

## WORLD 5

'CHINA'S ACTIVITY AROUND  
TAIWAN THREATENS REGION'

## MONEY 6

'INDIA'S ECONOMY RECOVERED  
DESPITE COVID WAVES'

## SPORT 7

INDIA STUN OLYMPIC  
CHAMPIONS BELGIUM

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NEW DELHI, SUNDAY JUNE 12, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹4

## Day after violent protests, bulldozers return to work

Outer walls of  
two houses in  
Saharanpur razed

PNS/AGENCY ■ LUCKNOW

A day after Uttar Pradesh witnessed violent protests over comments on Prophet Mohammad, bulldozers rolled in two cities: Saharanpur and Kanpur. Earlier on Saturday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's media adviser Mrityunjay Kumar posted a veiled message with a warning: "Remember every Friday is followed by a Saturday. He posted the message with a photo of a bulldozer."

The cryptic tweet implied stern action against people indulging in clashes. Haryana BJP IT cell in charge Arun Yadav on Friday tweeted, now Friday being "stone day, Saturday should be declared as bulldozer day".

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday held a review meeting with the team of top officials. "Toughest action will be taken against all those anti-social elements who participated in the anarchist attempts to vitiate atmosphere in various cities of the State. Such people have no place in civilised society. Take care that no innocent is harassed, but ensure not a single guilty



Police personnel inspect illegal structures at Atala area in Prayagraj on Saturday

PTI

escapes," the Government said in a statement.

According to NDTV report, police in UP's Saharanpur shared videos of municipal teams out with bulldozers under a heavy police presence, demolishing parts of homes of two of the accused arrested for disturbing the peace and social harmony.

Visuals shared by the police

showed cops and municipal teams at the residences of accused Muzammil and Abdul Waqir, with bulldozers razing gates and outer walls of their houses which they claim were illegal constructions.

In Kanpur, where violent clashes and stone-pelting took place on June 3 over the same issue, the police demolished properties belonging to a man

they called a "land mafia linked to local leader Zafar Hayat Hashmi who is the main accused in the violence".

UP Police's additional director general (law and order) Prashant Kumar said the situation is under control now and the police are taking strict action against those responsible for the violence.

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## BJP springs surprise in RS polls in Maha, Haryana

Snatches 6th seat from  
MVA in Maharashtra,  
BJP-backed Kartikeya  
Sharma defeats Cong's  
Ajay Maken in HryT N RAGHUNATHA/PNS ■  
MUMBAI/ CHANDIGARH

The ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in Maharashtra suffered a massive setback on Saturday, as the BJP sprang a nasty surprise on its main constituent Shiv Sena by snatching the sixth seat from the latter and winning two other seats in the Rajya Sabha polls held on Thursday.

Pulling off an unthinkable feat, the BJP in Maharashtra bagged one additional RS seat, as its candidate Dhananjay Mahadik trounced the Shiv Sena's Sanjay Pawar in an election battle that witnessed a majority of Independents, MLAs from smaller parties — who are actually the supporters of the MVA Government — voting in favour of Mahadik instead of (Sanjay) Pawar.

While in Haryana, in a jolt to the Congress, the BJP's Krishan Lal Panwar and the saffron party-backed Independent candidate Kartikeya Sharma were declared elected for the two Rajya Sabha seats, after a high drama over allegations of violations of polling rules that



Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Ashwini Vaishnav, former Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnis, State BJP president Chandrakant Patil and others flash the victory sign after three members were elected as Rajya Sabha member, in Mumbai on Saturday

PTI

delayed the counting by more than seven hours. The counting of votes in State began past midnight and the results were announced after 2 am on Saturday. According to Election Commission officials, Congress candidates Ajay Maken did not get enough votes. The party said one of its MLAs cross-voted while the vote of an MLA was declared invalid.

Congress MLA and the party's authorised polling agent BB Batra said while the vote of

a party MLA was declared invalid, MLA Kuldeep Bishnoi cross-voted for Sharma, a media baron who had entered the poll as an Independent candidate supported by the BJP and its ally JJP.

Friday's development in Maharashtra brought back the grim memories of the 1998 Rajya Sabha polls when the Congress' official candidate Ram Pradhan was defeated due to cross-voting indulged in by the Congress MLAs. Senior

leader Sharad Pawar, who was then with the Congress, was blamed for Pradhan's defeat, as he had opposed the latter's candidate.

Mahadik scored a comfortable victory over Pawar at the end of the second round of counting of votes. While Mahadik polled 41 votes, Pawar secured 33 votes. The minimum quota of votes required for winning the Rajya Sabha seat was 40.58 votes.

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## 2 killed, 2 dozen injured as violence rocks Ranchi

PTI ■ RANCHI

Two people were killed and many, including security personnel, were critically injured as violent protests rocked Ranchi over the comments made by two now suspended BJP spokespersons on Prophet Mohammad, officials said on Saturday. As per the post-mortem report, the two persons died due to gunshot wounds.

Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC have been clamped in 12 police station areas, including Sukhdev Nagar, Lower Bazar, Daily Market and Hindipdi, to prevent any further flareups, they said. Internet has also been suspended in the district, they added.

The situation is under control and is being monitored. Sufficient security forces have been deployed. CCTV footage and videos are being scruti-

nised and necessary action will be taken, the officials said. Over two dozen people were injured in the clashes that rocked the State Capital on Friday, officials said.

Thirteen of the critically injured people were admitted to the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), doctors there said. "Two of them died late last night. The condition of three people is serious and they are battling for their lives.

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## WB BJP prez held

**Kolkata:** BJP's West Bengal unit president Sukanta Majumdar was arrested on Saturday afternoon when he tried to visit violence-hit Howrah district, police said. Majumdar, the MP, was arrested near the toll plaza on Vidyasagar Setu, they said.

## Police book some for inciting Jama Masjid peaceful protesters

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has registered a case in connection with Friday's protest outside Jama Masjid to demand the arrest of suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma for her controversial remarks on Prophet Mohammad, officials said on Saturday.

According to Shweta Chauhan, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Central district, an First Information Report (FIR) has been registered under section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) on Friday against the protesters and further investigation is underway.

Police said the messages circulated on WhatsApp are being scrutinised and the initial probe has identified 4-5 miscreants, who are locals.

"Police might add more

UPC sections, keeping in view the provocation as witnessed by our police force and in the contents of CCTV footage that have been acquired," said police.

On Friday, the DCP had said, "Around 1,500 people had gathered at the mosque for Friday prayers. When the prayers ended peacefully, some people came outside, started shouting slogans.

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### YouTuber held for 'beheading'

**New Delhi:** A YouTuber from Kashmir, Faisal Wani, has been arrested for posting a video that showed him beheading an effigy of a suspended BJP spokesperson. Police said the video had caused fear and alarm among the public.

## Nagaland botched Army op: 30 jawans chargesheeted

PTI ■ DIMAPUR

Nagaland Police has chargesheeted at least 30 members of the 21 Para Special Force, including a Major, in the December 4, 2021 botched Army operations in Oting-Tiru area of Mon district when at least 13 civilians died.

The chargesheet has slapped charges of murder and culpable homicide not amounting to murder under on the team of soldiers.

The probe which preceded the chargesheet has found that the team had not followed the Standard Operating Procedure and Rules of Engagement and had resorted to indiscriminate and disproportionate firing leading to immediate death of six civilians and grievous injury to two more.

Addressing a press conference at Chumoukedima Police Complex on Saturday, Director General of Police (DGP),

Nagaland, T John Longkumer said that the Tizit Police Station case related to the Oting incident where civilians were killed in an ambush laid for militants as a result of mistaken identity on December 4, 2021.

The case was re-registered by State Crime Police Station on December 5 against unknown persons of the Indian Army under sections 302, 304 and 34 IPC and investigation handed over to a SIT.

"A professional and thorough investigation was carried out by the SIT" in this case, he said, adding that various evidences, including relevant important documents from various authorities and sources, scientific opinions from CFSL Guwahati, Hyderabad and Chandigarh and technical evidences from National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology were collected during the course of investigation.

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## BJP, Cong punish their MLAs for RS polls cross-voting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after they went against their respective party lines and indulged in cross-voting in the Rajya Sabha elections, the Congress and the BJP on Saturday acted against the errant MLAs.

The Congress expelled its Haryana MLA Kuldeep Bishnoi from "all his present party positions, including the post of special invitee of the Congress Working Committee, with immediate effect".

For its part, the BJP suspended its Rajasthan MLA Shobharani Kushwaha for cross-voting in favour of a Congress candidate and asked her to explain her action.

Bishnoi, who has been cut-up with the Congress central leadership for overlooking his candidature for the party's Haryana president's post, cross-voted for the BJP-JJP-backed Independent candidate media

executive Kartikeya Sharma. As a result, former Union Minister Ajay Maken lost, in a major embarrassment for the Congress which had the required numbers to win.

Bishnoi, the Congress MLA from Adampur, followed up his act with a cryptic tweet on Saturday morning saying, "I have the capability to crush snakes' hood. I do not leave the jungle fearing snakes."

With the Congress favouring old guard Bhupinder Singh Hooda over him for the PCC chief's post, Bishnoi had been seeking an appointment with former Congress president Rahul Gandhi. However, he did not get an audience.

In Rajasthan, what came as a surprise was the cross voting by BJP MLA Shobharani Kushwaha in favour of Congress candidate Pramod Tiwari, who sailed through smoothly.

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## CAPSULE

**COVID POSITIVITY RATE IN DELHI SPIKES TO 4.11%**  
**New Delhi:** Delhi on Saturday recorded 795 new Covid-19 cases and zero death, while the positivity rate increased to 4.11 per cent, according to data shared by the city health department here.

**2 TERRORISTS KILLED IN KULGAM & PULWAMA**  
**Srinagar:** Two terrorists were killed in two separate encounters with security forces in Kulgam and Pulwama districts of Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday, police said.

**NOW DELHI METRO BLUES IN VIOLET LINE**  
**New Delhi:** The commuters of Delhi Metro faced hardship as the Violet Line services were delayed for two hours on Saturday. This is the third time in the week when an entire metro corridor has been hit by a glitch. The Violet Line connects Kashmere Gate in Delhi and Ballabgarh in Haryana.

## Praggnanandhaa wins Norway Chess Open

Anand stands 3rd

PTI ■ STAVANGER (NORWAY)

Young Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa emerged winner in the Norway Chess Group A open chess tournament here with 7.5 points from nine rounds.

The 16-year-old GM, the top-seed, was in fine form and remained unbeaten through the nine rounds. He finished the tournament with a win over fellow Indian V Praneeth, an International Master, on Friday.

Praggnanandhaa (Elo 2642) finished a full point ahead of second-placed IM Marsel Efroimski (Israel) and IM Jung Min Seo (Sweden).

Former world champion Viswanathan Anand scored a win over Aryan Tari in the ninth and final round to finish



third in the Norway Chess tournament which was won by world number one Magnus Carlsen. Praneeth with six points was joint third but was placed sixth due to an inferior tie-break score.

Apart from beating Praneeth, Praggnanandhaa posted wins over Victor Mikhalevski (in round 8), Vitaly Kunin (round 6), Mukhammadzokhid Suyarov (round 4), Semen Mutusov (round 2) and Mathias Unneland (round 1). He drew his other three games.

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## Mamata calls joint Opp meet on June 15 for Prez poll plan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday took the lead in attempting to forge a unity for the Presidential polls and wrote to almost all the Opposition leaders requesting them to attend a meeting on June 15 convened by her in the national Capital to prepare a joint strategy for the upcoming elections.

Besides writing to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, Mamata also reached out to the Opposition CMs and leaders to participate in the joint meeting in the national Capital.

The Bengal Chief Minister addressed her letter to 22 Opposition leaders.

Detailed report on P4

## UNGA adopts multilingualism resolution, mentions Hindi

ANI ■ UN

In a significant initiative, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has adopted an India-sponsored resolution on multilingualism that mentions the Hindi language for the first time.

The resolution passed on Friday encourages the UN to continue disseminating important communications and messages in official as well as in non-official languages, including in Hindi language.

"This year, for the first time, the resolution has a mention of Hindi language. ...The resolution also mentions Bangla and Urdu for the first time. We welcome these additions," India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador TS Tirumurti.

He said multilingualism is recognised as a core value of



the UN and expressed gratitude to the Secretary-General for prioritising multilingualism.

"India has been partnering with the UN Department of Global Communications since 2018 by providing an extra-budgetary contribution to mainstream and consolidate news and multimedia content in the Hindi language," he said.

As part of these efforts, 'Hindi @ UN' project was launched in 2018 with an objective to enhance the public outreach of the United Nations in the Hindi language, and to spread greater awareness about global issues among millions of Hindi-speaking populations around the world.

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## Alarm over jawan missing from LAC post for 13 days

PTI ■ DEHRADUN

An Army jawan from Dehradun deployed on the Indo-China border in Arunachal Pradesh has been missing for the past 13 days, causing great anxiety among his family members in Dehradun.

The jawan, Prakash Singh Rana, was reported missing on May 29. Army authorities informed his wife about it telephonically.

A jawan in 7th Garhwal Rifles, Rana who is originally a resident of Ukhimath in Rudrapur district was deployed at the Thakla post on the Indo-China border in Arunachal Pradesh.

With the jawan missing from his Thakla post on the Indo-China border for the past 13 days, his family including his wife Mamata and his two minor children Anuj (10) and daughter Anamika (7) are a worried lot.

BJP MLA from Sahaspur, Sahdev Singh Pundir, met the jawan's family at their Sainik colony residence here on Friday to share their concern.

"I have spoken to the Union Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt about it and he has assured me that something will be done," Pundir told PTI.

He said details of the missing jawan have been sent to the Union Minister.



# Target killings aimed to foment unrest in region, says J-K LG

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Target killings in the valley were an act of desperation on part of the militants to provoke security forces to commit a mistake so that people can hit the streets in protest, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Saturday. "Target killings of innocent people have taken place. I believe the society should condemn it. A woman teacher, who imparts education to children, is killed, if the society does not condemn it, then I think, we are shirking away from our duties," Sinha said during a function in Kulgam district in south Kashmir. He said the killings were an act of desperation. "These are acts of desperation. J-K administration follows the policy of gunahgaar ko chhodo mat, aur begunah

ko chhedo mat' (Do not spare the culprit, but do not touch the innocent). "Target killings are taking place deliberately in the hope that police and security forces commit a mistake, kill an innocent person, and the people come out on streets to protest," he said. Sinha said the administration will not let that happen. "There will be no action against an innocent person by the police, security forces or the J-K administration," he added. The militancy was in its last stage and "when a candle is about to burn out, its flame flares bright," Sinha said. The 'flare' of militancy was intense as the police and security forces have tightened the noose around them, the LG said, adding, "it is our endeavour to is rid the people here of terrorism."

He said the road to progress and development goes through peace. Calling upon people to condemn such attacks, the J-K

LG said that time has come for people to come forward and support police and security forces in their campaign to root out terrorism.

## Two terrorists killed in separate encounters in Kulgam, Pulwama

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Two terrorists were killed in two separate encounters with security forces in Kulgam and Pulwama districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, police said. Acting on specific information regarding the presence of a terrorist in village Khandipora area of Kulgam, a cordon and search operation was launched by the security forces there, a police spokesman said.

During the search operation, as the search party approached towards the suspected spot, the hiding terrorist fired indiscriminately upon the forces, which was retaliated effectively leading to an encounter, he said. However, in order to evacuate the civilians trapped around the encounter site, the forces ensured the evacuation of all civilians to the safer places, the spokesman said.

# Authorities raze building of Kanpur violence mastermind's close aide

PTI ■ KANPUR

A week after the city witnessed chaotic protests marred by stone pelting, the Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) on Saturday demolished a multi-storey building allegedly owned by a close aide of the main accused in the incident, police said. Police also arrested one Nizam Qureshi, who officials claim is another mastermind of the June 3 violence. Qureshi was among the 36 accused whose names were mentioned in the FIR lodged soon after the violence, a police official said. Kanpur's Joint Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Anand Prakash Tiwari confirmed the arrest. "Nizam Qureshi has been arrested from Kanpur in connection with the June 3 incident," the officer said, adding that the accused had gone underground since the

violence took place. According to police sources, Qureshi shared incendiary messages on social media platforms and provoked people to indulge in stone pelting. The investigators are trying to recover information related to the violence from Qureshi's phone. "Qureshi was one of the key conspirators of the Kanpur violence. Messages from his mobile phones were sent to over half-a-dozen other mobile phones that are now being tracked," said a senior official, requesting anonymity. Some crucial information pertaining to the violence was also found from a social media group of which the prime accused in the violence, Zafar Hayat Hashmi, was a member, the officer said. Qureshi is the head of Jamiatul Qureshi, an unofficial body of the Qureshi community in Kanpur. He is a former Samajwadi

Party (SP) district secretary. District SP chief Imran told PTI that Qureshi was expelled from the party on May 22 for anti-party activities and not taking interest in the party's programmes. Tiwari said the KDA has demolished a four-storey residential building owned by Mohammad Ishtiyag, who is said to be a close aide of Hashmi. There are reasons to believe that investments in the construction of the building were made by Hashmi, the officer said, adding that the demolition was carried out in accordance with the relevant norms and regulations. Ishtiyag passed away a couple of years ago, he said. The building was located at Swaroopnagar and was built around three years ago, police said. Authorities brought down some parts of the ground floor and the first

floor of the building amid heavy police deployment. The building was vacant at the time of the demolition, police said. According to police, Ishtiyag, who ran a tailoring shop till a few years ago, was subsequently engaged in real estate business. Hashim was a major investor in the demolished building, they said. On Friday, a court here remanded Hashmi, Jawed Ahmad Khan, Mohammad Rahil and Sufiyan in police custody for three days. "The accused were taken into police custody on Saturday morning and will remain in custody till Tuesday morning," Tiwari said. Violence broke out in Kanpur on June 3 after some people gathered demanding strict action against former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson Nupur Sharma over her comments on Prophet Mohammad.

# Union Minister Patel blames Pakistan's 'jealousy' for social conflict in India

PTI ■ JABALPUR (MP)

Union minister Prahlad Singh Patel on Saturday said Pakistan is jealous of the peace prevailing in India and its growing reputation and called for the caution to guard against the use of religious fanatics to create unrest. Against the backdrop of protests in West Bengal and other states over the remarks of former BJP functionaries Nupur Sharma and Naveen Kumar Jindal against Prophet Mohammad, the minister said the creation of a conflict in this diverse culture is a challenge for the country and is a matter of concern. "Everyone knows that some people are jealous of the rising reputation and peace in India. Who are they? It's our neighbour Pakistan. Our

country needs to be alert if someone going on this path using some fanatics on religious grounds. The government is on alert and going to act as per the law," Patel said after attending a programme. He said creating such a situation in the country's mixed culture, which has no conflict, is a matter of concern and a challenge for the country. "I confidently say that somewhere the forces from abroad might have bad intentions and conspire but those who are here (in the country) are becoming their (forces from abroad) weapon, and the country needs to be alert about them," he said. The Central government and the BJP want the Ganga-Jamuni tradition (religious harmony) to continue in the country, Patel added.

# Sisodia to hold meeting to boost job avenues at Delhi Wholesale Shopping Festival

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia will hold a meeting with the representatives of wholesale market associations across the city on Monday to get inputs and suggestions on organising the Delhi Wholesale Shopping Festival to boost job avenues. According to the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) Chairman Brijesh Goyal, representatives of over 20 wholesale markets of the national capital are likely to attend the meeting. The Delhi government in its 'Rozgar Budget' had proposed Delhi Shopping Festival and a Delhi Wholesale Shopping Festival to generate job opportunities. A total outlay of Rs 250 crore was proposed in the budget for the Delhi Shopping Festival and the Wholesale Shopping

Festival. "This meeting will be headed by Deputy CM Manish Sisodia at the Delhi Secretariat. Market associations of over 20 wholesale markets are likely to participate in the meeting where the government will have a dialogue with traders and know their suggestions and check the feasibility of selecting suitable markets to organise the wholesale shopping festival," Goyal said. He said representatives of some prominent wholesale markets such as Kashmiri Gate, Sadar Bazar, Naya Bazar, Karol Bagh, Chawri Bazar, Chandni Chowk, Khari Baoli and Gandhi Nagar will participate in the meeting. In the meeting, the traders will also apprise the government about issues being faced by them, if any, in their respective market areas, he said.

# Joint action plan to combat pollution need of hour: Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Saturday asked the Centre to create a joint action plan to fight air pollution in the capital. The minister also said only 30 per cent of Delhi's pollution is generated locally and the rest comes from outside. "Vehicular pollution is a challenge in Delhi. We had earlier introduced CNG and now taken a conscious decision to move towards electric vehicles. All industrial units in the city have shifted to PNG," he said. Rai said the government is currently working on a mega tree plantation drive. "We're increasing green cover, making people aware, but a joint action plan through the Centre's intervention is the need of the hour," the minister said.

# US will do its part to control tensions with China: US Def Secretary Lloyd Austin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on Saturday said that the US will do its part to control tensions with China and prevent any future conflict as Beijing is becoming 'increasingly aggressive in the Asian region'. "That's especially important as the PRC (People's Republic of China) adopts a more coercive and aggressive approach to its territorial claims," Austin was quoted as saying by Channel NewsAsia (CNA) while addressing the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. The IISS Shangri-La Dialogue is Asia's premier defence summit where defence ministers, world leaders, senior officials, as well as business leaders and security experts discuss and debate the region's most pressing security

challenges. The summit is being held in Singapore from June 10-12. Relations between the two countries have soured due to clashes over Taiwan, China's human rights record and military activity in the South China Sea. China continues to push its agenda on Taiwan and has warned that it will reunify the island-nation if required. Austin reiterated the Biden administration's promise that the US will stand with all its allies including Taiwan. His comments came after a meeting with Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe where both ministers committed to take steps to better maintain the relationship between both countries. Austin also highlighted the recent altercation between Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) jets with those of other countries.

# Kejriwal Govt to do complete makeover of Kalinga Institute: Minister Gautam

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Social Welfare Minister, Rajendra Gautam on Saturday said that the Arvind Kejriwal Government has decided to do a complete makeover of the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences Delhi Government Senior Secondary Residential School (KISSDSSRS) to provide world-class facilities to the students. Gautam inspected the school with the PWD officials and the SC/ST departments on Saturday. Gautam also reviewed the progress of construction of the new hostel, kitchen and dining block on the premises. He also discussed the various issues related to the infrastructure of the school. Gautam said that the residential school will undergo a complete make-over to have world-class facilities for the students.

# Pvt schools on Govt land can't increase fees without DOE approval in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Private schools running on Government land in Delhi can submit proposals for a fee hike for the 2022-2023 academic year but cannot increase fees without prior approval of the Directorate of Education (DOE). The DoE has issued a circular stating that the private schools operating on government land in the national capital can submit proposals for a fee hike for the 2022-2023 academic year. The department has reiterated that the schools cannot hike fees without its prior nod. According to the circular issued by the DoE, "All the pending fee hike proposals submitted by the private unaided recognised schools running on the land allotted by the DDA (Delhi Development Authority) or other land-owning agencies...For session 2020-2021 have become infructuous...Such schools

may submit their fee hike proposals, if any, for the session 2022 23." The schools can submit their fee-hike proposals for the current academic year between June 12 (Sunday) and June 27. The Delhi government has sought fee-hike proposals after a gap of two years. After the lockdown in 2020, the DoE had directed the schools not to collect any fee except the tuition fee and prohibited them from increasing the fees. "The proposal submitted by the schools shall be scrutinised and examined by the Director of Education through any officer or team authorised on this behalf. All such schools are strictly directed not to increase any fee until the sanction is conveyed to their proposal by the Director of Education. In case no proposal is submitted by the school in response to this order, the school shall not increase its fee for the academic session 2022-23," the circular further said.

# Day after violent...

**From Page 1** UP police said it had arrested 237 people from various districts. In Saharanpur and Prayagraj, police officials said action will be taken against those arrested under the stringent National Security Act. Among those arrested, 68 were held in Prayagraj and 50 in Hathras, Kumar said in a statement on Saturday. He said 55 people were arrested in Saharanpur, 28 in Ambekarnagar, 25 in Moradabad, eight in Firozabad, and three in Aligarh. In Prayagraj after Friday prayer, some motorcycles and carts were set

on fire and an attempt was made to set ablaze a police vehicle. Police used tear gas and lathis to disperse mobs and peace was later restored and one policeman was hurt in the region. Nupur Sharma was suspended by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) while another leader, Naveen Jindal, was expelled over their controversial remarks on Prophet Mohammad. The comments led to an intense backlash in several Islamic countries and calls for a boycott of Indian products. There have been protests in many Indian cities as well, while multiple FIRs have been registered against Sharma.

# 2 killed, 2...

**From Page 1** The injured include CRPF personnel and policemen," a RIMS official said, adding the two deaths were caused by bullet injuries. Ranchi's Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Surendra Kumar Jha was admitted to a hospital with head injury, officials said. Besides head, he also received injuries in other parts of his body after he was hit by stones, they said. Some Hindutva outfits have called for a Ranchi bandh on Saturday, asking traders to keep their shops shut in protest against the violence. "We have called for a peaceful Ranchi bandh today against yesterday's incident. All Hindu religious organisations such as VHP, Hindu Jagaran Manch and others have extended their support to the bandh call," Mahavir Mandal president Ashok Purohit told PTI.

# Praggnanan dhaa wins Norway...

**From Page 1** The Indian teenaged star has been putting in impressive performances in recent times and had beaten world number one Magnus Carlsen for a second time in the Chessable Master online event and lost a close final to China's Ding Liren. The GM will be part of the India B team in the open event of the 44th Chess Olympiad in Chennai next month. Praggnanandhaa's coach R B Ramesh congratulated him after the win and said it will help boost his confidence. "Congratulations to him for the victory. He was the top seed, so it is not a surprise that he won the tournament. He played well in general, drew three games with black pieces and won the remaining games. It will help boost his confidence," Ramesh said.

# Delhi Police file cases against peaceful...

**From Page 1** "Police deployment always remains at Jama Masjid during Friday prayers. The protesters were dispersed within 10 to 15 minutes and the situation is peaceful. Legal action will be taken in connection with the incident. We have identified some of the miscreants and our teams are working to identify others," said the DCP.

# BJP springs surprise in RS polls in Maha...

**From Page 1** The BJP's Union Minister Piyush Goyal, it's Kisan Morcha's national general secretary Dr Anil Bonde and party's State spokesperson and former Kolhapur MP Dhananjay Mahadik romped home in the RS polls. Goyal and Bonde, both BJP candidates, got the highest votes at 48 each, while Mahadik secured 41 votes. The NCP's Praful Patel secured 43 votes, while the Congress Imran Pratapgadi got 44 votes Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut managed to get 41 votes. While the Shiv Sena is in the process of analysing the contributory factors for its second candidate Pawar's defeat, the BJP -led by former Chief Minister and current leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Devendra Fadnis - outmanoeuvred the ruling MVA by winning one extra seat in the RS polls. The election for the sixth seat turned out to be the highlight of the Rajya Sabha elections, which exposed the lack of coordination among the MVA constituents - Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress, leading to the defeat of the Shiv Sena's second candidate.

# UNGA adopts multilingualism resolution...

**From Page 1** "In this context, I would like to recall UNSC resolution 13(1) adopted In its first session on 1 Feb. 1946, which stated that the United Nations cannot achieve its purposes unless the people of the world are fully informed of its aims and activities," the Indian envoy said. He further stated it is imperative that multilingualism at the United

Nations in a true sense is embraced and India will support the UN in achieving this objective. Multilingualism is an essential factor in harmonious communication among peoples and an enabler of multilateral diplomacy. It ensures effective participation of all in the Organization's work, as well as greater transparency and efficiencies and better outcomes. "Multilingualism is

recognized by the General Assembly as a core value of the Organization. As such, all United Nations Secretariat entities are expected to contribute actively and demonstrate their commitment to this joint endeavor. Multilingualism mandates also call for the mainstreaming of multilingualism throughout the Secretariat," according to UN.

# Nagaland botched Army...

**From Page 1** The DGP said the probe was complete and the chargesheet was submitted to the District and Sessions Court, Mon on May 30, 2022 through Assistant Public Prosecutor. A case under various sections of the IPC has been made out against thirty members of the operations team of 21 Para Special Force including a Major, two Subedar, eight Havildars, four Naiks, six lance naiks and nine paratroopers, he said. Accordingly, the DGP said that the CID report seeking sanction for prosecution was forwarded to the Department of Military Affairs in the first week of April this year and a

reminder sent in May. The sanction for prosecution is still awaited, he said. Meanwhile, the charge-sheet has been filed, pending sanction for prosecution against the 30 accused, he said. Investigation has revealed that Alpha team of 21 Para Special Force consisting of 31 personnel led by a Major launched an operation in Oting Tiru Area on December 3, 2021, based on intelligence inputs on the presence of a group of National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) (Yung Aung) (NSCN-K(YA) and United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) cadres in the area, he

# BJP, Cong punish their...

**From Page 1** His victory was not expected because of a tough fight from media baron Subash Chandra given the uncertainty related to the BSP MLAs who had joined the Congress. Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria issued an order stating Kushwaha voted for Tiwari despite a whip and that she was being suspended from the BJP's primary membership. In the letter, Kataria also asked the MLA to clarify why she voted against the whip. BJP State president Satish Poonia said the party high command has been informed about the matter.



# Commuters face hardship as Violet Line services hit for 2 hrs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro's Violet Line services were delayed for two hours on Saturday with commuters facing hardship. This is the third time in the week when an entire metro corridor has been impacted by a glitch.

The Violet Line connects Kashmere Gate in Delhi and Ballabgarh in Haryana. "Violet Line update delay in services between Kashmere Gate and Raja Nahar Singh (Ballabgarh). Normal services on all other lines," the DMRC tweeted around 8:30 am. At 10:30 am, the DMRC tweeted saying, normal services on the Violet Line have resumed.

DMRC issued a statement saying, "There was an intermittent signalling issue between Central Secretariat and Khan Market stations of the Violet Line today due to



which trains were run at restricted speed in this section from 8 am to 10:15 am. This resulted into minor bunching of trains as they crossed this small section" "However, trains were running normal on rest of the major portion of line during this period.

The signalling issue was resolved at 10:15 AM and train services resumed normal in the overall stretch of the Violet

Line," it said. Commuters took to Twitter to share that they were waiting for trains for a long time at stations on their way to work or other destinations. "@OfficialDMRC standing at Kashmere gate from last 15 minutes metro not moving worst services Delhi metro.. Daily new drama.. Due to you guys we are getting late and our salary deducts for same.. Very lame services," wrote user @Mayank011097 soon after the delay was reported.

Another user, @aashnavd, posted: "Why no announcement again! We are waiting at Sarita Vihar Metro Station but no idea about the train, NO ANNOUNCEMENT!! I understand issues may pop up anytime, but keeping travellers informed isn't important?" Many commuters also reacted in a lighter vein. User @play-erkasp said he was proud of the Delhi Metro and its services.

"There could be some technical problems. Its all machinery anything can be happen. You can leave early for your office. Although I am proud of delhi metro and its services," the user tweeted.

Delhi Metro passengers, largely office-goers, on Thursday had faced inconvenience when services on its Blue Line were delayed for over two hours due to a technical snag. The Blue Line connects Dwarka Sector-21 in Delhi to Noida Electronic City, along with a branch line to Vaishali.

This was the second time in the week when the entire Blue Line had been impacted by a glitch. On June 6, a large number of commuters on the Blue Line had faced hardship as services across corridor were impacted for nearly an hour-and-a-half due to a technical snag caused by a bird hit.

# Hospital blaze claims life of 64-yr-old patient

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Panic reigned at Rohini's Brahm Shakti hospital on Saturday morning when a fire broke out in its ICU and claimed the life of a 64-year-old patient. Several people, including patients, were rescued in time thanks to sparse crowd inside the northwest Delhi hospital at the time of the incident.

According to Pranav Tayal, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Rohini district, the information regarding the fire was received around 5 am, following which the local police reached the spot and called fire tenders

Delhi Fire Services (DFS) Director Atul Garg said a total of nine fire tenders were rushed to the spot to douse the flames. The fire has been completely doused, Garg said.

All were safely rescued except one patient, who was admitted to the ICU and on a ventilator support, the DCP said. "Holi, a kidney patient and resident of Prem Nagar,

was taken out but he died due to the disruption in power and oxygen support. No operational fire fighting system was found in place and the fire exit door was found locked/blocked," said police.

A Delhi health department official, however, said the hospital was in possession of a fire NOC. On the fire equipment not working, the official said it is the responsibility of the fire department to assess the equipment.

A case under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 285 (negligent conduct with respect to fire or combustible material), 287 (negligent conduct with respect to machinery), and 304A (causing death by negligence) is being registered in this regard at the Vijay Vihar police station, the DCP said.

One of the evacuees said though there was no chaos, people did get terrified. 90 years old Khushi was admitted in the hospital and had come out of the hospital as the fire raged on its third floor. "I have some issues with my legs and



Charred remains after a fire broke out at the intensive care unit (ICU) of a hospital at Rohini area in New Delhi, Saturday morning. A 64-year-old patient died after his oxygen support was disrupted due to a fire at the facility PTI Photo

was admitted here six days ago. I was sleeping with my mother in room number 206 when a nurse came and asked us to leave immediately as there was a fire on the third floor in the ICU. We took our belongings with us, but my books were left inside the room," she said. Her mother Mamta Gupta said that though people escaped in time, everyone got scared and some

of them even broke down. Khushi said she is preparing for her journalism exams.

Surabhi Bhalla, 26, a resident of Budh Vihar, said she was on the second floor when the fire broke out. "I was admitted to the hospital last Saturday after being down with a stomach infection. I was sleeping in my room with my daughter and husband.

# No respite from heat, temp touches 43.8 C: IMD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

No respite from scorching heat as the maximum temperature in the national Capital on Saturday settled at 43.8 degrees Celsius, which is four notches above the normal for this time of the year.

According to the data released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) the observatories at Ridge, Ayanagar, Najafgarh, Pitampura, Palam, and Lodhi Road recorded maximum temperatures of 44.9 degrees Celsius, 44.4 degrees Celsius, 46.3 degrees Celsius, 46.1 degrees Celsius, 44.2 degrees Celsius and 43.8 degrees Celsius respectively. Delhi witnessed the peak power demand of 6991 at 2:23 pm on Saturday. On the other hand, several

areas in the national Capital were reeling under the short supply of water. The IMD has forecast no respite for Delhiites from the scorching heat till June 15.

Delhi has been reeling under severe heatwave conditions for the last one week and the conditions are expected to be the same till June 15, owing to the dry weather.

The data showed that the minimum temperature settled at 29.7 degrees Celsius, two notches warmer for this season. The relative humidity in Delhi on Saturday at 8:30 in the morning was 30 per cent and 15 per cent at 5:30 in the evening, recorded at Safdarjung observatory. The IMD said that partly cloudy skies with thunder, lightning, and strong surface winds are expected in

Delhi in the next few days but no major respite from the heat is likely till June 15.

Heatwave conditions are expected to prevail in isolated pockets of Delhi, Haryana, northwest Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh till June 15, a Skymet Weather report said. The air quality index (AQI) in Delhi was recorded in the 'poor' (285) category around 6:45 pm, according to System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) data.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'. According to sources in discoms, Delhi witnessed peak power demand of 6991 at 2:23 pm on Saturday.



A girl holding an umbrella during the hot summer day in New Delhi on Saturday RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER

The national capital witnessed the minimum power demand of 4441 at 8:23 am, the sources said. The city witnessed the peak power demand 7166 MW on June 9, which is the highest

this year. While informing about the reason behind the peak power demand of the city, they said that the cooling load is the main reason behind Delhi's power load.

# Capital records 795 fresh Covid cases, positivity 4.11%

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital on Saturday recorded 795 fresh coronavirus cases and zero death, while positivity rate increased to 4.11 per cent, according to data shared by the health department.

Delhi had reported 899 new coronavirus cases and four related deaths on May 13, while the positivity rate had stood at 3.34 per cent, according to official figures.

On both Thursday and Friday, daily cases were reported in excess of 600, and positivity rate had stood at over 3 per cent. Experts said people lowering their guard and vacation period are main reasons

behind recent increase in coronavirus cases in national capital. Experts say everybody has lowered guard so such spikes (of cases) will happen. "Patients are recovering in three to four days, and are having fever, body ache or loose motions. The good thing is that there is no lung involvement and requirement of oxygen," experts said.

With the new cases, Delhi's COVID-19 tally has increased to 19,12,063 while death toll stood at 26,218, the department said in its latest bulletin. Delhi on Friday had logged 655 COVID-19 cases and two fatalities, while positivity rate was 3.11 per cent. The city on Thursday had logged 622

COVID-19 cases and two more fatalities, while the positivity rate was 3.17 per cent. A total of 19,326 COVID-19 tests were conducted in the capital the previous day, it said.

On May 15, Delhi had reported 613 Covid cases with a positivity rate of 2.74 per cent and three deaths. The number of daily COVID-19 cases in Delhi had touched the record high of 28,867 on January 13 this year during third wave of pandemic. The city recorded a positivity rate of 30.6 per cent on January 14, the highest during third wave of pandemic. The number of active COVID-19 cases in Delhi increased to 2,247 from 2,008 on Friday, the bulletin said.

# Ensure highest standards of construction in Dwarka Park, LG directs officials

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday visited the site of the upcoming Bharat Vandana Park in Dwarka, and directed officials to ensure the "highest standards" of construction in the project.

The park coming up in the Dwarka sub-city will be spread over 220 acres. It will be a major tourist attraction as it will have replicas of important monuments from different states, an eco-forest zone, and lakes, officials said.

The Delhi L-G, who is also the chairman of the Delhi Development Authority, tweeted pictures from his site visit. "Took an on-site stock of the works & progress at the ambitious upcoming Bharat Vandana Park in Dwarka. Stressed on pristine quality & instructed officials from @official\_dda & NBCC to try complete the project before scheduled deadline, ensuring highest standards of construction," he said.



released by the LG office, "After undertaking a round of and witnessing the civil works in progress, the LG directed senior officials of the DDA and NBCC present on the occasion to ensure highest standards of construction through constant quality controls and checks. He also warned the officials that no compromise in quality will be accepted."

"Asking the officials to try and complete the project for dedication to the nation and the city before the scheduled deadline, Saxena said that he will personally monitor physical progress through site visits on a monthly basis," it said. "Satisfied with the progress



made so far, despite the pandemic related lockdowns and periodic pollution related bans on construction in the city, the LG said that this iconic project will not only bring about a sea change in the landscape of the area but also emerge as a world class recreational and educational tourist destination for residents of Delhi and its visitors alike," the statement said.

Rajinder Nagar bypoll: Pathak seeks time from Asthana to discuss law and order in area

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party's candidate for Rajinder Nagar Legislative assembly by-elections Durgesh Pathak sought time from Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana to hold a discussion on the law and order situation in the area.

This comes after a video went viral showed four people robbing jewellery worth Rs 10 lakhs from an NBT Suraksha Kavach member at gunpoint. The incident took place on June 6. Pathak said that there is an urgent need to revamp the law and order situation and hence, he has written a letter to the CP, Asthana, to seek an appointment to meet with him.

"I have written a letter to Delhi Police Commissioner to give some time from his busy schedule. I want to have a detailed discussion on the law and order situation in Rajinder Area with them and how we can revamp same.

# Delhiites face heat of rising vegetables prices



SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

The shortage in supply of vegetables in the national Capital has led to the price inflation with tomato and potato being sold at Rs 60-80 per kg and Rs 23-25 respectively, across the mandis in the city.

Not only is the soaring price troubling the residents of the Capital but the vegetable vendors are also facing the heat of rising prices of vegetables. The Pioneer inspected

several mandis and vegetable wholesale markets across the city to find the reason behind the increased prices of tomatoes. If the prices of tomatoes and potatoes were compared to last year's prices there is a major hike, which was never recorded before as the rate nearly doubled in major cities within a year.

Currently, the tomato prices skyrocketed to Rs 60-80 per kg in Delhi against Rs 15 per kg last year, according to

the survey. This year, the prices of potatoes in the Capital city increased to Rs 25 against Rs 20 as of June 1, 2021.

The prices of onion also hiked by over Rs 10 per kg, as it costs Rs 30 per kg against Rs 20 in month of June last year. The rate of the lemon nearly doubled over the year as it costs Rs 120 per kg this year against Rs 60 per kg last year.

Meanwhile, the cost of other vegetable like cauliflower Rs 30, brinjal Rs 30 and bottlegourd Rs 100 is the same as compared to the last year.

Charan Kumar, a vegetable vendor said that the prices of tomatoes and potatoes are rising due to the tight supply from the major sellers including Bangalore and Nasik.

The current supply is coming from Haryana, but the quantity is not sufficient which is the biggest reason behind the price surge. Another vegetable vendor, Lalan Yadav said that retail also they have to sell the vegetables at the purchasing

rates only as people have stopped buying them, due to increased prices. In market, there is a shortage of tomatoes and it's getting very difficult for sellers to even earn their living by selling them.

Another major problem is the scorching heatwave in the city following which vegetables get destroyed as buyers are not stepping out in market instead they prefer to order vegetables online.

On other hand, the buyers were seen buying tomatoes in very less quantities, hoping that prices will come down soon.

Arun Singh, a buyer said that budget of household is deteriorated because of sudden increase in the prices of majorly used vegetable, like tomatoes and potatoes. It is very difficult for a middle class family to survive in this situation. Another buyer, who did not wish to be named, said that he is sole earner in family and monthly his income is Rs 20,000.

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02 Group Housing Plots (Freehold)

IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS	
Date	Scheduled Activity
14.06.2022 (Tuesday) from 11:00 AM	Opening of Help desk, Starting and commencement of Registration & EMD Submission
16.07.2022 (Saturday) upto 06:00 PM	Closing Time of Registration & EMD Submission
19.07.2022 (Tuesday)	Bidding for Residential, Old Scheme Residential, Institutional Plots and CNG / Green Fuel Sites
20.07.2022 (Wednesday)	Bidding for Industrial Plots, Kiosks and Mobile Towers
21.07.2022 (Thursday)	Bidding for Commercial Plots, Small Size Residential Plots of LAB Rohini & EHS
22.07.2022 (Friday)	Bidding for Built up Shops, Group Housing Plots and LPC-ASMPCH

For details about plots / properties and procedure, kindly visit our e-auction website [www.ddaeauction.co.in](http://www.ddaeauction.co.in) or click the e-auction link available on our site [www.dda.gov.in](http://www.dda.gov.in) and download the same through "E-AUCTION OF PROPERTIES" link available at home page of e-auction website. Intending bidders may register themselves / their firms online at the above site through "REGISTER WITH US" link. Kindly note that digital signature of all the intending bidders are mandatory to participate in e-auction of DDA. A help desk has been opened at the Nagrik Suvidha Kendra, Ground Floor, D Block, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi which will start from 14.06.2022 to assist the intending bidders in the ongoing process of e-auction. For obtaining digital signatures and registration / training of prospective bidders and for any other clarification on e-auction process, please contact our help desk no. 08045811365 / 8800991846 / 8800378610 from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm (all working days) or at: [ddauction@etenderwizard.com](mailto:ddauction@etenderwizard.com)

Sanjeev Kumar, Commissioner (LD)

For further details contact: Commissioner (LD), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi - 110 023

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# Didi takes lead to forge Opp unity ahead of Prez poll

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday took the lead in attempting to forge a unity for the Presidential polls and wrote to almost all the Opposition leaders requesting them to attend a meeting on June 15 convened by her in the national Capital to prepare a joint strategy for the upcoming elections.

Besides writing to Congress chief Soni Gandhi, Banerjee also reached out to the opposition CMs and leaders to

participate in the joint meeting in the national capital, according to a statement issued by her party.

Banerjee addressed her letter to 22 Opposition leaders including Sonia Gandhi, Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray, Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan, Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik, Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin, Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren and Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann.

"Our hon'ble chairperson @MamataOfficial calls upon all progressive opposition forces to

meet and deliberate on the future course of action keeping the Presidential elections in sight, at the Constitution Club, New Delhi on June 15 2022 at 3 PM," Banerjee's Trinamool Congress said.

With the Presidential election round the corner, Banerjee, with an initiative of strong & effective opposition against the divisive forces, has reached out to the opposition CMs and leaders to participate in a joint meeting," the party statement said.

Incidentally, TRS chief and Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao too have



been active in the last couple of months in trying to forge a Opposition unity for the Presidential polls. Recently, KCR took a whirlwind tour of Delhi and Punjab meeting SP leader Akhilesh Yadav and

Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, doling out financial assistance to farmers before moving south to meet the likes of former PM HD Deve Gowda.

The Presidential polls will be held on July 18, with 4,809 members of the electoral college comprising MPs and MLAs set to elect the successor to incumbent Ram Nath Kovind. The counting of votes will take place on July 21.

A senior member of the TMC said that the purpose of the mission is basically to consider some names which can be proposed as a unanimous opposition candidate. "There

might be discussion on whether there is a possibility for the opposition parties to announce the name of their candidate before BJP announces their nominee," he said.

He also said that preliminary discussions between Mamata Banerjee and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav have already been made about the probable names of candidates.

Soon after BJP clinched victory in the Assembly polls in four out of five states, including Uttar Pradesh, Banerjee said on the floor of the Bengal

assembly that the game is not over yet since BJP will not be able to get its candidate elected in the presidential polls with support from other parties.

Sources said Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge talked to Banerjee over the phone and that the Trinamool Congress chief wanted the opposition to come up with a consensus candidate for the top post. Kharge's discussion with Banerjee came a day after Congress president Sonia Gandhi talked to her as well as Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin and Maharashtra CM Uddhav

Thackeray, besides NCP leader Sharad Pawar and CPI-M leader Sitaram Yechury, asking them to organise a common meeting to discuss the issue of a joint presidential candidate, the sources said.

Kharge spoke to Tiruchi Siva of the DMK, Sanjay Singh of the AAP, Elamaram Kareem of the CPI-M and Binoy Viswam of the CPI on Friday.

He will also hold discussions with Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray in this regard later. He said he will be holding talks with other opposition leaders soon. Kovind's term ends on July 24.

## India logs 8K fresh Covid cases, highest in 3 months, amid fears of 4th wave

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

With over 8,000 Covid infections on Saturday, India has shown the highest daily cases in over three months amid fears of a fourth Covid wave.

A total of 8,329 fresh Covid-19 cases and 10 deaths were reported in the last 24 hours. While the total active cases stand at 40,370, the country saw 4,216 recoveries. On Friday, the country had reported 7,584 cases and 24 deaths.

A senior health official said that a total of 8,329 new coronavirus cases were reported in a span of 24 hours, while the death toll due to the disease has climbed to 5,24,757, as per the data updated at 8 am.

The active cases now comprise 0.09 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.69 per cent, the Ministry said.

Seventeen districts in the

country, including seven in Kerala and five in Mizoram, are reporting a weekly Covid positivity rate of more than 10 per cent, while in 24 districts, including seven in Kerala and four each in Maharashtra and Mizoram, the weekly positivity rate is between five and 10 per cent, the official said.

The top 10 states and Union territories of concern in terms of an increasing positivity rate are Kerala, Mizoram, Goa, Maharashtra, Delhi, Haryana, Sikkim, Chandigarh, Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh.

Six states and Union territories -- Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Delhi, Haryana and Tamil Nadu -- have more than 1,000 active Covid cases.

An increase of 4,103 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours, the data showed.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 2.41 per cent and the weekly positivity rate at 1.75 per cent, according to



the health ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has surged to 4,26,48,308, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.21 per cent.

The cumulative number of doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 194.92 crore.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5, 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and the one crore mark on December 19, 2020.

The country crossed the grim milestones of two crore cases on May 4, 2021, and three crore on June 23.

Ten new fatalities due to the disease were recorded in the country -- five from Kerala, two from Delhi and one each from Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

## ED files chargesheet against Nagpur-based lawyer, brother in money-laundering case

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it has filed a "prosecution complaint" (charge sheet) under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Nagpur-based lawyer Satish Uke and his brother Pradip Uke in connection with an alleged land grabbing case against them.

In an official statement, the ED said the prosecution complaint was filed before a special PMLA court in Mumbai on May 26 and it took cognisance of it on June 9.

The PMLA case against Uke brothers was filed on the basis of the FIRs registered against them by the Nagpur Police (Ajni police station) in which they were charged with land grabbing in the district by creating "fake and forged" documents.

The brothers were arrested

by the ED on March 31 from Nagpur after searches were carried out at their premises. They are currently in jail as part of judicial custody.

"Satish Uke and Pradip Uke had resorted to fraud and forgery and created fake power of attorney in the name of Chandrashekar Namdevrao Matte and also forged signatures of government officials and usurped lands from the original owners with dubious and mala fide intentions," the ED alleged in its prosecution complaint.

"They have, thereafter, sold some of the lands and amassed huge amount through illegal means and thus have dealt with the proceeds of crime connected with the scheduled offence and thereby have committed offences under section 3 of the PMLA," the agency further alleged, while adding that the proceeds of crime in the case have been quantified at Rs 38 crore. The lawyer is known



for filing petitions against senior BJP leader and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis over the last few years. In one of his applications, he had sought criminal proceedings against Fadnis for "non-disclosure" of criminal cases in his election affidavit.

Uke had alleged that the BJP leader filed a false affidavit in 2014 by hiding two criminal

cases -- of cheating and forgery -- registered against him in 1996 and 1998. He had also petitioned the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court seeking a police probe into the "suspicious and untimely" death of CBI judge BH Loya, who presided over the trial in the Sohrabuddin Shaikh alleged fake encounter case. The Judge had died reportedly due to a heart attack in Nagpur in 2014.

## Jharkhand Govt moves SC challenging HC's maintainability seeking probe against CM

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The Jharkhand Government has moved the Supreme Court challenging an order of the high court which had accepted the maintainability of a plea seeking probe against Chief Minister Hemant Soren for alleged irregularities in grant of mining lease and also into the transactions of some shell companies allegedly operated by his family members and associates.

On June 3, the Jharkhand High Court had said it was of the considered opinion that the writ petitions cannot be thrown away on the ground of maintainability and it will proceed to hear the matters on merit.

"This court, after having answered the

issue, as framed by this court, and on the basis of discussions made hereinabove, is summing up its view and is of the considered opinion that the writ petitions cannot be thrown away on the ground of maintainability," a division bench of the high court had said in its order.

Prior to that, on May 24, the apex court had asked the high court to first hear the preliminary objections on the maintainability of the public interest litigation (PIL) seeking probe in the matter.

The top court had observed that the high court had itself in its May 13 order said that it would deal with the maintainability of PIL, filed by Shiv Shankar Sharma, upfront and then it would go into

the merit of allegations levelled in the petition.

"The issue of maintainability should be dealt with by the high court on the next date of listing when the proceedings are taken up. Based on the outcome of the objections to the maintainability of the proceedings, the high court may thereafter proceed in accordance with law," the apex court had said.

It had passed the May 24 order on the petition filed by the state against two orders of the high court in the matter. The top court had also made clear that it has not made any observation with regard to the merit of the case and has not dealt with the allegations levelled in the petition.

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## Air Asia India's two A320 aircraft face snags, return safely to Delhi

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

AirAsia India's two A320 aircraft, which were heading from Delhi to Srinagar, returned to the national Capital as they faced technical snags mid-air within a span of approximately six hours on Saturday.

The Delhi-Srinagar flight IS-712, which was being operated on A320 aircraft with registration number VT-APJ, took off from the Delhi airport at around 11.55 AM, a passenger who was on this flight said. After the plane was mid-air for about half an hour, the pilot announced that the aircraft (VT-APJ) is facing a technical snag,

the passenger stated. VT-APJ aircraft safely returned to Delhi airport at around 1.45 PM with all the passengers, the passenger stated.

Another A320 aircraft with registration number VT-RED was arranged by the airline to conduct the IS-712 flight so that the stranded passengers could be taken to Srinagar, the passenger said.

Some time after the second plane took off, the pilot announced that this aircraft (VT-RED) too has developed a technical snag and it will have to return to the Delhi airport, the passenger said. VT-RED aircraft safely returned to Delhi airport at around 5.30 PM with the passengers.

The airline then told the passengers that they can either cancel their flight and get the refund, or they can book another flight within the next 30 days, the passenger stated. When asked about this incident, AirAsia India spokesperson said, "AirAsia India confirms that flight from Delhi to Srinagar had to return back to Delhi on account of a technical snag. The aircraft is being operated after rectification of the snag to recover continuity of operations to and from Srinagar."

"We regret the inconvenience and disruption to the travel plans of our guests and reaffirm our commitment to safety in all our operations," the spokesperson noted.

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"We regret the inconvenience and disruption to the travel plans of our guests and reaffirm our commitment to safety in all our operations," the spokesperson noted.

## Nadda interacts with heads of missions of 13 countries at BJP's national HQ

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

BJP president JP Nadda on Saturday interacted with the heads of missions of 13 countries, including the United Kingdom and Nepal envoy, at the party's national headquarters. This was the fourth such meeting with the envoys.

"It is our belief that there should be better communication between the political system and political parties of different countries so that we can understand the vision of each other," Nadda said, addressing the visiting diplomats. The BJP firmly believes in a healthy democracy and shared cultural ties, he added.

The 'Know BJP' campaign

is the BJP's initiative to introduce the party's vision, mission and work culture to different countries of the world. With today's dialogue, the BJP president has so far interacted with the envoys of 47 countries including the European Union. The meeting was attended by the heads of missions from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Serbia, Spain, United Kingdom, Jamaica, Mauritius, Nepal and Thailand. Vijay Chauthaiwale, the BJP foreign affairs wing chief and the party's national spokespersons Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and Guru Prakash were also present.

A documentary showing the history and development



tal journey of the BJP was shown to the envoys. Nadda

later answered the questions of the diplomats in detail.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel, Goa CM Pramod Sawant and other dignitaries, during the 25th Western Zonal Council meeting, in Diu.

PTI

## Orchids vanishing rapidly from wild in India due to habitat destruction

**ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Colourful fragile orchids that have endured for millennia are now increasingly vanishing from the wild in India due to habitat destruction and degradation, climate change as well as illegal trafficking, according to a new report by the World Wildlife Fund, India.

Orchids are one of the most threatened flowering plants in the world. India is no exception. Illegal harvesting and overexploitation pose a severe threat with species like

Renanthera spp and a few slipper Orchids such as Cypripedium, Paphiopedilum, showing significant impact from the practice.

"Orchids are illegally collected and traded for ornamental plants, traditional medicine, and food. The increasing demand for it is leading to unsustainable harvesting practices. Orchids like Eulophia dabia and Dactylorhiza hatagirea populations are succumbing to overharvesting also," said the report 'Factsheet on India's Orchids in illegal wildlife

trade."

The increasing demand for Orchids for various purposes leads to unsustainable harvesting practices in India. Protected species of orchids such as Blue Vanda and Ladies Slipper have been found in wildlife seizures across India, the report pointed out.

Globally, Orchids belong to the second-largest family of flowering plants and have some of the most prized and traded flowers.

India is home to about 1256 Orchid species, of which 307 species are endemic to the



country. Despite such vast biodiversity, only 11 species

are protected under India's Wildlife (Protection) Act.

Export of orchid species specified under the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, CITES (Appendix I), and in the EXIM Policy of India is prohibited.

IUCN Global Red List has assessed about 1641 Orchid species (July 2020) of which 747 are categorised as 'Threatened' with 197 listed as 'Critically Endangered'.

In India, Arunachal Pradesh is home to about 40% of Orchid species in the country and is often referred to as the 'Orchid Paradise of India.' About 8% of all flowering

plants are Orchids. "Since Orchids are highly sensitive to the climatic changes in their habitat and have extensive, interconnected symbiotic relationships with organisms like insects, plants, and fungi, their presence is a positive indicator of the healthy ecosystem."

The report stresses on raising awareness among local people to encourage them to preserve the wild Orchid species in their area.

Also, medicinally and ornamentally valuable orchids such as Renanthera, Cypripedium, Paphiopedilum,

Habenaria intermedia, H. pubescens, Eulophia dabia, Dactylorhiza hatagirea, threatened by illegal trade and over-exploitation should be included in various Schedules of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 of India for protection and to restrain their overharvesting from the wild. The report also favours promotion of sustainable and traceable use of threatened Orchids in legally permitted areas through village level Biodiversity Management Committees as an additional source of livelihood.



# ‘Russia said to be using more deadly weapons’



AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian and British officials warned on Saturday that Russian forces are relying on weapons able to cause mass casualties as they try to make headway in capturing eastern Ukraine and fierce, prolonged fighting depletes resources on both sides.

Russian bombers have likely been launching heavy 1960s-era anti-ship missiles in Ukraine, the U.K. Defense Ministry said. The Kh-22 missiles were primarily designed to

destroy aircraft carriers using a nuclear warhead.

When used in ground attacks with conventional warheads, they "are highly inaccurate and therefore can cause severe collateral damage and casualties," the ministry said. Both sides have expended large amounts of weaponry in what has become a grinding war of attrition for the eastern region of Ukraine.

Russia is likely using the

5.5-tonne anti-ship missiles because it is running short of more precise modern missiles, the British ministry said. It gave no details of where exactly such missiles are thought to have been deployed.

As Russia also sought to consolidate its hold over territory seized so far in the 108-day war, U.S. Defense Secretary said Moscow's invasion of Ukraine "is what happens when oppressors trample the rules that protect us all."

"It's what happens when big powers decide that their

imperial appetites matter more than the rights of their peaceful neighbours," Austin said during a visit to Asia. "And it's a preview of a possible world of chaos and turmoil that none of us would want to live in."

A Ukrainian governor accused Russia of using incendiary weapons in the village of Vrubivka in Ukraine's eastern Luhansk province, southwest of the fiercely contested cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk.

While the use of flamethrowers on the battlefield is legal, Serhii Haidai, governor of Luhansk province, alleged the attacks overnight caused widespread damage to civilian facilities.

"Information about the number of victims in Vrubivka, in the Popasnyanska district, is being specified. At night, the enemy used a flamethrower rocket system - many houses burnt down," Haidai wrote on Telegram on Saturday.

The accuracy of Haidai's claims could not be immediately verified. Sievierodonetsk and neighboring Lysychansk are the last major areas of Luhansk province remaining under Ukrainian control.

Haidai said the Russians were destroying critical industrial facilities, including railway depots, a brick factory and a glass factory. During a visit to

Kyiv by the European Union's top official, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called for a new round of "even stronger" EU sanctions against Russia.

Zelenskyy called for the new sanctions to target more Russian officials, including judges, and to hamper the activities of all Russian banks, including gas giant Gazprom's bank, as well as all Russian companies helping Moscow "in any way."

He spoke during a brief press appearance with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen at the heavily guarded presidential office compound in Kyiv.

The pair discussed Ukraine's aspirations for EU membership. Zelenskyy said Ukraine "will do everything" to integrate with the bloc.

Von der Leyen praised Ukraine's "strength and resilience" in the face of Russia's "horrible and atrocious" invasion and said the EU would assist with reconstruction so the country could "rise from the ashes."

"We are mourning with you. We share the tears with you," she said. Von der Leyen was on her second visit to Ukraine since Russia invaded its neighbor. She was one of the first European leaders to go to

Ukraine during the war. Russian-installed officials in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region have set up a company to buy up local grain and resell it on Moscow's behalf, a local representative told the Interfax news agency on Saturday. Ukraine and the West have accused Russia of stealing Ukraine's grain and causing a global food crisis that could cause millions of deaths from hunger.

Yevgeny Balitsky, the head of Zaporizhzhia's pro-Russian provisional administration, said the new state-owned grain company has taken control of several facilities. He said "the grain will be Russian" and "we don't care who the buyer will be."

Balitsky added that the company is considering the purchase of grain from both this year and last year's harvests, with collection beginning in two weeks. It was not clear if the farmers whose grain was being sold by Russia were getting paid.

He said his administration would not forcibly appropriate grain or pressure producers to sell it. Russian forces occupying the southern Ukrainian city of Melitopol began handing out Russian passports to local residents Saturday, according to Russian state TASS agency.



## Zelenskyy didn't want to hear US info, says Biden

PTI ■ LOS ANGELES

President Joe Biden, speaking to donors at a Democratic fundraiser here, said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy "didn't want to hear it" when US Intelligence gathered information that Russia was preparing to invade.

The remarks came as Biden was talking about his work to rally and solidify support for Ukraine as war continues into its fourth month. "Nothing like this has happened since World War II.

I know a lot of people thought I was maybe exaggerating. But I knew we had data to sustain he" — meaning Russian President Vladimir Putin - "was going to go in, off the border."

## Civilians flee intense fighting in contested eastern Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

Civilians fled intense fighting in eastern Ukraine on Friday as Russian and Ukrainian forces engaged in a grinding battle of attrition for key cities in the country's industrial heartland.

Mostly women, children and elderly residents left on a special evacuation train that departed from the city of Pokrovsk and headed west.

"We live on the front line now," said Svitlana Kaplun, whose family fled as shelling reached their neighborhood in the city of Krasnohorivka. "The kids are worried all the time, they are afraid to sleep at night, so we decided to take them out."

After a bungled attempt to overrun Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, in the early days of the war, Russia shifted its focus to an eastern region of coal mines and factories known as the Donbas. The area borders Russia and has been partly controlled by Moscow-backed separatists since 2014.

# Told repeatedly he lost, Trump refused to go: 1/6 panel

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump was told the same thing over and over, by his campaign team, the data crunchers, and a steady stream of lawyers, investigators and inner-circle allies: There was no voting fraud that could have tipped the 2020 presidential election.

But in the eight weeks after losing to Joe Biden, the defeated Trump publicly, privately and relentlessly pushed his false claims of a rigged 2020 election and intensified an extraordinary scheme to overturn Biden's victory.

When all else failed in his effort to stay in power, Trump beckoned thousands of his supporters to Washington on January 6, 2021, where extremists groups led the deadly Capitol siege.

The scale and virulence of that scheme began to take shape at the opening House hearing investigating 1/6. When the panel resumes Monday, it will delve into its



findings that Trump and his advisers knew early on that he had in fact lost the election but engaged in a "massive effort" to spread false information to convince the public otherwise.

Biden spoke of the importance of the committee's investigation in remarks Friday in Los Angeles.

"The insurrection on January 6 was one of the darkest chapters in our nation's history," the president said, "a brutal assault on our democracy".

Americans, he said, must "understand what truly happened and to understand that same forces that led to January 6 remain at work today."

# China's military activity around Taiwan threatens region: US

AP ■ SINGAPORE

The American Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin stressed American support for Taiwan on Saturday, suggesting at Asia's premier defence forum that recent Chinese military activity around the self-governing island threatens to change the status quo.

Speaking at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Austin noted a "steady increase in provocative and destabilising military activity near Taiwan," including almost daily military flights near the island by the People's Republic of China.

"Our policy hasn't changed, but unfortunately that doesn't seem to be true for the PRC," he said.

Austin said Washington remains committed to the "one-China policy," which recognises Beijing but allows informal relations and defence ties with Taipei.

Taiwan and China split during a civil war in 1949, but China claims the island as its own territory and has not ruled out using military force to take it. China has stepped up its mil-



itary provocations against democratic Taiwan in recent years, aimed at intimidating it into accepting Beijing's demands to unify with the communist mainland.

"We remain focused on maintaining peace, stability and the status quo across the Taiwan Strait," Austin said in his address. "But the PRC's moves threaten to undermine security, and stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific."

He drew a parallel with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, saying that the "indefensible assault on a peaceful neighbour has galvanised the world and ... Has reminded us all of the dangers of undercutting an international order rooted in rules

and respect."

Austin said that the "rules-based international order matters just as much in the Indo-Pacific as it does in Europe." "Russia's invasion of Ukraine is what happens when oppressors trample the rules that protect us all," he said.

"It's what happens when big powers decide that their imperial appetites matter more than the rights of their peaceful neighbours. And it's a preview of a possible world of chaos and turmoil that none of us would want to live in."

Austin met Friday with Chinese Defence Minister Gen Wei Fenghe on the sidelines of the conference for discussions where Taiwan featured prominently, according to a senior American defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity to provide details of the private meeting.

Austin made clear at the meeting that while the U.S. Does not support Taiwanese independence, it also has major concerns about China's recent behaviour and suggested that Beijing might be attempting to change the status quo.

# Hindus in Bangladesh not enthusiastic about CAA: Community leader

PTI ■ DHAKA

Hindus living in Bangladesh are not enthusiastic about the CAA which seeks to provide Indian citizenship to the persecuted minorities in the neighbouring countries, a prominent community leader said on Saturday, asserting that the minority community will get its rights by staying here in the Muslim-majority country.

Moninder Kumar Nath, a prominent leader of the Hindu community and president of Mahanagar Sarvajan Puja Samiti, said that a lot remains to be done for the community.

Hindus in Bangladesh will have to deal with their own challenges, Nath told PTI-Bhasha. He said that the Hasina government is also taking steps in this direction.

Commenting on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of India, Nath said that the Hindu community living in Bangladesh is not very enthusiastic about it and does not consider it to be of much help.

"We do not need it, this is our country and we will get our rights by staying here," he said. The Government of India

passed the CAA in 2019 which is aimed at providing Indian citizenship to the minorities who have been persecuted in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

There is a demand for a separate minority ministry and a minority commission on his agenda and he is trying his best to get them for his community after the next year's elections, Nath said.

"Our demand for a minority ministry and minority commission is yet to be fulfilled. We are raising our voice for this right of ours," he said.

Nath said that the interests of the minorities will be protected through the minority ministry and the minority commission.

He said that Hindus and other minorities living in Bangladesh are safer than ever under the regime of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, but more steps are needed to be taken.

It is worth mentioning that last year, communal incidents took place in the Brahmanbaria and Cumilla areas and spread to Chittagong. Durga Puja pandals were targeted in the

attacks. Nath claimed that the situation was seeing an improvement due to the prompt steps and action taken by the Hasina government.

He said that due to the measures taken by the government, the number of Durga Puja pandals in the country has increased from 15,000 to nearly 30,000 in the last 12 years.

Mahanagar Sarvajan Puja Samiti is a central body for religious affairs of Hindus that allows the community members to perform Durga Puja celebrations in Bangladesh.

Nath said that in the last few years, the Hasina government has taken excellent steps in matters related to the minority community, due to which the untoward incidents happening here have been brought under control.

This has had an impact on the representation of the community in the government institutions, he said, adding that the number of people from the minority community in the bureaucracy has increased.

In the Hasina government, there is a ministry of religious affairs, but there is no separate ministry of minority affairs.

# Japan vows bigger security role in region to tackle threats



AP ■ SINGAPORE

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced plans on Friday to boost his country's diplomatic and security role in the Asia Pacific to tackle what he described as growing threats in the region amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Kishida said Japan will consider acquiring a preemptive strike capability in response to an increasingly assertive China, North Korea and now Russia - a controversial plan that critics say would violate Japan's war-renouncing Constitution.

"Ukraine today may be East Asia tomorrow," Kishida said in a keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, an Asian security forum.

Kishida stressed the importance of cooperation among regional partners, and said he will lay out a "free and open Indo-Pacific plan for

peace" by next spring in which Japan will provide development aid, patrol boats, maritime law enforcement capabilities and other assistance to countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific - where China is attempting to increase its influence - to help them better guard themselves.

Japan has been promoting a "free and open Indo-Pacific" security and economic framework among like-minded democracies as a counter to China's rise. Japan will provide such support to at least 20 countries, train at least 800 maritime security personnel and provide about USD 2 billion in assistance over the next three years, he said.

Kishida has already pledged to bolster Japan's military capabilities and spending. Japan's attempt to expand its security role in Asia, where many countries suffered from its World War II aggression, is a sensitive issue.

Kishida assured the audience that Japan's defense enhancement will be transparent and remain within the scope of its Constitution.

He said the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region is deteriorating because of increasing tensions in the East and South China seas and around Taiwan, which China claims as its territory.

## Early morning earthquake jolts Kathmandu

**Kathmandu:** A 4.7-magnitude earthquake shook Kathmandu in early hours of Saturday, jolting many out of their sleep and forcing them to run outside.

The earthquake was recorded by National Seismological Centre at 2.36 am, with epicentre being in Bhaktapur district, 15 km east of capital city. The earthquake was felt in and around Kathmandu valley. However, no damage to life or property was reported immediately after incident. (PTI)

## North Korean leader reaffirms arms buildup in party meeting

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un doubled down on his arms buildup in face of what he described as an aggravating security environment as he concluded a major political conference that came as US and South Korean officials say North Korea is pressing ahead with preparations for another nuclear test that could be imminent.

Kim's comments published by North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency on Saturday didn't include any

direct criticism of United States or rival South Korea amid a prolonged deadlock in nuclear diplomacy during three days of discussions that wrapped up Friday.

Kim defended his accelerating weapons development as a rightful exercise of sovereign rights to self-defense and set forth further "militant tasks" to be pursued by his armed forces and military scientists, according to agency. But report didn't mention any specific goals or plans regarding testing activity, including detonation of a

nuclear device. The plenary meeting of ruling Workers' Party's Central Committee also reviewed key state affairs, including efforts to slow a COVID outbreak North first acknowledged last month and progress in economic goals Kim is desperate to keep alive amid strengthened virus restrictions.

"(Kim) said right to self-defense is an issue of defending sovereignty, clarifying once again party's invariable fighting principle of power for power and head-on contest," KCNA said.

## Italy locates 7 bodies at scorched crash site of helicopter

**Rome:** Italian rescuers on Saturday located bodies of seven people, including four Turks and two Lebanese, who died when their helicopter crashed in a heavily forested, mountainous area in north-central Italy during a storm, authorities said.

Air Force Col Alfonso Cipriano, who heads Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and coordinated search, said rescuers were tipped off to crash site after a mountain runner reported seeing what he thought was a part of mangled

chopper during an excursion on Mount Cusna on Saturday morning. Air crews confirmed site and ground crews initially located five bodies, and then other two, Cipriano told *The Associated Press*.

The location was in a hard-to-reach valley and chopper remains were hidden to air rescuers from the lush tree cover, but some branches were broken and burned. The helicopter disappeared from radar screens Thursday morning as it flew over province of Modena in Tuscan-Emilian Apennines.

# Thousands rally for gun reform after surge in mass shootings



AP ■ WASHINGTON

Thousands of protesters are expected to rally in Washington, DC, Saturday and in separate demonstrations around the country as part of a renewed push for nationwide gun control. Motivated by a fresh surge in mass shootings,

from Uvalde, Texas, to Buffalo, New York, protesters say lawmakers must take note of shifting public opinion and finally enact sweeping reforms.

Organizers expect the second March for Our Lives rally to draw around 50,000 demonstrators to the Washington Monument. That's far less than

the original 2018 march, which filled downtown Washington with more than 200,000 people. This time, organizers are focusing on holding smaller marches at an estimated 300 locations.

"We want to make sure that this work is happening across the country," said Daud Mumin, co-chairman of the march's board of directors and a recent graduate of Westminster College in Salt Lake City. "This work is not just about DC, it's not just about senators."

The first march was spurred by the February 14, 2018, killings of 14 students and three staff members by a former student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. That massacre sparked the creation of the youth-led March

For Our Lives movement, which successfully pressured the Republican-dominated Florida state government to enact sweeping gun control reforms. The Parkland students then took aim at gun laws in other states and nationally, launching March for Our Lives and holding the big rally in Washington on March 24, 2018.

The group did not match the Florida results at the national level, but has persisted in advocating for gun restrictions since then, as well as participating in voter registration drives.

Now, with another string of mass shootings bringing gun control back into the national conversation, organizers of this weekend's events say the time is right to renew their push for

a national overhaul. "Right now we are angry," said Mariah Cooley, a March For Our Lives board member and a senior at Washington's Howard University. "This will be a demonstration to show that us as Americans, we're not stopping anytime soon until Congress does their jobs. And if not, we'll be voting them out."

The protest comes at a time of renewed political activity on guns and a crucial moment for possible action in Congress. Survivors of mass shootings and other incidents of gun violence have lobbied legislators and testified on Capitol Hill this week.

Among them was Miah Cerrillo, an 11-year-old girl who survived the shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. She told law-

makers how she covered herself with a dead classmate's blood to avoid being shot. On Tuesday, actor Matthew McConaughey appeared at the White House briefing room to press for gun legislation and made highly personal remarks about the violence in his hometown of Uvalde.

The House has passed bills that would raise the age limit to buy semi-automatic weapons and establish federal "red flag" laws.

But such initiatives have traditionally stalled or been heavily watered down in the Senate. Democratic and Republican senators had hoped to reach agreement this week on a framework for addressing the issue and talked Friday, but they had not announced an accord by early evening.



# ‘India’s economy recovered despite three Covid waves’

**Washington:** The Indian economy has rebounded strongly despite three significant Covid-19 waves, the US Treasury has said in a report to Congress.

India's acute second wave weighed heavily on growth through the middle of 2021, delaying its economic recovery, the Treasury said in a semi-annual report.

"However, economic activity rebounded strongly in the second half of the year as India's vaccination rollout accelerated," the Treasury said on Friday, as it praised India's vaccination efforts.

As of the end of 2021, about 44 per cent of India's population was fully vaccinated, it said.

After contracting seven per cent in 2020, the output returned to pre-pandemic levels by the second quarter of 2021, with full-year 2021 growth of eight per cent, it added.

Since the beginning of 2022, India faced a third major outbreak driven by the Omicron variant, but the number of deaths and broader economic fallout has been limited,



it said.

The Indian government continued to provide fiscal support to the economy against the backdrop of the pandemic in 2021, it said. The authorities estimate that the overall fiscal deficit will reach 6.9 per cent of GDP for the 2022 fiscal year, which is higher than deficits prior to the pandemic, it said.

According to the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of India kept its key policy rates unchanged at four per cent since May 2020,

# Top WFP official to visit Sri Lanka amid looming food shortage

**PTI ■ COLOMBO**

The top official of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is planning to visit Sri Lanka on the invitation of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe at a time when the crisis-hit island nation is grappling with an impending food shortage.

The Prime Minister's request comes after experts have warned of a possible shortage of rice and other essential food items from September this year because of lower production due to the impact after President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had enforced a ban on fertilisers in April last year and due to the inability to import amid an acute dollar shortage. Prior to the fertiliser ban, Sri Lanka was self-sufficient in rice production.

Wickremesinghe said he spoke to David Beasley, the Executive Director at the UN WFP on Friday and invited him to visit Sri Lanka. "He accepted my invitation and is planning to visit shortly. We appreciate all the support extended to us by the WFP," Wickremesinghe tweeted on Friday.

On Friday, the United Nations appealed for USD 47.2 million to provide life-saving assistance to crisis hit Sri Lanka, as it noted that shortage of medicines and surgical consumables will ease in the medium term with the support of a credit line from India and other partners.

The UN team in Sri Lanka and non-governmental organisations launched the joint Humanitarian Needs and Priorities Plan on Thursday, calling for USD 47.2 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.7 million people worst-hit by the economic crisis in Sri Lanka over a four-month period between June and September.

Additionally, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is also planning to send an in-person mission in the coming weeks to Sri Lanka for policy discussions on a financial arrangement, its spokesman has said but emphasised that the country needs to take steps to restore debt sustainability before the global lender can move on a financing programme.

# WTO meet: India to pitch for permanent solution for food security; protect interest of farmers, fishermen

**New Delhi:** India will press for a permanent solution to the issue of public stock holding of grains for food security programmes and strongly protect the interests of farmers and fishermen at the 12th ministerial meet of the World Trade Organization, beginning on Sunday.

The Indian delegation is being led by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal.

The four-day 12th ministerial conference (MC) will start on June 12 in Geneva. The meeting is taking place after a gap of four years and in the backdrop of the Ukraine-Russia war and uncertain global economic situation.

The last time it was held in Argentina in 2017. MC is the highest decision-making body of the 164-member World Trade Organization (WTO).

The main issues in the meeting include WTO response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including patent waiver; agriculture and food security; WTO reforms; proposed fisheries subsidies agreement; and extension of the moratorium on electronic transmission. Agriculture and food security:



importance for India," an expert said.

India has sought a fast-track resolution of the issue with no linkage with domestic support.

As part of a permanent solution, India has asked for measures like amendments in the formula to calculate the food subsidy cap and the inclusion of programmes implemented after 2013 under the ambit of the Peace Clause.

Under the Peace Clause, WTO members agreed to refrain from challenging any breach of the prescribed ceiling by a developing nation at the dispute settlement forum of the WTO. This clause will stay till a permanent solution is found to the food stockpiling issue.

India also wants the WTO to allow exports of foodgrains from public stocks for international food aid and for humanitarian purposes, especially on a government-to-government basis, an official said.

The current WTO norms do not permit a member country to export foodgrains from public stock holdings as they are subsidised grains. WTO Reforms:

A top government official has stated that India would support efforts to improve the working of the WTO but its key pillars like special and differential treatment for less developed and developing nations, equal voice and dispute settlement mechanism should be retained while undertaking reforms.

The WTO is a multilateral body, which formulates rules for global exports and imports and adjudicates disputes between two or more than two countries on trade-related issues.

"We believe that WTO is an important organisation. Its multi-lateral nature should never be affected and therefore, we support any efforts to improve its working."

"But the pillars of the WTO -- which are special and differential treatment for the less developed and developing nations, consensus based approach that is the equal voice that every member has, transparency requirements, rule of law and dispute settlement mechanism."

It is estimated that 34 per cent of global stocks are over-fished compared with 10 per cent in 1974. These figures reflect that the fish reserves are being exploited at a rate where the fish population cannot replenish itself.

Countries, including Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the EU, Canada and the US, are pressing for disciplining the subsidies. Nations like India, and Indonesia want flexibility under special and differential treatment.

"India is committed to concluding the negotiations so long as it provides space for equitable growth and freedom in developing fishing capacities for the future without locking members into disadvantageous arrangements in perpetuity," a source said.

Members are negotiating a fishery subsidies agreement with the objective of eliminating subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and curbing subsidies for overfished stocks; and over-fishing and overcapacity with a view to promoting sustainable fishing.

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Notis is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client i.e. Fullerton India Credit Company Limited that Mr. Yuvraj Singh and Mr. Suri are the owners of Shop No. 23, Anaj Mandi, Jhansi, Tehsil Jhansi District Palwal by Sale Deed dated 27.05.2020, Registration No. 57 & Transfer Deed dated 30.11.2021. Registration No. 2706. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owners want to mortgage the said shop and intend to obtain loan in the name of M/s Choudhary Lal Chand Trading Co. from our client against the said shop & the original Conveyance Deed dated 04.04.2013 (Doc No.55) & original Sale Deed dated 27.05.2020 in respect of said property/Shop have been lost. If anybody has any objections upon the ownership of above owner over the said shop, its mortgage/lien, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

**Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)**  
208, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Park, Moh Nagar, N. Delhi-110 011  
Ph: 011-4112527-28 kumarassociates.advocates@gmail.com

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Notis is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client i.e. Yes Bank Limited that Mrs. Ipsitha Bawa & Mrs. Sandeep Kaur are the owner of Third floor with roof rights property bearing No.M-372 Situated at The Hindustan Co. Operative House Building Society Ltd., presently known as Guru Hari Kishan Nagar, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi and have inherited the property after the death of Mrs. Hardeep Kaur and Mr. Jagjit Singh. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner (through their attorney Mr. Harvinder Singh Gandhi) wants to sell the said floor to a person who intends to obtain loan from our client against the said floor, if anybody has any objection's upon the ownership of above owner over the said floor, its said mortgage/lien, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

**Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)**  
208, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Park, Moh Nagar, N. Delhi-110 011  
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**R.O. No. 323 Tender Cancellation Notice Dt. 10.06.2022**

Due to unavoidable reasons following e-Tender (NCB) invited by the office of the Executive Engineer Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar has been cancelled. Details of e-Tender (NCB) is as under:

Tender No.: NCB/18/EE/PCM-DKP/TN/2021-22

Name of work: Treatment of Hill Slope behind the intake of Ichari Dam.

**Executive Engineer**  
**Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar**

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

## Union Territory of JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SOPORE

**Standard Bidding Document For**

- Laying & Fitting of Delivery and Distribution Pipe network of along with pipe fittings and control valves
- Construction of Service Reservoirs (SRs), Chowkidar Quarter, Saddle Block, Sluice chamber, clear water sump, Revamping of Filtration plant, Distribution System Chain link Fencing, Construction of Staff Quarter, Intake Channel, Retaining / Protection Wall, Approach Road, at various SOPORE of Water Supply schemes of Kashmir Province of UT of PHE Division J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

**FRESH E-NIT No. 15/JJM/JSDS OF 06/2022, Dated: 09 -06-2022**

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Sopore, invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders / Firms / Companies/ relevant classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government for below mentioned works at various Water Supply schemes of PHE Division Sopore of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

The bidding process shall be completed online on [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd consisting of Financial Bid on over all percentage rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

**Sr.No 1. Particulars of the work :-** Laying and fitting of Raw water/supply mains and distribution network , construction of intake chamber, sluice chamber, chowkidar quarter and allied works under JJM for WSS Mirangund Tanghar (under JJM)

**Estimated Cost (Lacs):- 198.42**

**Tender fee (in Rs) :-** Rs. 500/-

**Earnest money Deposit :-** 02% advertised Cost

**Bid Validity :-** 90 Days

**Time of Completion of work (days) :-** AAY

**Sr.No 2. Particulars of the work :-** Laying and fitting of pipes, construction of chowkidars quarter , chainlink fencing , anchor block and retaining wall for WSS Bohripura Sheeraz Colony (under JJM)

**Estimated Cost (Lacs):- 157.26**

**Tender fee (in Rs) :-** Rs. 500/-

**Earnest money Deposit :-** 02% advertised Cost

**Bid Validity :-** 90 Days

**Time of Completion of work (days) :-** AAY

**Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**

**The tender inviting authority is Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Division SOPORE**

**The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM).**

**Critical Dates:**

I) Publish Date :- 10-06-2022

II) Document Download start Date :- 10-06-2022

III) Clarification Start date :- 10-06-2022

IV) Clarification End date :- 16-06-2022

V) Bid submission Start date :- 10-06-2022

VI) Bid submission End date :- 22-06-2022

VII) Date of Bid opening :- 23-06-2022

1. Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in)

2. The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in). The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading them on the tender portal.

3. The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the District Superintending Engineer Hyd. Circle Sopore. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table.

a. The cost of tender documents should be in form of DD/TR/e challan in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Division Sopore.

4. The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of TR/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/DR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial cover.

5. The bid shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder with draws his bid before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the same shall be considered to be in violation of bid security declaration and shall be dealt with accordingly and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.

6. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).

7. Queries by email if any should be made at [phesopore@gmail.com](mailto:phesopore@gmail.com)

**ANNEXURE I**

**SCHEME WISE LIST OF WORKS**

**S. No. 1, Name of Water Supply Scheme :-** WSS Mirangund Tanghar, **Description of work :-** Laying and fitting of Raw water / supply mains and distribution network , construction of intake chamber, sluice chamber, chowkidar quarter and allied works under JJM for WSS Mirangund Tanghar (under JJM). **Jal Shakti (PHE) Division :-** SOPORE, **Estimated cost (in Lacs) :-** 198.42, **Time of completion (Days) :-** 90, **Class of Contractor :-** AAY

**S. No. 2, Name of Water Supply Scheme :-** Laying and fitting of pipes construction of chowkidars quarter , chainlink fencing , anchor block and retaining wall for WSS Bohripura Sheeraz Colony (under JJM). **Jal Shakti (PHE) Division :-** SOPORE, **Estimated cost (in Lacs) :-** 157.26, **Time of completion (Days) :-** 60, **Class of Contractor :-** AAY

**Sd/- Executive Engineer**  
**Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Sopore**

**No. DIPK-3818/22**  
**Dated: 11-06-2022**

# ‘Gasoline average hits new high of \$5 in USA’



**New York:** The nationwide average price for a gallon of gasoline has topped USD 5 for the first time ever.

Auto club AAA said the average price on Saturday was USD 5.00. Motorists in some parts of the country, especially California, are paying far above that.

The national average price has jumped 19 cents in just the past week, and it's up USD 1.93 from this time last year.

There are several reasons for the surge in gasoline prices. Americans typically drive more starting around Memorial Day, so demand is up. Global oil prices are rising, compounded by sanctions against Russia, a leading oil producer, because of its war against Ukraine. And there are limits on refining capacity in the United States because some refineries shut down during the pandemic. Add it all up, and the cost of filling up is draining money from Americans who are facing the highest rate of inflation in 40 years.

California has the highest average price, at USD 6.43, according to AAA. The lowest average is Mississippi, at USD 4.52. While this is the first time breaking the USD 5 barrier, it's still not a record when inflation is taken into account.

# Economic power will make India audible, persuasive, says Union Minister Rao

**New Delhi:** Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh on Saturday stressed on the significance of a strong economy and said the economic power is going to make India not only audible, but also persuasive in its dealings with the world.

He was speaking at the National Conference on Competition Law as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations under Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

"When India became independent, most of the industry was government owned, public owned... Today the government is not a regulator anymore. We are not inspectors anymore... We are facilitators," the Union Minister of State for Corporate Affairs said.

He further noted that "the economic power is going to make us not only audible, but also persuasive in whatever we wish to implement in this world."

According to official data, India's economy grew 8.7 per cent in



last fiscal year (2021-22), as against 6.6 per cent contraction in the previous year. "When the Modi government came to power, India clocked a GDP of 6.4 per cent and today we are running at 8.7 per cent , as per the latest data. If we can achieve this growth post-Covid, we are progressing faster than most economic superpowers... All our neighbours... What can we not achieve in

**“WHEN THE MODI GOVERNMENT CAME TO POWER, INDIA CLOCKED A GDP OF 6.4 PER CENT AND TODAY WE ARE RUNNING AT 8.7 PER CENT , AS PER THE LATEST DATA. IF WE CAN ACHIEVE THIS GROWTH POST-COVID, WE ARE PROGRESSING FASTER THAN MOST ECONOMIC SUPERPOWERS... ALL OUR NEIGHBOURS... WHAT CAN WE NOT ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT 25 YEARS?”**

the next 25 years?," he said.

In order to achieve high economic growth he said "we must all work together... Sabka saath... Sabka vikas... Sabka sahyog..."

Singh released a film on the journey of CCI, advocacy booklets in regional languages, and a special issue of CCI's quarterly newsletter, Fair Play, and felicitated winners of the essay and quiz competitions.

# Axis Energy commissions 445-MW solar plant in Raj

**New Delhi:** Axis Energy Ventures India on Saturday said it has commissioned a 445 MW solar plant in partnership with Brookfield Renewables in Rajasthan.

In a statement, Axis Energy Ventures India Private Limited said the project is part of the joint venture platform 'ABC Renewables' -- signed with Brookfield Renewables -- to set up a 5 gigawatt (GW) large utility renewable energy portfolio in India.

"Under ABC Renewables platform, Axis Energy and Brookfield Renewable (have) commissioned 445 MW solar project in a record time of 6 months in Jodhpur, Rajasthan," the statement said.



The company did not give any financial details of the project.

According to industry estimates, to set up every 1 MW of solar capacity, an investment of over 4.5 crore is required.

The project is expected to avoid 6 lakh tonnes of CO2 emissions per year or the equivalent of planting 24 million trees while generating 800 GWh (gigawatt hour) of clean energy annually, the company said. K Ravi Kumar Reddy, Chairman and Managing Director, Axis Energy said, "The platform has showcased immense success and takes pride in commissioning the project that brings environmentally-friendly objectives which the country awaits. We further hope and contemplate to take up projects that will be best of contributions to the environment".

Hyderabad-based Axis Energy is a decade-old developer of wind and solar projects.

# Number of income tax returns rising: CBDT Chairman

**Panaji:** The number of income tax returns has increased in FY22 over the previous fiscal, Central Board of Direct Taxes Chairman Sangeeta Singh said on Saturday.

Talking to PTI, Singh said the number of income tax returns last fiscal was 7.14 crore against 6.9 crore in the preceding financial year, showing a clear growth.

"There is an increase in the base of taxpayers and the filing of revised returns," she added.

The Board is witnessing an increase in tax collection, which usually happens if the country is showing an upward trend in economic growth, the chairman said, adding that "if the economic activities are going high, the purchases and sales will also increase".

Unless the economy is on an upward trend, taxes cannot go on an upward trend, she noted. "Secondly, the department is also seeing growth in the payment of taxes because of the initiative and call by Prime Minister Narendra Modi about

digital India," she said, adding that during the COVID-19 period, people have started paying more digitally, which is "probably leading to a change in the minds of the people".

The initiative of providing information to the taxpayers is also contributing to the awareness about paying their taxes on time. "We have also undertaken large-scale digitalisation over the years," she said.

For FY22, the tax collection is more than Rs 14 lakh crore, which is fairly good compared to the collection for FY20, as per the chairman.

She said that the outreach programmes are organised by CBDT through Principal Chief Commissioners, making people aware of the payment of taxes.

Initiatives like Updated Returns is also fetching good response. "Once you pay the return, and if we get additional information, then we ask you whether you have covered it, you can file the updated return," Singh said.





# Indian men stun Belgium

## Defeat Olympic champions 5-4 in FIH Pro League

PTI ■ ANTWERP (BELGIUM)

Goalkeeper PR Sreejesh saved a penalty stroke in an exhilarating shoot out after making some breathtaking saves in regulation time as the Indian men's team stunned Olympic champions Belgium 5-4 in the first match of the two-legged FIH Pro Hockey League here on Saturday.

The Indian team was down 1-3 with just eight minutes left in the match but made it 3-3 to force a penalty shoot out.

Sreejesh foiled an attempt from Alexander Hendrickx, who was taking his third PS, when the shoot out was locked 4-4 and Akashdeep Singh found the net to make it 5-4 for the Tokyo Games bronze medallists.

Sreejesh, as usual, was brilliant under the bar, foiling a number of attempts from the hosts throughout the match but his two saves in the final quarter proved to be crucial.

The eventful first quarter ended in a goalless stalemate with Sreehesh doing a fantastic job under the bar, making



two saves. It was India who had the first opportunity to open the scoring but both the short corners went abegging as the home goalie foiled those attempts with his rock solid defence.

Akashdeep too fluffed a shot near the goalpost which on any other day he would have flicked inside the post.

However, early in the sec-

ond quarter, India found the net when Abhishek's shot rebounded off the custodian's leg and Shamsheer Singh (18') tapped the high ball into the net after it came off the post.

Belgium found the equaliser through Cedric Charlier (21'), who deflected a pass from Nicolas de Kerpel in lightening quick time. It was Arthur van Doren, who pushed

it towards Kerpel from the left flank. Both the teams got a penalty corner each but did not utilise.

The hosts broke the deadlock in the third quarter with Simon Gougard (36') slotting a fierce hit home after being fed by Florent van Aubel, who controlled the high ball nicely to push it towards his teammate. Sreejesh saved India



from more ignominy when he made two heroic saves, parrying the ball away with his stick, stretched fully on his right. De Kerpel, though, finally breached the defence with a furious hit off a penalty corner to make it 3-1.

India were given a lifeline in the match when Manpreet Singh won a penalty which Harmanpreet converted and two minutes from the hooter, Jarmanpreet Singh found the equaliser through a short corner.

India opted for a variation as Jugraj let it slip towards Jarmanpreet from behind his back after faking a stroke, and the latter blasted that into the net.

# Test of Pant's captaincy as India plot comeback versus Proteas

PTI ■ CUTTACK

Accidental captain Rishabh Pant will expect an improved showing from the India bowlers as he plots a comeback against a marauding South Africa in the second T20 of the five-match series here on Sunday.

Leading India for the first time ever, Pant had to swallow a bitter pill when David Miller and Rassie van der Dussen shot down an imposing 212 with utmost nonchalance to go up 1-0 in the series.

The southpaw also had a forgettable Indian Premier League where he failed to lead Delhi Capitals to the playoffs.

Seen as a future white-ball captain, Pant's stakes have suddenly come down post-IPL and that has coincided with the resurgence of Hardik Pandya.

Returning to full fitness, the pace bowling all-rounder took the IPL by storm not only by his form but by pulling off a coup as he led Gujarat Titans to the title in their debut season.

Amid the growing chorus of 'Hardik Pandya -- the next white-ball captain of India', Pant will be under scrutiny again as he masterminds a comeback.

It may still be early days for Pant the leader, but his body language never stood out and he looked under pressure on his captaincy debut.

He also made a debatable decision to underbowl the IPL Purple Cap winner Yuzvendra Chahal, fresh from claiming 27 wickets for runners-up Rajasthan Royals. At Kotla, the leggie bowled only two full overs.

As for Pandya, fresh after his historic suc-



cess with GT, continued from where he left in the IPL.

Pandya, who last played for India in November last year in the 2021 T20 World Cup, dazzled with the bat with a 31 not out from 12 balls to prop the total past 200.

But he failed to impress with the bowl and leaked 18 runs in his only over.

The big headache for Pant would be the bowling department where he would have to make a call between Arshdeep Singh and pace gun Umran Malik.

# Rahul Srivasthav becomes India's 74th Grandmaster



PTI ■ CHENNAI

2500 on Friday.

To become a GM, a player has to secure three GM norms and cross the live rating of 2500 Elo points.

India one more step closer to getting 100 Grandmasters! Meet our newest addition to the elite club, 19-year-old Rahul Srivasthav from Telangana, India's 74th Grandmaster! A big congratulations to Rahul, his coach and family!" All India Chess Federation president Sanjay Kapoor tweeted on Saturday.

Bharath Subramaniam had become the country's 73rd GM in January. The legendary Viswanathan Anand is India's first GM, which he became way back in 1988.

Srivasthav had already secured five GM norms and achieved the title when he crossed the rating threshold of

# Indian women go down fighting against Belgium in opening tie

PTI ■ ANTWERP (BELGIUM)

Rusty-looking Indian women's hockey team gave away possession quite easily a number of times before putting up a fight in the fourth quarter but eventually lost 1-2 to Belgium in its first of the two-legged FIH Pro League tie here on Saturday.

An attacking start to the match saw both the teams creating opportunities in the opening minutes, but it was



Belgium who got better as they took the lead through captain Nelen Barbara in the third minute.

The hosts piled pressure on India with their structured attack and earned two penalty corners in the 5th and 7th respectively, but the Indian defence stood tall to deny them from scoring the second goal.

Minutes later, India earned their first penalty corner of the match, but Rani's attempt went off target, thus missed out on

fetching an equaliser in the first quarter.

Trailing by a goal, India started putting pressure on the Belgian defence and midfield. They even created an opportunity in the opening minutes, but Neha's pass to Salima Tete inside the circle went wide.

The home side responded with a quick counterattack which helped them earn back-to-back penalty corners, but yet again missed out on converting their chances.

# Top-ranked Swiatek pulls out of Berlin with shoulder problem

AP ■ BERLIN

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek has pulled out of next week's grass-court tournament in Berlin because of a shoulder problem, saying Friday she needs to rest up ahead of Wimbledon.

Swiatek is coming off her second French Open title after beating American teenager Coco Gauff in the final at Roland Garros on Saturday. She had been

set to open her grass-court season in Berlin but joined No. 2 Anett Kontaveit, No. 3 Paula Badosa and former No. 1 Naomi Osaka in pulling out of the event.

Swiatek wrote on Twitter that she was withdrawing because of "a recurrent discomfort I am feeling in my shoulder." She added that "I will focus on recovery and rest in order to be ready for Wimbledon."

# Around 200 players to go under hammer at GPBL auctions

PTI ■ BENGALURU

As many as 200 players will go under the hammer when the auction for the inaugural edition of the Grand Prix Badminton League (GPBL) takes place here on Sunday.

The GPBL has eight franchises — Bengaluru Lions, Mangalore Sharks, Mandya Bulls, Mysore Panthers, Malnad Falcons, Bandipur Tuskers, KGF Wolves and Kodagu Tigers. Each team comprises of maximum of eight players each and should include one icon player, a minimum of two Tier-1 and Tier-2 players respectively and also a minimum of two female players including icon category.



Each team has a star mentor including Kidambi Srikanth, Sai Praneeth, Ashwini Ponappa, Chirag

Shetty, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, HS Prannoy, PV Sindhu and Jwala Gutta.

# SAI to conduct detailed investigation next week, Cycling contingent returns home



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As part of its detailed investigation, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) will speak with entire cycling con-

tingent that travelled to Sloveina, where a female cyclist accused sacked national coach R K Sharma of 'inappropriate behaviour'.

While the female cyclist,

who made the allegations had returned from Slovenia earlier this week, the rest of the contingent including five male cyclist and coach Sharma got back on Saturday morning.

"The SAI probe panel had already spoken to the coach and female cyclist, now it will be speaking to other members of the contingent next week as part of a detailed investigation," said a SAI source. The training-cum-competition trip to Slovenia was arranged to help Indian team prepare well for the Asian Track Cycling Championships, scheduled to be held in the national capital from June 18 to 22.

# Nikhat, Lovlina punch their way to CWG berths

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reigning world champion Nikhat Zareen and Olympic bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain on Saturday sealed their berths in the Indian team for the Commonwealth Games with dominating wins in the selection trials here. While Nikhat (50kg), the two-time Strandja Memorial gold medallist, blanked Haryana's Minakshi 7-0 in an unanimous decision, Lovlina (70kg) outclassed Railways' Pooja by an identical margin.

Nitu Ghanghas (48kg) and Jaismine Lamboriya (60kg) were the other boxers, who also sealed spots for the quadrennial event, which is set to be held



in Birmingham from July 28 to August 8. Six-time world champion MC Mary Kom missed out on a chance to fight in what would have been her last CWG. The veteran boxer was forced to withdraw after

suffering a knee injury midway into her bout on Friday.

The 39-year-old will thus be unable to defend her light flyweight title. The Manipuri had created history at Gold Coast in 2018 by becoming the

first Indian women pugilist to win a gold medal at the event.

At the Indira Gandhi Stadium, Nikhat looked in control throughout her bout, landing clear punches as she danced around the ring dodging her opponent. The Telangana boxer looked at ease in her new weight category. She had won the world championship gold in the 52kg weight division last month.

"It was very difficult for me to get back into my competitive zone because since World Championships I hadn't trained. I went home and then there were a lot of programmes," Nikhat told reporters after the bout.

"I know the game that I

have shown here at the trials is not even 50 per cent of what I showed at the World Championships but still I managed to beat all my opponents by unanimous decision," she added.

Tokyo bronze medallist Lovlina, who is coming off an underwhelming World Championships campaign, too put up a convincing performance to punch her way to the Birmingham event. "I'm happy that I have won. I trained a lot after the world championships for this because I was well-prepared for the worlds."

I have to give my hundred percent now, Lovlina, a two-time world championship bronze medallist, said.

# India qualify for FIFAE Nations Cup 2022

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India on Saturday qualified for the FIFAE Nations Cup 2022 for the first time ever.

The esports showpiece event is set to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark this year, from July 27 to July 30.

India defeated Korea Republic and Malaysia in the FIFAE Nations Series 2022 playoffs to seal their qualification.

The journey for the Indian football team kicked off in January last year when All India Football Federation signed the participation agreement with FIFA for the FIFAE Nations Series 2021.

India was among 60 coun-



tries to participate and was placed in the Middle East & Africa Zone. India finished third in its zone, narrowly missing out on a place in the FIFAE Nations playoffs 2021.

India ended the season with

a global ranking of 22 and finished above heavyweights such as Italy, Argentina and Spain in the 2021 rankings.

For the 2022 season, India was moved to Asia/Oceania region and was awarded a spot

in the Play-Ins, which would provide direct qualification to the Playoffs (the last stage before the Nations Cup).

During the play-ins, India played 32 games across four match weeks and got 12 wins, 11 losses and nine draws.

With this, India successfully qualified to the Playoffs by finishing second in the Consistency Points chart, moving one step closer to the FIFAE Nations Cup 2022. During this period, India also achieved its highest global ranking of 19.

Going into the Playoffs, the goal for India was simple. Win two matches and seal the spot at the showpiece event and that is exactly what they have done.

AP ■ AUSTIN

Jesús Ferreira had a night to remember against an overwhelmed opponent in the United States' World Cup send-off. The 21-year-old forward tied the U.S. International record with four goals that included a hat trick in a 13-minute span Friday night during a 5-0 rout over Grenada.

The hard-to-evaluate performance against the world's 170th-ranked team came in a CONCACAF Nations League match played 164 days before the Americans' opener in Qatar. Just three warmup matches remain before U.S. Coach Gregg Berhalter picks his World



Cup roster. "I think I'm in a good spot," said Ferreira, a son of former Colombian national team midfielder David Ferreira, the 2010 Major League Soccer MVP. "I'm not going to focus on the goals because I know

they will come. Just having a good game will do the job."

Ferreira is competing for a roster spot and playing time with Ricardo Pepi, Haji Wright, Josh Sargent, Jordan Pefok and Daryl Dike. After an array of

misfires, Ferreira put the 15th-ranked U.S. Ahead in the 43rd minute, then added goals in the 54th, 56th and 78th to give him seven in 12 international matches. His four goals matched Landon Donovan (2003), Joe-Max Moore (1993), Buff Donelli (1934) and Archie Stark (1925).

"There's a certain validation that you get as a striker when you do hit the back of the net," Berhalter said.

Paul Ariola added a goal in the 62nd as the Americans stretched their home unbeaten streak to 26 games since a September 2019 loss to Mexico, matching the team record set from 2013-15.



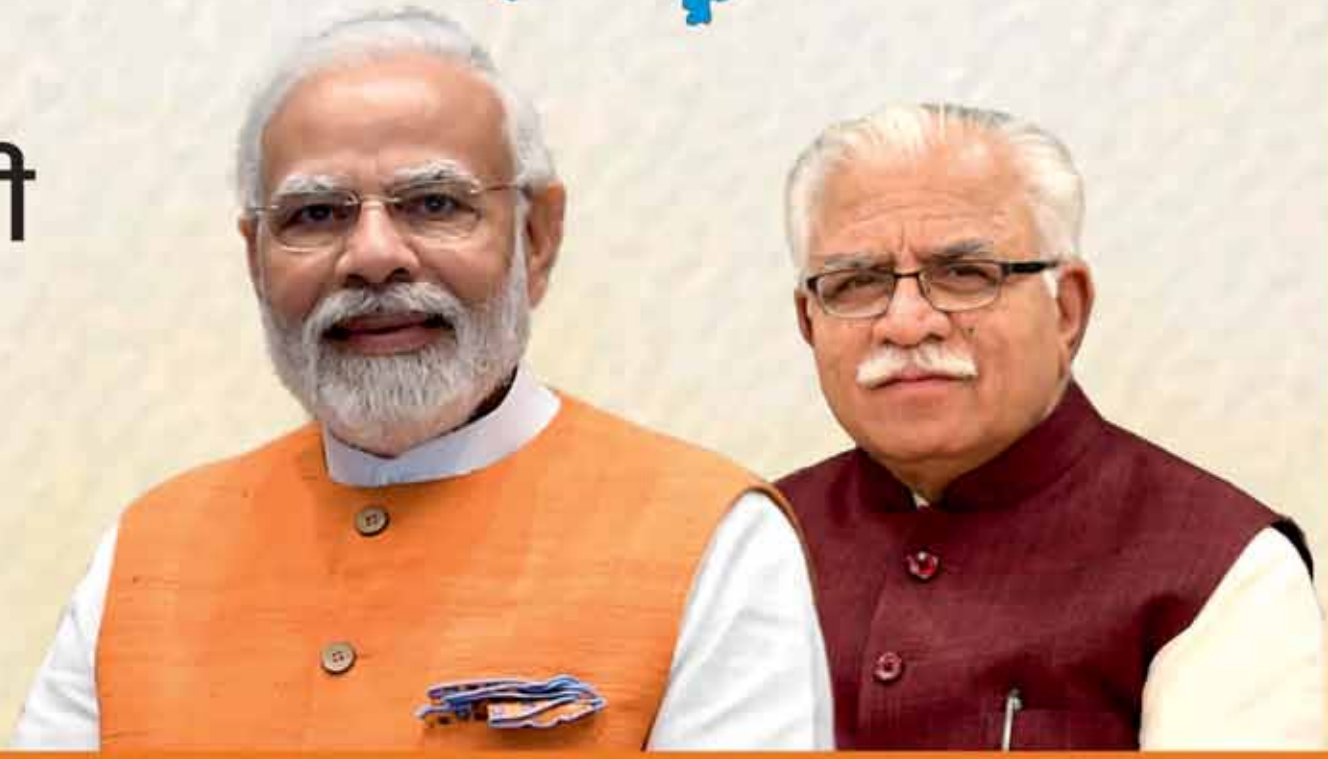


हरियाणा सरकार

75  
आज़ादी का  
अमृत महोत्सव

8 साल  
सेवा, सुशासन  
गरीब कल्याण

# प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी के नेतृत्व में हरियाणा 8 सालों से प्रगति के स्वर्णिम पथ पर अग्रसर



## किसान कल्याण - बीज से बाज़ार तक

- MSP पर सर्वाधिक 14 फसलों की खरीद
- किसानों को फसल खरीद का सीधा भुगतान 72 घंटे में
- 50 हजार करोड़ रुपये की राशि सीधे किसानों के खाते में
- किसानों को विभिन्न कल्याणकारी योजनाओं के 11,776 करोड़ रुपये के सीधे नकद लाभ
- हर खेत-स्वस्थ खेत अभियान - 87 लाख सॉयल हेल्थ कार्ड वितरित



## स्पोर्ट्स पॉवर हाऊस - हरियाणा

- हरियाणा के पदक विजेता खिलाड़ियों को देश में सर्वाधिक नकद पुरस्कार
- टोक्यो ओलंपिक - देश के 7 में से 3 पदक हरियाणा के खिलाड़ियों ने जीते
- टोक्यो पैरालंपिक - देश के 19 में से 6 पदक हरियाणा के खिलाड़ियों ने जीते
- एशियन कुश्ती - देश के 17 में से 13 पदक हरियाणा के खिलाड़ियों ने जीते
- ब्राज़ील डेफलंपिक - देश के 16 में से 6 पदक हरियाणा के खिलाड़ियों ने जीते
- हर पदक विजेता खिलाड़ी को सरकारी नौकरी देने का प्रावधान
- पंचकूला में अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर का वैज्ञानिक प्रशिक्षण एवं पुनर्वासि केन्द्र



## बेटियां हमारा स्वाभिमान

- 'बेटी बचाओ - बेटी पढ़ाओ' कार्यक्रम के फलस्वरूप प्रदेश में जन्म के समय लिंगानुपात की दर 871 से सुधरकर हुई 920
- महिलाओं को पंचायती राज संस्थानों में 50 प्रतिशत प्रतिनिधित्व
- 31 महिला पुलिस थाने स्थापित
- स्नातकोत्तर तक लड़कियों को मुफ्त शिक्षा
- 9.19 लाख मुफ्त रसोई गैस कनेक्शन



## लक्ष्य अंत्योदय - वचन अंत्योदय - पथ अंत्योदय

- मुख्यमंत्री अंत्योदय परिवार उत्थान योजना के तहत एक लाख रुपये से कम वार्षिक आय वाले 2.49 लाख परिवार चिह्नित
- मुख्यमंत्री परिवार समृद्धि योजना - 8.63 लाख परिवारों को 313 करोड़ रुपये जारी
- प्रधानमंत्री स्वनिधि योजना - 30 लाख रेहड़ी-फड़ी वालों को 3200 करोड़ रुपये के ऋण
- अंत्योदय आहार योजना - श्रमिकों को 10 रुपये में भोजन की सुविधा
- कन्यादान योजना - 3 बेटियों की शादी तक 51,000 रुपये कन्यादान
- काम के दौरान दुर्घटना में श्रमिक की मृत्यु होने पर 5 लाख रुपये तक की आर्थिक सहायता



## शिक्षा में बढ़ते कदम

- नई राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति वर्ष - 2025 तक पूर्ण रूप से लागू करने का संकल्प
- के.जी. से पी.जी. तक की शिक्षा एक ही परिसर में शुरू
- सरकारी स्कूलों में पढ़ने वाले विद्यार्थियों को निःशुल्क 5 लाख टेबलेट वितरित
- सुपर-100 कार्यक्रम में सरकारी स्कूलों के गरीब व मेधावी छात्रों को मुफ्त कोचिंग
- हर जिले में कम से कम एक विश्वविद्यालय
- प्ले-वे स्कूल तथा संस्कृति मॉडल स्कूल शुरू



## तकनीक से तरक्की

- परिवार पहचान-पत्र - 60 लाख परिवारों के 2.45 करोड़ सदस्य पंजीकृत
- ऑनलाइन ट्रांसफर पॉलिसी - 92 प्रतिशत अध्यापकों की मनचाही जगह पोस्टिंग
- अंत्योदय सरल पोर्टल - 5.5 करोड़ आवेदनकर्ताओं को घर बैठे प्रदान की गई सेवा
- ऑटो अपील - RTS में 573 सेवाएं अधिसूचित, जिनमें से 528 सेवाएं ऑनलाइन
- ई-ऑफिस - सभी विभागों की फाइलों का त्वरित निपटन
- डॉयल-112 - 5.8 लाख आपातकालीन कॉल पर 15 मिनट के भीतर पहुंचाई गई सहायता



## सबका साथ - सबका विकास

- ई-श्रम पोर्टल पर 52 लाख से अधिक श्रमिक पंजीकृत
- अब वृद्धावस्था सम्मान पेंशन का लाभ घर बैठे
- सभी सामाजिक सुरक्षा पेंशन 1000 रुपये से बढ़ाकर की 2500 रुपये मासिक
- पंचायती राज संस्थाओं में पिछड़ा वर्ग-ए को 8 प्रतिशत आरक्षण
- अनुसूचित जाति के बी.पी.एल. परिवारों की बेटी की शादी पर 71,000 रुपये शगुन
- 85,000 से अधिक युवाओं को योग्यता के आधार पर सरकारी नौकरियां



## स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएं

- मेडिकल कॉलेजों की संख्या 6 से बढ़कर हुई 13
- एम.बी.बी.एस. सीटों की संख्या 700 से बढ़कर हुई 1685
- वर्ष 2024 तक लक्ष्य - 3035 एम.बी.बी.एस. सीटें, हर जिले में एक मेडिकल कॉलेज
- सरकारी अस्पतालों में 550 प्रकार की दवाइयां, 228 प्रकार की सर्जरी, 70 प्रकार की जांच व 21 प्रकार के ऑपरेशन मुफ्त
- आयुष्मान भारत प्रधानमंत्री जन-आरोग्य योजना - 443 करोड़ रुपये की लागत से 4.29 लाख लोगों का मुफ्त इलाज



## आर्थिक सुरक्षा से आत्मनिर्भरता की ओर

- प्रधानमंत्री जन-धन योजना - गरीब परिवारों के 83 लाख से अधिक बैंक खाते खोले
- प्रधानमंत्री जीवन सुरक्षा बीमा योजना - 48 लाख से अधिक लोगों का पंजीकरण
- प्रधानमंत्री जीवन ज्योति बीमा योजना - 17.53 लाख लोगों का पंजीकरण
- अटल पेंशन योजना - 7 लाख से अधिक लाभार्थी पंजीकृत
- प्रधानमंत्री मुद्रा योजना - 19.17 लाख लोगों के 19,381 करोड़ रुपये के ऋण स्वीकृत
- स्टैंड अप इंडिया योजना - 4,529 उद्यमियों के 934 करोड़ रुपये के ऋण स्वीकृत



## ईज़ ऑफ़ डूइंग बिज़नेस

- हरियाणा उद्यम एवं रोज़गार नीति, 2020 - 56 सेवाएं, सेवा का अधिकार अधिनियम के दायरे में
- सूक्ष्म, लघु व मध्यम उद्योगों के लिए एम.एस.एम.ई. विभाग गठित
- पदमा योजना - वन ब्लॉक वन प्रोजेक्ट 143 ब्लॉक में लागू
- नई फार्मास्यूटिकल पॉलिसी लागू
- एच.ई.पी.सी. - 20 विभागों की 100 से अधिक स्वीकृतियां 45 दिन के अंदर
- NCR में वेयर हाऊसिंग एवं लॉजिस्टिक हब विकसित



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I'm going to do  
what I want to do.  
I'm going to be who  
I really am. I'm  
going to figure out  
what that is.  
—Emma Watson



According to the recently released data by the government's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 22,372 housewives took their own lives last year - that's an average of 61 suicides every day or one suicide every 25 minutes, writers BISWAJEET BANERJEE

# DEATH OF INNOCENCE

**May 24, 2022, Bacchor, Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh:**  
A mother and her two daughters consumed poison when police raided their house. The police were looking for her son, who had eloped with a neighborhood girl. For the last one week, the police along with the girl's brothers frequently visited the woman's house, sometimes at odd hours. The last time when the girl's brothers had come, they threatened to rape the girls if they do not reveal the location of the boy. That day, May 24, the police raided the house again when there was no male member present. The woman did not open the door. But the police along with the girl's brothers managed to enter through the backyards. When the woman saw the police with the brothers of the girl, she along with her daughters aged 18 and 16 drank poison and committed suicide.

**May 25, 2022, Dudi, Jaipur, Rajasthan**  
Three sisters, two of them pregnant, walked with a 4-year-old toddler and a 24-day infant for four-kilometer in the scorching heat. These three sisters, aged 27, 23, and 20 years respectively, were married to three brothers, who were well off. The sisters were frequently beaten up. The eldest of these three sisters, who was a post-graduate in Mathematics, tried three to four times to return to her father's house. As the father was poor, he cajoled her to go back to her in-laws. She returned with the hope that the situation will improve. One fine morning in mid-May, she was again beaten up by her husband. She was admitted to a hospital in Jaipur for eight days. When she recuperated, the three sisters decided to end their lives to escape from the routine bashing by their husbands. "We do not want to die ... we want to live. But cannot live in this situation," the youngest of the sisters wrote in her WhatsApp status. The three sisters, along with two kids jumped into the well and committed suicide.  
The two incidents, which took place a day apart in two different states ruled by two different political parties, highlight the dominance of a patriarchal society where women are beaten up at the drop of the hat and are made to live a life no better than animals. "Women suffer in silence. In Indian society, the women take the bashing by husbands or other male members of the family as their bhagya (fate). When the torture crosses the limit, these women decide to end their lives," Nomita P Kumar, an Associate Professor of Giri Institute of Development Studies (GIDS), Lucknow said.  
A recent government survey claims that women were frequently forced to commit suicide as they had faced spousal violence. There is no secret that the daily drudgery can make marriages oppressive and matrimonial homes suffocating. This exactly had happened in the case of the three sisters of Rajasthan. They were subjected to physical abuse on one pretext or the other. In 2018, the eldest of these three sisters registered a case of dowry harassment and domestic vio-

lence against her husband and in-laws at the local police station. She withdrew the case after a compromise between her in-laws and her father.  
These three sisters were married to three brothers in 2015. The sisters were educated—the eldest a post-graduate in mathematics, the second one a Graduate, and the youngest one and the youngest doing her B.Ed. In contrast, their husbands were illiterate. "As the girls were more educated than their husbands this could be a possible reason for friction between them as there are reports that these women were forced to cook in firewood oven despite the household having an LPG connection. The other friction point could be that father of these girls was poor and they did not bring enough dowry," Kumar said and added: "Women are really resilient, but there's a limit to tolerance".  
According to the recently released data by the government's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 22,372 housewives took their own lives last year - that's an average of 61 suicides every day or one suicide every 25 minutes. Housewives accounted for 14.6 percent of the total 153,052 recorded suicides in India in 2020 and women account for more than 50 percent of the total number of suicides.  
The rate of suicide in India is so high that women in India accounted for 36 percent of global female suicide deaths in 2016, a study in The Lancet Public Health said. It further said that women between the age group of 15 and 29 years account for the maximum number of suicides in India. The authors of this study speculate that these sui-

THE RATE OF SUICIDE IN INDIA IS SO HIGH THAT WOMEN IN INDIA ACCOUNTED FOR 36 PERCENT OF GLOBAL FEMALE SUICIDE DEATHS IN 2016, A STUDY IN THE LANCET PUBLIC HEALTH SAID. IT FURTHER SAID THAT WOMEN BETWEEN THE AGE GROUP OF 15 AND 29 YEARS ACCOUNT FOR THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SUICIDES IN INDIA. THE AUTHORS OF THIS STUDY SPECULATE THAT THESE SUICIDES MAY BE RELATED TO A CONFLICT BETWEEN WOMEN'S INCREASING EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT AND THE PERSISTENCE OF THEIR LOWER STATUS IN INDIAN SOCIETY



cides may be related to a conflict between women's increasing education and empowerment and the persistence of their lower status in Indian society.  
But sometimes, it is the societal fear and stigma that forces women to end their lives. In the Baghpat case, humiliated by a police raid after weeks of alleged harassment, the mother, 45, and their two daughters, aged 18 and 16, killed themselves by consuming poison. She belonged to the OBC caste. The girl who eloped with her son Prince belonged to the Dalit community.  
On May 2, the boy, 22, and the girl 19 eloped. The FIR was lodged on May 4. This started days and weeks of harassment. The father was first taken to a police station and was detained for two days where he was beaten up. They asked only one question - where were his son and the girl. A few days later, police started raiding their house. The police used to come with the brothers of the girl. The brothers even threatened to take two daughters of the women with them and rape them.  
"We were scared because the brothers of the girls had repeatedly said that they would take my daughter and keep them at their house till the eloped couple returns. They even threatened to rape them. My wife was so scared that she stopped going out. Even she stopped the daughters to move out of the house because some boys of their own caste passed comments about their brother being eloped with a Dalit girl," the father of the daughter, who is a menial labourer, said.  
He said that his wife was in such a trauma that she used to say who will marry their daughters now. My daughters were also

scared of the way the police and brothers of the girl behaved with them. They used to say it is better to die than to live with this kalank (blot). Fearing the social stigma my wife committed suicide with two daughters.  
"There is a gender bias. The woman will be subjected to ill-treatment if her brother elopes with a girl while the brother of the girl will be spared of the barbs. Why is this? This shows the patriarchal mindset where there are two sets of rules for boys and girls. This biased approach leads a woman to commit suicide as she is vulnerable in this male-dominated society," Lenin Raghuvanshi of People's Vigilance Committee on Human Rights (PVCHR) said.  
Gender bias is an inherent characteristic of a patriarchal society - it is a form that demeans women in a variety of ways. "Patriarchy is a system of social structure and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women. The male-dominant Indian society makes its women habitual of this discrimination. As a result, most women fail to understand their own rights and freedom," Raghuvanshi said  
"Unfortunately part is Indian women have accepted their subordinate position to men and are also part and parcel of the same patriarchal system," he said.  
This is evident in the Rajasthan incident. The mother-in-law of the three women remained a mute spectator as her sons tortured their wives. "Sab bhagya hai (it is all destined)", she uttered as police arrested her three sons.

(The writer is Political Editor, The Pioneer, Lucknow)



# FOURTH WAVE SCARE?

India has shown a 100 per cent increase in new Covid infections so far this month, with the test positivity rate (TPR) — a vital marker in assessing the spread of an outbreak — touching 2.26 recently. This has evoked fear of a fourth Covid wave gripping the Nation. Doctors say no need to panic as no new Variant of Concern has been found. But, it's time to mask up and adopt COVID-19 appropriate behavior (CAB) and work on enhancing immunity, they caution. The HEALTH PIONEER reports

After witnessing a decline in Covid cases till mid-May, the Coronavirus has gradually started moving towards northward, less than a month after the country was opened up post the third wave. This has evoked fear of a fourth wave in the country with some states like Maharashtra and Karnataka bringing back the mask mandate in the public.

On June 11, with 8,329 fresh Covid-19 cases and 10 deaths in the last 24 hours, India reported the highest number of daily cases in months. While the total active cases stand at 40,370, the country saw 4,216 recoveries. On Friday, the country had reported 7,584 cases and 24 deaths.

Analysis of the data shows that in just ten days, cases have doubled while the test positivity rate (TPR) — the number of positive cases out of the total tests conducted has increased to 2.3 per cent, which is the highest since February.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that the pandemic is not yet over. Tedros noted that 18 months after the first mass coronavirus immunization programs began in rich countries, 68 countries have yet to protect 40% of their populations.

While enough vaccines are now available, demand has fallen, he said. "The perception that the pandemic is over is understandable, but misguided," the WHO chief said. "A new and even more dangerous variant could emerge at any time, and vast numbers of people remain unprotected."

However, doctors in India blame Omicron sub-variants to be behind the spike in Covid caseload in the country. And since it is mild in nature, one should not panic, they assured.

India has reported a gradual rise in coronavirus infections since mid-May as BA.4 and BA.5 sub variants of the Omicron strain of SARS-CoV-2 made their way into the country.

The doctors asserted that the ongoing surge in Covid-19 cases in some parts of the country should not be seen as



the start of the fourth wave of the pandemic. Most people are protected by prior infection and high vaccination coverage, they reason.

"It's wrong to say the 4th wave is coming, we need to examine district-level data. A high number of cases in a few districts can't be considered as a uniform increase in cases across the whole country," said Samiran Panda, ADG, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

"There is no reason to believe that the current rise in Covid-19 cases heralds the beginning of the fourth pandemic wave in the country," Dr Sujeet Kumar Singh, director of the National Centre for Disease Control, which heads the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Surveillance (INSACOG) project told a media house.

According to Singh, while

the rise in cases may be the result of the spread of the BA.4 and BA.5 sub variants in several states, it does not mean much given India's hybrid immunity in the wake of prior infection with other omicron sub variants and high vaccination coverage.

Dr N K Arora, chief of the Covid-19 working group of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation, expressed similar views. "Rise in cases was the result of unbridled domestic and international travel by Indians after a long gap." He dismissed fears that the country is in the grip of the fourth wave. Mumbai has been reporting a sharp rise in cases over the past several days. In the first five days of June, about 4,000 cases were registered — higher than the number reported in the whole of March and April and

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CASES RISE”

— DR RAHUL  
BHARGAVA

almost the same as the total in May.

"It's because of businesses and travel returning back to normal and many people getting exposed to the virus," Arora said.

He added, INSACOG's surveillance so far had shown that there is no new variant at play, other than Omicron sub variants.

Dr Rahul Bhargava, from Fortis Hospital in Gurugram, Haryana called for a guarded approach. "These wave patterns will continue to affect mankind. We need to have a strategy by making rapid changes in our daily life, by bringing mask and social distancing back in our lifestyle quickly as cases rise."

"At the same time we need to have robust genome surveillance to keep a watch on the rise of new variants. Research needs to clearly

guide us on the frequency of covid vaccination in the frontline and high risk group," he suggested.

With immunity becoming a buzz word during Covid-19 pandemic, Dr Tanuja Nesari, Director of the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) talked about the importance of holistic well-being in checking the virus as well as other infections. She stressed on adopting time tested home-remedies and ayurvedic immunity herbs like Chyavanprasha, AYUSH Kwath and herbs like Tulsi leaves, crushed ginger and turmeric could be beneficial in developing overall immunity.

In this regard, she cited recovery of over 400 patients from Covid-19 in their institute through Ayurveda. Only 4% needed integration with oxygen, she said.

## HIV-Kala Azar co-infection: New WHO guideline raises hopes

There's good news for patients with VL (visceral leishmaniasis) also known as Kala Azar co-infected with HIV, both deadly diseases, says ARCHANA JYOTI, as she tells you about the World Health Organisation (WHO) new guideline for treatment of such co-infected people usually hailing from poor strata. The new guideline reduces the duration of treatment from 38 to 14 days in India.

The previously recommended treatment for VL-HIV coinfection consisted of intermittent daily injections of liposomal amphotericin B (AmBisome) over a period of up to 38 days. The new evidence-based treatment uses a combination of AmBisome and oral miltefosine. "This has resulted in significantly better efficacy rates," points out Dr Kavita Singh, director, Drugs for Neglected Diseases (DNDi), South Asia.

It is a matter of concern that people living with HIV are 100 to 2,300 times more likely to develop KA, caused by bites from infected female sandflies which attacks the immune system. These co-infected patients are marginalised and stigmatised, face poor treatment outcomes and also serve as a reservoir for KA, which is hampering sustainable elimination efforts in the country.

Kala azar and HIV co-infection is disastrous because both conditions weaken the immune system and reinforce each other, leaving a person vulnerable to other opportunistic diseases like TB, malaria and dysentery.

Because of their weakened immune systems, such patients don't respond well to standard treatments and have higher risk of relapse. If left untreated, VL can be fatal in over 95% of cases. It is caused by the protozoan

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DR KAVITA SINGH,  
INDIA AND SOUTH  
ASIA REGIONAL  
DIRECTOR AT DNDI



V Leishmaniasis is a tropical/sub-tropical disease, spread by the bite of infected sandfly

parasite of the genus Leishmania. Its clinical manifestations include irregular bouts of fever, weight loss and anemia. The new WHO guidelines comes in the wake of positive results of two studies conducted in India by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and in Ethiopia by the DNDi.

In India, the study was conducted on 150 patients between 2017 and 2020 at Patna's Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences (RMRIMS), which is a centre for clinical trials of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The findings were published in the Clinical Infectious Diseases scientific journal on February 11, 2022.

Soon thereafter, the research partners moved the WHO for approval.

"The new treatment regimen is good, as it reduces the use of injectable drugs and significantly increases the chances for patients to be cured," asserts Dr Krishna Pandey, director, Rajendra Memorial Research Institute and the principal investigator in the study.

In the Indian study, the new recommended treatment regimen demonstrated 96% efficacy at six months compared to 88% in the previous treatment, says Dr Kavita Singh.

Bihar and Jharkhand are the two most kala-azar endemic states in India. Goriakothi block in Bihar's Siwan district and Isuapur in Saran district; besides Hiranpur, Amrapara, Littipara and Jama blocks in Jharkhand's Pakur district and Kathikund and Dumka sadar in Dumka district have kala-azar endemicity of over 1 per 10,000 population.

Cutaneous leishmaniasis is confined to the north-western part of the country (Himanchal Pradesh, Rajasthan), whereas KA is endemic in 4 states, Bihar (33 districts, 458 blocks), Jharkhand (4 districts, 33 blocks), West Bengal (11 districts, 120 blocks) and Uttar Pradesh (6 districts, 22 blocks), 3 which contain approximately 10% of the total population at risk in India (136.5 million).

Since 2015, KA cases have been offered integrated screening and testing for HIV at block level in KA endemic regions in India. The percentage of KA cases tested for HIV increased from 47% in 2015 to 98% in 2020, indicating an increase in the proportion of KA-HIV co-infected cases from 0.5% (45/8545) in 2015 to 4.1% (84/2048) in 2020.

In Bihar — India's most endemic state — an estimated 6% of VL cases are co-infected with HIV.

It is hoped that the new WHO guidelines will significantly improve the lives of patients affected by both diseases who suffer from stigma, ostracization, loss of income and repeated relapses, says Dr Fabiana Alves, Director of neglected tropical diseases Leishmaniasis and Mycetoma at DNDi.

However, Dr Sakib Burza, medical advisor and study coordinator at MSF has a word of caution. "For the first time, patients with KA-HIV co-infection in India will be treated with an evidence-based treatment. However, there remains a lot to be done, as these patients present with multiple complex medical issues that need to be addressed holistically, including a very high prevalence of TB," he says.

## BEYOND THE STETHOSCOPE

When not pursuing their profession, a breed of doctors prefer to wear different hats to keep themselves fit and centered. The HEALTH PIONEER tries to catch up with them every week.



Dr Jagdish

## DR INNOVATION HAS FUN TOO

This doctor has several medical innovations to his name ever since the bug bit him in 2008 when he was still an MBBS student. But that's just one of his talents. He's a standup comedian, an author and an entrepreneur too.

When this multifaceted ENT surgeon, Dr Jagdish Chaturvedi from Fortis Hospital, Bengaluru, tells you that his contributions have been a game changer in the medical field, especially in rural areas, he's not exaggerating. In the last 10 years, Dr Jagdish' 18 innovations include the bowel cleaning device, esophageal varices management device, medicine management box, and adaptive noise cancellation for Tinnitus among others. Low-cost and easy to use, to make healthcare accessible in rural areas, are the hallmark of his innovations.

As an entrepreneur, Dr Jagdish runs a digital platform, Healthcare Innovation for Indian Healthcare (Hiiih), a medical entrepreneurship and innovation-enabling platform that sees doctors, engineers and entrepreneurs connecting and working on innovations.

"The platform has helped 40 Indian startups in terms of guidance, funding, product development and more. We also conduct training programmes and develop our own devices," he says.

Dr Jagdish's first invention was a cheap alternative to the expensive imaging equipment to diagnose throat cancer. After seeing the results of his 'jugaad', he decided to build a prototype and eventually launched it in the market to help more doctors practising in rural areas. Though there were no takers for his first innovation, he was not deterred.

"I faced flak from my fraternity, who advised me to stick to my job instead of capitalising on the prototype. But I did not give up and gave the licence to Icarus, who then sold it to Medtronic. It uses the third-generation Medtronic Shruti ENTview Otoscope (attached to an Android phone). It has helped around seven lakh people," he says proudly.

It was good learning for him. With help from his seniors like Dr Ravi Nair, he enrolled himself in a Stanford bio-design programme in 2012. "I learnt how to approach a design and bring a solution while keeping factors like affordability and accessibility in mind. The fellowship made my second innovation a smooth ride," he says.

His Noxeno, a device that removes foreign bodies from the noses of children in rural areas, without needing any invasive surgery is being used across 1,000 hospitals, and was even featured in News Asia's documentary 'Field Guide to Innovations' in 2017. His other invention—a tele examination system can be used by doctors while sitting anywhere in the world.

He has also penned three books, Inventing Medical Devices — A perspective from India, The Benefits of Failing Successfully and One year of Stand up comedy: A Journey in India.

A standup comedian, Dr Jagdish's eponymous YouTube channel has over 1 lakh subscribers while a comic awareness video on the coronavirus had 1,62,000 viewership. Fun and serious work goes hand-in-hand for him.

(Medicos may write to us at healthp100@gmail.com)

## NEWS BRIEFS

### TAKEDA'S DENGUE VACCINE CANDIDATE SHOWS PROMISE

Japanese pharma firm Takeda has said that its dengue vaccine candidate, TAK-003, prevented 84 per cent of hospitalised dengue cases and 61 per cent of symptomatic cases. The 4.5-year-long phase-3 clinical trial, which included over 20,000 children and teenagers, identified no "important safety risks". The data was presented at the 8th Northern European Conference on Travel Medicine.

### PGIMER GETS WHO AWARD FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

Recognising its efforts in advancing tobacco control, the WHO has awarded the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (e-RCTC) of the Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in Chandigarh with the Regional Director Special Recognition Award.

### HEALTH MINISTRY NOTIFIES RULES FOR ART CLINICS AND BANKS

The health ministry has notified the rules including the registration process, staff requirement, minimum equipment required and the license granting format for Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) in the country.

### NEI RESEARCHERS DISCOVER NEW GENETIC EYE DISEASE

Researchers from the National Eye Institute (NEI) have identified a new disease that affects the macula, a small part of the light-sensing retina needed for sharp, central vision.



(The writer is a young environmental conservationist)



