

OPINION 6

THE FALL AND RISE OF OLI AS NEPAL PM

WORLD 8

CHINA TRIED TO WARN US OFF STRENGTHENING QUAD: BIDEN

SPORT 12

BRAZIL START COPA AMERICA WITH WIN

RAIPUR, TUESDAY JUNE 15, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3

the pioneer

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WANT TO DO MEANINGFUL WORK: VIDYA 11 VIVACITY

CAPSULE

INDIA, PAKISTAN TO SHARE BASMATI RICE OWNERSHIP
Islamabad: In a rare agreement between two arch-rivals India and Pakistan, which have a history of long-time rivalry with disputes on every front from sea to land, exporters from both sides of the border have mutually agreed to share the ownership of the regions prized Basmati rice, a solution considered the most workable to reach the European markets.

MODI CONGRATULATES ISRAEL PM BENNETT

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday congratulated Naftali Bennett on being sworn in as Israel's new prime minister, and said he looked forward to meeting him and deepening their countries' strategic partnership as they celebrate 30 years of the upgradation of diplomatic ties next year.

INTERACT WITH SASIKALA AND FACE EXIT: AIADMK

Chennai: The AIADMK on Monday warned of disciplinary action against those in the party if they interacted with ousted party leader VK Sasikala, even as it expelled 17 members, including party spokesman V Pugazhendhi.

ACTOR SANCHARI VIJAY SUCCUMBS TO INJURY

Bengaluru: Kannada actor Sanchari Vijay, who met with an accident on June 12, died at the age of 38 on Monday. He was moved to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the Apollo Hospital in Bengaluru, where he was being treated.

5% post-jab cases serious, 488 succumbed: Ministry

95% of 26,000 adverse events post 23.5 crore doses mild

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Monday said that about 5 per cent of the total 26,000 cases of Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) were reported to be serious and severe during the period between the January 16 launch of Covid-19 vaccination nationwide drive and June 7. As many as 488 of the total AEFI cases resulted in deaths.

"These were co-incidental and mainly due to co-morbidities or among the elderly," a top public health official from the Union Health Ministry said.

The remaining 95 per cent were mild cases where the people post vaccination reported pain or headache, fever or dizziness, the official said citing details available through the Co-WIN platform from 684 districts of the country.

According to the Government data, over a period of 143 days, one out of every 10,000 people vaccinated



A health worker administers Covid-19 vaccine dose to a student at a vaccination centre organised for the students travelling abroad for higher studies in New Delhi on Monday

against Covid-19 developed complications after receiving the jab while two in every 10 lakh people vaccinated died. In other words, at least 2 per cent i.e. 488 of the total AEFI cases resulted in deaths, according to the officer.

In contrast, 10 deaths relating to Covid-19 vaccination were confirmed between January and March first week, as maintained by the AEFI committee's report.

According to the official, AEFI cases do not necessarily have a causal

relationship with vaccines.

The Government has been maintaining that bleeding and clotting cases following the vaccine shots in India were minuscule and in line with the expected number of diagnoses of these conditions in the country.

Presently, under the vaccination drive, Covishield and Covaxin are being given with the former having a major share. A total 23.5 crore doses have been administered in this period between January 16 to

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 2,95,68,891 (+58,814)

DEATHS: 3,77,037 (+2,708)

RECOVERED: 2,82,70,216 (+1,14,668)

ACTIVE: 9,09,992

MAHA: 59,17,121 (+8,129)

K'TAKA: 27,71,969 (+6,835)

KERALA: 27,35,959 (+7,719)

TN: 23,66,493 (+12,772)

DELHI: 14,31,270 (+131)

June 7.

This means AEFI cases — at 26,200 — accounted for just about 0.01% per cent of the total doses administered.

In other words, over a period of 143 days, one out of every 10,000 people vaccinated against Covid-19 developed complications after receiving the jab. Two in every 10 lakh people vaccinated died.

While 24,703 cases (or 94 per cent of the total AEFI cases) were linked to Covishield, Covaxin accounted for 1,497.

Nitish evens score, scripts LJP's coup against Chirag

5 of 6 LJP MPs oust Chirag as party leader in LS, elect Paras

NAVIN UPADHYAY ■ NEW DELHI



Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Chirag Paswan arrives to meet party leader Pashupati Kumar Paras at his house in New Delhi on Monday

Chandan Singh, Veena Devi and Mehbob Ali Kaiser. They have long been unhappy with Chirag's style of functioning, sources said. The LJP president has now been left virtually isolated at the top after taking on the mantle following his father Ram Vilas Paswan's death in 2020.

"I have not broken the party and saved it," Paras, MP from Hajipur, told reporters.

In case there is no patch up between a chacha and bhatija, the LJP could be headed for a clear split.

Indicating his closeness with the BJP and JD(U), Paras said his group will continue to be part of the BJP-led NDA, adding that Chirag can remain part of the organisation. The group of five MPs has conveyed their decision of electing Paras as the LJP leader in the Lok Sabha to the Speaker.

There has been no comment from Chirag on the issue.

The rebel group led by Paras includes MPs Prince Raj, Nitish Kumar to jail, something which

a person like Nitish was unlikely to forget and forgive.

After the Assembly polls, late Ramvilas Paswan's younger brother Paras was throughout in touch with Nitish Kumar and the BJP leadership. They decided to strike when the MPs agreed to desert Chirag en bloc.

Bihar BJP president Dr Sanjay Jaisawal reportedly had a luncheon meeting with Paras two days ago where the script to dump Chirag was discussed.

Sources said top JD(U) leaders backed the move and played a key role in bringing together all the MPs over a period of time. Senior JD (U) leader Lallan Singh, Bihar Deputy Speaker Maheshwar Hazari, and JD(U) MLC Sanjay Singh were part of the operation to bring together the rebel MPs.

Tourists flock to Shimla, Manali, metros witness chaotic traffic



Crowd at Sadar Bazar market after authorities eased Covid-induced restrictions on Monday

Ranjan Dimpri Pioneer

Single dose of vax sufficient for already infected people: Study

Hyderabad: A single dose of Covid-19 vaccine is sufficient for an infected person as there was a greater antibody response when compared with those who have had no prior infection, according to a study released by AIG Hospitals on Monday.

Hindustan Times

Yesterdays

India behind China, Pak in nuke numbers

KAMLESH SRIVASTAVA ■ AYODHYA



the countries have started rapid modernisation of its nuclear weapon inventory. "China is in the middle of a significant modernisation and expansion of its nuclear weapon inventory, and India and Pakistan also appear to be expanding their nuclear arsenals," it said.

There are nine nuclear weapon states in the world, including India, USA, Pakistan, China, Russia, France, United Kingdom, Israel and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).

At the start of last year, while India had 150 warheads, Pakistan had 160 and China had 320, the SIPRI report observed. It also said nearly all

Committed to save mother Earth: PM

Modi urges world to reduce pressure on land, resources

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the UN High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land degradation and Drought, through video conferencing, in New Delhi

restoring 26 million (2.6 crore) hectares of degraded land by 2030," Modi said.

This would contribute to India's commitment to achieve an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion (250 to 300 crore) tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, he added.

"We believe that restoration of land can start a virtuous cycle for good soil health, increased land productivity, food security and improved livelihoods," the Prime Minister said.

Pointing out that in many parts of India, novel approaches have been taken up, the Prime Minister cited the example of Banni region in Rann of Kutch in Gujarat which suffers from highly degraded land and receives very little rainfall.

"In that region, land restoration is done by developing grasslands, which helps in achieving land degradation neutrality. It also supports pastoral activities and livelihood by promoting animal husbandry," he said.

"In the same spirit, we need to devise effective strategies for land restoration while promoting indigenous techniques," Modi said.

Year after SSR's death, CBI yet to finish probe

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Even after a year of probe into the mysterious death of Bollywood film actor Sushant Singh Rajput, the CBI is yet to wrap up the investigation or solve the tangled up case.

The agency has not made much headway in terms of gathering prosecutable material to either file a chargesheet in the matter or taking a conclusive call on submitting a closure report before the competent court in the absence of pointed evidence.

Congress, Shiv Sena, TMC, RJD and several other parties called for a thorough investigation. The Congress flagged it as big scam by Ram temple trust and demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the charge.

While CBI remained tight-lipped on the outcome of the probe so far, official sources on Monday dished out the oft-repeated line, "the CBI continues to probe the case from all possible angles."

Retail inflation hits 6-month high of 6.3% in May on costlier food, fuel

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rising prices of edible oils and protein rich items pushed the retail inflation to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, breaching the comfort level of the Reserve Bank and thus rendering reduction in interest rates a difficult proposition in the near term.

The Government has asked the Reserve Bank to keep the retail inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

CPI inflation has breached the upper band of the inflation target about 10 times since the first meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which decides the key interest rate, in October 2016.

Detailed report on P9

Land deal charges false, says Ram Mandir trust



Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra general secretary Champat Rai

ANI

India Today

HT

PTI

Times Now

HT

ANI

PTI

HT

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AAP to spread its wings to Gujarat

TO CONTEST ALL SEATS IN THE 2022 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS



STAFF REPORTER ■
NEW DELHI/ AHMEDABAD

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will contest all seats in the Gujarat State Assembly elections scheduled in 2022, the party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal said on Monday.

"The AAP will contest each and every seat in the 2022 Gujarat Assembly elections. The AAP is a credible alternative to the BJP and the Congress. Gujarat will change soon," Kejriwal said while inaugurating the party's office in

Ahmedabad.

Kejriwal who landed in the State on Monday, paid a visit to the famous Krishna temple after which he held a press conference and welcomed Sudan, a journalist into the party.

"The people of Gujarat played a very important role in the Indian

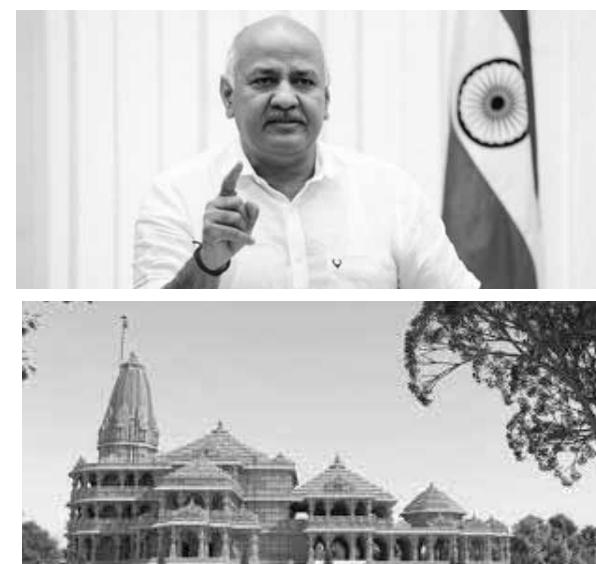
Independence movement. The biggest leaders of the country belonged to the land of Gujarat. At the time when the country got its Independence, it was divided into princely States. It was then that Sardar Patel took the effort to unify the country. After a great struggle, he unified the nation. But today the farmers of Gujarat are committing suicide even after 75 years of Independence and the condition of Government schools and Government hospitals is extremely poor," he said.

The AAP convener further said that the State is suffering because of this friendship and alliance between the BJP and the Congress.

"The people of the State want to know why the electricity costs are so high in Gujarat while it is free in Delhi. Government-run schools and hospitals in Delhi are superb but why are they in a bad shape in Gujarat," he said. "People here in Gujarat also observe that if electricity can be given 24x7 for free in Delhi, why is it so expensive in their State? If the hospitals and schools can be improved within five years in Delhi then why did not happen here in Gujarat in the last 70 years?" he asked.

Sisodia said: "The Ram Janmabhoomi Trust bought 1,208 acres of land for ₹18.5 crores on March 18. The land was bought from Ravi Mohan Tiwari and Sultan Ansari in the

Ram temple trust must clarify high price of land: AAP



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Monday alleged corruption in land purchase by the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, saying that land worth ₹2 crore was bought at ₹18.5 crore by the trust.

Sisodia said: "The Ram Janmabhoomi Trust bought 1,208 acres of land for ₹18.5 crores on March 18. The land was bought from Ravi Mohan Tiwari and Sultan Ansari in the

presence of Anil Mishra and Mayor of Ayodhya Rishikesh Upadhyaya who are members of the trust.

"The Ram Janmabhoomi Trust has purchased a piece of land in Ayodhya for ₹18.5 crore. It was sold for just ₹2 crore five minutes before it was bought by the Ram temple trust. There has been a scam in purchasing this land for the pious work of building the Ram temple. The Ram Janmabhoomi Trust must clarify why the land was bought at

such a high price," he said.

Sisodia further said that the temple is being built using donations made by people and their sentiments are attached to it. "My request to them (Ram temple trust) is only that they should not play with the sentiments of the people who donated their hard-earned money for the temple," he said.

AAP senior leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, who was also present at the press conference, claimed Anil Mishra, trustee of the Ram temple trust, and Rishikesh Upadhyay, mayor of Ayodhya, were present during the finalisation of both the sale agreements.

"BJP leaders immediately came to the defence of all those involved in the scam.

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Trust should give a full account of the money received through donations by the people," he said.

The trust's general secretary Rai has strongly refuted the allegations, saying that the charges of assassinating Mahatma Gandhi were also levelled against us but we do not fear allegations. "I will study the allegations levelled against us and probe them," he said.

MCG to conduct a special drive against property tax defaulters



STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) will conduct a property sealing drive in August, against the property tax defaulters who are not depositing their property tax, despite the interest waiver and exemption given by the Haryana Government on the payment of property tax.

The officials said that for the recovery of property tax, the cooperation of the Resident Welfare Association (RWAs) will also be taken. Three citizen facilitation centres have been set up by the MCG for the payment of property tax, in which the amount up to ₹5,000 in the form of cash and above the amount through demand draft, credit card and debit card can be paid from MCG officials.

The commissioner has instructed the Zonal Taxation Officers to issue notices against such property owners whose outstanding property tax amount of ₹5 lakh or above and seal their properties by running a special drive in August in case of non-payment of property tax.

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The officials said that for the recovery of property tax, the cooperation of the Resident Welfare Association (RWAs) will also be taken. Three citizen facilitation centres have been set up by the MCG for the payment of property tax, in which the amount up to ₹5,000 in the form of cash and above the amount through demand draft, credit card and debit card can be paid from MCG officials.

The MCG commissioner Mukesh Kumar Ahuja directed the officials of the taxation wing to expedite the recovery of property tax from such property owners on Monday.

The commissioner has instructed the Zonal Taxation Officers to issue notices against such property owners whose

'People going abroad will get a shield against Covid-19'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

People going abroad will get a shield against Covid-19 at a dedicated vaccination centre in Navyug School, Mandir Marg. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said the AAP Government has started a special vaccination centre for students going to study abroad, people who have taken up jobs in foreign nations and sportspersons headed for the Tokyo Olympic Games.

"These days, our children are going abroad for further studies, or have attained jobs outside the country or are participating in international sports events. We have opened this special vaccination centre for all

these citizens who are leaving for abroad and need to be vaccinated at the earliest, without any hassle," Sisodia said.

He further stated that citizens would be administered the Covishield vaccine at this centre and under special provisions of the Delhi Government, citizens would be able to get their second shot after 28-34 days of their first jab.

This special centre was inaugurated on June 14 and this provision would be available to all those citizens who need to undertake international travel in August. It is mandatory to carry all relevant documents for the same along with a passport.

Gopal Rai inspects vaccination centres



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai inspected vaccination centers at Canterbury Public School, Vijay Park and Government Boys Sr. Sec. School Ghoda No. 1 North Ghonda, Subhash Mohalla of Babarpur.

"All these centres vaccination of people above 45 years have begun along with the people of age 18-44. "The target of the Delhi Government is to vaccinate as many people as possible in the coming days because vaccination is the only way to save the lives of people," he added.

"As you know that the Kejriwal Government has launched the initiative of vaccination in every booth across Delhi and the work is going on successfully here. The target of the Delhi Government is to vaccinate as many people as possible in the coming days because vaccination is the only way to save the lives of people," he added.

"As you know that the Kejriwal Government has launched the initiative of vaccination in every booth across Delhi and the work is going on

Delhi sees 131 cases

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 131 new Covid-19 cases, lowest since February 22 while the positivity rate dipped to 0.22 per cent.

Besides, 16 more fatalities were reported on Sunday, taking the total number to 24,839 till now, according to data shared by the health department.

The number of active cases stood at 3,226 on Monday, out of which 960 are in home isolation, according to the latest health bulletin.

Delhi man held for making hoax call about bomb on plane



panied by his father to Patna for treatment," said the senior police official.

Police have received the papers of his medical treatment. A medical examination will be conducted and further course of action will be decided based on his interrogation," said a police official privy to investigation.

"There were over 48 passengers onboard the flight. They are being shifted to another aircraft. The first aircraft is being checked thoroughly," he said.

made the call to the Police Control Room (PCR) saying that there was a bomb on the plane.

Police said that the accused has been identified as Akash Deep and he is "mentally disturbed".

According to a senior police official, after boarding the flight with his father, Deep

PICTALK



People visit a restaurant after authorities eased Covid-induced restrictions, at Khan Market in New Delhi on Monday

Ranjan Dimri

Early monsoon in Jharkhand this year too

VIJAY DEO JHA ■ RANCHI

The southwest monsoon hit Jharkhand on Saturday contrary to the initial forecast of India Meteorological Department (IMD) that had predicted the monsoon will arrive in Jharkhand between June 15 and June 18.

IMD's Bihar and Jharkhand unit on Saturday had issued a special bulletin informing the advent of monsoon.

As per the report, southwest monsoon entered in Jharkhand from northeast part of the state. The monsoon splashed Bengal on Friday and moved to Jharkhand on Saturday.

"We always keep the data of previous years in mind while studying about the current advancement of monsoon. Since the last few years, the arrival of monsoon in Jharkhand has been revised from June 10 to June 15. So on this basis we can say that monsoon has arrived this time three days earlier," an official of the weather department said.

He said that a scheme should be made at the central level for fish production in these coal fields, where the State is used as an agency. There is also a need to celebrate National Fisheries Day on a large scale on July 10.

in such a situation, if the central allocation is made to different states in a proportionate manner, then the contribution to GDP can be increased. He said that NITI Aayog is also accepting that there has been a decline of 19 per cent in fish exports in the last 4 years, it needs to be corrected. He said that there are total 1741 colpits and stone mines in Jharkhand, where 9880 hectare area is covered and the State Government is doing the work of increasing fish production in these areas.

He said that a scheme should be made at the central level for fish production in these coal fields, where the State is used as an agency. There is also a need to celebrate National Fisheries Day on a large scale on July 10.

group.

The machines would be distributed in the presence of public representatives in all the blocks," said Badal.

days. In 2018, it reached Jharkhand on June 25, after a delay of 15. Similarly in 2017 and in 2016 the monsoon was delayed by six days.

Zonal Office (Mumbai), 3, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Ballard Pier, Mumbai 400 001, Maharashtra, India Tel : 91-22 2261 0341 Fax : 91-22 2261 1259 E Mail : gm.gnz@bankofbaroda.com Web : www.bankofbaroda.com

SHOW CAUSE NOTICE Date: 10.05.2021

To: **M/s. Goldstar Polymers Ltd.**, B-701, 702, 703, Citipoint, 7th Floor, Andheri Kurla Road, J.B. Nagar, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400 059

M/s. Goldstar Polymers Ltd., Plot/ Shed No. 16 and 17, C.S. No. 366/5 & 366/6, Premier Industrial Estate, Kachigam, Taluka and District Daman

Mrs. Khushboo Premprakash Saroogi (Alias Mrs. Khushboo Magher) (Guarantor- M/s. Goldstar Polymers Ltd.) Azra Dage Building, Motibaug Chowk, Business Raj Bhawan, Civil Lines, Raipur - 492001

Dear Sir,

Re: Show Cause Notice for declaring M/s. GOLDSTAR POLYMERS LTD and its Directors/ Guarantors as Willful Defaulters and Opportunity for Representation there against.

We refer to your captioned account and write to inform you that due to non-payment of interest/installment, account turned to Non-Performing Assets in the books of the Bank on 19.07.2019.

We further write to inform you that as per the directions of the Committee of Executives on Willful Defaulters of our Bank and on scrutiny of your account based on your acts of omission and commission, deeds/documents and writings, performed/executed by the Company and its directors/guarantors, the Company and its directors/guarantors be classified as Willful Defaulters as per guidelines of RBI on the following grounds:

1. The Company has declared stock of Rs. 62,000 lakhs in their stock statement of February 2019, however on conducting physical inspection the actual value of stock lying at the factory on 10.04.2019 was to the tune of Rs. 90.00 Lakhs only.

2. As per Unit Inspection report dated 11.12.2020 the unit was found closed and there was no stock.

3. The Company has remitted large amounts to their associate concerns in accounts maintained with our Daman Branch from Cash Credit/ Current Account and approx. Rs. 2.00 Crs were transferred from Cash Credit/ Current account during the period 08.02.2008 to 02.05.2009 to their associate concerns.

Thus the Company has defaulted in meeting your payment/ repayment obligations to us and have not utilized the finance taken from us for the specific purposes for which finance was availed of but have diverted/siphoned off the funds for other purposes and the fund has not been utilized for the purpose for which finance was availed.

In terms of RBI guidelines and to comply principles of natural justice, if you, desire, may send your submission for consideration by the Committee of Executives, headed by our Executive Director within 15- days from the date of receipt of this letter as to why your account and you not classified by Bank as a Willful Defaulter. The Committee reserves the right to give or not to give the personal hearing to decide about classifying as willful defaulter in case your submission is received.

Please note that, in case your submission against the intention of Bank to declare you as a Willful Defaulter is not received within 15- days from the date of receipt of this letter, the Bank will proceed further and classify your account as willful defaulter. Bank reserves the Right to publish the name and photograph of Willful Defaulter in News Paper and will initiate the necessary recovery action as per extant guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India.

This communication is issued as per the directions of the Committee of Executives on Willful Defaulters (COE) as on 31.03.2021.

Yours faithfully,

(P. Pattanayak)

Dy. General Manager

(Mumbai Zone)

Monitor Lizard rescued from BTSPS

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Monitor Lizard decided to make itself at home in the toilet of the Badarpur Thermal Power Station (BTSPS). However, the four-feet-long reptile was safely "escorted" out of its new-found "home" by Wildlife SOS in a 30-minute long operation.

The security personnel stationed at the BTSPS first sighted the Monitor Lizard inside the power station but later it made its way into a toilet stall. A three-member team from the NGO rushed

to the location with requisite equipment including a customized transportation unit and protective gear. "The reptile's size made the rescue operation more challenging. It took the team nearly 30

minutes to safely transfer the Monitor Lizard into a trans-

port carrier," an official from Wildlife SOS said.

A Senior Shift Officer at BTSPS, said, "We saw the Monitor Lizard moving from the powerhouse into the toilet. It was quite shocking to see such a big reptile and we thank the Wildlife SOS team for helping us out in this emergency situation."

Kartick Satyanarayan, Co-Founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS said, "Handling reptiles can be quite challenging especially, when they get stuck or trapped in such situations. We are happy to see that people are showing compassion towards these highly misunderstood reptiles by reaching out to us for help. Our rescue team is trained to deal with any given situation in the interest of public safety and the protection of urban wildlife."

Agriculture department distributes tractors, rotavators among women

PNS ■ RANCHI

In an attempt to increase women participation in

Even during Covid, C'garh economy grew: Baghel



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Covid-19 affected the economy of the entire country but there was no shortage of employment or food during the pandemic in Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said on Monday.

Chhattisgarh's economy remained strong and dynamic even during this challenging time because of government schemes which benefited farmers, forest dwellers and villagers, an official communication said.

Baghel was addressing a virtual programme held here when he performed bhumi pujan of

construction works worth nearly Rs 592 crores, the statement said.

These include projects worth Rs 308.31 crores for Raigarh district and Rs 283.70 crores for Jashpur district.

The Chief Minister spoke to the beneficiaries of various schemes in both the districts.

He said both Raigarh and Jashpur have a lot of potential for horticulture crops along with agriculture. Besides paddy, Kodo-Kutki, pearl, cashew, litchi and strawberry are being produced in Jashpur.

Now preparations are on to cultivate apple in Jashpur, he added. Tea is also cultivated in

Jashpur. The government is making elaborate arrangements to increase production of Jawapool rice of Lailunga in Raigarh district and to export and sell it on the online platform, he said.

The Chief Minister said that now forest produce has become a major factor of change in Chhattisgarh. Individual and community forest right patta and forest resource rights have been awarded to the forest dwellers.

Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey said that despite the corona crisis, development works worth Rs 4,446 crores have been completed in 16 districts in the last one week.

Mountaineering academy in Chhattisgarh soon

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday announced that a mountaineering academy will be set up in Bastar region soon.

Baghel said this while meeting Naina Singh Dhakad, who conquered Mount Everest on June 1. The academy will promote adventure sports in the state, he said.

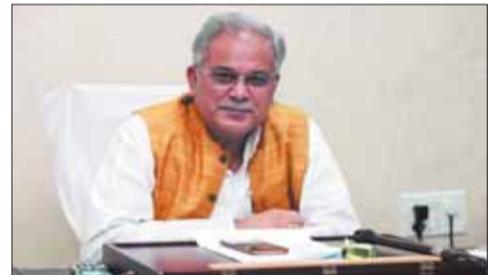
Baghel also wished a bright future for Dhakad, who hails from Takraguda village in Bastar region. She hoisted the tricolor on Mount Everest, located in Nepal at a height of 8,848.80 metres above sea level. She also scaled Mount Lhotse, the fourth highest mountain in the world at 8,516 metres.



Private school students who lost parents also to get help: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday announced that children in private schools who lost parents/guardians to Covid-19 will also get free education from the state government. Under the Mahtari Dular Yojana, the government will bear the educational expenditure of such children. The students will have



the choice to either continue their education in the same private school or they can go for the Swami Atmanand English Medium School. The government will bear their school fees, an official communication said.

The government has launched the Mahtari Dular Yojna to provide

free education and monthly scholarship to children studying in government schools who lost their parents or guardians due to the pandemic.

Under the scheme, students will get a scholarship of Rs 500 a month from Class I to 8 and Rs 1,000 a month from Class 9 to 12.

Children who lost the earning parent (mother, father or both) to Covid are eligible to avail this scheme.

Magisterial probe ordered into farmer's suicide

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh government has ordered a magisterial probe into the suicide by a 64-year-old farmer who consumed poison in Raipur district, it was announced on Monday.

Raipur Collector Saaurabh Kumar has set up a team headed by Additional Collector Padmini Bhoi Sahu to investigate the suicide, an official statement said. Sarju Ram Yadav consumed poison at his home in Morena village on June 12. A handwritten note found from the spot claimed his land was being encroached upon and three people, including a revenue department staffer, were harassing him.

Do you have digital eye strain?

By Siddhi Jain ■

If you have felt increased screen time is doing a number on your eyes and potentially contributing to digital eye strain, a survey shows you're not alone. Findings show that 80 per cent of respondents say pandemic-prompted screen time put their eyes in "overdrive". In fact, two-thirds of respondents report experiencing some degree of eye discomfort every day and nearly a quarter say their eyes feel worse now than they did a year ago. All that is adding up to a new sense of urgency; 90 per cent say it's important to take care of their eyes -- starting now. The VSP Vision Care survey also found that a quarter say their eyes feel worse now than before the pandemic. Over half of the respondents report looking at a computer most of the day, every day, say the findings, adding that nearly 2 in 3 experience some degree of eye discomfort on a



daily basis. Eighty per cent would be willing to schedule routine computer breaks to relieve digital eye strain, while roughly 1 in 5 prioritises paying regular visits to the eye doctor. In the survey, more than half of respondents defined a "digital detox" as a break from screen time. However, there are other ways to relieve your eyes other than stepping away from screens completely: Finding relief from digital eye

strain: Digital eye strain can occur from prolonged and frequent use of screens, which engages our near vision, and exposes us to the blue light emitted by screens. Symptoms can appear as watery, dry, sore eyes, blurred vision and headaches. Although around 65 per cent report experiencing eye discomfort on a daily basis, half of Americans sometimes miss their annual exam or never go, according to the survey.

Even if you have perfect vision, prolonged screen time -- pandemic-related or not -- can tire out your eyes. During an eye exam, your eye doctor may suggest a computer lens or a blue light-reducing, anti-reflective lens coating that can help reduce your exposure and combat digital eye strain. If you don't wear prescription glasses, non-prescription lenses with a blue light-reducing, anti-reflective coating can be used. In the 20-20-20 rule, where every 20 minutes, you take 20 seconds to look at something 20 feet away. This will help to reset your focus and help your eyes feel less fatigued due to digital eye strain. Blinking more frequently also helps to relieve discomfort by moistening your eyes. Keeping an eye out for kids: The survey found that more than half of parents are worried about the effects of their children's increased screen time. Men are more likely than women to be worried about their children's eyes and, when it comes to millennial dads, 6 in 10 are concerned about their children's vision due to increased screen time.

Eye care is health care, and through a comprehensive eye exam, an eye doctor can detect early signs of serious health conditions like diabetes and hypertension. (IANSlife)

Students will get free textbooks at home

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The new educational session in Chhattisgarh starts from June 16, and free text books will be delivered to the homes of all eligible students in view of Covid-19.

The government took

the decision as schools are physically closed. Free text books are distributed to students every year by the government.

The School Education Department said that both government and private schools should prepare a plan to distribute the text books to the students at their homes.

Chhattisgarh inks deal for Kodo-Kutki processing

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Federation on Monday signed a MoU with the Indian Institute of Millets Research for better processing of Kodo-Kutki and Ragi.

With this, the Federation will be able to develop new durable food items by using the technology of the research institute, an official communication said.

These food items will be sold under the prestigious government brand 'Chhattisgarh Herbals'. This value addition work of Kodo and Kutki will provide better benefits to the

farmers, the statement said.

The government has decided to buy Kodo-Kutki and Ragi in the notified areas of Chhattisgarh at the minimum support price. This work will be done through the Federation.

These steps have been taken to improve the financial condition

of the farmers involved in millet cultivation in the state.

The Managing Director of the State Minor Forest Produce Federation, Sanjay Shukla, said Kodo-Kutki and Ragi are generally grown in Chhattisgarh by villagers residing near the forests.

Kार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता, लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड सचिव (छ.ग.)

ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट निविदा सूचना

निविदा प्रपत्र "A" में एकाइकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत देकेदारों से जल जीवन मिशन के देवीप्रिया नलजल प्रायव योजनागत निवास कार्य की अनेकाइन निविदा आंतर्गत की जाती है।

एन.आर.टी. डिमोक्रॉटि. सिस्टम डेव्हेलपर क्रमाक्र.

कार्य का नाम अनुमानित लापता (लाख) में

47/10.06.21, 78025 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम बरानारा 57.36

48/10.06.21, 78026 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम छेरीखेड़ी 22.85

49/10.06.21, 78027 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम दोदेखुर्द 162.93

50/10.06.21, 78028 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम निरोही 87.48

51/10.06.21, 78029 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम निरोही 54.43

52/10.06.21, 78030 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम निरोही 71.44

53/10.06.21, 78031 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम मुरोद 31.80

54/10.06.21, 78032 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम नगरगाव 64.80

55/10.06.21, 78033 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम पथरी 72.95

56/10.06.21, 78034 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम सरोद 75.18

57/10.06.21, 78035 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम तुलसी 55.53

58/10.06.21, 78036 विकासखंड धरसीवा के ग्राम असेना 140.65

59/10.06.21, 78038 विकासखंड तिल्ला के ग्राम बेलोरी 115.51

60/10.06.21, 78039 विकासखंड तिल्ला के ग्राम बेलोरी 66.41

61/10.06.21, 78040 विकासखंड तिल्ला के ग्राम बेलोरी 104.11

नोट:- उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्यों की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापन के देवीप्रिया नलजल प्रायव योजनागत निवास कार्य की अनेकाइन निविदा आंतर्गत की जाती है।

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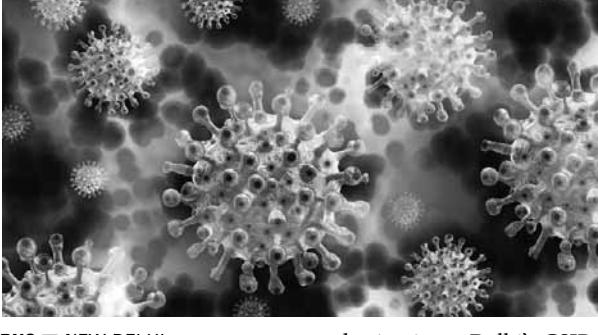
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60/

Concern over Delta variant mutating to Delta Plus



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

and scientist at Delhi's CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), tweeted on Sunday. The mutation, he pointed out, is in the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2, which helps the virus enter and infect the human cells.

At least 63 genomes of Delta (B.1.617.2) with the new K417N mutation have been identified so far on the global science initiative GISAID, according to Public Health England report. In its latest report on coronavirus variants, updated till last Friday, the health agency said Delta plus was present in six genomes from India as of June 7.

Health experts have said that there is no immediate cause for concern in India as its incidence here is still low and two doses of vaccines, putting up masks and implementing Covid appropriate norms can help check its infection.

However, given the snail's pace of vaccination drive owing to jab shortage and poor implementation of social norms for Covid-19, the authorities may find it difficult to combat its spread in the coming days.

Stating that the travel histories for the variant were yet not readily available to make assumptions, "evidence suggests that it is resistance to monoclonal antibodies

Officers at level of Under Secretary or above directed to attend offices on all working days

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday directed all officers at the level of Under Secretary and above to attend offices on all working days, beginning Wednesday, except for persons with disabilities and pregnant women employees who would continue to work from home. For the first time, the government has also issued instructions for staggered timings to be maintained.

As for the government servants of the level below Under Secretaries, 50 per cent of such officials will attend office on all working days and the remaining will work from home, as per an order by Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). The Personnel Ministry has come up with guidelines to regulate attendance in government offices "in view of the fact that

number of Covid cases and positivity rate have reduced considerably".

For the first, the officers/staff shall follow staggered timings — 9 AM to 5.30 PM, 9.30 AM to 6 PM and 10 AM to 6.30 PM — to avoid overcrowding in offices.

All government servants at the level of Under Secretary and above to attend office on all working days. All officers/staff have to ensure strict compliance with COVID-appropriate behaviour viz. Frequent washing of hands/sanitisation, wearing a mask/face cover, observing social distancing at all times and "any laxity in this regard shall be viewed seriously", the order said.

The persons with disabilities and pregnant women employees will continue to be exempted from attending office but are required to work

from home till further orders, the order said. All officers/staff residing in the containment zone shall be exempted from coming to offices till the containment zone is denoted, according to the order.

Those officers/staff who are not attending office shall work from home and they should be available on telephone and other electronic means of communication at all times, the order said. "Meeting, as far as possible shall be conducted on video-conferencing and personal meetings with visitors, unless absolutely necessary in public interest, are to be avoided," it said.

These instructions shall come into force from June 16 until June 30, the order said, adding that biometric attendance shall continue to be suspended and physical attendance registers to be maintained until further orders.

Casirivimab and Imdevimab.

Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-made proteins that mimic the immune system's ability to fight off viruses. Of late, some monoclonal antibodies have been specifically designed to target the spike protein of the Covid virus -- they do not let the virus attach itself and enter into the human

cells.

Casirivimab and Imdevimab are monoclonal antibodies that are specifically directed against the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2, and designed to block the virus' attachment and entry into human cells, according to reports.

Scaria also suggested the

mutation may be associated with the ability to escape the immune response against the virus. "There is no cause of concern due to the new variant in India as of now," added Anurag Agrawal, the director of CSIR-IGIB said.

He said that the blood plasma from many fully vaccinated individuals will have to

be tested against this variant to determine whether it shows any significant immune escape.

Agrawal further said SARS-CoV-2 has a nearly constant rate of acquiring genetic mutations, and each variant has acquired additional variants in a stepwise fashion.

"Understanding this continued evolution is of great importance in mapping the critical and persistent global public health need for additional COVID-19 vaccines," said Stanley C. Erck, Novavax's president and chief executive in a statement here.

Unlike some rival jabs, Novavax's vaccine -- formerly known as NVX-CoV2373 -- does not have to be stored at ultra-low temperatures.

The company said it was "stored and stable at 2°-8°C, allowing the use of existing vaccine supply chain channels for its distribution."

evolutionary landscape of emerging variants. Largely the virus has tried to optimise for transmission and immune escape by step-wise acquisition of new mutations," he added.

NOVAVAX



cy overall," the company said in a statement, adding "the study enrolled 29,960 participants across 119 sites in the U.S. and Mexico to evaluate efficacy, safety and immunogenicity."

After that, it said, it would be on course to make 100 million doses per month by the end of the third quarter and 150 million doses per month by the end of the year.

The jab "demonstrated 100 per cent protection against moderate and severe disease, 90.4 per cent efficac-

variants, and each variant has acquired additional variants in a stepwise fashion.

"Understanding this continued evolution is of great importance in mapping the

Jaishankar likely to attend G20 FM meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar is likely to travel to Matera in Italy to attend the G20 Foreign Minister's (FM) meet on June 29. India presently holds the rotational presidency of G20. It will also hold the leaders' summit in Rome on October 30 and 31.

The G20 Foreign Ministers' physical meeting is set to take place after the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said that Group of Seven (G7) nations and guest countries "had a detailed discussion on the need for reforming global health governance. India has been actively engaged with international communities at the level of G20, G7 and World Health Assembly on various aspects related to dealing with the current pandemic."

Now that the G7 leaders' summit ended on June 13, the next major event for G20 will take place in the month end.

Last year, the G20, under the chairmanship of Saudi Arabia, held its meetings including the leaders' meet, virtually amid the Covid pandemic.

Cong urges LS Speaker to elect Dy Speaker

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Monday wrote to Speaker Om Birla urging him to take necessary steps for election of Deputy Speaker of the House in the Monsoon Session of Parliament. In his letter to the Speaker, Chowdhury said two years have passed since the 17th Lok Sabha was constituted and the House does not have a Deputy Speaker.

Chowdhury said that the Office of Deputy Speaker continuing to remain vacant "is not in consonance with what has been envisaged under the Constitution as well-established conventions".

As the second-highest-ranking legislative officer of the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Speaker is of help in ensuring that the varied functions of the Parliament are discharged effectively, and the business of the House is conducted in a manner befitting the needs of our representative democracy," he said.

Chowdhury said it is a "very well-established convention" that the position of



complete the process of electing Deputy Speaker.

Last month Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, in his as capacity chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), had written to Lok Sabha Speaker urging him to permit the PAC to meet and discuss the government's Covid-19 vaccination policy.

"There have been numerous occasions in the past where, with permission or direction of the Speaker, the Public Accounts Committee has met and taken up matters of larger concern for discussion, deliberation and making observations and recommendations thereon to the Government to act upon," he mentioned.

Delhi HC refuses stay, warns IMA prez against misusing doctors' body

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to stay an order of a trial court directing IMA president JA Jayalal not to use the organisation's platform to propagate any religion and cautioning him that loose comments cannot be expected from a person chairing the responsible post.

Justice Asha Menon said the court will not pass any ex parte order as nobody appeared on behalf of the person on whose complaint the trial court had passed the order on June 4.

The high court issued notice on the appeal filed by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) chief challenging the trial court's order and listed the matter for further hearing on June 16. It said the high court will have to look into the order passed by the trial court and cannot take a superficial view.

The trial court had passed the order on a plea filed against Jayalal for allegedly starting a defamatory campaign against the Hindu religion "by way of promoting Christianity, in the

Ex-Telangana Min, supporters join BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Pradhan said that the BJP will form the Government in Telengana after the next Assembly election

Speaking on the occasion, Pradhan said that the BJP will form the government in Telengana after the next assembly election. He said Telengana would be the second state in the South after Karnataka where the BJP will hold fort.

While Pradhan described Rajender as a six-time MLA, Chugh said he was a founder member of the TRS.

The former TRS leader described the charges against him as baseless saying he was not given an opportunity to explain and that the allegations were based on 'anonymous complaints'.

Last week, the BJP inducted senior Congress leader and former union minister Jitin Prasada into the party.

Monsoon two weeks ahead of its schedule

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The monsoon has covered nearly two-thirds of the country and that too, nearly

two weeks ahead of the normal schedule.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), after advancing into most parts of the country, including many parts of north-west India, monsoon's progress is likely to slow down.

Monsoon has so far advanced into entire peninsular India; east central; east and northeast India and some parts of north-west India.

The IMD has issued orange alert for Idukki, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod districts for Monday and yellow alert for Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram and Wayanad districts.

The IMD said the monsoon progressed very quickly

over most parts of the country in the span of only 10 days, mainly due to active monsoon circulation and the formation of a low pressure area over Bay of Bengal.

"Conditions are favourable for further advance of the Southwest Monsoon in most parts of Madhya Pradesh, remaining parts of east Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, west Uttar Pradesh and Haryana...", the IMD said. The four-month long rainy season is crucial for the farmers in the country and it also replenishes the water bodies.

"However due to approaching mid-latitude westerly winds further progress of monsoon over remaining parts of northwest India is likely to be slow. The progress of the monsoon is

widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy falls, thunderstorm & lightning very likely over Konkan, Goa, Karnataka and Mahe during next 4 days.

Note: 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.

Note: For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table & Stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website: <https://enquiry.indianrailways.gov.in>.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

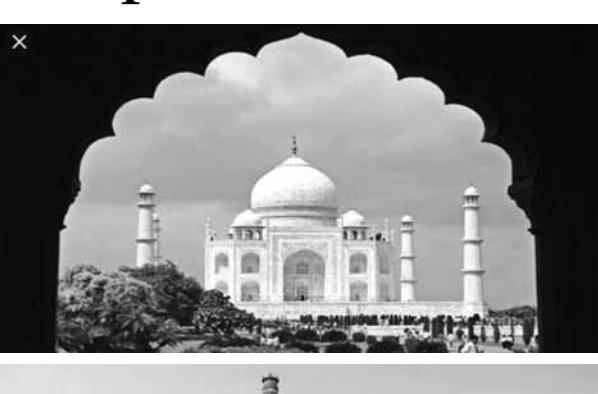
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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

ASI monuments to open tomorrow



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All Central monuments and museums, protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and which had been closed down owing to the coronavirus pandemic, will reopen from June 16, 2021.

Tourists can visit the monuments following necessary Covid-19 protocols. Best wishes to everyone," Union Minister Prahlad Singh Patel tweeted.

The ASI had earlier ordered closure of all centrally-protected monuments from April 16 to May 15. The ASI had again issued an order on May 12 to keep all such historical sites closed till June 15.

Covid-19 cases have been continuously declining in the country.

During the last 24 hours, 70,421 new cases were reported, which is the lowest since March 31. There were 3,921 deaths due to Covid-19 in the country saw a sudden spike.

"Today the Union Tourism Ministry has given approval to duly open all the ASI monu-

ments from June 16, 2021.

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Roy likely to be TMC VP with eye on N-E

TMC expects Mukul to break Tripura too
SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With apparent plans to use Mukul Roy to hit the BJP where it should hurt it the most, Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee is likely to appoint him as the Trinamool national vice president and use him in the north-eastern States where the saffron outfit is in power and where Roy has a good following.

Roy was the national vice president of the BJP when he left it to join the TMC last Friday — about four years after he left the party that he co-founded with the Bengal Chief Minister in 1998.

Though no TMC leader would speak on the issue publicly sources said that Trinamool national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee has communicated to Roy the plans of the Chief Minister.

Roy who has a good number of loyalists among the Tripura BJP family, sources said.

MLAs could be entrusted with "Mission Tripura and North East," sources said adding at least 12-13 MLAs in the tiny north-eastern state could join the Trinamool at appropriate time.

Foremost of these Roy loyalists is senior BJP legislator Sudip Roy Burman who once left the Congress — the main and only opposition party in Tripura — to join the Trinamool Congress and later joined the BJP with the entire chunk of the TMC brass ahead of the State elections in the north-eastern State.

A known Roy loyalist Roy Burman had been in a funk for not being made the Tripura Chief Minister — the post went to Biplob Deb. Roy could now be entrusted with gauging the mood of the disgruntled saffron MLAs including Roy Burman — who leads the anti-Biplob Deb camp. The former Railway Minister could also be joined in his "mission" by senior Congress leader in that State PM Deb Burman a member of the Tripura Royal family, sources said.

"Mukul Da has been the TMC national general secretary and had seen the organizational work in various states including Tripura and Assam... it is true that he has good followers in those States ... now he may try to revive those contacts after becoming the national vice president of the party," a senior Trinamool leader said adding "if the BJP could not understand the worth of Mukul Da then that is not our fault ... Mamata Banerjee knows full well where to use which leader and how."

Meanwhile, Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari on Monday demanded immediate steps to be taken against the defecting leaders saying if adequate steps were not taken then the BJP would move the court.

"We give a day's time to Mukul Roy to tender his resignation (as a BJP MLA) and if that is not done then we will appeal to the Speaker who is quite a senior and knowledgeable person ... and even then if he continues on

the post then I know what is to be done ... we will get things done by the judiciary." Roy won the State election from Krishnagar North Assembly seat.

Elsewhere there was a considerable churning in the Trinamool Congress regarding the home-coming of leaders who had left the party before the elections.

Already rallies were being taken out against any possible decision to take in leaders like former Minister Rajib Banerjee who left the TMC just before the elections. Banerjee who met senior TMC leaders Partha Chatterjee and Kunal Ghosh would however not make any comments.

A senior TMC leader and MP said, "the case of Mukul Roy is different because he is worth taking back maybe along with his loyalists because of his contacts but others are just parasites ... besides it would be wrong to take these leaders back who have been defeated in their own areas ... the workers who worked continuously would be disheartened."

Stop communal violence: Suvendu to Bengal Govt

24 MLAs absent from BJP delegation to Guv

PNS ■ KOLKATA

As many as 24 MLAs were absent from the delegation that Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari, led on Monday to meet Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar.

Only 50 MLAs out of a total of 74 accompanied Adhikari who submitted a memorandum regarding the post-poll violence in the State that he claimed to have "degenerated into a communal violence." The news assumes importance in the backdrop of a number of BJP leaders expressing willingness to return to the TMC.

In the Assembly elections the BJP had won 77 seats out of whom two party MPs resigned to retain the older posts and Mukul Roy left the party on Friday.

On why only 50 out of 74 BJP legislators accompanied him to the Raj Bhavan the Opposition Leader who had himself defected to the BJP from the TMC just before the elections said "most of them are from outside and could not come to Kolkata because of the pandemic situation."

This, amid reports that the BJP's Kaliaganj MLA had gone of a party WhatsApp group though the Legislator said that some family member had mistakenly got his name deleted from the group. Among those who skipped the meeting despite living nearer to Kolkata was Biswajit Das, an MLA from Bagdah in North 24 Parganas. He had earlier expressed interest in reverse defection to TMC, sources said. Apart from him MLAs from Falakata MLA Dipak Barman and Alipurdur Suman Kanjilal did not attend the meeting.

Incidentally these MLAs and a couple of MPs enjoy good chemistry with Mukul Roy the BJP former vice president who on Friday left the party to join the Trinamool Congress. Already a number of BJP leaders who had left the Bengal ruling outfit have expressed their desire to join the old party back. About a dozen MLAs and some influential leaders like Babu Master in North 24 Parganas are willing to return to the TMC, Kashi Ali, a close associate of Roy, was quoted as saying.

Cut to Raj Bhavan. Emerging from his meeting with the Governor Adhikari attacked the Mamata Banerjee Government for failing to contain the post-poll communal violence in the State

and said if things were not brought under control then the BJP would start agitation in a big way.

Adhikari who met Governor with a range of issues including post-poll violence and defections, said, "The post poll political violence has taken the shape of communal disturbance in the State ... we have not forgotten Dhalagarh, Basirhat, Baduria ... and now similar incidents are taking place at Chandannagar (in Hooghly) and at Tiljala in the very heart of Kolkata ... everyone has seen what had taken place."

Complaining that in the name of "containing the situation the police have arrested the victims ... I must tell this Government that secessionism does not mean attacking the Sanatanis..." he said adding how the women and children were being targeted in various places of Bengal "and the police are sitting idle."

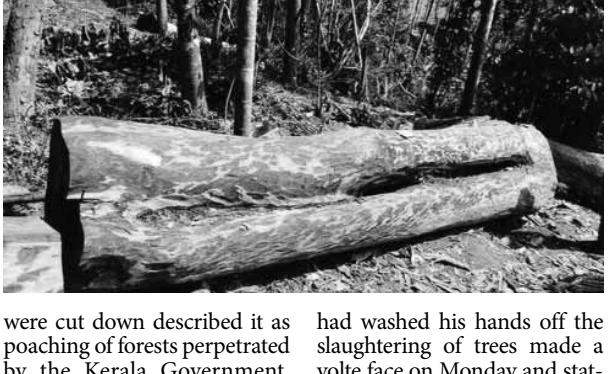
Complaining that the "SPs and other officers were not taking phone calls of the opposition MLAs," he said "even the Left Government was far better than this ... then the police acted more judiciously ... and here they are working at the behest of the Bhaipo (Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's nephew)."

Kerala forest official blames politicians for massive deforestation

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

A massive deforestation drive, hitherto unseen in the State, has denuded Kerala of its already fragile green cover. A senior Forest Department official told *The Pioneer* that the felling of trees from the reserve forests and its peripheries was in violation of the Articles in Indian Constitution dealing with the preservation of environment and forests.

"Kerala had 35 per cent forest cover till the early 1970s. But widespread deforestation during the reign of C Achutha Menon and K Karunakaran as chief Ministers saw deforestation of the reserve forests in the State. The then Forest Minister K G Adiyodi, a Congress leader had to quit following the Kerala High Court's observation that



the slaughtering of invaluable and exotic trees took place with official connivance," said the officer designated as Conservator of Forests. He did not want his name to be quoted for obvious reasons.

Said the massive felling of trees in Wynadu, Idukki and Pathanamthitta districts were more severe than what was witnessed during the 1970s. "The forest cover over the State was just 11 per cent but that too is a fudged figure because the remote sensing satellite images rate the rubber plantations too as forest cover," said the Conservator of Forests, a widely respected environmentalist.

Kummanan Rajsekharan, environmental activist and former Governor of Mizoram, who personally inspected the forest sites from where the rare trees

were cut down described it as poaching of forests perpetrated by the Kerala Government. "This is destruction of forests of the worst kind. Ministers, bureaucrats and brigands are behind this scale of tree felling," said Rajsekharan.

A K Saseendran, the new Forest Minister, who last week

had washed his hands off the slaughtering of trees made a volte face on Monday and stated that the decision to fell the trees was taken observing all departmental formalities. "We had held discussions with the revenue department before the order to cut down the trees was issued. There is no misunder-

standing between ministers or officers on this issue," Saseendran told reporters at Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. He also said that the decision to transfer certain forest officials was taken by the Department of Forest. Saseendran, who had expressed reservation in accepting the Forest portfolio, had said last week that the officers were shunted out by the Revenue Department and he had no role in it.

The seriousness of the

felling of trees in the State was brought to light when a tribal settler disclosed that he was paid ₹80,000/- to cut down a tree from his plot of land by the contractors. "This means that the particular single tree costs more than ₹3,00,000/- in the market," said P K Ramachandran,

botanist and former head of the Kerala State BioDiversity Board.

He said the Forest and Revenue Departments had the authority to slaughter listed trees which are 30 years old and planted by the departments. "But trees from areas marked as forest should never be touched by anyone and the laws are clear about it. There is a list of trees which could be slaughtered from non-forest regions. But what I saw was that exotic trees like teak and rosewood that command dream values were cut down indiscriminately and this is an open violation of the Indian Constitution," said Ramachandran who spends his retirement days by attending to the rare collection of trees, plants and medicinal herbs which he had planted in his family property.

The chief secretary, while inaugurating the camp, assured

Blood camp for kids with Thalassemia

PNS ■ PATNA

To boost the availability of blood for Thalassemia-affected children, the IAS Officers Association, Bihar, organised a blood donation camp on Monday on the occasion of World Blood Donor Day in Patna. The event was supported by State Health Society, Department of Health, Government of Bihar and was inaugurated by Tripurari Sharan, Chief Secretary, Bihar, as the chief guest. Aamir Subhani, Development Commissioner, Bihar, was the distinguished guest, while G S Kang, Vice-chairman, Bihar State Planning Board presided over the event.

The chief secretary, while

that the State Government is committed to augmenting appropriate facilities for blood transfusion in Bihar so that the children do not have to travel long distances. The officers interacted with the three thalassemia affected children of Bihar receiving specialised treatments at CMC hospital, Vellore. Their treatment is being provided under direct guidance of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, as per the Press statement.

Dipak Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary, DEFC, Bihar said that "this is the first such big event of blood donation after the onset of covid, through which our aim is to support the children who are affected by thalassemia in Bihar.

339 more test positive in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh recorded almost 97 per cent decline from its peak of April 24 as the State recorded only 339 cases in the last 24 hours. The cases remained below the 500-mark for the second consecutive day on Monday.

With the reduction in fresh cases, Uttar Pradesh also recorded a sharp slide in the number of active cases to 8,111 since the peak on April 30.

The cases have reduced by a remarkable 97.3 per cent in a span of 44 days.

In a big relief, none of the 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh reported more than 25 fresh Covid cases in the last 24 hours.

Kerala logs 7,719 new cases

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala on Monday logged 7,719 fresh Covid-19 cases and 161 deaths, taking the caseload to 27,05,933 and the toll to 11,342.

It said 68,573 samples were tested in the last 24 hours and the test positivity rate was 11.26 per cent. Till now, 2,12,89,498 samples have been tested. Active case stood at 1,13,817.

As many as 16,743 people have been cured, taking the total recoveries to 26,10,368.

Among the districts, Thiruvananthapuram recorded the highest number of positive cases today at 1,170, followed by Ernakulam with 977 and Kollam 791. "Of those found infected today, 36 reached the State from outside while 7,138 contracted the disease from their contact.

Etawah police arrest SP leader Dharmendra Yadav

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After facing sharp criticism and several suspensions over inaction, Etawah police finally managed to arrest Samajwadi Party leader and newly-elected district panchayat member Dharmendra Yadav before he could surrender before a local court on Monday. The SP leader was about to enter the court premises through gate number 3 to surrender when a joint team of Civil Lines police station and Crime Branch, dropped the net on him.

Yadav was accused of tak-

ing out a celebratory procession upon his release from Etawah jail on June 5. After a case was lodged against him, he went underground to evade arrest. After that, the police announced a reward of ₹25,000 on the SP leader's arrest. For allowing the celebratory procession, the Etawah CO was transferred and seven policemen were suspended.

On June 4 evening, Yadav was released from Etawah district jail and on the next day, he took out a celebratory procession with his supporters from outside the jail.



Construction work of Kashi Vishwanath Dham Corridor Project near the banks of Ganga river, in Varanasi on Monday PTI

TN: Tea shops, TASMAC outlets, salons re-open to brisk business

Chennai: It was destination tea-shop, salon and liquor outlet across Tamil Nadu on Monday after the State Government eased the stringent Covid-induced lockdown in force since May 10. Long queues were noticed outside the State-run TASMAC outlets in most places. In certain districts of the State, liquor consumers welcomed the re-opening by breaking coconuts normally witnessed on auspicious occasions. Brisk



sale of liquor began this morning barring the districts - seven in western and four in Cauvery

delta regions where the lockdown was not eased in view of the virus infection rate. PTI

Army gives Covid-related items to Udhampur admin

Jammu: The Army's Northern Command on Monday handed over a large number of Covid-19 related material including oxygen concentrators, PPE kits, face masks and steam inhalers to Udhampur district administration in Jammu & Kashmir, a defence spokesman said.

This was the second time in the past three weeks that the Udhampur-based Northern Command provided such a

large quantity of essential Covid-19 medical supplies to the civil administration in the district.

The spokesman said the Covid-related items were handed over to Udhampur District Commissioner Indu Kanwal Chieh by the station commander, Udhampur Military Station, on behalf of Northern Command as part of proactive assistance to the civil administration. PTI

Raj: Rape accused, out on bail, arrested for killing victim

Jodhpur: A man, out on bail in a rape case, was arrested on Monday in Rajasthan's Sirohi district for allegedly stabbing to death the woman he had raped last year, police said.

The accused had been pressuring the woman for withdrawal of the complaint against him since he was out on bail and stabbed her to death on Saturday night at her house in Nagani village in Sirohi district, ADG (Crime) Ravi Prakash Meharda said. The ADG confirmed the arrest of the accused Netram on

Seven held for raping woman, three minor girls

Agartala: Seven men have been arrested for allegedly raping a woman and three minor girls at a rubber plantation in West Tripura district, around 15 km from here, a police officer said on Monday.

Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Amtali range, Anirban Das, said seven of the eight accused were apprehended on Sunday from Champaknagar in Jiranai police station area, after the family members of the minor girls and the woman filed a complaint.

According to Das, the accused, who were familiar faces from the neighbourhood, had invited all four for a motorcycle ride. The woman and the girls were then taken to a rubber plantation at Bardhamanthurkpara in Ranibazar police station area on Saturday and allegedly raped. PTI

Murder case registered in TV journalist's death

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Pratapgarh police finally registered a case of murder in connection with the death of a journalist of a TV channel but the family members insisted on probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), suspecting that the local police would not conduct a fair probe.

Journalist Saurabh Srivastava (45) had launched a campaign against the liquor mafia being patronised by the local police in recent weeks. Perceiving imminent threat to his life, Srivastava had even submitted an application with ADG of Prayagraj Zone Prem Prakash for

providing security cover to him which was never looked into by the top official.

In this letter, Srivastava mentioned that he had covered the arrest of the illicit liquor mafia in different police station areas of Pratapgarh district, which made the mafia very angry. The news clip was also run on the digital platform of the news channel on June 9. He also said in the letter that whenever he stepped out of the house for the last two days, it appeared that someone was chasing him. In such a situation, he felt that some liquor mafia, who was unhappy with his news items, might harm him or his family.

ECI starts preparations for UP Assembly elections

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Election Commission of India has started the preparations for the Uttar Pradesh elections which are due early next year. In the first phase of the preparations, the present standard of 1,500 voters per polling booth is likely to be revised to 1,000. The ECI has asked the chief electoral officer of UP to ascertain the increase in the number of booths if the number of voters per booth is fixed at 1,000-1,200.

The chief electoral officer of UP has sent a report to the ECI for the number of voters to be revised at 1,000 per booth. The ECI had sought the report from the CEO, UP. As soon as the CEO gets the nod from the ECI, UP will



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Caution ahead

Considering the third wave, would it be more prudent to slow down the lockdown lifting process?

India is opening up gradually. The States have set their schedules and pace for lifting the lockdown. There is a general sigh of relief that the second wave of COVID-19 has nearly abated. Most States are bound to lift the lockdown completely by the third week of June. Call it a coincidence, but that is around the same time the UK Government originally proposed to remove all legal limits of social contact. However, it has since decided to delay the process by a few weeks in view of infections from the Delta variant of Coronavirus, the B1.617.2 Variant of Concern (VoC) first identified in India, again rising in the country. The VoC designation — assigned by the WHO — means the variant may be more transmissible or cause severe disease, not succumb to medical treatment or evade immune response. The British Health Secretary has said that over 90 per cent of the new cases comprise this variant which is 40 per cent more transmissible. The United States says Delta has a "wild type" transmission and is beginning to get worried about its presence in the country. The Delta variant is also the one that kick-started the second wave in India, which was at its worst in April and May when life became an agony for millions of infected people. India entered May reporting nearly 400,000 cases, coupled with scarcity of medicine, oxygen and beds and even spaces in crematoria.

However, now that the wave has nearly dissipated, India is beginning to open up. Is it the right decision to have a goal of eventually lifting all restrictions when faced with four questionable situations? One is the re-think within the UK Government itself on lifting the lockdown because of the same Delta variant. Two, everybody in India, including scientists and doctors, have predicted a third wave three or four months from now. Three, the Delta variant the UK and US talk about originated in India and there is no evidence that it has died out. In fact, reports from the UK suggest that it has mutated into a more virulent version called AY.1 or Delta+. Four, while India followed the UK when it came to increasing the gap between vaccine jabs to three months, it is deciding not to when it comes to moving towards lifting the lockdown. Considering India's terrible experience with the second wave, would it not be prudent to slow down the lockdown lifting process? The States have the option of reducing the pace of opening up to ensure in the meantime that the vaccination process finally gets streamlined, that vaccine unavailability and hesitancy both stand resolved and that virologists and the National Task Force obtain proof that the vaccines are effective in reducing hospitalisation and deaths. Importantly, it needs to be ascertained that the current rate of infection does not suffer a spike after the easing of restrictions because of sudden, inevitable laxity in following COVID-19 protocols in public places.

PIC TALK

Life-size elephant sculptures at Green Park as part of the CoExistence Campaign, in London

PTI

The G7 world

How equipped is the grouping to tackle the changing world realities and the new challenges?

The three-day parleys at the G7 Summit in Carbis Bay ended at a positive note even as the world grapples with the Corona pandemic which has far-reaching economic consequences. COVID-19 indeed figured prominently at the G7 meet but the fervour was perhaps missing. The G7 looked desperate to show how united they were. The G7 is an informal grouping of strong economic powers. It unveiled the US-led plans to counter China in infrastructure funding for poorer nations. It also came up with an accord to prevent future pandemics. The G7 leaders said they would offer a "values-driven, high-standard and transparent" partnership. Their "Build Back Better World" (B3W) project is aimed to counter China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative. The world realities are changing fast and throwing up new challenges to this elite club which is mostly European and American grouping, after the departure of Russia. The membership of Russia was suspended in 2014 after it annexed Ukraine's Crimea region. Due to internal divisions, the relevance of G7 is under the scanner.

Moreover, the share of the G7 nations' GDP is constantly falling. The aggregate GDP of the G7 members has slid to 45 per cent of the global economy from nearly 70 per cent three decades ago. This naturally reduces its hold on the world economy as well as politics.

Besides, China has emerged as a big challenger, if not a threat, to the supremacy of the G7. G20 is more potent than the G7 today. For its shrinking clout, the G7 is itself to blame. G7 meets annually to discuss issues of global economic governance, international security and energy policy. Its follow-up on its declarations has been rather lacklustre. Its membership often completely ignores the emerging trends. For instance, it did not take China's emerging power into consideration and is oblivious to India. It has deep-rooted differences over trade and climate policies. President Joe Biden has pledged to restore the US' historical commitment to multilateralism. But G7 did not show unity or firmness in Russia's role in Syria, and Russian interference in the US and European elections. In 2017, divisions emerged within the G7 over a proposal to impose fresh sanctions on Russia. If G7 is to survive as a dominant force, it will have to renew its commitment to democracy and building a world order based on equitable and just world order.



The fall and rise of Oli as Nepal PM

Though he is likened to a 'Prime Minister of no substance', Oli is trying every trick in the book to remain in the saddle

Adesperate Prime Minister KP Oli is leaving no stone unturned in consolidating his position. In doing so, he is making compromises that were once the exact opposite of his ultra-nationalistic outlook. After failing the confidence vote in Parliament on May 10, 2021, due to withdrawal of support by archrival Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'-led Maoist party, Oli had to resign. However, benefiting from the nexus with President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Oli was once again appointed as the Prime Minister considering his Communist Party of Nepal (UML) was still the largest party in Parliament. While the Opposition had requested the President to allow them to form the Government, Bhandari was in a hurry to appoint Oli.

Oli, on the other hand, appointed senior leader Rajendra Mahto as the Deputy Prime Minister, who is leading a faction of JSP and extended support to Oli. Mahto's appointment comes as a surprise as he had opposed Oli's anti-Madhesh ideology and criticised him for stopping the first amendment of the Citizenship Act. As a proud Khas-Arya (high caste hill people), Oli had vehemently opposed any amendment to the Citizenship laws which prevented Nepali citizenship to the children of a Nepali mother married to a foreigner. After Mahto supported the Government, Oli had recommended Citizenship Ordinance on May 23, which was promulgated within minutes. The ordinance will allow the issuance of citizenship by descent to all those children born to Nepali mothers whose fathers' whereabouts are unknown before September 20, 2015.

The ordinance is seen as part of the horse-trading pact between Oli and Rajendra Mahto to appease the Madhesis. Oli's long-term critic CK Lal claims that accommodating Mahto must not have been easy for a "populist demagogue to ignore xenophobia, swallow his jingoistic pride and accept Rajendra Mahto as the Deputy Prime Minister". Meanwhile, the legality of the ordinance remains in question as it

requires approval by Parliament within 60 days. Since Parliament has been dissolved on May 21, the apex court has stayed its implementation as it could lead to long-term implications. A five-member Constitutional Bench has also issued show-cause notices to the offices of the PM and President to clarify on House dissolution on May 21 and shuffling of the Cabinet.

Feuds Within: To suppress the rising opposition within the UML, Oli has appointed party leader Raghbir Mahaseth as the Deputy Prime Minister. Mahaseth is also appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs despite having no experience in the field. Another UML heavyweight, Bishnu Poudel, has been appointed Deputy Prime Minister and continues as the Minister of Finance. At the same time, Oli has removed Deputy Prime Minister Ishwar Pokhrel and a total of 13 Ministers, including Health Minister Hridayesh Tripathi and Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali, who carried out ill-intended foreign policy decisions towards New Delhi during the border row. In the past, Oli had suspended party leaders for speaking against him. However, in the present cir-



cumstances, more suspensions may lead to a credible opposition to Oli within the UML.

Misunderstanding resolved: Within a year of issuing a controversial map of Nepal showing India's territory as its own in the Kalapani region, accusing India for COVID-19 spread in Nepal, claiming that lord Ram was born in Nepal's Birgunj. In an interview to the BBC, Oli said: "Yes, there were misunderstandings at one time, but now those misunderstandings are gone. We should not be stuck in past misunderstandings but move forward looking at the future." He also requested India to supply COVID-19 vaccines as a good neighbour. Although Oli did not clarify on what he meant by "misunderstanding". With such remarks, Oli is again trying to reach out to New Delhi with his Madhesh card.

At present, almost 50 per cent of the Oli Cabinet consists of Madhesi leaders, which is a complete U-turn from his longstanding prejudice against the idea of Madhesh and Madhesi people. Knowing that the Khas-Arya may come after Oli for compromising with the Madhesis, Oli has no alternative to keep the premiership safe until new elections in

November.

While Oli's rapprochement towards India is short-term and politically motivated, in the hindsight it showcases the strong cultural and people-to-people links between Nepal and India. It is also a strong answer to China's deep-pocket diplomacy in Nepal. For decades, China has been trying to create artificial people-to-people ties with Nepal. However, Beijing often forgets that it was Tibet with whom Nepal had cultural ties and Tibet's forced annexation in 1950 did not transfer cultural claims to China. Therefore, Beijing needs to learn that political relations with Nepal are a result of a short-term compromise in Kathmandu. India has always supported the democratic aspirations of the people of Nepal and stands alone as the top development partner. China's expansionist outlook will sustain neither in Nepal nor in South Asia. Nevertheless, it will be difficult for India to fully trust Oli.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SLOW SPEED OF VACCINATION A WORRY

Sir — The speed of vaccination in India is very slow. Seeing the large number of population, it becomes hard to run universal inoculation drive for the vast diversity of Indian nationals. The Government's data reveals that only 3.5 per cent of the population is fully vaccinated so far. The inoculation drive has enrolled more persons than who reach the centres for taking the jab. Many are technologically challenged and thus they cannot register themselves for registration at the CoWin app.

Can anyone imagine how fast the slots get booked in the evening for the following day's jab registration? People are struggling to get at least one dose of either of the vaccines. The elderly and the poor are the most vulnerable. It is good to hear that scientists predict that the third wave of COVID-19 in India is likely to be less severe than compared to the second wave. Thankfully, we can use this as an opportunity for improving the data and ensuring more and more people to get vaccinated. We have successfully suppressed the second wave, and the third wave is expected to peak soon. The gap period is not to waste but to plan the duration's usage to the maximum so that more and more people can benefit with the vaccination at the end of the day.

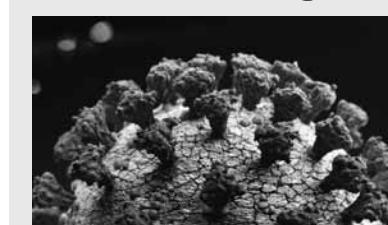
Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

ZOONOTIC DISEASES AND PREVENTION

Sir — As the human cases of COVID-19 show a declining trend in India, zoonotic diseases are on the rise with several incidents of animals falling prey to it. Recently, nine Asiatic lions in the Chennai Vandur Zoo got infected and one of them succumbed; besides, many elephants, tigers and leopards have died in Tamil Nadu and in other States.

Since India has a huge population, there are greater chances of transmission from animals to humans. According to a paper published in the Indian Journal of Community Medicine in March 2020, of the 1407 human pathogens detected, 816 were found to be zoonotic, which means these were capable of being transmitted naturally between animals and humans, which

The origin of Coronavirus



It has been 18 months since the outbreak of COVID-19. But the truth about the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the causative agent of the disease, still eludes the world. Even though how to end the pandemic has now become more important than knowing how it began, the interest in knowing the origin of the Novel Coronavirus has not waned. The accusation against China of a massive cover-up and the call for new investigation into the origin of the virus made by G7 leaders, including US President Joe Biden, have fuelled the debate over whether the virus occurred naturally or it was bioengineered in a lab in Wuhan. Some scientific leads support the theory that the virus may have jumped from ani-

mals to humans, probably in a wet market in Wuhan that sold seafood and exotic animals for human consumption. There is also the theory that someone in the Wuhan lab boasting a large collection of bats for culture of virus may have been accidentally infected with the Novel Coronavirus.

There is a general consensus among scientists that COVID-19 is a zoonotic disease. The WHO still sticks to its stated position that the escape or leak of the virus from the Wuhan Institute of Virology was "highly unlikely". It may be pointed out here that genetically designing and creating a virus in a lab and unleashing it as a bio-weapon on the world is a futuristic idea to discredit China with conspiracy theories, no matter what one's perception of that country is.

The issue has been politicised so much that to counter the US' lab incident hypothesis, Beijing has said that the US military hatched the virus and released it in China. We can all agree that science, scientific inquiries and investigations and scientific findings should prevail over geopolitics and geopolitical considerations.

G David Milton | Kanyakumari

Took my first dose of vaccine... it's the need of the hour in our fight against #corona.

Kirti Kulhari

I could have easily cried, but I see no reason for me crying because I tried everything. I could not come up with anything better.

Greece tennis player

— Stefanos Tsitsipas

Chirag Paswan has committed so many blunders.

Now, its results are coming in the form of a split in the party.

JD(U) national president

— RCP Singh

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

WHEN VILLAGERS TURN TO QUACKS

Not to glorify them, but a handful of quacks in Bihar's countryside are helping out the villagers

AMRITANJ INDIWAR

Last week World Health Organization reported a 13 per cent decrease in new COVID-19 cases in India. However, the number of new infections in the country remains the highest in the world. Rural areas with no proper health infrastructure are bearing the brunt, forcing the villagers to turn to quacks for treatment. Lack of information about government hospitals, PHCs, medicine and vaccinations has affected regulation of the virus in rural areas. Worse, there are hardly a few or no doctors in government hospitals. Thus, quacks have ironically assumed a larger role in several villages across States. The situation in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district is no better. It had the highest number of reported cases in the country. Nearly 208 Covid-19 deaths were reported in 50 days since April 1. Around 315 people were cremated at one crematorium alone in this period. The rural areas of Sikanderpur, Mothijheel, Town Thana, Khabda, Ramdayal, Patahi, Bhagwanpur, Bhikhanpura and Mushahariblocks were most affected. Ragini, a resident of Alkapuri colony in Muzaffarpur, said: "Those who test positive are isolated in rooms. However, because the virus is highly stigmatized, the infected person is not treated well by the public." Ankush Singh, resident of Manika village in Mushahariblock, said that even after he recovered from the virus, no one was concerned about his well-being. He also complained about unprofessional behaviour and indifference of the block hospital doctor. Chemists and quacks showed better concern than the doctors, he said in a bitter voice.



In the Paru block, dispensary employees and quacks were treating people. Accepting that quacks were the first line of defence against COVID-19, District Councilor Devesh Chandra said they were a lifeline for more than 50,000 people in the block. These quacks have no medical degrees, but practice medicine based on their practical experience. Quacks Balram Shah, Umesh Prasad, Ganesh Pandit, Asharfi Bhagat, Parmeshwar Prasad, and others in Paru Block had decided to come forward and assist the villagers. "Whatever medical experience we have gained over the years, the villagers are benefiting from it. The situation was such that people were scared and unwilling to get vaccinated and, therefore, we decided not to leave them under such circumstances. We are likely to get infected in the process, but helping people is the need of the hour," said these quacks. The Block Medical Officer, on the other hand, stated that trained healthcare workers are going to villages for inspection, vaccination, and medicine on a regular basis. The situation in Bihar's Vaishali district is similar. Basant Kumar, a homoeopathic practitioner said: "I went to the block health centre to get the rapid antigen test done. The centre was crowded with no guidelines being followed. Although I had registered myself, due to the huge crowd I had to return without getting tested. Two days later, I received a message on my mobile number informing that I had tested negative. I was shocked to receive that message." Others got such reports too and people are hesitant to visit government hospitals and are relying on quacks. The purpose of this article is not to glorify quacks, but it is equally important to note that if properly trained in pandemic protocols, these quacks can play a critical role in reaching out to villagers. They already share a relationship with them and can create awareness about preventive measures and vaccination in these hard-to-reach areas. The West Bengal government has already ordered training and tagging quacks with health workers to help survey rural areas and identify patients so that the treatment can start early. If successful, other states should also follow suit.

(The author represents Charkha — The Development Communication Network. The views expressed are personal)

Some answers nation wants to know



VEERAIAH KONDURI

The Government wants us to believe that while it took about three months to administer 1.91 crore vaccine doses, it will administer 20 times higher doses in less than half the time

After much persuasion and the Supreme Court along with more than 10 High Courts taking the Central government to the task, Prime Minister Narendra Modi allowed the nation a peek into his idea on the question of vaccination. This latest address left me perplexed with several unaddressed questions. Let me list out some of them.

The address began with Prime Minister confessing the fact that the country is still coming to terms with COVID-19 second wave. But to our surprise, Home Minister Amit Shah told the media few days ago, "India managed to control the second wave of COVID-19 in a very short time" and attributed this success to the visionary (?) leadership of Modi. This double-speak once again confirms that even after such castigation, the Central government made its best attempt to live in its make-believe world. The Prime Minister continued with untruths for the next few minutes with regard to augmenting medical infrastructure facilities for the anti-virus fight-back. The Supreme Court had castigated the Centre on this very issue. The funniest part of the speech is his stress on the observance of COVID-19 protocols.

The Prime Minister also referred to Mission Indradhanush, the immunization program for children below six years and lactating mothers to bolster his government's capacities of mass immunisation campaigns. According to the 2011 census, population falling under the age group of 0-6 years stands at 13.59 per cent (16.45 crore). Even after launching Mission Indradhanush, according to the Prime Minister, it took five years to vaccinate additional 40 per cent of child population, that is, roughly seven crore. If the government took five to six years to inoculate the additional numbers, we can imagine the time required to inoculate the total adult population in the first place.

The Prime Minister claimed that India developed two Made-in-India vaccines within a span of one year which is not true and does not require any proof. India rolled out the vaccination drive on January 16, 2021. Surprisingly, the Finance Minister in her 2021-22 budget speech, which was presented barely a fortnight later, told the nation that India exported vaccine to about 100 countries. If we were to believe what Prime Minister told the nation, it is a deemed fact that the finance minister committed a breach of trust and violated parliamentary protocols by presenting untruths on the floor of the House for which, in normal times, she would have been served a privilege notice.

The Prime Minister himself launched the first phase vaccination drive on January 16, 2021 for three crore frontline health workers. As on April 19, only 37 per cent got full vaccination and an additional 91 lakh their first dose. In his address to the nation, Modi once again said that by the time he speaks to his fellow countrymen again, about 23 crore of doses have already been administered. The government wants us to believe that while it took about three months to administer 1.91 crore vaccine doses, it will administer 20 times higher doses in less than half the time? That means the government administered dosage at the rate of 46 lakh doses per day!

Doubts arose over the Prime Minister's assertions about funding research and development of vaccine by the Central government. The things are not matching between what the Prime

IF THE CENTRE PLAYS SMART AND SUCCEEDS IN TRANSFERRING THE COST OF VACCINATION OVERTLY OR COVERTLY ON TO THE STATE GOVERNMENTS, THERE WILL BE A HOLE IN STATES' RESOURCES TO THE TUNE OF A MINIMUM OF ₹55,000 CRORE. THUS, THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S VACCINATION POLICY IS LEAVING THE NATION WITH TWO SETS OF OPTIONS, EITHER TO CUT DOWN OTHER SOCIAL EXPENDITURE AND DIVERT MONEY FOR VACCINATION OR WATCH THE INCREASE IN NUMBER OF DEATHS DUE TO COVID-19

The author is former CWC member, All India Agricultural Workers Union. The views expressed are personal.



Minister said and what was submitted by the government's law officers to the Supreme Court. The affidavits filed by the government in response to its May 2 order said that no governmental aid, assistance or grant was given for research and development of COVID vaccine. The affidavit also states that the Indian Council of Medical Research spent about ₹ 44 crore for clinical trials and government paid about ₹ 2520 crore by way advance to purchase vaccine on May 10, 2021. Discarding government's own affidavits the Prime Minister told the nation that they funded thousands of crores for development of vaccine. We do hope that in the next submissions, the trusted Attorney General will correct his statements and let the country know about the thousands of crores the Prime Minister spent for development of vaccine program.

The Prime Minister in an attempt to defend the un-defendable, said his government's new path for the future was criticised by several forces including some state governments. This is totally baseless and an out of context contention.

Not only economic and health experts in India but those across the globe also criticised the Central government's unitary decisions

during first phase of COVID-19 spread. As we all know, the lockdown was declared in hours without even visualising what would be the impact on lives and livelihoods. The lockdown was extended for months leaving the state governments without any option but to implement the same grudgingly.

Towards the end of this speech, Modi made it clear that the state governments need not spend a single pie to vaccinate the population. But the question that slipped through his master oratory skills is about the allocation for health in the 2021-22 budget. According to the ministry of finance, the amount required for fully vaccinating the country would be to the tune of ₹ 91,000 crore whereas the total budget earmarked for Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for the year 2021-22 is ₹ 71,268.77 crore only. The secretary, Department of Expenditure is playing smart and succeeds in transferring the cost of vaccination overtly or covertly on to the state governments, then there will be a hole in states' resources to the tune of a minimum of ₹ 55,000 crore. Thus, the Central government's vaccination policy is leaving the nation with two sets of options, either to cut down other social expenditure and divert money for vaccination or watch the increase in number of deaths due to COVID-19.

transfers to state governments will be counted as part of the ₹ 35,000-crore vaccine funding. The expenditure department assesses that the allocations are enough to vaccinate 50 crore of the population.

This presents us with few dangerous possibilities. If the Central government mobilises ₹ 35,000 crore from its own resources, and wishes to honour the Prime Minister's assurance to the world, it will fall short by ₹ 56,000 crore. As the finance minister stated, if this ₹ 35,000 crore too is to be chipped in by diverting funds from amounts earmarked under Transfers to States, in addition to what is budgeted orally by Finance Minister, even then there will be short fall of nearly ₹ 20,000 crore, assuming that the cost estimated by secretary, Department of Expenditure is not breached. Or if the Central government plays smart and succeeds in transferring the cost of vaccination overtly or covertly on to the state governments, then there will be a hole in states' resources to the tune of a minimum of ₹ 55,000 crore. Thus, the Central government's vaccination policy is leaving the nation with two sets of options, either to cut down other social expenditure and divert money for vaccination or watch the increase in number of deaths due to COVID-19.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

MUKUL (ROY) IS OUR OLD MEMBER. HE WAS NOT IN A GOOD CONDITION IN THE BJP BECAUSE THEY CREATED PRESSURE ON HIM THROUGH AGENCIES.

—TRINAMOOL CHIEF
MAMATA BANERJEE



HE BEHAVED LIKE MIR JAFAR, BUT I AM NOT AT ALL SURPRISED. HE IS A BETRAYER. HE HAS NOT MADE ANY CONTRIBUTION TO THE PARTY.

—BARRACKPORE BJP MP
ARJUN SINGH

Stop bank sales, empower the middle class instead

If nationalised banks are sold instead of taking corrective steps, it would mean social assets would decline leading to further economic chaos



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The middle class, the backbone of the economy, is shrinking and the government announces sale of two major public sector banks, Central Bank of India (CBI) and Indian Overseas Bank (IOB). Should India privatise critical assets when it needs the finances most? The sales instead would be used for one-time financing of budgetary deficits.

Both the banks like many other public sector banks (PSBs) have shown improvement in their balance sheets. On June 8, shares of CBI and IOB soared seven and 14 percent, respectively after Niti Aayog announced their privatisation. Both lenders are currently under the prompt corrective action (PCA) imposed by the Reserve Bank of India and have shown marked

improvements. This shows that the market is ready to lap up assets worth ₹ 9.7 lakh crore - CBI ₹ 3.56 lakh crore and IOB ₹ 24.41 lakh crore. Another asset of United Insurance is ₹ 3.7 lakh crore - a good sum for a race to a multi-trillion dollar economy.

The bank health is mysteriously linked to the growth of the middle class. Since 1969 nationalisation of banks for development purposes has helped both banks and depositors, largely from the middle class. But as the middle class got a jolt after the 2008 Lehman Brothers meltdown, it started taking the hit.

Moreover, a low-interest, high prices and high-tax-on-deposit regime marginally buffered up revenue figures, but caused impoverishment of the middle class. They are paying income

tax on a skewed higher income as interest and was not considered as hedging against inflation but unwisely as "income". This erodes savings.

Pew research, looking into the pandemic lockdown, says 33 million people in the last one year have slid into poverty from the supposed 99-million strong middle class. Poverty rate rose by 9.7 percent in 2020, up from January 2020 forecast of 4.3 percent and are projected to have reached 134 million. If the food dole is a standard the pandemic has hit 80 crore people. Lower incomes and lesser consumption capacity define this class now. If instead of corrective steps nationalised banks are sold, it would mean social assets would decline. It is often said that PSBs are unable to cope up with pri-

of being eroded by their own bosses. Axis has asset quality problems, ICICI was moth-eaten by its chief executive Chanda Kochhar and HDFC was fined ₹ 10 crore for wrongfully selling third-party non-financial products to its auto loan customers. By privatising big financial institutions would they be forced to go the unethical, chaotic way?

The CBI has 33,481 employees in 4,685 branches and IOB 26,334 in 3,400 branches. Once privatised, one-third or more employees would lose jobs.

Despite the PCA curbs, both lenders have managed to grow their loan books. Central Bank's gross advances rose nearly three percent between March 31, 2020 and March 31, 2021 to ₹ 1.77 lakh crore. IOB's advances stood at ₹ 1.37 lakh crore as on

December 31, 2020, up two percent year-on-year. Central Bank's deposits grew over five percent in a year to ₹ 3.3 lakh crore as on March 31, 2021 and IOB's deposits also increased to ₹ 2.34 lakh crore as on December 31, 2020.

Since nationalisation, the Indian banking sector expanded at an unmatched level but it made banks prone to political interference for many purposes including the 2008 incentivisation of the rich corporate or Jan Dhan accounts that raised operational costs. Largely the financial woes of the PSBs are not due to corruption and nepotism alone.

Many loans of banks like Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Bank of Baroda, Axis bank and IDBI Bank were written off to shore up balance sheets. The quantum of PSB loan stood at ₹ 32,853 crore higher than recoveries of ₹ 23,894 crore. Such figures are gradually coming down.

This also does not justify the process of privatisation. Even the

United Insurance is preferred to most private insurers as its claim settlement process is more realistic and ethical. It is not easy to create ₹ 10 billion assets. It might now go to a defaulter? Retaining the asset would help government boost economic activities and jobs. An empowered middle class with lower taxes and TDS exemptions on deposits can do wonders. Mere change in approach could strengthen the economy and open up many avenues for the government.



vate banks. This is a misnomer. India's private banks Axis, ICICI, HDFC and others have a record

China tried to warn US off strengthening Quad: Biden

London: US President Joe Biden has revealed how China tried to warn him off strengthening the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, referred to as the Quad as an informal strategic partnership between India, Japan, Australia and the United States.

Addressing a press conference at the conclusion of the UK-hosted G7 Summit in Cornwall on Sunday, the President who took charge in the White House earlier this year said that in his conversation with a Chinese leader he was asked about his international relations plans before he assumed the presidency. Biden did not reveal the identity of the Chinese leader.

Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke to Biden for two hours in February, days after he assumed office as the US President.

On February 11, President Biden said: "Last night, I was on the phone for two straight hours with Xi Jinping. And you all know as well as I do, these folks - and it was a good con-

versation. I know him well. We spent a lot of time together over the years I was Vice President."

"When I was asked what I was going to be doing after being elected, I said we're going to re-establish the strength of American relationships so we can be counted on again..." Biden recalled on Sunday of the meeting with the unidentified Chinese leader.

The Chinese leader then requested him to not get India, Japan, Australia, and the US together under the Quad umbrella.

Biden said the Chinese leader suggested that, "Well, maybe you (Biden) shouldn't get the Quad..." - meaning India, Japan, Australia, and the United States - "...working together." Known as the "Quadrilateral Security Dialogue," representatives for the four member nations have met periodically since its establishment in 2007.

Interestingly, Biden hosted the first virtual summit of Quad leaders on March 12. During the summit, PTI

President Biden told leaders of the coalition that a "free and open" Indo-Pacific is essential to their countries and vowed that his country was committed to working with its partners and allies in the region to achieve stability.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his Japanese counterpart Yoshihide Suga attended the virtual summit.

The Quad member states have been resolving to uphold a rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific amid growing Chinese assertiveness in the region.

The Quadrilateral alliance is often projected in the official media in China as an alliance against the Communist giant's rise. China's military and the foreign ministry have repeatedly criticised the Biden administration for continuing the Trump era "Indo-Pacific strategy", saying the US should not form "cliques" or provoke "new Cold War" featuring bloc confrontation.

Putin likens Russian crackdown to arresting Capitol rioters

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is to meet President Joe Biden at a summit Wednesday, has suggested that the hundreds of people arrested for rioting at the U.S. Capitol are being subjected to "persecution for political opinions."

Putin is likely to come under strong criticism from Biden at their meeting in Geneva for moves against his political opponents in Russia, particularly the imprisonment

of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, the detention of thousands of demonstrators protesting his arrest, and the outlawing of Navalny's organisations as extremist.

"You are presenting it as dissent and intolerance toward dissent in Russia. We view it completely differently," he said in an interview with NBC News broadcast Monday.

He then pointed to the January 6 insurrection in Washington when protesters

barged into the Capitol to try to halt the count of electoral votes to certify Biden's election victory over Donald Trump.

"Do you know that 450 individuals were arrested after entering the Congress? ... They came there with political demands," he said.

Although the protests that erupted across Russia after Navalny's arrest in January were unsanctioned, demonstrators were largely peaceful and did not enter Government buildings or cause significant property damage, unlike the

Capitol riot. Putin also reiterated denials that the Kremlin was behind last year's poisoning of Navalny with a nerve agent that nearly killed him.

"We don't have this kind of habit, of assassinating anybody," Putin said.

"Did you order the assassination of the woman who walked into the Congress and who was shot and killed by a policeman?" Putin said, referring to Trump supporter Ashli Babbitt, who was fatally shot by a Capitol Police officer as she tried to climb through a win-

dow that led to the House floor.

Putin also sharply dismissed allegations that Russia is carrying out cyberattacks against the United States as baseless.

"Where is the evidence? Where is proof? It's becoming farcical," Putin said. "We have been accused of all kinds of things — election interference, cyberattacks and so on and so forth — and not once, not once, did they bother to produce any kind of evidence or proof, just unfounded accusations." AP

Biden, unlike predecessors, has maintained Putin skepticism

BRUSSELS: President Joe Biden frequently talks about what he sees as central in executing effective foreign policy: building personal relationships.

But unlike his four most recent White House predecessors, who made an effort to build a measure of rapport with Vladimir Putin, Biden has made clear that the virtue of fusing a personal connection might have its limits when it comes to the Russian leader. Biden, who is set to meet with

Putin face to face on Wednesday in Geneva, has repeated an anecdote about his last meeting with Putin, 10 years ago when he was vice president and Putin was serving as prime minister.

Putin had taken a break from the presidency because the Russian constitution at the time prohibited a third consecutive term, but he was still seen as Russia's most powerful leader. AP

Some US allies near Russia are wary of Biden-Putin summit

Kiev (Ukraine): Central and Eastern European nations are anxious about the coming summit meeting between US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin, wary of what they see as hostile intentions from the Kremlin.

Some in the countries that once were part of the Soviet Union or the Moscow-led Warsaw Pact during the Cold War worry that Washington could scale down support for its allies in the region in a bid to secure a more stable and predictable relationship with Russia.

"I think there have been doubts as to the resoluteness of the present administration to face Russian aggressive actions in a decisive manner," said Witold Rodkiewicz, chief specialist on Russian politics at Warsaw's Center of Eastern Studies, a state-funded think tank that advises the Polish Government.

Putin calls accusation of cyberattacks against US 'farcical'

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin has dismissed allegations that his country is carrying out cyberattacks against the US as baseless.

"We have been accused of all kinds of things — election interference, cyberattacks and so on and so forth — and not once, not one time, did they bother to produce any kind of evidence or proof, just unfounded accusations." AP

Israel's new Govt gets to work after Netanyahu ouster

Jerusalem: For the first time in 12 years, Israelis on Monday woke up to a new Government and a new Prime Minister after Naftali Bennett secured the backing of Parliament and ousted longtime leader Benjamin Netanyahu.

The two were slated to hold a handover meeting later in the day, but without the formal ceremony that traditionally accompanies a change in Government.

Israel's parliament, the Knesset, narrowly approved the new Bennett-led coalition Government on Sunday, ending Netanyahu's historic 12-year rule. The divisive former prime minister, the longest to hold office, will now serve as the opposition leader.

David Bitan, a Likud lawmaker, told *Kan public radio* that Netanyahu was not holding the handover ceremony with Bennett because he feels "cheated" by the formation of the Bennett-Lapid government and "doesn't want to give even the slightest legitimacy to this matter." AP

Biden meets leaders of 3 Baltic nations

Brussels: President Joe Biden has met with the leaders of three Baltic nations at the NATO summit in a move to reassure them of US support before his Wednesday summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Geneva.

The White House says Biden met Monday with Prime Minister Kaja Kallas of Estonia, President Egils Levits of Latvia, and President

Gitanas Nausėda of Lithuania and "underscored strong U.S. support" for their security.

The White House added: "The four leaders committed to further strengthening our political, military, and economic partnerships, including working together through NATO to address challenges posed by Russia and China." AP

UK: NATO doesn't see China as rival like Russia

Brussels: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says NATO leaders do not see China as an adversary in the same way that the military organisation views Russia, but that they must come to terms with the Asian giant's growing influence.

Johnson told reporters at a NATO summit in Brussels Monday that China is "a gigantic fact in our lives and a new strategic consideration for NATO." He says "I don't think anybody around the table today wants to descend into a new Cold War with China." He says.

Stoltenberg said, at a German Marshall Fund think tank event, "We will make it clear at this summit that, of course, any attack on space capabilities like satellites and so on or attacks from space will or could trigger Article 5," he said, a few hours before chairing a summit with U.S. President Joe Biden and his counterparts.

Around 2,000 satellites orbit the earth, over half operated by NATO countries, ensuring everything from mobile phone and banking services to weather forecasts.

Military commanders rely on some of them to navigate, communicate, share intelligence and detect missile launches.

NATO nations ready to jointly respond to attacks in space

Brussels: NATO leaders on Monday will expand the use of their all for one, one for all, collective defense clause to include attacks in space, the military organisation's top civilian official said.

Article 5 of NATO's founding treaty states that attack on any one of the 30 allies will be considered an attack on them all. So far, it's only applied to more traditional military attacks on land, sea, or in the air, and more recently in cyberspace.

"I think it is important (with) our Article 5, which states that an attack on one will be regarded as an attack on all, that we all will respond," NATO Secretary-General Jens

US assessing plaint of leak in Chinese N power plant

Beijing: The US government is assessing a report of a leak at a Chinese nuclear power plant, after a French company that partly owns and helps to operate it warned of an "imminent radiological threat," a media report said on Monday.

The warning included an accusation that the Chinese safety authority was raising the acceptable limits for radiation detection outside the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant in Guangdong province in order to avoid having to shut it down, the CNN quoted a letter from the French company to the US Department of Energy.

There is no reaction yet in Beijing by the Chinese government or officials on this report, it said.

The media report said despite the alarming notification from Framatome, the French company, the Biden administration believes the facility is not yet at a "crisis level." AP

Macron wants to 'move forward' with Turkey ties

Brussels: French President Emmanuel Macron tweeted that he wants to "move forward" with Turkey toward a demanding and respectful relationship, after meeting with the country's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Both men talked Monday on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Brussels.

It was their first meeting since the dispute between the two countries reached its peak in October after Erdogan questioned

Macron's mental health.

Macron said he wants all NATO allies to make a clear commitment to the military organisation's values, principles and rules, according to the French presidency.

Both men discussed Libya and Syria issues, the Elysee said. Macron has notably accused Turkey of flouting its commitments by ramping up its military presence in Libya and bringing in jihadi fighters from Syria.

AP

ICICI Bank PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Prince Mangla (Borrower) / Kiran Gupta and Prashant Mangla (Co Borrower)	DDA HIG Flat Bearing No. 510, 5th Floor, Pocket D-6, Ganga Block 6, Group 3, Vasant Kunj, Delhi-110070 area of 1450 sq ft.	Rs. 1,16,07,44/- as on May 29, 2021	Rs. 1,55,30,400/-	June 25, 2021, From 12:00 PM to 01:00 PM	July 15, 2021, From 12:00 Noon onwards
2.	Bijender Kumar (Borrower) / Sunita (Co Borrower)	"LIG Flat No. 16, 3rd Floor, Sec-G-2, Pocket- 5, Narela Delhi. Area is 344 Sq.Ft."	Rs. 18,59,744/- as on June 9, 2021	Rs. 10,80,000/-	June 28, 2021, From 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM	July 15, 2021, From 01:00 PM to 02:00 PM

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link-https://disposalhub.com) of our auction agency M/s **NexXen Solutions Private Limited**. The Mortgagors/ notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till July 14, 2021 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi-110005** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **July 14, 2021** before 05:00 PM along with scan image of Bank acknowledgement DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, incase prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi-110005** on or before **July 14, 2021** before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "**ICICI Bank Limited**" payable at **Delhi**.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited** on **8126013708** or **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited** on **9710029933/9810029926/01244233933**.

Please note that Marketing agencies 1. **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited** 2. **Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd** 3. **Props AMC** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

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Retail inflation hits 6-month high of 6.3%

WHOLESALE INFLATION AT RECORD 12.94 PC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rising prices of edible oils and protein rich items pushed the retail inflation to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, breaching the comfort level of the Reserve Bank and thus rendering reduction in interest rates a difficult proposition in the near term.

The government has asked the Reserve Bank to keep the retail inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

CPI inflation has breached the upper band of the inflation target about 10 times since the first meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which decides the key interest rate, in October 2016.

Wholesale price-based inflation too accelerated to a



record 12.94 per cent in May on account of rising prices of crude oil, manufactured goods and the low base of last year due to the COVID-19 lockdown.

While the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation rose from 4.23 per cent in April to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent, food inflation soared from 1.96 per cent to 5.01 per cent in May.

The previous high in retail inflation was 6.93 per cent in November 2020.

In May 2020, the Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation was (-) 3.37 per cent and in April 2021, it hit

double digits at 10.49 per cent. This is the fifth straight month of upturn seen in WPI inflation.

As per the data on CPI, factored in by the RBI while arriving at its monetary policy, the steepest price rise was witnessed in the 'oils and fat' segment, which on an annual basis showed an increase of 30.84 per cent.

The May CPI data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) further revealed that the rate of price rise in 'meat and fish', 'egg', 'fruits', and 'pulses and products' stood at 9.03 per cent, 15.16 per cent, 11.98 per cent, and 9.39 per cent, respectively.

Reports of its foreign investors' accounts being frozen 'blatantly erroneous': Adani group

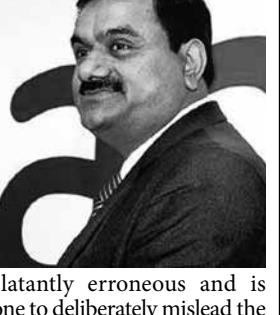
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Gautam Adani's group on Monday said it has written confirmation that accounts of three foreign funds that are among its top shareholders are not frozen and reports to the contrary are "blatantly erroneous and misleading".

Shares of Adani group companies plunged on Monday after reports that the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) froze the accounts of the three foreign funds that are among the top stakeholders in the firms.

Adani Enterprises, the conglomerate's flagship company, as also Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone, Adani Green Energy Ltd, Adani Transmission Ltd, Adani Power and Adani Total Gas Ltd in identical filings to the stock exchanges said the reports of NSDL freezing accounts of Albia Investment Fund, Cresta Fund and APMS Investment Fund holding shares in the group firms were "blatantly erroneous and is done to deliberately mislead the investing community."

"This is causing irreparable loss of economic value to the investors at large and reputation of the group," they said. Given the seriousness of the issue and its consequential adverse impact on minority investors, "we requested Registrar and Transfer Agent, with respect to the status of the Demat Account(s) of the aforesaid funds and have their written confirmation vide its e-mail dated 14th June, 2021, clarifying that the Demat Account(s) in which the aforementioned funds hold the shares of the company are not frozen," the firms said.



"blatantly erroneous and is done to deliberately mislead the investing community."

Reliance Industries topped the Sensex gainers' list with a jump of 1.46 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, ONGC, Infosys, PowerGrid, L&T and IndusInd Bank.

On the other hand, Kotak Bank, HDFC, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto, NTPC, Maruti and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards, shedding up to 1.51 per cent.

Markets maintain record run as Reliance rallies

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex and Nifty erased initial losses to finish at fresh lifetime highs on Monday, buoyed by brisk buying in market heavyweight Reliance Industries.

Positive global cues and a declining trend in new Covid-19 cases added to the momentum, traders said.

Rising for the third straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 76.77 points or 0.15 per cent higher at its new closing peak of 52,551.53.

Similarly, the broaderNSE Nifty advanced 12.50 points or 0.08 per cent to a record 15,811.85.

Reliance Industries topped the Sensex gainers' list with a jump of 1.46 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, ONGC, Infosys, PowerGrid, L&T and IndusInd Bank.

Meanwhile, shares of Adani Group companies plunged after reports said the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) has frozen the accounts of the three foreign funds that are among the top stakeholders in the firms.

Rupee logs longest losing streak in 2 months, tumbles 22 paise against

Mumbai: The Indian rupee ended 22 paise lower at 73.29 against the US dollar on Monday, sliding for the fifth straight session amid rising crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened on a negative note at 73.21 per dollar as against its previous close of 73.07. It hovered in the range of 73.10 to 73.29 per dollar during the day before ending at 73.29 – equalling its lowest level recorded a month ago.

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On the other hand, Kotak Bank, HDFC, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto, NTPC, Maruti and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards, shedding up to 1.51 per cent.

Gold futures fall on low demand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices fell by ₹476 to ₹48,427 per 10 grams in the futures trade on Monday as speculators reduced their positions amid low demand.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for the August delivery traded lower by ₹476, or 0.97 per cent, to ₹48,427 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 11,087 lots.

Similarly, the broaderNSE Nifty advanced 12.50 points or 0.08 per cent to a record 15,811.85.

Reliance Industries topped the Sensex gainers' list with a jump of 1.46 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, ONGC, Infosys, PowerGrid, L&T and IndusInd Bank.

On the other hand, Kotak Bank, HDFC, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto, NTPC, Maruti and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards, shedding up to 1.51 per cent.

Meanwhile, shares of Adani Group companies plunged after reports said the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) has frozen the accounts of the three foreign funds that are among the top stakeholders in the firms.

On the other hand, Kotak Bank, HDFC, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto, NTPC, Maruti and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards, shedding up to 1.51 per cent.

Oil prices reach multi-year high on demand hopes

IANS ■ MUMBAI

Crude oil prices surged to multi-year highs on Monday on hopes of rising demand, along with estimates of tightening supplies.

The August contract of

Brent crude oil the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) surged 0.92 per cent to \$73.36 per barrel. Similarly, the July contract of WTI crude on the NYMEX was at \$71.56, higher by 0.92 per cent from its previous close.

Meanwhile, shares of Adani Group companies plunged after reports said the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) has frozen the accounts of the three foreign funds that are among the top stakeholders in the firms.

1st consignment of GI-certified Jardalu mangoes from Bhagalpur exported

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Litchi, the first commercial consignment of Geographical Indications (GI) certified Jardalu mangoes from Bhagalpur, Bihar, which is better than all other varieties both in taste and smell for many, was exported to the United Kingdom amid pandemic on Monday.

Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) in collaboration with the Bihar government, Indian High Commission and Invest India exported the juicy and aromatic mangoes which were packed and treated at APEDA packhouse in Lucknow.

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HEALTH

LoveYourLiver
A team of researchers from IIT Mandi has identified the underlying biochemical relationship between the consumption of excessive sugar and the development of a fatty liver, medically known as Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD). NAFLD is a condition in which excess fat deposits in the liver. The disease starts silently, with no overt symptoms for as much as two decades



DOCYARD

DR JAGDISHWAR GOUD
GAJAGOWNI

Head, Dept of Surgical Oncology,
Yashoda Cancer Institute
YASHODA HOSPITAL
SECUNDERABAD TELANGANA



Don't ignore these signs



The esophagus or the food pipe is the tube that connects the mouth with the stomach. Esophagus cancer occurs when there is a formation of tumours anywhere along the length of the esophagus, from the opening in the mouth to the point where it meets the stomach. As it grows, it affects nerves, muscles and eventually other organs. Some of the main causes that lead to the increased risk of esophagus cancer include smoking, drinking alcohol and steaming hot beverages, obesity, and not enough intake of fruits and vegetables.

Esophagus cancer is the sixth most common cause of cancer deaths globally and is not easily detected. That is the reason the majority of esophageal cancer cases are diagnosed only in advanced stages. Therefore, it is imperative to look out for symptoms of esophagus cancer before it's too late. Esophageal cancer may not show signs in its early stages; however, as the disease advances, it shows the following symptoms:

Difficulty in swallowing (Dysphagia): One of the most common esophageal cancer symptoms is trouble swallowing, particularly a feeling of food stuck in the throat caused by the tumor growing on the inner lining of the esophagus. These symptoms tend to intensify, with a rise in discomfort when swallowing progressively.

Hiccups and vomiting:

Frequent hiccupping and vomiting are also symptoms individuals must look out for, as the narrowing of the esophagus obstructs the food from going down smoothly, with more chances of the food getting stuck and being pushed back up.

Chest pain and heartburn:

Recurring chest pains and chronic heartburn in the lower chest area happens due to acid reflux. Acid reflux occurs when the stomach acid flows back into the food pipe (or esophagus).

Change in voice and throat discomfort: A recurrent cough or a hoarse, scratchy voice may also signify the existence of esophageal cancer. In this case, the tumour compresses the nerves that control the vocal cords' proper functioning, causing the voice to become hoarse.

Weight loss: Unexpected weight loss affects roughly 50 per cent of people with esophageal cancer. This may be caused due to swallowing difficulties or a cancer-related reduction in appetite. One can experience dramatic weight loss even when the person is on a healthy diet.

The treatment approaches for esophageal cancer aim to take the tumour out or shrink the tumour to prevent it from growing. Depending upon the factors like size, type, and place of cancer growth, and age of the person, the following are the three types of treatment approaches recommended for esophagus cancer:

Surgery: In the early stages, when cancer hasn't spread to other parts of the body, or in advanced stages, when cancer has also spread to the stomach, along with the infected sections of the esophagus, minimally invasive surgery is suggested. In which case, the part of the esophagus with the tumor is removed along with the lymph nodes, and the remaining part is reconnected using sections from the small or large intestines as required. The most advanced method to perform the esophagectomy is using Robotic-Assisted Surgery with the da Vinci surgical system in which, with a small incision, the cancer is removed with precision leaving minimal scars and quicker recovery time.

Chemotherapy: Depending upon the cancer stage, location and size, chemotherapy is usually recommended, either before or after the surgery. This treatment approach helps slow down the progression of cancer, prevents recurrence, and helps relieve the symptoms.

SUMMER COOLER

PAPAYA: Rich in fibre, Vitamin C and antioxidants which prevent cholesterol build up in your arteries, papaya is just the right fruit for summers.

Papaya helps in weight loss because the fibre content in papaya leaves you feeling full and clears your bowel movement. It is also great for boosting immunity.

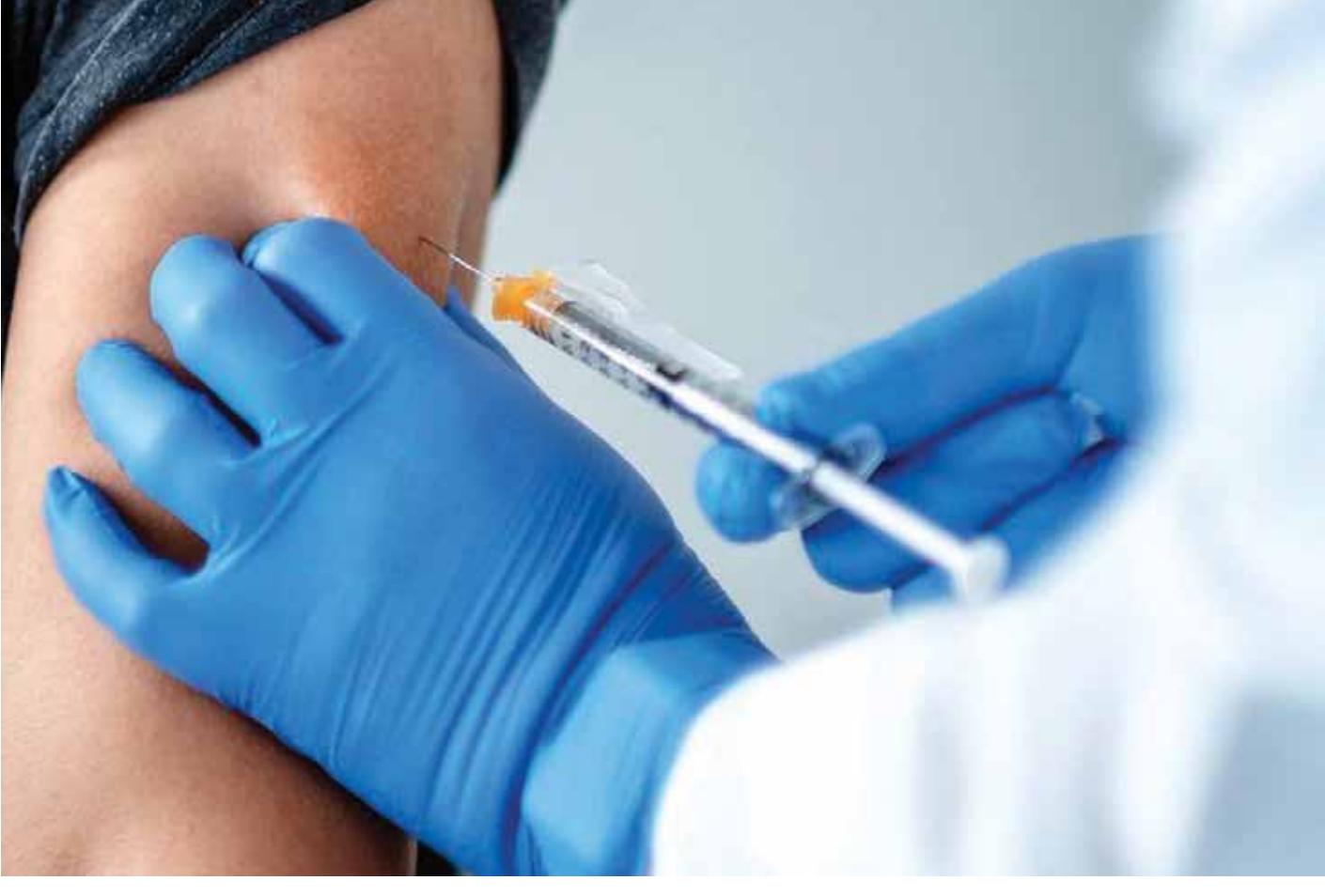
Papaya is a rich source of antioxidants, phytonutrients and flavonoids that prevent your cells from undergoing free radical damage. Some studies have also linked the

consumption papaya to reduced risk of colon and prostate cancer.

Not only this, but the presence of several vitamins and nutrients in the fruit also help in preventing the skin from free radical damage thereby keeping all the signs of ageing at bay.

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LET'S WORK IT OUT

Easing back in to exercise can be a task, especially after a long break. VAIBHAV SOMANI shares easy tips that can help you get back into the exercise routine



If you are in the lockdown mode at your home or struggling with making time from work commitments, family obligations and doing household chores,

it may seem daunting and impossible to accelerate anything else on the plate. As a consequence, people tend to give up the one thing they don't wish to do — exercise. And long before you know it your non-workout days would have extended into weeks or months.

Whatever the reason of your busyness, there are ways to tug yourself out of a workout rut and make an enduring routine. So irrespective of whether you are a sports person, a regular housewife or a fitness enthusiast, it's never a bad idea to shake your self up and get back into the exercise routine.

Here, are the few points that will help you get back on track.

Planning: One of the first steps, before you dive back into an exercise routine, is to plan out what you want to achieve, how you want to get there, and what you want your routine to look like. It is always advisable to start small and not undertake any aggressive exercises if it's been quite a while since you last worked out.

Setting up a goal: One thing lockdown has assured is that most of us have gained weight. If you have put on a lot of weight during this time, then you need to set a target, what you're expecting and how much weight you want to achieve. The setting goal will always give you a holistic approach that includes stretching, cool down and work-out sessions.

Schedule your workout like you schedule your meeting: Discipline is a must in this case. As you ease back into your fitness routine, don't forget to make a schedule for your workout session. There is a high possibility that your mind will subconsciously look for excuses to not work out and look out for distraction to deter from your plan. Schedule a time that you won't get easily distracted, if you know you can get caught up with work in the evening then schedule your time for a workout in the morning or vice versa.

Start with an easy workout: As they say, the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. Getting started is sometimes the hardest part, as you feel less motivated and don't know where to start. It is better to start the exercise routine at a slightly less intense pace and gradually increase the momentum with time. The high intense routines initially will exhaust you quickly and may eventually feel like too much to deal with, so start small but practice consistently.

Eating right to get back into shape: If you listen to your grandparents most of them would tell you to avoid eating out of a 'ready made packet', which means avoiding junk food and eating mindfully. Eating a well-balanced diet can assist you to get the calories and nutrients you require to fuel the daily activities and help you reach your work out goals.

Things to avoid: People tend to overdo the exercise initially and end up being hurt or injured as the body. So, don't set too many unrealistic goals at once and ditch the all-or-nothing mind-set.

The writer is Director, Gravolite

JAB STAYS IMPORTANT

A group of experts suggest that those infected with COVID don't need to get vaccinated, others believe it is too early to say so. MUSBA HASHMI brings you a report

Only last week, a group of experts opined that patients who had recovered from COVID, don't need to get vaccinated, as they have already developed antibodies. This came weeks after the Health Ministry had recommended COVID patients to get vaccinated after three months of recovery.

Hiccups and vomiting: Frequent hiccupping and vomiting are also symptoms individuals must look out for, as the narrowing of the esophagus obstructs the food from going down smoothly, with more chances of the food getting stuck and being pushed back up.

Chest pain and heartburn: Recurring chest pains and chronic heartburn in the lower chest area happens due to acid reflux. Acid reflux occurs when the stomach acid flows back into the food pipe (or esophagus).

Change in voice and throat discomfort: A recurrent cough or a hoarse, scratchy voice may also signify the existence of esophageal cancer. In this case, the tumour compresses the nerves that control the vocal cords' proper functioning, causing the voice to become hoarse.

Weight loss: Unexpected weight loss affects roughly 50 per cent of people with esophageal cancer. This may be caused due to swallowing difficulties or a cancer-related reduction in appetite. One can experience dramatic weight loss even when the person is on a healthy diet.

The treatment approaches for esophageal cancer aim to take the tumour out or shrink the tumour to prevent it from growing. Depending upon the factors like size, type, and place of cancer growth, and age of the person, the following are the three types of treatment approaches recommended for esophagus cancer:

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PAPAYA: Rich in fibre, Vitamin C and antioxidants which prevent cholesterol build up in your arteries, papaya is just the right fruit for summers.

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Papaya is a rich source of antioxidants, phytonutrients and flavonoids that prevent your cells

However, with that being said, cases of reinfection is not an alien concept. Chugh believes that these can be attributed to the mutations in the virus.

"Reinfections can be attributed to a lot of factors like different variants and/or low immunity. Though, the chances of reinfections are low and it doesn't affect a majority of patients. As more and more data comes, we will have better answers but remember even though you are vaccinated you should wear mask and take precautions," he opines.

Dr Piyush Goel, Senior Consultant — Pulmonary and Critical Care, Columbia Asia Hospital, Palam Vihar, Gurugram, insists that patients should get vaccinated after at least 12 weeks of recovery. "A patient who got infected with the virus, too should get vaccinated after at least 12 weeks of getting cured," Goel says and adds that there is no such robust data to analyse how long antibodies stay but they will be there for at least three months post recovery.

The reason for reinfection, he says, is because antibodies can disappear after three months, or can decrease to a certain level, and as a result can't prevent a person from getting reinfection.

There is data that antibodies can persist after COVID infection anywhere from three to eight months, Chugh asserts.

He adds that all infected people should get vaccinated after three months. "Every time our body is exposed to an infection a sort of blueprint or memory is formed to counter future infections, if they may arise. Hence, antibodies are not the only measure of protection against infection, memory cells also play their part," he tells.

Dr Arunesh Kumar, Sr Consultant & Head Respiratory Medicine/Pulmonology, Paras Hospital, agrees with Chugh and

Goel and says that in the absence of proper studies we should resort to vaccines only as they are your best available protective shield against the virus.

The data says vaccine to COVID recovered people should be given only after 90 days. Whether there is lasting immunity after initial infection is still a matter of debate. Although it is likely that in the future vaccination may not be required after infection

— Dr Chandril Chugh

It is too early to say COVID recovered patients don't need vaccination. The reason is there's no proper data of how long the immunity stays, it may differ from person to person and can even depend on the severity of the infection. Some say mild COVID patients can have higher immunity. Again, there are no facts yet to prove it. Also, we can't rule out the possibility of mutations. It can lead to reinfection. So, for the time being, we would recommend people to get vaccinated," Kumar says.

Dr Col Vijay Dutta, Senior Consultant — Internal Medicine, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, too agrees on the fact that COVID infected patients have immunity which can last for three to six months and it has been documented. "We don't know whether this acquired immunity will last beyond six months or not. The present data is only valid maximum up to six months irrespective of the clinical status of the patient — whether he had mild, moderate or severe infection," Dutta says.

Several other doctors opine that we should wait for proper studies to back the fact and decide later on. Meanwhile, as said previously, your jab stays important.

DadiKaKehna

Monsoons are here and with it, various issues like cough, cold and skin diseases. ROSHANI DEVI shares easy home remedies that can help you beat the monsoon blues



Fill up those cracks

Cracked skin is common, especially if one tends to wash hands often. DR AJAY RANA lists easy ways that can help one get rid of it

Cracked skin can usually appear when the skin barrier is compromised. It's a symptom of dry and irritated skin, but there are many possible causes especially the change in the temperature. Feet, hands, and lips are more prone to cracking as compared to other parts.

Any rashes, cuts or marks on the cracked skin typically occur when a person's skin is dry or irritated. Dry and cracked skin can be itchy, flaking and bleed. You may feel unpleasant sensations when applying any product to cracked skin.

It is the most common skin problem that people face during summers. Severe hand and wrist dryness from over-washing is a condition that causes the appearance of cracked skin. To prevent its appearance, it requires using moisturiser

every time the hands are washed. In some cases, cracked skin can also be a symptom of an underlying medical condition. In some people, cracked skin condition may occur due to a skin condition, such as eczema or Psoriasis, or because the skin came into contact with an irritating substance. In smooth and hydrated skin, natural oils present in the skin layer prevent the skin from drying out by retaining moisture. But if the skin loses moisture, which makes the skin shrink, which leads it to cracking.

There are many ways you can treat your cracked skin at home if the condition isn't too severe. You may try one of these self-care treatments:

■ **Moisturising:** Since dry skin can cause cracked skin and in most of the cases can

worsen it, it's important to keep your skin well hydrated. Apply moisturiser frequently on the affected areas.

■ Use skincare products that contain ingredients such as jojoba oil, coconut oil, olive oil and shea butter.

■ Avoid washing hands with hot water. Taking hot baths and showers can worsen dry or cracked skin.

■ Use topical hydrocortisone cream. It contains corticosteroids, which reduce any kind of irritation and swelling.

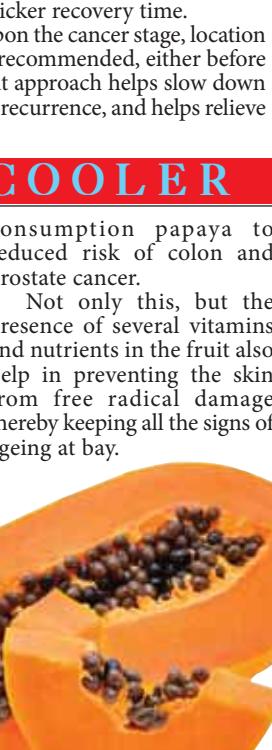
■ Exfoliate your skin regularly. Gentle exfoliation helps to remove dead, dry cells from the surface of the skin. This remedy is the most effective that is recommended for cracked feet and heels.

The writer is Dermatologist, Aesthetic Physician and Founder-Director of Flamed

IN BRIEF

As the whole country scrambles to navigate through the worst public health disaster in recent memory, a few organisations and companies are looking to contribute their bit by ensuring protection and treatment for their own employees. With a view to secure the health and lives of their employees, among several measures, these few companies are also taking recourse to COVID-focused tele-health solutions easing the load on the already struggling public health infrastructure and services in the country. And in this endeavor, Apollo TeleHealth has emerged as a significant partner of choice for these companies. Apollo TeleHealth's Tele-Covid Management, a notch above the popular doc-on-call telehealth solutions, being a one of its kind offering, is proving to be a lifeline for these companies.

"With our existing healthcare systems struggling to provide adequate services and facilities in these trying times when a shortage of ICU beds and oxygen supplies have become an everyday experience for most people, Tele-COVID Management ensures that end-to-end treatment and solutions is provided for all corporate employees enrolled for the programme. With provision for separate isolation wards, tele-ICUs, tele-emergency and tele-specialist services offered as part of a comprehensive module, we have ensured that these employee-patients receive continuous consultation and care," said Vikram Thaploo, CEO, Apollo TeleHealth.



leaves the face sticky especially during the rainy season. A simple remedy is: Take 200 ml rose water, a teaspoon of camphor and a teaspoon of dried mint powder. Mix and refrigerate. Use it to wipe face two-three a day.

It is the most common skin problem that people face during summers. Severe hand and wrist dryness from over-washing is a condition that causes the appearance of cracked skin. To prevent its appearance, it requires using moisturiser



Bollywood
A calm and composed
mind can deal with a lot
more than what we think.
—Shilpa Shetty

SEIZE YOUR MOMENT

Old-fashioned discussions on women in business are holding us from making any real progress, says PRIYANKA GUPTA ZIELINSKI

COVID-19 has, among other things, proven to be a disrupter for women in a family business, both in a good and bad way. It has challenged existing gender roles and accelerated women's entry to the forefront of household and business sustainability.

Here are some of the big risks that this drawn-out pandemic poses for women in businesses and the ways we can seek opportunities for growth in this downturn.

Stop sounding old-fashioned and repetitive

Parochial discussions about women in business centred around glass ceilings and work-life balances have dominated the narrative for too long. Every conversation on women entering the workforce is structured along the same topics. There is a need for a different, refreshing perspective on gender, moving forward. Women have evolved in the workplace but the articulation of their agenda has become anachronistic. The past two decades, and now the pandemic, have drastically changed the economy, so much so that we can no longer continue to speak of women as though they need encouragement.

Women run a grave danger of alienating themselves if they continue to sound old-fashioned. Women have to own their success and start showing that they have already made it.

In family businesses, women no longer need to be just in the supporting roles or in



charge of the family's charity arm. They need to start moving into other growth and development areas of the core business.

Break out of the princess trap

Women groomed and raised in business families are often confined to their princess trap, to play into the "daddy's little girl" trope and seek traditional validation for their ambition. At work, there is an exit date ticker blinking and marking the last day in the business — the day they get married.

The community is unable to visualise and accept an alternative for women. This creates immense pressure on the ones in business. Women need to assert their individualism and define themselves separately from the herd mindset. The need of the hour is to change the conversation entirely

so that women are longer defined by their marital status.

Leverage the disruptions and channel female-centric authenticity

The realities of gender disruption in this pandemic revealed what women need to fight for and what must change to obtain access to opportunities of all kinds. What is clear is that authentic female leadership must prevail and an audacious delivery of women's agenda will go further along in clearing a path for women's entry and success in busi-

nnesses. This pandemic era has witnessed women in command, taking charge in the struggle for the survival of their nations and finances. Countries with women who are head of the state such as Denmark, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Germany and Slovakia have been internationally recognised for the effectiveness of their response to the pandemic. In a way, this crisis is an accelerator that has made women come to the forefront faster — causing disruption in a good way. It is becoming evident that women are more efficient because they are more prudent and avoid excessive risk-taking strategies.

Reimagine success through a gendered lens

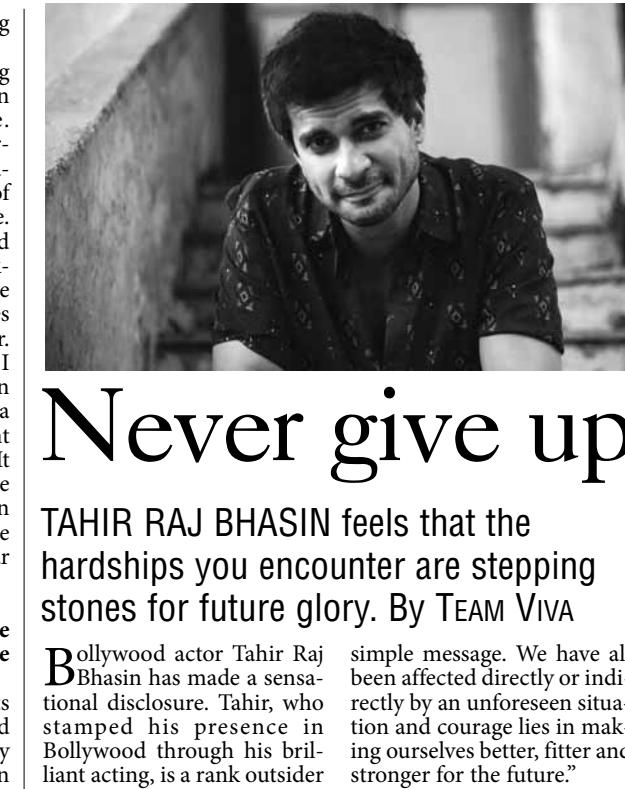
Women should be participate in all the current and relevant conversations, be it digitisation, crypto or drone deliveries. They need to show up at the workplace day in and day out to demonstrate persistence. The men, however supportive they may be, have and continue to reserve the decision making for themselves. That is why women must show that they are equal to them in knowledge and intellectual capacity. They should no longer settle for feel-good, accommodating quotas such as 'one woman on the board'.

How often do we see men apologising for their inability to multitask, grapple with nuances, deal with change? Rarely, if ever. Men are hard-wired to perceive themselves as belonging in every conversation, whether they add value to it or not. It is high time that we understand that women form the crux of the family and every business, as owners, suppliers and consumers. No conversation is complete without this sisterhood.

(The writer is a business leader, entrepreneur and author of *The Ultimate Family Business Survival Guide*.)



Lead actor Arya Putra, director Avinash Bawankar and executive producer Aditya Garg captured during the announcement of forthcoming web series *Suicide*, a biopic based on the life of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Sushant, who was born and bred in Patna, was reportedly an avid reader who was deeply interested in astrophysics. In 2003, he secured the seventh rank in India to gain entry into Delhi College of Engineering (now known as Delhi Technical University). He later dropped out to pursue his interests in acting. On June 14, 2020 Sushant allegedly died by suicide. However, there is an ongoing CBI probe into the same and an official stated that the case is being meticulously looked into. Photo: Pankaj Kumar



Never give up

TAHIR RAJ BHASIN feels that the hardships you encounter are stepping stones for future glory. By TEAM VIVA

Bollywood actor Tahir Raj Bhasin has made a sensational disclosure. Tahir, who stamped his presence in Bollywood through his brilliant acting, is a rank outsider to the industry. He shared he was rejected 250 times before he was signed on by Aditya Chopra for *Mardaani* (2014), a film that fetched him a Filmfare award nomination for Best Supporting Actor and the Screen Award for the Best Actor.

Despite the overwhelming number of rejections, Tahir never lost hope and believed he was destined to shine in Bollywood. "To be honest, I never saw my initial time in Mumbai as a struggling phase. It was an aspiring phase. I was visualising a dream and aspiring to make it real and it's the hardship and journey that make the successes worth celebrating," he said.

Tahir will be seen in *Lopeta* as a romantic lead opposite Taapsee Pannu, in *Bulbul* Tarang opposite Sonakshi Sinha and *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein*, in which he has been paired with Sweta Tripathi. He will also be seen in the Ranveer Singh starrer *83*, directed by Kabir Khan, in which he plays the role of the legendary Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar. With several good projects under his belt, it is time for Tahir to shine bright in tinseltown.

simple message. We have all been affected directly or indirectly by an unforeseen situation and courage lies in making ourselves better, fitter and stronger for the future."

Consider skin polishing or microdermabrasion if you want something more effective than at-home cleansing but less drastic than an in-office treatment. It can be quite effective at minimising the appearance of pores.

-JANS

He added, "The improvements that came as a result of obstacles, prepared me to be propelled forward when the time was right. (My) strength lay in getting hit and in the will to keep moving forward. Today's world is all about that



Pore problems?

Celebrity dermatologist NIKETA SONAVANE shares some lesser-known facts about this skincare concern



We've all come across serums and creams that promise tighter pores or even poreless skin. But can any serum, face mask, or pore strip truly shrink your pores to an invisible size?

As you might expect, the idea that topical products can shrink your pores is false. More importantly, you can never completely eliminate pores; they play an important role in maintaining skin health

and without them we'd be doomed. Pores are necessary for the normal structure and function of the skin.

Pores are simply hair follicle openings, and each pore contains its own sebaceous gland, which produces oil, or sebum. Your skin requires sebum for lubrication and protection but an excess of sebum can cause breakouts, and a lack of sebum can cause dry skin. We have no control over

the size of our pores due to genetics. However, if you want your pores to appear smaller, here are some pointers.

■ Is it a bad thing to have large pores?

While large pores may appear frightening in a magnifying mirror, they generally pose no health risks.

Most people seek to reduce pore size for cosmetic reasons, as irregular-looking pores can make the skin appear textured, older, and damaged.

Big pores also create an easy place for makeup to collect because they are more pronounced. As a result, makeup applied over the pores may have a caky appearance, which can be distracting in photographs.

While large pores can be a cosmetic annoyance, they can also be beneficial in some cases. Large pores are not always bad for your health and they may even be beneficial as you get older. Since larger pores produce more oil, this can be beneficial as we age and our skin becomes drier.

■ How to use topical treatments to reduce the appearance of pores

While it may be cosmetically beneficial to reduce the appearance of pores, we cannot change the size of the pore itself. Instead, there are numerous methods for temporarily refining pores. These include using cosmetic products containing *dimethicone*, a silicone ingredient that sits on top of the skin and reduces the appearance of pores, such as sunscreen and foundation.

Some skincare products can also help in reducing the appearance of pores. Consider products with active ingredients that contain acids, particularly glycolic and *salicylic* acids, or retinol, as they work to unclog pores. These ingredients promote skin cell turnover, which aids in the

unclogging of pores, making them appear smaller.

Last but not least, wearing sun protection every day can make a huge difference. Wearing SPF products regularly helps reduce redness, irritation, and discolouration, all of which affect pore appearance. Sun exposure ages skin and contributes to collagen breakdown, causing the skin to lose elasticity, which dilates pores and makes them appear larger.

When it comes to SPF, I may sound like a broken record, but it is, without a doubt, the most important product in anyone's regimen. It is the most effective tool we have for preventing collagen breakdown, which is one of the main reasons our pores appear larger.

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■ Do medical-grade procedures ensure more effective outcomes?

Although topical products can help clean pores and reduce their appearance, only medical-grade procedures can produce more visible results. These include dermatologist-administered micro-needling and laser treatments, which typically require no downtime and no recovery time.

There is no downtime with the *Fraxel* laser, and it can improve pigmentation, fine lines, and the appearance of pores.

Similarly, procedures involving the use of botulinum toxin are prohibited. Botox can be effective in reducing sebum production and pore size by acting directly on the sebaceous and other glands.

Consider skin polishing or microdermabrasion if you want something more effective than at-home cleansing but less drastic than an in-office treatment. It can be quite effective at minimising the appearance of pores.

-JANS

KATE MOSS: THE TATTOO ARTIST

Model **KATE MOSS** has revealed that she has been taking lessons from her tattoo artist friend Daniel Casone, as she wants to go to Glastonbury to ink people. "She said she wanted to learn tattooing from me. She called me to go up and tattoo her and she ended up tattooing me as well. She gave me a 'Kate' and a heart on my arm," Casone told The Sunday Mirror newspaper.



TREND BLAZER

fairtalk

AAMIR KHAN



'*Lagaan* was, is, and continues to be an amazing journey for me. It has been a journey in which I have met exciting new people, made new friends, started relationships that have lasted over two decades, learnt so much and experienced so many emotions. This journey has shaped me in so many ways.'

dailytalk

AYUSHMANN KHURRANA



'I try to bring focus towards inclusivity as much as possible with my films and social media, and I do feel that people need to be aware of the intersex movement. As actors, we are fortunate that we can raise awareness for such important issues and I'm trying to do my bit by speaking about Pride month.'



WANT FULFILLING ROLES: VIDYA

Actor **VIDYA BALAN** who will be essaying the role of an upright forest officer on the lookout for a man-eating tigress in her new film, *Sherni*, says she wants to do work that is an extension of her belief.

"I want to work in projects that would mean something to me, work that would excite me and fulfill me. Therefore, I went ahead and made the choices that I made."

Sherni releases on June 18 on Amazon Prime.

WHAT A SCHICK SHOW

Patrik scores brace including one from the halfway line in Czech's 2-0 win over Scotland



AFP ■ GLASGOW

Scotland's long-awaited return to a major international tournament was ruined by Patrik Schick's slick finishing as the Czech Republic won 2-0 at Hampden on Monday to move top of Euro 2020 Group D.

Schick's header just before half-time opened the scoring, but it was his stunning strike from

just inside the Scotland half after the break that will live in the memory as one of the all-time great European Championship goals.

After a 23-year wait to qualify for a major tournament, Scotland's hopes of making more history by getting out of the group for the first time now look slim.

Steve Clarke's men face

England next on Friday at Wembley before hosting World Cup finalists Croatia at Hampden on June 22.

Playing in front of fans at Hampden for the first time since November 2019 with 12,000 in attendance, Scotland made a nervous start.

The hosts were desper-

ately missing the driving runs and

poise on the ball normally provided by Kieran Tierney on the left side of a back three.

Without the Arsenal defender, Liverpool's Andy Robertson was his side's biggest threat with a series of rampaging runs.

A cagey game of few chances burst into life after Schick's towering leap put the visitors in front three minutes before half-time.

Scotland were slow to react after initially clearing a corner and the Bayer Leverkusen forward rose highest to flick home Vladimir Coufal's cross.

Marshall was called into action to make two quick saves from Schick and Vladimir Darida in an explosive start to the second-half.

But twice Scotland were inches away from levelling when Jack Hendry's dipping effort came back off the crossbar before Vadik clawed away a mishit clearance from Tomas Kalas.

However, the home side were stunned by a moment of brilliance from Schick on 52 minutes as he spotted Marshall off his line from halfway and bent in an incredible shot from just inside the Scotland half.

Dramatic win for Dutch

Dumfries late header helps Oranje return to big time with 3-2 success

AFP ■ AMSTERDAM

Denzel Dumfries scored a dramatic late winner as the Netherlands marked their long-awaited return to a major tournament with a 3-2 victory over Ukraine in a remarkable Euro 2020 game in Amsterdam on Sunday.

Dumfries, the PSV Eindhoven full-back, headed in a cross from substitute Nathan Ake to complete a madcap second half after the home side eased into a two-goal lead and then threw it away.

Captain Georginio Wijnaldum and Wout Weghorst both scored before the hour mark in front of a raucous crowd at the Johan Cruyff Arena, only for Ukraine to silence the home supporters as Andriy Yarmolenko and Roman Yaremchuk netted to briefly restore parity.

Frank de Boer's side got there in the end and the victory will provide a major lift to the Netherlands after what was their first game at a major competition in seven years.

They will now hope to build on it on Thursday against Austria, who beat North Macedonia earlier in Bucharest in the same Group C.

It was a brilliant game, and a crowd of around 16,000 created an atmosphere fit for the occasion at the home of Ajax, where supporters held up banners with messages of support for Christian Eriksen following the Denmark star's cardiac arrest on Saturday.

Eriksen made his name at Ajax before moving to Tottenham Hotspur in 2013.

After failing to qualify for Euro 2016 or the 2018 World Cup in Russia, the Netherlands were playing their first game at major competition since beating hosts Brazil 3-0 to claim third place at the 2014 World Cup.

They had not won a game at a Euro in almost exactly 13 years, since Klaas-Jan Huntelaar and Robin van Persie netted in a 2-0 win over Romania at Euro 2008.



Brazil start Copa defence with win

AFP ■ BRASILIA

Star forward Neymar netted a penalty and created a second as hosts Brazil eased to a 3-0 victory over a coronavirus-depleted Venezuela on Sunday in the opening match of the 2021 Copa America.

Centre-back Marquinhos opened the score midway through the first half and Gabriel Barbosa sealed the Group B win a minute from time.

In a tournament already delayed a year and moved from its original hosts Argentina and Colombia due to the pandemic, it was fitting that the coronavirus should take centre-stage right up to the tournament kick-off.

Played in front of an empty Mane Garrincha stadium due to Covid-19 restrictions, Brazil made light of the continent's minnows, who arrived with a makeshift side missing eight players ruled out after testing positive for coronavirus the day before.

Venezuela called up 15 emergency replacements but could still only name seven out of a possible 12 substitutes due to a lack of available players.

Brazil took the lead on 23 minutes when Richarlison flicked on a Neymar corner that deflected into Marquinhos' path inside the six-yard box, allowing the centre-back to bundle home.

Richarlison had a goal ruled out for offside while Neymar incredibly fired wide from 12 yards out as Brazil threatened to put the game to bed before half-time.

It was more of the same after the break as substitute Alex Sandro from distance and Richarlison with a header both shot over the bar.

Neymar somehow failed to turn home a cross-cum-shot from Gabriel Jesus from three yards out but on 64 minutes he doubled the lead from the penalty spot.

Yohan Cumana clumsily brought down Danilo in the box and Neymar sent Graterol the wrong way from 12 yards.

The hosts took their foot off the gas but Neymar kept probing and was denied a second by Graterol following a mazy run and shot from inside the box.

Neymar then created the third, rounding Graterol before crossing for Gabriel Barbosa to chest home from barely a yard out.

"He's developed the ability to create. Right foot, left foot, he's become an unpredictable player," Brazil coach Tite enthused about Neymar.

In the second match, Edwin Cardona scored the only goal of the game as Colombia held on under second half pressure to begin their Group B campaign with a 1-0 win over Ecuador — who thrashed them 6-1 the last time the sides met in a World Cup qualifier in November.

Colombia's goal was a thing of beauty with Cardona taking a short free-kick to Juan Cuadrado, who chipped the ball into the box for Miguel Borja to head down into the path of Cardona to volley home.

It was initially disallowed for offside but a VAR review showed that while three Colombian players were beyond the defensive line, Cardona and Borja were onside.

Chhetri targets record feat against Afghanistan

PTI ■ DOHA

Goal-machine Sunil Chhetri will look to add to his tally and enter the all-time top 10 scorers' list as a buoyant India meet Afghanistan in the joint 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup qualifiers here on Tuesday.

The talk since then mostly centred around the Indian striker surpassing the legendary Lionel Messi as international football's second highest scorer among active players.

A veteran in top-flight at 36, Chhetri played down the comparisons with the Argentine global superstar, but he will certainly look to put his best foot forward come the next match and add to his tally of 74 goals.

If the Blue Tigers can avoid defeat in the upcoming match, they will finish third in their group, an improvement over



the fifth-place result during the last campaign.

India are already out of con-

tention to progress further in the World Cup qualifying campaign, and is now looking to secure a

ing the supply chain flowing.

India are currently placed on six points after seven matches in comparison to Afghanistan's five points from seven games.

Form and past record both favour India and anything less than a victory for the Blue Tigers will be seen as an upset.

India will enter the game as clear favourites despite Afghanistan's ability to fight it out.

Igor Stimac's men will be high on confidence after thoroughly dominating Bangladesh, against whom they enjoyed nearly 75% possession while completing more than 600 passes.

If they are to repeat that kind of impressive stats, India will need the duo of Chhetri and Manvir Singh to fire upfront, with Brandon Fernandes marshalling the midfield and keep-

ing the supply chain flowing.

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As far as Afghanistan are concerned, they will take heart from their spirited performance in their previous outing against India, who were held to a stalemate at home by their lower-ranked opponents in 2019.

But the recent defeat against Oman means Afghanistan are not among the top four-th place teams in the World Cup qualifiers and a failure to win against India would send them to the playoffs just to get into the third round of Asian Cup qualifiers.

berth in 2023 Asian Cup, scheduled to be held in China.

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Rahane offers Test batting tips to Mithali & Co

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

We're mentally prepared for England: Harman

PTI ■ BRISTOL



now looking to stamp her class in the traditional format.

She added, "Even in the nets, we try to be in the right frame of mind.

When you are happy, you

play good cricket. We try

to play to our strengths.

"We had an easy and

friendly talk with Rahane, he is very experienced, and we did exactly that."

Elaborating on the interaction with Virat Kohli's deputy in the men's Test team, she said,

"Rahane has so much

experience, he shared them with us, offered us tips on how to bat, what kind approach should we have to batting because it's long format, how to break your inning in parts..."

Asked about teen bat-

ting sensation Shafali Verma's chance of making her Test debut, Harmapreeta said the team management doesn't prefer tinkering with her game.

"Shafali is someone we always want to play, she is someone who can dominate the opposition.

"We never tried to tinker with Shafali's game as she is a natural player, it's not a great idea to talk too much about technique and game planning with her.

"All of us are trying to

create a very nice situation

for her so that she doesn't

feel the pressure and enjoys her cricket. She was

looking great in the nets,

and I hope, if she gets a chance to play, she will do better."

Both the teams have high quality pace bowlers and Lee wants them to be in the game at all times.

"Pace just makes red-ball cricket exciting, I'm a cricket fan and I want to produce a pitch where the cricket lovers have to watch every ball in case they miss something, be that some class batting or an amazing spell of bowling."

"A maiden over can be quite

exciting if it's a battle of skill between both bowler and batter. So, yeah, if we get some pace and bounce in the pitch, but not too one-sided towards seam movement, we'll be happy," he said.

Djokovic eyes Golden Grand Slam

AFP ■ PARIS

Novak Djokovic has set his sights on the Golden Grand Slam of all four majors and the Olympic title, insisting:

"Everything is possible".

The world number one captured a second French Open and 19th Slam with a 6-7 (6/8), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 win over Stefanos Tsitsipas on Sunday.

It allowed him to become the first man in the Open era, and only third in history, to claim all four Grand Slam titles on multiple occasions.

Now he has targeted being the third man to complete a calendar Grand Slam after Don Budge in 1937 and Rod Laver in 1962 and 1969.

On top of that, he also wants the Olympic Gold medal to complete the Golden Grand Slam. "Everything is possible. Definitely in my case I can say that what I've been through in my career, in my life, this journey has been terrific so far," said Djokovic.

"I've achieved some things that a lot of people thought it would not be possible for me to achieve."

"So everything is possible, and I did put myself in a good position to go for the Golden Slam."

T he Golden Slam has never

come up short at the Rio Olympics, Wimbledon and the US Open later in the year.

However, Djokovic has been at this juncture before, winning in Australia and Paris in 2016 but coming up short at the Rio Olympics, Wimbledon and the US Open later in the year.

Agencies