

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
KARIMNAGAR | MONDAY | 14 JUNE 2021



## WEATHER



**Max:** 32.4°C  
**Min:** 23.4°C  
**RH:** 58%  
**Rain:** Nil

**Forecast:** Cloudy sky. Moderate rain likely. Max/Min temp. 32/24°C

## ASTROGUIDE

**Plava:** Uttarayana  
**Tithi:** Jyestha Shuddha Chaviti till 10.31 pm  
**Star:** Pushyami till 8.32 pm  
**Variyam:** Nil  
**Durmuhurtam:** 12.42 pm to 1.34 pm; 3.18 pm to 4.11 pm  
**Rahukalam:** 7.30 pm to 9 pm  
**HJRI CALENDAR**  
**Zeeqad** 2,1442 AH  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 4.32 am  
**Zohar:** 12.26 pm  
**Asar:** 4.53 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.57 pm  
**Isha:** 8.14 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY** 6.51 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 5.41 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY** 8.47 AM  
**MOONSET TODAY** 10.13 PM

## COUNTER POINT



**They should declare the cadre as frontline warriors and vaccinate them in poll bound states!**

## SHORT TAKES

### Congress needs reforms: Sibal

**New Delhi:** The Congress must bring reforms across all levels of the organisation to show it is no longer in a state of inertia and to present itself as a viable alternative to the BJP, party veteran Kapil Sibal said on Sunday. India needs a resurgent Congress. But for that, the party needs to show that it is active, he said.

■ Full report on Page 4

### WB BJP divided over defections

**Kolkata:** A major policy clash has unfolded between two prominent leaders in the West Bengal BJP on how to tackle the threat of defection by its newly elected MLAs after their former national vice-president Mukul Roy, the sitting BJP MLA from Krishnanagar North, returned to the Trinamul Congress.

■ Full report on Page 4

### Indian docu gets NYIFF best award

**Visakhapatnam:** A documentary film 'Ahimsa-Gandhi: The Power of The Powerless,' produced by Uma Gajapati Raju, Sanchaita Gajapati Raju and Jean Luc Berlot, and written and directed by Ramesh Sharma (Emmy nominee), won the Best Documentary Award at the 21st New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF).

■ Full report on Page 2

## STUDY | BIZ

### Parents will be denied entry in US to settle their kids

# US resumes visas for students

VINEETA PANDEY | DC  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 13

Indian students who have taken admission in American universities in the 2021-22 academic year can book appointments for visas from Monday at the United States embassy in New Delhi and US consulates in other Indian cities.

The US embassy has decided to start an intensive two months of interviews starting July 1. Embassy officials said "tens of thousands of interview slots" would be available from Monday. However, parents who want to go to

● The embassy added that students need not carry the original hard copy of I-20 forms (certificate of eligibility) given by the institutions. Instead the electronic I-20 provided by schools is accepted by the embassy

the US to "help their children settle" cannot accompany them at this time as the US government has still not opened B1/B2 visas for tourists.

The US stopped the entry of Indians after President Joe Biden signed Presidential Proclamation 10199 suspending most non-immi-

grant travel from India on April 30 due to the intense Covid-19 second wave that saw a huge number of Indians infected with the contagious "Delta" variant. Now, with the wave abating and fresh cases largely under control, the US government has decided to open its borders for Indian students who will be joining classes in the fall semester.

"Student visas remain a top priority for the US Mission to India and we are making every attempt to facilitate student travel in time for the fall semester. As such, on June 14, 2021, we will open limited July

and August student visa appointments at posts across India," the embassy said.

The embassy added that students need not carry the original hard copy of I-20 forms (certificate of eligibility for non-immigrant student status) given by the institutions. Instead, the electronic I-20 provided by schools is accepted by the embassy. Students need to get it printed and carry it with them. Also, fully funded students do not need to show proof for financial support during the visa interview if it is mentioned in the I-20 form.

## WORLD | 5

### Netanyahu's 12-yr rule ends in Israel

deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle

## SPORTS | 8

### Djokovic is new king of clay

## TABLOID

### Bollywood's age-defying divas

## Etala to join BJP today; all eyes on Huzurabad

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

Former minister Etala Rajendar is all set to join the BJP in the presence of party president J.P. Nadda in Delhi on Monday.

Also joining the BJP with Rajendar will be former TRS MLA Enugu Ravinder Reddy from Yellareddy constituency, former Karimnagar zilla parishad chairperson Tula Uma, former TSRTC joint action committee leader Aswathama Reddy and a few others.

As per schedule, Rajendar will leave for Delhi from the Shamshabad airport at 6 am on Monday and will join the BJP at 11 am at the party headquarters.

With this, the BJP is hopeful in making a comeback in Telangana and emerging as a force to reckon with if it wins the Huzurabad bypoll necessitated by Rajendar's resignation from the Assembly on Saturday.

It may be yet another byelection for many, but for the BJP, it is a litmus

## MISSION BOUNCE BACK

● It may be yet another byelection for many, but for the BJP, it is a litmus test. The party central leadership is said to have laid special focus on the Huzurabad bypoll as it strongly believes a victory will change the course of Telangana politics

● The BJP is looking to bounce back after suffering back to back electoral setbacks in the recent Legislative Council and municipal polls and the Nagarjunasagar Assembly bypoll at the hands of the TRS.

test. The party central leadership is said to have laid special focus on the Huzurabad bypoll as it strongly believes a victory will change the course of Telangana politics, dominated by the TRS since the formation of state in June 2014.

The BJP is looking to bounce back after suffering back to back electoral setbacks in the recent Legislative Council and municipal polls and the Nagarjunasagar Assembly bypoll at the hands of the TRS.

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy told this newspa-

per, "The party's central leadership is seeking a report on Huzurabad developments every week. Party's state in-charge Tarun Chugh will camp in Telangana for most of the days until Huzurabad bypoll is over. A few other national leaders will visit the state and campaign in Huzurabad. The BJP will emerge victorious and the downfall of the TRS will begin. This result will pave the way for the BJP to come to power in Telangana State in 2023."

■ Page 2: Etala's entry gives BJP confidence

## WORK ON TTD'S BALAJI TEMPLE IN JAMMU BEGINS

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 13

The work began for erecting a magnificent temple and allied infrastructure at the behest of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) in Jammu and Kashmir's winter capital, Jammu, on Sunday.

J&K's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha unveiled the plaque marking the laying of foundation stone and attended the *bhumi puja* ceremony. The temple is expected to be completed in 18 months in two phases, at a cost of ₹33.22 crore.

Among those present at the ceremony included Union ministers Jitendra Singh and G. Kishan Reddy, chairman of TTD Board Y.V. Subba Reddy, and a member of the national executive of RSS, V. Ram Madhav.

"This is a historic and proud day for J&K," he said and asserted that the temple, besides being a centre of faith and spirituality, "will open up opportunities across sectors in Jammu, giving a major push to religious and pilgrimage tourism, boosting the economy of the region".

Some 20 months have passed since the Centre stripped J&K of its special status by repealing Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution.

■ Page 2: Balaji temple gets land on 40-yr lease



Dharmendra Pradhan

## PRADHAN TELLS CONG GOVTS TO CUT FUEL TAX

New Delhi, June 13:

With petrol and diesel prices climbing to record high, oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday said the Congress governments in Rajasthan and Maharashtra should cut high sales tax if the party was concerned about fuel price burden on common man.

Petrol and diesel have risen to all-time high across the country after fuel rates rose by ₹5.72 per litre to ₹6.25 per litre in less than six weeks. This is due to a combination of rising international oil prices and record high central and state taxes.

"If Rahul Gandhi is concerned about the poor being hit by fuel prices, he should ask chief ministers of Congress-ruled states to cut taxes. He should ask Uddhav Thackeray to reduce taxes," he said. — PTI

## KCR puts errant officials on notice

### Plans surprise visits to check progress of works

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao has warned officials that he will not spare anyone found slack in their works during his surprise visits to districts from June 20.

The Chief Minister on Sunday held a seven-hour meeting with additional collectors of all 33 districts at Pragathi Bhavan to review the progress of Palle Pragathi and Pattana Pragathi programmes being taken up by the TRS government for the overall development of rural and urban areas.

The Chief Minister said even after explaining the matters through meetings like this, if the officials failed to correct their working methods, strict action would be taken against them. The Chief Minister has once again made it clear to additional collectors and DPOs (district panchayat officers) that their performance would be assessed during his surprise visits and stringent action would be followed and he would listen to none on this matter.

The CM announced that

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

An additional 2.81 lakh farmers have gained eligibility for Rythu Bandhu for the kharif season over the recent rabi season taking the number of beneficiaries to 63.25 lakh, covering 1.5 crore acres.

The government has sanctioned ₹7,508 crore for the

scheme, which will be credited to the bank accounts of farmers at ₹5,000 per acre from June 15 to June 25.

Agriculture minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy on Sunday officials have resolved the problems of 2.81 lakh farmers owning 66,311 acres, who had failed to avail the benefit.

■ Full report on Page 2

he would adopt a district and participate personally in Palle Pragathi and Pattana Pragathi programmes there. "I will directly monitor the development in the district," he said.

He said he would undertake surprise visits on June 20 in Siddipet and Kamareddy and Warangal on June 21.

During his Warangal trip on June 21, the Chief Minister said he would inaugurate the Warangal district collectorate complex and lay foundation stone to the proposed multi-super specialty hospital there.

He instructed the principal secretary (finance) to immediately allocate ₹25

lakh each to the additional district collector to sanction funds for the local bodies for solving certain issues immediately.

He instructed that the proposed multi-specialty hospital in Warangal should be built with 24 floors with all the modern facilities and it should be developed as a green building having a helipad facility on its terrace to meet emergencies. He wanted the construction to be in Canadian style of cross ventilation and asked the officials concerned to visit Canada to have first-hand experience.

■ Page 2: Act tough against sarpanches, says CM

## Puri Rath Yatra without devotees



Labourers work to prepare a chariot ahead of the annual Rath Yatra festival, in Puri, on Sunday. Ahead of Rath Yatra on July 12, the Odisha government has announced that this year, too, devotees will be barred from participating in the festival, which will only be held in Puri amid strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols.

— PTI

## Demolition of Warangal central jail gathers steam

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, JUNE 13

As part of the state government's decision to build a multi-specialty hospital in place of Warangal Central Prison, demolition of the 135-year-old structure is progressing amid high security.

Not even the media is being allowed near the premises. In fact, the main road between Kakatiya Medical College and MGM hospital has been completely cordoned off with heavy deployment of police personnel.

Ever since Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao visited the jail on May 22, works to shift it have been taken up on a war-footing. The inmates were shifted to various jails and the land was handed over to the medical and health department, paving the way for its demolition.

Rao, who is likely to inaugurate Warangal Integrated Collectorate on June 20, is also expected to lay foundation stone for the proposed hospital. It will provide medical services to people in the 12 eastern and



The Warangal Central Prison being demolished. — DC

north-eastern districts. From the 73 acres of land that is available, five acres are earmarked for Kaloji Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences building with the remaining area marked for the multi-super speciality hospital.

Meanwhile, the secrecy being maintained by officials with regard to the demolition is raising several questions. Even the general public is dismayed at inconvenience caused fol-

lowing closure of the road. Built in 1886, during the regime of the sixth Nizam Mir Mahbub Ali, the jail grew into a correctional facility where the inmates were made to find a livelihood within the confines of the jail walls. The new central prison is expected to be built in the premises of the Telangana state special police 4th battalion campus. Officials have conducted a survey on the extent of land and its feasibility.

## SHAH TO FOCUS ON TALKS WITH FARMER UNIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 13

In a bid to break the deadlock with protesting farmers from Punjab and Uttar Pradesh who have been camping at Delhi's borders for over six months, home minister Amit Shah may take the initiative to enable the resumption of dialogue between the Centre and the farmer unions.

Sources said, however, that while the home minister may not directly hold talks with the farmers himself, this could largely be done by agriculture minister Narendra Tomar and railway and commerce minister Piyush Goyal, Mr Shah could hold back-channel talks with the farmers to end the deadlock and bring the two sides to the negotiating table. The talks between the Centre and the protesting farmers hit a roadblock in January as even after 11 rounds of talks no solutions could be reached between the two sides.

While the Centre agreed to suspend the three controversial agricultural reform laws for almost two years and even agreed to make all the amendments in the laws that the farmers objected to, the agitating farmer unions remained adamant on a complete repeal of the law.

Since January, no talks have been held between the two sides, though senior government sources now claim that some back-channel talks had started in a bid to break the deadlock. The sources said that even last year the home minister had a detailed meeting with the farmers, and even now his assessment is that the two sides should start talks again.

The farmers are continuing their protest at the three main Delhi borders — Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur — for more than six months now and have hardened their stand that they will not settle for anything less than the scrapping of the three farms laws.

## RAMANA GIVES CLEAR HINTS OF JOINING TRS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, JUNE 13

The plan of ruling Telangana TRS to use Telugu Desam (TD) TS president L. Ramana as a counterweight to former minister Etala Rajendar among backward classes seems to be bearing fruit with Ramana throwing enough hints in this regard at a meeting he addressed in Jagtial on Sunday.

Ramana recalled that he had faithfully carried out the responsibility given to him by TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu of holding reins of the party in Telangana since the past seven years. He had earlier been a minister in Naidu government and was even an MP. The TS TD chief said had he desired any high posts, he could have crossed over to ruling TRS, as he is very close to over 70 percent TRS leaders. As he did not expect anything from any party, he had so far fulfilled his responsibility perfectly, the TS TD president maintained.

However, he expressed worry over the situation of TD in Telangana state. Ramana said despite striving hard for strengthening the party at grass-root levels, Telugu Desam is not in a position to "continue further in the region".



## SHORT TAKES

## MAN BOOKED FOR CROWD AT MEHENDI FUNCTION

**Hyderabad:** Habeebnagar police booked cases against a man for organising a mehendi ceremony ahead of his daughter's wedding by flouting lockdown norms. Officials said that more than 40 people had gathered for the ceremony.

According to police, Mohammed Zaffar had hired a group of trans-persons to dance at the wedding and had organised a mehendi ceremony as well. The area locals gathered in huge numbers to watch the dance. However, one of the guests captured the whole thing on his phone and shared it on social media. When the video went viral, police noticed the violation. Taking suo moto cognizance, police registered a case under the Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act and violation of COVID-19 protocols.

## TRADER HELD SELLING BANNED TOBACCO GOODS

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

The Central Zone Task Force polcie conducted a raid at a shop in MJ market circle and seized ₹2.4 lakh worth banned tobacco products on Sunday. 'New Royal Chalia Store' situated at Abids, was selling prohibited tobacco and hookah products, police said.

Officials apprehended Anwar Ali, 60, who was illegally procuring and selling noxious products. The accused and the seized properties were handed over to Abid Road police for further action.

## DOCU ON GANDHI WINS AT NYIFF

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 13

A documentary film, 'Ahimsa- Gandhi: The Power of The Powerless,' produced by Uma Gajapati Raju, Sanchaita Gajapati Raju and Jean Luc Berlot, and written and directed by Ramesh Sharma (Emmy nominee), won the best documentary award at the 21st New York Indian Film Festival on Sunday.

The chairperson of Simhachalam Temple Trust, Sanchaita Gajapati Raju, said the film speaks to the conscience of humanity as people globally grapple with intractable problems surrounding race, and as societies struggle to give the marginalised and underserved human dignity and restore fundamental human rights.

The film brings to the fore the impact of the Gandhian message of non-violence worldwide: how it inspired Martin Luther King Jr., John Lewis, Barack Obama, the US civil rights movement, Solidarity movement in Poland, the Velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia as well as Nelson Mandela.

The title song 'Ahimsa' was composed by A.R. Rahman and Bono of the rock band U2. "At a time when the world is fraught with turbulence, the Mahatma's teachings and life are all the more relevant," Sanchaita Gajapati Raju said after winning the award.

## 2.81L more farmers get Rythu Bandhu

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

An additional 2.81 lakh farmers have gained eligibility for Rythu Bandhu for the kharif season over the recent rabi season taking the number of beneficiaries to 63.25 lakh, covering 1.5 crore acres.

The government has sanctioned ₹7,508 crore for the scheme, which will be credited to the bank accounts of farmers at ₹5,000 per acre from June 15 to June 25.

Agriculture minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy on Sunday released the final list of beneficiaries of Rythu Bandhu for kharif.

He said officials have resolved the problems of 2.81 lakh farmers owning 66,311 acres, who had failed to avail the benefit in the absence of land-holding details on Dharani portal.

Those details have been

uploaded making them eligible to claim the benefit. He asked the new beneficiaries to submit their details to EOs, AOs such as pattadar pass-book, Aadha-ar and bank account.

Reddy asked farmers not to worry over change of IFSC codes due to merger of a few PSU banks and officials have gathered IFSC details on their own.

Nalgonda district tops the number of beneficiaries at 4.72 lakh owning 12.18 lakh acres who will get ₹698 crore while Medchal Malkajgiri district stands at the bottom with 39,762 farmers owning 77,000 acres getting ₹38 crore.

Seven districts will get Rythu Bandhu of ₹300 crore to ₹400 crore, 11 districts ₹200 crore to ₹300 crore and 10 districts will get ₹100 crore to ₹200 crore. Only Warangal urban, Mulugu and Medchal districts will get less than ₹100 crore each.

order regarding procurement of jowar. We have been conducting a survey on the farmers' losses."

Raju, who sold 35 quintals of jowar at ₹1,100 and incurred a loss of ₹50,000, said, "I usually cultivate maize but opted for jowar this time."

I harvested the crop in mid-April, and stored the yield and waited for the government decision till June first week."

A few days back, Raju spoke to agriculture minister S. Niranjan Reddy on a TV programme run by the department of information technology. Raju said, "I explained our issues and asked whether the government was planning to procure jowar."

The minister said no. Under pressure to repay our debts, 50 per cent of the farmers in our village sold their yield at a low price. We demand that the government compensate us for our loss."

T. Sreeharsha, state coordinator of Kisan Mitra helpline, said, "Since May, the helpline has received calls from more than 75 jowar farmers, out of which majority was in distress. We are reaching out to check when the government will start procurement of jowar."

Kiran Kumar Vissa, state committee member of RSV, said "The jowar farmers' struggle in Telangana is an important part of the nationwide farmers' movement for remunerative prices and guarantee of MSP."

## Night safari project shelved

## Singapore consultant warns of environ challenges, threat to birds, animals

**MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC**  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

Citing non-feasibility, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) has cancelled the proposal to build the city's first night safari project. Officials said that the Singapore-based consultant has opined that once executed, the project would not only pose greater challenges but also put the safety of several animals in peril.

Calling off the project, the authorities are now exploring options to set up an eco-park in about 120 acres at Kothwalguda.

Highly placed sources in

the HMDA said that the Kothwalguda site, which was earlier visited by Bernard Harrison, principal partner (creativity and design), and Alexander Stingal, general manager (business operation) of Bernard Harssion and Friends Ltd, Singapore, gave a positive report and claimed that it would be the ideal location for the night safari.

The team once again visited the site to submit rough estimates. However, after inspecting the site, the consultant informed HMDA that if executed they would have to reckon with several challenges to provide a sustainable envi-

ronment for over 150 species apart from constructing sophisticated structures. Sources said that the project cost would be equal to that spent on Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL).

A senior HMDA official on condition of anonymity told *Deccan Chronicle* that the Singapore experts had in 2018 given a positive response and had assured that they would be ready with the designs during their 2019 visit.

He said municipal authorities had also formed two teams comprising officials from Environment Protection Training & Research Institute (EPTRI) to con-

duct a baseline survey for impact assessment, to check groundwater levels and air quality, forest department officials, urban biodiversity officials, engineering officials, tourism officials and others.

He said that one team coordinated with the Singapore delegation to assist them in providing infrastructure and another focussed on the budget requirements in order to tap financial institutions for funding the project.

This apart, the official said that the second team had also coordinated with the Union government for getting clearance to the

night safari proposal. However, after conducting a detailed study in 2020, the consultants felt that the topography of Kothwalguda would not be suitable for construction of night safari as it could raise environmental challenges, the officer said.

Considering the budget related issues among others, the HMDA official said that the municipal authority had decided to call-off the proposal.

He said that the government was actively considering the proposal to construct an eco-park on 120 acres and a meeting in this regard would be held shortly.

## ETALA'S ENTRY GIVES BJP CONFIDENCE

FROM PAGE 1

The BJP was upbeat after its stupendous performance in Dubbak bypoll and the GHMC elections towards 2020-end and declared itself as the only alternative to the TRS, replacing the Congress. This did not last long as the BJP faced shocking defeats in successive polls in between March and May this year and the Congress emerged as the principal opposition to the TRS.

At this juncture, the Rajendar episode gave an unexpected opportunity to the BJP to prove that it is the only alternative to the TRS by winning Huzurabad bypoll and brace the party's rank and file for the 2023 December Assembly polls.

In Dubbak, the BJP had a strong local candidate in M. Raghunandan Rao, which helped the party trounce the TRS. The lack of such a candidate in Nagarjunasagar led to the BJP failing to retain its deposit.

The BJP was considered weak in Huzurabad as it lost deposit in 2018 Assembly polls. In fact, the BJP candidate P. Raghu polled fewer votes (1,683) than NOTA (2,867) but Rajendar's entry has changed the scenario altogether.

Rajendar has never lost an election from this seat since 2004. He was elected six times and the BJP is confident of defeating the TRS using Rajendar's popularity in the constituency.

## TALASANI GIVES PA'S NUMBER FOR GRIEVANCES

**Hyderabad:** In a move to prevent any untoward incident during the monsoon, minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav has provided his personal assistant Pavan Kumar's phone number 98480 21665 to address all mala-related issues in the city. The grievances reported to this number will be forwarded to officials to take required steps and resolve the issues.

This year, the state government sanctioned ₹45 crore to widen and repair stormwater drains in GHMC limits. To make sure these works are executed efficiently and in time-bound manner, elected representatives will also carry out inspections in their respective jurisdiction from June 14 to 19. Srinivas Yadav will also inspect the storm water drains works in Begumpet on June 14.

According to a press release issued by the minister's office, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao are constantly monitoring the works related to stormwater drains.

To address urban flooding, the state government accorded administrative sanction of ₹858 crore in April and the budget is to be used to strengthen the stormwater drain network in the city and its peripheries.



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao inspecting the SUVs which were handed over to additional collectors at Pragathi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Sunday.

— BY ARRANGEMENT

## CM gives SUV surprise to officials

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

Additional collectors of the 33 districts in Telangana state who attended Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's review meeting at Pragathi Bhavan were in for a pleasant surprise on Sunday. After the meeting, the Chief Minister handed over brand new Kia Carnival SUVs to each of them.

Official sources said each SUV cost over ₹30 lakh and nearly ₹10 crore was spent to purchase 33 SUVs at one go. The transport department purchased the SUVs on the directions of the Chief Minister.

While the meeting was on at Pragathi Bhavan, the fleet of 33 SUVs arrived outside the Chief Minister's camp office and was parked on its sprawling premises.

The Chief Minister gave a small break to the meeting in between and examined the SUVs along with a few ministers and senior officials. He expressed satisfaction over the SUVs and asked the officials to hand over them to additional collectors after the meeting. Later, transport minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar flagged off the vehicles and formally handed them over to additional collectors.

A festive atmosphere prevailed at Pragathi Bhavan as additional collectors thanked the Chief Minister for giving them the unexpected and expensive gift.

● **THE REASON** for their jubilation was that no one expected the Chief Minister to offer this high-end car in these difficult times when the state government is facing severe financial crisis due to Covid outbreak since March 2020.

prevalled at Pragathi Bhavan as additional collectors thanked the Chief Minister for giving them the unexpected and expensive gift.

The reason for their jubilation was that no one expected the Chief Minister to offer this high-end car in these difficult times when the state government is facing severe financial crisis due to Covid outbreak since March 2020.

In the meeting, the Chief Minister is learnt to have justified his decision saying additional collectors deserved high-end cars to travel the entire district and discharge their duties effectively. The government had earlier provided Toyota Fortuners to district collectors and joint collectors in 2015 at a cost of ₹5.25 crore. At that time, the state had just 10 districts, which were now reorganised to 33 districts. High-end cars were provided to collectors of new districts later.

## KCR tells babus to act tough on sarpanches

FROM PAGE 1

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said, "There is no doubt that additional collectors and DPOs are working very hard to develop villages and urban areas in all the sectors. But reports from the field to me suggest that the progress is not happening on the expected lines. This is the reason why I have been raising the matter with you time and again. After giving you sufficient time, I have decided to undertake surprise visits. I have convened this meeting to talk to you once again, take your opinion before starting my surprise visits. It will be a mistake on my part if I do not forewarn you. Despite all this, if some additional collectors and DPOs are negligent about their work, show laxity in their duties and if it is proved during my surprise checks, I will not listen to anyone. I will not pardon and stringent action

● **HE DIRECTED** the officials concerned to suspend sarpanches and secretaries if they failed to conduct Gram Sabhas and this should be done even if the sarpanches belonged to the ruling party. If the TRS sarpanches committed any mistake, take action against them first, he told the officers.

would be taken forthwith." Since his surprise visits are 10 days away, corrections can be made during that period, the Chief Minister said. He directed the officials concerned to suspend sarpanches and secretaries if they failed to conduct Gram Sabhas and this should be done even if the sarpanches belonged to the ruling party. If the TRS sarpanches committed any mistake, take action against them first, the Chief Minister told the officers.

## COVID | PRECAUTION

## GHMC's reverts to spraying to keep the spread of Coronavirus in check

## Disinfectant to be sprayed in Hyd this monsoon

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

While the state government has been claiming a decline in Covid-19 second wave cases, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has decided to procure disinfectant liquid (sodium hypochlorite solution) to spray at all public places during monsoon.

Corporation authorities stated that spraying the disinfectant was to curtail the spread of Coronavirus in the city.

While the peak was in April and May, the corporation's Enforcement, Vigilance and Disaster Management (EVDMM) wing has now decided to procure 5.6 lakh kg of disinfectant at an estimated

cost of ₹1.96 crore. Authorities said that the disinfectant would be sprayed in public places for 30 days during the monsoon.

The all-purpose antiseptic solution will have 12.5 to 15 per cent of chlorine confirming IS-11673/1992 inclusive of packaging in containers. The successful bidders must deliver a minimum of 18,600 kg daily from the date the letter of authorisation (LOA) is issued. On their failure, the tender would be cancelled and earnest money deposit (EMD) will be forfeited. Officials said that the bids would be finalised on Tuesday.

This apart, the corporation has now floated tenders to procure four inflatable rescue boats for the

LB Nagar zone ignoring the other areas in the city that are prone to submerging. Each boat would carry eight to ten persons and would cost about ₹32 lakh. The design and construction of the boat would be suitable for an outboard motor (OBM) with maximum motor power of 25 HP.

When asked about the invitation of bids for spraying disinfectant liquid during monsoon and that the second wave, as claimed by the government, was declining, GHMC officials refused to comment.

Asked about the purchase of boats, a senior official said: "We are gearing up to fight urban flooding. And something is better than nothing."



A disaster rescue team of the GHMC sprays disinfectant in a colony near Mallepally in a bid to combat Covid-19.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE



## SHORT TAKES

## MANY DONATE ESSENTIALS FOR POOR ADIVASIS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, JUNE 13

Various social organisations, NGOs and political leaders donate medical kits and oxygen accelerators and essential commodities to the health workers and poor during the lockdown in the old Adilabad district.

Adilabad Metrasanam head prince Anthoni and his team distributed essential commodities to the Adivasis of 232 families in Jainoor; Sirpur (U) and Lingapur mandals in the Komaram Bheem Asifabad district.

Adilabad Metrasanam also distributed essential commodities to the poor Adivasi families in Navaguda village in Indravelli mandal in the Adilabad district. Indravelli Church father Velpula Muthai and sister God Free and members participated in the event few days ago.

Members of 'Abhinava' organisation distributed essential commodities to the poor and pregnant women in the villages in Tandur mandal in the Komaram Bheem Asifabad district. Representative of 'Abhinava' Santosh Kumar and his team participate in the distribution of essential commodities.

On the other hand, Boath MPP Tula Srinivas of TRS on his birth day distributed sewing Machines to 15 women and handed over the documents of medical insurance to ten journalists, try cycle to the physically handy capped person. Adilabad ZP Chairman Janardhan Rathod and Boath MLA Rathod Bapurao and MLA Jogu Ramanna participated in the event.

## NIZAM CLUB RECORD ROOM GUTTED IN FIRE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

A fire broke out at the prestigious Nizam Club at Saifabad in the city on Sunday morning. While there was no loss of life, some furniture and papers were damaged in the fire. The cause of the fire is said to be a short-circuit.

Speaking to this newspaper, Rajendar Kumar, secretary, Nizam Club said, "The fire broke out early in the morning, and passers-by spotted the smoke and called the fire department.

The fire broke out in the office room, and it had engulfed servers, computers, and furniture. Fortunately, the files were in the strong room, so they weren't damaged."

According to officials of the Telangana State disaster response and fire services department (TSDRFS), fire tenders were pressed into service after they had received a complaint.

"When our personnel reached the spot, they extinguished the fire in 15-20 minutes. Owing to the lockdown, there was no one in the office. We think the cause of the fire was of electrical origin."

But, as the rains continue to lash the city and state, more such fires — of electrical origin — are to be expected, say officials of the fire department. In 2020, there were 1,992 fires of electrical origin. "Fires of electrical origin are high for the last few years.

There are four reasons why this is happening, overloading, poor insulation, improper earthing and use of sub-standard electrical wiring. There are circuit breakers available in the markets which can aid in avoiding such fires.

These circuit breakers suspend power supply if there is a disruption or overdose of power," C. Lakshmi Prasad, director, TSDRFS, told this correspondent. These fires can be avoided by ensuring electrical wiring in a home or office is checked regularly, he added.

"Maintenance of these wires is paramount. A check on wires should be taken up once in every six months," he said.

● **ACCORDING TO** officials of the Telangana State disaster response and fire services department (TSDRFS), fire tenders were pressed into service after they had received a complaint. "When our personnel reached the spot, they extinguished the fire in 15-20 minutes. Owing to the lockdown, there was no one in the office. We think the cause of the fire was of electrical origin."

## ZP chiefs vie with MLAs to get party MLA tickets

Though Assembly polls are 2 years away, infighting intensifies

PILLALAMARRI  
SRINIVAS | DC  
ADILABAD, JUNE 13

With eyes set on the next assembly polls, infighting has intensified among TRS leaders in the Old Adilabad district. Komaram Bheem Asifabad ZP chairperson Kova Laxmi and sitting MLA Atram Sakku are preparing ground for winning the party ticket for Asifabad constituency, though polls are two years away.

At another level, Adilabad ZP chairman Janardhan Rathod and sitting Khanapur MLA Ajmeera Rekha Naik are aspiring for party ticket for contest from Khanapur constituency.

Curiously, the ongoing fight is between the sitting ZP chairperson and local MLA of the same Adivasi community in Asifabad. The same is the case with the Adilabad ZP chairman and Khanapur MLA, both belonging to the Lambada community.

Kova Laxmi lost the previous MLA election by just 171 votes at the hands of Atram Sakku in the 2018 polls. Atram Sakku contested the polls on a Congress ticket, won the seat and later joined the

TRS.

Kova Laxmi was made ZP chairman of the Komaram Bheem Asifabad district in 2019 after her defeat in the assembly elections in 2018. She is the daughter of former minister late Kotnak Bheem Rao.

Kova Laxmi had said she still won a moral victory since she was defeated with a negligible margin of 171 votes.

She was aspiring for a minister post in the state cabinet under ST quota but her dreams were shattered by the defeat in 2018. There were allegations that Kova Laxmi's opponents in the party were also aspiring for a minister post in the ST woman quota and hence played a role in defeating Kova Laxmi.

A similar fight is going on in the assembly constituencies reserved for Scheduled Tribes. It is quite visible that TRS cadre and the second-rung leaders are divided into two groups and siding with one or the other leader in both Asifabad and Khanapur.

In some instances, TRS second-rung leaders are getting caught in the crossfire and are in a

dilemma over extending support to one or the other side in this tug of war.

Mohd Imthiaz Khan, popularly known as Lala, who is a TRS party president of Jainoor mandal, was earlier with Kova Laxmi and now took sides with the Atram Sakku amid the in-fight between two leaders and in view of their political future.

Imthiaz Khan is the senior-most leader in the party since its inception but did not get proper recognition in the party. But, he has been at the forefront in strengthening the party in the old Adilabad district and now Komaram Bheem Asifabad.

As the tug of war progressed, both Kova Laxmi and Atram Sakku are organising their programmes separately, except on a few occasions. Kova Laxmi's supporters keep off the programmes of Atram Sakku and vice versa.

This was visible also in a programme conducted in the Komaram Bheem Asifabad district the other day.

These two leaders or their supporters visit the villages separately even in situations of a road acci-

dent or fire incident, to extend a helping hand.

On the other hand, Adilabad ZP chairman Janardhan Rathod is focusing on Utnoor and Indravelli mandals and some parts of the present Sirikonda which falls under the Khanapur assembly constituency.

Indravelli and Utnoor are major towns and these mandals are having more voters in Khanapur.

News is making the rounds of political circles that both Janardhan Rathod and Rekha Naik are selectively reaching benefits of development works to their supporters in view of the approaching elections.

Janardhan Rathod is actively participating in programmes in Utnoor and Indravelli mandals and he is also attending community programmes and religious events. Taking note, Rekha Naik has also intensified her presence in these mandals.

News is also that former minister and Adilabad MLA Jogu Ramanna is extending support to Janardhan Rathod while forest minister Allola Indrakaran Reddy is supporting Rekha Naik.

## Sudden spell



Motorists were caught unawares by the downpour in Karimnagar on Sunday.

—DC

## World recognition for best policing to Warangal cops

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, JUNE 13

The Warangal commissionerate Police has been ranked in the Best Policing and Public Health Service category in the World Book of Records for the measures taken by the Warangal Commissionerate Police for the prevention of disease during the Coronavirus pandemic. Warangal police commissioner Dr Tarun Joshi will soon be presented with a Certificate of Commitment by the World Book of Records, London

delegates for this record. The Warangal Police Commissionerate was informed on Sunday by World Book of Records



Head of Europe Wilhem Gezler that the Warangal police commissionerate had been selected for tak-

ing safety measures in line with World Health Organisation guidelines for curbing Coronavirus.

## GOVT | JOB

There are 50-70% more contract lecturers than regular staff

## Contract lecturers affected by pay parity

HARLEEN  
MINOCHA | DC  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

State universities in Telangana are running on the shoulders of contract lecturers, albeit on far less salaries as the regular lecturers get, the Telangana State Universities Contract Teachers' Joint Action Committee.

As per the latest data shared by the TSUCT-JAC with Deccan Chronicle, there are 50-70% more contract lecturers compared to regular teachers in each of the 11 state universities here.

For example, in Osmania University, there are 425 more contract faculty with 325 regular staff on 1,230 total sanctioned posts till now, leaving 845 positions vacant.

● **"IT HAS** been over 7 years since the last recruitment drive took place in the state in 2013 even as the government in its latest notification has permitted recruitment on 1,061 posts against 2,791 total sanctioned budget posts in 2020", Dr. Teja said.

In Kakatiya university, there is 90 regular staff members, compared to 250 contract faculty working with 298 vacant posts till date. Dr. Dharma Teja, President of the Steering Committee of TSUCT said that most teaching responsibilities have hence fallen on the shoulders of the contract faculty in all universities, while the regular staff takes care of the administrative work.

"It has been over 7 years since the last recruitment drive took place in the state in 2013 even as the government in its latest notification has permit-

ted recruitment on 1,061 posts against 2,791 total sanctioned budget posts in 2020", Dr. Teja said. He also raised the issue of pay parity among contract and regular staff in state universities saying, "For a contract lecturer with over 25 years of experience is now getting about ₹75,000.

Whereas, a regular lecturer is earning over ₹2 lakh at this point. For us to compete for a post through an exam to get permanent employment, even as we have spent years in this profession, is just not fair".

Meanwhile, in a latest

GO issued by the state government on the 7th PRC, the TSUCT members have complained that the state government has not included contract teachers for pay hike.

In a statement, the teachers' union said, "The Telangana State Government has issued GO No. 51 on June 11 with a new pay revision for regular, contract and outsourcing employees working in the State. This will benefit about 9-10 lakh employees working in about 37 departments in the state. But about the contract faculty working in 11 universities in the state of Telangana that provide higher education, no pay revision has been mentioned."

The government of Telangana approved the 7th PRC and issued the

Order of Salary Allowance in 2018 for Regular Faculty members working in 11 Universities. The pay hike is being applied to them from January 2016. Even then the government ignored the pay hike for contract faculty of various universities in Telangana, it added.

Meanwhile, the Telangana State Council of Higher Education Chairman, Prof. T Papi Reddy clarified on issue saying that the delay in recruitment so far had been due to pending court cases on the issue, as well as the absence of regular VCs for these universities, and that now that these issues have been resolved, a raise in salaries as per eligibility and recruitment drive will take place soon.



BC welfare minister Gangula Kamalakara along with the representatives of ICOM organisations inspects the project area of Manair river front in Karimnagar on Sunday.

—BY ARRANGEMENT

## Manair riverfront set to be best tourist spot: Gangula

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, JUNE 13

Backward classes welfare minister Gangula Kamalakara reiterated that Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao is striving hard for all round development of Karimnagar district.

"That is the reason why Manair riverfront is being developed into one of the best tourist attractions in the country," Kamalakara declared while inspecting the area along the river accompanied by district collector K. Shashanka on Sunday.

He said the government has decided to acquire 150 metres of land on either side of the riverfront, though after conducting a survey. "People must come forward voluntarily to hand over their lands for completion of this beautiful project," he

maintained.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister pointed out that the state government has sanctioned Rs. 320 crore for construction of a protection wall on either side of Manair River up to a distance of five kilometres and for other works.

In addition, the government has also released ₹190 crore for the construction of a cable bridge and Rs. 80 crore for construction works of five check dams.

He informed that in accordance with special interest taken by the Chief Minister, there will be a central lighting system up to a distance of 14 kilometres.

With 24 TMC of water, Lower Manair Dam will also be a wonderful water body adjacent to the Karimnagar city, unlike in any other city in the

country, he said.

To add to the beauty, Manair riverfront project has been designed up to 10 kilometres distance until Chegurthi village from the city, Kamalakara explained.

In this context, he said the IT Tower has already started functioning within the city.

The minister said authorities have already held discussions with representatives of ICOM organisation from USA for construction of the Manair riverfront. Tenders will be invited for construction works once a detailed project report (DPR) is submitted after conducting a survey for 15 days, he announced.

City mayor Y. Sunil Rao, deputy mayor Challa Swarupa Rani and representatives of ICOM were among those present at the meeting.

## DISCOM STAFF TO BE VACCINATED AGAINST COVID

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, JUNE 13

The employees of Telangana State Northern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSNPDC) in its 16 circles including O&M staff, spot billers, private collection agents and store labours and others will be vaccinated against the coronavirus, said its chairman and managing director A. Gopal Rao.

He urged all the electricity department officials to make use of the opportunity provided by the state government. Gopal Rao thanked Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao and TRANSCO and GENCO CMD D. Prabhakar Rao for understanding the need to vaccinate the electricity department which has been rendering immense services.

## SCCL CONDUCTS MEGA VACCINATION DRIVE IN KOTHAGUDEM, SATTUPALLI

**Khammam:** Singareni Collieries Company Limited Yellandu area General Manager M. Subba Rao said that the miners and other employees should use the mega vaccination drive taken up by the management. He said that SCCL decided to complete the vaccination

within two weeks. He said that the Koyagudem Open Cast employees can administer the vaccine at CER Club in Tekulapalli and vaccination will be done from 8 am to 6 pm every day. SCCL opens vaccine camps in Kothagudem, Manuguru and Sattupalli.

## Highest Covid cases recorded in Sattupalli

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, JUNE 13

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) MLA Sandra Venkata Veeraiah said Sattupalli Assembly constituency topped in Covid-19 cases in the state and Vemsoor mandal recorded the highest number of Covid deaths in the Assembly segment.

The MLA said 80 persons died in Vemsoor mandal due to Covid-19 so far and it was highest in Sattupalli constituency. About 1,212 persons tested Covid-19 positive in the mandal during the second wave. Former sarpanch of Venkatapuram in Vemsoor mandal P Appa Rao, 65, succumbed to the virus while undergoing treatment in a private hospital in Hyderabad on Sunday. Veeraiah said about 65,000 tests were done in Kallur division – Sattupalli, Vemsoor, Penuballi, Kallur, Tallada and Enkoor mandals - so far and 11,060 persons were tested positive.

"The people of Vemsoor are contracting the virus as they are going to the belt shops. I ask the excise officials not to give scope to belt shops. Attending functions in the pandemic situation is not advisable and I did not attend the housewarming of my maternal uncle after his death. I did it not to trouble people approaching me for various reasons," he said.

The villages on Andhra Pradesh border are still in Covid-19 grip and everyone should take care of himself. Villages like Beerapalli, Kandukuru and Kunchaparthi are still under Covid-19 danger. He said public repre-

sentatives and people should work together to reduce the cases in Vemsoor by the end of next week.

People should conduct marriages and other functions with lesser guests and pave the way for making Sattupalli free from viruses.

He said 295 patients out of 325 admitted in Covid-19 100-bedded hospital in Sattupalli had been recovered. The patients were served food and breakfast twice a day free of cost. He said about 21,000 persons were tested for the last one week in Sattupalli constituency.

Referring to sanctioning of a 100-bed hospital to Sattupalli, he said the present 50-bed area hospital would be used for treatment of children.

On the other hand, people were not allowed to enter the state by the Madhira police at the check posts of Konatamatukuru and Jonnalagadda in Nandigam mandal of Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh. Because of increasing Covid-19 cases, the police took the decision, he said.



SHORT TAKES

NCB BUSTS RACKET  
SELLING DRUGS  
INSIDE CAKES

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC  
MUMBAI, JUNE 13

After conducting raids on a bakery in Malad area in suburban Mumbai, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has found out a new modus operandi adopted by drug dealers. The NCB has claimed that the drugs were supplied in high profile areas by putting them inside cakes and pastries.

According to NCB sources, the raid was conducted late Saturday night after the probe agency got a tip off about the same. The NCB officers were informed that the narcotic substances were being delivered by placing them inside the cakes and pastries to avoid any obvious suspicion.

The bakery products were then delivered to high-profile people in high profile parties and areas.

After the action, the agency found suspicious activities in the Bakery and also claimed to have seized 830 grams of edible weed brownie and 160gm of marijuana (ganja). The police have arrested three persons in the case so far.

One of the arrested persons has been identified as Jagat Chaurasia, who is said to be the supplier. Chaurasia was arrested in Bandra on the same night and found to be in possession of 125 grams of marijuana.

During the raid, NCB officials found a box that contained cakes and drugs. Now the team is probing the matter to find out for how long has this operation been going on, who is the mastermind behind the same and also the clients of this bakery who are receiving drugs in this manner.

MP CONG. DIVIDED  
OVER DIGVIJAY'S  
ART. 370 REMARKS

RABINDRA NATH  
CHOUDHURY | DC  
BHOPAL, JUNE 13

Congress veteran Digvijay Singh's purported opposition to abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir has divided his party in Madhya Pradesh.

While a section of the party defended him on the issue, albeit reluctantly, his brother and senior Congress leader Laxman Singh, however, countered him saying that "It is not possible to restore Article 370 in J&K now".

Media wing chief of Congress in Madhya Pradesh Narendra Singh Saluja on Sunday defended him saying that there was nothing wrong in the suggestion made by the veteran leader to review the abrogation of Article 370 in J&K by taking views of the local people on the issue (if Congress returned to power at the Centre).

"Digvijay Singh has rightly said that Congress should consider reviewing abrogation of Article 370 in J&K if the party returns to power at the Centre. In democracy, people's views are taken on many issues. There is nothing wrong with it. BJP was unnecessarily making it an issue to divert public attention from the Centre's failure to deal with the Coronavirus in the country", he said.

He, however, hastened to add that "It was his personal view. The issue has never been discussed at the party forum". Congress spokesman K.K. Mishra said the party should discuss the issue.

India is natural  
ally of G7: Modi

PM highlights revolutionary impact of digital tech

Proposal by India  
on vaccine patents  
gets support at G7

New Delhi, June 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India is a natural ally for the G7 and its partners in defending democracy, freedom of thought and liberty from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism, violent extremism and economic coercion.

The Prime Minister made the remarks in a virtual address at an outreach session of a summit of the Group of Seven (G7) richest democracies which was held in the British seaside resort of Cornwall.

The ministry of external affairs (MEA) said that Modi, as the lead speaker at the session titled 'open societies and economies', highlighted India's civilisational commitment to democracy, freedom of thought and liberty. "As the world's largest democracy, India is a natural ally for the G7 and guest countries to defend these shared values from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation and infodemics and economic coercion," he said.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the revolutionary impact of digital technologies on social inclusion and empowerment in India through applications such as Aadhaar, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) trinity.

While underscoring the vulnerabilities inherent in open societies, the prime minister called on tech companies and social

media platforms to ensure a safe cyber environment for their users, additional secretary (economic relations) in the MEA P. Harish said at a press conference. "The Prime Minister's views were appreciated by other leaders in the gathering," he said.

Harish said the G7 leaders underlined their commitment to a free, open and a rules-based Indo-Pacific and resolved to collaborate with partners in the region.

The Group of Seven (G7)

Okonjo Iweala and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

"I can confirm that there was widespread support in deliberations for text-based negotiations on the India-South Africa proposal for TRIPS waiver at the World Trade Organisation (WTO)," P. Harish, additional secretary (economic relations) in the MEA, said at a press conference. The TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) council of the WTO is likely to start text-based negotiations on the proposal.

Calling on the G7 to demonstrate leadership, Modi sought the grouping's strong support for the proposal for a TRIPS waiver at the WTO." — PTI

comprises the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States. As chair of G7, the UK invited India, Australia, South Korea and South Africa to the summit as Guest countries "Was happy to address the @G7 Session on Open Societies as a Lead Speaker. Democracy and freedom are part of India's civilisational ethos, and find expression in the vibrancy and diversity of India's society," Modi tweeted. — PTI

Congress needs  
widespread  
reforms: Sibal

New Delhi, June 13: The Congress must bring widespread reforms across all levels of the organisation to show it is no longer in a state of inertia and to present itself as a viable political alternative to the BJP, party veteran Kapil Sibal said on Sunday.

India needs a resurgent Congress. But for that, the party needs to show that it is active, present, aware and is in the mood to engage meaningfully," the former union minister said.

"For this to happen, we will need to have widespread reforms at the organisational hierarchy both at the central and state levels to show that the party is still a force to reckon with and is no longer in a state of inertia, he said.

Sibal, who was among the G-23 leaders whose letter to Congress President Sonia Gandhi last year demanding a meaningful overhaul of the party had triggered a

storm, acknowledged that at present there is no strong political alternative to the BJP but said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has lost the moral authority to rule and the Congress can gain from the current mood in the country.

The former union minister voiced hope that organisational elections, recently postponed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, will happen sooner than later.

He also noted that while forming committees to review election losses is good, it will have no impact unless remedies suggested are implemented.

Noting that the party's alliances with the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) in Assam and Indian Secular Front (ISF) in West Bengal were not thought through, Sibal said the Congress has failed to drive home the point that minority and majority communalism are equally dangerous for the country. — PTI



Lt Governor Manoj Sinha performs rituals during bhoomi puja ceremony of Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) at Majeen in Jammu. — PTI

Balaji temple gets land on 40-yr lease

Militancy, infiltration in J&K  
largely controlled: Kishan

From Page 1

J&K's administrative council under Sinha had in April this year allotted 496 kanals and 17 marlas (62 acres) of land to the TTD for building the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Majeen on the peripheries of Jammu city.

Article 35A had empowered J&K Assembly to define a J&K resident and guaranteed special rights and privileges to them and thereby prohibited non-permanent residents from permanent settlement and from acquiring immovable properties, government jobs and scholarships in the state. However, those willing to supplement the erstwhile state's development and economic growth would be provided with land and other immovable possessions on temporary or lease basis under strict regulations.

The TTD has been allotted this land on lease for a period of 40 years. "TTD, a board established by the government under the TTD Act, 1932, is a charitable organization of international repute with a proven track record in the spiritual, cultural, social and educational sphere," a statement issued by the J&K government said.

Sinha said the TTD board will establish a Gurukul and Veda

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy on Sunday claimed that post-abrogation of Article 370 not only has militancy been controlled to a great extent in Jammu and Kashmir but the government has through a concerted effort put in by the security forces also curbed infiltration of terrorists and other undesirable elements from across the border.

He asserted, while speaking to reports at Jammu, "We've managed to curb infiltration and militancy and terrorism stand controlled in J&K. Not more than a couple of incidents of violence were reported in India including J&K in

● KISHAN REDDY said that it is because of the pandemic that the process of development has slowed down in J&K.

● KISHAN REDDY was with J&K's Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at Jammu Raj Bhavan to discuss 'a range of issues pertaining to the internal security, law and order management and public welfare in the Union Territory.'

the past two years."

Kishan Reddy said that it is because of the pandemic that the process of development has slowed down in J&K.

"Earlier as many as 36 Union ministers visited J&K as part of the government's effort to boost its

economy and development but Covid-19 has played a spoilsport", he said, adding that due to the pandemic the developmental projects got a hit yet he promised that once the situation eases "we will take J&K to new heights on the development front."

Later in the evening, Kishan Reddy was with J&K's Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at Jammu Raj Bhavan to discuss "a range of issues pertaining to the internal security, law and order management and public welfare in the Union Territory."

An official spokesman said that the discussion between the two was also on the functioning of DRDO's Covid hospitals in twin capitals of Jammu and Srinagar.

Pathshala within the complex to promote Sanskrit language and ancient culture of Vedic teachings and learning. "The board has also agreed to set up centres of excellence in the field of healthcare on the lines of its excellence centres in Andhra Pradesh," he said.

He thanked the TTD board and the central government "for fulfilling the long-pending wish of the people of J&K and North India for establishing the temple of Lord Balaji on the land of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi".

BJP's UP leaders meet in  
Vrindavan, discuss poll plans

Mathura, June 13: The BJP held a meeting of its western Uttar Pradesh office bearers to devise ways to improve its electoral prospects in the state's Assembly elections next year.

The meeting was held at Keshav Dham in Vrindavan near here and was chaired by state BJP general secretary (organisation) Sunil Bansal.

In the meeting, it was decided to fill all vacant organisational posts of the party to help it gear up for the 2022 Assembly elections.

During the meeting, Bansal sought to impress

● IN THE meeting, chaired by state BJP general secretary (organisation) Sunil Bansal, it was decided to fill all vacant organisational posts of BJP to help it gear up for 2022 Assembly polls.

upon party workers to create a conducive environment up to booth level.

Sources said during the meeting, the party leaders decided to take active steps to assuage the alleged resentments among people over some perceived lapses of the government in tackling the pandemic.

They also said the BJP leaders also asked workers to encourage and facilitate the activists and workers of other parties if they express interest in joining their rank.

After the party meeting, Bansal also had an interaction with UP's former power minister and prominent BSP leader Ramvir Upadhyay and his wife Seema Upadhyay, a former MP, who recently joined the BJP.

Seema Upadhyaya is also a contender for the post of Hathras Zila Panchayat chairperson. The couple met Bansal for over 20 minutes. — PTI

He promised that except for the main pujaris of the temple and the core supervision team, it will also have a large number of local people for the management, thus providing direct and indirect job opportunities to the people of the region.

AAP MP ALLEGES  
GRAFT IN LAND  
PURCHASE FOR  
AYODHYA TEMPLE

Lucknow/Ayodhya, June 13: Shriram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust general secretary Champat Rai was on Sunday accused by two opposition leaders of buying a piece of land worth ₹2 crore at an inflated price of ₹18.5 crore for the Ram temple premises with help from Trust's member Anil Mishra.

The allegation, strongly refuted by Rai, was made by two opposition leaders — AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh and a former minister in the Samajwadi government, Pawan Pandey.

Terming it a case of money laundering, Singh and Pandey both sought a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate into the land purchase for the temple premises.

Both the leaders alleged that Rai purchased the land, measuring 1,208 hectares and located in Bag Bjaasi village under Sadar tehsil of Ayodhya district for a price of ₹18.5 crore from the first purchaser, who had bought it minutes earlier on March 18 this year from its original owners for a sum of ₹2 crore.

"Champat Rai, the general secretary of Shriram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust with the help of Trust's member Anil Mishra bought the land worth ₹2 crore at ₹18.5 crore. This is a case of money laundering and the government should get it probed by the ED and CBI," Singh told reporters in Lucknow. — PTI

Parked car sinks as  
concrete floor caves in

Mumbai, June 13: A video of a car disappearing into a pool of water in a Mumbai housing complex after the spot where it was parked caved in went viral on social media on Sunday.

Responding to the viral video, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said the spot where the car sank used to be a well but was partially covered with cement concrete by the housing society.

The incident took place at the Ram Nivas society located at Kama lane in Ghatkopar West area on Sunday morning, police said, adding no one was injured.

The housing society had covered a well with reinforced concrete cement and residents were using the area to park their cars. A police team reached the spot and brought the car out of the water body. The spot has been cordoned for the safety of residents," an official said. — PTI



A screenshot of the viral video showing a car sinking into water as concrete floor caves in Mumbai. — PTI

DIRE | CONDITIONS

Suvendu talks of anti-defection law, Ghosh of sacrifice

WB BJP  
divided over defectors

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC  
KOLKATA, JUNE 13

A major policy clash has unfolded between two prominent functionaries in the West Bengal BJP on how to tackle the threat of defection of its newly elected MLAs to the ruling Trinamul Congress. This, after the return of BJP's national vice-president Mukul Roy to the TMC.

Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari has warned Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee that he would raise provisions of the anti-defection law in the Assembly if defection of legislators from the BJP took place. This is also seen as a veiled warning to BJP MLAs so as to hold them back.

State BJP president Dilip Ghosh lamented the

Trinamul leader blocks ghar wapsi

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, JUNE 13

Senior Trinamul MP Kalyan Banerjee objected to the move of BJP leader Rajib Banerjee to return to the party of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the footsteps of Krishnanagar North MLA Mukul Roy.

"habit on the part of many to leave the party," and said the party itself would drive out those "who only want to enjoy power."

Replying to questions on Roy's alleged bid to poach on at least 10 BJP MLAs and a Lok Sabha MP, Adhikari said, "There

Kalyan made his stand clear a day after Banerjee met TMC general secretary Kunal Ghosh. Days ago, he had slammed the BJP leadership for threatening President's Rule in West Bengal. The three-time Serampore MP alleged, "Rajib spoke against the CM. He also abused the booth-level

workers. During the elections, he prompted the arrests of TMC workers at Domjur in Howrah, where he contested but lost."

The MP asked, "Didn't he unleash atrocities on the ruling party workers with the help of the CISF? Does it mean that he has come clean just because he met Kunal Ghosh?"

were instances of MLAs of Congress and CPI(M) being present in the TMC. Mamata Banerjee now started it again with Mukul Roy. It is my responsibility as a leader of opposition to establish that Banerjee and the West Bengal Assembly are

not above the law."

The Nandigram BJP MLA added, "Who will go where and with whom is not a big issue. But the CM must keep in mind that the anti-defection law had not been enforced in West Bengal because of the control the CM exercised on



## SHORT TAKES

**BOLSONARO FINED FOR MASKLESS MOTORCYCLE RALLY**

**Sao Paulo, June 13:** Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was fined \$100 Saturday for violating Covid-19 containment measures in Sao Paulo by failing to wear a mask and provoking huge crowds at a motorcycle rally for supporters.

Thousands of motorcycles took part in the “Accelerate for Christ” rally, led by the far-right president, who wore an open-faced helmet and no mask, in violation of health regulations. Bolsonaro, who has been holding such rallies across Brazil as he gears up to seek re-election next year, defied a prior warning from Sao Paulo Governor Joao Doria, a political rival, who had said the president would be fined if he failed to observe regulations.

**CHINA CITY’S DRONES TO KEEP PEOPLE INSIDE**

**Beijing, June 13:** A fleet of 60 drones has been deployed in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou to keep people indoors and remind those going out to wear masks.

China has locally stamped out cases of local Covid-19 transmission, but Guangzhou has seen a flare-up of the more infectious delta variant of the virus, initially discovered in India. Six new cases were reported in Guangzhou over the previous 24 hours, raising the number in the outbreak to more than 100.

The police-operated drones carry cameras and broadcast messages to people venturing outdoors that they and others are best protected by staying inside.

**POLICE ARREST 1 OF 2 IN AUSTIN MASS SHOOTING**

**Austin (US) June 13:** Police have arrested one suspect and are searching for another after a mass shooting on a crowded downtown Austin street left 14 people wounded, two of them critically.

The Austin Police Department said in a news release that the US Marshals Lone Star Fugitive Task Force assisted in making the arrest on Saturday but it provided no other details other than to say it is continuing to follow up on leads for the suspect still at large. Interim Police Chief Joseph Chacon said the shooting happened around 1:30 am on a street packed with bars and barricaded off from vehicle traffic. He said investigators believe it began as a dispute.

**SHELLING KILLS 18 IN SYRIA’S REBEL-HELD AFRIN**

**Beirut, June 13:** Shelling of the rebel-held city of Afrin in northern Syria killed at least 18 people on Saturday, many of them when a hospital was hit, a war monitor said.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said a doctor, three hospital staff, two women and two children died at Al-Shifaa hospital in the city which is held by Turkish-backed rebels. A rebel commander also died at the hospital, the Observatory said, adding that 23 people were injured.

An AFP correspondent shot footage of white-helmeted aid workers in the hospital courtyard strewn with bodies.

“The shelling targeted several areas of the town and hit the hospital”, Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahmane said.

“Most of the victims died in shelling on the hospital,” the monitoring group said in a statement.

**12 KILLED, OVER 100 HURT IN GAS BLAST IN CHINA**

**Beijing, June 13:** At least 12 people were killed and more than 100 others injured after a gas explosion tore through a residential community in central China on Sunday, official media reported. The blast took place at about 6:30 am local time in the Zhangwan district of Shiyan city in Hubei province, trapping a large number of people. The explosion left 12 people dead.

Authorities have rescued nearly 150 people from the area, including 39 with serious injuries, and rushed them to hospitals, the state-run *Xinhua* news agency reported. Images and video footages circulating on social media platform *Weibo* show showed rescue workers working through the wreckage of flattened houses. The exact number of casualties is still being verified as the search and rescue is underway, the report said.

# New Israeli govt to be sworn in

## Will end Netanyahu’s 12-yr premiership

**WILL RETURN TO POWER, SAYS BIBI**

**Jerusalem, June 13:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is vowing to lead his Likud Party back to power. In a speech to parliament, Netanyahu made clear he has no plans on giving up leadership of the Likud Party. He vowed to “continue the great mission of my life, ensuring the security of Israel.” —AP

being the longest-serving Prime Minister in the country’s history. Having served in the position earlier between 1996 and 1999, Netanyahu last year surpassed the record held by one of the Jewish state’s founding leaders, David Ben-Gurion. The formation of the new government would end the political impasse in the country that saw four elections in less than two years leading to inconclusive results.

But opinion polls suggest that majority of the Israelis do not look too hopeful regarding the longevity of the coalition of eight disparate parties who do not see eye-to-eye on most of the critical issues facing the country. Bennett, 49, has entered into a power-sharing agreement with Centrist leader Yair Lapid, the head of the Yesh Atid party, under which the latter would take over Premiership in September 2023, serving for two years till the end of the term. Lapid, the leader of the second-largest faction in the Knesset with 17 seats was invited by President Reuven Rivlin to form a coalition after Netanyahu, leading the Likud party with 30 seats, expressed his inability to put together a government. The unstable coalition that Lapid has managed to put together faces severe challenges and the glue that seems to hold them together is the ‘unity of purpose’ created by the agenda of ousting Netanyahu. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that Netanyahu, seen by many as Israel’s ‘divider in chief’, also in a strange way has proved to be a unifier, bringing in together unthinkable allies to form a government of national unity. Analysts feel that two factors likely to determine the tenure of the new coalition are the fear of Netanyahu’s return and a political demise of some of the right-wing factions that have gone against the wishes of their voting constituency. —PTI

# Nato set to bid symbolic farewell to Afghanistan

**AFGHAN I.S. GROUP CLAIMS KABUL ATTACKS**

**Kabul, June 13:** The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for bombing two minivans in a mostly Shiite neighbourhood in the Afghan capital that killed seven people. Among the dead were two employees of Afghanistan’s state-run film company, a colleague said Sunday.

In a statement issued late Saturday, Afghanistan’s IS affiliate said its operatives blew up two minivans carrying “disbeliever Shiites” using sticky bombs. Sticky bombs slapped onto cars trapped in Kabul’s chaotic traffic are the newest weapons terrorising Afghans in the increasingly lawless nation. —AP

that Nato leaders almost want to downplay and leave quietly, rather than making too big a deal of it, and going on to focus on other business,” said Erik Brattberg, director of the Europe Programme at

the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. With the US leading the withdrawal, European allies and Canada want to hear Biden’s thinking about how security will be assured at their embassies, along major transport routes and above all at Kabul’s airport.

Many wonder whether the Afghan government can survive a resurgent Taliban. Some think Kabul’s capitulation is only a matter of time. “We are currently in intense discussions with our member states, the United States, Nato and the United Nations on the absence of essential security conditions for our continued diplomatic presence. It will be difficult to keep it” in place, European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

For now, Nato plans to leave civilian advisers to help build up government institutions. It’s unclear who will protect them. The 30-nation alliance is also weighing whether to train Afghan special forces outside the country. As an organisation, Nato will not provide sanctuary for Afghans who worked alongside its forces. —AP

## Flash mob demo in Myanmar



Protesters make the three-finger salute as they take part in a flash mob demonstration against the military coup in Yangon on Sunday. —AFP

# G7 leaders agree on vaccines, China and taxing corporations

**Carbis Bay, June 13:**

Leaders of the Group of Seven wealthy nations staked their claim Sunday to leading the world out of the Coronavirus pandemic and crisis, pledging more than 1 billion Coronavirus vaccine doses to poorer nations, vowing to help developing countries grow while fighting climate change and backing a minimum tax on multinational firms.

At the group’s first face-to-face meeting in two years, the leaders dangled promises of support for global health, green energy, infrastructure and education. The leaders wanted to show that international cooperation is back after the upheavals caused by the pandemic and the unpredictability of former US President Donald Trump.

And they wanted to convey that the club of wealthy democracies — Cana-

da, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States — is a better friend to poorer nations than authoritarian rivals such as China. Speaking at the end of the three-day summit in southwest England, US President Joe Biden, who was making his first foreign trip as leader, said it was an “extraordinary, collaborative and productive meeting.” British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the summit’s host, praised the “fantastic degree of harmony” among the group. Johnson said the G-7 would demonstrate the value of democracy and human rights to the rest of the world and help “the world’s poorest countries to develop themselves in a way that is clean and green and sustainable.”

“It’s not good enough for us to just rest on our laurels and talk about how

**BEIJING: DAYS OF ‘SMALL’ NATIONS DICTATING GLOBAL DECISIONS GONE**

**Beijing, June 13:** China on Sunday asserted that the days when global decisions were dictated by a “small group” of countries are long gone, hitting back at the G-7 summit where Beijing was at the centre of severe criticism over the Covid-19 origins, human rights violations, Belt and Road Initiative.

Answering a question on issues covered by the G-7 Summit on pandemic response, economy, trade and global supply chains and US efforts to “seizing”

the opportunity to bond with other Western countries to safeguard the “rules-based international system”, the Chinese embassy in London said there is only one system, the international system, which is led by the UN. “We always believe that countries, big or small, strong or weak, poor or rich, are equals, and that world affairs should be handled through consultation by all countries,” it said. —PTI

important those values are,” he told reporters after the 3-day meeting on the Cornwall coast. “And this isn’t about imposing our values on the rest of

the world. What we as the G-7 need to do is demonstrate the benefits of democracy and freedom and human rights to the rest of the world.” —AP

# A custom-made bicycle is Biden’s G7 gift for Boris

**London, June 13:** US President Joe Biden chose a custom-made, hand-built bicycle as his gift for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson for their first in-person meeting ahead of the G7 Summit in Cornwall this weekend.

The bike is made by a small company in the American city of Philadelphia that was reportedly given just a few days to build a red, white and blue bike that normally takes months to construct.

Johnson is a keen cyclist and is often pictured cycling on the streets of London, with his security detail in pursuit. Biden is also known as a regular cyclist and was revealed

to be a fan of indoor cycling with Peloton. The bike gifted by Biden was made by Bilenky Cycle Works, a business with a staff of four who usually take up to 18 months to make a machine. The owner, Stephen Bilenky, was contacted by the US State Department on May 23 about designing the bike and a matching helmet, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported. It says the budget was just \$1,500, a third of the minimum price the firm charges.

Bilenky told the newspaper that he had accepted the order to raise the firm’s profile and that “controlled chaos” followed. “It is a very modern ver-

sion of an upright British roadster with a custom paint scheme with the Union Jack flag and a matching helmet,” he was quoted as saying.

Johnson’s gift for the US President was a framed picture of a mural showing the American anti-slavery campaigner Frederick Douglass. The image of the former slave, who became a leading figure in the 19th century slavery abolitionist movement, is part of Edinburgh’s mural trail. US First Lady Jill Biden was given a first edition of *The Apple Tree* by Daphne du Maurier, the English author who lived in Cornwall. —PTI

**BIDENS ATTEND SUNDAY SERVICE, AMAZE LOCALS**

**Falmouth (England), June 13:** Churchgoers in a seaside resort in England say they have been left “gobsmacked” when US President Joe Biden and the first lady Jill Biden dropped in for a Sunday service.

The Bidens are in Cornwall, southwest England, to attend a Group of Seven wealthy democracies summit.

On Sunday morning, ahead of the summit’s conclusion, they were seen attending mass at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in St. Ives.

“I think gobsmacked is probably a very true word,” said Annie Fitzpatrick, 58. —AP

# Man jumps into lake for 365th straight day

**Chicago, June 13:** A Chicago bus driver looking for a way to relieve stress during the Coronavirus pandemic jumped into Lake Michigan for a 365th straight day on Saturday.

Dan O’Conor said he started jumping into the lake at Montrose Harbour on the city’s North Side last year to relieve stress. “It was during the pan-

demic, it was during the protest, it was during an election year. ... So it was somewhere where I could come down here and block all that noise out and kind of be totally present with me in the lake, and find some moments of Zen,” said the father of three.

He continued jumping into the lake through the fall before the hard part:

● **SATURDAY WAS special because it was the culmination of doing it for a full year.**

Hacking a hole in the ice on the frozen lake that was big enough for him to jump through during the winter. He said when he got home after one such jump, he found about 20

scrapes and cuts on his body.

He was encouraged by the response he got for his undertaking.

“People started asking me what this was benefiting and how they could support and when I say people, I’m talking strangers online, you know. When I started posting the videos on Twitter and

Instagram ... I got more wind in my sails there because people started commenting like, ‘This makes my day, it’s nice to see this,’” he said.

Saturday was special because it was the culmination of doing it for a full year. “I just wanted to celebrate just that drive to dive for 365,” O’Conor said. —AP

**GORILLA | TACTICS****Colleague fired without warning after coming late for shift**

# Berlin delivery riders take on \$1B start-up

**Berlin, June 13:** Dozens of workers gathered outside of one of Berlin’s most-celebrated start-ups, the grocery delivery company Gorillas, to protest the firing hours earlier of a colleague. “We want Santiago back!” the young riders chanted last week, threatening to block one of the company’s inner-city warehouses with their bikes unless he was reinstated.

The wildcat strike on a balmy June evening was unusual even by Germ-

any’s strong tradition of labour rights, highlighting growing tensions in the capital’s freewheeling start-up scene.

“We came here to show our solidarity, to support our friend,” said Zeynep, a Gorillas rider who declined to give her last name for fear of facing repercussions from the company. “We want this decision to be reversed as soon as possible.” The riders said their colleague had been fired without warning after turning up late for his shift.

In a statement, the company said he his contract was terminated for “serious misconduct” but declined to provide details, citing confidentiality. Founded just last year, Gorillas has benefited from surging demand for quick grocery deliveries during the pandemic. In March, the company raised about \$290 million from investors, becoming Germany’s fastest “unicorn” — a start-up with a total valuation of \$1 billion or more.

Gorillas now operates in

dozens of cities across Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Britain, and has already set its sights on New York, where it faces US incumbents such as GoPuff. But strikes like those in Berlin show trouble is brewing in its home market. The rowdy but peaceful protest late Wednesday drew support from employees of rival delivery services, some of whom downed their colourful courier bags to join the picket. Eventually Gorillas agreed to close the depot for

the night, drawing cheers from the protesters.

The next day, riders blocked another warehouse, making clear their gripes go beyond the firing of a single colleague. “In the last six months, that I’ve been here I’ve noticed so many ways that the company is doing things in an unjustified way,” said rider Huseyin Camalan.

“We’re here to stand against that. It’s part of a larger thing.” Camalan said many riders suffer from back pain. —AP

# Proof in Mexico serial killer’s home suggests 17 victims

**Mexico City, June 13:** Investigators digging under the house of a suspected serial killer on the outskirts of Mexico City have said they have found 3,787 bone fragments so far, apparently belonging to 17 different victims.

Prosecutors in the State of Mexico, which borders Mexico City, suggested the grisly finds may not end there. In excavations carried out since May 17, authorities have dug up the floors of the house where the suspect lived. They now plan to extend the search to the soil beneath several other rooms he rented out on the same property. ID cards and other possessions from people who disappeared years ago were found at the junk-filled home, suggesting the trail of killings may go back years.

The number of bone fragments found underneath concrete floors at the suspect’s home would imply the corpses may have

been hacked into tiny pieces. That could make sense. The suspect, identified by prosecutors only as “Andrés”, was formerly a butcher and in fact sectioned and filleted his last victim. “The bones fragments are being subjected to lateralisation studies, which include carefully cleaning each one, identifying what part of the body they are and then placing them in their anatomical position, providing a method for determining the approximate number of victims,” the office said in a statement.

“This analysis indicates that, up to now, the bone fragments found may possibly be those of 17 people,” the statement said. Authorities have not released the full name of the 72-year-old suspect under Mexican laws protecting a suspect’s identity. He has been ordered to stand trial in the killing of his last victim, a 34-year-old woman. —AP





# DECCAN Chronicle

14 JUNE 2021

## Test ahead for BJP in UP: Will it blink or tame Yogi?

UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath was in the national capital last week to discuss political, governance and administrative issues with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union health minister Amit Shah and BJP president J.P. Nadda, to tighten loopholes and raise the BJP's prospects in the Assembly election due early, 2022. Earlier, complaints were being voiced by BJP leaders in UP, and there were even murmurs that the PM and the CM might not be on the same page.

In this backdrop senior BJP and RSS leaders visited Lucknow to take stock and held confabulations in the national capital afterward. There was fevered speculation that the CM may have to be changed. Given all the excitement, the CM's visit to New Delhi was followed closely, not least because he had very lengthy talks with Mr Modi, Mr Shah and Mr Nadda.

It would have become clear to all concerned that the UP CM is not a BJP leader in the normal sense and the usual rules of party discipline do not apply to him. He is the head of a centuries old religious establishment. Politically he is aligned to the Hindu Mahasabha. Hindu Vahini, the outfit he created, is a more extreme practitioner of Hindutva than any other outfit. Nevertheless, he has BJP connections because this party has sent him to Parliament several times and elected him to be its leader in the UP Assembly in 2017, catapulting him to the position of CM.

Adityanath is not collegial in his ways. He is a religious right-wing maverick. His administrative actions have been widely perceived as dictatorial. He has no party factions or party favourites and relies on a clutch of bureaucrats, a trait he shares with many chief ministers, including Mr Modi

when he was the Gujarat CM. He goofed up on pandemic management big time. The BJP naturally feared he might lose the party the state polls, if allowed to run unchecked.

But can he be checked? If he were to break away, it is not unlikely that he can cut into a section of the saffron party's vote bank that is emphatically communal. The BJP can ill afford this specially when there is said to be considerable disenchantment, flagged by Covid mishandling.

In light of this it is possible that the ideas produced in the CM's consultations in New Delhi will lead to organisational changes in the state BJP and in the council of ministers in the state. However, any comment on these will be premature since the Yogi is his own man and not quite subject to BJP discipline. Changes that may follow in the wake of the CM's meetings in the national capital will naturally be watched by all — not just the BJP. The Opposition parties too will wait to see if there emerges a think that they can exploit. Evidently, the situation is not as conducive for the BJP as it was before the pandemic.

With all preparations now moving toward the election, it will be interesting to see if the CM has a significant hand in the selection of the BJP's candidates for the upcoming state poll. That may provide a clue to the state of the power balance between the CM and the traditional BJP power structure.

## GST cut is welcome relief

The GST Council's decision to reduce tax on goods and services used for the treatment of Covid-19 disease brings a welcome relief to people fighting one of the most infectious diseases of recent times.

The Council, which comprises state and Union finance ministers, has also decided to levy a five per cent tax on any drug that the health ministry recommends for the treatment of coronavirus infection. The reduction in the tax rate, however, would be applicable only till September. The tax on vaccines, however, would continue to be five per cent. Though several state governments had demanded exempting vaccines from GST, the Council went with the opinion of the central government which opposed any such move. The state governments, however, did not insist on its demand after the Centre agreed to buy 75 per cent of the vaccines for public immunisation. The focus on healthcare should continue even after the Covid pandemic. It is high time that the Central and state governments take lessons from the pandemic and take steps to improve public health infrastructure which is woefully inadequate. Apart from building more hospitals and training more healthcare professionals, the government should focus on preventative healthcare. It is believed that preventative healthcare could add billions of dollars to the economy by way of saving the cost of hospitalisation and by enhancing people's productivity. Preventative healthcare could be promoted by reducing the cost of diagnosis by encouraging local manufacturing of medical equipment. Though the Narendra Modi government has already announced incentives for boosting the manufacturing of medical equipment, it should be pursued with renewed vigour.

Another step that would greatly help in the delivery of healthcare is the standardisation of medical records and the national storage of health records, which would allow people to avail medical care anywhere in India as records could be accessed by a click of the mouse, obviously after due authorisation of the patient.

**Apart from building more hospitals and training more healthcare professionals, the government should focus on preventative healthcare.**

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**Hyderabad:** 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256  
**Vijayawada:** No.C-3 & 4 Patnam, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234  
**Visakhapatnam:** Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Roadway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285  
**Rajahmundry:** Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208  
**Anantapur:** Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904  
**Karimnagar:** Survey No.1341, Vavilalpalay Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433  
**Nellore:** Survey No.527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennamudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580  
**Chennai:** SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325  
**Coimbatore:** 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph : 0422 2231255  
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Subhani



## India's Great Helmsman: Salute to Narasimha Rao



Sanjaya Baru

Sanjayovacha

It was interesting that the day after Congressman Jitin Prasada joined the BJP, the political future of Rajasthan's Sachin Pilot has become the subject of renewed media speculation. The two have one political antecedent in common.

Both their fathers were regarded as being close to Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. The Congress Party apparatus, the late Devendra Nath Dwivedi, would often lament that many Congressmen, including himself, had to pay a political price for their loyalty to the late Prime Minister. Perhaps the Prasadas and the Pilots continue to pay that price.

Those who imagine that the decline of the Congress Party began in 2014, attributing this to Narendra Modi's campaign for a "Congress mukt Bharat", are unaware of the roots of the party's decline. It began the day the party ceased to be a party, as Narasimha Rao famously put it in his book *The Insider*, and became a "proprietorship". When I suggested to late President Pranab Mukherjee that a book on the decline of the Congress Party was waiting to be written, he asked me when I thought the decline had begun. I said to him that the turning point was the 1989 election. Mukherjee sat back in his chair, thought for a while and said: "The analysis should begin from 1969."

While Manmohan Singh was the head of a coalition called the United Progressive Alliance that was in office thanks first to the Communists and then to the Lohia socialists, it was Narasimha Rao's tenure that marks the party's last hurrah.

The way in which Narasimha Rao stabilised his party and government at a time when it was shattered by two successive assassinations of its top leaders, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, was a stellar example of political leadership on a national and historic scale.

In remembering P.V. Narasimha Rao this month, when the nation commemorates his birth centenary, many will recall his leadership during a period of economic crisis. Narasimha Rao lent his prime ministerial imprimatur to the sweeping industrial and trade policy reforms that set India on a new growth path. It is useful to recall the role of the political leadership in economic policy change and management at a time when its absence is being acutely felt.

A second set of policy initiatives that many will credit Narasimha Rao with, as they recall his leadership, will be the shifts in India's foreign and strategic policy. He steered the country through the turbulent years of the end of the Cold War, the implosion of the Soviet Union, at that time India's closest ally, and the changes in the global balance of power. Prime Minister Rao authorised the testing of nuclear weapons that his successor, Atal Behari Vajpayee, finally sanctioned and declared India a nuclear weapons power. Narasimha Rao also launched the "Look East Policy", making India reconnect to the Rising Asia to her east. India came close to the nations of Southeast Asia and East Asia, including South Korea and Japan.

Narasimha Rao also took important initiatives to improve India's ties with both China and

the United States. While these two aspects — economic and foreign policy — of Prime Minister Rao's leadership will be much commented upon, few are willing to give him any credit for his leadership of the Congress Party. His critics point to the aborted attempt at internal democracy at the Tirupati session of the All-India Congress Committee in April 1992, where organisational elections were held for the first time in two decades, and to the political fallout of the handling of the Babri Masjid demolition as evidence of failed political leadership. The Congress also yielded space to the BJP during Narasimha Rao's tenure, enabling the BJP to make its first attempt at forming a government in 1996.

While some of this criticism is justified, the political importance of Narasimha Rao lies in his demonstrating to the Congress Party that someone from outside the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty can in fact run the party and the government quite successfully. He was not only the first Congress leader after the Nehru-Gandhis to remain in office for a full term but was also the first South Indian Prime Minister. The political significance of this cannot be underestimated, as it continues to be.

The loyalists of the Nehru-Gandhi family continue to chant the mantra that without the family at the helm, the party would disintegrate. Of course, at one time it also used to be said that without a Nehru-Gandhi at the helm the country would disintegrate. Narasimha Rao proved the loyalists wrong and earned their

**If Narendra Modi promised more and has delivered less, P.V. Narasimha Rao promised much less and delivered much more**

enduring dislike. Narasimha Rao's success in New Delhi emboldened several Congress leaders at the state level to strike out on their own. From G.K. Moopanar to Sharad Pawar to Mamata Banerjee, many Congress leaders have demonstrated that the party did not need a Nehru-Gandhi to secure electoral success at the state level. It is now clear that the Nehru-Gandhis cannot deliver power even at the national level.

Narasimha Rao's political legacy as Prime Minister deserves a more objective analysis than is so far available. Interestingly, the growing disappointment across the country with the assertive and domineering political leadership of Narendra Modi has sparked off renewed interest in the quiet and low-brow leadership of a man who in fact altered India's destiny. If Narendra Modi promised more and has delivered less, P.V. Narasimha Rao promised much less and delivered much more.

Grappling economic and strategic challenges in a period of political uncertainty and, at the same time, calming communal tensions aroused by the BJP's aggressive Hindutva project, Narasimha Rao pushed India on to a new trajectory of growth. No one viewed India as an "emerging economy" till 1990. By the end of the 1990s the world began to view India not only as a country catching up with the "Asian tigers", but also as a "rising power". Three consensual leaders — Narasimha Rao, Atal Behari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh — set India on a new path. For the first time in three decades the world is now wondering whether India would return to that rising path or return to its Third World status.

*Sanjaya Baru is the author of 1991: How P.V. Narasimha Rao Made History (2016)*

### LETTERS

#### ETHICS IN PARTIES

BJP leaders call its national vice-president Mukul Roy "Mir Jaffer, an opportunist" for changing his party in West Bengal and joining the Trinamul Congress. One must appreciate this strict stand if it is taken by the BJP against all defectors, but when Etala Rajendar, who was allegedly involved in grabbing of assigned lands, joins the party it welcomes him.

M. Mohan Rao  
Hyderabad

#### ENCROACHMENTS

Many encroachers are in nexus with sub-registrars (*Grabbed land being taken back, says Wakf, DC June 13*). Officials in the registration department are ignoring the aggrieved persons' complaints and keeping mum without taking any action against the errant sub-registrar. By invoking the registration rule unilateral cancellation of sale deed must be done after sending notice to the encroachers.

John Samuel  
Secunderabad

#### COVID-19 GST

The government is reactive, not proactive as it should be (*GST lowered on Covid essentials, DC, June 13*). Like announcing new vaccination policy assuming full responsibility, the reduction in GST on Covid-19 essentials is a knee jerk reaction forced on the government to fulfil the persisting demand of people and the judiciary.

Dr O. Prasada Rao  
Hyderabad

### 50 YEARS AGO IN

## DECCAN Chronicle

#### 'Salyut' crew relaxing

MOSCOW, JUNE 13.

The Soviet Union's three orbiting cosmonauts took the day off today to relax and cast their votes in the nationwide Supreme Soviet elections.

Official reports said the Salyut space station crew was in "top spirits" and enjoying a "well-earned rest".

After their regular morning exercises on a few necessary flight control talks, three cosmonauts — Georgy Dobrovolsky, Vladislav Volkoy and Viktor Patsayev — went on the air again for television viewers and messaged their votes to Soviet ground control.

A.G. Noorani



## The fault in our federalism: Parties in India have a unitary structure

One of the main architects of India's constitution, Dr B.R. Ambedkar was always at pains to assert that the Constitution over which he had toiled was essentially federal in nature. Moving that the Draft Constitution be taken into consideration, on November 4, 1948, he said: "The Draft Constitution is a federal constitution inasmuch as it establishes what may be called a dual polity. This dual polity under the proposed Constitution will consist of the Union at the centre and the states at the periphery each endowed with sovereign powers to be exercised in the field assigned to them respectively by the Constitution."

These dicta are advisedly quoted at length to demonstrate how a Constitution can be deformed and perverted despite the intentions of its framers. Some perversions began early when Jawaharlal Nehru was Prime Minister. Dr Ambedkar was almost in tears a few years later when he told the Rajya Sabha that he was a hack and

disowned the Constitution.

In this he was being utterly unfair to himself and, indeed, to the text of the Constitution. A British scholar on constitutional law opined early enough that India's was a unitary Constitution with federal features rather than a federal Constitution with unitary features.

Right now, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, assaults on the few federal features have increased. Truth to tell, the Hindutva parties, the Jan Sangh and its successor, the BJP, were never happy with federalism. For at the core of the concept of federalism is sharing of power.

Debate in India reckons with the Union's amassment of power but not with the refreshingly new insights into the concept of "cooperative federalism". This implies that all the three tiers of the country's government — Union, provincial or state and municipal — cooperate in the national undertaking; each sticking to its own sphere delineated in the Constitution. States which resent central domi-

nance cheerfully tread on the domain of the municipalities and local boards, the law regardless. As Jyoti Basu, chief minister of West Bengal, discovered, memoranda demanding greater powers for states are one thing. But it is the Union which controls the flows of funds to the states.

The concept of cooperative federalism implies obligation by all to cooperate in the nation-building exercise. As explained previously, "Rather than pitting state's rights against central power, the trend in the US, Canada, Australia and Europe has been towards sharing and cooperation in services and planning. While the federal governments without a doubt have increased their power at the expense of the state level, the state governments have also gained new functions." And "states and local agencies, in particular, have developed ways of participating in the planning and administration of many of the federal activities which at first glance appear to intervene so drastically in their

internal affairs".

In Australia, for instance, since 1982, states are to be consulted in advance before the Commonwealth of Australia concludes a treaty with a foreign government which impinges on their interests, although under the Constitution foreign affairs is exclusively a Union subject.

In Canada, the provinces successfully united to secure greater powers without amending the Constitution. It is politics which shapes the working of a Constitution. The All-India Services are another tool of central control. Deputation of an officer belonging to this service is controlled by the Centre. Recently, the Modi government sought to punish the chief secretary of West Bengal for being late, by five minutes for a meeting with Prime Minister Modi. Kashmir has bitterly complained of central control over the so-called All-India Services. They include the Indian Police Service also.

It is, however, in the intellectual realm that the backwardness is

more harmful. There exists an international body charged with the study of federalism. The progress which its journals record are unknown in India. We need to think anew. A federal Constitution cannot be worked by political parties organised as unitary bodies.

All the political parties are run by their party bosses at the very centre. They award tickets for election to party candidates whom they select. The party members have no voice in the selection. It is the boss who will decide who will be the chief minister and even the composition of the cabinet. In short, a so-called democratic constitution is run by outrageously undemocratic political parties. This is the direct opposite of the situation in Britain, Germany, the United States and other democratic countries. This has an impact on the working of the Constitution, especially on the functioning of the governor and the President.

By arrangement with Dawn



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52474.76	0.33
Nifty 50	15799.40	0.39
S&P 500*	4,247.44	0.19
Dollar (₹)	73.06	0.00
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.38	-0.36
Euro (₹)	88.81	0.07
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,530▲441	0.90
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	72.91	0.54
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.006	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.464	0.005

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

FPIs invest ₹15,520 cr in equities in June

Foreign portfolio investors pumped in a net Rs 13,424 crore so far in June as risk-on sentiment improved with declining Covid-19 cases. Depositories data showed FPIs invested Rs 15,520 crore in equities during June 1-11. At the same time, they withdrew Rs 2,096 crore from the debt segment, taking the total net inflow to Rs 13,424 crore. This comes after a net withdrawal of Rs 2,666 crore in May and Rs 9,435 crore in April.

Trading in DHFL shares suspended from today



BSE and NSE will suspend trading in the shares of DHFL from Monday, June 14. The move, aimed at avoiding "market complications", comes against the backdrop of the NCLT approving Piramal Group's resolution plan for DHFL. The resolution plan provides for delisting the DHFL shares. DHFL on June 9 said no value was attributable to the equity shares as per the liquidation value of the company estimated by the valuers.

CG Power lines up ₹135 cr capex in current year

CG Power and Industrial Solutions, acquired last year by Tube Investments of India of Murugappa Group last year, has chalked out capital expenditure plans of Rs 135 crore during the current financial year. The capex will be spent in balancing, debottlenecking and modernising facilities at the plants to improve production and productivity", CG Power and Industrial Solutions said in a statement.

Nitco to launch new range of products in US

Mumbai-based tile and natural stone surface designer Nitco will participate in the US exhibition "Coverings 21" scheduled from July 7 to July 9 in Orlando, Florida. Nitco's export business is spread across more than 40 countries. "Nitco will launch its new range of wall tiles and mosaics for the first time in the US," the firm said. "There is immense opportunity for Nitco to expand its presence in USA & Latin American markets", it said.



■ Paytm, Aadhar Housing, Policy Bazaar eye mega IPOs Financial services firms line up ₹55,000-cr float

Mumbai, June 13: With payments major Paytm's board reportedly approving a bumper share sale plan running north of Rs 22,000 crore, the IPO market is set for a big day, as over a dozen financial services players, including fintechs, are set to mop up over Rs 55,000 crore this fiscal from the market, according to investment bankers.

With more than a dozen insurance, asset management, commercial banking, non-banks, microfinance, housing finance and payment bank players already filing draft documents with the market regulator Sebi for public offerings, the financial services sector is set to dominate the primary issues or initial public offerings (IPOs) over the coming months.

Some of those who have already filed the draft red herring prospectus (DRHPs) with the Sebi include Aadhar Housing Finance (Rs 7,500 crore), Policy Bazaar (Rs 4,000 crore), Aptus Housing Finance (Rs 3,000 crore), Star Health Insurance (Rs 2,000 crore), Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC (Rs 1,500-2,000 crore) Arohan Financial Services (Rs 1,800 crore), Fusion Microfinance (Rs 1,700 crore), Fincare Small Finance Bank (Rs 1,330 crore), Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (Rs 1,000-1,300 crore), Medi Assist (Rs 840 crore) and Jana Small Finance Bank (Rs 700 crore). The board of the biggest payments bank Paytm has reportedly cleared a more



RAMDEV'S RUCHI SOYA FILES FPO PAPERS TO RAISE ₹4,300 CRORE

New Delhi, June 13: Edible oil firm Ruchi Soya, which is owned by Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Ayurveda, has filed draft document with the Sebi to launch a follow-on public offer (FPO) for raising up to Rs 4,300 crore.

The FPO is being launched to meet the Sebi norm of minimum public shareholding of 25 per cent in a listed entity. Ruchi Soya filed the draft red herring prospectus

(DRHP) with the market regulator on Saturday, sources said.

They said that the promoters have to dilute a minimum 9 per cent stake in this round of the FPO. The FPO is likely to hit the capital market next month after getting Sebi approval. Promoters group held 98.90 per cent stake in the company.

Ruchi Soya closed at Rs 1,242.35 apiece on the BSE on Friday. —PTI

than Rs 22,000-crore IPO. Together, these financial services companies are set to garner around Rs 55,000 crore from the public.

If materialised, the Paytm issue will be the largest IPO ever in the country, eclipsing the hitherto largest issue—the Rs 15,000-crore share sale by the government in national miner Coal India in October 2010, says investment bankers, who wished not to be quoted.

Investment bankers and analysts consider the IPO boom to be reflective of the ongoing bull run and advice retail investors to be cautious while parking their money in new firms.

V. K. Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services in Kochi, said the performance of the IPO market usually has a strong correlation to the performance of the secondary market. "If the stock market is bull-

ish, it attracts a large number of investors into IPOs.

Particularly, new investors lured by high potential profits, get attracted to new offers and the IPO market has always done well during market booms, Vijayakumar said.

Rupen Rajguru, head of equity investments and strategy at global wealth management firm Julius Baer in Mumbai, concurs and cautions retail investors to study the valuations carefully before investing as the market is a bit over-heated now.

"The current IPO market buoyancy is expected to continue into the next few quarters. IPOs are in fact playing on the financialisation of savings theme, which is a big structural shift in the country," Rajguru said.

Apart from Paytm, Policy Bazaar is looking to float a Rs 4,000-crore offering, industry sources said.

Two small finance banks — Jana SFB and Fincare SFB— have filed their draft papers with the Sebi.

Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC is looking to go public with Rs 1,500-2,000 crore offering. From the insurance sector, there are two IPOs: Westbridge Capital and Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Star Health & Allied Insurance, and the largest health benefits administrator Bengaluru-based Medi Assist TPA.

Microfinance players Arohan Financial Services, Fusion Microfinance and digital debt platform Northern Arc are also eyeing the IPO market. —PTI

G-7 drops 2030 target to shift to green cars

JOSH WINGROVE & ALBERTO NARDELLI JUNE 13

The Group of Seven nations backed away from plans to set a target for making



sure most new cars sold are greener vehicles, instead pledging only speed up efforts to move away from combustion engines.

In the final communique Sunday, the bloc include an autos section that was far more modest than earlier versions being discussed. It pledged to do more to electrify the transport sector but didn't set firm target dates.

"We recognize that this will require dramatically increasing the pace of the global decarbonization of the road transport sector throughout the 2020s, and beyond," the leaders wrote.

"We commit to accelerate the transition away from new sales of diesel and petrol cars to promote the uptake of zero emission vehicles."

The language is an apparent compromise between the nations, several of whom are major automakers. Earlier drafts of the communique suggested that the G-7 "strive" to ensure that the majority of all new passenger car sales are not petrol or diesel-powered "by 2030 or sooner." —Bloomberg

MFs need fully independent board of trustees: Quantum

New Delhi, June 13: There is a need for a fully independent board of trustees that will ensure that markets regulator Sebi's rules are complied with and the interests of the small investors are protected, said Quantum AMC founder Ajit Dayal. He said it should act as another check and balance that will further strengthen the mutual fund industry.

This could be a significant step after Franklin Templeton AMC has been found guilty of violating regulatory norms in the winding up of six debt schemes.

In a telephonic conversation with PTI, Dayal said that if one person of an asset management company (AMC) is sitting on the board of trustees then we are compromising the interest of investors. "The presence of that one member will make the board of trustees less independent."

"If you want to ensure that investors are well-looked after then you should have 100 per cent independent trustees," he said.

He further said the board of trustees is the most underutilised body.

In his opinion, Sebi should make a regulation that only independent trustees should be on the trustees board, not anyone from AMC, or anyone linked to the management.

"I think this is an oversight from Sebi that they have not put this rule. This should have been



done from 1993 but they haven't done it so far," he added.

The trustees job is to ensure that the funds are actually managed in the interests of the shareholders.

Quantum MF is probably the only fund house where the board of trustees is totally independent.

When asked whether Franklin Templeton-like episode could have been avoided if such a measure was in place, Dayal said "it is difficult to say whether we could have avoided such a situation but in theory, yes."

"In theory, yes, because if the trustees have the right information, if the trustees keep on comparing the information they have with what is stated in the prospectus or offer document then possibly if there is a mismatch, they can immediately correct it," he said.

Dayal said a lot of that also depends on the way the trustees take their job. He said they should take their job seriously as representative of investors, not as friends of the AMCs. —PTI

Thinking up creative ways to fight inflation

TRACY ALLOWAY JUNE 13

As the cost of everything now from steel to sugar surges, it's worth pausing to consider some more unusual ways to bring down prices. In China, for instance, Bloomberg reports that the Department of Price has been charged with working out the finer details of the country's recently announced crackdown on rising commodities costs. The effort to bring down prices includes higher transaction fees for commodity trades, new tax rules, encouraging producers to sell down inventories, and much more.

Last month, for instance, the Tangshan steel hub banned steelmakers from spreading price-hike information, while Shanghai has urged steel mills not to raise prices if production costs haven't changed.

And while China's renewed interest in price controls does raise some questions about its continued commitment to freer markets, it's certainly not the only country to have experimented with more creative types of inflation

When egg prices rose in the spring of 1966 US President Johnson had the Surgeon General issue alerts as to the hazards of cholesterol in eggs... A surprising number of people still think eggs are unhealthy

targeting. In fact, one of my all-time favourite financial anecdotes comes courtesy of Robert Samuelson's *The Great Inflation and its Aftermath*, which describes Lyndon B. Johnson's own struggles to bring down inflation in the 1960s. As recounted by one of Johnson's former aides:

"Shoe prices went up, so [President Lyndon B Johnson] slapped export controls on hides to increase the supply of leather. Reports that colour television sets would sell at high prices came across the wire. Johnson told me to ask

RCA's David Sarnoff [RCA was then a major TV manufacturer] to hold them down. Domestic lamb prices rose. LBJ directed [defence secretary Robert] McNamara to buy cheaper lamb from New Zealand for the troops in Vietnam. The president told CEA [Council of Economic Advisers] and me to move on household appliances, paper cartons, newsprint, men's underwear, women's hosiery, glass containers, cellulose, [and] air conditioners ... When egg prices rose in the spring of 1966 and agriculture secretary Orville Freeman told him that not much could be done, Johnson had the Surgeon General issue alerts as to the hazards of cholesterol in eggs."

Unfortunately, as Samuelson put it, "all this was for naught" and the president's customised inflation-fighting was too small to offset the overwhelming inflationary impulse from the economic boom of the time. A surprising number of people still think eggs are unhealthy though.

—Bloomberg

Income inequalities point to 'uneven' recovery: Subbarao

BIJAY KUMAR SINGH NEW DELHI, JUNE 13:

Former RBI governor D. Subbarao has expressed concerns over "extreme unevenness" in economic recovery and "sharpening inequalities" between upper income segments and lower income households in the country, cautioning that the trend will hit growth prospects, going forward.

He said liquidity in the domestic market and foreign fund inflows are leading to soaring prices of stocks and other assets despite disruptions due to the Covid pandemic.

The earlier expectations of a sharp economic recovery this year have been dashed by the new pandemic wave, he said.

"The economy contracted last year, for the first time in four decades, by as much as 7.3 per cent. That was less deep than we had first feared but still deep enough to have caused distress to millions of families in the informal sector. There was expectation of a sharp recovery this year

but those expectations are now tempered by the impact of the second wave," Subbarao told PTI.

The RBI too reduced its growth forecast for the current fiscal by one percentage point, from 10.5 per cent to 9.5 per cent, he said adding that even 9.5 per cent growth might seem impressive but note that this is coming on a very low base of last year. "Even if we clock this growth rate, the output during this fiscal 2021/22 will still be less than the output two years ago."

Subbarao said that while the majority of people have lost jobs and saw reduction in their income, the wealth of some rich individuals have increased during the pandemic period. "The positive wealth effect of the upper income segments juxtaposed with the negative income effects of the lower income households tells a story of a very uneven recovery and sharpening inequalities. This is morally wrong and politically corrosive," he said. —PTI

AMAZON RAISES MINIMUM PAY IN GERMANY TO 12 EUROS/HOUR



June 13: Amazon will guarantee an entry-level wage at its German warehouses of 12 euros (\$15 or Rs 1,100) an hour, the company said on Friday in the face of a long-running battle with a top labour union.

Germany is Amazon's biggest market after the United States, and the Verdi union has been organising strikes at Amazon since 2013 to protest low pay and poor conditions.

The pay increase is effective from July.

Amazon's wages exceed Germany's current minimum wage of 9.50 euros per hour. But workers have regularly gone on strike, such as last year to coincide with the \$1.6 trillion company's global "Prime Day" promotion event. They were disgruntled that a coronavirus bonus had been scrapped.

A Verdi official said that the increase was the least that the company could do after "earning a pretty penny in recent months" and that pay still fell short of its demands for many employees.

Amazon—which saw net profit rise to \$8.1 billion in the first quarter, more than tripling from \$2.5 billion the year earlier—has faced similar criticism over conditions and pay throughout the globe.

A spokesperson for Amazon in Germany said all employees would be getting a raise, and Amazon said in a statement that further increases were scheduled for the future. —Reuters

UNSEEN | COST

A Shanghai-Rotterdam cargo costs \$10,522, or 547% of 5-year seasonal average

Out-of-control shipping costs fire up prices

ALEX LONGLEY, CATHERINE BOSLEY & DEIRDRE HIPWELL JUNE 13

The skyrocketing price of shipping goods across the globe may hit your pocket sooner than you think—from that cup of coffee you get each morning to the toys you were thinking of buying your kids.

Transporting a 40-foot steel container of cargo by sea from Shanghai to Rotterdam now costs a record \$10,522, a whopping 547 per cent higher than the seasonal average over the last five years, according to Drewry Shipping.

With upwards of 80 per cent of all goods trade transported by sea, freight-cost surges are threatening to boost the price of everything from toys, furniture and car parts to coffee, sugar and anchovies, compounding concerns in global markets already bracing for accelerating inflation.

"In 40 years in toy retailing I have never known such challenging conditions from the point of view of pricing," Gary Grant, the founder and executive chairman of the UK toy shop The Entertainer, said in an interview. He has had to



stop importing giant teddy bears from China because their retail price would have had to double to add in higher freight costs. "Will this have an impact on retail prices? My answer has to be yes."

A confluence of factors—soaring demand,

a shortage of containers, saturated ports and too few ships and dock workers—have contributed to the squeeze on transportation capacity on every freight path. Recent Covid outbreaks in Asian export hubs like China have made matters worse. The

pain is most acutely felt on longer-distance routes, making shipping from Shanghai to Rotterdam 67 per cent more expensive than to the US West Coast, for instance.

Often dismissed as having an insignificant impact on inflation because they were a tiny part of the overall expense, rising shipping costs are now forcing some economists to pay them a bit more attention. Although still seen as a relatively minor input, HSBC Holdings Plc estimates that a 205 per cent increase in container shipping costs over the past

year could raise euro-area producer prices by as much as 2 per cent.

At the retail level, vendors are faced with three choices: halt trade, raise prices or absorb the cost to pass it on later, all of which would effectively mean more expensive goods, said Jordi Espin, strategic relations manager at the European Shippers' Council, a Brussels-based trade group that represents about 100,000 retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers. "These costs are already being passed to consumers," he said. —Bloomberg



SHORT TAKES

Mankad inducted into Hall of Fame

**Dubai:** The ICC on Sunday inducted 10 icons of the game, including India's Vinoo Mankad, into its illustrious Hall of Fame with two players each from five eras, dating back to cricket's early days, making it to the list. The inductees are Aubrey Faulkner of South Africa and Monty Noble of Australia (pre-1918), Sir Learie Constantine of West Indies and Stan McCabe of Australia (1918-1945), Ted Dexter of England and Vinoo Mankad of India (1946-1970). Desmond Haynes of the West Indies and Bob Willis of England were inducted from the ODI era (1971-1995) while Andy Flower of Zimbabwe and Kumar Sangakkara were from the modern era. — PTI

India up for WTC challenge: Pujara

**Southampton:** Batsman Cheteshwar Pujara says New Zealand will have the advantage going into the WTC final after playing a Test series against England but India will utilise the available time to prepare well for the title clash, starting here on June 18. "They will obviously have advantage having played two Test matches before the final but when it comes to final we will give our best and we know that our team has the potential to do well and win the championship," Pujara told *bcci.tv*. "So we are not worried about that, we will try and focus on these 10 to 12 days which we have for preparation." — PTI

Milkha's wife dies of Covid-19

**Chandigarh:** Former Indian women volleyball team captain Nirmal Kaur, who is the wife of sprint legend Milkha Singh, died at a Mohali hospital due to complications related to Covid-19 infection she had contracted last month. She was 85 and is survived by her husband, one son and three daughters. "A back bone of the Milkha Family, she was 85 years old, it is tragic that the Flying Sikh Milkha Singh ji could not attend the cremation which was conducted this evening itself as he is still in the ICU (of PGIMER in Chandigarh) himself," a statement from the family spokesperson said. — PTI

Faf recovering after concussion

**Abu Dhabi:** Much to the cricket community's relief, South African star Faf du Plessis on Sunday said he was back from the hospital and "recovering", after suffering a concussion during his team Quetta Gladiators' PSL match against Peshawar Zalmi here. In trying to save a boundary, Du Plessis collided with teammate Mohammad Hasnain during their Pakistan Super League match on Saturday night. Following the freak accident, the former South Africa captain lay prone on the ground for a few minutes while the team physio attended to him. — AFP

Rabada helps SA clinch innings win

**Saint Lucia:** Kagiso Rabada completed a five-wicket haul as South Africa formalised their demolition of the West Indies by an innings and 63 runs just before the lunch interval on the third day of the first Test on Saturday. Having taken just one wicket in the first innings on day one when the home side were routed for 97 after choosing to bat first, Rabada led the way for the Proteas with figures of five for 34. — AFP

**Brief scores:** West Indies 97 & 162 (Chase 62; Rabada 5/34) lost to South Africa 322 by an innings & 63 runs.

Live on TV

EURO	
Group Stage: Scotland vs Czech Republic from 6.30 pm; Poland vs Slovakia from 9.30 pm; Spain vs Sweden from 12.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD	
COPA AMERICA	
Group Stage: Argentina vs Chile from 2.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 1, 2; Paraguay vs Bolivia from 5.30 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD	

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Sterling start

Raheem's clinical strike fires England to a 1-0 win over Croatia

England	1
(Raheem Sterling 57)	
Croatia	0

**London, June 13:** Raheem Sterling ignited England's Euro 2020 campaign as the Manchester City forward's clinical finish sealed a 1-0 win against Croatia in their Group D opener on Sunday. Gareth Southgate's side were struggling to break down Croatia until Sterling struck in the second half at sun-baked Wembley. The 26-year-old's first goal at a major tournament — in his 13th game — was the perfect riposte to critics who questioned Southgate's decision to select him instead of Jack Grealish. Sterling has endured a chequered relationship with England fans after being hounded following his tame performances at Euro 2016. He also struggled to hold down a place with Premier League champions City this term, culminating in his lacklustre display in their Champions League final defeat against Chelsea. But, days after he was given an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for his anti-racism campaigning, Sterling enjoyed a perfectly-timed moment of redemption. In a rematch of the 2018 World Cup semi-final won by Croatia, England were hampered by a lack of cutting edge until Sterling came to the rescue. England host neighbours Scotland in their second Group 'D' match on Friday before taking on the Czech Republic. — AFP

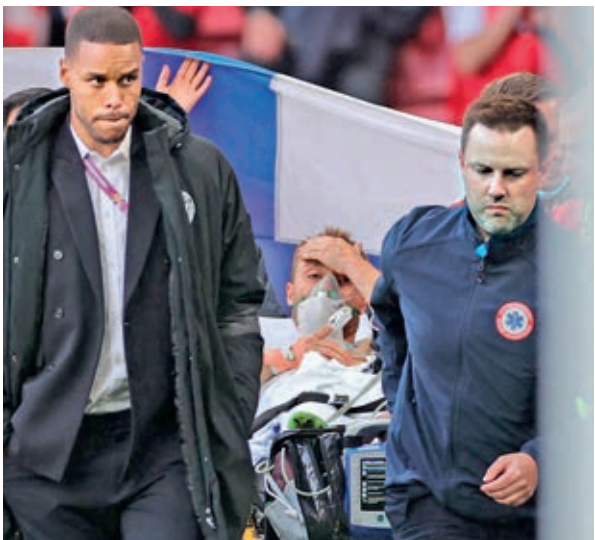


England's Raheem Sterling celebrates after scoring a goal against Croatia in the Euro match at Wembley on Sunday.

Finland	1
(Joel Pohjanpalo 60)	
Denmark	0

JOEL HEADER HELPS FINLAND SECURE 1ST WIN

**Copenhagen, June 13:** Finland beat Denmark 1-0 in their opening match of Euro 2020 which was overshadowed by Christian Eriksen collapsing and having to be revived on the field by medics. Joel Pohjanpalo scored the only goal on the hour mark of a Group 'B' match which was stopped for nearly two hours after Danish playmaker Eriksen slumped to the turf towards the end of the first half. Chants of "Christian" and "Eriksen" from both sets of supporters rang around the stadium as news of his status began to filter through to supporters. The two teams played out an uneventful final few minutes of the first half after both sets of players returned to the pitch with several Danish players in tears. After a short break of five minutes the second half of the match continued with Denmark pressing Finland back but failing to find a way past the opposition defence and Finnish 'keeper Lukas Hradecky. Pohjanpalo stunned the crowd into silence when he headed home Jere Uronen's cross, capitalising on Finland's one true chance of the game. — AFP



Denmark's Christian Eriksen (centre) is evacuated after collapsing on the pitch during the Euro match at the Parken Stadium in Copenhagen on Saturday. — AFP

We got Eriksen back: Team Doc

**Milan, June 13:** Denmark's team doctor said on Sunday that Christian Eriksen's heart stopped and that "he was gone" before being resuscitated with a defibrillator at the Euro Championship. Eriksen collapsed during Denmark's opening Euro 2020 group game against Finland on Saturday and was given lengthy medical treatment before regaining consciousness. "He was gone. And we did cardiac resuscitation. And it was cardiac arrest," said team doctor Morten Boesen, who led the work in giving Eriksen treatment on the field. "How close were we? I don't know. We got him back after one defib. That's quite fast." Boesen said it was still unclear what caused the midfielder's collapse. "I'm not cardiologist, so the details about why it happened and further, I will leave to the experts," he said. **HE HAD NO HEALTH ISSUES: INTER DOCTOR** Eriksen showed no hint of any underlying health condition, Inter Milan's team doctor said on Sunday. "We had a bad time, not just me, but the whole family of our club," Piero Volpi told *Gazzetta Dello Sport*. "In the next few days he will be subjected to in-depth examinations. "The important thing is that he is well, but there had never been any episode that even remotely hinted at a problem when he was at Tottenham nor at Inter. In Italy there are very strict controls."



Denmark's goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel (right) and defender Simon Kjær (centre) comfort Sabrina Kvist Jensen, partner of Christian Eriksen. — AFP

CHRISTIAN HOPES TO BE BACK SOON

Inter CEO Giuseppe Marotta said that Eriksen had sent a message on the team chat reassuring them: "I'm fine, I hope to be back soon." "Those harsh images foreshadowed dramatic things, but luckily it wasn't so thanks to the doctors," said Marotta. "He never had Covid and he has never been vaccinated, we don't want to be intrusive because it's right for the player to be calm."

LUKAKU DEDICATES GOALS TO ERIKSEN

Belgium striker Romelu Lukaku said he shed tears for Christian Eriksen before dedicating his two-goal haul in Saturday's 3-0 win over Russia at Euro 2020 to his stricken Inter Milan team-mate. "I am really happy with the win, but it was hard for me to play because my thoughts were with him," said Lukaku. — Agencies

Belgium get off to a flyer

Belgium	3
(Romelu Lukaku 10, 88, Thomas Meunier 34)	
Russia	0

**St. Petersburg, June 13:** Romelu Lukaku struck twice as Belgium confirmed their status as one of the favourites for Euro 2020 with a confident 3-0 victory over Russia on Saturday. Despite being without key performer Kevin De Bruyne, world number one ranked Belgium were rarely in trouble against a Russian side that struggled to impose themselves. Roberto Martinez's Belgium top Group B on three points, ahead on goal difference of Finland who beat Denmark in the

Belgium	3
(Romelu Lukaku 10, 88, Thomas Meunier 34)	
Russia	0

Dendoncker, and Lukaku turned and fired into the bottom corner. Lukaku celebrated his goal by running to the television camera and shouting "Chris, Chris, I love you" in tribute to Christian Eriksen, the Danish midfielder and his club team-mate at Inter Milan, who had been rushed to hospital after collapsing during the earlier game in the group. Belgium were calm in possession against a Russian side who struggled to get a firm grip on the game. — AFP

Swedish challenge for Spain

**Madrid, June 13:** After a week without training and three years of upheaval, Spain head into their Euro 2020 opener against Sweden on Monday determined to leave the past behind but unsure about what comes next. Luis Enrique was appointed to ring the changes in the aftermath of the 2018 World Cup, when going out on penalties to Russia had made it three consecutive failures to reach the quarter-finals of a major tournament. At La Cartuja in Seville on Monday, only Jordi

Alba will remain from the Euro success nine years ago, with Sergio Ramos cut and Sergio Busquets self-isolating after testing positive for Covid last weekend. And yet while the names bear almost no resemblance to what went before, Spain's fresh mix of promising youngsters and high-end performers arrive without any real sense of what now fills the void. **BAD BLOOD BETWEEN CZECH & SCOTLAND** Scotland's first match at a major tournament for 23 years is laced with acrimony for the Czech Republic, who travel to Hampden on Monday having been forced into a last-minute change of training camp and without suspended defender Ondrej Kudela. Kudela was hit with a 10-match ban for racially abusing Rangers midfielder Glen Kamara when Slavia Prague visited Scotland in the Europa League last 16 in March. The widespread condemnation of Kudela in Britain has not been reflected in his homeland, where Slavia and many of his club and international teammates have stood

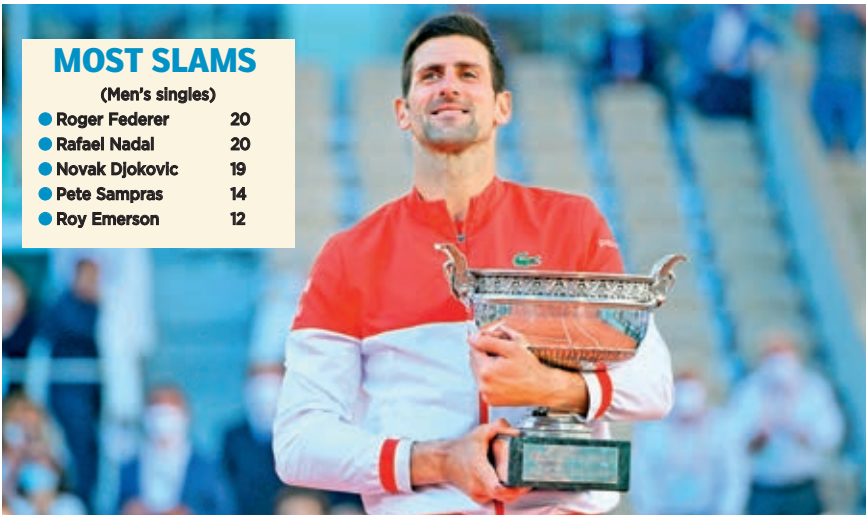
by the 34-year-old and claimed there was a lack of evidence against him. **LEWANDOWSKI OUT TO IMPROVE RECORD** Robert Lewandowski's standing as one of the greatest ever strikers at club level is surely undisputed after a record-breaking season with Bayern Munich. With 66 goals in 119 games for Poland, his status in the international game is well-established, too. Except, maybe, in one respect. Lewandowski has yet to turn it on at a major tournament. — Agencies

HEAD-TO-HEAD	
SCOTLAND-CZECH REPUBLIC	
● Matches: 9. Scotland: 4. Czech Republic: 4. Drawn: 1.	
EURO MEETINGS	
1999: Czech won 2-1 in Glasgow. 1999: Czech won 3-2 in Prague. 2010: Czech won 3-0 in Prague. 2011: 2-2 in Glasgow.	
SLOVAKIA-POLAND	
● Matches: 8. Slovakia: 4. Poland: 3. Drawn: 1.	
EURO MEETINGS	
1995: Poland won 5-0 in Zabrze. 1995: Slovakia won 4-1 in Bratislava.	
SPAIN-SWEDEN	
● Matches: 14. Spain: 6. Sweden: 3. Drawn: 5.	
2006: Sweden won 2-0 in Solna. 2007: Spain won 3-0 in Madrid. 2008: Spain won 2-1 in Innsbruck. 2019: Spain won 3-0 in Madrid. 2019: 1-1 in Stockholm. — S. PERVEZ QAISER	

DJOKER IS KING

Djokovic rallies to beat Tsitsipas in French final, wins his 19th major

**Paris, June 13:** Novak Djokovic claimed a 19th Grand Slam title and became the first man in 52 years to win all four majors twice when he came from two sets down to beat Stefanos Tsitsipas in a gripping French Open final on Sunday. The world number one triumphed 6-7 (6/8), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 over the Greek 22-year-old who was playing in his first Slam final. Djokovic is now just one major away from equalling the all-time record of 20, jointly held by Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. It was a second French Open crown for Djokovic after his 2016 victory and adds to his nine Australian Opens, five Wimbledon titles and three at the US Open. The 34-year-old is the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to win all four Slams on multiple occasions and just the third in history. He is also the first man ever to win a Slam title by twice coming back from two sets down in same the tournament. Djokovic now has 84 career titles in total while Sunday's win pushed him



Serbia's Novak Djokovic holds the French Open trophy after defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final on Sunday.

to the brink of \$150 million in prize money. "It was an electric atmosphere," said Djokovic after the four-hour 11-minute final. "It's a dream. It's difficult to win the title against a great player. It was a difficult three days physically and mentally." Djokovic had also spent more than four hours on court on Friday to knock out defending champion Rafael Nadal.

Tsitsipas survived a nervy opening service game, having to save two break points. Djokovic, by contrast, didn't concede a point in his first three service games. But suddenly he faced a set point in the 10th game courtesy of an ugly shank but saved it after a 26-shot rally. Fired up by a time violation, Djokovic broke for the first time for a 6-5 lead but was unable to serve

out the opener as a series of razor-sharp returns put Tsitsipas back on level terms. In a dramatic tiebreaker, Tsitsipas saw a 4/0 and 5/2 lead disappear. He had to save a set point before claiming the opener after 70 minutes when Djokovic fired a forehand wide. Dropping the opening set at this year's Roland Garros was familiar territory for Djokovic.

He had to recover from two sets down to beat Lorenzo Musetti in the last 16 and lost the opener against Nadal on Friday. Tsitsipas, 12 years the world number one's junior, broke again in the first game of the second set as the 2016 champion looked increasingly weary in the 30-degree afternoon heat. The Greek edged ahead 5-2 and pocketed the second set with his eighth ace of the contest. But the top seed wasn't finished, breaking in the fourth game of the third set to cut the deficit. **BARBORA COMPLETES GRAND DOUBLE** French Open champion Barbora Krejickova completed a rare sweep of titles at Roland Garros as she won a third women's doubles major trophy with fellow Czech teammate Katerina Siniakova on Sunday. Less than 24 hours after she claimed her maiden singles slam title, Krejickova became the first woman since Mary Pierce in 2000 to lift both trophies at the clay-court major. Only seven women have completed the titles sweep at Roland Garros. — Agencies



New Zealand's Tom Latham (centre) holds the trophy as his teammates celebrate winning the Test series against England in Birmingham on Sunday. — AFP

Kiwis seal rare away series win

**Birmingham (UK), June 13:** New Zealand overpowered England by eight wickets in the second Test at Edgbaston on Sunday as they sealed a 1-0 series win with more than a day to spare. Set a target of just 38 after England tailender Olly Stone was out to the very first ball of the fourth day the Blackcaps finished on 41-2. Tom Latham, captaining the team in place of the injured Kane Williamson, hit the winning boundary to be 23 not out after the first Test of a two-match series at Lord's last week ended in a draw. Victory gave New Zealand just a third win in 18 Test series in England, and a first this century after their 1986 and 1999 triumphs. And it means they will head into next week's inaugural World Test Championship final against India at Southampton in confident mood. "It's great to get an extra day of rest before India but we'll celebrate as well — we've not won here since 1999 so it's important to celebrate those achievements," said Latham at the presentation ceremony. By contrast, this was England's first series loss at home since a 2014 defeat by Sri Lanka. — AFP

**BRIEF SCORES**  
England 303 & 122 (Wood 29; Wagner 3/18, Henry 3/36) lost to New Zealand 388 & 41/2 (Latham 23 (not out)) by eight wickets.