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# No compromise on Article 370, 35A: Gupkar leaders

### They say ahead of all-party meet called by Modi on June 24

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Striking a discordant note ahead of joining the all-party meet convened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on June 24, the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) on Tuesday announced they will attend the meeting but there can be no compromise on Article 370 and 35A, which granted special status to the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir.

The PAGD leaders, who assembled at the residence of Dr Farooq Abdullah, discussed the contours of the agenda of the June 24 conclave.

After the meeting was over, chairman of the PAGD alliance Dr Farooq Abdullah told reporters, "Mehebooba Mufti, Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami, and I will attend the all-party meeting called by the PM. We hope to keep our agenda before the PM and Home Minister."

Dr Abdullah said, "Our stand is clear and all of you know what our stand is. There is no need to repeat the same. Since New Delhi has invited the leaders individually, we have decided that all those invited will attend the meeting and put forth their points on 18th."

The chief spokesperson of the PAGD and CPI(M) leader Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami said he will not ask for moon during the meeting with the PM. "We will seek something



National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and PDP chief Mehebooba Mufti with other members during a media address after a meeting of Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), in Srinagar, on Tuesday. PTI

that is ours and will remain ours," he said. Tarigami said they will go to Delhi and represent the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. "We will put forth the aspirations of people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in the meeting. Whatever is possible within the Indian constitution is what we are going to seek. We will not put our signature on their agenda, we will agree to the agenda which is in the interest of the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh," said Tarigami.

PDP chief Mehebooba said during the meeting with the Prime Minister on Thursday, she will press for the restoration of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir which was "snatched away from us".

# 53L jobs day after record 86L

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after India recorded a milestone of 86 lakh vaccination in a day, numbers slumped drastically on day two of the implementation of "revised guidelines for Covid-19 jab drive" with just around 53.4 lakh people vaccinated as per the Government data available till 10pm.

According to the Union Health Ministry, on the second day of the new phase of Covid-19 vaccination, more than 53.4 lakh vaccine doses were administered on Tuesday till 10 pm with Uttar Pradesh recording highest single-day vaccine coverage by administering 7.96 lakh doses.

Other States, like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka, which reported a sharp surge in vaccination on

June 21, showed poor performance on Tuesday.

Since the launch of the nationwide vaccination drive, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have administered first dose to more than 10 lakh beneficiaries of the age group 18-44 years, said a statement from the Government.

Overall, more than 29.35 crore (29,35,04,820) vaccine doses have been provided to States/UTs so far, through the Centre Government of India (free of cost channel) and through direct state procurement category.

More than 2.14 crore (2,14,90,297) Covid vaccine doses are still available with the States/UTs to be administered while more than 33.80.590 vaccine doses are in the pipeline and will be received by the States/UTs within the next 3 days, said the Government.



Table with Covid-19 statistics for various states: MAHA: 69,87,521 (+8,470), KERALA: 28,29,461 (+12,617), KTKA: 28,15,029 (+3,709), TN: 24,38,819 (+6,895), DELHI: 14,32,778 (+397)

# Delta + prevalent in Maha, Kerala, MP but Covaxin, Covishield effective: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the WHO said the existing Covid-19 vaccines are showing reduced signs of efficacy against the Delta variant of coronavirus, the Government on Tuesday alerted that the Delta plus variant is prevalent in Maharashtra, Kerala and MP in India and 8 other countries.

However, it asserted that both Covishield and Covaxin are effective against the new mutation. It said it would shortly come out with the extent of their effectiveness.

As a precautionary measure, the Union Health Ministry has issued an advisory to the three State Governments to keep a vigil on the new mutated virus which is said to be more virulent. Delta plus, also known as AY1 variant or B.1.617.2, is considered to be the most dangerous variant of Covid-19.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said at a Press briefing here that India is among the nine countries where the Delta plus mutation of the coronavirus has been found so far. However, he underlined that it is currently a "variant of interest" and has not yet been classified as a "variant of concern".

Of the 22 cases of Delta plus variant of the coronavirus detected in India, 16 have been detected in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri and Jalgaon while others are from parts of Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.

## CAPSULE

NEPAL SO QUASHES 20 MINISTERS' APPOINTMENT

**Kathmandu:** In a major blow to beleaguered Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, the Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled that the appointment of 20 Ministers by him was unconstitutional, invalidating his two recent Cabinet expansions after the dissolution of the House of Representatives. **PH**

BJP'S SILENCE HURTS SAYS CHIRAG PASWAN

**New Delhi:** "Hurt" at the BJP's silence while he battles challenges from within his party, Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Chirag Paswan said on Tuesday his relations with the saffron party cannot remain "one-sided" and he will consider all possibilities about his future political steps if attempts to corner him continue.

BJP MP SEEKS NUSRAT'S LIS DISQUALIFICATION

**Badaun:** BJP's Badaun MP Sanghamitra Maurya has written to the Lok Sabha speaker, demanding disqualification of TMC MP Nusrat Jahan for allegedly giving a false affidavit over her marital status to Parliament.

# Jharkhand declares Mucormycosis as epidemic

## JOB EXTENSION TO GOVT DOCTORS

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand Government on Tuesday declared Mucormycosis commonly referred to as black fungus as an epidemic and also issued a detailed guideline and protocols to be followed when ever a case of black fungus is detected.

The decision was taken during the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Hemant Soren.

"A number of cases of Mucormycosis among Covid-19 patients have been seen during and after treatment of Covid-19. Now, the black fungus has been declared an epidemic under Epidemic Diseases Act 1897 and Jharkhand Covid-19 Regulation 2020. A detailed guideline has been issued and hospitals will have to inform the Government if a patient is diagnosed with Mucormycosis," said Secretary of Cabinet Coordination Yamana Dadel.

In Jharkhand so far 82 confirmed cases of Mucormycosis have been reported whereas 54 other cases were suspected to be Mucormycosis.

In Jharkhand so far 82 confirmed cases of Mucormycosis have been reported whereas 54 other cases were suspected to be Mucormycosis. Ranchi so far topped with 30 confirmed cases

of Mucormycosis followed by East Singhbhum district.

The Cabinet took another major decision to give job extension to Government teaching and non-teaching doctors, who are set to retire by March 2022.

Those who are retiring between May to September 2021, their service has been extended till March 2022, whereas those retiring between October 31, 2021 and March 31, 2022, their service will be extended further for six months which will be counted from the date of their retirement.

The Government took the decision in the wake of the outbreak of Covid-19. As the third wave of Covid-19 is also feared the Government needs more doctors to strengthen health infrastructure.

The Government also conceded the outstanding demand of personnel of Special Auxiliary Police (SAP) for benefits at par with Jharkhand Police in case of death due to nasal violence, compensation and job on compensatory ground. In SAP the Government hires retired army personnel on contract and they are also deployed during anti-naxal operations.

"Now if a personnel of SAP dies during duty due to nasal violence the compensation will be given to the family besides a fourth grade job in police to one of the family members," Dadel said.

The Cabinet also agreed to start the Central Government's scheme SVAMITVA (Survey of villages and mapping with improved technology in village areas).

This scheme is an initiative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj that aims to provide rural people with the right to document their residential properties so that they can use their property for economic purpose.

The survey will also fix the boundary of their village. The scheme is for surveying the land parcels in rural inhabited areas using Drone technology.

The survey will be done across the country in a phase wise manner over the period 2020-2025. The scheme is proposed as a central sector scheme with a projected outlay of Rs 79.65 crores for the pilot phase till 2020.

The pilot phase of 17 cases against 15 recoveries, while East

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# Guv nod to TAC headed by CM

## NOTIFICATION ISSUED BY GOVT

PNS ■ RANCHI

Governor Droupadi Murmu has approved the new Jharkhand Tribes Advisory Council headed by Chief Minister Hemant Soren as notified by the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste and Backward Classes Welfare Department of the State Government on Tuesday.

The notification states that in view of the Rules 3 and 4 or the Jharkhand Tribes Advisory Council Rules 2021, the Jharkhand Tribes Advisory Council has been formed. The Chief Minister will be the ex-officio Chairman of the council, while Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste and Backward Classes Welfare and Transport Minister Champai Soren has been made the ex-officio deputy chair-

man of the council.

According to the notification, MLAs Stephen Marandi, Neelkanth Singh Munda, Babul Marandi, Bandhu Tirkey, Sita Soren, Deepak Birua, Chama Linda, Koche Munda, Bhushan Tirkey, Sukhram Oran, Dashrath Gargai, Vikas Kumar Munda, Naman Vikal Kongadi, Rajesh Kachhap, Sonaram Sunku have been made members of the council. At the same time, Vishwanath Singh Sardar, has been nominated from the Scheduled Castes and Jhal Munda, nominated from the Scheduled from the Scheduled Tribes, have been made members.

The Principal Secretary of Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste and Backward Classes Welfare department will be the Secretary of the council. The tenure of the members of the council will be as per the provisions of the Jharkhand Tribes Advisory Council Rules 2021. The notification will come into being with immediate effect.

At least 13 people were found infected by the lethal virus in Ranchi and 26 Covid patients recovered here, bringing the active caseload in the capital down to 462.

By end of Tuesday, only two districts — Ranchi and East Singhbhum — had an active caseload of more than 100. At least 14 recoveries against ten fresh cases of infection brought the active caseload

# Centre-State 'bhagidari' helped States raise extra ₹1.06L cr in 2020-21: Modi

**New Delhi:** The "successful Centre-State bhagidari," said the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday, has helped States raise an extra ₹1.06 lakh crore in 2020-21 and this, he said, happened despite the challenges thrown by Covid-19 pandemic. States were able to raise an extra ₹1.06 lakh crore in 2020-21 by implementing a set of reforms that allowed them to borrow more from the Centre. Modi said in a blog titled "Reforms by Conviction and Incentives".

He wrote in his blog that 23 States availed of additional borrowings of ₹1.06 lakh crore out of a potential ₹2.14 lakh crore. "This significant increase in availability of resources was made possible by an approach of 'bhagidari'," he wrote. The Prime Minister said the Covid-19 pandemic has come with a whole new set of challenges to Governments in terms of policy-making. India is no exception. **PNS**

# Captain wins trust of party, gets 6 months to fulfil poll promises

### Cong panel not happy with open revolt by Sidhu

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

The Congress three-member panel constituted to resolve the infighting in Punjab party unit on Tuesday gave Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh virtually six months to keep the promises his party made before the 2017 elections, that were not fulfilled during past four-and-a-half years.

The deadline came during his three-hour-long meeting with the panel, led by Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, Punjab party affairs in-charge Harish Rawat, and former MP JP Aggarwal.



At the same time, the panel also took a strong note of statements that too at a time when the efforts are on to resolve the issue.

In fact, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was also not happy with the former cricketer's latest statements.

# HC stays Lakshadweep order to remove beef from school kids' meal

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

In a serious setback for Lakshadweep Administration, the Kerala High Court on Tuesday stayed till further orders the operation of two controversial orders issued by the UT on May 21. Chief Justice Manikumar and Justice Shaji P Chali stayed the orders issued by the Lakshadweep Administration to shut down the dairy farms operated by the administration and to remove beef and related items from the noon meal served to children in the island schools. Resident of one of the islands who filed a public interest litigation (PIL) had stated that order was passed with a malicious intention to change the food habits of the island inhabitants.



According to the petitioner, this was a prelude to the implementation of the proposed Animal Preservation (Regulation), 2021, which seeks to ban slaughter of cows and consumption of beef and beef products.

These orders had caused wide resentment in the islands that saw massive protests and en masse resignation from the Lakshadweep unit of the BJP.

# 20 more die of Covid-19 in State

## Four districts report zero cases

PNS ■ RANCHI

Two more Jharkhand residents, one each from East Singhbhum and Gumla, died of Covid-19 on Tuesday, taking the Covid toll in the state to 5,102, figures released by the health department highlighted. The active caseload in the State, however, dropped to 1,417 on the day as least 180 Covid patients recovered from the infection while 110 fresh cases of coronavirus surfaced in the State, a bulletin released by the National Health Mission (NHM) stated.

At least four districts — Saraikela, Khunti, Dumka and Chatra — did not report fresh Covid-19 cases on Tuesday, while none of the remaining 20 districts reported a spike of more than 20 cases on the day, the NHM stated in its bulletin.

Dhanbad reported the highest spike of 17 cases against 15 recoveries, while East

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14K Covid tests in 2 days, 512 passengers test negative

PMS ■ JAMSHEDPUR administration has embarked on a two-day special drive for detection of Coronavirus positive cases across the district. Revealing about the special drive, district civil surgeon, AK Lal said that they have targeted to carry out 14,000 Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) during these two days across the district.

"We have taken up this task to ensure that the impact of the next wave can be curbed. Health workers across the district have been given the task to carry out 7,000 RATs during these two days. As per the plans, 7,000 tests have to be carried out in Jharkhand and as many tests have to be done in the rural areas," said the civil surgeon.



Tracing and Treatment that led to controlling the prevailing situation. Moreover, the number of deaths due to COVID has also come down considerably during this period as only six persons died during the past 24 hours," said an official of the health department. Lal pointed out that the pace of RAT had slowed down following the Coronavirus positive cases showing a declining trend in the district, but the district administration decided to carry out such special drives on a regular basis in view of the pandemic's third wave.

"The recent decline is a big relief for us. However, we do not want to give a letdown. Our focus is on three T's Testing, Tracing and Treatment that led to controlling the prevailing situation. Moreover, the number of deaths due to COVID has also come down considerably during this period as only six persons died during the past 24 hours," said an official of the health department. Lal pointed out that the pace of RAT had slowed down following the Coronavirus positive cases showing a declining trend in the district, but the district administration decided to carry out such special drives on a regular basis in view of the pandemic's third wave.

Septuagenarian, his daughter-in-law die of electrocution

PANKAJ KUMAR ■ DHANBAD: In a bizarre incident a septuagenarian and his daughter-in-law died on spot on Tuesday morning due to electrocution, while the father-in-law died in hospital at the earliest. Police from Putki police station reached on spot owing to the incident and took possession of both bodies and sent them for postmortem.

The incident took place at Bashi Dhora locality under Putki police station early today. The deceased have been identified as 70-year-old Chamar Pasi and 35 year old Guria Devi got electrocuted while Guria was attempting to remove the TV set that was kept on a steel trunk to take out something.

The main line of the house was passing near the trunk and probably due to continuous rains current was flowing in the trunk. Seeing the condition of Guria, Chamar attempted to pull her but unfortunately himself also got electrocuted and died.

His son Prakash resides in Chennai where works as a contract labour in a firm. Police from Putki police station reached on spot owing to the incident and took possession of both bodies and sent them for postmortem.

OC of the Putki police station said, Prakash has been informed of the incident and has been asked to return to Dhanbad at the earliest. Police entered the house only when a shutdown was taken for the entire area.

Meanwhile, neighbours have been asked to look after the kids till their father returns.

VINOBA BHAVE UNIVERSITY, HAZARIBAG - 825 301. Tender Notice for supply, installation and commissioning of 1.5 Ton split air conditioner in the University Department of English of Vinoba Bhave University.

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय. ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, धनबाद. सूचीकृत पत्र. 1. धनबाद/01/ RDD (RWA) 73.998 1.48 2. धनबाद/02/ RDD (RWA) 67.336 1.35

सारस्वत सरकार. श्रम, नियोजन, प्रशिक्षण एवं कौशल विकास विभाग, जिला नियोजन विभाग, धनबाद. "मुख्यमंत्री प्रोत्साहन योजना". सूचना.

Table with 4 columns: S.No., Name of work, Estimated Cost, Earnest Money, B.O.Q. Rate, Time of Completion. Includes construction of Child Friendly Paediatric Ward at Thehatnagar in Simdega District.

प्र. 248361 Labour Employment and Training(21-22).D. श्रम, नियोजन, प्रशिक्षण एवं कौशल विकास विभाग, जिला नियोजन विभाग, धनबाद. "मुख्यमंत्री प्रोत्साहन योजना". सूचना.

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, भवना निर्माण विभाग, भवना प्रमण्डल, सिमडेगा. अति उत्पत्कालिन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना 13/2021-22. 1. निर्माण का नाम - कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवना प्रमण्डल, सिमडेगा. 2. निर्माण विभाग का नाम - भवना प्रमण्डल, सिमडेगा.

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Promoting creative skills among hearing impaired

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR Taking part in creative activities can help the hearing impaired community to feel more confident and learn new skills. With this aim, La Graviata, a DeafCafe at Jamshedpur that employs deaf, hard of hearing and orphan boys and girls is all set for the new edition of KhamsheWithLife.



It is the only annual event by a startup in India which empowers and gives an opportunity to deaf community to show their skill in diverse fields. The contest has invited a two minutes video from deaf community around the globe showing their creative skill in what they can do for society/environment during Covid19 lockdown. For society, it could be helping elderly in their task, assisting children,

supporting other PwDs, teaching YOGA and so on. For the hearing impaired, it could be spreading awareness on saving water/no honking, making other things free. The event will be held on Saturday, June 26 at LaGraviata. The results will be organised on July 28.

The brain behind the event Avinash Dugar said: "The contest is an opportunity to stay positive utilising your time and energy so that PwDs don't suffer from mental health issues during the pandemic and win some cash prize in return. KhamsheWithLife 4.0 in 2020 which was held online on the Facebook Page of LaGraviata had a participation of 111 deaf girls from 5 countries viz., India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Kenya, South Africa. This year too the participation is overwhelming. La Graviata in posh Circuit House Area has employed waitresses and cooks, all sourced from Sonar's Bal Vihar, an institution that works with the hearing impaired. Apart from serving breakfast, lunch and drinks, the most unique feature of the cafeteria is their initiative to empower women with hearing impaired.

Govt. of Jharkhand. OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER. Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, Road Construction Department, Nirupam Bhawan, 4th floor, 56-57 Chowk, Durgam, Ranchi-834002. e-mail - eorcddps@iran-jhrc.in

PR 248380/Road/21-22-D. Tender Reference No.-ARJCSDF/API/RAN/15/21-22. Dated 21.06.2021. 1. Name of Work - Consultancy Services for Preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Construction of 01.11 Km bridge in Kudi Bazar to Okhla via subdi road in Rampahad, Dist. H. Bridges in Hoar (Garnha-Dhaura Road) in Subdivision Border via Dumaria Danda in Garnha District. From Consultants empanelled in Category - I with the Road Construction Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no. 488 dated 29.01.2019.

सारस्वत सरकार. कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग प्रमण्डल, रामगढ़. अति उत्पत्कालिन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं-04/2021-22. 1. निर्माण का नाम - कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, रामगढ़.

अति उत्पत्कालिन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं-04/2021-22. 1. निर्माण का नाम - कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, रामगढ़. 2. निर्माण विभाग का नाम - ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, रामगढ़.

13 tractors with sand seized near Jainamore in Bermo

PNS ■ BERMO The Civil SDO said that on the instructions of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), there is a ban on sand mining in the entire district till the next October 15, 2021.

Police sources said that four tractors carrying illegal sand on NH-320 were confiscated by Sub-Divisional Officer Bermo, Tenughat Anant Kumar.

All the tractors have been handed over to the local police station and also informed to the District Mining Officer and District Transport Officer for further action.

On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Singh, necessary instructions have been given to all the concerned BDOs/COs, Panchayat Sevaks etc.

The team of civil SDO Tenughat Anant Kumar and police officials carried out a raid against illegal mining on the Damodar river bed and seized 13 tractors loaded with sand on NH-320 near Jainamore near the local police station on Tuesday morning but the miscreants managed to escape.

According to officials, the raid was conducted at Jainamore under Jaitilph police station in Bokaro district on Tuesday morning after locals complained that a group from Bokaro and Jainamore was illegally mining sand on the river bed.

The team seized 13 tractors loaded with sand but the miscreants managed to cross the village and flee to unknown places, the officials said.

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# Schools to reopen after maximum people get jab: Govt



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Anticipating a third Covid-19 wave in October, the Government on Tuesday said that schools, shut since March last year due to the pandemic, will only re-open once a significant portion of the population has been vaccinated against coronavirus.

The Government had last week also cancelled CBSE and ICSE exams for Class 10 and 12. An alternative marking system has been proposed, amended with suggestions from parents and students, and accepted by the Supreme Court.

"Schools require teachers and children to sit together. It gives the virus an opportunity to spread. We can only have this (re-opening of schools) when a large part of the population is protected," Dr VK Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, said at a press conference on Tuesday here.

"Until it (the spread of the virus) is predictable it is hard to re-open," he said.

Dr Paul also warned against re-opening schools because of the declining trend in daily new cases, saying

"The lull right now is because of restrictions. When they are removed cases may spike."

The re-opening of schools, colleges and other places of education will always be under active consideration... but the overall guidance is to be cautious," he added.

Some states like Telangana have said they will re-open schools and colleges from July 1. Others like Delhi and Kerala, have said they will continue with virtual classes for now.

"We should also remember that in many countries schools reopened then outbreaks were reported and they had to shut them down again. We don't want to put our children and teachers in that position unless we have more confidence that the pandemic won't harm us," the government has been saying in the past few days.

The government has said next month's sero survey will include 14,000 kids over the age of six.

In a recently released sero-survey by the AIIMS, the seroprevalence, presence of virus-fighting antibodies

## Covaxin shows 77.8 % efficacy in phase III trials

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin has shown 77.8 per cent efficacy in phase III trials, according to sources in the Government's panel of experts which has reviewed the phase 3 clinical trial data of the country's indigenous Covid-19 vaccine. The phase 3 data will now be reviewed by the top drug regulator, Directorate of Controller General of India (DCGI).

The data will also be reviewed by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 23 June for approval. Once approved by WHO, India will be able to export Covaxin to many developed countries like the UK and the US.

The trial was conducted on 25,800 subjects, and the data submitted to the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) showed the vaccine was "well-tolerated". Covaxin had received emergency use approval (EUA) by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) in January 2021, and has been used to vaccinate the population since. However,



the WHO is yet to give it EUA approval, restricting its export to many developed countries like the US and the UK.

"According to the data submitted, Covaxin has shown 77.8 per cent efficacy in the last stage trials conducted on 25,800 subjects. It is almost the same as the interim efficacy," a member of the SEC on the condition of anonymity said.

"The data shows the vaccine was well-tolerated."

The SEC, however, did not discuss changing the status of the vaccine from emergency use to full licensure, which means regular approval or marketing authorisation of the vaccine under normal circumstances, the sources said.

A panel of independent experts, SECI adds the DCGI on applications seeking approvals for new drugs, vaccines and clinical trials. Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech had submitted the data to DCGI over the weekend.

In March, Bharat Biotech had announced an interim efficacy of 81 per cent from the trial, where participants received vaccine or placebo in a 1:1 ratio.

The company had then said the clinical trial will continue through to final analysis, to gather more data and to further evaluate the efficacy of Covaxin. The final data is known to be more accurate and reliable.

Besides Covaxin, Covishield, developed by AstraZeneca and manufactured locally by Serum Institute of India and Russia's Sputnik V are the other two vaccines being currently used in India.

Children below 18 have not yet been cleared to receive a Covid vaccine, although Bharat Biotech has begun trials for 2-8 year old candidates with Covaxin.

## 7 who took AstraZeneca shots in Kerala develop rare neurological disorder

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Eleven persons—seven from Kerala in India and four from the UK—who received the AstraZeneca-Oxford Covid-19 vaccine, have developed a rare neurological disorder called Guillain-Barre syndrome, clinicians in India and England have reported in two separate studies.

The studies, published in the peer-reviewed medical journal *Annals of Neurology*, described an unusual variant of Guillain-Barre syndrome characterised by prominent facial weakness.

All the 11 cases were among people who had received that vaccine 10-22 days earlier. Seven cases were reported from a regional medical center in Kerala, India, where approximately 1.2 million people were vaccinated with the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine till April 22.

The cases occurred within two weeks of the first dose of vaccination. Six out of the seven patients progressed to areflexic quadriplegia and required mechanical ventilatory support," said Bobby Varma, a neurologist from the Department of Neurology, Aster Medcity, Kochi, Kerala. "The frequency of GBS was 1.4 to 10 fold higher than that expected in this period for a population of this magnitude. In addition, the fre-



## AstraZeneca: Four cases were reported from Nottingham, England, in which approximately 7 lakh people received the same vaccine

quency of bilateral facial weakness, which typically occurs in less than 20 per cent of GBS cases, suggests a pattern associated with the vaccination," he added.

Four cases were reported from Nottingham, England, in which approximately 700,000 people received the same vaccine. These were characterised by bilateral weakness with a paraesthesia variant of GBS occurring within three weeks of vaccination with the Oxford AstraZeneca SARS-CoV-2

vaccine. "This rare neurological syndrome has previously been reported in association with SARS-CoV-2 infection itself. Our cases were given either intravenous immunoglobulin, oral steroids, or no treatment," said Jonathan Rhys Evans, Department of Neurology, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust. "If the link is causal it could be due to a cross-reactive immune response to the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein and components of the peripheral immune system," wrote the authors of the report from England.

"We suggest vigilance for cases of bifacial weakness with paraesthesia variant of GBS following vaccination for SARS-CoV-2 and that post-vaccination surveillance programmes ensure robust data capture of this outcome, to assess for causality," Evans said.

## Be prepared for imminent 3rd wave: Rahul to Centre

## BJP: 'Gyani Baba' dishing out 'pearls of wisdom to PM'

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday warned the Government of an imminent third wave of the coronavirus pandemic and urged the Centre to prepare for it. But not before hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who, he charged, was busy with West Bengal polls when many died due to lack of oxygen.

"The whole country knows that a third wave will strike," Rahul said at a virtual Press conference during which he also released a "white paper" on the pandemic.

Rahul said the aim of this white paper on Covid-19 is not finger-pointing at the government but to help the nation prepare for the third wave of infection.

However, he criticised Modi for conducting election rallies for Assembly polls during the second wave of coronavirus.

"In the second wave, many died needless deaths. We couldn't provide the oxygen cylinders. Prime Minister's tears cannot wipe the tears of families who lost family members. His tears cannot save them, oxygen can. But he did not take it seriously. His focus was on Bengal," Rahul said.

He also said that the government's management of the first two waves of the pandemic was "disastrous", adding

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

"Giving a riposte to the Congress white paper on Covid-19 management, the BJP on Tuesday took a sharp jibe at Rahul Gandhi saying the 'Gyani Baba' dishing out 'pearls of wisdom' to the Prime Minister should introspect why Congress ruled States caused the second wave of coronavirus, why they did not accept vaccines and also share the actual count of deaths?"

The BJP accused the Congress of 'derailing' country's fight against the pandemic.

Union Minister and BJP leader Smriti Irani, who had defeated Rahul in Amethi in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, tweeted saying: "While Gyani Baba is dishing out pearls of wisdom to the Honourable Prime Minister, he may like to introspect on the following - Where did the second wave start? - Congress ruled states. Which states had a huge percentage of India's cases and

that his intention was to provide the government "information and insights on what went wrong".

The Congress MP sug-

gested the ramping up of health infrastructure in the country as the Government was "not ready" during the first two waves of the pandemic.

## Judge recuses himself from hearing Narada case



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Justice Indra Baneerjee's recusal from hearing West Bengal post election violence cases, another judge from the State Justice Aniruddha Bose recused himself from the politically sensitive Narada case on Tuesday.

Later, the Supreme Court's new Bench comprising Justices Vinet Saran and Dinesh Maheswari decided to hear on June 25 the appeals of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the state Law Minister Moly Ghatkhat against the June 9 order of the Calcutta High Court which had refused to take on record their affidavits on the CBI's transfer plea related to the Narada scam case.

The appeals, initially listed before a vacation bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Aniruddha Bose, were referred to another bench by Chief Justice N V Ramana during the day itself after Justice Bose recused from the hearing without citing any reason. The bench of Vinet Saran and Dinesh Maheswari, to which the cases were referred, took up the matter in the afternoon. Justice Saran said that the matters are fresh for the bench and

they needed to go through the files before the hearing.

On being pointed out that earlier the top court had requested the high court to defer the hearing till it decides the appeals, the bench said that it would pass the same order urging the high court to postpone the scheduled hearing there on June 23 and wait for two more days. The bench then enquired from Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, and Senior Advocates Rakesh Dwivedi and Vikas Singh whether they will be able to conclude the arguments on Friday. The lawyers answered in the affirmative.

Initially, the state government and the law minister had moved the top court with their appeals and later the chief minister filed her plea against the June 9 order of the high court.

On June 9, a five-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court, hearing CBI's application for transfer of the Narada sting case from the special CBI court to the high court, had said it will decide later on considering the affidavits by Banerjee and Ghatkhat on their respective roles on the day of the hearing. The bench established the IFC-IOR in 2018 in

## India, US to start air drill from today in Indian Ocean region

## ₹583 cr deal with Goa shipyard for 2 pollution control vessels

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the Indian Ocean has emerged as one of the most strategically important regions and China is flexing its maritime muscle there, the IAF will take part in an exercise with the US there for two days starting Wednesday.

Giving details here on Tuesday, IAF officials said as a strategic outreach exercise with the defence forces of friendly foreign countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), IAF and the US Navy will participate in an exercise to be carried out with Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group (CSG).

The Exercise in the area of responsibility of the Southern Air Command will see the IAF forces operate from bases under four operational commands and will include Jaguars

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

and Su-30 MKI fighter jets, AWACS, AEW&C and Air to Air Refueller aircraft. The US CSG is expected to field F-18 fighters and E-2C Hawkeye

respond to incidents of oil spills at the sea and also boost the force's pollution response mechanism. These two vessels are scheduled for delivery by November 2024 and May 2025 respectively.

The defence ministry said the "special role ships" will be indigenously designed, developed and built by GSI. The acquisition will significantly augment the capability of ICG to respond to oil spill disasters at sea, it said.

AEW&C aircraft. The exercise will be carried out south of Thiruvananthapuram, on the western seaboard, over two days.

## UK posts liaison officer at Indian Navy's Information Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Signaling the growing importance of India's maritime progress and its significance in the Indian Ocean region, the UK on Tuesday posted a liaison officer at the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre (IFC). It is the key hub of maritime security information relating to the Indian Ocean.

The positioning of the British officer at the centre comes ahead of a planned visit to India by the UK's Carrier Strike Group, led by aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, its

Gurugram to effectively keep track of the shipping traffic as well as other critical developments in the region under a collaborative framework with like-minded countries. Australia and USA have already deputised their officers to this centre.

The positioning of the British officer at the centre comes ahead of a planned visit to India by the UK's Carrier Strike Group, led by aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, its

Smith will be based full-time at the Centre, working directly with the Indian armed forces and fellow liaison officers from partner nations to enhance maritime domain awareness in the region," the British high commission said here on Tuesday.

Admiral Tony Radakin, Chief of Naval Staff of the UK, described it as a significant step towards maritime domain awareness by both India and Britain.

## No relief from scorching heat, humidity for next 7 days: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Monsoon in large parts of northwestern India would actually be delayed, quite contrary to the forecasts about its onset a fortnight earlier than its scheduled date or slightly before time. With the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Tuesday saying that further progress of the monsoon into Delhi and parts of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab is "unlikely" during the next seven days, it is clear that even the usual onset date of June 27 would not be met in the region.

It also means there would not be any relief from the scorching heat and humidity anytime soon.

India has received 37 per cent excess rainfall during the monsoon season so far. As per the IMD data, northwest India has received 71.3 mm rain, less than the normal of 40.6 mm rainfall during the period, a surplus of 76 per cent. Central India has registered 145.8 mm rainfall against the normal of 92.2 mm, an increase of 58 per cent. The southern peninsula has received 133.6 mm rainfall, which is 24 per cent more than normal, while east and northwest India witnessed 253.9 mm rainfall against the normal of 224.8 mm during the period.



On the advancement of the monsoon, the IMD said that further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi and Punjab is likely to be slow as large scale features are not favourable.

"The forecast wind pattern by the numerical models do not indicate any favourable condition for sustained rainfall over the region during the forecast period," it said.

"Southwest monsoon has so far covered most parts of the country except parts of Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana and Punjab," it said.

"The salient feature of the monsoon in 2021 is its progress to eastern, central and adjoining northwest India earlier than normal (up to 7-10 days). However, further progress over the remaining parts of the country is unlikely during the next seven days," it said.

Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre, said light rains are likely in Delhi-NCR around June 26 but the region will have to wait for monsoonal showers.

The Met office had earlier predicted that the wind system may reach Delhi by June 15, which would have been 12 days early. Normally, the mon-

soon reaches Delhi by June 27 and covers the entire country by July 8.

Last year, the wind system had reached Delhi on June 25 and covered the entire country by June 29, according to SkyMet weather private forecasting agency.

Mahesh Palawat from SkyMet weather said chances are that Delhi will get monsoonal showers only around June end.

"Westerly winds have been blocking the advance of the monsoon into the remaining parts of northwest India for some days. These are expected to persist for at least one week," he said.

# New political alliance in the offing in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A new political alliance led by the Bahujan Samaj Party and Bhagdarai Sankalp Morcha comprising Om Prakash Rajbhar-led Suheldeo Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) and AIMIM is likely to include three more small political parties.

BSP chief Mayawati and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi have held several rounds of talks and the latter is coming to Lucknow next month. The alliance is likely to be formalised and the BSP supremo is expected to make the announcement. Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh are scheduled for early next year.

Om Prakash Rajbhar had dropped hints about broadening the alliance on June 20. Rajbhar said he was trying to rope in several other parties, including TMC and Aam Aadmi Party to form an effective front to counter the BJP.

In the 2017 UP Assembly elections, the SBSP in alliance with the BJP had contested eight seats and won four. Rajbhar was made a cabinet minister but he was dismissed in May 2019 soon after the Lok Sabha elections.

The SBSP is strengthening its ground in eastern UP. Pradesh, had stiched up an alliance with the Hyderabad-based All India Majlis-e-Millat Muslim League (AIMIM) in January earlier this year.

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi had made a one-day tour to Purvanchal with Rajbhar. Owaisi visited Azamgarh and Jaunpur districts.

In UP, Owaisi has joined hands with SBSP and eight other parties, including Krishna Patel, Apana Dal, Adhikar Party and Chandrasekhar Ravan's Azad Samaj Party.

This Bhagdarai Sankalp Morcha has announced to contest the 2022 UP Assembly elections against the BJP to represent the unheard Muslim-Bahward and Dalit caste voices. The Apana Dal (Krishna Patel) is likely to quit the alliance as it is said to have cut a deal with the BJP. Its president Krishna Patel is likely to be nominated as the member of the UP Legislative Council. The Apana Dal (Sonela) led by Anupriya Patel MP, daughter of Krishna Patel, is already an ally of the BJP.

Ever since the entry of the AIMIM in Bihar elections in October last year, small caste-based political parties have been trying to get the caste arithmetic in their favour in eastern UP.

Although the Bhagdarai Sankalp Morcha and Owaisi are not the primary focus in targeting the BJP, the presence of this alliance in Azamgarh and adjoining districts will directly affect the Samajwadi Party performance in the region.

# Stalin seeks support of other CMs to oppose Centre's move to take over minor ports

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Muthuvelu Karunanidhi Stalin on Tuesday wrote to his counterparts in nine States asking their support in opposing the actions initiated by Government of India on management of minor ports hitherto managed and regulated by State Governments.

Stalin asked all coastal States and Union Territories to express their objection to the Draft Indian Ports Bill 2021, which according to him was an aggression on the powers and rights enjoyed by the States to manage the minor ports. There are nearly 200 minor ports dotting India's coast line.

In a demt-official letter dated June 21, excerpts of which were released to the media on Tuesday, Stalin told chief ministers of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Odisha and West Bengal that the Draft Indian Ports Bill 2021 "to modify the current management model of minor ports was an attempt to rob the States of their powers."

"As per the existing Indian Ports Act, 1908, the powers to plan, develop, regulate and control the minor ports vests with the State Governments concerned. However, the new draft Indian Ports Bill 2021 proposes to change this and transfer many of these powers to MSCD (Maritime State Development Council), which has so far been only an advisory body. Further to this, many



powers currently exercised by State Governments would be taken over by the Union Government," writes Stalin in his letter.

He said the move of the Central Government to bring a new Bill would have long term adverse implications on the management of minor ports, since the State Governments will not have any major role anymore, if the Bill is passed.

But experts in maritime sector describe Stalin's apprehensions as much ado about nothing. "There is no hard and fast rules that say that minor ports belong to the domain of States," said Captain Hariharan Balakrishnan, formerly of Indian Navy.

"The Centre has every right to decide how ports, both major and minor ports, should be developed. How many minor ports are being operated by State Governments. We do have minor ports but the Centre can take over them as and when it wishes," said Captain Balakrishnan.

The Constitution of India has clearly stated in Article 246 (sections 24 to 28) that Ports, Maritime Shipping and Navigation on Inland Waterways come under the jurisdiction of the Centre while Ports other than those declared by or under law made by Parliament or existing law to be major ports fall under the Concurrent List where the Centre calls the shots.

# PMO move against Bengal ex-CS cruel, heartless: TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress has strongly reacted to Centre's decision to take punitive action against former Bengal Chief Secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay for alleged insubordination (to the Prime Minister's Office) and dereliction of duty in the cyclone Yaas case.

Calling the central proceedings against Bandyopadhyay for avoiding a meeting at Kalaikunda where he was asked to brief Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the damages caused by the super cyclone senior Trinamool Congress MP Saugaro Roy on Tuesday said that "the actions taken by the Department of Personnel and Training which in all essence runs under the Prime Minister's (Narendra Modi) instruction is a proof of his cruelty and heartlessness... this order has been passed to intimidate the upright officers like Alapan Bandyopadhyay to stop them from working independently... such actions are a blow to the federal structure of the country."

"The action a 'cruel and heartless one' at a time when 'the former Chief Secretary has just lost his mother' Roy said.

Bengal Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury said that the Centre was "unnecessarily" making it an ego clash of sorts "in a bid to show who is more powerful or look I am more powerful than you"... Such childish fights should stop."

"The Centre had sent a 'memorandum' of 'charge sheet' service's Discipline Rules 1969 and the Retirement Benefits Rules 1958 — to be explained within 30 days of receipt — to the retired IAS officer.

It states 'Shri Alapan Bandyopadhyay, IAS (Retd) is informed that an inquiry will be held only in respect of the Article of Charge as is not admitted. He should, therefore, specifically admit or deny the Article of Charge'."

Bandyopadhyay known for his integrity, merit and high literary talents was pulled up by the Centre for failing to abide by the PMO directives requiring him to make a digital presentation of the damages caused by cyclone Yaas in a Prime Ministerial meeting in the last week of May — at Kalaikunda of Kharagpur.

Bandyopadhyay had gone there with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee but left along with her after she decided to leave the venue immediately after coming to know that Opposition Leader Suvedu Adhikari had too been invited to the meeting. She left the spot in a huff alleging protocol breach with Bandyopadhyay in tow.

Subsequently the Chief Secretary was transferred by the central Home Ministry to Delhi. However he chose to retire on May 31st which was he appointed the Chief Advisor of the Chief Minister.

# Om Birla urges public representatives to play active role in vax drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday urged the public representatives to play an active role in the ongoing vaccination drive. He also asked the presiding officers to sensitise the members of all democratic institutions to conduct public awareness campaigns about Covid-19 so that citizens can be protected against the pandemic. The Lok Sabha Speaker was addressing a virtual meeting of all-India presiding officers conference.

Birla asked the presiding officers to urge all members of Vidhan Sabha, Vidhan

Parishad, Panchayat, Municipality etc to make the vaccination drive a big success. 31 presiding officers of State legislatures have participated in this virtual meeting, who discussed several matters, including legislative response to tackle the menace of Covid-19.

Birla said that in the first two years of the 17th Lok Sabha, the productivity of the House has been more than 122 per cent.

He added that changes have been in rule 377 with respect to matters under Rule 377, to which the Hon'ble Members now get answers to more than 90 per cent of matters raised.

# 12,617 new cases in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Despite the lockdowns of different varieties, there has been a minor ports vests with the State Governments concerned. However, the new draft Indian Ports Bill 2021 proposes to change this and transfer many of these powers to MSCD (Maritime State Development Council), which has so far been only an advisory body. Further to this, many

As the lock down rules have been relaxed, crowds in roads and public places have come back with most of the public transport plying to capacity.

A release issued by the department of health said that during the last 24 hours, the State tested more than 1.17 lakh samples.

Out of the new cases of 12,617

diagnosed with the pandemic on Tuesday, 11,730 persons contracted Covid-19 through contacts which underscore the fact that Kerala is not a safe place for those who want to escape from the Wuhan virus, as the disease is popularly called here.

Meanwhile the Indian Medical Association and doctors under the Kerala Government Service have issued unofficial alerts about the possibility of the third wave of the pandemic, which may strike the State anytime.

# MUMBAI HOUSING SOCIETY VACCINATION FRAUD HC directs Maha to frame policy to prevent recurrence of frauds

TR RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Having taken cognizance of the Covid-19 vaccination fraud that came to light in a city cooperative housing society last week, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday directed the Maharashtra government and Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to formulate a policy to prevent recurrence of such frauds and also book the kingly behind the fraud unseated in the metropolis.

Hearing a public interest litigation filed by social activist a PIL filed by lawyer Anita Shekhar Castellino and Adv. Siddharth Chandrasekhar, a HC bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G. S. Kulkarni asked the Mumbai Police to submit the status report on its investigations into the fake vaccination racket by Thursday.

Directing the BMC to keep a track of ongoing private vaccination camps, civic housing societies in the metropolis and also ensure that senior citizens did not suffer, the HC bench observed: "There has to be a policy. Some information or communication among housing societies, civic housing societies, so that such incidents do not happen."

"What is the most unfortunate thing here is that when the whole of humanity is suffering, some people are still playing frauds of this kind... The State and the BMC must come up with a policy or guidelines on an SOS basis for private vaccination camps to avoid similar incidents in future," the HC bench said.

The HC bench told the State Government and BMC not to take such incidents lightly, and wanted to know if the fraudsters were being booked under stringent provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act, or the Disaster management Act. "See to it that the investigation is not delayed. Tell us what is the progress of the investigation."

These are serious issues. Fraudsters are playing with the lives of innocent people," three judges said.

Senior Advocate Anil Sakhare, representing the BMC, told the court that the Mumbai Police was already investigating the issue and the civic body has also initiated the necessary measures.

On his part, State's counsel Deepak Thakare told the High Court that of the five ongoing in the vaccination fraud reported from Kandivli-based Hiranandani Heritage Society, four had been arrested and an accused doctor was on the run.

The High Court directed the Mumbai police to arrest all accused persons. It will hear the case on July 24.

It may be recalled 62 hours after the office bearers of Hiranandani Heritage Residents' Welfare Association (HHRWA) lodged a complaint with them, their Kandivli police station reported the vaccination fraud. The HHRWA office bearers had alleged that the three alleged fraudsters collected 74.92 lakh from 390 residents, housingkeeping staff, security guards, drivers and other helpers on May 30 for conducting a vaccination camp.

The camp was conducted by three facilitators, including Rajesh Pandey and Sanjay Gupta, who claimed to represent leading private hospitals like the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital (KDAH) and the Nanavati Hospital. They agreed to provide 400 vaccine doses for around ₹1,260 each, for which the society paid around 74.92 lakh. However the vaccination facilitator did not provide receipts for the money taken.

On their part, the KDAH and Nanavati Hospital had distanced themselves from the questionable vaccination camp by saying that they had nothing to do with the vaccination camp conducted at Hiranandani Heritage Society.

# Supplementary chargesheet filed in TRP scam case

With addition of 7, total accused goes up to 22

TR RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a significant development, Editor-in-Chief of Republic TV was on Tuesday named as among the seven additional accused in a supplementary chargesheet filed in the much-discussed Television Rating Points (TRP) scam before a Metropolitan Magistrate's Court here.

In a 1,912-page supplementary chargesheet filed before the 37th Mumbai Metropolitan Court at Esplanade named Goswami and six other employees from Republic TV and Republic Bharat TV channels as accused for offences registered against them under Section 420 (cheating), Section 120-B (conspiracy), 406 (criminal breach of trust), 465 (forgery), 204 (destruction of evidence) and various other Sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Apart from Goswami, six others named in the supplementary chargesheet are Priya Mukherjee, Chief Operating Officer, Republic TV, Siva Subramanian, Chief Financial Officer, Republic TV, Amit Mohan Dave, Sanjay Sakshdev Varma, Shivendra Mundherkar and Ranjit Walter.

With addition of seven names in the supplementary chargesheet, the total number of accused chargesheeted in the alleged TRP scam has gone up to 22. In two charge-sheets filed earlier in the case on November 11, 2020 and January 11, 2021, the police had named 15 accused in the case.

Those charge-sheeted include the ex-CEO of Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) Partho Dasgupta and Republic TV CEO Vikash Khanandani all of whom had been booked for alleged cheating, forgery, criminal conspiracy, destroying evidence and criminal breach of trust etc.

In their three charge-sheets running into 22 accused in the TRP scam case, the police have said that the investigations in the case had revealed three kinds of tweaking of TRP data — including the panel homes where Bar-o-meters are installed by way of paying money to switch certain channels for specific time, placing of one television channel on two different frequencies by multi system Operators/Cable operators for one television channel and manipulation of television viewership data (metarule) received at BARC.

It may be recalled that on October 6, 2020, Mumbai's former police commissioner Pararam Bir Singh had said: "The investigations carried out so far have revealed that certain television channels like Republic TV, Fakt Marathi, Box Cinema etc have been indulging in such malpractices. Certain witnesses have come forward to tell us that they were induced by the arrested accused people and their accomplices for a monthly monetary consideration". Singh had said that the Republic TV was a suspect in TRP manipulation and the police had received data from the BARC.

The TRP is calculated on the basis of TV channel viewership in a confidential set of households.

# Conversion racket: NSA invoked against accused

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after the Anti-Terror Squad arrested two individuals in the alleged religious conversion, the police have now invoked the National Security Act (NSA) against the accused on the directions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Those arrested have been identified as Mufti Qazi Jahangir Alam Qasmi and Mohammad Umar Ganatam by Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar. Both accused are the residents of Jami Nagar in New Delhi.

According to reports, the properties of the accused will also be confiscated. On Tuesday, the ATS also got their police custody remain for further interrogation.

The alleged conversion racket was busted by the ATS following the registration of an FIR in the case at the ATS police station in Lucknow.

As per reports, two men of Delhi's Jami Nagar, were allegedly running an outfit involved in converting deaf and dumb students and other poor people to Islam in Uttar Pradesh with funding from Pakistan's ISI. Moreover, children and women were also lured with false promises of cash, jobs, and marriage for conversion.

# BJP MP demands disqualification of Nusrat Jahan

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

BJP MP from Badaun Dr Dhanraj Mishra has demanded the disqualification of West Bengal's TMC MP and actress Nusrat Jahan for allegedly giving a false affidavit in Parliament and hiding her marital status. Maurya handed over a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla recently.

The BJP MP demanded cancellation of Nusrat Jahan's membership in Parliament and Parliament. In the letter, said that the TMC MP's name is Nikhil Jain. Now she claims that her marriage was not valid. You lied to the public and Parliament. There should be an investigation into this matter and action be taken," Maurya said.

"When Nusrat came to take oath in the Lok Sabha, she wore vermilion on her forehead and had marriage bangles, which is a custom of a newly married woman. I think it was done to mislead the people," Maurya added.



with her affidavit where she has shown her marital status as married. Her name in the affidavit is Nusrat Jahan alias Noori Jain and her husband's name is Nikhil Jain. Now she claims that her marriage was not valid. You lied to the public and Parliament. There should be an investigation into this matter and action be taken," Maurya said.

"When Nusrat came to take oath in the Lok Sabha, she wore vermilion on her forehead and had marriage bangles, which is a custom of a newly married woman. I think it was done to mislead the people," Maurya added.

# SC stays Bombay HC verdict cancelling caste certificate of Amravati MP

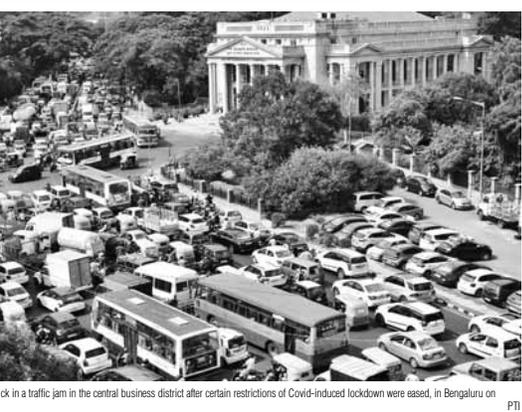
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a relief to Lok Sabha MP Navneet Kaur Rana, the Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the Bombay High Court verdict cancelling the caste certificate of the independent lawmaker representing Maharashtra's Amravati constituency, reserved for scheduled castes. The Bombay High Court had on June 9 cancelled the caste certificate of Rana, saying it was obtained fraudulently using fabricated documents, and had also imposed a fine of ₹2 lakh on her.

A vacation bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari took note of the submissions of senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the lawmaker, and issued notices to respondents including the State Government, District Caste Scrutiny Committee and Anandrao Vitthala Adul who had challenged the veracity of the caste certificate of the MP.

"Issue notice. We will have it for hearing on July 27. Meanwhile, we have stayed the judgment of the Bombay High Court. It is understood that on the next date of hearing the matter will be disposed of," the bench said. The court, which proposed to issue notice on Rana's appeal and stay the high court's judgement at the outset, took note of vehement submission of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Adul, that the verdict not be stayed without hearing him.

Rana, backed by Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), had won from Amravati constituency in 2019 by claiming to be a member of Mochi caste. The high court had held that Rana's claim of belonging to 'Mochi' caste for obtaining the SC certificate itself was fraudulent and made with the intention of obtaining various benefits available to a candidate from such category, despite knowing she does not belong to that caste.



Vehicles stuck in a traffic jam in the central business district after certain restrictions of Covid-induced lockdown were eased, in Bengaluru on Tuesday

# Close to 8L people in UP inoculated

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh created a record of sorts as close to 8 lakh people were vaccinated in 11 hours even as 255 new cases of Covid were reported on Tuesday while 397 patients recovered.

Government spokesman Shishir Singh said that till 8 pm on Tuesday, 7.63 lakh people were vaccinated and the count could reach 8 lakh.

On June 21, the State had recorded 7,29,197 vaccinations. Till now, 2,63,22,777 vaccine doses have been administered across the state. "From July 1, the Government has fixed a target to vaccinate 12 lakh people per day," the spokesman said.

At present, there are 3,910 active Covid cases in the state and 2,525 patients are in home isolation.

Today, no new cases of infection were found in 16 districts while fresh cases in single digit were reported in 55 districts. "Additional Chief Secretary. In formation, Navneet Sehgal said here on Tuesday.

# Wheat purchase in UP hits all-time high

"Lucknow: In the Rabi marketing season 2021-2022, the Uttar Pradesh Government has made the highest-ever purchase of wheat from the highest number of farmers. Wheat procurement in 2016. During the Rabi marketing season 2016-17, wheat was purchased from merely 1,66,073 farmers whereas in the 2021-22 season, over 12.88 lakh farmers benefited. MSP so far in its tenure which is 110 per cent more than the target. In comparison, during the erstwhile Akhlesh Yadav Government, the total purchase of wheat from 2012 to 2017 was just about 94.38 lakh MT, only 42 per cent of the target.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## The bulwark

An Opposition front is seemingly in the making, but its united impact on the BJP remains to be seen

It is best to think of the meeting of like-minded parties and individuals convened by Sharad Pawar and Yashwant Sinha as being exploratory. For, the invitation issued for the meeting is not clear about the real purpose of the deliberations at this juncture, who all are expected to put up a united political front to confront the BJP and the scope of the political strategy. The meeting between Pawar and political strategist Prashant Kishor preceding the invite gave rise to speculations in the entire Opposition camp. There is also ambiguity about the status of the Congress in this scheme of things because the invite did not go to the party but to three senior leaders who are part of the 'G-23' group. Prashant Kishor clarified that what they will look for is not the Third Front model. Be that as it may, the meeting comes just as the political parties gear up for the next round of Assembly elections, including in Uttar Pradesh. The second wave of Coronavirus has left most parties, in power in one State or the other, scarred by exposing their inadequacies in handling the pandemic. Both are good enough reasons for the politicians to take stock of where they stand individually and what it means to shape themselves into a united forum to challenge the BJP in 2024.



There is enough on the table even for an exploratory meeting. The regional parties are strong in their respective States, but lack national presence or relevance. Most of the leaders, save a few, do not have a national presence either. Many of them fight the Congress in regional politics. Some, like the YSRCP and the TRS, are partners with an umbilical rivalry. The true postures of these parties will become apparent in the next presidential election due next year. The national parties suffer from a shrinking area of influence even as they confront one another, like in Kerala, or are whipped by a regional force, like in West Bengal. Some of these parties are not even attending the meeting. Second, they will need to project a correct perception of their relations with the Congress. A non-Congress, anti-BJP bloc of regional parties is one thing. An anti-Congress, anti-BJP forum of regional parties is another. For, the latter, by definition, shares anti-Congressism with the BJP. The Congress, despite its dipping political fortunes, remains the fulcrum of anti-BJP politics, given that in both 2014 and 2019 it was the runner-up in upwards of 200 seats. It all depends on whether the Congress can retain Punjab and fare better in other States in the upcoming elections. The real issue, however, is coming up with an alternative to brand Narendra Modi's political narrative that has an equal resonance nationally and a post-pandemic economic agenda. What the exploratory meeting can afford not to do is wait for the law of diminishing utility to eventually kick in against the BJP.

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### PIC TALK



Devotees offer prayers on the occasion of Bada Mangal, at Badu Hanuman Ji temple near Sangam, in Prayagraj

## Fuel on fire

The Government should exercise fiscal discipline rather than exploiting oil prices to shore up revenue

While every graph of economic indicator is nose-diving, oil prices and inflation are defying gravity. This month, diesel also breached the ₹100-mark in Rajasthan. In seven States, petrol is selling for more than ₹100. This is indeed not a good sign for economy, which is reeling under severe recessionary pressures. Manufacturing is down, employment is low, and so is the purchasing power of the common man. The petrol-diesel



prices put an extra burden on him. Oil prices push the prices further up as these have a cascading effect on economy. The Government is in no mood to relent. Moreover, volatility in the international market limits its options. These two factors are responsible for putting the fuel prices on fire. The prices were hiked 43 times this year. This has indeed helped the Government collect more revenue. The excise collection during April-November 2020 was at ₹1,96,342 crore, up from ₹1,32,899 crore during the same period in 2019. The central taxes increased from ₹10.39 in May 2014 to ₹32.9 in June 2021! This explains the dynamics of oil pricing. Before Modi

Government, crude oil price constituted two-thirds of the fuel price, now taxes have taken that spot. The central and State Government taxes account for nearly 54 per cent of its cost.

The Government is justifying the high excise on petrol and diesel by saying that it needs money to spend on welfare schemes. Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan concedes that it is problematic for people, though quietly adding that the Government spent ₹35,000 crore on vaccines. So, apparently the logic is that people who drive should foot the bill. But then it is not only the cars and bikes that consume petrol and diesel. The trucks that carry freight and diesel pump sets that push water into the fields also run on diesel. That was one reason that diesel was always priced less but that consideration has been done away with. This naturally translates into higher input costs for farmers and a higher cost of farm products. However, adjusting excise and other taxes could control the fuel prices. With the Opposition struggling, there are hardly any street protests. Each time, the increased price becomes normal. The Government has done little to tighten its expenses. It has failed to avoid wasteful expenditure on projects of little value. Fiscal discipline is missing in the Government. The petrol price hike comes in handy.

# Corona's orphans: Kids of a lesser god



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

Stung by the tragedy of one or both parents succumbing to the virus, thousands of children stare at an uncertain future, if they have one

Even as the country braces for the third Corona wave which experts feel would be tougher on children, the pandemic has already taken a toll. On June 1, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) reported in the Supreme Court more than 9,300 Corona orphans in India. These include more than 1,700 children who lost both the parents. The actual figure could be many times this number as the data is yet to be collected from across the country.

Unfortunately, as of now, the Government does not have a plan in place to rehabilitate these children. Let alone a plan, it has not even identified these children yet. Many children have been orphaned due to circumstances created by the pandemic. Many people lost their lives while going back to their hometowns during the lockdown. They carried children in their arms or dragged them on wheeled suitcases. Many never reached their destinations and the children were left in the middle of nowhere. Who can forget the pictures of a toddler trying to wake up her dead mother on a railway platform? Of course, these children would not figure in the Government data of Corona orphans.

The pandemic has already killed the dreams, aspirations and hopes of the Corona orphans. Their number is in thousands, if not lakhs, after the second wave. Many people who succumbed to Corona could not even have the last word with their children. Some children are still waiting for their parents to return. They are fed on lies that their parents have 'gone to work' and will 'return with goodies'. The day they find out the truth would be shattering for them.

Often, especially in the second wave, both the parents died within a few days of each other. The child was left alone without any support system to fall back upon. Even those survived by a single parent do not have the normal childhood left for them. The person who got them toys,



played with them, attended their PTMs is gone. A bleak future and hardships await them; the innocence all set to yield at the altar of the real world.

Corona took away the children's childhood as it did their innocence. Most people at a tender age wilt under pressure. If it is a child, the chances of her/his being altered for life are high. For children, losing parents is traumatic. Parents fulfil not only the needs of a child but give him a sense of security which is important in the growing up years. Most of the behavioural traits of the children get consolidated in the first seven years. Losing parents during that time scars children, changing their worldview forever.

It is the time when we, as a nation, need to step up our efforts to take care of such children. The parents cannot be replaced but, in the least, the child can be given a sense that there is someone who cares and provides him support. It could be his relatives, adopting parents, non-governmental organisations, or the Government itself. The moot question is, what next for these children?



THE PERSON WHO GOT THEM TOYS, PLAYED WITH THEM, ATTENDED THEIR PTMS IS GONE. A BLEAK FUTURE AND HARDSHIPS AWAIT THEM; THE INNOCENCE ALL SET TO YIELD AT THE ALTAR OF THE REAL WORLD

Indeed, adoption comes up as the most natural way these children could be given a second lease of life. But there are some inherent dangers. The chances of fake adoptions are high. Child traffickers see it as an opportunity. Often, the children get adopted by traffickers and sold off. The Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) handles adoptions in the country. Strict guidelines govern the process of adoption in India. Any adoption without following this process is illegal. It puts children at high risk. Many adopted children are exploited, trafficked and abused. Moreover, the adoption rate in India is rather low. Only around 4,000 children are adopted every year; so few children would find a family that way.

An abandoned child is an easy prey for traffickers. In this situation, it becomes the responsibility of each one of us to help a child in distress. At the least, one could dial the children's helpline number (1098) and inform the authorities about the child in distress. Or, one can also contact the district Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) or inform the local police sta-

tion. The CWC decides the fate of these children — whether the child needs to go to a long-term or short-term shelter or for adoption. The Prime Minister has announced that such children will get a monthly stipend once they turn 18 through a corpus fund of ₹10 lakh under the "PM-CARES for children" scheme. But the important question is how a child, says age two, survives 16 years to take that stipend!

Foster care is another option that can be explored and encouraged. The kith and kin of the deceased can take care of the child. But then that, again, is not free of problems. Many a time, the children end up working as domestic helps; their education stopped; their rights curtailed. There must be an agency to monitor such cases. There is an urgent need to tackle this issue on priority so that these children do not fall into the wrong hands. We, as a nation, have to think out of the box to help these children of a lesser god! (The writer is a columnist and documentary film-maker. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### AN UNCHARITABLE DEED

Sir — I have only heard of insurance companies trying to find some loopholes in the claim applications and find some lame excuses to deny claims made against policies issued by them. It is shocking that the Central Government is trying to follow the tactics of such insurance companies to deny ex gratia compensation to the families of those who died of COVID-19 on the plea that this is not a one-time disaster and that such a huge payout will empty the disaster funds available with the Government.

While we have witnessed the Government deferring the expenditure of more than ₹20,000 crore for the not-so-urgent and not all necessary Central Vista project and a luxury mansion for the Prime Minister, the Government has denied compensation to the victims' families. What is the use of dumping the available funds in developing new infrastructure for mega facilities when the amount to the bereaved families that need immediate support in the absence of the breadwinner of the family?

The argument of the Government to deny COVID-19 compensation is uncharitable when it has taken decisions to give huge tax benefits to the corporates and also to write off non-performing assets in banks amounting to millions of rupees.

Tharcus S Fernando | Chennai

### BEFORE THE NEXT WAVE HITS

Sir — The strains of the third wave of Coronavirus would fall upon us during October, according to medical experts. So it is the foremost duty of the State and the Centre to be prepared to combat it from all directions. Further, people should strictly follow guidelines, protocols and advisories issued by the authorities concerned. It is also suggested that stress should be on the production of vaccines, medicines and other healthcare facilities. Hopefully, this third wave may be outcast from the country without putting any deleterious impact on the health of people.

If the Government takes their advice and opens up schools, then what will hap-

## Blue Dot Network versus Chinese BRI



The G7 Summit held recently in the wake of the COVID-induced crisis will be remembered for certain — 'Build Back Better World' plan of the US-backed 'Blue Dot Network' to support middle and lower income countries in high-quality infrastructure. What is surprising is that it took several years to visualise and conceptualise a network akin to the Chinese model. In its quest to contain the overgrowing influence of Belt and Road in the world panorama.

Krishnan Subramaniam | Kozhikode

at the 35th Asian Summit in Bangkok and proposed in the recent G7 Summit under the auspices of the OECD, can serve as a counterweight to the Chinese BRI unveiled in 2013.

As China has acquired the dubious distinction for unsustainable debt creation in participating countries, this network can serve as a balancing act to curb the hegemonic designs of China. The BDN's objective is to assist smaller countries in developing quality infrastructure, to promote open and transparent investments, which was found wanting in the latter, as they did not adhere to international certification standards. Moreover, the BRI in the guise of economic and infrastructural development has put several participating countries of Asia and Africa in a debt trap. Sri Lanka and Pakistan are glaring examples of this. The BRI's intention to develop deep sea ports in the Indo-Pacific region is also ambiguous. Australia pulled out of BRI in April 2021 on grounds of violation of territorial integrity. As one of the ardent critics of BRI, India must play a significant role in shaping a global discourse in order to counter China.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

Handing over the unit on lease will not only enable commencement of production quickly and ramp up the vaccination drive for all age groups in the State, but also will help cater to the needs of other States. Meanwhile, it pains one to read media reports that this state-of-the-art unit, which is built in a sprawling area of 100 acres and which reportedly has a capacity to produce one billion doses of any vaccine annually, has been lying idle for years due to issues like shortage of staff, pending wages, and suchlike issues. At a time when people are scurrying for jobs, it is grossly unfair for a big vaccine-producing unit owned by the Central Government to have been quiet for long.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

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

## SOUND BITE

If (the Government) failed to learn from the lessons and response models of other countries which had been hit by the pandemic.

Congress leader — Rahul Gandhi

Easing measures at the border will happen as we see our communities increasingly become safe.

Canadian Health Minister — Patty Hajdu

Affected. Join the fight back. Now loading: Antibodies...

Actor — Kartik Aaryan

I am humbled to have this opportunity of representing India at the Olympics for the third time, this time as team captain.

Hockey midfielder — Manpreet Singh

Way to go Team AP. More power to you. Congrats to YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for his inspiring leadership.

Actor — Chiranjeev



## FIRST COLUMN

### NEED FOR HOLISTIC EDUCATION POLICY

An important position should be given to education, and particularly inclusion, in the scheme of things



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Gender disparity and non-inclusivity is a major hindrance in India's pursuit to achieve the 4th Sustainable Development Goal of ensuring quality education for all. India lags behind China and other BRIC nations in terms of inclusivity and participation in education. China in particular has near universal levels of enrolment in lower secondary and a majority completing upper secondary in most parts of the country. India has a smaller proportion of its population enrolled at secondary levels than Brazil, Russia, and China. The only region of the world with lower participation at secondary school level than India is sub-Saharan Africa. India witnesses a huge gender disparity and access to education in India remains widely problematic, with great variations between and within states, and large differences in participation between identifiable sub-populations like Scheduled Castes and Tribes, girls, and some Muslim communities. Nationally, there is a high initial enrolment rate in the first grade. However, about 30 per cent of them fail to complete Grade V (primary), about 50 per cent drop out before completing Grade VIII (upper primary), and 60 per cent do not finish Grade X (lower secondary). This is prevalent in northern India, particularly in the BIMARU states. Gender plays an important role in education in India. According to



the Census of India 2011, only 26 per cent of girls completed secondary education as compared to 50 per cent of boys. The Annual Status of Education Report (Rural), 2019 also found that preference is given to the education of sons in comparison to daughters, by enrolling the former in private schools, which are considered better than government schools in imparting education.

In India, both direct and indirect costs of schooling are high and the lower household incomes of the majority of the population makes participation in secondary schooling a big challenge. Household surveys show the poorest allocate less than five per cent of expenditure to education. Unsubsidised secondary schooling is not available to most rural households and is considered a prerogative only for rich urban households. The present globalised world and integrated economies have brought to the fore the core importance of education. It plays a crucial role in empowering individuals and pave way for transformation of the society at large. Education has a major role in making the youth improve their social standing by alleviating their poverty-hidden condition. One of the main measures of human development is access to education, and as the Human Development Report 2012 mentions, the growth in index is associated with growth in public spending on education. Therefore, a fundamentally important position should be accorded to education, and particularly inclusion, in the entire scheme of things. The importance of quality education and the urgent need of equality in education should be ingrained in the policy. As education is imperative for empowering people, equality and inclusivity have to be crucial for any education policy to facilitate and drive widespread social transformation in the society. The government should create a framework based on equality of condition, which has five dimensions of 1) resources; 2) respect and recognition; 3) love, care and solidarity; 4) power; and 5) working and learning. With equality of condition as a base, gender equality framework can be extended by adding the aspect of inclusion, which, in addition to parity, equity and equality, can become the pillars for achieving quality education for all. It is proposed that these four elements of the gender equality framework have to be guided by another framework — strategy, practices, resources and governance - to develop a holistic and integrated education policy.

(The writer is Associate Professor at Anitya University, Noida. The views expressed are personal.)

# Big Tech vs Governments: The road ahead

## A few unaccountable and unelected corporations having the power to silence or amplify an opinion and directing a country's political discourse doesn't bode well



ANIL K ANTONY

Great corporations exist only because they are created and safeguarded by our institutions, and it is, therefore, our right and duty to see that they work in harmony with these institutions." These were the words of the 26th US President Theodore Roosevelt during his 1901 State of the Union address. There is a widespread conviction in the minds of the American people that the great corporations known as trusts are in certain of their features and tendencies hurtful to the general welfare," he wrote before he used the Sherman Antitrust Act to break up monopolies including the largest railroad conglomerate, J.P. Morgan's Northern Securities, and the largest oil company, Rockefeller's Standard Oil.

The US since then has used updated antitrust legislatures to clip the wings of giants including AT&T and Microsoft which were deemed powerful enough to stifle free-market competitiveness. The extent of influence of Big Tech companies that drive today's internet-technology-driven world is much more profound.

None of us can imagine a life where we do not use one of their products. They have aided in the creation of a hyper connected planet where any individual with technical know-how, irrespective of other differences, can access the internet and find myriad avenues for acquiring knowledge, forming communities, create or get access to digital products and services, and be a part of a global digital economy. They act as instruments of economic and social mobility for billions.

Their valuations also unsurprisingly increased with their rapid expansion. Currently, eight of the world's largest ten companies based on their market capitalisation are from this industry. They exceed the GDP of most nations. Some of their balance sheets have surplus cash greater than the reserves of most countries. Apple, for instance, has a valuation exceeding \$2 trillion, and cash reserves of nearly \$200 billion.

The growth of this sector has been immune even to the Covid-19 pandemic that wrecked economies as people's reliance on digital tools increased during lockdowns. This sector's growing prominence has also led to some of the great maladies of our time, including never-seen-before inequalities, and democratic recession. Integration of Artificial Intelligence, and Automation into Big Tech products has cut down the need for new jobs, leading to jobless growth. The same platforms that disrupted mass communication have ironically been used by governments with authoritarian tendencies to further extend state control. They have also aided in the rise of many demagogues to power across the world.

As these tech titans continue their market conquests, run-ins with governments have become commonplace. The past year saw fronts opening across continents between these companies and various governments. Antitrust lawsuits are the biggest battlegrounds. Major Big Tech firms including Google, Amazon, Apple, Alibaba, Facebook, and Flipkart are facing multiple investigations across the United States, European Union, China, and India.

This is mainly because the Big Tech firms have evolved into the gatekeepers of the Internet. They have user bases in hundreds of millions. Customers and enterprises cannot access many markets without going through their tech infrastructure. These companies set up large barriers of entry, or promote unfair business practices that charge



OUR DIGITAL ECONOMY IS DRIVEN BY DATA AND ALL THE BIG TECH FIRMS DERIVE TREMENDOUS VALUE FROM THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THEIR MYRIAD USERS. WE SHOULD SEE MORE COUNTRIES MAKE LAWS THAT WOULD MANDATE THE BIG TECH FIRMS TO SHARE SOME OF THE WEALTH CREATED WITH THE MAIN CONTRIBUTORS, INCLUDING PUBLISHERS

(The writer is a tech entrepreneur, public policy commentator, and works on the Congress party's digital initiatives. The views expressed are personal.)



excessive platform fees, limit competition, and kill smaller businesses.

Very recently, five bills have been moved with bipartisan support in the US House of Representatives meant to prevent big tech firms from favouring their products and services through their platform over their competitors. These proposed laws could separate their primary platform from their other line of businesses. Interestingly, US President Joe Biden has named Lina Khan, a very vocal Big Tech critic, as the country's top regulator.

The EU has proposed a sweeping set of legislation through the Digital Markets Act (DMA) that has clauses to fine an offender up to 10 per cent of their annual global revenue for anti-competitive behaviour. Provisions are included to break up repeat offenders. Aspirants are vying to be modern-day Teddy Roosevelts on both sides of the Atlantic.

India in 2018 itself had banned e-commerce companies from selling products they have an equity interest in through their platforms. The latest CCI probes are based on allegations of them circumventing these laws through circuitous business structures.

Google and Facebook, meanwhile, locked horns with the Australian Government over a new law that requires these tech companies to pay news companies for any original content they share on their platforms. After an altercation that resulted in a week-long blockade of the country's news links on Facebook, local news publishers started receiving payments. These developments will have conse-

quential effects.

Our digital economy is driven by data and all the Big Tech firms derive tremendous value from the data collected from their myriad users. We should see more countries make laws that would mandate the Big Tech firms to share some of the wealth created with the main contributors including publishers. Upcoming technologies like Blockchain would enable micro-payments to be made to every person contributing value in cyberspace. Big Tech's unassailable influence was highlighted during the months following the 2020 US Presidential elections when Donald Trump and some of his most vocal supporters were locked out of all social media platforms in a united effort by Big Tech. What can happen to the all-powerful President of the United States could happen to anyone. Angela Merkel of Germany called Trump's boss problematic.

The prospect of a few unaccountable and unelected corporations having the power to silence or amplify any voice or opinion based on their predictions and thereby directing a country's political discourse does not bode well for any democracy. Since then, Uganda banned Twitter before their Presidential elections, and Nigeria banned Twitter after the social media platform deleted a tweet of their President.

Twitter and the Indian Government are at loggerheads over its intermediary status. Tech platforms have created internal systems for flagging and deleting questionable content posted on their platforms. However, there are repeated altercations with

authorities. India could again take a leaf out of the EU, which through its newly proposed Digital Services Act (DSA) makes it mandatory for all platforms to reveal to regulators currently opaque areas of tech platform functioning including possible dissections of their proprietary algorithms, and requires clear-cut mechanisms on filtering or removing content. Penalties up to six per cent of the company's turnover, and even suspension of service await non-complying offenders.

The tech sector, whose role and impact would only increase with time, requires broad, standardized, holistic regulations including well-defined penalties. Policy ambiguity would only create avenues of Government overreach. Regulatory bodies and tax authorities could arbitrarily open probes based on individual whims and fancies.

India's ruling party and the Union Government have many a time been accused of using these very same platforms for spreading false narratives, and for the propagation of underhanded political practices. Our Parliamentary Committee of IT should take the initiative in creating watchdog institutions under their purview, comprised of domain experts, with independence and authority to check Government excesses in tech policy.

Institutions and regulations thus formed are essential to ensure that our markets and political processes are free and open, and our digital landscape remains safe places for open discourses, without being subjected to digital colonization.

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT

90 PER CENT OF PEOPLE WHO DIED... BIGGEST REASON WAS LACK OF OXYGEN. THE PM'S TEARS CAN'T WIPE FAMILIES' TEARS... — CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



WHENEVER WE ARE AT A CROSSROADS IN OUR FIGHT, RAHUL GANDHI AND THE CONGRESS HAVE TRIED TO DERAIL EFFORTS BY PLAYING POLITICS. — BJP NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON SAMBIT PATRA



# Sasikala planning a return to Tamil Nadu politics?

Age and circumstances are against her but she will not throw in the towel easily and will weigh her options to see how she can stage a comeback

Will V.K.Sasikala, a one-time close confidante of late Tamil Nadu chief minister J. Jayalithaa, make a comeback? It is a question mark as politics is changing fast in the state. Chinnamma, as she was known, has had her ups and downs in the past four decades. She enjoyed power as Jayalithaa's shadow but she never did understand that she was only the shadow, not Jayalithaa. She took over the party and nearly became Jaya's successor in 2017 but the BJP spoiled her plans and she instead went to Parappana Agrahara jail in Karnataka for four years.



KALYANI SHANKAR

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

before going to the Bengaluru jail and thumped the memorial platform thrice with her palm vowing to avenge her enemies. Now, after her release and a month after the AIADMK lost power in the Tamil Nadu polls, she is all set to return to active politics. In a recent alleged, phone conversation with one of the party cadres, Sasikala confirms her plans to take the political plunge.

She has been sending confusing signals about her future. Significantly, 2021 is not 2017. Much has changed in the past four years. Her two hand-picked leaders - former chief ministers O.Panneerselvam (OPS) and E.Palaniswamy (EPS) - have captured the party and they do not want



her to return. Sasikala had been involved in separate power tussles with both leaders earlier. The intensifying feud between EPS and OPS even after the electoral defeat and Sasikala's come-back plans are threatening to break the party again. EPS piped OPS to the post of the leader of

opposition after a literal show of strength; the former had more legislators backing him. Sasikala, on the other hand, sees an opportunity in the two leaders' tussle to avenge her setbacks.

Though she cannot contest until 2027, there is no legal ban to head a party. It is a mystery why Sasikala announced her retirement from politics in March and why she wants to come back now. The timing she has chosen is also significant because the AIADMK is still struggling to come to terms with the loss of power. The cadres, especially EPS backers, are opposed to her emerging as a power centre-opinion. EPS is one of the big hurdles for her return to the party again. EPS piped OPS to the post of the leader of

senses a threat to his position in the party. The 'leaked' audio clip of an alleged conversation between Sasikala and one of her supporters has gone viral, creating a flutter about her imminent return. In the clip she is heard saying, "we will surely streamline the party... certainly, I will come". And this as well: "You don't worry at all. Sure, I will resolve all the problems in the party. I will come. I will definitely be troubled by a case involving the purchase of properties with demonetized currency. With a Union Government and the State Government hostile to her she is skating on thin ice. Fourthly, according to insiders, Sasikala is in no

weigh her options to see how she can stage a comeback. The second hurdle is her own corrupt image. Her first effort to float an outfit AMMK through her nephew, TTV Dhinakaran, flopped in the recent assembly polls even though he initially won the R.K.Nagar assembly by-poll in the party... certainly, I will come". And this as well: "You don't worry at all. Sure, I will resolve all the problems in the party. I will come. I will definitely be troubled by a case involving the purchase of properties with demonetized currency. With a Union Government and the State Government hostile to her she is skating on thin ice. Fourthly, according to insiders, Sasikala is in no

hurry as her target is the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. She wants to get back into the BJP's good books by that time and establish herself and her nephew as players by using her money power. She wants to do this either by dividing the AIADMK from within or by her nephew's AMMK. Being the backdrop player and Jayalithaa's shadow in Tamil Nadu politics since the 1980s, Sasikala knows the ins and outs of Dravidian politics. She and her family were called the 'Mannargudi mafia' in Jaya's time. Chinnamma's future hangs in balance for now. It depends on many factors. Where one week is long in politics, another three years is too long.



Sitharaman meets Infosys officials

REVIEWS TECH GLITCHES ON NEW I-T E-FILING PORTAL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday reviewed with Infosys officials the technical glitches that continue to mar the new income tax e-filing portal.



Sitharaman on Tuesday reviewed with Infosys officials the technical glitches that continue to mar the new income tax e-filing portal.

Sitharaman, along with Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur, Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj, CBDT Chairman Jagannath Mohapatra and other senior ministry officials, went point by point on the issues facing the new portal with officials of Infosys - the vendor which developed the site.

While there was no official word on what transpired at the meeting, a statement issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)

said "the technical glitches shall be addressed fast".

ICAI representatives attended the meeting on Tuesday.

The portal launched on June 7 continued to face glitches, including longer logging in time, inability to generate OTP for Aadhaar validation, non-availability of ITRs for past years.

submitted written inputs highlighting the issues facing the portal as well as areas that need to be fixed.

The stakeholders have also highlighted weak user interface, inability to view old demand, grievances and intimation orders as the issues that need to be fixed. The ICAI in a statement issued after the meeting said that it has been asked to provide its continuous support and inputs to CBDT and Infosys, in resolving the issues, as early as possible.

"The Income Tax Department said the new portal was aimed at making compliance more taxpayer-friendly, however the technical glitches shall be addressed fast, for convenience of all," the ICAI statement

Sensex ends flat, retreats from 53,000-mark on profit-booking

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex ended on a flat note after scaling the 53,000-mark on Tuesday as investors booked profits at higher levels.

A depreciating trend in the rupee also weighed on sentiment, traders said.

After touching a lifetime intra-day peak of 53,057.11, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 14.25 points or 0.03 per cent higher at 52,588.71, marking its third straight session of gains.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 26.25 points or 0.17 per cent to close at 15,772.75.

Maruti Suzuki, which was the biggest gainer in Monday's session, topped the Sensex gainers' chart on Tuesday with a jump of 5.25 per cent.

L&T, UltraTech Cement, TCS, Titan, Tata Steel and Bajaj Auto were among the top gainers, advancing up to 2.20 per cent. On the other hand, Asian

Rupee slumps for second day

Mumbai: The Indian rupee depreciated 27 paise to close at 74.37 against the US dollar on Tuesday in its second straight day of losses following a stronger dollar overseas and elevated crude oil prices. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened weak at 74.18 against the American currency, lost further ground and finally closed at 74.37, showing a fall of 27 paise over its previous close.

Gold gains marginally to ₹46,213; silver declines ₹66,389

New Delhi: Gold in the national capital on Tuesday gained ₹45 to ₹46,213 per 10 gm, according to HFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at ₹46,168 per 10 gm. Silver declined marginally by ₹6 to ₹66,389 per kilogram from ₹66,475 per kilogram in the previous trade.

hectic activity in stocks pertaining to the 'unlock theme', said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Nearing Month 53K, however, witnessed profit-taking across the board in afternoon trade, he noted.

India's crude output slips 6.3% in May, gas production jumps

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's crude oil output fell 6.3 per cent in May after staged nearly a tenth less due to cyclone 'Tauktae', government data showed on Tuesday.

Crude oil production at 2.43 million tonne in May was 6.32 per cent lower than 2.6 million tonne output in the same month last year, according to the latest data released by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), the

nation's biggest producer, reported a massive 9.63 per cent drop in output at 1.5 million tonne "due to conditions created by cyclone 'Tauktae'", it said. Severe cyclone 'Tauktae' slammed the western coast last month disrupting economic activity. ONGC's main oil and gas producing fields in western offshore ONGC also produced over 9 per cent less natural gas but ramping up of output from the KG-D6 block of Reliance Industries Ltd and BP helped lift overall production.

Several stakeholders have reported a massive 9.63 per cent drop in output at 1.5 million tonne "due to conditions created by cyclone 'Tauktae'", it said. Severe cyclone 'Tauktae' slammed the western coast last month disrupting economic activity. ONGC's main oil and gas producing fields in western offshore ONGC also produced over 9 per cent less natural gas but ramping up of output from the KG-D6 block of Reliance Industries Ltd and BP helped lift overall production.

Average return of small cap funds in last 1 year stands around 100%

IANIS ■ MUMBAI

A small cap and midcap fund underperformance amid the pandemic, an ICICI Securities report has said that the category average return of small cap funds have been around 100 per cent in the past one year.

Small cap funds and midcap funds continue to outperform since last one year with category average return of small cap funds at around 100 per cent in the last one year," it said. Further, the credit risk funds and medium-term funds are outperforming as a stable

Special e-auction of Assam tea generates good response

Guwahati: The first International Tea Day special auction by auctioneers limited, a leading e-commerce platform, fetched record prices at the Jorhat tea e-marketplace on Monday.

More than 93 per cent of the total teas on offer were sold, with buyers logging in from Assam, West Bengal, Delhi, Gujarat and Rajasthan, auction closed here on Tuesday.

Fuel price hiked again

New Delhi: Fuel prices increased again across the country on Tuesday adding more misery for the common man already grappling with rising food prices amid shrinking income.

With the rise, petrol prices have reached very close to hitting the century mark all across the country extending the scope of historic high prices that had already made the fuel rates cross the ₹100 per litre mark in certain cities and towns of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh.

BRIEFS

EU INVESTIGATES GOOGLE'S CONDUCT IN DIGITAL AD TECH SECTOR

London: European Union regulators have launched a fresh antitrust investigation of Google, this time over whether the US tech giant is stifling competition in digital advertising technology. The European Commission said Tuesday that it has opened a formal investigation into whether Google violated the bloc's competition rules by favouring its own online display advertising technology services at the expense of rival publishers, advertisers and advertising technology services.

HARSH VARDHAN UNVEILS 'MY JOYS AND SORROWS - AS A MOTHER OF A SPECIAL CHILD'

New Delhi: Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Dr Harshwardhan launched "My Joys and Sorrows - as a Mother of a Special Child", a book written by the minister's daughter Krishna Sakshana, on Sunday. The Minister said the book is an epitome of the bravery and endurance of a mother, in the best tradition of Indian motherhood. The writer, a teacher by vocation, emotionally said that at this juncture of her life she is very much satisfied with the way she has been able to nurture her son Shiv.

INDIA, FIJI SIGN MOU FOR COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

New Delhi: India and Fiji on Tuesday signed an agreement for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors. Union Minister for Agriculture Narendra Singh Tomar and Fiji's Minister of Agriculture, Waters and Environment Mahendra Prasad Singh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors between India and Fiji. The MoU was signed in a virtual meeting, an official statement said. The MoU will remain valid for a period of five years. Speaking at the event, Tomar said India has helped all the countries during the Covid pandemic including leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The village minister has focused on agriculture and the development of villages from the very beginning, he added.

IRDAI allows home treatment as add-on cover in health insurance

IANIS ■ CHENNAI

The Indian insurance regulator IRDAI has allowed non-life insurers to offer 'homecare/domiciliary treatment' or treatment at home as an add-on cover afresh or to their existing policies.

In a circular to all non-life insurers including standalone health insurers, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has said companies have to file

their products with it, if home treatment is offered as an add-on cover. According to IRDAI, homecare treatment is one taken at home for an ailment that normally needs hospitalisation provided that a medical practitioner advises the insured home treatment; there is a continuous active line of treatment with the health status of the insured monitored daily by a medical practitioner during the duration of home treatment.

NOTICE OF LOSS OF SHARE CERTIFICATES. Notice is hereby given that the following Share Certificates have been reported to be lost/misplaced and the registered holder/damant therefore has requested the company for issuance of Duplicate share certificates in lieu of lost Shares.

Table with 5 columns: S. No., Name / Jt. Name(s), Folio No., Shares Certificate No. From, To, No. of Shares.

For CHAMBAL Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited. Place: New Delhi. Date: 23.06.2021.

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION, BULDANA. Tender notice for construction of various roads and bridges. Includes details of work items, tender cost, and contact information.

RATHI BARS LIMITED. Registered Office: 2477, Main Compound Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi-110044.

DMF Finance Private Limited. CIN - U69990DL2008PTC182749. Express Building, 3rd Floor, 9-10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002.

STATEMENT OF ANNUAL AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2021. Table with 3 columns: Particulars, Audited Current year ending March 31, 2021, Audited Previous year ending March 31, 2020.

DMF Finance Private Limited. Notes to the Financial Results. 1) Pursuant to Clause 52 of Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the Audited financial results for the year ended March 31, 2021 have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on June 21, 2021.

DHFL National Office: HDCL, Towers, B-Wing, 6th Floor, Anant Kanwar Marg, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400051.

DEMAND NOTICE. Under Section 132(1) of the Securities Act and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 211 of the Securities (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the undersigned the Authorized Officer of DHFL has issued Demand Notice under Section 132(1) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) to repay the amounts mentioned in the Demand Notice.

Table with 4 columns: Name of the Borrower(s), Demand Notice date and amount, Description of secured asset, and Remarks.



# IN CORPORATE STYLE

The future of corporate e-learning holds potential in reshaping the landscape for the learning and development department, says SAMEER NIGAM

The growing relevance of the digital world has pushed modern corporations to stay ahead of the curve. From learning needs and habits to learning behaviour. Modern corporates are incorporating huge changes at their workplaces. But the onset of the pandemic made it necessary more than ever. Corporations have had to pivot to work-from-home models almost overnight and become more receptive to the uncalculated change to brave through the pandemic and its aftermaths. Especially in these uncertain times, it became imperative to invest in upskilling of the workforce and leveraging technology-aided e-learning solutions to get things done.

As corporates enabled e-learning during this pandemic, employees became more adaptive to learning curves. Learning and development were accessed efficiently, and still, effectively maintained productivity while

supporting social and physical distancing. With e-learning, the knowledge gap between conventional employees and modern workers blurred out and witnessed the beginning of a new decade of ample opportunities, but the latest technology, and further innovations.

The future of corporate e-learning holds immense potential in reshaping the landscape for the learning and development department. So, what does the new normal corporate learning look like? Here are some e-learning tools that are going to make the future bright.

**Video-based learning:** Learnings based on video is seen as a more interactive experience in the training process as they are faster and efficient in understanding the learning. The increasing use of social media and mobile learning has also captivated the need for video-based learning tools. This builds connections and community

that can increase productivity even when working apart.

**Micro-learning:** The adoption of micro-learning is growing slowly. Organisations are incorporating shorter video formats for learning as more social, mobile, interactive, and user-friendly learning is demanded. The tool makes it easier to create quick, accessible training for employees right when they need it the most and encourage them to apply the learning immediately.

**mLearning or Mobile-based learning:** Unlike conventional training methods, mLearning provides numerous benefits such as flexibility, scheduling, access to more content, etc. Also, it offers an enhanced experience to the learner including chat features, and audio/videos, the option to record information, better assessments, etc. Many organisations are already unleashing their potential as the mobile learning industry is expected to

grow 10X in the coming times.

**AR and VR-based learning:** Building real-world opportunities; AR and VR-based learning are considered as the future of corporate eLearning. Working from home posing difficulties in providing on-the-job training, VR and Augmented Reality (AR) tools are deploying complex environments and cases to the employees to ascertain their real-life reactions and learning's based on it.

**Game-based learning:** With more and more organisations working towards building an immersive learning experience for their employees, game-based learning tools are assisting them in combining businesses and training in an immersive way. As an alternative to the traditional tool of learning, this tool increases engagement and motivation amongst employees while also throwing real-world problems through game designs.

**AI based learning:** These futuristic learning tools are a great indicator for employee performance analysis. AI is assisting the modern workplaces to identify skills they want to apply at work. AI and learning automation are helping corporates in delivering performance-driven and ROI-inclined solutions and also enabling them to upskill the workforce.

Undoubtedly, the above-discussed sought-after e-learning tools are going to reinvent the whole process of corporate e-learning while also making it relevant for the new-age workforce. Digital learnings are here to stay and the use of e-learning tools and advanced technology will enable corporates to maintain a productive and healthy workforce. Going forward, corporate learning will be more about bringing learning to the learners than learners to the learning.

The writer is CEO & Co-founder, Stratibeans

THE INCREASING USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE LEARNING HAS CAPTIVATED THE NEED FOR VIDEO-BASED LEARNING TOOLS. THIS BUILDS CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNITY THAT CAN INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY EVEN WHEN WORKING APART

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
The man who reads nothing at all is better educated than the man who reads nothing but newspapers.  
— Thomas Jefferson

## 9th E-commerce Day

**PHS ■ NEW DELHI**

Following its tradition to create a highly anticipated and exclusive entrepreneurial opportunity for the budding entrepreneurs and e-commerce enthusiasts, Droom hosted its ninth edition of its annual E-commerce Day on June 21, 2021.

The event saw active participation of over 600 attendees from renowned business schools, technical institutes, budding entrepreneurs and e-commerce buffs. The event consisted of numerous sessions, which allowed the attendees to directly interact with Droom's Founder & CEO, Sandeep Aggarwal and other dynamic leadership members of the company.

Students from reputed universities/colleges such as IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Kozhikode, IIM Indore, IIM Kashipur and many others, participated in the event and learned the nuances of entrepreneurship and the e-commerce industry through multiple fascinating sessions.

It was a highly interactive event, filled with pep talks and brainstorming sessions, showcasing Droom's unicorn journey highlights. Furthermore, through experience sharing sessions, Aggarwal and Droom's leadership shared challenges and potential solutions of their professional journey and advised the young entrepreneurs to build on their ideas & passion. At the event, Aggarwal continuously emphasised the role of new-age technologies and transformation brought by digital and modernistic approach in all industries and domains.

In his keynote address, Aggarwal said, "Our annual meet-up of e-commerce day event is planned to ensure that the youth are armed to take on any hurdle that comes their way and make the most of this growing industry. We feel that these budding entrepreneurs will be making history in the entrepreneurship and economic growth segment of the country, and we plan to back them in all possible aspects".

## Yoga Day celebration

The seventh International Yoga Day was observed by KIIT Group of Institutions & KISS on June 21, 2021 online. The theme of the International Yoga Day for this year was "Yoga for Fitness". On this occasion, Dr Gaganendra Dash, Director Sports, KIIT & KISS, delivered the introduction speech and read out the message of the founder which said: "Yoga is the ancient custom of India and it is India's best gift to the global community. It is often seen that more people are being attracted towards yoga around the world nowadays. While it brings wonders to our body, during the pandemic, yoga is creating miracles to mitigate mental stress of the people".

Among others, Prof Hrushikesh Mohanty, VC of KIIT DU; Prof Sasmata Samanta, Pro VC; Prof Jyana Ranjan Mohanty, Registrar, KIIT DU; and Dr Prasanta Kumar Routray, CEO of KISS laid focus on the advantages of various aspects of some foremost yoga asanas.

Some staff members of KIIT and KISS practiced various postures of yoga under the guidance of the Yoga Coach of KIIT & KISS.



## Find your way forward

There is now a possibility that more students may meet the eligibility criteria set by foreign universities, since these will not be contingent on Board results anymore, says ADARSH KHANDELWAL

The Board exams have now been replaced by "well-defined objective criteria", according to the Government's notification on the same. The CBSE Board will follow a 30:30:40 criteria, with 30 per cent of weightage given to the Class X Board exam results, 30 per cent to Class XI final results, and 40 per cent to the Class XII Pre-Board or internal assignment results (flexibility for which has been given to schools). The results are to be announced before July 31.

What does this mean for students applying abroad?

With around 14 lakh students who would take Class XII CBSE Boards, of which a significant portion will apply abroad, there is now the possibility that even more students may meet the eligibility criteria set by foreign universities, as these will not be contingent on Board results anymore.

January 2021 has already seen over 10.9 lakh Indian students enrolled in universities abroad — a number that was expected to rise this year with students who had deferred their 2020 admissions or were awaiting a relaxation in pandemic restrictions around the world. As the scope of the marking criteria has been increased, there is a slight chance that universities might introduce a foundation course or prerequisite programme that applicants would need to complete before they can be offered admission. The latest ruling may also not do justice to the students who are already applying for external exams and courses, having thought that these may be preferred in place of a variable predictive score. For future test takers and aspirants, it also reiterates the importance of academic consistency and continuous assessment throughout the school year, not merely during Boards.

What will be the impact of this possibility on country-specific applications?

**UK, Ireland, Australia:** The term commencement dates for universities in the UK and Ireland are usually in September-October, with many institutions requiring academic transcripts and final scores before they can make an admission offer. Now that there is a confirmed marking process and date for the release of results, students can breathe a sigh of relief about their application timeline.

The only challenge we can see here is if universities rescind their conditional offers due to the updated grades the student has received. Many students bank on the Board finals to showcase their academic strength while not preparing as intensively for their internal assessments or Class X/XI exams. The new predictive score may not reflect their academic potential accurately and may not meet university cut-offs. While the CBSE Board has stated that those who are unsatisfied with their new marking scheme can take the Board exams later when the pandemic regulations ease, this is not feasible for international applicants who are already operating on a tight timeline.

**US & Canada:** As universities in these regions accept students with unconditional offers from the get go, there

# For a beautiful future

NAINA RUHAIL lists trends that will play a vital role in shaping one's future in the beauty industry

In recent times, the beauty industry has seen a significant shift with everyone making eco-conscious choices. It is the era of 'end of more' and getting back to basics. No longer one cares for beauty for the sake of beauty, now it's beauty for the sake of you. With most of us stuck at home during these unprecedented times, it's important more than ever to spend time pampering your skin, consciously. From DIY masks, tonics, and a better understanding of what works best with the increased awareness, it will be the dawn of clean beauty as an answer to the future of the ever-growing beauty industry. If you want to succeed in the beauty industry take a look at the prospects of the beauty arena and understand it better to get ahead.

**Consumer choices to anticipate in the beauty industry**

The consumer today is making conscious choices towards eco-friendly, sustainable, toxin, and cruelty-free products. This new guilt-free beauty norm is all about organic and natural ingredients to leave skin healthy and hair lustrous. Clean signifies beauty products that are free from synthetic ingredients and harness the goodness of nature. On the other hand, all the ingredients are sustainably sourced to unburden the natural resources while incorporating recycling practices to be eco-friendly.



Knowing what the consumers demand will help you understand their needs and tweak your products according to their preference, ensuring a long-lasting relationship.

Here are the top trends that you need to know that will play a vital role in shaping the beauty landscape. If you inculcate these within your profession, you will surely be successful in building your brand and building trust with your consumers.

**Building trust within the community**

Nothing grows the community stronger than a common interest. An authentic, personal review helps build trust and interest that will effectively boom the industry as well as an increase in the consumer base. This aspect will definitely play a vital role in the near future.

**Be part of inclusive beauty standards**

A beauty consumer always often looks for cues from the closest to them, appropriate to their age, skin type, age, and ethnicity. They expect a brand to be inclusive and cater to all colours, shapes and sizes in the most realistic ways.

**Deliver hassle-free beauty at doorstep**

When the world has come to a still, we have understood that the way we connect with beauty has changed completely. Its do-it-yourself-beauty encouraged some small changes like — comprehensive skin and hair care regime, less use of mascara, we all became our own groomers, manicurists, and colourists. This shift has increased the requirement of interactive, impressive at-home deliveries.

**Be sustainable and transparent**

Recycling beauty products is another trend that is reaping interest. With this practice, you don't have to discard your empties that will end up going into the landfills. Instead, it will be reused. By bestowing an afterlife to your product empty, you will surely make a difference in the environment.

If you incorporate these practices, you will surely be able to build an authentic, sustainable and successful brand.

The writer is Co-founder, Vanity Wagon

## Webinar on Global Compact on Refugees

On the occasion of World Refugee Day, VIT-AP School of Law, VIT-AP University, Andhra Pradesh organised an event on June 21, 2021 jointly with the Centre for Statelessness and Refugee Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, along with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, India.

The inaugural session followed by national webinar on Global Compact on Refugees in fostering Laws, Policies and Practices vis-a-vis Protection and care.

The daylong national webinar deliberated upon the importance of Global Compact on Refugees and reminded the State parties to be bound by the obligations of the sovereign States. Experts from academia, civil society, practitioners, refugee organisations and students have participated in the programme.

The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) has following broad four objectives: (i) ease pressures on host countries; (ii) enhance refugee self-reliance; (iii) expand access to third country solutions; and (iv) support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity, with relevant indicators frame work. Are the objectives specified in GCR, recast of earlier durable solutions? Or do they have new meaning in text and context was discussed in national webinar.

Yukiko Koyama, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR, India stressed upon the relevance of Global Compact on Refugees for the protection of the refugees and stateless people across the world.

Dr Arvind Tiwari Dean School of Law TISS, Mumbai gave the presidential address and Prof Samir Kumar Das, Former Member, Chancellor of University of North Bengal delivered the keynote address.

Dr Parivelan K.M Chairperson of Centre for Statelessness and Refugee Studies at TISS Mumbai explained the importance of the occasion. Dr Benarji Chakka, Dean, VSL welcomed the chief guest, participated, students, faculty and staff and moderated the session on Global Compact on Refugees and Legal and Policy issues.



## Environment plays an important role in our lives. This has opened plenty of lucrative options in the field in India as well as abroad, says DR MUKESH KWATRA

Environment isn't one subject but an associate integration of many subjects that embrace each other, like Science and Social Studies. It teaches us about sustainable way of living together with environment. Therefore the scope of environmental studies is very wide and covers some aspects of nearly each major discipline. It offers an overlap of job chance for environmental scientists, biologists, engineers, modellers and journalists.

Environmental scientists find opportunities in the mining industry, plant food industry, textile and dyeing industry, food processing units and bio fuel industry. After holding a degree in this field you get a variability of careers to choose from and that could be from Government, personal organisations or from plentiful of alternative industries.

One can also consider a teaching job in schools or universities. Several private organisations like food processing industries, refineries, distilleries and plant food industries are providing various job opportunities for the graduates in this field.

Aspirants doing various courses in environment field, can apply for a research degree in Government organisations. MSc degree holding candidates can find many lucrative career opportunities in India as well as abroad in Environmental Science.

**Environmental Professor:** The scope of

environment studies is tremendously growing in recent years with cutting-edge research and continuous innovation in the field. Researchers find Environmental Professor as a lucrative career choice. If you want to be a part of this highly paid job in government and private sectors then pursue a desired degree to achieve success.

**Environmental Engineering:** It is a job type in which environmentalists utilise the knowledge of engineering thus acquired in soil science, hydraulics, chemistry etc to evolve answers for ecological issues. They are also better equipped to address global issues, such as ecological disparity, water issues, climate change, and environmental sustainability. If you choose to start your career at the right place, you are bound to attain heights in your career. It offers you plenty of opportunities to work on broad range of fields.

**Environmental Biologists:** They are scientists who study how living organisms interact with each other, their environments and surroundings. In this field one can work as a research assistant, laboratory technicians, researchers for private or government laboratories, or as independent contractors.

**Environmental Scientists:** They are the ones who use their knowledge of natural science to protect the environment and human health. Environmental scientists are employed with mines, agencies involved in

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS ARE EMPLOYED WITH MINES, AGENCIES INVOLVED IN CLEANING UP OF POLLUTED AREAS, DYING INDUSTRY, FERTILISER INDUSTRY, AS ADVISORY TO POLICYMAKERS, OR WORK WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT CONCERNS**

cleaning up of polluted areas, dying industry, fertiliser industry, as advisory to policymakers, or work with waste management concerns.

This sector provides plethora of highly paid job opportunities. You can be employed by various Government organisations like Pollution Control Board, Water Authority, Waste Management and Urban Planning.

There is plenty of opportunities, abundance of jobs and various paths a diploma holder in environment field can choose to take. In addition, the earning hereinafter offer a reasonable possibility to clear school of mortgage debts if any and take care of their family in the future.

The writer is founder, Smiling Tree

## 'Scale start-up in Canada'

The country has announced investments of \$55.1 million in clean technology companies. This has opened doors for opportunities, says ESHA CHOPRA

The dynamic start-up scene in Toronto, Canada is gaining momentum with early-stage start-up founders. In a 2020 report by StartupBlink, Canada ranked third in the world for COVID-19 innovation, and Toronto ranked fourth in the world. Here are some reasons why you should consider moving your start-up in Canada:

**Tech-innovation:** In a bid to lay the groundwork for a greener, stronger and more resilient economy, the Canadian Government has made investments in technology innovations. In early 2021, the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, announced investments of \$55.1 million in clean technology companies across Canada. This funding will support small and medium-sized companies that are developing innovative solutions to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lessen the environmental impacts of conventional mining methods and support more sustainable agricultural practices.

**Government incentives:** The Canadian Government has special programmes for entrepreneurs around the world wanting to scale in the North American market. The Start-up Visa Program is designed for international entrepreneurs with businesses that are innovative and have the potential to grow in Canada. The program offers Permanent Residence to entrepreneurs to help support them from around the world.

**Funding:** The Canadian Venture Capital & Private Equity Association boasts dozens of members and tracks deals by region and amount. According to its data, the Canadian venture capital market is booming. According to KPMG's report in April 2021, Canadian venture funding hit a record high of \$2.49 billion in the first quarter of 2021, solidifying Canada's position as a global start-up hub.

**Availability of top talent:** Fueled by a strong set of universities, the student-friendly immigration policies allow talented individuals from around the world to join workforce in Canada



**Esha Chopra**  
Director Strategy and Marketing,  
Toronto Business Development Centre

every year. Top technical universities like University of Toronto, the University of BC and McGill and Waterloo offer access to workforce without cutthroat competitiveness of Silicon Valley.

**Proximity to software giants and financial institutions:** Financial Institutions like JP Morgan, Citi, Morgan Stanley etc and software moguls like Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook among others all have a growing footprint in Canada.

**Start-up culture:** Successful start-ups like Slack, Shopify, FreshBooks, Tunnel Bear, WattlePad, Hootsuite and others were founded in Canada and continue to thrive. The impact of COVID-19 has not curtailed investment in Canadian technology and other high-growth sectors like ed-tech, healthcare, fintech and AI.

**Diverse community:** Canada boasts one of the highest percentages of foreign-born citizens than any other G8 country and is home to more than 14 million people with over 200 languages spoken. This cultural boiling pot makes a great home for a start-up founder and his family looking for a place to thrive in.

Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs, and habits. If this were to be true, then we all should be very well aware as to what are the skills, values, morals, beliefs, habits and knowledge that a student is likely to possess after a specific number of years of education. What are the deliverables that the present education system is promising to our children? What are the short term and long term education objectives that have been determined? What can we expect from the educated after a specific number of years?

With loads of information and data, children today have been made to feel as if

they are totally in the unknown and that they need to learn from the text books which are the Gospels of truth and knowledge.

Without going into how the syllabus has been structured to meet the larger objective, children burn the midnight oil to master the information. Some score 100 per cent and some 40 per cent. The student who scores 100 per cent develops the attitude that he knows it all and that the one with 40 per cent feels that if he were to master the books, it would give him taste of eternal knowledge.

The point in question here is what should be the goal of education? Whether the present day education system is achieving that goal? What is the set of specific and broad goals that our children

should acquire after a long 14-15 years of school education? Has the end become more important than the process?

Without going into the correlation of the education goals with the subjects and syllabus being covered in schools; even for a moment if we say all is well; why does the system need to send hundreds of changed/additional circulars to schools on newer practices almost on regular basis? Even it being so, we may like to conclude that the system is ever evolving, ever expanding, ever developing. So isn't the

process standardised to not achieve the goal which is supposedly earmarked in the first place, that we need to keep adding newer activities every week or fortnight as additional curriculum. Why doesn't the system delete some activities which may become redundant. It is anybody's guess that no school would be able to complete the set of stipulated exercises as enshrined in the system's requirement. Is this a calculated way of putting the schools on back foot to always?

Where are the parents in the process? Do the parents even know about the teaching objective or what they can expect their children to be after they pass out Class XII? Or is it too mechanical that everything that goes in the system comes out and further goes in and then again comes out and on and on. What is the accountability of the system? With school toppers languishing in jails, being unemployed, most disillusioned, with no morals, values, beliefs and habits, it is high time we have a re-look at the education system of the country.

Let's take the exam system; it can be anything except being perfect. The focus of all school children, teachers and parents is on examination. Exams are not adjusted on completion of education but education is adjusted seeing the exam timelines. The process is being taken care of by people who seldom teach in classrooms. The system has become a test in itself.

Have exams become a toy in the hands of the system to use? Are we losing crucial time for education for excused on reforms have always been advocated in this country, but nothing seems to be happening on the ground. We were not able to implement the last NPE in 34 years. Now the country has adopted NPE 2021. Hopefully, the new music beats are melodious to the ears, but the question is how and when?

The writer is Sachin Gupta, Chancellor, Sanskriti University



December 1, 2021.

The Ottago Polytechnic, New Zealand invites applications for its post-graduate diploma international scholarships. The programme is open to worldwide applicants who want to undertake the postgraduate diploma for the academic year 2021-2022.

**Award:** Each successful scholar will receive the amount of \$5,000 to cover their study expenses in New Zealand.

**Eligibility:** Postgraduate diploma in any subject area. Applicants must be international citizens.

**Supporting documents:** Pre-qualification degree, copies of academic transcripts, certificates of English language proficiency, a statement, a copy of passport

**Admission requirements:** Applicants must have to fulfil the entry criteria of the Ottago Polytechnic.

**Language requirement:** Students are expected to demonstrate adequate English competence if their schooling has not been performed in English.

**How to apply:** Students are required to take admission in the postgraduate diploma programme at the Ottago. After that, apply for the award.

**Application deadline:** It is the last date is November 30, 2021.

**ANDROID APP DEVELOPMENT AT WEDNESDAY SOLUTIONS**  
Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹8,000 per month  
Link: internshala.com/i/568111  
Deadline: July 1, 2021

**IOS APP DEVELOPMENT AT WEDNESDAY SOLUTIONS**  
Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹8,000 per month  
Link: internshala.com/i/56362  
Deadline: July 1, 2021

**EMAIL MARKETING AT NEHANET CORPORATION**  
Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month  
Link: internshala.com/i/99673  
Deadline: July 1, 2021

**RESEARCH (DISASTER MGT & CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION) AT SPHERE INDIA**  
Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹18,000-₹25,000 per month  
Link: internshala.com/i/d6d15  
Deadline: July 1, 2021

**OPERATIONS AT K2PICTURES**  
Location: Delhi  
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month  
Link: internshala.com/i/0cc6fd  
Deadline: July 1, 2021

**MARKETING AT THINK & LEARN PRIVATE LIMITED (BYJU'S)**  
Location: Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Rourkela  
Stipend: ₹18,000 per month  
Link: internshala.com/i/189a0  
Deadline: June 28, 2021

**JUNIOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ASSOCIATE JOB AT GLU STUDIOS**  
Location: Delhi  
Stipend: ₹3-₹3.6 lakh per annum  
Link: internshala.com/i/ef6d3c  
Deadline: July 17, 2021  
Skill(s): Social Media Marketing

### INBRIEF

#### ZSA TO IMPROVE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The Zupeo, online gaming company, has announced the launch of their skilling academy, which will impart employable skills and promote equal opportunities in the youth of the country. Zupeo Skilling Academy (ZSA) will be a first-of-its-kind mission by a corporation, aimed at skilling, upskilling and educating young, disadvantaged Indians. The idea is to prepare them for the future by getting them ready through on-line training and ensuring that everyone in the programme has equal opportunities for employment.

#### NZ PARTNERS WITH FUTURELEARN

Educaton New Zealand has announced a partnership with FutureLearn which will provide courses from more than 15 New Zealand education providers on one central platform to reach 15 million-plus learners worldwide. The courses have options for learners and teachers of sustainable agriculture, Te Reo Maori and English language.

#### NEW COURSE FOR CRIMINAL LAWYERS

The SVKM's NMIMS Deemed-to-be-University has introduced Criminal Law as a new specialisation in its Master of Law (LLM) programme at Kirti P Mehta School of Law. The one-year PG course specifically designed for working professionals, aims to create stalwart criminal lawyers in order to meet the critical and challenging requirements. To be eligible, the candidate should hold a L.B. degree from a recognised university, with a minimum of 50 per cent aggregate marks. Candidates appearing for the final year examinations are also eligible to apply.

#### INNOVATIVE INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY AT RICS

The RICS School of Built Environment (SBE) Amity University has implemented an innovative internship idea for its present students. Keeping in view the present pandemic, the institute has innovatively transformed the internships into intensive research projects based on the specific needs of the industry which the students have undertaken from their homes.

#### BOOTCAMP-LEARNING FOR CLASSES V TO X

The GlobalGyan Academy of Management Education, has launched its Youth Leadership Programs, Laksh and Laksh Junior. The programmes offered to students of Classes V-VII (Laksh Junior) and Classes VII-X (Laksh) are designed to build the life-skills that are essential for their future. Students participate in a two-month long bootcamp-style learning model, which includes live instructor-led classes, assignments, group projects, quizzes and video content. The programmes provide an experiential learning to students to unleash

The internship team has brainstormed and prepared a list of research topics related to issues for which the industry is looking for answers. According to their interests, students have chosen their internship projects and assigned a mentor and industry veteran who would guide them through their research. Ashwani Awasthi, MD said: "The institute has

innovatively transformed the internship process into an intensive research project-based internship programme for excused on the needs of the industry organizations. These internships have evolved after a significant thinking and focus on the students are able to receive as close to real-world experience as feasible given the current challenging circumstances."

To register kindly visit: <https://lakshleaders.com>

#### MOU TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES IN GOVERNANCE REFORMS

The Kaulitya School of Public Policy, Gitam, Hyderabad intend to be university, with the Daksh Society to promote better governance and improve the justice system, through data-based analysis. Under the MOU, both the institutions will conduct supportive, non-partisan, and interdisciplinary research on related aspects of the justice system. The research will come up with inclusive, transparent, and self-correcting mechanisms to encourage accountability across all branches of the Government. The students will be engaged through internships and capstone projects giving them a firsthand experience and aiding a clear conception of how system works. This will empower the students and help them understand critical concepts in accountability, transparency, and governance.

