपास रोड-02 साईट, रायपुर रोड-03 साईट, सहस्त्रधार रोड-10 साईट, ससर्काई एण्ड रैस्ट कैम्प-03 साईट, इंदौरी रोड-04 साईट तथा कैंट रोड-01 साईट 184 7,96,16,064/-
निविदा के साथ निविदा सूचना प्रश्न में निर्धारित धनराशि रु० 79,61,607/- की सी०डी०आर० / एफ०डी०आर० संलग्न करनी अनिवार्य होगी। जो नगर आयुक्त नगर निगम, देहरादून के नाम लेंज होगी। निविदायें ई० निविदा के माध्यम से निर्धारित तिथि एवं समय उपलब्ध करायी जायेगी। निविदादाता को निविदा में अंकित समस्त तकनीकी दस्तावेजों एवं निर्धारित धनराशि की एफ०डी०आर० / सी०डी०आर० को मूल रूप में दिनांक 15.07.2021 की अपरान्त 4.00 बजे तक निगम कार्यालय में जमा करवाना अनिवार्य होगा जिसका परीक्षण दिनांक 16.07.2021 के सांय 4.00 बजे गठित समिति के समक्ष किया जायेगा। तकनीकी निविदा के परीक्षण के उपरान्त तकनीकी निविदा में सार्वजनिक निविदाओं की वित्तीय निविदा समिति द्वारा खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न एवं शर्तें विज्ञापित प्रकाशन की तिथि से 200000टेन्डर की वेबसाईट से भी डाउनलोड की जा सकती है अथवा किसी भी कार्यालय में नगर निगम कार्यालय में दिनांक 14.07.2021 सांय 4.00 बजे तक प्राप्त की जा सकती है। निविदा ई० निविदा के माध्यम से www.uktender.gov.in पर उपलब्ध करायी जायेगी।
नगर आयुक्त, नगर निगम, देहरादून

Survey of migratory tribal population initiated in J&K
Jammu: Jammu & Kashmir Government has initiated first enumeration and survey of migratory tribal population in higher reaches with an aim to formulate a plan for extending benefits to migratory population for their socio-economic upliftment. The survey will serve as baseline for allocation of funds for different schemes planned to cover the migratory population. Tribal Affairs Department has earmarked a budget of ₹3 Cr for the first enumeration/ survey of nomadic migratory population for providing targeted benefits and assistance to community in a phased manner. These initiatives include healthcare facilities, livestock health, Rights awareness, education, skill development, tribal products marketing and a number of other support initiatives. Department is also coordinating with districts in Ladakh UT, Punjab and Himachal for information on inter-State/UT migration. Secretary, Tribal Affairs, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary held a detailed interaction with District Nodal Officers (ADCs), Chief Planning Officers, District Statistics & Planning Officer and other officers from all the districts. The Tribal Affairs Department in collaboration with District Administration and District Planning & Statistics organisation has initiated the survey with set deadlines for completion of various stages. A common format developed for the survey includes details related to migration route, family particulars, educational status, health and animal husbandry facilities, Livelihood and skilling requirement among other parameters. On completion of family and smart card with complete family details will be initiated. The smart cards will serve multiple purposes for a range to facilities to be extended to the tribal migratory population. A list of 14 major migratory routes was discussed in the meeting and district teams were asked to minutely work on the migratory routes and suggest facilities required for the population. He also asked for active association of PRIs, stakeholders and community representatives for ensuring fool-proof planning and development as an outcome of the survey. PNS

Amarnath Shrine Board organises Pratham Pooja at holy cave on Jyeshtha Purnima
PNS ■ JAMMU
The Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, Nitishwar Kumar on Thursday performed Pratham Pooja on the auspicious occasion of — Jyeshtha Purnima at Holy Cave, amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras to invoke the blessings of Shri Amarnathji. Hawan was also performed seeking blessings of Baba Amarnathji. Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board has been organising Pratham Pooja on the auspicious occasion of Jyeshtha Purnima every year to seek the blessings of Lord Shiva for the peaceful conduct of the Annual Yatra. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic situation, Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2021 has been cancelled, but the Shrine Board is committed to carry out all religious rituals a per past practice, the CEO, SASB said. The CEO prayed for the good health and well-being of the people. The CEO further said in order to respect the religious sentiments of millions of devotees worldwide, SASB has made all the arrangements for carrying out traditional religious rituals at the Holy Cave.

NAVI MUMBAI AIRPORT NAMING ROW

Farmers threaten to stall airport construction work from Aug 16

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Thousands of farmers on Thursday took out a morcha to the City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) in Navi Mumbai, demanding the naming of Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMAIA) after their leader and late MP D B Patil and threatened to stall the work at airport construction from August 16, if their demand was not met.

A day after the Maharashtra government approved a proposal to allow M/s Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) to operate the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMAIA), the supporters of late Patil staged a protest in front of the CIDCO headquarters against its decision to name NMAIA after late Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray.

The supporters of later D B Patil, working under the aegis of Navi Mumbai International Airport Namakaran Kruti Samiti, demanded the annulment of the decision to name the NMAIA after late Thackeray taken by the CIDCO at its Board meeting.

Acting on a directive by the Shiv Sena-led MVA government, the CIDCO had decided to name the NMAIA

after Thackeray. Subsequently, the State Government had earlier this month formally announced that the new airport would be named after the late Shiv Sena chief.

However, there have been protests by the supporters of late D B Patil against naming the NMAIA after Thackeray. In the first week of June, Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray had called a meeting of a delegation of the protesting farmers. However, the meeting failed, with the farmer-representatives refusing to budge from their stand. The farmers, who took out a morcha to the CIDCO, had earlier planned to gherao the CIDCO Bhavan at CBD Belapur. However, the police stopped the protesters one kilometre away from the CIDCO building.

Not wanting to take any chances, the local police had deployed more than 5,000 police personnel, 500 officers and Reserve Police Force units on roads leading to the CIDCO headquarters. As a fallout of the morcha taken out by the protesting farmers, vehicular traffic on various arterial roads, including the Palm Beach Road, had been diverted. A delegation of the protesting farmers met the CIDCO's Managing Director



Mumbai-Pune Expressway wears a deserted look due to a protest over the naming of the under-construction Navi Mumbai International Airport, in Navi Mumbai on Thursday

and submitted a memorandum, demanding the naming of the NMAIA after late D B Patil. Addressing the protesting farmers, farmer leader and former MP MP Ramsheth Thakur gave an ultimatum to the Maharashtra government and the CIDCO if the new airport was not named after late D B Patil by August 15, the protesting farmers would stall the ongoing construction of the airport.

Meanwhile, it remains to be seen as to what bearing the Maharashtra government's decision to allow M/s Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) to operate the upcoming Navi

Mumbai International Airport (NMAIA) will have on the raging airport renaming controversy. At its weekly meeting presided over by chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, the State Cabinet 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 (NMAIA) in the adjoining Thane-Raigad region.

At the meetin, the MVA Cabinet a go ahead to AAHL to be the new concessionaire

Amarnath Shrine Board organises Pratham Pooja at holy cave on Jyeshtha Purnima

PNS ■ JAMMU

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past practice, the CEO, SASB said. The CEO prayed for the good health and well-being of the people. The CEO further said in

EXTENSION OF PERIODICITY OF SPECIAL EXPRESS TRAINS

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that Railways have decided to extend the periodicity of the run of following Special Express Trains as under:-

Train No. & Name	Notified earlier upto	Extended Upto
05001 Muzaffarpur-Dehradun Special Express	28.06.2021	Till Further Advice
05002 Dehradun-Muzaffarpur Special Express	26.06.2021	Till Further Advice
05005 Gorakhpur-Dehradun Special Express	25.06.2021	Till Further Advice
05006 Dehradun-Gorakhpur Special Express	29.06.2021	Till Further Advice
05023 Gorakhpur-Yeshvantpur Special Express	29.06.2021	Till Further Advice
05024 Yeshvantpur-Gorakhpur Special Express	01.07.2021	Till Further Advice

These Special Trains will be having Fully Reserved Service.

For any kind information such as timings, composition and stoppages enroute passengers are advised to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

1401/21
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CLASS 10, 12 BOARD EXAMS RESULT ISSUE

Declare Class XII results by July 31: SC to States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the State boards to declare internal assessment results of Class 12 examination by July 31, making it clear that there can't be a "fit-all" scheme and each board was autonomous and free to formulate its own evaluation method for students. Stating that it will not pass any direction for having a uniform scheme for assessment across the country, the court directed the state boards to ensure that scheme be formulated at the earliest and not later than 10 days from Thursday.

A bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari observed that each board will have to evolve their own scheme. "We direct the boards to ensure that the scheme be formulated at the earliest and not later than 10 days from today and also declare the internal assessment results by July 31, 2021, like the time line specified for CBSE and CISCE," the bench said in its order.

The top court was hearing a plea which has sought directions to states to not hold board examinations in view of

the Covid-19 pandemic. "We make it clear that each board may formulate their own scheme. However, we further make it clear that we are not endorsing the correctness and validity of scheme that will be formulated by the concerned board..," the bench said.

"During the hearing conducted through video-conferencing, the bench was told by an advocate appearing in the matter that state boards which have cancelled the class 12 examinations amid the pandemic may be asked to have a uniform scheme for assessing students.

"That may not be acceptable because every state board has their own scheme. It cannot be uniform. We are not going to direct for uniform scheme. Each board will have to evolve their own scheme," the bench said, adding that each board is different and autonomous. It said each state boards have experts to advise them and there cannot be a uniform all India scheme for this.

"There cannot be a fit-all scheme," the bench observed, adding, "We have made it clear that each board is autonomous and they will have their own scheme". The counsel appear-

ing for Haryana school education board told the bench that the petitioner is seeking a uniform formula for assessment.

"That we have already made it clear that each board can have their own scheme," the bench said. The court noted in its order that state of Assam has filed an affidavit stating that examinations for class 10 and 12 have been cancelled and scheme is being formulated by the board for internal assessment of marks.

"That be done expeditiously. In addition, the scheme must provide for a mechanism for redressal of grievance of students after declaration of results as done by the CBSE and CISCE," the bench said.

The top court also noted that National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has cancelled the board examinations and is in the process of formulating the scheme for assessment. The court was earlier informed by the Assam and Tripura governments that they have cancelled their state boards of Class 12 exam due to the pandemic.

On June 17, the top court was informed that out of 28 States, six States have already conducted the board exams, 18 states have cancelled them.

Nishank to interact with students via social media today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" will interact with students through social media on Friday and answer queries related to Class 10 and 12 board exams, which were cancelled in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nishank, who is in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) undergoing treatment for post-Covid complications, said students have been sending him messages with their queries and apprehensions.

"Dear students, I am constantly receiving a lot of your messages and information. Also, you have expressed concern about my health. For this, I would like to express my thanks to all of you and say that I am feeling healthy now. Some of your apprehensions have also been expressed in your messages. But was unable to communicate with you due to this ongoing treatment in the hospital. If you have any other query related to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) exams then you can send me on Twitter, Facebook, or also by mail," he said in a series of tweets.

The Union minister informed that he will answer the queries of students on June 25 at 4 pm

through social media. The exams for both class 10 and 12 were cancelled by the CBSE in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. The board has announced its alternative assessment policy for both the classes. While schools have been asked to submit class 10 marks till June 30, the deadline for schools to compile class 12 marks is July 15.

According to the policy for class 12 results, decided by a 13-member panel set up by the board, the theory paper evaluation formula of 30 per cent weightage will be given to class 10 marks, 30 per cent to class 11 marks and 40 per cent weightage to class 12 marks obtained in unit test/mid-term/pre-board examinations.

The CBSE scheme further elaborated that for class 10, the 30 per cent marks based on average theory component of best three performing subjects out of main five subjects will be taken. According to the evaluation criteria announced for class 10 students, while 20 marks for each subject will be for internal assessment as every year, 80 marks will be calculated on basis of the students' performance in various tests or exams throughout the year.

Army plans to buy 1,750 Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicles, 350 light tanks

NEW DELHI : Indian Army on Thursday issued the Request for Information (RFI) to finalise the specifications for acquiring 1,750 Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicles (FICVs) under the Make in India initiative to destroy enemy tanks and carry troops.

The Indian Army says it wants to deploy the vehicles in places like Eastern Ladakh along with desert and amphibious terrain.

The FICV project has been in plans for a long time and the need for a modern troops carrier equipped with tank-busting capabilities was felt during the recent Ladakh conflict.



Due to the experiences in the Ladakh theatre, the Indian Army is also looking at the prospect of acquiring 350 light tanks in a phased manner, along with performance-based logistics, niche technologies, engineering support package, and other maintenance and training requirements.

The Light Tank is planned to be procured under the 'Make-in-India' ethos and spirit of the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) - 2020, the Indian Army has stated.

The Indian Army specified that it wants its less than 25 tonnes tanks to be used for operations in High Altitude Area (HAA), marginal terrain (Rann), amphibious operations, etc.

"The advancement in technology also facilitates that the 'Light Tank' is having weapon systems and protection of adequate capacity and is equipped suitably to operate in current/future threat spectrum, to support combat operations as a weapon system," the RFI issued on April 23 said. Agencies

IN BRIEF

'TIMELY ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS LAUDABLE'
New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday lauded all Government staff involved in timely issuance of passports to citizens notwithstanding the coronavirus pandemic. In an address at an event to mark 'Passport Seva Divas', Jaishankar said the Ministry has integrated 174 Indian embassies and consulates abroad with the passport service programme.

WILL TRY TO EXTRADITE NIRAV MODI EARLY: MEA
New Delhi: After fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi lost the first stage of his extradition appeal in the UK High Court, the Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday said it has noted the decision and will continue its efforts to pursue his early extradition to India to face justice.

BJP LEADER FILES PIL, WANTS CITIZENS' CHARTER
New Delhi: A PIL filed by advocate and BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay in the Supreme Court on Thursday sought direction to the Centre and States to implement a citizens' charter in every public service department to ensure time bound delivery of goods and services.

Centre rubbishes allegations of biased distribution of jabs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Thursday dismissed reports alleging non-transparent distribution of the jabs and clarified that allocation of Covid-19 vaccines to a State is done based on its population, case-load, utilisation efficiency and wastage factors.

It termed the allegations by a certain media of non-transparent distribution of vaccines among states "completely without any basis, and not fully informed".

It said that more than 1.89 crore balance and unutilised Covid-19 vaccine doses are still available with the States and Union territories. "Over two crore vaccine doses have been administered in the first 72 hours of the implementation of the new revised guidelines of the National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme," the ministry said in a statement here.

"Distribution of Covid-19 vaccine is done on the parameters - population of a state, Caseload or disease burden, and State's utilisation efficiency. The allocation is negative-



ly affected by the vaccine wastage," said the statement here.

So far, more than 30 crore (30,33,27,440) vaccine doses have been administered by the Centre to states/UTs since the massive vaccination drive began on January 16. More than 58.34 lakh vaccine doses were given to the eligible beneficiaries on Wednesday, according to the Ministry.

In the new phase of the universalisation of the Covid-19 vaccination drive, the Centre will procure and supply (free of cost) 75 per cent of the vaccines being produced by vaccine manufacturers in the country to states/UTs, it added..

ICMR, NIV to conduct study on Delta Plus' variant, efficacy of jab on it

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To examine the potency of the "Delta Plus" variant of Covid-19 in patients and the efficacy of vaccines on it, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV) will soon conduct a study in this regard.

This comes after the Union Government found Delta Plus cases in Maharashtra (Ratnagiri and Jalgaon) Kerala (Palakkad and Pathanamthitta), Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal and Shivpuri) and also in Karnataka.

"The newly emerged Delta Plus variant has possible increased transmissibility, higher binding capacity to the lung cells and resistance to monoclonal antibody treatment.

"Looking at this scenario, Delta Plus variant could be a concern, and a high watch should be undertaken and containment of affected zone should be done reduce the transmission," Dr Prayaga Yadav, head of the NIV's Maximum Containment Facility, said.

"As per earlier data concerning Delta variant, neutralization was happening with the existing vaccines in India. Though neutralization has dropped, it's enough to protect against Delta variant. Delta



Plus should also behave (in a similar manner). We are working in this direction. We have isolated this variant and we are going to conduct a study soon," according to a report.

Meanwhile, Dr Samiran Panda, an ICMR scientist, said the research body is also closely monitoring neutralisation capabilities of antibodies drawn from vaccine recipients.

"We are examining (virus) samples drawn from various locations to see if they get neutralised by serum from Covid-19 vaccine recipients," he said.

The scientist added that states should implement strict containment around infection clusters involving Delta-plus, continue to quarantine contacts and improve the pace of vaccination in regions reporting

the variant.

Twenty-one cases of the 'Delta plus' variant of Covid-19, considered highly infectious, have been reported in Maharashtra threatening to massively dent the state's fight against the virus as experts warn that this variant may trigger a third wave of the pandemic in the state.

Kerala, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh, too, have reported cases of this deadlier variety. And even though, only about 200 confirmed infections have been detected across the globe, of which 44 are in India, fears remain that the virus mutant may wreak havoc in the near future.

Union Health Ministry on Tuesday advised Maharashtra, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh on Delta plus variant of Covid-19 after a significant number of cases were reported from these states.

Cong should play active role in Covid -19 vaccination: Sonia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday said the party must play an active role in ensuring full Covid-19 vaccination coverage and address vaccine hesitancy wherever evident. She also said that the country needs to prepare for the possible third wave and take proactive measures so that children are spared this calamity. Her comments come in the wake of the BJP accusing the Congress of aiding vaccine hesitancy.

Addressing a meeting of party general secretaries and in-charges of AICC in various States, Sonia called upon party leaders and workers to continue to put pressure on the Union Government to ensure that the daily rate of vaccination trebles so that 75 per cent of the population gets fully vaccinated by end of this year.

"On the pandemic, let me say that it is absolutely essential that our party plays an active role in ensuring full vaccination coverage. At the national level, the daily rate of vaccination has to treble so that 75 per cent of our population gets fully vaccinated by end of this year," she said.

"No doubt, this is dependent entirely on the adequacy



"At the national level, the daily rate of vaccination has to treble so that 75 per cent of our population gets fully vaccinated by end of this year"

of vaccine supply. We must continue to put pressure on the Union government which has, at our party's insistence, finally taken on the responsibility for this. At the same time, we have to ensure that registration takes place, that vaccine hesitancy wherever evident is overcome and vaccine wastage is minimised," she said addressing the party leaders virtually.

Quoting experts, she said they are talking of a possible third wave in a few months from now and some have pointed to the vulnerability of children in the coming months. "This too requires our urgent attention," she said.

Talking about the white paper on Covid management brought out by the Congress, she said it is being translated in other languages. It is very detailed and needs to be disseminated widely. I hope this gets done urgently, she told the leaders.

Referring to the rise in fuel

prices, the Congress chief said it is causing an intolerable burden on people and agitations have been organised to highlight how it is hurting farmers and millions of families. Apart from fuel, the prices of many other essential commodities like pulses and edible oils too have skyrocketed causing widespread distress, she noted.

"This price rise is taking place at a time when livelihoods are lost in unprecedented numbers, when there is mounting unemployment and when economic recovery is not a reality," she said.

She also appreciating the relief work carried out by party workers across the country during the pandemic. "We must continue our effort. The control rooms will continue to function. The helplines too. Emergency services like ambulances and essential medicines should continue to be provided," Sonia said.

Modi gives 'vocal for local toys' call in Toycathon-2021

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Noting that India's share is only about 1.5 billion dollars (over ₹ 11,000 crore) in the global toy market of approximately 100 billion dollars (₹ 7.5 lakh crore), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday pitched for improving the country's standing in what he called 'Toyconomy' or the economic aspects of the toys and gaming industry.

He regretted the fact that about 80 per cent of the toys were being imported by India with crores of rupees going abroad and called for changing the situation as part of the nation's 'vocal for local toys' call.

Modi made the remarks after interacting with participants of Toycathon-2021 via video conferencing during which Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Sanjay Dhotre were also present.

He said the participation of over 1,500 teams in the first Toycathon signals the strengthening of the 'Atmarnibhar Bharat' programme. Around 1.2 lakh participants from across India registered and submitted more than 17,000 ideas for the Toycathon 2021, out of which 1,567 ideas were shortlisted for the three-day online Toycathon Grand Finale,

being held from June 22 to June 24.

Toycathon-2021 was jointly launched by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Textile Ministry, Information and Broadcasting Ministry and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) on January 5, 2021 to crowd-source innovative toys and games ideas.

He underlined that beyond numbers, the toy sector has the capacity to bring progress and growth to the neediest segments of society.

Toy sector has its own small-scale industry, artisans comprising rural population, Dalits, poor people and tribal population, he noted and also talked about the contribution of women in the sector. "In order to take the benefits to these segments, we need to be vocal for local toys," Modi asserted.

The PM emphasized the need to create interesting and interactive games that 'engage, entertain and educate'. He also called for new models of innovation and financing to make Indian toys competitive at the global level. There is a need for

new ideas to be incubated, new start-ups promoted, taking new technology to traditional toy makers and creating new market demand, Modi said, adding that this is the inspiration behind events like Toycathon.

He referred to the cheap data and growth of Internet-led rural connectivity and called for exploration of possibilities in virtual, digital and online gaming in India. He also raved the fact that most of the online and digital games available in the market are not based on Indian concepts and many such games promote violence and cause mental stress.

"Our focus should be on developing toys, games that present every aspect of Indianness in interesting, interactive ways," Modi said.

Emphasising the importance of toys, he said if the child's first school is his or her family, then the first book and the first friends are toys. The prime minister also said that the 75th anniversary of India's Independence is a huge opportunity for the innovators and creators of the toy industry. "Many incidents, stories of our freedom fighters and their valour and leadership can be created into gaming concepts," he stressed.

SBI employee, her husband, others booked for fraud through overdraft accounts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against a branch manager of State Bank of India, her husband who is a private person and others on the allegations that the accused public servant perpetrated a fraud on the bank by illegally sanctioning and disbursing funds to the tune of ₹11,84,71,217 through overdraft accounts in the name of fictitious persons.

The agency registered the case on a complaint from the SBI against the then Branch Manager, Khajrana Square Branch, Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and others including a private person and conducted searches at their premises.

The alleged fraud was committed through overdraft facilities in 18 Overdraft (OD) Accounts in the name of fictitious persons and fraudulently marking a Lien on Fixed Deposits of bank customers during the period 2018 to 2021, the agency said.

It was further alleged that the accused branch manager routed the misappropriated bank funds through different bank accounts which were received in the various bank accounts of her husband and her family members. Such bank



funds were allegedly invested in the security/stock market and elsewhere.

"It was also alleged that one of the bank customers requested for renewal of the FD, who thereupon found the said FD was marked as lien/collateral security against one such OD account, but the customer denied any consent/information towards the lien/collateral security or having connection/knowledge of the OD account holder," it said in a statement.

Searches were conducted at the premises of the accused on Thursday at four places in Indore at the premises of the accused which led to recovery of incriminating documents, it added.

The accused persons named in the case are the then Branch Manager, SBI, Khajrana Square Branch, Indore, Sweets Sumeria and her husband Ashish Saluja.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh conducts an aerial survey of the Indian Navy's Project Seabird in Karnataka's Karwar PIB

India desires normal relation with Pak: MEA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India on Thursday said it desires normal relations with Pakistan and it was for that country to create a conducive atmosphere through measures including taking 'credible, verifiable and irreversible' action to not allow any territory under its control to be used for cross-border terrorism.

"We desire normal relations with all our neighbours including Pakistan," Ministry of

External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said at a media briefing.

He was responding to a question.

"Pakistan must work towards creating a conducive atmosphere including by taking credible, verifiable and irreversible action to not allow any territory under its control to be used for cross-border terrorism against India in any manner," he said.

To a question on Pakistan

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's comments on New Delhi's role in Afghanistan, Bagchi said India brought electricity and built dams, schools and healthcare infrastructure in that country.

"The world knows what Pakistan has brought to Afghanistan," he said.

Bagchi said India supports the Afghan peace process and is in touch with various stakeholders including regional countries.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

The Sidhus

In a cleft stick, the Punjab Congress needs to bring its house in order before the Assembly elections

The forthcoming Assembly election in Punjab is for the Congress to lose. The party's campaign for the election, scheduled for February-March 2022, is caught between the tale of two Sidhus from Patiala and their mutual political animosity. The Chief Minister, Captain Amarinder Singh, is a Sidhu though he does not use the surname which he shares with his *bete noire*, Navjot Singh Sidhu. Both are Jat Sikhs and hail from the same city of Patiala. The similarities end there as the Congress high command has realised, trying to ensure that their differences will not affect the party's electoral prospects. On paper, the Congress faces little opposition from other political parties. The Akalis have never recovered from the drubbing they got in 2017. The 2015 incident of the desecration of the *Guru Granth Sahib* weighs heavily on them. They have no defence against it and cannot wriggle out of what the Sikhs consider the ultimate sin. They have signed a pact with the Bahujan Samaj Party for the elections, but that has not made their supporters confident. The Aam Aadmi Party rests on its 2017 laurels, trying to become an influencer this time. The Bharatiya Janata Party faces the ire of the farming community in Punjab over the new farm laws. However, these parties are waiting for the Congress infighting to implode, to pick up the best pieces before the elections. Nothing is going the Congress way at present. The Captain, known for his authoritarian rule, dependence on the bureaucracy, and the habit of being aloof from party workers and



legislators, is not too popular in the State Congress unit.

He prefers war over diplomacy in dealing with his rivals, whether Sidhu, Pratap Bajwa, Ravneet Bittu and Amarinder Singh Raja Warring. Each has his pocket of influence in the State and the party and sees himself as a potential Chief Minister. The Captain faces, apart from the usual anti-incumbency, charges of nepotism and worse, a soft corner for the Akali patriarchs, the Badals. That is precisely why Navjot Sidhu raises the 2015 desecration affair, obliquely hitting out at the Captain for not being serious about pursuing the perpetrators. The party high command appears to have no love lost for him even though it is also miffed with Sidhu's frequent outbursts. The dilemma before it is whether to face the elections under Amarinder Singh, in which case it will have to pacify the rival pack of leaders. It has sent an encouraging signal to the rivals by replacing Captain's sympathiser Asha Kumari with Harish Rawat as the AICC general secretary in-charge of Punjab. The Captain, who returned to Chandigarh without meeting the leadership in Delhi, is yet to get a positive signal. The worst fear of the high command is the State unit breaking up beyond repair as elections approach. The worst move the high command can make is being openly partisan to any one side and further inflame matters.

PICTALK



A worker sanitises Diana seat as tourists visit the Taj Mahal

PTI

One world

As UP and other elections approach, India must stop looking at people through the prism of religion

We have been sensitised in our schools not to differentiate in terms of gender, caste, color, or religion. Given to read books that have moral lessons and humanitarian concerns of compassion and tolerance. It may not have embedded as deeply as it should, it does leave an imprint. When we grow up, we wash it up. Why else we turn into hate mongers, suspecting, even vengeful grown-up individuals. Then there is Ajeera. An Indian no one knows about. As it happened, she needed a job as domestic help tried her luck in a Hindu family. She was refused. She wore a Muslim identity. Burqa. Then seven years later, she turned up again. This time more practical. Throwing nothing to smack of her Muslim identity. "Namaste, looking for work." The work and payment details were done and dusted. Then something came over her, she added: "By the way, I am a Muslim." Not important if she got the job. Now, really? Does it matter? Did it ever matter? It is happening in our cultural cauldron. India. Where people came made it home and assimilated. They lived together, shared laughter and their sorrows. Of course, sometimes they fought and then forgot. Nevertheless, not like now. The schism is visible. Split is wide open. How did it all come about? Didn't we see it coming? We will never know.

No one knows when religion a personal expression for one's search for self turned into a political plot. One could ask maybe Donald Trump or Jair Bolsonaro or our Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Why even blame anyone else. We agreed. Yielded. Unthinking. We nodded in agreement everything doled out to us; started suspecting our neighbor who we knew from childhood. Aren't we all responsible for Ajeera's innocent second utterance? Are we not pushing ourselves towards dispensation we despise most ISIS, Taliban, Burmese Tatmadaw, and what have you. There is a world beyond article 370, Ram Temple, love jihad, and many other divisive issues. Would we ever go beyond them? Building a home for God who left his kingdom is a good idea. But then Ram returns to Ayodhya — Ayudh(ya) — a place where there is no conflict. In that, state Ram resides. As Rumi reminds "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right doing there is a field. I'll meet you there..". And then, there is Ajeera...

When a PM's conceit dragged down India

On the anniversary of the only state of Emergency that India has seen, here's a look back at the dark days and those preceding it



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Certain maxims like "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (Spanish philosopher George Santayana) or "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it" (British statesman Winston Churchill) get more and more powerful and relevant as the years go by.

The notes of caution issued by Santayana and Churchill come to mind on every June 25, the day in 1975, when Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, declared internal Emergency and arrested all those who questioned her authority to continue in office despite the Allahabad High Court declaring her 1971 election to the Lok Sabha from Rae Bareilly null and void for using fraudulent means.

According to Shanti Bhushan, the lawyer who appeared for Raj Narain Singh, the challenger to Indira Gandhi in the 1971 election, the charges against her included using Indian Air Force planes during the campaign, employing the services of Yashpal Kapur, her private secretary, as her election agent even as he was in the Government of India service and using the symbol of cow and calf, which was deeply associated with the religious sentiments of Hindus.

Bhushan has given a vivid account of the election suit and its trial in his memoirs, "Courting Destiny". Justice Jagmohan Lal Sinha, who delivered the verdict on June 12, 1975, set aside Indira's election and disqualified her for six years from contesting elections. But the stay granted to her by Sinha turned out to be the spoilsport, says Bhushan. "If I had been in Allahabad, I would have opposed the prayer for a stay and perhaps it would have been declined and the political history of India might have been different," Bhushan writes in his memoir.

It was to facilitate her continuation in office that Indira declared the Internal Emergency. She was persuaded to do so by the members of her "kitchen cabinet" that included



Congressmen and the CPI under the garb of pseudo intellectuals. Having lived through that period, one can easily say that Indira, who had a landslide win in the 1971 election, had squandered the public goodwill through acts of corruption and favouritism.

Discontentment was brewing among people. They had understood their folly behind slogans like "Garibi Hatao". The voters across the country wanted quality rice, wheat, pulses and employment that would help them realise their dreams. Our politicians propagated the wrong brand of socialism, wrote eminent jurist Nani Palkhivala in an article (*Socialism: Its kernel and its shell*) way back in 1972. "Socialism means different things to different people, and to some people it means no more and no less than Cabinet rank," wrote Palkhivala.

Public resentment was at its peak against Indira and her cartel of select politicians who never had any mooring among the electorate. Slogans like "Indira is India and India is Indira" coined by the then AICC president Dev Kant Barooah reverberated across



THE CHARGES AGAINST INDIRA INCLUDED USING THE IAF PLANES DURING THE CAMPAIGN; EMPLOYING THE SERVICES OF YASHPAL KAPUR, HER PRIVATE SECRETARY, AS HER ELECTION AGENT EVEN AS HE WAS IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE

the country, thanks to serviles in *Akaashvani* and the obliging media. Civil rights were suspended and the judiciary was turned into a scarecrow. The worst kind of press censorship was introduced. The *All India Radio (Akaashvaani)* became *Indirawani* or *All Indira Radio*.

The CPI, which bemoans that democracy is in danger in India, was hand in glove with Indira to suppress and oppress dissidence of any kind. C Achutha Menon, party leader, was the Kerala Chief Minister with Congress support. What we witness now is a replay of the days of Emergency. Court jesters and sycophants would never take India to the position of a developed country. International honours accorded to top political leadership are nothing other than a ploy to retard the country's progress. The same "well-wishers" finance all disruptive forces to foment riots and chaos across the country.

The problem with Indira was her fear for people around her whom she feared of toppling her from power. Leaders like K Kamaraj, Morarji Desai, Chandrashekhar, Sidharth Shankar Ray, Jagjivan Ram,

Lalit Narayan Misra and Biju Patnaik were all competent.

We had Jayaprakash Narayan, whom people addressed as Lok Nayak at the time, to rekindle the passion for democracy and honesty in our hearts. But as we approach the golden jubilee of Internal Emergency, what we see in the national political arena is a replay of what was witnessed in the early 1970s. There is not a single leader who can inspire the youth. Politics has become a big-time business with State chieftains of national parties getting caught with their *veshtis* down! Not merit or competence, but the ability to sing paean in honour of the supreme matters.

When Indira was defeated in 1977, a widely respected politician (we had a few of them then) was heard telling "Indira is not even Rae Bareilly". The lady failed to learn her lesson even after the bitter experiences of Emergency. A leader starts fearing her/his colleagues when s/he loses self-confidence. Need any proof?

(The writer is a senior journalist working as a Special Correspondent with *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TIME TO BE ON THE HIGHEST GUARD

Sir — This is in reference to COVID after the third wave has been discovered in Madhya Pradesh. At least three cases were found in Bhopal and two in Ujjain. That itself is bad news for all. One lady died due to the third wave of COVID in Ujjain; that's really horrifying. We must be on guard against the third wave because we saw in the second wave of COVID how many people lost their lives, now the third wave is about upon us, so we have to be aware but we must keep in mind that only vaccination can save our lives.

The lady who died in Ujjain was not vaccinated and her husband is vaccinated; that's why he was not infected. If we follow the COVID protocols and other related guidelines, then we are safe. Our lives depend on all our family members, and *vice versa*.

Aman Raghuvanshi | Ujjain

CRICKET CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD

Sir — Two years after their heartbreak in the World Cup final at the Lord's, New Zealand returned to the English soil and emerged triumphant, (when India's Virat Kohli could only look on and applaud as Ross Taylor flicked the winning runs through the leg-side and hundreds of topless New Zealand supporters erupted), an eight-wicket victory over India meaning Kane Williamson's men were crowned the inaugural World Test Champions (WTC) at the end of a dramatic sixth day that stirred the senses.

Anyway, the Kiwis have beaten India... a couple of weeks after beating England in a series for the first time since 1999. It's called quality by the Black Caps, first bossed England and then bulldozed India. In the first ever World Test Championship final, if the 6ft 8in right-armed Jamieson who sent a match seemingly destined for a draw and a shared title hurtling towards its memorable victory won the Man-of-the-final, then it also a fitting farewell to Kiwis wicket keeper BJ Watling, who retires from all forms of cricket, dislocated his finger early in the day, but continued keeping.

Unite in the COVID-19 fight



It is gratifying to note that after months of speculation, the Government has finally assumed control of the vaccination policy. The revised vaccination drive, which commenced on June 21, 2021, with 86 lakh people receiving the jab on the first day, is a positive development.

The recent Government advisory on INSACOG's report on the new variant, called Delta Plus or B.1.617.2.1 or AY.1 with K4 17 N mutation, is a timely reminder to remain cautious. We must not lower our guard against the virus, as several cases of this mutant have been reported not just from Maharashtra, Karnataka, MP and Kerala but also from nine countries. It has been

But for Virat Kohli, this is the third failure in big ICC events after the 2017 Champions Trophy and the 2019 World Cup. He comes across as a jinx for India and might just have one more shot, which is the T20 World Cup this year, and failing to win that could warrant some changes in the team hierarchy.

This is the result for those who have been involved with New Zealand cricket, it's the culmination of hard toil for over two decades. Virat Kohli & Co. got the prize money of 5.94 crore Indian rupees.

Well done! Kudos, New Zealand!
Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

ONDRIYA ARASU

Sir — The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's reiteration that the DMK Government will continue to use the term "Ondriya Arasu" (Union Government) to refer to the Government formed with a majority in the Lok Sabha jibes with his party's long-held views on Centre-

known to evade immune response, raising concerns about the efficacy of existing vaccines.

There is unanimity among the epidemiologists of the world regarding booster doses which can provide long-term immunity against the Novel Coronavirus. With the virus mutating at a faster pace, several developed countries are considering to administer booster doses to their population next year. The Indian Government, too, must not lose sight of this latest development and devise policies to strengthen the immunity of its citizens. Many virologist and experts opine that in order to ascertain the progress, characteristic of the variant, a new test developed in England which is faster and cheaper than the whole genome sequencing process must be.

We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the second wave. This time around, early warnings by the Health Ministry should be seen as a wake-up call to take preventive measures beforehand. As COVID-19 caseload shows a declining trend, there should not be premature declaration of victory over the virus until the entire population is vaccinated.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

SOUND BITE

Banta sent a letter to Aviation Minister: Sir, it is my humble request that the new airport in Navi Mumbai be named 'Bantacruz' since my brother has already one airport named after him 'Santacruz'.



Civil Aviation Minister
— Hardeep Singh Puri

Folks, this (gun violence) shouldn't be a red or blue issue... It's an American issue.

US President
— Joe Biden

We all have to resume work and I am ready to resume work. My injuries have healed.

Actor
— Rahul Dev

I think he deserves to go around the cricket grounds in New Zealand and for people to acknowledge him.

New Zealand ex-keeper
— Ian Smith

It is learnt that Covaxin is still not approved by the WHO, creating problems for those trying to go abroad.

West Bengal Chief Minister
— Mamata Banerjee

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

UNITE TO PREVENT THE THIRD WAVE

Leaders across the political spectrum should spread vaccine awareness



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The new vaccine policy of the Union Government, after many twists and turns, got off to a thumping start with nearly 82 lakh citizens getting a vaccine shot in a single day. The role played by State Governments, many of whom have realized the potential of vaccination to ensure getting the economy back on track, cannot be underplayed. The zeal they showed in driving the vaccination exercise in a 'mission mode' is commendable. The second good news amid nearly three months of gloom and pandemic-stricken psyche is the constantly reducing number in active Covid cases across the country, providing relief to the stretched healthcare system.

These two developments along with a limited unlock process and the upcoming festival season could bring a ray of hope for prosperity and growth for all enterprises. Early signs of revival in FMCG sales and signals emerging from auto manufacturers and real estate developers indicate a healthy bounce-back. However, it is also the time for extreme caution and to try to be ahead of the shape-shifter virus before it strikes back with vengeance. India has managed to provide at least one jab of the vaccine to nearly 30 crore citizens. This means a vast majority of the popula-



tion is still at risk. The nature of the war against the virus is as strong as the last vulnerable citizen. The challenge is to quickly ramp up vaccination and overcome vaccine hesitancy. These two issues are interrelated, as one of the reasons for India's reluctance to place bulk orders of vaccines in the global markets was a second thought on the need for vaccines towards the beginning of this year. The government correctly launched the vaccination programme with the most vulnerable segments of the population and front-line healthcare workers. However, somewhere in the high decibel election campaign and the frenzy of religious gatherings the message of and the need to vaccinate all was lost. The result was a disaster with fatal consequences including for many senior government officials.

The issue of vaccine hesitancy is a matter of concern reports indicate that rural India is resisting attempts to take the jab. While urban India is queuing up in front of vaccine centers, there are numerous reports of the rural folk literally running away from them. This is where the role of the state governments and local administration kicks in. The government can devise strategies for dispelling myths about the vaccine and persuade its grassroots employees to spread vaccine awareness. The local village influencers have their roles cut out too. The reality is that many of the states are now ruled by personality-driven chief ministers who would like to share the political dividends of free vaccination with the Union government. A clever sharing of optical space between the Centre and the States, providing ample opportunities for both to achieve their political goals while ensuring the safety of the citizens, can be a milestone. After all, a single central team of vaccinators no matter, how large, will not be able to reach the stated target of one crore vaccinations per day without the local leaders' help. The problem gets more acute in rural areas where various pressure and caste groups create a system of opacity for an initiative to save lives. The governments have ample evidence in the past of vaccinating nearly 17 crore children every week which led to the eradication of polio in the country. Lessons from the past would come in handy in vaccinating another 70 crore citizens of the country against COVID-19.

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

Climate change and its socio-economic impact

Climate change and poverty are part of a vicious cycle. The inability of the vulnerable sections to effectively mitigate climate change-induced impacts make them worse off



SIMI MEHTA RIA MOHAL

In South Asia, India has a huge role to play in the field of climate change, given the enormity of its industrialisation levels. In the 1970s and 80s, we had little clue about how climate change would impact India but one thing was amply clear that unequal development patterns between developed and developing countries and greed were the biggest polluters — eloquently voiced by then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi.

As years passed, the Indian position at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) revealed its domestic interests: Developing countries should not be bound by emission reduction requirements unless they were provided with the necessary financial and technological assistance to lower their GHG emissions and, such provisions to curb GHGs would not come at the expense of their development trajectories.

Gradually, sound economic growth of the country catapulted India into taking the leadership role, when in the COP-21 Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA). Visionary actions such as these can help bend the rising curve of global warming, provided they are implemented both nationally and globally. The overall objective of ISA, with its current 121 member countries located in the sunbelt — those between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn — is to work tirelessly in making solar energy available at affordable costs to all. This would require scaling up solar energy projects to meet growing energy demands and combat climate change.

The World Bank has released a report, "Turn Down The Heat", on the likely impact of rising temperatures on agricultural production, water resources, coastal ecosystems, and cities. The report projected future scenarios in a world warmer by 2-degree and 4-degree Celsius.

According to their findings for India, extreme heat events will occur more frequently and cover larger areas than before. Western and Southern India are likely to shift to high climatic regimes, with cities reeling from the 'urban heat island' effect. The Global Climate Risk Indices for the past few years has ranked India as the worst-affected country due to heatwaves.

Secondly, dry years will become drier and wet years will become wetter, making the summer monsoon extremely unpredictable. It will trigger massive losses in agricultural production. Environmental extremes and meteorological events like tropical storms, cyclones, tornadoes, river floods, landslides, wildfires, and droughts are becoming common. Recently, the estimated loss due to damages from cyclones Tauktae (west coast) and Yaas (east coast) is to the tune of \$5 billion, including infrastructure, electricity grids, agricultural lands, houses, and losses of precious human lives. Previous years have had other devastating cyclones like Amphan, Titli, and Gaja. Drought years have led to massive declines in agriculture production. There are estimates that agricultural yields will start falling by the 2040s.

Thirdly, glaciers in the Himalayan ranges have been retreating. Alterations in glacial caps will affect the downstream population of the Indus, Ganges and the Brahmaputra plains.

These direct implications of global warming-



A GENDER AUDIT IS NEEDED OF BOTH MICRO- AND MACRO-PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR WOMEN FARMERS, COMMUNITY WORKERS, STUDENTS AND YOUTH WORKING ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. THERE IS AN EQUAL NEED TO STRENGTHEN CLIMATE AND GENDER EQUALITY AGENDAS BY ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION OF ADIVASI AND DALIT WOMEN AND FEMINIST EXPERTS

(The writer is a Simi Mehta is CEO and Editorial Director, Impact and Policy Research Institute (IMPRI) and Ria Mohal is a researcher at the Institute. The views expressed are personal.)



induced meteorological and hydrological changes will have their bearing on the society and economic growth of India. Climate change and poverty are part of a vicious cycle as each entity reinforces the effects of the other. Climate change threatens to disrupt natural resource systems, thereby adversely impacting populations (farmers, fisherfolks, and Adivasi communities) dependent on these ecosystems. The inability of the vulnerable sections to effectively mitigate climate change-induced impacts makes them worse off.

The prime impact is on agricultural production and food security. The yield of the wheat crop has already peaked in India. Rising water scarcity, sea-water intrusions and rising temperatures will threaten crop yields, jeopardize food security, and make India dependent on food imports. Crop failures and increased infestation of pests and insects are commonplace. It would not be an extrapolation to link farmers' suicides to climate change.

is also reeling under malnutrition and child-stunting. Increasing temperatures will enhance vector-borne diseases such as malaria and diarrheal infections — the prominent causes of child mortality — declining worker productivity, rising cardiovascular diseases, and deaths.

Changes in rainfall patterns and glacial melt will impact water security. Irrigation facilities for crop production along with rising demand from population growth will lead to water shortages. Cities like Chennai have already witnessed this form of insecurity, suffering extreme flooding in 2015, while the year after the city suffered from acute water shortages. Also, water shortages will impact sanita-

tion facilities — an essential prerequisite for the health of a country.

Hydel power plants may undergo an erratic supply of electricity generation due to the reduced flow of rivers. Thermal plants of India that guzzle up freshwater supplies may also face electricity generation issues.

Water-sharing is already a contentious issue in South Asian politics. Water scarcity may further add to the pressure. Declining agricultural productivity and reduced farm incomes may result in heavy migration, either rural-urban or even transboundary. Such large-scale migration of people referred to as climate refugees may generate conflicts.

With the loss of forests and ecosystems such as mangroves and coral reefs, several ecosystem product provisioning will decline. These include medicinal plants and herbs. Ecosystem services provided by forests and mangroves such as climate moderation, water filtration, and clean air may reduce due to global warming-induced climate change.

The vulnerability of the people in India and South Asian countries is because of lower coping capacities that become further embossed because of low per capita incomes, social inequality, and poverty. A study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) pointed out that South Asia is expected to lose five per cent of its working hours due to heat stress by 2030, corresponding to 43 million full-time jobs.

Non-economic losses refer to those losses which are not commonly traded in the markets but bear high relevance to those affected. These include loss of life and sea-level rise leading to losses in

biodiversity and cultural heritage. Thus, there is a need to integrate these non-economic losses into decision-making processes to reduce the losses ex-ante. For these, historical analogs, remembrance and recognition, and oral histories provide valuable insights for UNFCCC's science-policy interface.

The way forward is to first provide the rural population of India with access to fossil-fuel-free clean energy to meet the basic energy demands of cooking, heating, and lighting. Two, eliminate the burning of agricultural waste and instead use the crop residues to produce renewable biomass fuels for energy and compost feedstock for healthy soils. Three, phasing out of diesel fuels by 2030 would prove to be effective in declining carbon dioxide emissions.

Four, need to accelerate soil's natural ability to absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide from the air through better land management. It would not only remove carbon dioxide from the air but also enhance soil quality and increase the yields of crops like rice and wheat. Five, a massive climate education program to educate high school and college students and foster indigenous knowledge on climate change. Six, a gender audit is needed of both micro- and macro-planning and program implementation, providing a platform for women farmers, community workers, students, and youth working on environmental issues. There is an equal need to strengthen climate and gender equality agendas by encouraging the participation of Adivasi and Dalit women and feminist experts in climate change.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED, SHE (PRIYANKA) IS THE CAPTAIN AND SHE IS LEADING US. I HOPE SHE WILL TAKE A DECISION AND LET US KNOW.

— CONGRESS LEADER SALMAN KHURSHID



IN THE 2022 UP POLLS, THE BJP WOULD WIN EVEN MORE SEATS THAN BEFORE TO BE HELD UNDER... CM YOGI ADITYANATH'S STEWARDSHIP.

— BJP VICE-PRESIDENT (UTTAR PRADESH) AK SHARMA

Embracing circular economy in cooling technologies

It is essential to transit towards the circular economy opportunities with the practice of three 'R's — reuse, reduce, recycle

The need for thermal comfort will be inevitable in the coming weeks ahead, as the mercury is expected to scorch the past 40 degrees Celsius in the major cities and towns across the country. The rising global average temperatures have affected the climate around the world and particularly India being a tropical country is experiencing increasing cases of heat-stressed regions.

With the unprecedented global rise in temperatures, the decade 2010-2020 has been recorded as the hottest decade, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. These certainties are portents of global warming and its associated climate change threats affecting



GAURAV PHORE SHANMUGANATHAN K

(Shanmuganathan K is Associate Fellow and Gaurav Phore is Research Associate at Earth Science and Climate Change Division, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). The views expressed are personal.)

the livelihood of 7.9 billion people across the world. In India, a recent study conducted by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) revealed that the urban heat island effects due to industrial agglomeration in Ib Valley in Jharsuguda, Odisha have led to a steady build-up of heat in the region over the years resulting in higher nighttime temperatures.

Cooling has now become a developmental need and is no longer a luxury anymore. Thermal comfort providing optimum human comfort conditions plays a crucial role in the productivity and quality of life. A strategic document titled 'India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP)' was released in March 2019. The action plan strategizes the country's cooling-



related challenges, opportunities, and social benefits over the next 20-year horizon.

With the increasing urbanization and economic growth, the demand for cooling is anticipated to increase manifold in the coming decades. The growing demand puts massive stress on the energy demand, consumption, and its associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) report has revealed that India will share a

fourth (1.12 billion units) of global room air conditioners by 2050. These findings plainly indicate that there is a massive need for raw materials, energy, and resources to cater to the country's unprecedented cooling demand.

The rising peak power demands are putting a strain on the DISCOMs. In July 2019, Delhi clocked an all-time high demand of 7,409 MW. Of this, almost 50 percent was due to cooling loads of air-conditioners, coolers, and fans.

These environmental challenges can be addressed through super energy efficiency as a resource, passive design techniques to reduce cooling load, promoting environment-friendly refrigerants, and the introduction of

renewable-based cooling technology options. Embracing circular economy in cooling is echoed as a strategic option towards the transition for a sustainable cooling scenario. The World Economic Forum (WEF) defines a circular economy as "an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design". It replaces the end-of-life concept with restoration, shifts towards the use of renewable energy, eliminates the use of toxic chemicals, which impair reuse and return to the biosphere, and aims for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, systems, and business models, the definition says.

Only nine percent of 92.8 billion tonnes of minerals, metals, and fossil fuels entering the economy are re-used annually. The rest 91 percent falls in the spectrum of circular gaps and its closing would be a fundamental step in alleviating the climate risks. The circular economy-related studies reveal that around two-thirds of global emissions are released during the extraction, processing, and manufacturing of goods and services and the remaining one-third pertains to its transportation and logistics.

Anticipating the country's thriving, cross-sectoral cooling infrastructure developments and its associated energy and emission impacts, it is essential to transit towards the circular

economy opportunities with the practice of three 'R's — reuse, reduce, recycle.

Raising the AC temperature by one degree Centigrade can lead to an average saving of six percent of electricity consumption. Additionally, efforts are on reducing the cooling load in buildings through passive design without compromising on thermal comfort. Super energy-efficient five-star appliances which consume 40 percent less electricity are being popularised.

The reduced electricity consumption scenario directly complements minimal consumption of resources, primarily the burning of coal at power generating units and its associated greenhouse emissions.

S&P lowers India's FY22 growth to 9.5%



FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Ratings agency S&P Global Ratings on Thursday lowered India's economic growth forecast to 9.5 per cent for this fiscal from an earlier prediction of 11 per cent.

According to the ratings agency, India's growth in fiscal 2023 (ending March 31, 2023) will likely come in at 7.8 per cent.

"A gradual revival is under-

way after a severe second Covid-19 outbreak in April and May led to lockdowns across much of the country and to a sharp contraction in economic activity," S&P Global Ratings said in a report.

"The lockdowns were more targeted compared with the blanket national lockdown seen last year but were still enough to lower discretionary mobility to more than 60 per cent below normal."

However, it cited that manufacturing and exports were less severely affected compared with 2020, but services were acutely disrupted.

"Consumption indicators such as vehicle sales fell sharply in May 2021 and consumer confidence remains downbeat."

"The economy has turned a corner now. New Covid-19 cases have been falling consistently and mobility is recovering. We expect this recovery to be less steep compared with the bounce in late 2020 and early 2021." Besides, the agency pointed out that households are running down saving buffers to support consumption and a desire to rebuild saving could hold back spending even as the economy reopens.

Furthermore, it said that monetary and fiscal policies will remain accommodative but new stimulus "will not be forthcoming".

Jio's 'Made in India' 5G solution globally competitive: Ambani



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Jio, together with partners, has tested its 5G solutions in India, successfully demonstrating speeds of over 1 GBPS, and its 'Made in India' solution is "globally competitive", RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani said on Thursday.

Ambani also exuded confidence that the company will be the first to launch full-fledged 5G services in the country.

Jio is not just working to make India '2G-mukt' (free from 2G) but also '5G-yuk' (5G empowered), he added.

Jio's engineers have developed a 100 per cent home-grown and comprehensive 5G solution that is fully cloud native, software defined, and digitally managed. Jio's 'Made in India' solution is complete and globally competitive, Ambani said while speaking at Reliance Industries Ltd's 44th AGM. With its partners, the company has tested the Jio 5G solutions in India and successfully demonstrated speeds well in excess of 1 GBPS.

Once proven at India-scale, the company will keenly look at prospect of exporting Jio 5G solutions to other telecom operators globally.

The company recently received the necessary regulatory approvals as well as trial spectrum for initiating 5G field-trials. "As I speak to you, the entire 5G standalone network has been installed in our data centres across the nation and also at our trial sites in Navi Mumbai," Ambani said.

'JioPhone Next, co-developed with Google, to be most affordable smartphone globally'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani on Thursday said Jio and Google have jointly developed a power-packed and affordable smartphone 'JioPhone Next', which will be available in the market from September 10.

Ambani promised that JioPhone Next will be the most affordable smartphone not just in India but globally.

Speaking at Reliance Industries Limited's annual general meeting, Ambani asserted that an ultra-affordable 4G smartphone is essential to make India '2G-mukt' (free of 2G).

India's bank credit-to-GDP ratio inches up to 56% in 2020, but still way behind peers: BIS data

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Not with standing incremental credit growth plunging to a 59-year low at 5.56 per cent in FY21, the bank credit-to-GDP ratio rose to a five-year high of a little over 56 per cent in 2020, but way behind its peers and just half of the G20 average, according to the latest data from the Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

At 56.075 per cent credit-to-GDP ratio, total outstanding bank credit stood at USD 1.52 trillion in the country in 2020, according to the BIS data for the year, but this is still the second lowest among all its Asian peers.

And when it comes to the emerging market peers, it is 135.5 per cent and at 88.7 per cent in advanced economies.

It can be noted that in spite of the massive credit-driven stimulus that the government tried to push to help tide over

the impact of the pandemic in 2020, incremental credit growth inched up only 5.56 per cent (at ₹109.51 lakh crore), which was the lowest recorded growth in 59 years when in FY1962 it was at 5.38 per cent. Even in FY20, credit growth was at a 58-year-low at 6.14 per cent, an analysis by SBI Research showed recently.

According to analysts, bank credit growth is a key indicator of economic growth and a credit-GDP ratio of 100 per cent is the ideal, which indicates robust demand for credit without the fear of a bubble in the making.

A higher credit-to-GDP ratio indicates aggressive and active participation of the banking sector in the real economy, while a lower number shows the need for more formal credit. This is also a key reason for economists and analysts calling for privatisation of state-run banks to increase credit growth.

New home launches declined 42% in April-June, sales down 58%

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

As the second wave of Covid-19 and lockdowns across states impacted economic activities, housing launches decline 42 per cent on

a quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) basis in the April-June quarter, according to a report by Anarock Property Consultants.

The top seven cities saw around 36,260 new units launched in Q2 2021, as

compared to 62,130 units in Q1.

Hyderabad is the frontrunner in overall housing launches with around 8,850 units launched in Q2 2021, followed by MMR with 6,880

and Bengaluru with 6,690 units. Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai accounted for 51 per cent of the total new launches during Q2, 2021.

Further, sales also plummeted during the quarter.

US blocks solar components from China over labour abuses

AP ■ WASHINGTON

A major Chinese producer of material used to make solar panels will be barred from the US market as part of a broader effort to halt commerce tied

to China's repressive campaign against Uyghurs and other minorities, the Biden administration said Thursday.

US Customs and Border Protection will immediately halt shipments from the Hoshine

Silicon Industry Co. Ltd. And its subsidiaries under a law that bans the import of goods produced with forced labour. In addition, the Commerce Department will add six Chinese organisations linked to the company that pro-

duces raw materials and components of the solar industry in the Xinjiang region to a list of entities from any access to the US market, the administration said in a fact sheet announcing the new restrictions.

NIFTY 50						BSE 500										
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	Script	Open	High	Low	LTP	CHANGE					
NIFTY 50	15737.30	15821.40	15702.70	15790.45	103.50	RELIANCE	2214.80	2215.00	2140.00	2153.35	39.65					
INFY	1517.00	1568.75	1511.20	1556.10	52.95	IDEA	10.03	10.14	9.50	9.57	NATIONALUM	3240.00	3293.25	3160.20	3193.65	
TCS	3284.00	3383.00	3278.50	3370.00	108.60	ADANIEN	1514.00	1520.45	1488.05	1508.30	9.57	J&K BANK	69.10	69.80	68.10	68.45
JSWSTEEL	669.60	681.50	664.90	680.50	15.00	TCS	3282.00	3382.00	3272.60	3373.60	90.60	SHRECEM	2900.00	2910.95	2861.00	2866.30
TECH	1056.55	1082.30	1052.50	1080.00	23.55	ADANI PORTS	726.65	726.65	701.90	709.50	27.65	COUMINSIND	832.15	838.65	829.20	833.00
IT	1490.00	1513.20	1482.00	1510.00	30.75	INFY	1516.00	1568.35	1511.90	1559.15	42.45	VMART	2863.80	3134.65	2772.00	2825.25
ASIANPAINT	2897.35	3049.70	2975.45	3044.00	56.65	SBIN	421.05	422.70	416.40	417.10	0.70	STAR	763.25	771.15	758.20	760.20
TATASTEEL	1105.00	1120.50	1098.45	1119.90	18.90	BEL	169.30	173.50	166.85	171.05	4.20	RAMCOCEM	1018.00	1038.25	1018.00	1034.60
ICICIBANK	627.00	636.30	624.45	635.00	10.30	NLCINDIA	61.85	62.55	60.60	60.95	0.35	FINCABLES	527.60	535.45	511.20	515.25
NESTLEIND	17415.05	17670.00	17324.00	17662.00	247.20	HFLCL	67.50	69.00	65.75	66.80	1.05	MARICO	518.50	518.75	512.75	516.40
ITC	783.00	794.00	779.00	793.00	11.05	TATASTEEL	1104.00	1120.50	1098.80	1113.25	14.45	ASTRAL	1999.55	1998.95	1913.30	1927.80
HDFCBANK	1490.00	1513.45	1488.00	1506.05	20.55	SAIL	125.10	126.95	123.65	125.00	1.35	HEG	2198.50	2283.95	2172.00	2190.40
MARUTI	7448.80	7550.00	7410.00	7531.00	98.30	MARUTI	7441.00	7549.95	7410.05	7529.60	108.55	HATHWAY	26.55	27.15	26.20	26.35
WIPRO	541.90	550.55	539.20	547.25	7.10	BHARTIARTL	534.60	535.45	527.50	528.80	0.80	PIND	2866.00	2889.00	2812.80	2824.25
HCLTECH	972.00	994.60	969.10	984.90	12.00	UBL	1425.00	1425.00	1374.35	1377.00	50.65	HINDZINC	334.90	338.75	329.80	336.15
UPL	809.00	815.45	796.60	813.00	9.00	WOCKPHARMA	568.00	575.00	540.00	542.10	12.00	DELTA CORP	2134.00	2159.60	2130.05	2155.50
AXISBANK	735.90	742.95	731.10	739.50	7.15	TULUSHGFIN	2639.30	272.35	262.95	264.40	0.45	INDUSTOWER	103.00	103.95	102.25	103.45
BAJAJFINSV	12282.25	12296.00	12165.00	12295.00	112.75	TATAPOWER	121.00	121.45	118.25	118.90	0.30	SHREECEM	691.55	697.10	687.00	693.90
NTPC	127.20	118.50	115.10	118.15	0.90	SBICARD	942.00	938.55	941.95	976.35	34.40	IRF	39.50	39.65	38.70	38.85
HINDALCO	369.00	372.45	366.10	375.00	2.40	HDFC	2511.20	2513.00	2485.00	2487.30	22.30	FSL	166.50	166.50	162.30	164.30
BAFINANCIA	359.30	370.85	365.00	368.25	22.95	PNB	42.60	42.85	41.40	41.60	0.20	MAHINDRACIE	213.00	213.90	215.00	211.00
DIWISLAB	4235.00	4259.70	4195.05	4250.00	25.40	ICICIBANK	626.10	636.00	625.00	633.80	7.70	RITES	272.65	274.65	269.45	272.15
ULTRACEMCO	600.00	697.50	688.05	694.30	39.65	TATAMOTORS	335.70	337.40	335.45	334.55	1.85	ADANITRANS	1314.00	1314.70	1248.50	1256.95
HINDUNILVR	290.00	294.80	247.40	249.00	13.50	WIPRO	543.90	550.50	539.50	549.00	6.60	OIL	154.00	157.35	152.30	156.25
BAJAJ-AUTO	4190.00	4232.00	4157.25	4211.00	22.40	KOTAKBANK	1736.80	1741.80	1728.00	1738.00	6.00	JINDALSAW	106.50	107.35	104.90	105.10
BAJAJFINSV	6072.00	6108.00	6011.00	6044.95	29.35	VENKYS	3555.00	3782.35	3494.15	3537.10	42.90	INDMIL	1816.00	1831.80	1798.75	1809.45
HDFCFIN	715.00	722.45	710.25	720.50	2.75	GREAVESCOT	168.40	184.25	168.40	173.55	5.15	ANB	517.25	523.20	516.70	520.00
KOTAKBANK	1735.00	1742.90	1727.20	1741.50	4.80	ITC	204.05	204.65	202.60	203.35	0.70	AFLE	4649.95	4649.95	4560.00	4591.20
SBILIFE	1000.10	1005.45	995.00	1001.40	0.85	DREDDY	5296.00	5312.35	5251.00	5278.65	31.65	VINATIORGA	1874.00	1908.80	1836.85	1855.25
TATACONSUM	762.00	763.80	754.00	758.00	0.15	HDFC	1494.50	1512.75	1488.60	1506.25	27.65	TVSHREDCST	45.20	46.25	44.65	44.95
TATAMOTORS	335.00	337.40	333.35	335.00	0.05	ONGC	124.25	124.60	121.40	122.05	0.60	RECLTD	145.25	146.90	140.70	141.35
ITC	204.45	204.65	203.35	203.95	0.00	BAJFINANCIA	6029.00	6110.00	6011.15	6042.90	41.75	HUCO	54.35	56.45	54.30	54.80
INDUSINDBK	1004.00	1008.00	996.20	1001.00	-0.45	INFRALEASE	118.90	125.25	117.15	121.60	4.45	CERBERATING	716.55	732.85	712.00	715.80
SUNPHARMA	664.20	671.00	661.50	668.40	-0.45	NMDC	1482.55	1512.60	1482.55	1504.10	28.55	BAJAJHLNGD	3612.00	3665.95	3601.05	3610.15
ADANI PORTS	724.00	725.00	710.30	713.10	-0.60	IDFCFIRSTB	58.20	58.30	56.75	56.90	0.15	ABFRL	213.10	213.85	205.75	210.05
SBIN	420.35	422.75	416.30	418.25	-0.60	BAJAJFINSV	12348.00	12393.00	12163.50	12297.35	113.50	BHARATFORG	616.00	622.00	610.95	613.25
GRASIM	1549.00	1570.00	1485.00	1494.60	-4.15	RELIANCE	1186.75	1242.00	1157.65	1189.85	1.85	CROMPTON	416.00	422.00	410.95	413.25
HDFC	219.40	215.00	208.50	209.05	-7.15	JINDALSTEL	385.50	392.15	383.75	385.85	2.10	NOCIL	217.00	220.50	213.70	215.60
TITAN	1789.00	1792.95	1767.60	1777.10	-5.45	SIEMENS	2031.00	2097.45	2017.10	2025.45	78.35	VGUARD	273.30	276.65	270.60	272.25
DREDDY	5295.00	5314.95	5250.05	5290.05	-20.35	GMRIINFR	32.70	32.35	31.40	31.75	0.35	LUXIND	3683.40	3777.55	3599.15	3599.75
HEROMOTOCO	2940.00	2940.00	2893.50	2914.00	-14.35	LAURUSLABS	615.00	628.30	611.65	625.60	13.95	JSLSHISAR	198.95	200.00	195.80	196.65
ECHOMOTOCO	2748.00	2735.00	2694.00	2715.00	-13.60	ADANIPOWER	666.05	681.35	665.00	679.50	16.35	AMBUJACEM	347.55	347.55	342.55	346.60
CIPILA	957.80	958.90	944.00	952.55	-5.20	ADANIPOWER	126.90	126.90	126.90	126.90	0.00	ASHOKA	103.00	103.95	102.25	103.45
POWERGRID	232.25	222.25	228.10	231.00	-1.25	APOLLOHOSP	3247.00	3277.95	3144.70	3203.70	73.20	INDUSTOWER	105.00	105.95	104.35	105.45
BPLCL	409.50	470.50	465.10	467.00	-2.60	HINDALCO	368.15	372.45	366.05	369.00	CANBK	152.90	153.25	149.60	149.00	
ONGC	124.45	124.45	121.35	122.45	-0.90	HCLTECH	975.90	994.50	969.80	990.70	ZEL	217				

Hong Kong's last pro-democracy paper sells out final edition

Hong Kong: The final edition of Hong Kong's last remaining pro-democracy paper sold out in hours Thursday, as readers scooped up all 1 million copies of the Apple Daily, whose closure was yet another sign of China's tightening grip on the semi-autonomous city.

Across the densely populated metropolis, people lined up early in the morning to buy the paper, which in recent years has become an increasingly outspoken critic of

Chinese and Hong Kong authorities' efforts to limit the freedoms found here but not in mainland China. The paper was gone from newsstands by 8:30 am.

The newspaper said it was forced to cease operations after police froze \$2.3 million of its assets, searched its office and arrested five top editors and executives last week, accusing them of foreign collusion to endanger national security.

"This is our last day, and last edition, does this reflect the

reality that Hong Kong has started to lose its press freedom and freedom of speech?" an Apple Daily graphic designer, Dickson Ng, asked in comments to The Associated Press. "Why does it have to end up like this?"

The paper printed 1 million copies for its last edition — up from the usual 80,000. On the front page was splashed an image of an employee in the office waving at supporters surrounding the building, with the headline "Hong Kongers

bid a painful farewell in the rain, We support Apple Daily." While pro-democracy media outlets still exist online, it was the only print newspaper of its kind left in the city.

The pressure on the paper reflects a broader crackdown on Hong Kong's civil liberties, ramped up after massive anti-government protests in 2019 unsettled authorities. In response, they imposed a sweeping national security law — used in the arrests of the newspaper employees — and

revamped Hong Kong's election laws to keep opposition voices out of the legislature.

The result is that dissenting voices have been almost completely silenced in the city long known as an oasis of freedoms on mainland China's doorstep. The increasing restrictions have come despite China's promise to protect Hong Kong's civil liberties for 50 years after the city's 1997 handover from Britain.

The closure of Apple Daily raises the spectre that other media outlets — though none as

outspoken — will become even more cautious, such as the more than 100-year-old English-language South China Morning Post.

The paper, while identified with the political and business mainstream, has thus far continued to report on controversial issues in Hong Kong and on mainland China, even after its owner, internet business titan Jack Ma, dropped from sight last year after publicly criticising Chinese Government policies.

Apple Daily's closure marks a

"dark day for press freedom in Hong Kong," said Thomas Kellogg, executive director of the Georgetown Centre for Asian Law.

"Without Apple Daily, Hong Kong is less free than it was a week ago. Apple Daily was an important voice, and it seems unlikely that any other media outlet will be able to fill its shoes, given growing restrictions on free speech and freedom of the press," he said.

Taiwan's Cabinet agency responsible for China issues

also lamented the paper's closure as a heavy blow to media freedom in Hong Kong. The island is a self-governing democracy that split from mainland China in 1949 but that Beijing continues to claim as its territory.

"This shows the international community that the Chinese Communist Party, in its exercise of totalitarian political power, will stop at nothing to use extreme means to wipe out dissenting opinions," Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said in an emailed statement. **AP**

Middle East peace process can not be kept on back burner: India tells Security Council

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

The Middle East peace process can no longer be kept on the back burner, India told the UN Security Council on Thursday, underscoring the need for immediate resumption of direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

Addressing the UN Security Council meeting on Middle East (Including the Palestinian question), Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs Vikas Swarup also urged all parties to deescalate the situation and refrain from acts of provocation.

"The peace process can no longer be kept on the back burner. The continuation of the impasse only exacerbates the trust deficit between the parties and increases the chances of cycle of violence to recur," he said.

Swarup underscored the need for immediate resumption of the Middle East Peace Process and direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

"India supports all diplo-

matic efforts, including by the Quartet, which are aimed at strengthening the collective commitment of the international community to resume these negotiations and facilitate the peace process," he said.

Reaffirming India's unwavering commitment to the establishment of an independent, viable, democratic State of Palestine, Swarup asserted that there is "no alternative" to a two-state solution for ensuring meaningful and enduring peace.

He voiced concern over the recent developments in Palestine, saying after a period of brief calm, tensions are rising again in Gaza.

"The launch of incendiary balloons from Gaza targeting civilians in Israel and the retaliatory strikes into Gaza threaten to restart the cycle of violence, which caused immense suffering and resulted in deaths recently. We urge all parties to honour the ceasefire arrangement to ensure that the situation does not spiral out of control," Swarup said.

He also noted with concern

that the situation in West Bank continues to remain volatile.

"We are concerned at the potential for renewed violence in East Jerusalem and other parts of West Bank over the legal process that could lead to possible evictions in Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem. Incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, as witnessed during the recent escalation, only drives and fuels violence," Swarup said.

India urged all parties to deescalate the situation, refrain from acts of provocation, intimidation and incitement that exacerbate tensions. "Any attempt to unilaterally change the status-quo that undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution should also be avoided," he told the Council.

India further highlighted that attention of the international community should not be diverted from the immediate needs of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian civilian population, particularly in Gaza.

"Such assistance should reach the Palestinian people through verified channels. We call for reinforced cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities in the area of humanitarian aid delivery, including food and medicine, and movement of patients in and out of Gaza."

Swarup added that rehabilitation and reconstruction of Gaza should also be prioritised. India recognises the centrality of the Palestinian Authority for delivery of international assistance to the Palestinian people, he said, adding that New Delhi encourages all Palestinian parties to work with the Palestinian Authority to ensure the well-being of the people of Palestine.

"We take note of the postponement of the reconciliation meeting of all Palestinian parties that had been facilitated by Egypt and hope that the parties overcome the current stalemate. We believe that intra-Palestinian unity is critical for achieving a peaceful settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict."

Nepal House dissolution case Lawyers question Prez Bhandari's impartiality

Kathmandu: Questioning the impartiality of President Bidya Devi Bhandari in the May 22 dissolution of the House of Representatives, lawyers representing petitioners against the move have argued that her actions make it clear that she didn't want anybody except K P Sharma Oli as PM.

A five-member Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana on Wednesday began the hearing process, starting with the writ jointly filed by 146 law-makers backing Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba's claim to Prime Ministership.

At the recommendation of PM Oli, President Bhandari dissolved the lower house for the second time in five months on May 22 and announced snap elections on November 12 and November 19. **PTI**

Russia says it may fire to hit intruding warships

Moscow: Russia will be ready to fire to hit intruding warships, a senior diplomat warned Thursday in the wake of a Black Sea incident in which a British destroyer sailed near Crimea in an area that Russia claims as its territorial waters.

Russia said one of its warships fired warning shots and a warplane dropped bombs in the path of British destroyer Defender on Wednesday to drive it away from the area near Sevastopol, but Britain denied that account and insisted its ship wasn't fired upon.

The incident marked the first time since the Cold War that Moscow acknowledged using live ammunition to deter a NATO warship, underlining the rising threat of military collisions amid Russia-West tensions.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Thursday that "the inviolability of the Russian borders is an absolute imperative," adding that it will be protected "by all means, diplomatic, political and military if needed."

He gibed that the British

navy should rename its destroyer from Defender to Aggressor and warned that "those who try to test our strength are taking high risks."

Asked what Russia would do to prevent such intrusions in the future, Ryabkov told reporters it would stand ready to fire on targets if warnings don't work.

"We may appeal to reason and demand to respect international law," Ryabkov said in remarks carried by Russian news agencies. **AP**

Delta variant now reported in 85 countries globally: WHO

United Nations: The Delta variant, the significantly more transmissible strain of Covid-19, is expected to become a "dominant lineage" if current trends continue, the WHO has warned after it was reported in 85 countries and continues to be detected in more places around the world.

The Covid-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update released on June 22 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) said that globally, the variant Alpha has been reported in 170 countries, territories or areas, Beta in 119 countries, Gamma in 71 countries and Delta in 85 countries. **PTI**

Google delays plan to phase out Chrome ad-tracking tech

London: Google says it's delaying plans to phase out Chrome web browser technology that tracks users for ad purposes because it needs more time to develop a replacement system.

The tech giant said Thursday that its deadline to remove so-called third-party cookies will be pushed back to late 2023, nearly two years later than the initial timing of January 2022.

"We need to move at a responsible pace, allowing sufficient time for public discussion on the right solutions and for publishers and the advertising industry to migrate their services," Vinay Goel, the director of privacy engineering for Chrome, said in a blog post.

Third-party cookies are snippets of code that log user info and are used by advertisers to more effectively target

their campaigns, thereby helping fund free online content such as newspapers and blogs.

However, they've also been a longstanding source of privacy concerns because they can be employed to track users across the internet.

Google is retiring third-party cookies as it overhauls Chrome to tighten privacy, but the proposals have shaken up the online advertising industry, raising fears that replacement technology will leave even less room for online ad rivals.

European Union and British regulators have been investigating Google's plans, known as Privacy Sandbox.

To resolve the UK probe, the company has offered the country's competition watchdog a role overseeing the cookie phase-out. It has also promised not to discriminate

against rival digital advertising companies when designing the new technology and pledged to give the UK competition watchdog 60 days notice before removing third-party cookies.

Goel said Google aims to have the new technology available by the end of 2022 for developers to start adopting, which would allow third-party cookies to be phased out of Chrome over three months ending in late 2023.

That timeline is in line with the commitments Google has made to the UK competition watchdog, Goel said.

One of the leading ideas to replace third-party cookies is a technique that hides users in large online groups based on their interests while keeping web browsing histories on devices to maintain privacy. **AP**

EU slaps economic sanctions on Belarus over rights breaches

Brussels: The European Union slapped economic sanctions on Belarus on Thursday in response to what the bloc called the "escalation of serious human rights violations", including the detention of journalist Raman Pratasevich.

The sanctions target the economy but are also aimed at hitting President Alexander Lukashenko and his allies.

Pratasevich, a dissident journalist, was arrested May 23 after Belarusian flight controllers ordered a Ryanair jet travelling from Greece to Lithuania to land in Minsk.

The sanctions agreed upon Thursday target industries including potash — a common fertiliser ingredient — tobacco industry exports and petroleum products. **AP**

Lanka Prez pardons ex-MP on death row, draws criticism

Colombo: A former Sri Lankan parliamentarian from the ruling party who was serving a death sentence over murder charges on Thursday was released from prison on a 'special' presidential pardon, triggering a widespread criticism, including from the US.

Duminda Silva has been granted 'special presidential pardon' by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. He was set free from Welikada Prison after he received the pardon, the prison's spokesperson Chandana Ekanayake told reporters here.

Silva, a former parliamentarian from the ruling SLPP, and 12 others were accused of 17 charges, including the murder of his political rival and another lawmaker Bharatha Lakshman Premachandra and four others in 2011. A special three-member panel of High Court judges acquitted seven

suspects and sentenced five, including Silva, to death in 2016. Silva and three others sentenced to death had moved the Supreme Court against the judgement. However, the apex court in 2018 rejected their appeal and upheld the lower court's ruling.

Silva was released in addition to 93 prisoners, including 16 LTTE terror suspects, who were also pardoned by the president.

Criticising the government action, the US Ambassador to Lanka, Alaina Teplitz, in a tweet said the pardon of Silva "undermines rule of law".

"Accountability and equal access to justice are fundamental to the UN SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) to which the GoSL (Govt of Sri Lanka) has committed," she said.

However, she welcomed the "early release" of the pris-

oners held without charges under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

The Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) also questioned Rajapaksa's decision to pardon "a prisoner who was convicted for unlawful assembly and murder by the High Court, which was unanimously affirmed by the Supreme Court".

The top lawyers' body in a statement said under article 34 (1) of the Constitution, a president is empowered to grant such a pardon. Yet it requires the president to call for a report from the judge concerned which should in turn be submitted to the Attorney General for advice. The Attorney General must report to the justice minister on the issue and the minister is mandatory to submit a recommendation to the president.

GOVT READY FOR STATEHOOD

Asked by a television channel on how it was sitting with the Home Minister who called them as "Gupkar gang", Abdullah quipped saying he did not say so in the meeting and listened to all patiently.

He said all the leaders left no stone unturned in telling PM what they felt after what happened following removal of article 370. On Mufti's comment "if Taliban can be talked to why not Pakistan", Abdullah said he understands that "back channel talks are already on, no body denied it...and it is good", he said.

According to Congress leader Gulam Nabi Azad who represented his party along with the PCC president Gulam Ahmed Mir and former Deputy-Chief Minister Tarachand in the meeting, Prime Minister and Union Home Minister committed themselves to granting statehood to J & K.

Azad said his party had put forward five demands including that of statehood, Assembly polls, domicile rights on land and employment, rehabilitation of Kashmiri pandits and setting free of all political prisoners.

Mufti who had this week sought Government should speak to Pakistan too and thus triggering protests in Jammu, described the meeting as "positive".

People's Conference (PC) Muzaffar Baig said it was a "dignified meeting and PM listened to carefully". Sajjad Lone of PC also described it as "very cordial meet and with emotional bonding given what happened in last two years".

Most of the political parties, including Congress, National Conference (NC), People's Democratic Party (PDP), People's Conference (PC), understood to have demanded restoration of "full statehood".

FROM PAGE 1

The first meeting convened by the Prime Minister on Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, deliberated for three and half hours process of restoring "democratic process" and elections in J & K and delimitation process at Prime Minister's residence at 7, Lok Nayak Marg.

The Centre has set-up Delimitation Commission under ex-Supreme Court Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai who is currently working on the delimitation of LS and MLA Assembly segments in J & K with an extension of one year in account of slowing down of work due to Covid19. The new delimitation is expected to allocate more seats to the Jammu region. The last delimitation was done in 1995.

The meeting included leaders such as J & K former Chief Ministers Farooq Abdullah, Gulam Nabi Azad, Omar Abdullah and Mufti.

The BJP from J & K was represented by former deputy-Chief Minister Nirmal Singh, BJP State Chief Ravindra Raina. Besides, J & K Panthers party, Apni party and CPM representatives also attended the meeting. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval were among those present in the meeting at the Prime Minister's residence.

Indicating fissures in the Gupkar Alliance, Farooq Abdullah said before the meeting that the PDP leader is following her party's agenda and he is following his own track. He said this when asked to comment on Mufti's comment that Pakistan should also be talked to by the government of India.

"Mehbooba ji is the president of her party. She has the right to speak. I have my own. I don't want to bring in Pakistan. I am going to talk to our own prime minister," said

FELT LIKE MAHARAJA, SAYS LONE FLYER ON AI FLIGHT TO DUBAI

He also measured the length of the aircraft by steps. "I missed the usually 'Jo Bole So Nihal' and 'Sat Sri Akal' chants that passengers from Punjab usually raise during take-off and landing of the aircraft," he said. Oberoi had been refused permission by Air India for boarding the flight but after the intervention of the Ministry of Civil Aviation he was allowed to do so.

"I was carrying all travel documents including authorized UAE full vaccinations proof. I finally boarded the flight after the intervention of Hardeep Singh Puri's ministry," Oberoi said.

He added, "If I get a chance to travel solo next time I will refuse. It is good for once in a lifetime experience. It was very boring." UAE has put restrictions for passenger flights from India since late April in view of the surge in cases of coronavirus.

Air India has refused to comment on the matter. Agencies

EX-DGP, FORMER IB DY DIRECTOR BOOKED

"Our aim was to oust Karunakaran as Chief Minister and bring in AK Antony in his place. The ISRO spy case came in handy at that time," Cherian had told the media. Incidentally, he dumped Antony and Oommen Chandi and crossed over to the CPI(M). The Supreme Court not only gave a clean chit to Nambi Narayanan but ordered the State Government to pay a compensation of Rs 1 crore to him for the

4 STUDENTS FROM KARGIL HELD

"They have been taken on remand and brought to Delhi for questioning," Biswal added. A minor IED blast took place outside the Embassy of Israel in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi on January 29. There were no casualties. Some cars were damaged in the explosion that occurred about 150 metres from the Embassy on the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Road in the very high-security Lutyens' bungalow zone.

TWITTER INDIA MD GETS K'TAKA HC BREATH

The Twitter India Managing Director, who lives in Bengaluru in Karnataka, was issued notice by the Ghaziabad police on June 21 and asked to report at its Loni Border police station at 10.30 am on Thursday to get his statement recorded in the case, officials at Ghaziabad said.

"He (Maheshwari) is not coming today," Ghaziabad Senior Superintendent of Police Amit Pathak told PTI.

Pathak said he Ghaziabad police has learnt that the Twitter India MD has given a representation in Karnataka High Court in connection with the case and a decision on that is pending.

The Karnataka High Court's interim

ANDHRA CANCELS CLASS X EXAMS

"We have accordingly started making arrangements but after a review of the situation, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy suggested that we cancel the examinations and promote all the students," the Education Minister said.

He said the advanced supplementary and improvement examinations for Intermediate (Class XI and XII) students, slated from July 11, were also being cancelled. Earlier, the Supreme Court came down heavily on the State Government for the decision to conduct Class 12 examination and told the State that it is not convinced of the suggested precautionary measures for holding exams.

ANDHRA CANCELS CLASS X EXAMS

When he refused, his beard was cut. Subsequently a notice under section 161 of the CrPC was issued to Maheshwari by email and responding to it, he said he would be ready to appear virtually.



GAMING TO BOND

Engaging in online games can help you connect with your child while improving your mental wellbeing, says DR SUBI CHATURVEDI

The pandemic has triggered repeated lockdowns globally, confining children and families indoors. This is affecting the mental health of many youngsters as well as their parents. At more than 2.2 billion worldwide, children comprise 28 per cent of the global populace.

Empirical evidence indicates that being cloistered within four walls for long periods can impact mental health and therapists have been reporting that more people are reaching out for help after the outbreak last year. The COVID-19 prevention strategies have led to the suspension of classes across academic institutions. Consequently, millions of students have not physically met teachers and classmates for prolonged periods. More than 168 million schoolchildren across the globe are currently missing physical classes. Additionally, uncertainty due to postponement/cancellations of Board Exams is generating intense worry among affected students and their parents.

■ The need for interactive entertainment
 According to a recent UNICEF report, the present pandemic has pushed children's development back by several years globally. Meanwhile, as vaccine drives prioritise those 18 years and above only, children may be forced to remain indoors much longer. Yet, as social beings, children, in their formative years, require greater opportunities for extracurricular activities and interactions. Lack of this can hurt their cognitive and emotional development. And this is putting immense pressure on parents to keep their children engaged through activities while juggling extended work hours and household chores. It was thus no surprise that for some children, the screen time shot up as much as 500 per cent as they looked at ways to keep themselves entertained.

It is important to acknowledge how parents have had to adjust to such changes and constantly seek new opportunities for interactive engagement with children. Engaging with their children in recreational activities such as sports, travelling, and gaming et al essentially serves as a bonding exercise for guardians, among other things.

As the lockdown measures and the lack of vaccination in the under-

18 segment are forcing children to stay inside at all times, online gaming is coming up as an interesting alternative to outdoor sports and activities. We aren't talking about playing video games in isolation for hours anymore. Online, multiplayer games provide opportunities for interaction, engagement and fair competition. We're in the Golden Age of social gaming and parents, especially younger parents, are certainly making the most of it. As online gaming is a de-stressor for older age groups too, a parent can engage with their children through a well-chosen skill-based game.

There is a popular trend in the west, where parents have been playing online games with their children and other than sharing commands and strategies in-game, they have been talking to their children about school, their friendships and everything else that is going on in their lives.

■ Growth in India

A 2020 report by FICCI and EY on the country's media and entertainment sector notes that online gaming recorded 40 per cent growth in 2019-2020 while generating revenues of ₹65 billion (2019). As per a KPMG report, online gamers in India grew by 20 per cent between July 2020 and January 2021, crossing 500 million, with smartphones or tablets used by 90 per cent of them. A BARC-Nielsen report reveals gamers in India now spend 218 minutes on online games — up from 151 minutes before the lockdown in 2020.

Not surprisingly, the growing interest in gaming saw a parallel rise in interest from investors and start-ups. While approximately \$173 million was invested in the domain in CY2020, there are 400-plus gaming start-ups in the country currently. As a sunrise sector, online gaming holds immense growth potential. According to KPMG, the online gaming industry is expected to gross ₹290 billion with 650 million users.

As the ongoing pandemic continues impacting the mental health of children along with their academic prospects, online gaming can transform such scenarios via winning propositions for both society and the economy at large. All it requires is foresight, an open mind and institutional support from policymakers to make this a reality.

(The author is a distinguished public policy professional and a former member of the United Nations, Internet Governance Forum, Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group.)

Long wait ends

JAY OZA shares his joy at being shortlisted for a mentorship programme by BAFTA



Cinematographer Jay Pinak Oza has had a fascinating journey so far, from being a production assistant to Rakesh Om Prakash Mehra in *Rang De Basanti*, to director of photography (DOP) in Rakesh's upcoming film *Toofan*. He looks back at *Gully Boy* as the film that changed his career, on the occasion of being among the 10 selected participants for the talent initiative BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) Breakthrough India.

BAFTA Breakthrough India showcases and supports the next generation of creative talent working in Indian film, games and television by providing a year-long mentoring and guidance programme.

"Coming from a middle-class family with no background in film, I started my career in the industry from zero, just after college. In 2005, I was one of the production assistants on the set of *Rang De Basanti*. I would watch Rakesh sir and in my head, I was like, 'one day Jay, one fine day you will be the DOP of one of his films'. It is 2021 now, yes, almost 15 years after I made that promise to myself but *Toofan* is coming. I made it! It took time but I achieved my dream," expressed a jubilant Jay.

When quizzed about how the year-long BAFTA programme will help him to take his career to the next level, he says at this stage of his career getting a chance to be guided by international experts through BAFTA will be a win-win not only for him but everyone who takes part in the programme.

A major reason he was picked for the BAFTA programme was for his work in *Gully Boy*. Jay feels the Zoya Akhtar directorial added weight to his profile.

"To be honest, how I bagged *Gully Boy* is a story in itself and I think that is my breakthrough film. I think the BAFTA Breakthrough India jury members also considered me because of my work in that film. That will remain a special film for me because of Zoya, who is a fantastic captain of the ship. She knows how to bring the right people on board to create the world that we did with a story like *Gully Boy*. You know, she would say that with each frame, I want our audience not only to get a visual feel of the place, of the slum where we shot a major part of the film but also people should be able to smell the place — the struggle and suffocation through my visuals. Zoya is accurate with what she wants!" he said.

Jay concluded with a message for budding cinematographers, "Dreams do come true, look at me. When we go through struggle and hardship, we must not forget why we started our journey and if we are focused on our work, even though it takes time, it happens. I never gave up, why would you?"

'A dream come true'

SHILPA SHUKLA highlights her experience of working in Mahesh Dattani's teleplay. By TEAM VIVA

In Zee Theatre's latest offering, *The Big Fat City*, film and theatre actor, Shilpa Shukla plays one of the key characters who depict the hollowness of urban lives. The theme shows how the obsession with technology and wealth renders life, and even relationships, meaningless. The play showcases acclaimed playwright Mahesh Dattani's astute observations about life in a metropolis where people are stuck in the endless cycle of dissatisfaction while grappling with their own realities. Mahesh is the first Indian playwright in English to be awarded the Sahitya Akademi honour and Shilpa found it immensely rewarding to work with him.

"This was my first teleplay and I loved the journey. To work with Mahesh sir was a dream come true for me as I have acted in many of his plays when I was in college. His scripts are remarkable and so is his process and I just showed up for the rehearsals without even reading the play! *The Big Fat City* also has a wonderful cast and we would meet every morning and rehearse till evening before we got into the filming process. It was a very fulfilling experience as there's always so much to learn and unlearn, so much to deconstruct before attempting to construct, so much to give and receive,"



said a beaming Shilpa. Sharing her views on the teleplay format, she expressed, "Theatre in its essence is very much a live medium. Words cannot describe the magic of 'right here, right now' that is collectively felt by the artiste and the audience. Having said that, I also feel that theatre is so rich in literature and emotions, that it must be adapted for a generation that is not aware of its magic. If they don't come to the theatre, we can take it to them and hope that they do not let the art form disappear after having tasted its magic."

Shilpa believes that teleplays have different grammar and adds, "As an actor, it is an intriguing space to explore. How we bring to life the vast canvas of literature, characters, and conflicts in a teleplay without losing the essence of theatre is always going to be an interesting challenge."

The Big Fat City also stars Bhavna Pani, Mansi Multani, Nissar Khan, Sid Makkar, Anuj Gururwara, and Deepal Doshi.

The story begins when a supposedly happily married couple, Niharika and Murli invite guests to their new flat. Tension mounts as a surprise visitor arrives to stir things up and a fatal climax seems imminent. The audience is left asking the question, 'How many will survive the night?' (The *Big Fat City* will be screened on Dish TV D2H Rangmanch Active throughout this week.)



The Kidney Grille Debate

BMW's signature feature has been the cause of many divided opinions among automotive journalists, enthusiasts and buyers

While driving the lifecycle update on the BMW 5-series, I noted that BMW designers had made some subtle modifications to the car's kidney grille, but unlike when BMW updated the 7-series, they had not gone overboard. The updated G30 5-series maintained its relatively sleek kidney grilles and stands out against many of BMW's other new vehicles where these are getting larger and larger. And this has resulted in divided opinions among many automotive journalists, enthusiasts and buyers. I, for one, am not a huge fan of the larger grilles.

Truth be told, at a level this is good for BMW, because this keeps their cars in conversation. We all talk about this, unlike say design updates on BMW's rivals, thus keeping the brand at the top of mind. But why is this becoming such a major talking point? Well, BMW cars had three key design elements for years that made them recognisable to even casual car drivers, other than of course the signature blue-and-white logo, which is not a spinning propeller, as many believe, but borrowed from the flag of Bavaria, the southern German province of which Munich is the capital and where BMW is based and



indeed takes its name from. The other two design elements are the 'Hoffmeister Kink', which is the slight reversal the window line takes at the very end of the car, giving an illusion of speed, and the signature 'Corona Lights'. The kink is not unique to BMW and you can notice that on the new Skoda Octavia as well, for example. And Corona headlights are a thing of the past, not just because of the current pandemic, but were phased out well before that. Why? Well, LED technology has given designers the ability

to play around with design and make the headlights three-dimensional. The inner light on the cars has a slight 'wall', making the Corona impossible. You can clearly see that on the updated headlights on this refreshed 5-series as well. New BMW cars still retain twin LED lights, but the round Corona lights are a thing of the past.

So BMW designers needed to do something with the one signature feature they had left, the grilles, and as has been explained to me over various BMW drive events all across the world,

the Chinese consumer played a major role. Today, China accounts for almost a third of BMW sales and the average well-to-do Chinese car buyer wants his or her car to be noticed from afar, and well, the BMW kidney grilles are noticeable from a distance. So when you take a look at the new 4-series, or the updated 7-series and the new X7, you see massive grilles. True, when you see these huge grilles, on the 7-series and X7, these might not look so large given the gargantuan proportions of those vehicles, but on the new 4-series and M4, that snout looks strange. I'm very sure the new M4 will be a beast to drive, but it really does look odd on an otherwise excellent-looking vehicle.

As for the updated 5-series, it remains an excellent car although it is now a lot more pricey. I drove the 530i M Sport that is priced at ₹62.9 lakh ex-showroom all-India, which is by far the best driving car in its class. The 520d Luxury Line costs a lakh more and the excellent 530d M Sport is quite pricey at ₹71.9 lakh. If you are looking for a bit more space and a different look, the BMW 6-series is also an attractive bet, but if you drive your executive sedan yourself, the 530i remains the best vehicle you can buy. If you're sitting at the back though, BMW's long-wheelbase 3-series, the 'Gran Limousine' is quite a bit cheaper with all the same features and other than the 30d engine option, all the other toys there can save some of the driving assistance features. Honestly, I didn't play around with those during this short drive but do check in this column soon.

You can watch my views on this issue, on my channel on YouTube and if you reading this online, by clicking this link - <https://youtu.be/8b5MqJsPIfw> there is a lot of other cool automotive, aviation and history content all across that channel.

TRENDBLAZER



SHRUTI HAASAN'S FITNESS FORMULA

Actor **SHRUTI HAASAN** revealed what she claims is a formula for fitness — secretly dancing to nineties music.

"Back to training hard! I'm obsessed with fight training and mixing it up with good old fashioned cardio and secretly mixing it up with dancing to 90s music for hours," she stated on Instagram.

On the work front, the actress will feature alongside Prabhas in the film *Salaar*, which is being shot in Kannada and Telugu, and will be dubbed in Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam.

fairtalk
 AMYRA DASTUR



"Children should not be living in a bubble. We need to help them so that they are in a position to create a better world, tomorrow. Kids need to be made aware of the reality of widespread poverty in India so that when they grow up they can help and make a difference in the lives of those who are less fortunate than them."

dailytalk
 PRANUTAN



"I think the medium doesn't matter as long as it helps an actor hone their skills. I don't think we should get too caught up in our comfort zones. The kind of response audience is giving to OTT platforms is amazing and I personally believe that they are creating some amazing content."

'FIGHTING ALIENS AND CRACKING JOKES'

Actor **CHRIS PRATT**, who stars in and makes his debut as an executive producer in the upcoming sci-fi action thriller *The Tomorrow War*, reveals why he was interested in playing Dan Forester in the film.

"I have to confess, making a film where I get to fight aliens and save the world while cracking the occasional joke is right in my wheelhouse," Chris shared.

The film is set to premier on July 2 on Amazon Prime Video.



The concept of pairing wine with meals in the culinary world has been slowly picking up pace over the years. This process not only enhances the dining experience but also upscales the flavours of the meals and provides the diners with a heightened sensory experience.

This modern art of food-wine pairing is a recent phenomenon but has been increasingly occupying a place in the recipes, books, culinary shows and restaurant menus. The idea behind pairing them both together is that certain components — primarily texture and flavour — in both food and wine, interact and blend well and thus, extend an enjoyable and luxurious dining experience. A glass of wine can bring solace and joy, and matching it with feasts can prove to be a blissful experience. It can heighten our senses to an unimaginable level.

TREND

This trend is becoming increasingly prominent to the extent that even restaurants and fine-dining places have a dedicated team of sommeliers on board, who are experts in pairing wine with the restaurant's feasts and offer a delectable and memorable dining experience to the visitors. The eateries have a distinct food and wine pairing menu or have dedicated a space to the modern culinary art in their existing menu to offer an enriched and luxuriant dining experience.

TECHNIQUE

Matching meals and wines are purely based on observations and knowledge as to how do flavours and aromas of meals interact and blend with those of a particular wine and gel well.

This concept of matching wine with meals could involve pairing a specific variety of wine with a specific dish. For instance, Sangiovese with a steak tartare appetiser, or suggesting multiple wine pairings with a particular dish. For example, Sangiovese and a Napa Merlot both could be paired with the same appetizer or dish.

Indeed, it is undeniable that the cookbooks, magazines, and websites are flooded with recipes and guidelines on pairing food and wine perfectly but culinary experts believe that the basic step of combining them both is understanding the right balance between the weight of the food and the weight of the wine. The amount of alcohol in the wine along with tannin levels determines the wine's body. The idea behind this technique is that food and wine weights should balance each other. This is one of the most basic rules of wine-food pairing; combining a heavy dish with a light wine or vice versa.

However, if we go beyond weight, flavours and textures can also be complimented or matched contrastingly. In such scenarios, sugar, acid, alcohol, and tannins of the wine and how can these be amplified or minimised when paired with certain types of food also fall under the category of the



RAISE A TOAST TO PAIRINGS

Chef NIKLESH SHARMA says that coupling spirits with food not only enhances the dining experience but also upscales the flavours of the meals and provides the diners with a heightened sensory experience

art of matching wines to the meals. However, both these strategies work equally well.

There is no right or wrong way of pairing wine with food. In the case of complementary pairing, similar flavours enhance each other. While the alike burst of flavours adds to each other, the minute differences are interesting and quirky for the taste palette. On the other hand, in the case of contrasting flavours, the extreme ends of the taste fill each other's gaps and provide an appetising experience to the taste buds.

THE ART OF PAIRING

There are three flavouring components in wine that contribute to their pairing with the gourmet feasts — tannins, sugar, and acid. Tannins interact well with hard cheese variety, red meats, oily foods along with meals prepared with grilling and blackening methods that have a charred taste. Sugary wines go well with spicy foods, meals rich in salt and pepper, along slightly sweet desserts so that the sugar from the wine overpowers that of the sweet course. Furthermore, acidic wines gel well with acidic dishes like oysters and with greasy and fatty foods.

The rule of thumb usually states that white wine pairs well with fish along with dishes rich in garlic and chives whereas red wine goes with earthy herbs and red meat. However, certain specific wines couple well with a certain specific type of food. For instance,



heavy wines like Carbernet Sauvignon can elevate a delicate dish like a quiche, whereas light wines like Pinot Grigio can match well with a sumptuous stew.

The renowned Chardonnay matches with salmon or fish prepared in buttery and herby sauces along with seafood, especially prawns. The celebratory Champagne is much more than a drink suitable for popping open on special occasions and it pairs well with salty foods and appetisers. The

beloved Dry Rosé matches perfectly with diverse variants of cheese. Malbec, on the other hand, tastes extremely tantalising with powerful flavours of a mixture of sweet and spicy. It also combines well with herb-based dishes and feasts prepared with barbecue sauces.

SUM-UP

It is highly advisable that you first try out different food items with wine. Once you have an idea of the elements that gel well with the

wine, you can go ahead by sampling the combination with the completely prepared dishes. However, wine and food pairings are not just restricted to combining them both individually. Cooking with wine is another way of coupling both the elements together and is also a recent phenomenon in the culinary world that is gradually gaining prominence. It is contributing majorly to extending a scrumptious and luxurious dining experience.

Food and wine pairing have, indeed, emerged as an upselling tool for the culinary industry. It upscales the dining experience and renders it a high-end, elegant, sophisticated, premium, and top-notch touch.

The food-wine coupling can go extremely well and hit the charts or go down the drain. This fad is extremely subjective with no right or wrong way of doing it but it is all about being excited about the pairing and being experimental to try something new. Matching feasts with wine is certainly an art and requires creativity and thoughtfulness. But its acceptance or rejection is solely based on an individual's palate and preferences. Hence, one should be open to experimenting and should have an innovative approach. The idea behind the concept of pairing wine with meals is to try and try until you succeed and find the right combination as per your taste palette.

(The chef is the founder of a group of professional culinary & pastry schools with pan-Asia presence.)

Binge guilt-free

While working out to ensure physical wellness has become essential these days, diet also plays a vital role when it comes to good health. Baked with the goodness of nuts, seeds, and grains, here are a few benefits that granola has on offer, shares PURVI PUGALIA

The past year has seen health and wellness rise to the top of our priorities. Even then, with most of us leading a sedentary lifestyle working from home, these tend to take a back seat. While working out to ensure physical wellness has almost become essential these days, diet also plays a vital role when it comes to ensuring good health.

While there are different kinds of breakfast and mid-meal snacking options available today, we still find ourselves in a fix looking for easy, guilt-free and versatile options. Some key aspects, for a few people, also include taste and preparation time. One product that has stood out over the years is granola. Baked with the goodness of nuts, seeds, and grains, this fibre-rich food is as versatile as it is convenient to prepare. Its versatility ensures that we are never out of new and exciting snacking options, while its health benefits greatly reassure us.

Still not convinced? Read on for reasons to make granola a part of your diet.

■ A protein-packed snack that's also ideal for post-workout intake

The high quantity of dried fruits, seeds, and nuts present in granola makes it a protein-packed snack ideal for you to munch on post your workout. Not only does it help build your muscles, but also leaves you feeling energised. Further, micronutrients such as magnesium, zinc, and iron found in granola help build a stronger immunity and produce greater energy.

■ Guilt-free binge for a healthier gut

Probiotic fibre plays an active role in retaining the healthy bacteria in your gut. Whole grain, a primary ingredient that makes up granola, is rich in fibres that aids digestion and helps maintain healthy bacteria levels. The presence of probiotic fibres explains why granola is perfect to munch on all day.

■ A chai-time snack that keeps your cholesterol in check

Primarily made up of oats, granola is a great source of beta-glucan — a fibre that lowers the risk of heart disease by maintaining the total and bad cholesterol present in your body.

■ Fulfill your antioxidant intake

Chia seeds, coconut, and nuts in granola are a rich source of antioxidants, which are proven to improve



overall health by providing the body with sufficient quercetin, selenium, vitamin E, and gallic acid.

■ Leaves you feeling full and satisfied

Largely made up of oats and whole grains, granola is a high-fibre food that leaves you feeling full for longer. Fibre has also proven to greatly reduce the rate at which sugar and carbohydrates are digested in your body, reducing the risk of a spike in blood sugar levels.

(The writer is the co-founder of a granola company.)

R E C I P E S

CRANBERRY ORANGE ALMOND QUICK BREAD

WHAT YOU NEED

- All-purpose flour: 3 cup
- Sugar: 3 tbsp
- Baking powder: 1 tbsp
- Salt: 1/2 tsp
- Californian dried sliced cranberries: 1 cup
- Roasted and salted almonds: 1/2 cup
- Egg at room temperature: 1
- Fat-free milk: 1 cup
- Canola oil: 1/3 cup
- Orange zest (grated): 3/4 tsp
- Almond extract: 3/4 tsp



METHOD

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- In a large bowl, whisk together three cups of all-purpose flour, three tablespoons of sugar, one tablespoon of baking powder, half teaspoon of salt.
- Add in the Californian dried sliced cranberries and roasted-salted almonds.
- In another bowl, whisk together egg, milk, oil, zest and extract.
- Combine the dry and wet mixtures and stir until it is moistened.
- Transfer to a 9x5-in loaf pan greased with butter.
- Bake until a toothpick inserted in centre comes out clean. This should take around 40 to 50 minutes.
- Do not over bake.

Courtesy: Happilo.

PHILADELPHIA ROLL

WHAT YOU NEED

For sushi rice:

- Japanese sticky rice: ½ cup
- Vinegar: 1/5 cup
- Sugar: 1/5 cup
- Salt: 1 tsp

For sushi rolling:

- Smoked salmon: ½ cup
- Gari: ½ cup
- Wasabi: 1 tsp
- Sushi nori: 1
- Soy: 2 tsp
- Cream cheese: 1 tsp
- Spring onion (chopped): 1 tsp
- Sesame seeds (black): 1 tsp
- Sesame seeds (white): 1 tsp
- Cucumber: 1

METHOD

For cooking rice:

- Wash and rinse the sushi rice in running water to extract the excess starch from the rice grains, and then boil them.
- Make the sushi vinegar by mixing vinegar, sugar and salt.

WALNUT, AUBERGINE & MUSHROOM KEEMA CURRY

WHAT YOU NEED

- California walnuts (chopped): 150 gm
- Oil: 1 tbsp
- Onion (chopped): 1
- Red chilli (finely diced): 3/4 tsp
- Curry powder: 1 tsp
- Turmeric: 1 tsp
- Aubergine (cut into 1 cm

- dice): 1
- Mushrooms (sliced): 200 gm
- Tomatoes (chopped): 400 gm
- Baby spinach: 100 gm
- Basmati rice (cooked): 225 gm

METHOD

- Soak the walnuts in lukewarm water for 20 minutes, drain well.



- Once the rice is cooked, mix them and the sushi vinegar together and keep it covered with a moist cloth until used further.

For rolling the sushi:

- Place the nori sheet on the sushi mat and uniformly spread a handful of sushi rice on the sheet.
- Sprinkle a mix of white and black sesame seeds on the sushi rice.
- Flip the nori sheet in such a manner that

the sushi rice is facing the sushi mat.

- Spread the cream cheese in a line on the nori sheet and place the neatly cut scallions, English cucumber and smoked salmon.

- Gently roll the sushi into a square shape, applying even pressure throughout the roll and cut into eight equal pieces with a sharp knife.

- Serve it with gari, wasabi and soy.

Courtesy: Masterchef Amit Patra at Edo restaurant, ITC Gardenia, Bengaluru.



- Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large frying pan. Fry the onion and chilli for four to five minutes. Add the spices and then the aubergine and mushrooms, cook for a further four to five minutes.
- Stir in the tomatoes, 100 ml water and the walnuts, bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the spinach until just wilted and season.
- Serve with the cooked basmati rice.

Courtesy: California Walnuts.



WALNUT FALAFEL WITH MANGO PICKLE

WHAT YOU NEED

For falafel:

- Dried green split peas: 250 gm
- Onions: 2
- Garlic cloves: 2
- Green chilli pepper: 1
- Coriander: ½ bunch
- Salt
- Baking soda: 1 tsp
- California walnuts: 40 gm
- Chickpea flour or wheat flour: 50 gm
- Oil for frying

For pickle:

- Mango: 1
- Green chilli pepper: 1
- Oil: 2 tsp
- Turmeric: ½ tsp
- Brown sugar: 1 tbsp
- White wine vinegar: 1-2 tbsp
- California walnuts: 40 gm

METHOD

- Soak all peas overnight in cold water.
- For falafel, peel and chop the onions and garlic. Rinse

chilli pepper and chop finely. Rinse the coriander, separate the leaves and chop finely.

- Drain the peas and blend with onions, chilli pepper, garlic and turmeric in a blender.

- Season the mix with salt and stir in baking soda. Chop walnuts and roast them briefly.
- Then mix walnuts and flour with the peas to form balls from the dough.

- Heat the frying oil to 160°C and fry the balls for three to five minutes until golden brown. Let them dry on paper towels.

- For pickle, peel the mango, remove the pulp from the stone and cut into dices. Wash the chilli pepper and chop finely.

- Heat oil and sauté the chilli pepper briefly. Add turmeric and mango, then sprinkle with sugar and let it stew for about one to two minutes. Add vinegar and raise heat for a minute.

- Chop walnuts, toast them in a small pan and mix them with the pickles. Serve the falafel with the mango pickle.

Courtesy: Chef Sabayasachi Gorai.

RECORD BREAKING RONALDO

Cristiano equals Ali Daei's all-time record of 109 international goals, surpasses Klose for most goals (21) by a European player at Euros & WC combined with brace in 2-2 draw against World Champions France

AFP ■ BUDAPEST

Cristiano Ronaldo scored two penalties to equal the all-time international goalscoring record and help holders Portugal edge into the last 16 of Euro 2020 with a 2-2 draw against France in Budapest on Wednesday.

Portugal will face the world's top-ranked side Belgium in the first knockout round in Seville on Sunday.

Fernando Santos' men moved through as one of the four best third-placed sides, for the second straight Euro, from Group F behind France and Germany.

Ronaldo gave his side the lead just after the half-hour mark with his first spot-kick, before France hit back through Karim Benzema's two goals either side of half-time.

But, with Portugal heading out as it stood with Hungary leading Germany, Ronaldo helped win and then scored their second penalty with half an hour remaining.

The 36-year-old's fifth goal of the group stage extended his record tally of Euro goals to 14 and drew him level with former Iran striker Ali Daei, in his 178th International match.

World champions

France will next take on Switzerland in Bucharest on Monday.

The first real chance of the game fell to France forward Kylian Mbappe after quarter of an hour, but the 22-year-old's wait for a Euro goal was extended by Rui Patricio's parried save.

But it was Portugal who made the breakthrough, as they

were awarded a 31st-minute penalty as France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris tried to punch the ball away, but instead caught Danilo Pereira in the face, leaving the Portugal midfielder needing treatment on the pitch.

Ronaldo stepped up to score his fourth goal of the tournament, sending Lloris the wrong way.

VAR CONTROVERSY
France drew themselves level in controversial circumstances in first-half stoppage time.

EURO 2020 KNOCKOUTS



Goal-rettzka comes to rescue Germany

AFP ■ MUNICH

Leon Goretzka came off the bench to rescue Germany's Euro 2020 campaign with a late equaliser as a nerve-shredding 2-2 draw against Hungary in Munich on Wednesday sent them through to the last 16.

Captain Adam Szalai gave Hungary a shock early lead and although Germany drew level through Kai Havertz in the second half, the Hungarians went back in front almost immediately through Andras Schaefer.

With six minutes left, Goretzka fired home a crucial equaliser to set up a blockbuster tie against England at Wembley on Tuesday, eliminating Hungary who finished bottom of Group F.

The match build-up had been dominated by UEFA's refusal to allow the city of Munich to light the Allianz Arena in rainbow colours in solidarity with Hungary's LGBTIQ community.

UEFA and the Government of Hungary came under a hail of criticism after Budapest's new anti-LGBTIQ law and the football body's refusal to light the Munich stadium.

Germany got off to the worst possible start when Szalai ghosted in between centre-backs Mats Hummels and Matthias Ginter to head Roland Sallai's superb cross past Manuel Neuer.

Delighted travelling Hungarian fans celebrated wildly as their German counterparts

looked on in silence.

Hungary taking the lead with just 11 minutes gone sparked Germany into action as Hummels hit the crossbar, then Ginter fired straight at visiting goalkeeper Peter Gulacsi.

A cloudburst over north Munich soaked the Allianz Arena pitch as Germany poured forward in a desperate search for an equaliser.

The euphoria felt across the country after Germany's spectacular 4-2 win over Portugal just four days previously had suddenly evaporated.

But the hosts drew level on 66 minutes when Gulacsi failed to catch a Joshua Kimmich free-kick, Hummels headed the ball on and Havertz nodded into an empty net.

The joy in the German ranks was short-lived as Hungary regained the lead straight from the restart.

A long ball found Szalai, who lofted a pass over the defence where Schaefer got between the scrambling German defenders to head past an onrushing Neuer.

The crucial second German equaliser was down to two substitutes.

Teenager Jamal Musiala's cutback found his Bayern Munich team-mate Goretzka, who set up Timo Werner for a blocked shot.

But the rebound dropped to Goretzka who smashed the ball into the back of the net to avoid a humiliating group-stage exit.

Benzema delighted to lift 'pressure'

AFP ■ BUDAPEST

Karim Benzema said he was delighted to score his first goals for France since 2015 against Portugal on Wednesday, as there was 'a little pressure' on him across the country.

The Real Madrid striker was brought back for Euro 2020 by coach Didier Deschamps after a five-and-a-half year exile from International football over his alleged role in a blackmail plot.

Benzema failed to score in his first four matches since returning for France, who won the 2018 World Cup without him.

But he netted a first-half penalty in the final Group F game against Portugal before slotting in a second to end his long wait. "A lot of joy, a lot of pride," he said to *BeIN Sports*.

"I think everyone was waiting for it. There was a little pressure on me from all over the country but I'm a footballer, a professional — I need that pressure."



A 2-2 draw on Wednesday sent France through as group winners.

Deschamps' men will face Switzerland in the last 16 on Monday in Bucharest. "He (Benzema) was looking for that."

He hasn't lost his confidence, or mine," Deschamps told *TF1*. "We will recover well and then we'll prepare for that (Switzerland game) as well as possible."

Kohli hints at overhaul of Test side

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

India skipper Virat Kohli has indicated an overhaul of his Test team after the stunning loss to New Zealand in the World Test Championship final here, saying that "right people who have the right mindset to perform" will be brought in following a reassessment.

After his side lost the WTC Final by eight wickets in Southampton on Wednesday with batting being a major let-down, the Indian captain didn't take any names but expressed his displeasure at some players for not showing enough 'intent' to score runs.

Senior batsman Cheteshwar Pujara managed 8 off 54 balls in the first innings and consumed 35 balls for his first run. He then scored just 15 runs off 80 balls in the second essay.

"We will continue to reassess and continue to have conversations around what are the things required to strengthen our side and not follow or fall prey to certain patterns," Kohli said at the post-match conference.

It can be safely assumed that some of the seniors will be on borrowed time and only a stellar performance in the five-Test series against England in August can secure their futures.

"We will not wait for a year or so and have to plan ahead. If you see our white ball team now, we have great depth and guys are ready and confident. Same thing needs to be done with Test cricket."

"You have to reassess and replan and understand what dynamics work for the team and how we can be fearless. Bring in right people who have right mindset to perform," the skipper added.

For the current management, a 50 off 80 balls is of more value than a 15 off 80 which can put unnecessary pressure on batsmen coming after someone with an ultra-defensive mindset.

Kane Williamson scored seven runs in a session during the first innings but when it mattered, he scored a half-century of 80 odd balls during final session of the Test match.

"I think evolving with the game and improving yourself with the game is very important and when you have been a top side for few years in a row, you don't want to suddenly drop your standards..."

"We will certainly take those decisions and have those conversations and in near future," the skipper looked visibly hurt and in a mood to take some tough calls in near future.

He also spoke about finding ways to score runs against quality attacks like that of New Zealand. India scored only 217 in the first innings and were all out for 170 in the second effort.

"We definitely need to work out better plans on understanding how to score runs. We have to stay in sync with the momentum of the game and not let the game drift away too much. I don't think there are any technical difficulties as such," he asserted.

Virat calls for World Test final to be played over 3 matches

Southampton: Echoing the views of head coach Ravi Shastri, India skipper Virat Kohli has said that the best Test team in the world should be decided by a best-of-three final and not a one-off game like it was in the inaugural edition.

India were able to bounce back to win the series against Australia and England but couldn't do so with the World Test Championship final, a one off game against New Zealand which ended with Kohli's men losing by eight wickets.

"Well, look, firstly, I'm not in absolute agreement of

deciding the best Test side in the world over the course of one game, to be very honest," Kohli said in the post-match press conference.

"If it is a Test series, it has to be a test of character over three Tests, which team has the ability to come back into the series or totally blow away the other team."

"It can't just be a pressure applied over two days of good cricket and then you suddenly are not a good Test side anymore. I don't believe in that."

Shastri had advocated a three-match finale before the team departed for England earlier this month. PTI

Kane credits his 'bits & pieces' cricketers for WTC triumph

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson saluted the commitment of his star-shorn side as he savoured the 'special feeling' of winning the inaugural World Test Championship mace by beating India, relying on "bits and pieces to stay in games and be competitive".

With the World Test Championships triumph, the 'nice guys' of world cricket showed that they don't always finish last. The win over mighty India has also made up for the heartbreak of successive ODI World Cup final losses in 2015 and 2019.

Williamson termed their final win over India as the 'pinnacle' but stopped short of calling it the country's biggest achievement in the game.

"I've been part of (New Zealand cricket) for a short while, it's a very special feel-



Kiwi pacers Trent Boult (18) and Tim Southee, second from right, give winners medals to teammate Kyle Jamieson, left, and Neil Wagner, right

played this match, it's a special achievement to be savoured. "I think for us, we know we don't always have the stars, and we use our bits and pieces to stay in games and be competitive," added the likeable captain in the post-match presentation. "We've had 22 players over the last two years, and they've all played their part and the support staff and the guys who

AFP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Brazil continued their winning romp through the Copa America on Wednesday, eking out a controversial 2-1 victory against Colombia after struggling most of the match to answer a magnificent bicycle-kick goal by Luis Diaz.

The 11th-hour win gave the Selecao a perfect nine points from three matches in the South American championships, and extended their current winning streak to 11 matches.

However, the victory was steeped in controversy: Brazil's second-half equalizer, a Roberto Firmino header, was preceded by a Neymar pass that glanced off Argentine referee Nestor Pitana.

Colombia heatedly argued afterward that play should have been stopped, but Pitana, who refereed the 2018 World Cup final, ruled the goal valid after checking the video.

11 wins in a row

Firmino, Casemiro on target in Brazil's 2-1 comeback win against Colombia



"It's sad that with all the effort we made against one of the best teams in the world, we lost the match on a call like

that," said Juventus' Cuadrado. "A referee with that much international experience, who's refereed at the World Cup,

Insult was added to injury 10 minutes into stoppage time, when Casemiro headed a Neymar corner past a distracted Colombia defense to give Brazil the win.

However, Colombia, who are second in Group B with four points from four matches, still secured a spot in the quarter-finals.

In the early match, Ecuador and Peru failed to settle who advances to the quarter-finals, drawing 2-2 in Goiania.

Jos powers Eng to big win

Cardiff: Jos Buttler saw England to a comfortable eight-wicket win in the first T20 International against Sri Lanka at Sophia Gardens on Wednesday as the hosts went 1-0 up in a three-match series.

Sri Lanka were restricted to a modest 129/7 after winning the toss, with leg-spinner Adil Rashid taking 2-17 from his four overs and Sam Curran 2/25 from three overs.

Only Dasun Shanaka with 50 off 44 balls really threatened England's attack.

But a target of 130 proved well within the range of England, the world's top-ranked T20 side, as they won with 17 balls to spare.

Buttler thrashed eight fours and one six in his innings and shared an opening stand of 80 with Jason Roy. "The thing about batting in partnerships is it allows you to try and sit in and keep Roy back on strike," said player-of-the-match Buttler,

whose innings was labelled a 'masterclass' by England captain Eoin Morgan.

"I think it was a fantastic performance from the boys, early wickets in the power play always keep you in the game," added Buttler after his ninth half-century in just 20 T20 innings opening for England.

Morgan, speaking to *BBC Radio*, was pleased by an all-round display that augurs well for England's prospects in October's T20 World Cup.

"It's a great way to start a series that's so condensed," he said. "The bowlers really did set the tone, so full credit to them."

"In the chase, Roy and Buttler at the top of the order are a quite formidable pair, and when they play in the fashion that they can be quite intimidating." AFP

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